



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

Plans Panel North and East

Date: 30th July 2015

Subject: APPLICATION 15/03475/FU – Proposed 74 bed residential care facility with associated landscaping, car parking and access on land adjacent to Seacroft Grange, The Green/Seacroft Crescent, Seacroft

APPLICANT	DATE VALID	TARGET DATE
Springfield Healthcare Group	11/06/15	10/09/15

Electoral Wards Affected:

Killingbeck & Seacroft

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

POSITION STATEMENT - For Members to note the contents of the report and to provide feedback on the questions posed at section 10 of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is brought to North and East Plans Panel as it represents a significant proposal within the Seacroft District Centre and raises a number of key issues which officers would like Members feedback on before continuing negotiations with the applicant.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 This application proposes a detached 74 bed space care home facility on the former probation centre site situated within the Seacroft District Centre. The building is designed in a basic 'L' shape with curved corner features and fronts onto Seacroft Crescent and the footpath which separates the site from Seacroft Grange to the east.

- 2.2 The main building elevates to a height of 4 storeys although the top floor rooms are largely contained within the roofspace. Part of the ground floor would also effectively become subterranean due to ground levels rising from south to north. A modern, contemporary design is proposed with materials responding to those used on The Grange redevelopment and includes a stone plinth, render and brick walls all under a slate, pitched roof.
- 2.3 Vehicle access (including servicing) would be provided via Seacroft Crescent and a new access road would be provided to the rear leading to a 20 bay car park. Outdoor amenity space would predominantly be provided to the rear, via a series of secure garden areas linked to individual zones within the building. Site landscaping is also proposed.
- 2.4 The proposed car park is identified as potentially being temporary and could be re-provided close by via a land swap deal with the Council in the event current feasibility work about potential expansion of the 'offer' available at the District Centre continue.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The application site is split into two separate components. The main part faces onto Seacroft Crescent and originally contained a probation centre building with associated parking. The parking area is still apparent (and appears to be used informally by people visiting the District Centre or using local services) but the building was demolished many years ago. The second part of the site extends further towards the main centre and provides a landscape setting for the network of footpaths serving the centre and surrounding buildings.
- 3.2 Both areas contain significant landscaping in the form of semi-mature and mature trees, the majority of which are identified as falling within retention category B. Ground levels rise across the entire site from south to north.
- 3.3 The whole site is located within the Seacroft District Centre boundary and accordingly the surrounding buildings are all in commercial use. A single storey clinic building is situated directly to the northwest, beyond which the Tesco Extra building is located (and elevating to a considerable height). To the northeast is Deacon House, a 2 storey office building and further to the east is the Grange Medical Centre. South of the medical centre is the grade II listed building The Grange which has been restored and extended by the applicant to provide a care home. Seacroft Green which is an open grassed area with cricket pitch is to the southeast beyond the access road which surrounds 'The Green' itself and the Cricketer's Arms public house is to the south on the opposite side of Seacroft Crescent.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 PREAPP/15/00163 – The applicant has entered into detailed discussions about the proposal with officers identifying a number of key issues including the loss of trees, design and highway issues but also acknowledging the potential regeneration benefits. In response, the detailed design has been revised and the access arrangements amended to utilise the existing infrastructure rather than trying to secure access via The Green (albeit it is understood the applicant may potentially want to revisit this in the future – via a separate application)

- 4.2 08/05000/OT - Outline Application to erect residential development - Granted but now expired
- 4.3 07/06354/OT - Outline application to erect detached public house, restaurant and wine bar – Refused (Lack of Parking and loss of landscaped setting to footpath)

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 As identified within the planning history, the applicant entered into pre-application discussions prior to formal submission. Previous difficulties associated with trying to take access direct from The Green have been resolved by utilising Seacroft Crescent and design improvements have also been achieved. The loss of existing trees still remains and cannot be resolved through the current proposals.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE

- 6.1 The scheme has been advertised as a major application via sites notices dated 26/06/15. The application has also been advertised within the Yorkshire Evening Post on 02/07/15.
- 6.2 The formal consultation public consultation period expires on 30th July and at the time of writing no third party representations has been received.
- 6.3 Ward Councillors – A briefing note has been provided to Ward Members and a follow up meeting is scheduled for the 24th July. As the closing date for this report is before the meeting, a verbal update will be provided as part of the officer presentation. The discussion is likely to centre around the tree loss issue and potentially if any mitigation options exist and the importance this site has in terms of the district centre going forward.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Statutory

- 7.1 **Coal Authority** – No objection subject to further site investigation being carried out prior to commencement of any development on the site.

Non-statutory

- 7.3 **Highway Officer** – Acceptable in principle, subject to addressing detailed issues regarding access and servicing arrangements.
- 7.4 **West Yorkshire Combined Authority** – Comments awaited
- 7.5 **Public Rights of Way** – A claimed footpath runs to the south eastern corner and should be open and available for use.
- 7.6 **Contaminated Land** – A phase one report has been submitted and indicates a phase two study is required. No objection subject to conditions.
- 7.7 **Flood Risk Management** – No objection in principle but proposed surfacing to the car park and on-site surface water storage system needs to be revisited
- 7.8 **Yorkshire Water** – No objection subject to conditions

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES

- 8.1 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 The development plan for Leeds is made up of the adopted Core Strategy (2014), saved policies from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) and the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted January 2013.

Core Strategy

- 8.3 The Core Strategy is the development plan for the whole of the Leeds district. The following core strategy policies are relevant:
- SP1- Delivery of spatial development strategy.
 - SP4 - Identifies East Leeds as a Regeneration Priority Programme Area where such initiatives will be supported
 - P1 - Identifies town and local centres (and includes Seacroft)
 - P2 - Lists acceptable uses within town centres and includes health care services and housing
 - P10 – High quality design.
 - P12 – Good landscaping.
 - H2 - New housing (which includes that provided through residential care) on non allocated sites can be accepted in principle subject to various criteria
 - T2 – Accessibility requirements and new development.
 - G8 – Biodiversity improvements.
 - EN1 – Carbon dioxide reduction measures
 - EN2 – Sustainable construction.
 - EN5 – Managing flood risk.
 - ID2 – Planning obligations and developer contributions.

Saved UDP Review

- 8.4 The following saved policies within the UDP Review 2006 are also considered to be of relevance:
- GP5: Seeks to ensure that development proposals resolve detailed planning considerations, including amenity.
 - LD1: Seeks for landscape schemes to complement and where possible enhance the quality of the existing environment.
 - N23: Incidental space around built development should provide a visually attractive setting.
 - N25: Development and Site Boundaries.
 - T7A: Cycle parking requirements.
 - T24: Refers to car parking guidelines.
 - BD5: Requires new buildings to give consideration to both their amenity and that of their surroundings.

Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan

- 8.5 The following DPD policies are considered to be relevant:

- WATER 7: All developments are required to ensure no increase in the rate of surface water run-off to the existing formal drainage system and development expected to incorporate sustainable drainage techniques.
- LAND1: Supports principle of development on previously developed land and requires submission of information regarding the status of the site.
- LAND2: Relates to development and trees and requires replacement planting (on or off site) where loss is proposed.

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

- 8.6 The following SPD documents are relevant to the consideration of this application:

SPG10 Sustainable Development Design Guide
SPG13 Neighbourhoods for Living
SPG22 Sustainable Urban Drainage
SPD Street Design Guide
SPD Designing for Community Safety
SPD Travel Plans
SPD Building for Tomorrow - Sustainable Design and Construction

National Planning Policy

- 8.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 27th March 2012, and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), published March 2014, replaces previous Planning Policy Guidance/Statements in setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. One of the key principles at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.
- 8.8 The introduction of the NPPF has not changed the legal requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.
- 8.9 In addition to ensuring sustainability is at the heart of all development proposals, the NPPF seeks to promote the reuse of brownfield land, supports healthy communities and improvements to health care facilities more generally and also the provision of different types of housing to meet local needs and different groups of the community.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of the development (use and impact on trees/landscape setting)
2. Design

10.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Use:

- 10.1 The site's positioning within the Seacroft District Centre boundary is such that a variety of uses can be supported. The introduction of a residential care facility can therefore be accepted in principle and would complement the applicant's existing facility at The Grange, the neighbouring medical uses and would also make a valuable contribution towards the centre itself and wider area, both economically (through the provision of local employment opportunities and increased spending) and from a regeneration perspective by bringing back into use a part brownfield site and also by consolidating development within the district centre.
- 10.2 The introduction of additional residential care facilities within the area is also welcomed as this is an area of specialist housing need that has already seen significant growth which is only likely to continue in the future. Accordingly the proposed end use is welcomed in principle and would add to the existing facilities provided by at the applicant's neighbouring site which are already fully occupied.

Impact on trees/landscape setting:

- 10.3 In terms of layout considerations, the need to achieve a certain quantum of development for operational and viability reasons has been advanced by the applicant as the main driver for the size and scale of the building and accordingly is the reason why the existing on-site trees are shown to be lost. In dealing with other proposals for residential care facilities, officers are aware similar claims have been advanced by other operators and in particular the need to have circa 70+ bed spaces is often seen as an ideal benchmark.
- 10.4 In the context of the application site, the issues which flow directly from the scale of the development translate into two main issues. The first is clearly the loss of the mature trees from across the site and the second is the loss of the spacious, landscape setting currently provided to the footpath link adjacent to the site.
- 10.5 In considering the second issue, no part of the site is formally identified as 'greenspace' and accordingly is not afforded any formal policy protection. Indeed, the 2007 application for a wine bar proposal on the northern part of the site, which although refused was not resisted in principle. It was refused due to its detailed design which proposed a large building hard up to the footpath and over a considerable length. Although the current application also proposes a substantial building, it would be sited towards the southern part of the site facing onto Seacroft Crescent. As such, a degree of separation would be provided along the length of the footpath and the northern section of the site would be occupied by an open car park so a sense of openness could be retained in combination with the use of appropriate boundary treatments. In the light of these factors, the development is not considered to give rise to the same concerns as associated with the previous wine bar proposal and a reasonable setting to the footpath can be achieved. The introduction of an additional building in this location and in particular improved natural surveillance will also no doubt help with anti-social behaviour and safety concerns which have previously been sited but have already improved following the development of The Grange site in the same use.
- 10.6 With respect to the more substantive issue regarding the loss of on-site trees, although the trees are not formally protected by preservation orders (TPO's) it is normally expected for proposals to work with existing landscaping and to retain at least some features in order to help assimilate developments into the local landscape and preserve the character of an area. Unfortunately this is not possible with the current proposal as the size requirements of the building itself and its associated infrastructure require the development of the entire site.

10.7 The proposed loss of the existing trees is clearly regrettable as their visual impact within the wider area is significant due to their size and extent. Their long term impact is also not in doubt as the submitted tree survey confirms some have 40+ years of good health ahead of them with most also falling within retention category B. Notwithstanding this, the trees are also noted to represent a significant constraint on the site's redevelopment potential and their retention would clearly limit any future development options. Their presence is also likely to be the contributing factor in explaining why the probation centre site in particular has not been previously redeveloped although its rather 'backstreet' siting and the lack of passing trade relative to the main district centre are likely to have been more significant and determining factors for this.

10.8 In considering the above, the site's attractiveness for redevelopment is already limited despite it falling within the district centre boundary and any requirement to retain the trees is only likely to add to its unattractiveness. For this reason and noting the clear regeneration benefits which would flow from the site's redevelopment, officers are of the opinion the loss of the trees in these circumstances could be justified.

1. What are Members thoughts regarding the site's future role within the Seacroft District Centre, the acceptability of the proposed loss of existing on-site trees to facilitate the proposed development and any need for mitigation?

Design:

10.9 The proposed building has been designed to have a modern, contemporary appearance and its basic shape seeks to ensure active frontages are provided to the main public elevations. A simple palette of materials is also proposed and would be reflective of those generally found within the surrounding area with the exception of the two neighbouring listed buildings (The Grange and the Cricketers Arms) both of which are limited to natural stone walls.

10.10 The separation provided between the neighbouring listed buildings is such that a modern design approach is considered acceptable and the scale and general shape of the building also lends itself more than a traditional design would. The building's prominent positioning when viewed from The Green is also such that the opportunity to provide a striking landmark exists and may help the imposing side gable of the Tesco store recede more into the background when viewed from this direction. Officers are therefore comfortable with the general design approach adopted for the building and support the modern, contemporary design being advanced in principle.

2. What are Members views of the proposed design for the building itself?

11.0 CONCLUSION

11.1 This proposal is considered to offer a number of regeneration benefits as well as delivering much needed specialist housing. The proposal would however come at the cost of the existing landscape features on the site and accordingly Members comments regarding this particular impact are specifically requested.

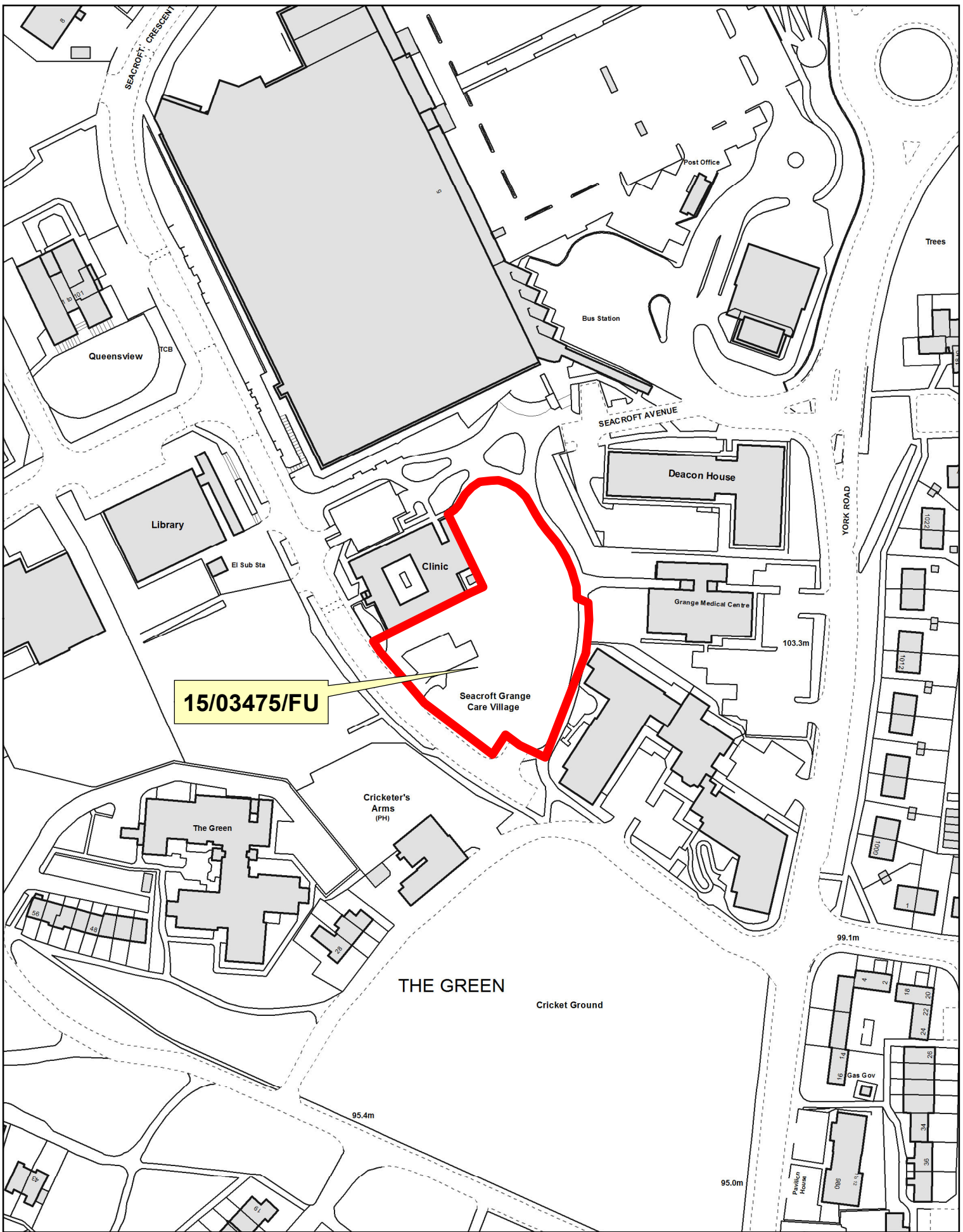
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2. What are Members views of the proposed design for the building itself?

Background papers:

Application file: 15/03475/FU

Certificate of Ownership: Notice serviced on LLC Highways



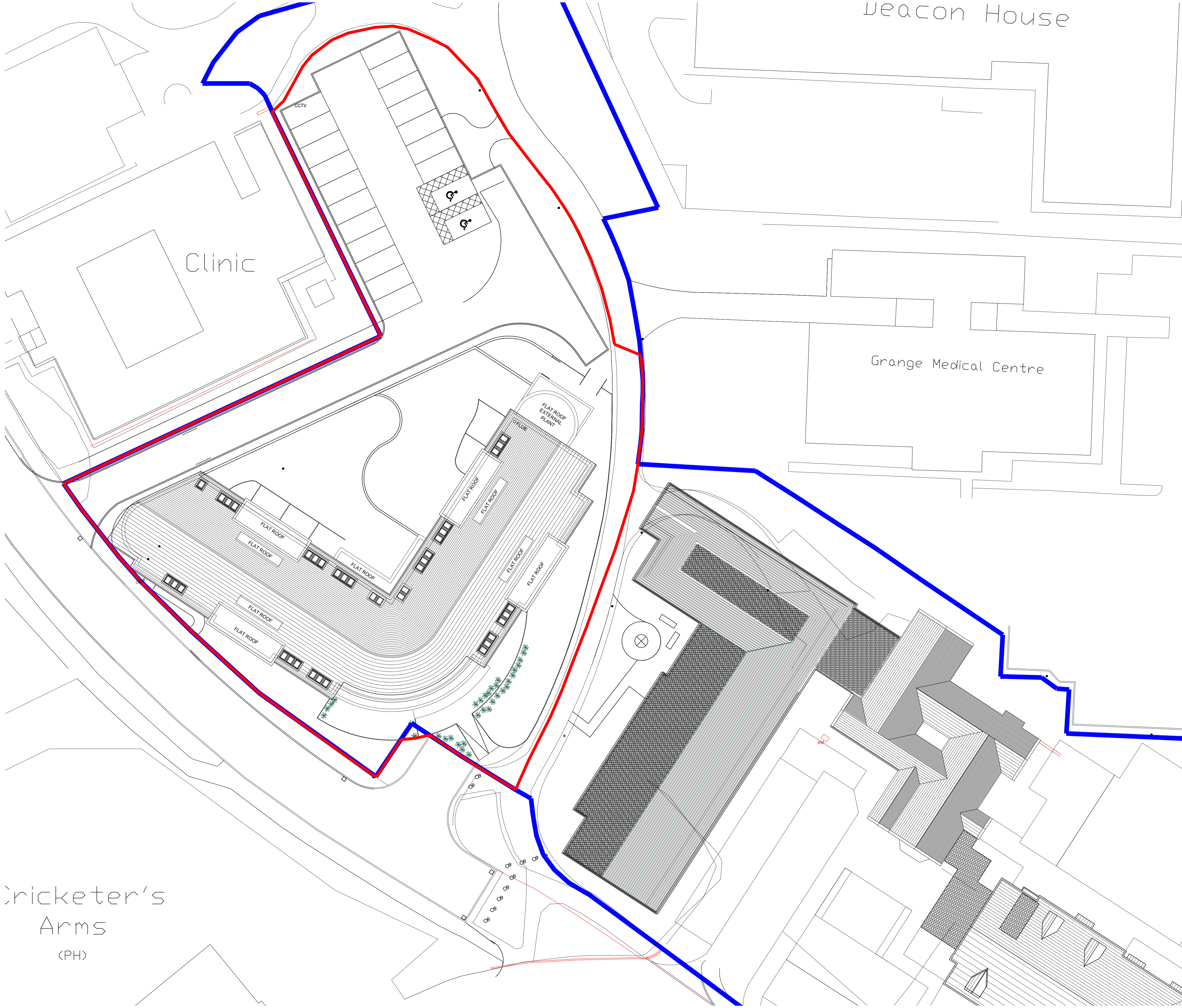
NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/1500



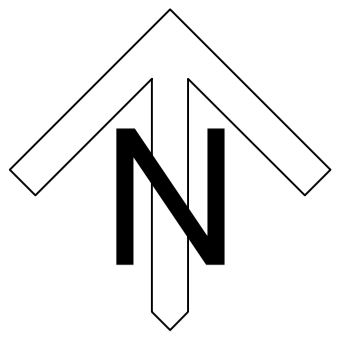


Beacon House

Clinic

Grange Medical Centre

Cricketer's Arms
(PH)



A 02.06.15 ET JAS
 Rev Date Details Drawn Checked

PLANNING	
Project/Client:	Project No:
Springfield Healthcare	IALD140024-98
Seacroft Grange Phase II	Dwg No:
Proposed Residential Care Facility	A1 00 11
	Rev:
	A
Drawing:	Scale:
Proposed Block Plan	1:200 @A1
	Drawn By: Date:
	ET 27.05.15
	Checked By: Date:
	JAS 27.05.15

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Contractors must work only to figured dimensions which are to be checked on site.
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**Appendix 6:
Tree Constraints Plan**

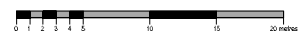
ADDRESS: Land at The Green, Seacroft,
Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS14 6JL.
JCA REF: 12138-ALAJB.

SCALE: 1:200 PAPER SIZE: A1
SURVEYED BY: AJB DRAWN BY: AJB APPROVED BY: TP

BRITISH STANDARD 5837:2012 4.5
RETENTION CATEGORIES

Detailed definitions of these categories are at Appendix 2 of our report 10. These categories do not necessarily represent or correspond to recommendations for action made in this report.

	CATEGORY A RETENTION MOST DESIRABLE
	CATEGORY B RETENTION DESIRABLE
	CATEGORY C TREE WHICH SHOULD BE RETAINED
	CATEGORY U TREE FOR REMOVAL
	STEM OF TREE TO BE RETAINED
	STEM OF TREE TO BE REMOVED
	ROOT PROTECTION AREA



Root Protection Area: RPA

THE ROOT PROTECTION AREA (RPA) INDICATES THE LIKELY ROOTING ZONE OF A TREE. THE RPA SHOULD IDEALLY REMAIN UNDISTURBED IF A TREE IS TO BE RETAINED.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SHOULD THEREFORE BE DESIGNED TO AVOID THE RPA OF ANY TREE WHICH IS TO BE RETAINED.

IF IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT TO ENCROACH INTO THE RPA OF A TREE WHICH IS TO BE RETAINED THEN SPECIALIST CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS MUST BE CONSIDERED.