

3333_7 Belvedere Road, Westbury Park, Bristol

Design and Access Statement

11th March 2025

1.00 Introduction

- 1.01 We apply for planning permission for the conversion of No. 7 Belvedere Road to care home use, as part of the Glenview Care Home in the adjoining Nos. 8-9 Belvedere Road.

The planning issues with the change of use are addressed in the Planning Statement prepared by Planning Ventures which accompanies this application. In physical terms, the proposals involve the following...

- a. Additional windows and a lightwell to the lower ground floor facing Belvedere Road.
- b. Alterations to the fenestration to the rear, to reflect the re-alignment of the half landing floors with the main floor levels and ground, first and second floor levels
- c. Dormers to the rear and side roof planes.
- d. A replacement rear extension at ground floor and lower ground floor levels, served by an enlarged lightwell.
- e. An internal link through the party wall to No. 8 on each of four levels.

Items a. to d. inclusive formed the basis of planning application no. 24/03733/F for

Replacement rear extension and works to existing building to include external alterations to window levels, new dormers to rear and side, formation of windows to lower ground floor level and creation of associated lightwells.

This was granted planning permission on 4th December 2024.

- 1.02 No. 7 Belvedere Road is configured as apartments, with three apartments for rent over the existing four levels. It is not known when the building was subdivided into flats; it is a long established use.
- 1.03 The lower maisonette (Flat 1) uses the original entrance (through a side porch as many houses of this date in Bristol). This flat has accommodation at ground floor level, lower ground floor level and a single room at a half landing level between ground and first floor. This apartment was the principal subject of a planning application (18/03500/F) for the
Extension of existing basement¹ level to create enlarged single residential dwelling (use class C3)

This application was approved in September 2018.

The approved work involved the excavation of the void below that part of the lower ground floor against No. 8 Belvedere Road (the neighbouring care home) to provide additional space within the dwelling. This work has commenced, with underpinning of existing walls being carried out to the specifications of JDL Consultants (Structural Engineers).

- 1.04 Flats 2 and 3 on the upper levels (and accessed from a door formed by the enlargement of an original window facing Belvedere Road) were unaffected by these works.
- 1.05 A number of other applications to link this building to the next door Glenview Care Home have been made by the building owner in recent years. These are addressed in the Planning Statement that accompanies this application, and are not relevant to the design being discussed in this document..

¹ The term basement is misleading. This is a lower ground floor, with the front and rear rooms below the bay windows respectively having both windows and doors onto a small lightwell each.

- 1.06 A separate application (21/00415/F) was also made to extend the building to the rear, and create 8 no. apartments. This application was refused, primarily on the grounds² of the visual impact to the rear, and the increase in likely parking needs.
- 1.07 The proposed alterations to the external envelope directly reflect those approved under 24/03733/F. The approved changes to the building footprint are as that application, particularly the extension to the rear at upper and lower ground floor levels.

There are some minor differences, which are described in the following text.

- 1.08 The proposed conversion to care home use also involves the provision of a lift to augment that in the existing care home. This has a small over-run at the top. This does not extend higher than the ridge line so will not be visible from Belvedere Road.
- 1.09 The access to the building will be changed:
- The principal access for staff and visitors will be through the main entrance to the existing care home.
 - The later door on the Belvedere Road frontage is no longer required and will be converted back into a window as its original condition.
 - The original front door and porch will be retained unchanged, as a secondary entrance and exit.

2.00 Additional lower ground floor windows

- 2.01 The planning permission (24/03733/F) to extend the existing lower ground floor extends the accommodation below the two large rooms (one front and one rear) alongside the party wall to No. 8. It also includes the space under the staircase on the main ground floor. However neither of the additional spaces so created enjoy natural light or ventilation.

Lightwell to be formed here



- 2.02 The room to the front is below the access to the upper floor flats, with paving taken to the face of the wall at ground floor level as the above photo shows.
- 2.03 We propose to create a small lightwell, whilst still maintaining the access to the upper floors. A pair of windows, echoing the central and right-hand windows on the floor above, will give natural light and ventilation to the room within the lower ground floor. Under these proposals it is envisaged that this room will be a laundry or other service space.

The impact on the street scene will be minimal, as the proposed window heads will align with those on the lower ground floor level of the bay window visible in the above right hand side photo.

² As will be demonstrated later, these proposals involve a minimal increase in the size of the rear extension, and no increase in apartment numbers.

- 2.04 The sole change to the street frontage to that approved under 24/03733/F is the conversion of the door on the right hand ground floor window arrangement back to a window (its original state). The door (which currently gives access to the upper floor flats) will no longer be necessary in this location.

3.00 Altered fenestration to the rear

- 3.01 The room between the rear bay window and the party wall to No. 8 is set at a different level to the main floor level on the ground, first and second floor levels. This is a not uncommon configuration in houses of this period, and results in some windows to the rear of the house being at 'half levels' as the photo opposite shows.

However it does cause significant practical issues in the configuration of the three flats into which this building is now sub-divided. The practical issues were explained in the submission for 24/03733/F.

With a care home, particularly one dealing with residents with mobility issues and dementia, split levels are wholly inappropriate.

- 3.02 We propose to rationalise the rear facade as follows...
- The ground floor half landing will be raised to that of the main ground floor. this level will extend into the new extension.
 - The window to the first floor half level will be raised to that of the main first floor windows.
 - The window to the second floor half landing will be raised to that of the second floor. Given the eaves level, this will result in a dormer window to the rear as described below.



4.00 New dormers

- 4.01 A new dormer to the rear facade is the result of the raising of the half landing floor level internally. Such a dormer will be discrete, and not visible from the public realm within the conservation area. We propose a flat roof, rather than a gable pitched roof as the more visually important dormer on the existing front facade.
- 4.02 The second floor has a limited headroom along the side passage side due to the slope of the existing roof. The existing rooms are constrained by this low headroom. They are lit by rooflights (one each).

We propose a single dormer set between the two chimneys (but not extending to either) to provide enhanced headroom and therefore additional usable space internally.

This dormer window will be set back behind the plane of the side wall and chimneys, and therefore be of very limited visibility from any public viewpoint within the conservation area. It is also set largely in the rear half of the side pitch, further diminishing any visual impact from the street.

5.00 Replacement rear extension

- 5.01 The existing rear extension is an unsatisfactory shape and configuration. It also prevents the provision of natural light and ventilation to the rear room on the lower ground floor created by 18/03500/F.

There is also a small lightwell serving the lower ground floor windows at the base of the bay window as shown in the photo to the right.



- 5.02 We propose the demolition of the existing extension and its replacement by a new extension at ground and at lower ground floor level. This extension will be the width of the room behind on both levels, effectively enlarging those rooms. On both level the extension will include the windows to the extended rooms providing natural lighting and ventilation.

The existing extension has an internal footprint of 8.5 sq. metres. The proposed extension has one of 13.5 sq. metres, an increase of 5 sq. metres. This is replicated on the lower ground floor. This is a *de minimis* increase in floorspace.

On the lower ground floor the existing lightwell to the bay window will be enlarged to create a small patio.

- 5.03 The extension will have a flat roof behind a parapet. This keeps the overall height of the extension low, and maintains the parapet height of the ground floor addition to the care home next door.
- 5.04 The proposed extension will not extend beyond the back line of the existing extension. It is solely the width that increases.

6.00 Access

- 6.01 No change to the existing access to the building is proposed.
- 6.02 As an annexe to Glenview Care Home, the storage of refuse and recycling will be shared. At present, this storage is to the front of No. 8-9. We propose that additional refuse storage will be located in the forecourt to No. 7 as shown on the drawings.
- 6.03 Details of vehicular and personal movements to and from the existing care home are provided elsewhere in this submission. Residents (who have mobility issues, often ill health, and most suffering from dementia, will not require the used of bicycles and storage therefor.

We propose a small cycle store for staff in the rear garden, with Sheffield stands for visitors on the forecourt. Step free access is along the side of the building and through the porch. This is a normal access in buildings of this type and age in Bristol.

7.00 Materials

- 7.01 The external alterations to the building are minimal. As such we propose to maintain the palette of materials used to date on the existing buildings.
- Extension wall: Painted rendered masonry.
 - Wall to lightwell: Painted rendered masonry (to match the painted stone dressings).
 - Windows: Painted timber.

8.00 Planning context

- 8.01 The design overcomes the concerns regarding that previous submission for enlargement and conversion to 8 flats (21/00415/F), noted in the Officer's Report as...
- *The proposed development, by nature of its excessive height, scale and massing would be out of keeping with the character of the host property and the Conservation Area.*
This proposal contains a modest enlargement of the existing rear extension and small dormers.
 - *...the proposed development would result in overshadowing and overbearing impact on the adjacent windows of 8-9 Belvedere Road and would result in unacceptable overlooking towards the gardens of 5 and 6 Belvedere Road via side-facing windows/Juliet balconies.*
 - Overshadowing: As the building is to the north of neighbouring properties to the rear, there is no risk of overshadowing.
 - Overbearing: This a simple addition which does not break the parapet line of the ground floor rear extension to the care home next door.
 - Overlooking: There is no significant increase in the overlooking of neighbouring properties. The ground floor window looks to the rear garden, with a smaller side window facing the boundary with No. 6 (this is not a change in principle from the side facing windows to the existing extension).
 - *The proposed development would result in an increased demand for on-street car parking in an area which is oversubscribed.*
There is no increase in the number of dwellings, and therefore no impact on parking requirements.
 - *The proposed development does not demonstrate that the existing green infrastructure onsite could be retained and would be integrated into the development.*
There is minimal impact on the existing planting to the rear garden. The proposed extension has a footprint which is wider than the existing, but does not extend to the garden to any greater extent. The enlarged lightwell presents an opportunity for enhanced planting. The rest of the garden is unchanged.
- 8.02 The design is essentially unchanged from that approved under 24/03733/F. The Officer's Report for that application addresses the specific design changes proposed also by this application.

The first-floor window on the rear elevation primarily changes the level of the existing windows and does not create any new openings which would be pose harm by virtue of loss of privacy or overlooking and is considered acceptable. Similarly, addition of a rear dormer window on the second floor would be a new opening, however, considering the distance between the proposed development and the opposite dwellings on Blenheim Road and the existing level of mutual overlooking, the rear dormer window is considered acceptable.

The proposed side dormer windows on the second floor provides openings for a bathroom and a kitchen, which does not directly overlook into adjacent properties and is therefore considered acceptable. The proposed rear extension replaces the exiting rear extension and aligns in length and height with the existing rear extension of the adjacent property at 8-9 Belvedere Road thereby not harming the adjacent properties by virtue of overbearing or overshadowing.

Impact on amenity: acceptable
Overlooking/loss of privacy: acceptable
Visually overbearing: acceptable
Loss of sunlight/daylight: acceptable
Over shadowing: acceptable

- 8.03 Conservation aspects of these proposals are discussed in a separate Heritage Statement that accompanies this application. However, the Officer's Report on 24/03733/F stated...

With reference to the comments from the Urban Design officer, the proposed design is considered to be suitable, and not out of character with the property or the surrounding area. The proposed alterations to the host building would have a negligible impact upon the character, appearance, and historic significance of the surrounding Conservation Area. The integrity and status of adjacent heritage assets would therefore be preserved by the proposed development.

9.00 Conclusion

- 9.01 The physical changes are primarily to the rear (and interior) of the building. They result in much improved internal configurations and enhanced daylight and sunlight for residents.
- 9.02 The issues associated with the proposed change of use are addressed elsewhere in this submission.
- 9.03 There is no adverse impact to neighbours from the proposed extension to the rear.
- 9.04 There is no adverse impact on the streetscape in the conservation area as a result of the creation of windows and a lightwell to the front. Indeed the current configuration is rather sad and the proposed changes will enhance the appearance at street level.
- 9.05 The proposed external alterations are those approved under 24/03733/F.