



## Planning Committee

22 January 2026

# S25/1656

Proposal:	Planning application for a proposed change of use of a Residential Care Home (Use Class C2) to two 12-bedroom House of Multiple Occupancy (Use Class Sui Generis).
Location:	Birchwood Nursing Home, 6 Dudley Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 9AA
Applicant:	Mr Josh Hobbins
Agent:	Mr Peter Mills
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Reason for Referral to Committee:	Called in by Councillor Morgan – Conservation Area, residential amenity / exceeds previous occupation, waste management, site management, loss of care home, parking
Key Issues:	Impact on the character and appearance of the area. Impact on neighbouring amenities.
Technical Documents:	Design and Access Statement

### Report Author

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Corporate Priority:	Decision type:	Wards:
Growth	Regulatory	Grantham St Vincent's

### Reviewed by:

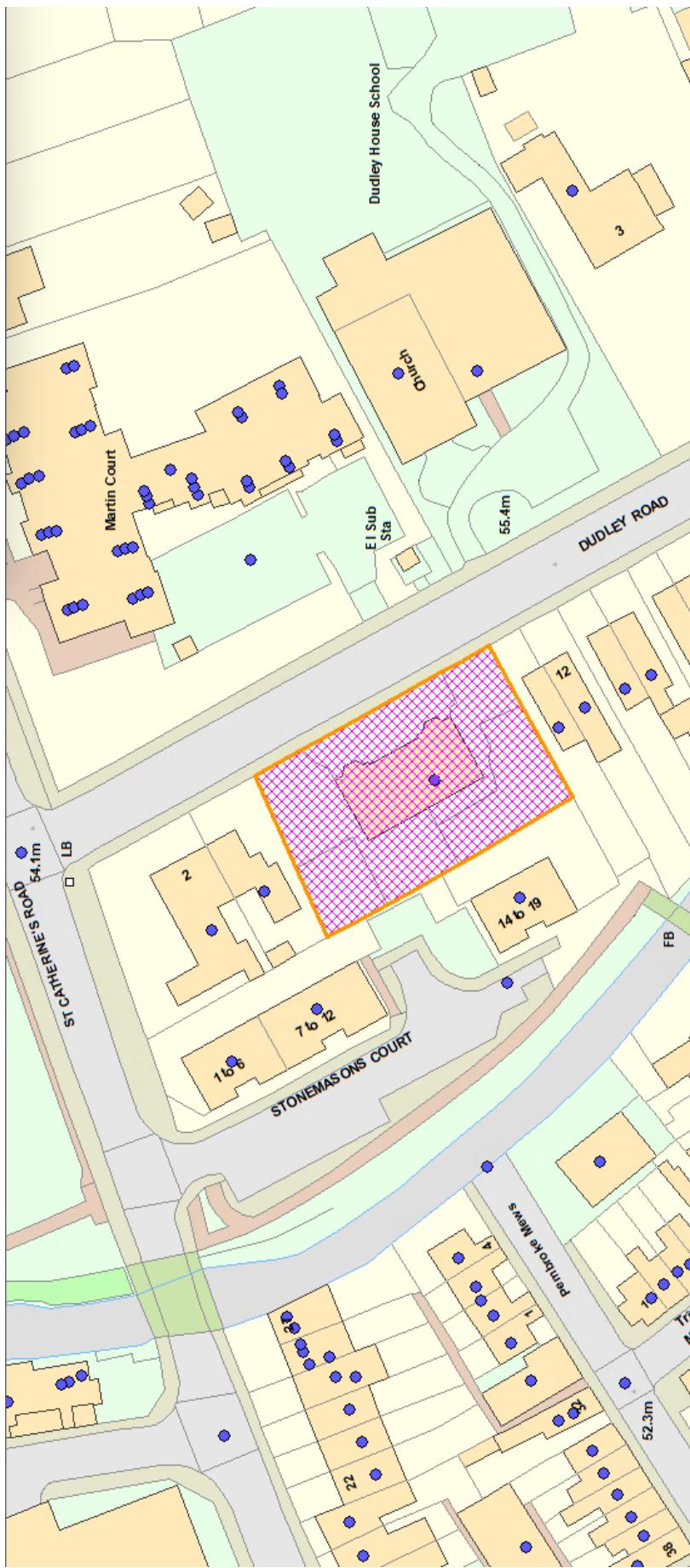
Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner

12 January 2026

### Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions

# S25/1656 – Birchwood Nursing Home Dudley Road Grantham



Key



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## **1 Description of Site**

- 1.1 The application site is a detached residential Care Home sited on Dudley Road, in the town of Grantham. The former Care Home consists of an original pair of semi-detached houses, no.6 and 8 Dudley Road. The Care Home building contains 14 bedrooms, with 4 reception rooms, 3 bathrooms, and separate toilets, with a laundry and storage in the basement. building has amenity space to the front, side and rear of the building providing garden space, bin storage, and vehicle parking for between 3-4 parking spaces in the northern and southern amenity areas.
- 1.2 The surrounding area consists of a Retirement Living Development with 41 apartments on the opposite side of Dudley Road, residential dwelling houses, a church and Dudley House School. The application site is within the Conservation Area.

## **2 Description of proposal**

- 2.1 The proposal is for a proposed change of use from a 14-bedroom Residential Care Home (Use Class C2) for up to 17 residents, to two 12-bedroom House of Multiple Occupancy (Use Class Sui Generis) for up to 24 residents.

## **3 Planning History**

- 3.1 No relevant planning history.

## **4 Relevant Planning Policies & Documents**

### **4.1 SKDC Local Plan 2011 – 2036 (Adopted January 2020)**

- Policy SD1 – The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven
- Policy SP1 – Spatial Strategy
- Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy SP3 – Infill Development
- Policy H4 – Meeting All Housing Needs
- Policy EN6 – The Historic Environment
- Policy DE1 – Promoting Good Quality Design
- Policy ID2 – Transport and Strategic Transport Infrastructure

### **4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (updated December 2023)**

- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

## **5 Representations Received**

- Lincolnshire County Council (Highways)**

5.1 No objections, subject to planning condition and informatives. Suggests planning condition for the provision of three pedestrian crossing points over St Catherines Road; junction with Newton Street, Stonemasons Court, Dudley Road, to improve the existing footway network for vision impaired pedestrians.

### **Grantham Town Council**

5.2 The following concerns are raised:

*'The property had a previous maximum capacity of 17 as a nursing home and was marketed and sold as a 14 bedroom property. The proposed number of occupants exceeds this amount.*

*Will there be laundry/washing facilities in each property as only one laundry facility for a 24 bed property is not enough.*

*There is no communal living space other than the kitchens and the bathroom and toilet facilities seem slim*

*There is limited parking at the rear of the property and potentially too few for 24 vehicles. –*

*Disturbance to local residents is likely to occur when changing from a minimal disturbance nursing home to two 12 bed HMO's*

*Ensuring the character and features of the property are in keeping with the local area'.*

### **Lincolnshire County Council (Community Based Services)**

5.3 No objections.

5.4 Comments:

*'Birchwood Residential Home closed in September 2024. I can confirm that there is currently sufficient capacity for residential care in the town and the permanent loss of this building would not have an impact on the market'.*

### **Lincolnshire Police (Designing Out Crime)**

5.5 No objections – refer to Secured by Design technical guides.

### **Grantham Town Councillor Tracey Forman**

5.6 Objection.

5.7 Comments:

*'Parking is already an issue on Dudley Road and a HMO will bring more issues near the school and senior citizens accommodation. So I would request that highways take a good look at this application. I am a Town Councillor and will seek to object further via that route'.*

### **SKDC Conservation Officer**

5.8 No objections.

5.9 Comments:

*'The application site is a large previously semi-detached, now detached property located within the Grantham St Annes Conservation Area. The Grantham St Annes Conservation Area is characterised by having late Victorian and Edwardian housing to the south of St Catherines Road.*

*It is proposed to convert the property back into two separate dwellings and convert each dwelling into a 12no. bedroom HMO.*

*The proposal to return the property to 2no. properties and conversion into HMO's will result in minimal change to the exterior of the property with the downstairs bay windows being replaced as these rooms will be split to create a total of 4no. bedrooms. This will have a minimal impact on the Grantham St Annes Conservation Area. As such the proposal is in line with South Kesteven District Councils Local Plan Policy EN6: The Historic Environment.*

*Overall, I have no concerns with the proposal on heritage grounds'.*

### **Environmental Protection**

5.10 No objections.

#### **Grantham Town Councillor John Morgan**

5.11 Objection.

5.12 Comments:

*'As a Town Councillor for the area, I would like to object to this proposal. I object, primarily, on grounds of housing density. When it was an old people's block, it had a maximum of 15 residents. I know, because I delivered election leaflets there, on a regular basis, going back to 2011. (Sometimes the number of residents would drop, but I do not recall it ever going below 12.) This proposal would increase the number of residents of the same building from 15 to 24. That is a 60% increase, and it is too much. It is not inherently unreasonable to turn the building into flats, but not with such a sharp increase in housing density.*

*This will also have a knock-on effect on parking. Most of the former residents did not have cars. The new residents will have a broader spread of ages, and are more likely to have cars. They will not all fit in the existing small number of parking bays, and will therefore take additional places on Dudley Road, where they will be competing with existing residents. There will probably be more cars with the same number of residents, but a 60% increase will make this problem worse.*

*Birchwood is in a conservation area. It is good to see the external shape of this nice old building being preserved. It enhances the street scene at that end of Dudley Road. However, these proposals would have so many dwellings crammed in, that they are placing internal dividers in the bay windows, in order to divide the rooms up. This would look horrendous, and is not in keeping with a stand-out building in a conservation area. If the housing density was reduced, this could also solve this problem, as the rooms could be divided up differently. As Birchwood is in a conservation area, that should protect the mature trees on the site, which are part of the street scene. Whatever planning proposal eventually gets approved for this site should have an explicit commitment to keeping the mature trees. The street scene was damaged when Martin Court (opposite) was built and some of the vegetation did not survive. If the same thing happened to Birchwood, this would make it worse'.*

#### **Grantham Town and District Ward Councillor Charmaine Morgan**

5.13 Objection.

5.14 Comments:

*'I am writing to object to this application for the Change of Use of a Care Home to an HMO for the following material considerations:*

*The application is contrary to Local Plan Policy DE1 on several grounds  
DE1 a. Proposals should be of an appropriate scale, density, massing, height and material  
given the context of the area*

*The former care home had 15 residents living in it prior to its closure. There were no more  
than 15 residents in the previous 10 years.*

*The proposal for a Change of Use to an HMO is for 2 x 12 room units which total 24  
occupants. This is a much higher density of occupation than existed when the property was  
used as a Care Home.*

*This amounts to an increase of over 41% IF we accept the applications statement that were  
previously 17 residents occupying the premises. Regular visitors to the premises advised in  
fact there were no more than 15 residents for at least a decade prior to its closure.*

*a. Planning application ref S24/0065 & S24/1214 were REFUSED on Decision date 30 April  
2024 by SKDC.*

*The REFUSALS were upheld by the Planning Inspector on two material grounds.*

*a. density of the occupation of the HMO proposed was higher than that previously existing  
in the Care Home.*

*APP/E2530/W/24/3347525*

*b. the impact on the Listed Building of the required changes to cater for the increase in  
density of use*

*APP/E2530/Y/24/3347527*

*Of particular relevance is the Inspectors decision APP/E2530/W/24/3347525*

*Whilst Planning Application at Castlegate s25/1357 & s25/1192 were subsequently  
approved by SKDC this was AFTER the applicant amended the application to REDUCE the  
number of units to be occupied and the number of residents was limited by Condition by  
SKDC Planning committee members to a maximum occupation of 20 residents in a building  
which was extended with a purpose built wing and larger than the 2 semi-detached houses  
proposed for use as an HMO on Dudley Road.*

*SKDC can 'reasonably' object to this application, on these grounds alone.*

*DE1 c. Provide sufficient private amenity space, suitable to the type and amount of  
development proposed.*

*In order to accommodate the significant increase of 40% of rate of occupation in the  
buildings the applicant is proposing to*

*I. Split two bay windows of the homes in the Conservation area. These grand Victorian  
houses are in a high profile location on a gateway into the St Annes Conservation Area,  
visible from St Catherines Road. They are also similar in character to the neighbouring home  
at 4 Dudley Road.*

*The split proposed to the ground floor bay windows WILL impact on the character of the  
houses, contrary to the comments by the SKDC Conservation Officer. The impact will be  
detrimental. The houses are over 100 years old and have survived this time without any  
detrimental alterations. The purpose of the Conservation Area is to protect the heritage of  
the area.*

*SKDC Local Plan EN6 also refers to the need to take Conservation Area Appraisals into  
account. I was involved along with other Conserving Grantham members in drafting the  
Conservation Area appraisal.*

*The houses at the end of Dudley Road were designed to house the senior managers and  
professionals living in Grantham associated with the industrial works. They were of  
particular size and low density to reflect this. There are no other high density HMOs in this  
area of Dudley Road.*

*All other development is of self contained flats which are of a more appropriate standard of housing for the area.*

*II. The proposal will cram at least 24 occupants into a property which has rooms without a complete set of measurements. The details available indicate non compliance with SKDCs own Licensing standards in relation to the ratio of bathrooms to occupants if the application is for 2 x 12 bedroom properties - as it states. The SKDC standards directly reflect Government guidelines for HMOs.*

*III. It is not acceptable to have such important details missing from the applicants plan prior to a decision being made, nor, for the approval of plans which fail to comply with licensing standards.*

*DE 1 b. Ensure there is no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring users in terms of noise, light pollution, loss of privacy and loss of light and have regard to features that minimise crime and the fear of crime*

*The police response to this application is arbitrary and not consistent with the report provided in response to the Planning application for a Change of Use for an HMO at Castlegate. This highlights the need for internal security measures and lighting.*

*The application site is within a short walk to the public green space The Paddock opposite Waterfront Flats on Welham Street and Martin Court. There have been significant issues within The Paddock relating to ASB, fly tipping and assaults throughout the summer. It will be possible to obtain specific records from the police and SKDC enforcement team relating to this area. In a high profile case a homeless person was attacked and their tent set alight. This is the nearest public area for the residents of an HMO at Dudley Road to use given the lack of internal space proposed in their accommodation. It is not unreasonable to assume that they will overspill into the neighbouring public outdoor space especially in the summer months.*

*Overall density of HMOs in the vicinity of 6 and 8 Dudley Road*

*There is no record of the number of HMOs in the nearby vicinity. However a recent report by SKDC licensing and available publicly indicated at least 28 HMOs are LICENSED in St Vincents Ward. At last count a significant number of these, over half, were located within 0.2m or a 3 minute walk from the proposed HMO via the public footpath and footbridge over the River Witham to College Street. This area has had such a significant level of crime and fly tipping that SKDC Street Cleaning team have to visit Eton Street and other neighbouring streets on a weekly basis. The issues around ASB and other crime are such that SKDC have agreed to install CCTV cameras on the street in this area. This excludes NON LICENSED HMOs in the vicinity.*

*Parking - shortage of on street parking*

*Whilst LCC Highways has raised no objections regarding impact on parking this contradicts their activity in the close vicinity. There is such a shortage of available on-street parking within the area that Resident Street Parking has been provided in the terraces around Grantham Railway Station accessed only 0.3miles from the site.*

*So bad is the on-street parking in the neighbouring streets off London Road known as University Square, and including College Street, Oxford Street, Cambridge Street, Harrow Street and Harrow Street that residents have called for a Resident Street Parking Scheme in their area which is currently in the pipeline to be progressed by LCC Highways. The overspill from these areas including visitors to the town centre, the parade of shops on St Catherines Road, Grantham College students and KGGS Sixth formers is already affecting Dudley Road at the junction of St Catherine's Road, such that there is no/minimal available on street parking after rush hour. Commuters using the railway station will also park on Dudley Road rather than pay to park all day.*

*It is clear that the former Care Home residents of Birchwood, many of whom had dementia, did not add to the on-street parking issues. The staff and visitors were able to use the limited on site parking available on the premises. Any increase in the car usage on this site will negatively impact on the on-street parking amenity of neighbouring residents, a number of whom do not have off-street parking outside their homes on Dudley Road.*

*DE1 c. Provide sufficient private amenity space, suitable to the type and amount of development proposed.*

*As stated above, the design proposed DOES NOT comply with even the minimal standards required within an HMO as set by the Government and SKDC.*

*ALL apartment blocks in the vicinity have their own associated parking amenity. These include Stonemasons Court, Martin Court and Waterfront flats on Welham Street in the neighbouring Grantham Town Centre Conservation Area.*

*Even though Stonemasons Court includes social housing it still has onsite parking.*

*Unlike the Castlegate site referred to previously, the densely packed HMO on Dudley Road would be immediately neighbouring family homes.*

*Any issues relating to ASB will have a direct impact on the residents in close proximity including those neighbours and the occupants of Stonemasons Court, which backs onto the application site. A significant number of residents have raised concerns regarding the potential impact on their amenity especially increased risk of noise and ASB. Recent events in The Paddock relating to single people living in tents have raised awareness of the sale of drugs in the area and poor management of ASB issues.*

*There is a particular concern regarding the management of Waste on site.*

*The Benson Planning Studio proposal states - page 15*

#### *Bin Storage*

*'Suitable storage for bins is provided at the REAR of the property, which is in line with the existing arrangement. There is no requirement for bins to be stored at the front of the property which can have wider adverse implications on the amenity of the locality. Bins can be brought out for collection on Albert Avenue via a private road.'*

*The Site Plan however clearly shows a bin storage area at the FRONT of the property adjacent to 4 Dudley Road and within sight and hearing of the occupants. It will also be directly opposite the residents of Martin Court which is a sheltered private retirement scheme. Locating the number of bins capable of storing the waste from 24 residents at the front of the building will have a detrimental impact on the area both visually and from the noise produced as contents are placed in the bins - IF they are used correctly.*

*The estimated waste produced by 24 residents in an HMO living independently is based on Guidelines which often specify a minimum volume per occupant for both residual (general) waste and recycling. For example, some councils may require a minimum of 48 litres of residual and 48 litres of recycling capacity per person per week. This is a total of 1152 litres EACH week of residual and recycled waste. A number of commercial bins would be required in the immediate vicinity of the neighbouring residents to cater for that quantity of waste and multiple trips to bins could occur any time day or night depending on the behaviour and need of the occupants of the property.*

*There are other conflicts within the application proposal produced by Benson Planning Studio including and not restricted to:-*

*a. The proposal pg 14 refers to a laundry and storage area in the basement. However the plan indicates there is no formal use of this area and there is no laundry on site.*

*b. There is no such road as Albert Avenue as described in the application, should the waste be stored at the rear of the property. What would the waste storage and management plan be?*

c. There is a map within the Benson document pgs 24 and 25 which indicate car ownership in the area. The outline avoids Stonemasons Court and Waterfront properties all of which have a high number of cars. A different analysis would be produced by car usage within a radial distance of the site, even taking into account The Paddock which is not occupied.

d. There is no strong evidence that the site could not have been used as a Care Home or other purpose, e.g. for restoration of the original family homes, or self contained flats, which residents in the vicinity would prefer. The care home closed after the Covid pandemic and was only on the market a relatively short period of time. It was put on the market with both houses for sale together, which reduced who would be able to buy it. Had the two houses been made available separately it is highly likely they would have appealed to people moving into the area given the occupancy of the neighbouring properties and popularity of the area due to its historic character and access to local amenities'.

## 6 Representations as a Result of Publicity

6.1 This application has been advertised in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, and 56 letters of representation were received. The letters were objections, and this has been summarised below:

- Increase in noise, and traffic / movements to/from the site
- Insufficient on-street parking on Dudley Road at the moment so cannot accommodate more residents parking demand
- Dudley Road already has a road safety issue; it's a 'rat-run' and suffers from speeding and illegal parking
- Anti-social behaviour and crime concerns
- Lack of transparency regarding the projects purpose / who will be housed in the HMOs
- Change to the overall atmosphere / community cohesion of Dudley Road
- Inadequate parking for residents and would be lower than the 8 spaces shown due to practicality and size of parking areas
- Refuse management concerns e.g. two bins will not be sufficient, rodents, too close to neighbouring properties
- Misleading information with the submission / inconsistencies on the submission
- The HMOs will be a very different use to the Care Home
- Would affect the quality / character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Too many residents proposed when compared to previous use as a Care Home with 17 residents / overdevelopment
- Property is opposite a primary school, and near other schools so school children and college students use this route / safeguarding and safety concerns
- Harm to residential amenity e.g. noise, disturbance, activity
- Would not benefit existing residents in the centre of Grantham
- Increase demand for local infrastructure e.g. schools, doctors, dentists
- Large HMOs are not appropriate in residential areas / deter family occupation of adjacent housing
- Cumulative impact of other HMOs in the area / in Grantham

- Precedent for future applications
- Would generate more pedestrian movements and vehicle trips e.g. late evening, early morning, pickups, food delivery
- Application does not include a robust Management Plan / Construction Management Plan / Delivery and Servicing Plan / Parking Management Plan / Travel Plan / Fire Safety Statement or Plan / Fire Management Plan / Ecology Survey.
- The permanent loss of the Care Home has not been justified with marketing evidence, and no alternative uses for the building have been explored
- Proposes to divide the bay windows on the ground floor which will change the look of the property and not be in keeping with the other bay windows on the street
- Loss of part of the hedgerow and lawned front garden for parking area
- Demographic of residents of Retirement Community Martin Court opposite are elderly and vulnerable
- Rise in HMOs / disproportionate number of HMOs in Grantham - 16 new licences in the past year
- SKDC has considered an Article 4 direction to require planning permission for all HMOs
- Will reduce privacy for neighbouring properties.
- Should have robust evidence that the HMOs will be well managed
- Would like another option for no.6 and no.8 Dudley Road such as self-contained flats with a designated parking space.
- Applicant has converted another house in Grantham into a HMO this year.
- HMO residents are most vulnerable in society
- Insufficient internal (living, cooking, social space) and external space for residents of the HMO
- Loss of family homes.
- Adverse effect on property values
- Ecological concerns e.g. bats may be present in the building, cycle parking may encroach on tree roots
- Reference to the HMO licensing standards and inadequate residential amenity for future residents e.g. bathrooms, fire prevention, outside and inside communal space
- Loss of part of the lawned side garden for cycle parking area
- Surface water drainage and foul drainage
- Historic Victorian building and this would result in changes to the interior and exterior
- Pressure on drainage from more demand / existing issue of blocked drains along Dudley Road
- Loss of community facility
- Map of approved and proposed HMOs in Grantham / more HMOs in Grantham compared to Stamford
- HMOs are not part of the required housing mix in the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023

- HMOs degrade the quality of an area with waste, visual clutter and decline in external maintenance to building.
- Queries regarding HMO license and enforcement.
- Positive provision of cycle parking spaces
- Could be used as a Hostel in multiple occupation

## 7 Evaluation

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the Local Planning Authority makes decisions in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan 2011-2036 in January 2020, which forms the Development Plan for the District, and is the basis of decision-making in South Kesteven alongside the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (where relevant).

### 7.2 Principle of Development

7.2.1 The proposal is for a proposed change of use from a 14-bedroom Residential Care Home (Use Class C2) for up to 17 residents to two 12-bedroom House of Multiple Occupancy (Use Class Sui Generis).

7.2.2 The principle of development for the residential institution use in this location is established with the previous use as a Residential Care Home. This use was for the provision of residential accommodation along with care. The proposed change of use would be from a residential use class to the Sui Generis use class. In this case the use would be two large HMOs which remain a residential use.

7.2.3 The current lawful use of the building is as a residential care home, which the adopted Local Plan defines as a community facility. Policy SP6 (Community Services and Facilities) states that applications for a change of use from a community use such as this to an alternative use will be resisted unless it is clearly demonstrated that:

- (a) there are alternative facilities available and active in the same area which would fulfil the role of the existing use/building; and
- (b) the existing use is no longer viable (supported by documentary evidence), and there is no realistic prospect of the premises being re-used for alternative business or community facility use.

7.2.4 The proposal must also demonstrate that consideration has been given to:

- (c) the reuse of the premises for an alternative community business or facility and that effort has been made to try to secure such a re-use;
- (d) the potential impact closure may have on the area and its community, with regard to public use and support for both the existing and proposed use.

7.2.5 Lincolnshire County Council's Community Based Services team has been consulted and has not objected to the loss of the residential care home, stating that '*there is currently sufficient capacity for residential care in the town and the permanent loss of this building would not have an impact on the market*'. There are 10 Care Homes in Grantham offering residential care for older people. In a recent Appeal, reference. **APP/E2530/W/24/3347525** and **APP/E2530/Y/24/3347527** for the loss of another Residential Care Home in Grantham, the Inspector noted that the building was vacant, and there are other care homes in

Grantham which are larger and offer more modern facilities. The Inspector then concluded that '*There is no substantive evidence before me that the building should be protected and retained as a care home*' and was '*not persuaded that the appeal site represents a community facility*'.

7.2.6 In conclusion, the proposal is acceptable in principle and in accordance with Policy SP3 and SP6 of the adopted Local Plan, subject to material considerations.

### 7.3 **Meeting all Housing Needs**

7.3.1 Policy H4 (Meeting all Housing Needs) states that new housing proposals shall (d) increase choice in the housing market.

7.3.2 This proposal would provide multiple units of small housing provision within the main town of Grantham, provided for the rental market. It is recognised that HMOs make an important contribution to the private rented sector by catering for the needs of specific groups of people and by contributing to the overall provision of private rented stock. The proposed development would provide a range of 1-bedroom rooms, which would cater for residents seeking smaller accommodation within the town centre. As such, the application scheme is in accordance with Policy H4 of the adopted Local Plan. The provision of this additional residential accommodation is considered to be a public benefit that weighs in favour of the proposals.

### 7.4 **Impact on the character and appearance of the area**

7.4.1 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that special regard to preserving the Listed Buildings and their settings in relation to Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act'). No harm should be caused with the historical assets and their surroundings requiring to be preserved or enhanced.

7.4.2 Furthermore, the importance of considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets is expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF advises that development and alterations to designated assets and their settings can cause harm. These policies ensure the protection and enhancement of the historic buildings and environments. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance should be treated favourably.

7.4.3 Policy EN6 (The Historic Environment) states amongst other criteria that the Council will seek to protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings, in keeping with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. Proposals will be expected to take into account the Conservation Area Appraisals, where these have been adopted by the Council.

7.4.4 The application site is situated in the Grantham St Annes Conservation Area. The Grantham St Annes Conservation Area is characterised by having late Victorian and Edwardian housing to the south of St Catherines Road.

7.4.5 It is acknowledged that there have been representations concerned with the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, and Conservation Area.

7.4.6 The application for this change of use relates to an existing building that was formerly a Residential Care Home in a residential area of Grantham. It is not proposed to extend the building or make any external alterations other than the subdivision of two rooms downstairs

which will result in the division of the two bay windows. This alteration to the two bay windows is not considered to be harmful to the character or appearance of the building.

7.4.7 The proposed HMOs would each have 4 bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom and a toilet on the ground floor, 5 bedrooms, one bathroom, one kitchen on the first floor, and 3 bedrooms and 1 toilet on the second floor. No.8 would include a laundry and storage in the basement, and no.6 would include storage in the basement. The Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations drawing ref. 0113-001 101 00 illustrates single beds, therefore the proposal would result in living accommodation for 24 people. The previous use accommodated up to 17 residents, therefore the numbers of people living in the building would exceed the numbers of occupants under the previous use, and the use would be materially different.

7.4.8 The proposal does include for the subdivision of a ground floor room into two separate bedrooms and this will result in the division of the bay windows on the ground floor. This is considered to have a minimal change to the exterior of the property and the Conservation Officer has commented '*The proposal to return the property to 2no. properties and conversion into HMO's will result in minimal change to the exterior of the property with the downstairs bay windows being replaced as these rooms will be split to create a total of 4no. bedrooms. This will have a minimal impact on the Grantham St Annes Conservation Area*'.

7.4.9 The appearance of the building may remain similar to the previous use however the proposed use would be materially different to the previous use as a Care Home, with the occupants no longer requiring onsite care and 24-hour staffing. The number of occupants will increase from the previous use as a Care Home from 17 residents to 24 residents. There would be adaptations required to accommodate the proposed use e.g. post requirements, electronic access and door controls, windows, and a CCTV system as is typical for a large HMO.

7.4.10 Nonetheless, it is Officers' assessment that, whilst the nature of the occupation of the building would materially change, this would not result in any unacceptable adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area. The visual appearance of the building will remain similar to the current state of the building, and therefore, would also not result in an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy DE1 of the adopted Local Plan and Section 12 of the Framework in these respects.

## 7.5 Impact on neighbours' residential amenities

7.5.1 The application site is a sizable, detached two storey building with a generous plot. There is outside amenity space to the front, sides and rear. There are neighbouring residential properties to the north, east, south and west. The application has been supported by a planning application form and Design and Access Statement for further information. There is no further information regarding the future residents of the HMO or the management of the property (this is not a requirement for this type of use).

7.5.2 The local planning authority has received objections to the proposed development with concerns raised regarding residential amenity for residents, refuse management, parking, noise, and crime/antisocial behaviour.

7.5.3 The planning officer acknowledges that the pattern of people arriving and departing the proposed HMO would be different to previous use. The Care Home would have generated movements related to staff arriving and departing at shift times, and visitors. The proposed use would have residents arriving and departing for education/work/leisure and shopping

purposes and include visitors. Both the previous and proposed use would generate deliveries. It is unlikely that the differences in the number of visitors and deliveries would be significantly different to the previous use.

- 7.5.4 In terms of parking, it is proposed to utilise the parking areas at the front/side of the building with 8 parking spaces available for residents, and any further parking demand would be accommodated on-street and in car parks.
- 7.5.5 The outside amenity space generous and considered to be adequate for the needs of future residents e.g. outdoor clothes drying. Additionally, the site is located centrally to Grantham and a short walking and cycling distance from local open spaces such as Wyndham Park.
- 7.5.6 Considering noise resultant from the density of residents proposed for the building it is noted that the building is a detached building, and set centrally in its plot with physical separation from neighbouring properties to the north, east, south and west. The central location within Grantham would result in a level of urban noise from existing traffic movement, nearby residences, the church and the school in proximity. It is likely to generate outside noise with the rear amenity space provided but there is adequate separation from neighbouring properties. The Environmental Protection Officer has been consulted and has not raised any concerns regarding noise as a result of the proposed use. The Environmental Protection Officer's response included planning conditions for Construction Work and Deliveries, and Asbestos, however, these are not included as the application is for a change of use with only internal alterations.
- 7.5.7 Considering the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour, Lincolnshire Police's Designing Out Crime Officer was consulted and has not objected to the application. The officer has provided comments regarding the importance of reference to Secured by Design technical guides. The recommendations provided would apply equally to any HMO and refer to mail delivery, access and visitor door entry systems, external and internal doors, windows and door-sets, CCTV and lighting. There are detailed recommendations attached to each of these topics.
- 7.5.8 The proposal does not involve external alteration (other than the bay windows) or enlargement of the existing building, and it is proposed to mainly undertake internal alterations, so the levels of overlooking will remain as existing, and there will be no encroachment on neighbouring residential properties in terms of loss of light or privacy. The outside amenity space to the dwelling will remain the same and will provide sufficient private amenity space for the use.
- 7.5.9 Outside there would be storage for 12 bicycles (total 24 bicycles), parking spaces each accommodating 4 vehicles (total 8 vehicles), and two bin storage areas each containing 12 bins (total 24 bins). It is the officer's opinion that the levels of internal and external amenity space would be acceptable for up to 24 residents in the town centre location.
- 7.5.10 The proposed amenity space, management and maintenance of the building would be considered against the SKDC Prescribed Standards for HMO Licensing and be appropriately addressed through the licensing process.
- 7.5.11 Taking all the above into account, it is considered that the proposed development would provide a suitable standard of residential amenity for residents, and not result in an adverse impact on the amenities of occupiers of adjacent properties, in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

## 7.6 Highway issues

7.6.1 Lincolnshire County Council has been consulted as local highways authority, and commented on the application raising no objection to the proposal. They have confirmed that the site is in a central urban area and there are services and facilities within a reasonable distance, and these could be accessed by sustainable travel options such as walking, cycling and public transport. The future residents of the development would not be reliant on the private car and therefore parking is not essential to the proposal.

7.6.2 Lincolnshire County Council has requested that three crossing points be upgraded to tactile crossing points. However, it is the Case Officer's assessment that this request has not been sufficiently justified and there is no evidence that they are reasonably related to the proposal and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. As such, these conditions are not included in the schedule of conditions recommended below.

7.6.3 The proposals include for bicycle storage for 24 bicycles, and this would be capable of storing bicycles securely for residents. Additionally, there would be car parking spaces for a total of 8 vehicles onsite.

7.6.4 The proposal would result in adequate access, parking and turning facilities and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on highway safety in accordance with Policy ID2 of the Local Plan and the NPPF Section 9.

## 7.7 Other Matters

7.7.1 The Housing Act 2004 Part 1 assesses housing conditions and enforces housing standards in dwellings, HMOs, unoccupied HMO accommodation, and any common parts of a building containing one or more flats. This legislation covers fire safety, fire detection systems, fire doors, electrical safety, repair and maintenance, and security of housing including damp and mould hazards. Rented properties are required to provide extractions to bathrooms and kitchens, and opening windows to bedrooms for ventilation. There is not an issue with men and women sharing a HMO, or communal areas such as bathrooms as long as the security requirements are met e.g. locks on bathroom doors.

### Licensing of HMOs

7.7.2 Licensing of HMOs (Houses in multiple occupation) is covered by the Housing Act 2004 Part 2 and covers all properties with 5 occupants or more living in two or more separate households, who share some basic amenities (washing facilities, toilets, kitchens). It is a requirement for HMOs that they are licenced by the local authority, in this case South Kesteven District Council. All licences granted are subject to conditions which the licence holder must comply with either immediately or within a specified period of time. Certain conditions as detailed in Schedule 4 of the Housing Act 2004 are mandatory and must be included in every licence granted. The Council can also impose any other specific property conditions considered necessary for regulating the management, use and occupation of the premises concerned plus its condition and contents. The licence ensures that the house is suitable for the number of occupants, and the manager of the house is considered to be 'fit and proper' e.g. no criminal record, or breach of landlord laws or code of practice. The council require an updated gas safety certificate every year, installed and maintained smoke alarms, and safety certificates for all electrical appliances. The licence would be valid for a maximum of 5 years.

7.7.3 Furthermore, there are mandatory national minimum bedroom sizes (6.51sqm for single occupancy, and 10.22sqm for a couple) and amenity requirements covering the number of bathrooms / bathing facilities, and kitchens include cooking facilities, cupboard storage, washing facilities, cold food storage, and worksurface preparation for HMOs. The national guidelines stipulate the floor area necessary for kitchens (minimum 7sqm with 1sqm for every tenant exceeding 5) and bathrooms.

7.7.4 It should be noted, there are no requirements under HMO licensing for the provision of a separate sitting room (if the kitchen is large enough to meet the space requirements), laundry facilities, or outside space. There are also no specific requirements for disabled individuals in the HMO licensing requirements.

### **Management of HMOs**

7.7.5 The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation Regulations sets out the legal duties relating to the day to day running of HMOs. The regulations impose duties on managers of HMOs to

- provide contact details and have them on display,
- ensure all means of escape from fire are maintained and kept free from obstruction, all fire precautions are maintained, steps are taken to protect occupants from injury,
- maintain water supply and drainage,
- ensure annual gas safety checks are carried out
- not unreasonably interrupt gas or electricity supply
- maintain in repair and keep clean all common parts and installations, and ensure common parts have adequate lighting
- ensure each unit and furniture are clean at the start of each occupation and maintain the internal structure and installations in each letting
- provide adequate waste storage facilities and ensure that there is appropriate collection of waste.

7.7.6 The manager should also ensure that the building, and boundary walls, fences, gardens are maintained in a safe and tidy condition.

### **Issuing the HMO Licence**

7.7.7 When determining the licensing application, the property is inspected, and the officer considers whether it is suitable for licensing (room sizes, amenity space), makes an assessment of the licence holder, and whether the proposed management arrangements are suitable.

7.7.8 Where the property is unsuitable for the proposed number of occupiers the local authority may where the property can be made suitable by certain works, place conditions on the issued licence for certain works to be completed by certain dates. Where the property cannot be made suitable for the number of occupiers then the local authority may propose to grant a licence for the number of occupiers the accommodation is suitable for. Where the property or management arrangements are inadequate, or significant health and safety failings are noted then the authority may choose to refuse an application or grant a licence for a reduced time period.

## **8 Crime and Disorder**

8.1 It is considered that the proposal would not result in any significant crime and disorder implications.

## **9 Human Rights Implications**

9.1 Articles 6 (Rights to fair decision making) and Article 8 (Right to private family life and home) of the Human Rights Act have been taken into account in making this recommendation. It is considered that no relevant Article of that act will be breached.

## **10 Conclusion**

10.1 The application the change of use of a Residential Care Home Use Class C2 to two 12-bedroom House of Multiple Occupancy (Use Class Sui Generis) within Grantham. The proposed use of the site would provide 24no. bedrooms. The use is considered to be in accordance with Policy SP1, SP2 and SP3 of the Local Plan, and suitable as a residential use, particularly taking into account the previous use of the site as care home. The application scheme is considered to offer an opportunity to provide multiple units of residential accommodation in Grantham town centre in accordance with Policy H4 of the Local Plan, and this would be a public benefit that weighs in favour of the proposal.

10.2 The development of the site would result in an increase of 7 residents from the previous use and not result in an overdevelopment of the site that would have a detrimental, adverse impact upon the residential amenities of adjacent properties. The application site provides a suitable level of internal and external residential amenity space for the future occupiers including storage space, 8no. car parking spaces, bicycle storage for 24 bicycles, and waste collection. Furthermore, the HMO will require a HMO licence and will be assessed against the SKDC Prescribed Standards for HMO Licensing.

10.3 Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposal is appropriate for its context and is in accordance with the NPPF (Sections 9, 12 and 16) and Policies DE1, SP1, SP2, SP3, EN6 and H4 of the South Kesteven Local Plan. There are no material considerations that indicate otherwise although conditions have been attached.

## **11 Recommendation**

To authorise the Assistant Director of Planning & Growth to GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.

### **Time Limit for Commencement**

1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order that the development is commenced in a timely manner, as set out in Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

### **Approved Plans**

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following list of approved plans:

- i) Site Location Plan, drawing ref. 0113-001 050 01 (received 25/09/25)
- ii) Proposed Block Plan, drawing ref. 0113-001 051 01 (received 25/09/25)
- iii) Proposed Floor and Elevation Plan, drawing ref. 0113-001 101 01 (received 25/09/25)

Unless otherwise required by another condition of this permission.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

## **Prior to Occupation**

### Refuse and Cycle Storage

3 Before first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, the refuse and recycling storage and cycle storage areas indicated on approved Proposed Block Plan drawing ref. 0113-001 051 01 shall have been completed and made available for use. Those facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision of satisfactory facilities for the storage of refuse and recycling and to promote sustainable means of travel.

### Crime Prevention

4 Before the development hereby permitted is occupied, a scheme of crime prevention measures shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the approved measures shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation, and shall be retained and maintained throughout the operation of the use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of minimising crime and disorder, and the fear of crime and disorder.

### Management Plan

5 Before the development hereby permitted is occupied, a Site Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Site Management Plan shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following details:

- Noise Management;
- Waste Management; and
- Amenity area management (including internal and external shared areas and hours of use)

Thereafter, the approved Site Management Plan shall be implemented prior to first use and shall be strictly adhered to throughout the operation of the use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of existing and future residents of the area.

## **Ongoing Conditions**

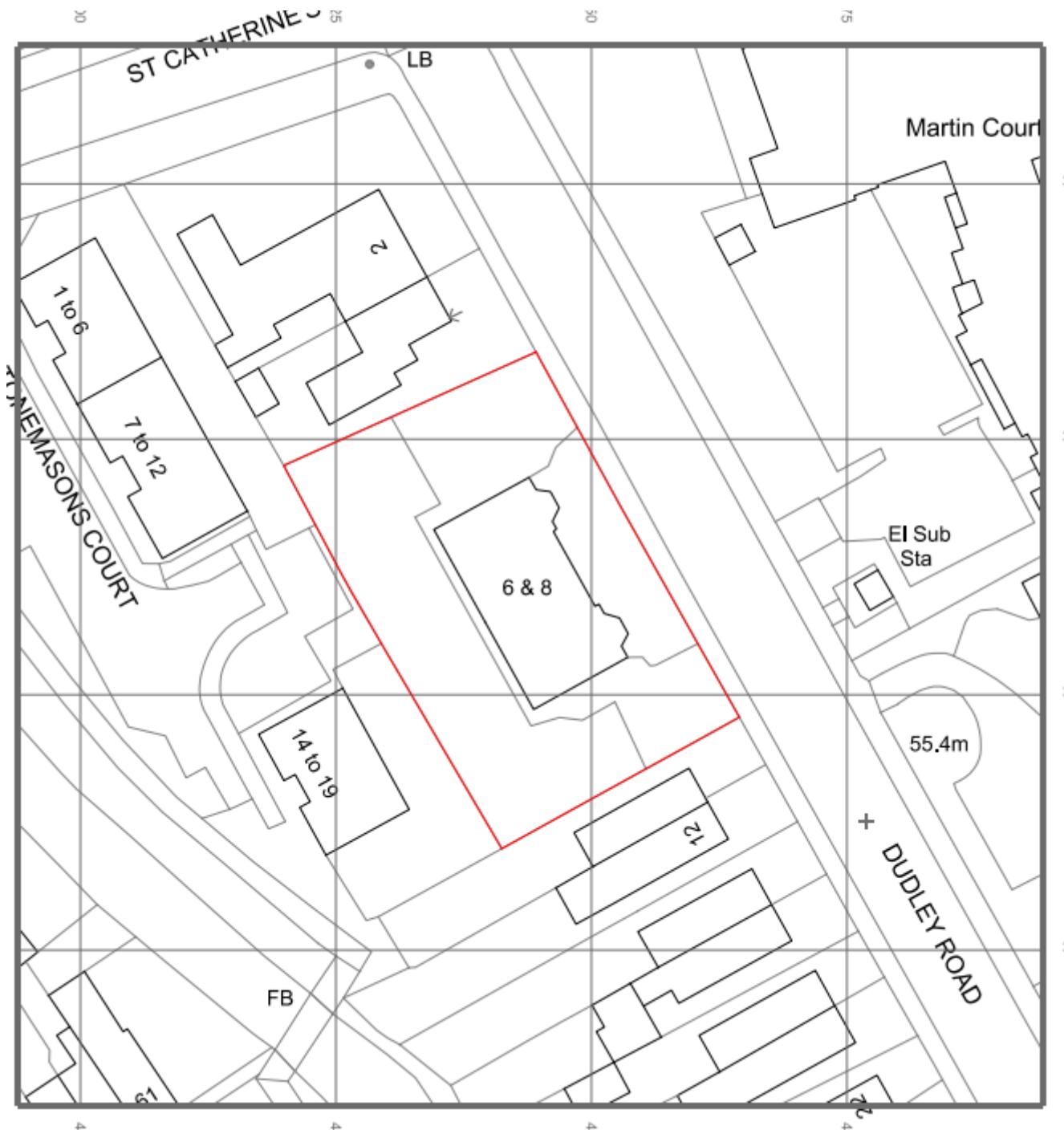
6 The HMO use (Sui Generis) hereby permitted shall be limited to 24no. bedrooms and no more than 24.no occupants, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.

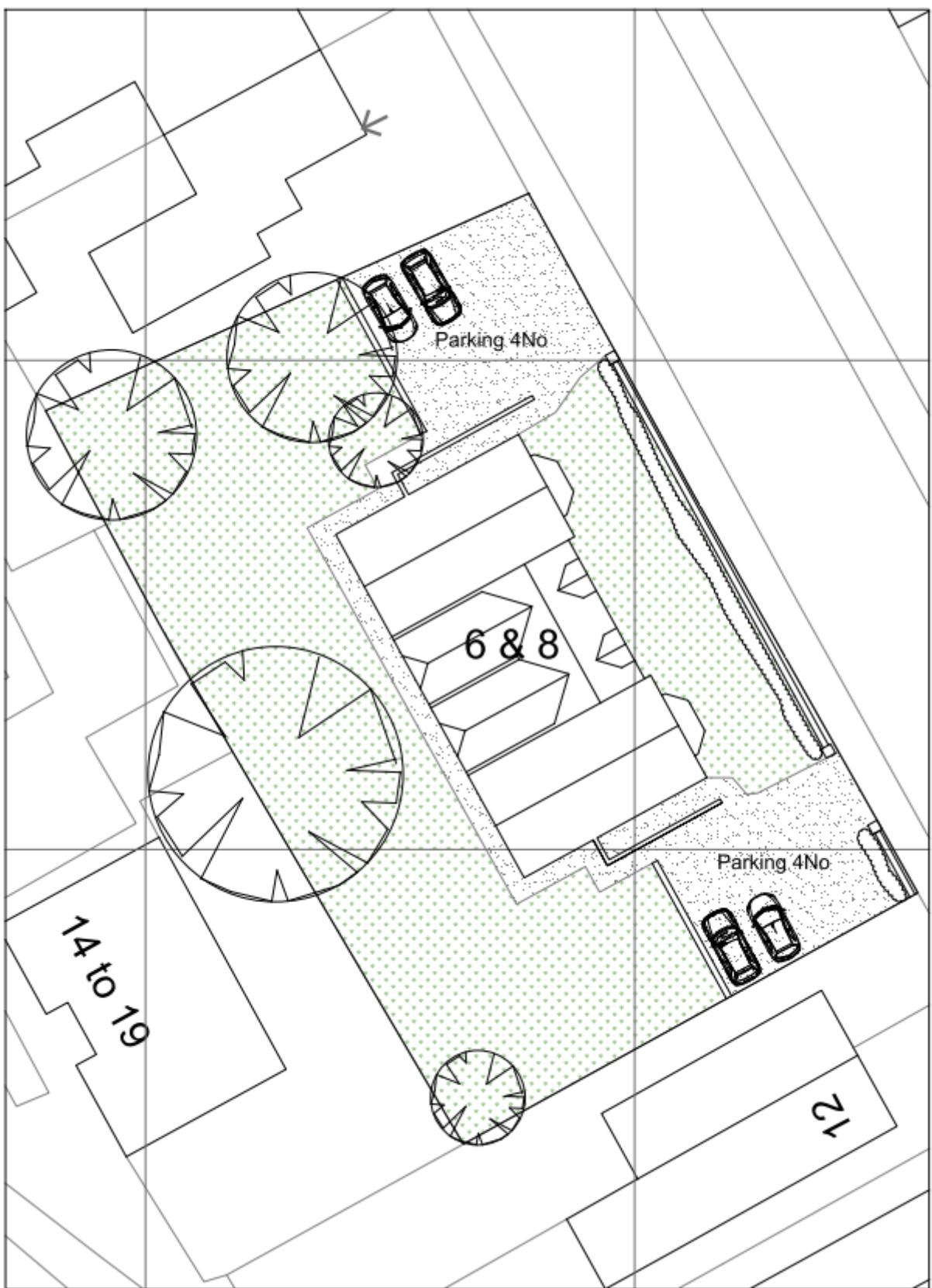
**Standard Note(s) to Applicant:**

In reaching the decision the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by determining the application without undue delay. As such it is considered that the decision is in accordance with paras 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

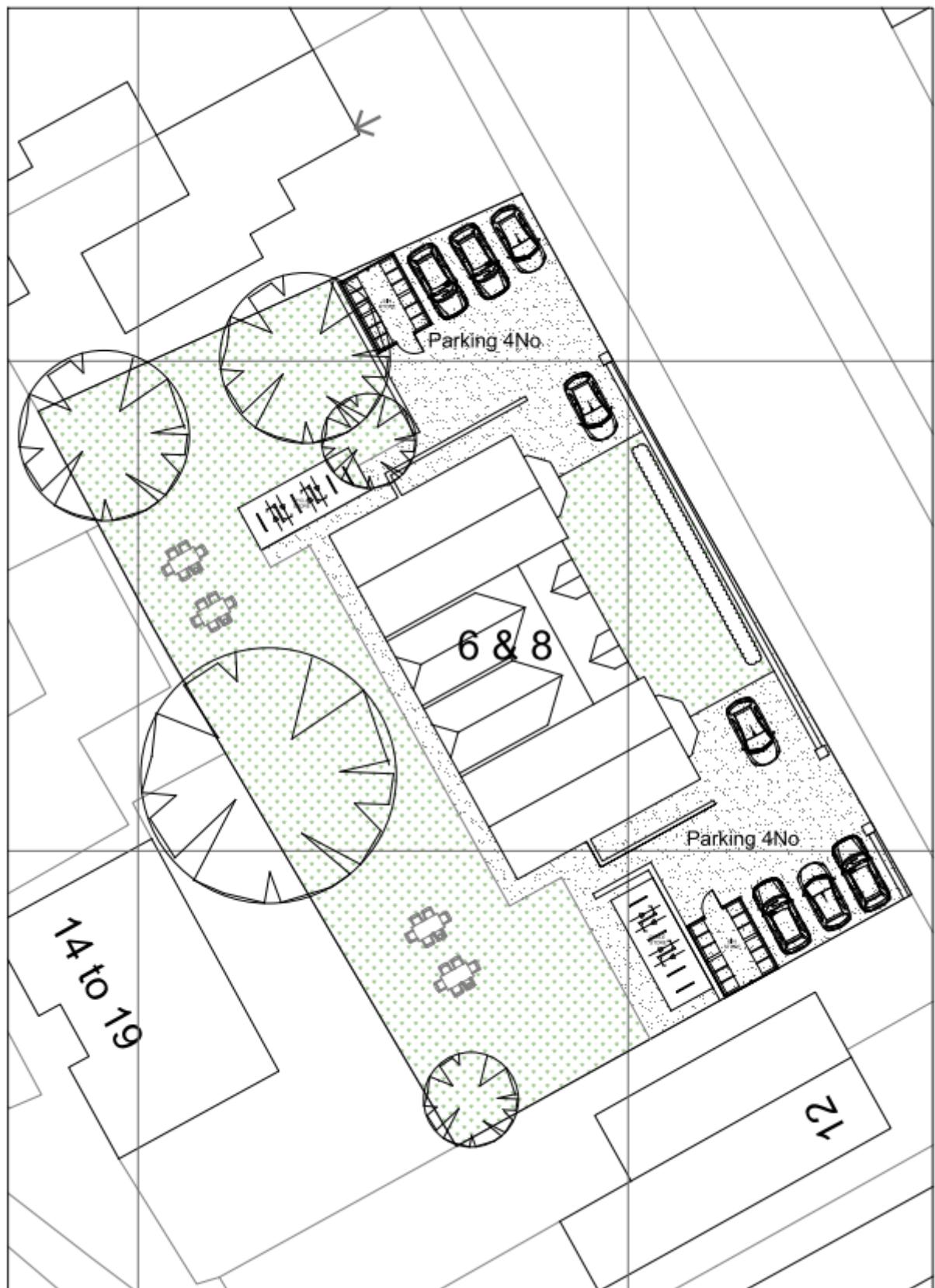
## SITE LOCATION PLAN



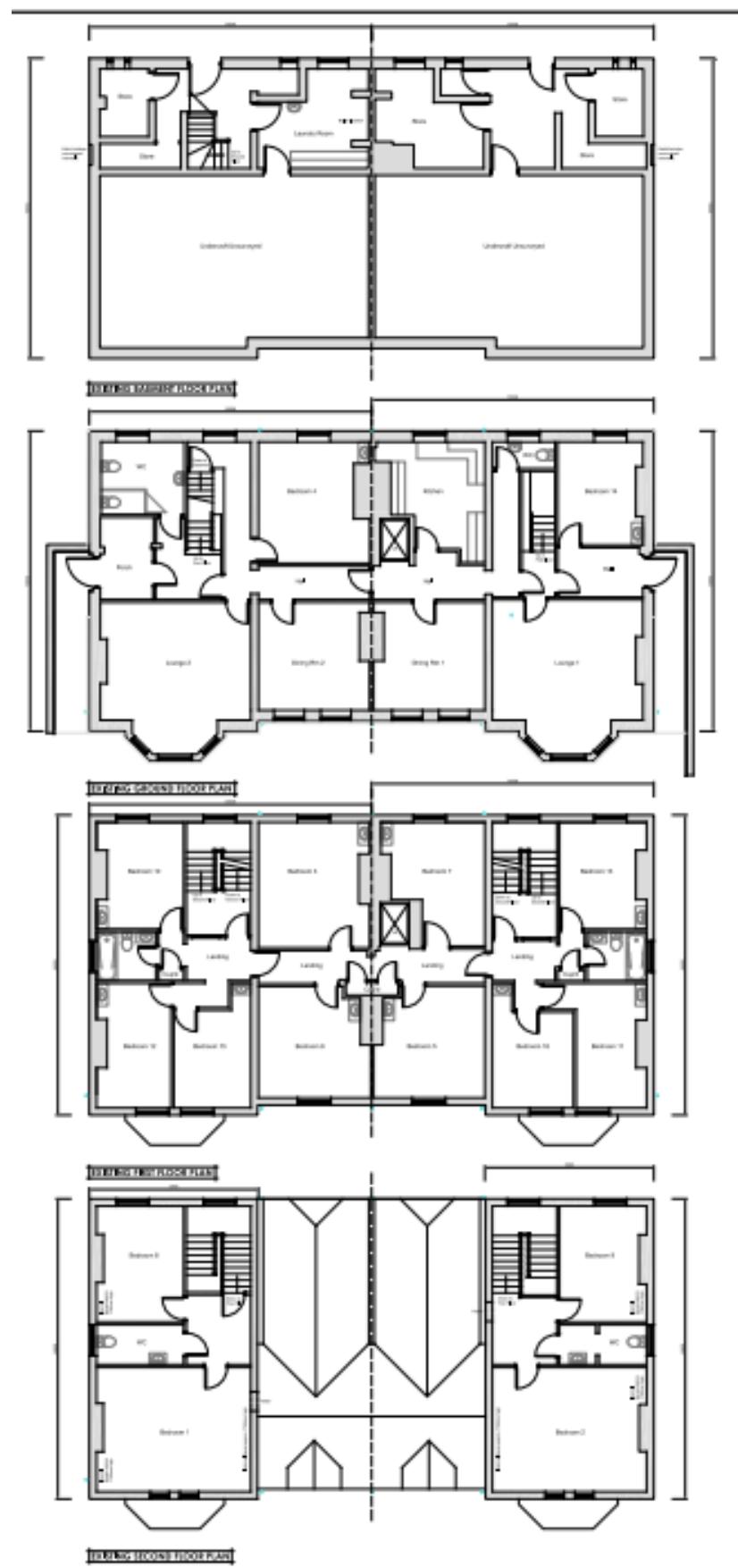
**BLOCK PLAN EXISTING**



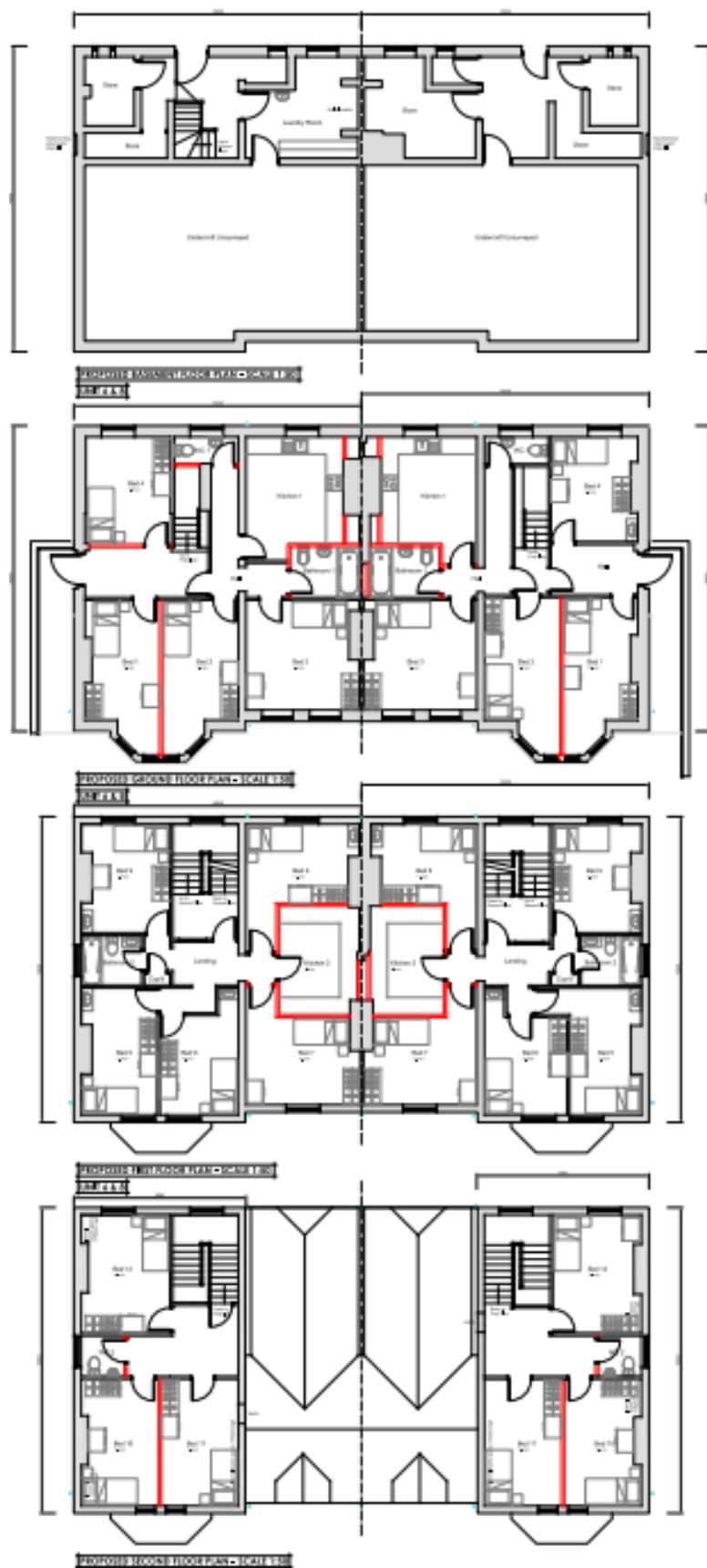
## BLOCK PLAN PROPOSED



## FLOOR PLANS EXISTING



## FLOOR PLANS PROPOSED



## **ELEVATIONS EXISTING**



## **ELEVATIONS PROPOSED**

