

PLANNING STATEMENT

Site Address: Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington, Stoke-on-Trent, ST9 0DG

Proposal: Change of use from hotel/guesthouse with restaurant and bar (Use Class C1 with ancillary food and drink) to a residential care home (Use Class C2) for up to ten adults, with no external alterations.

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement supports an application for the change of use of Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington, from its current use as a small hotel/guesthouse with on-site restaurant and bar to a residential Adult care home within Use Class C2 accommodating up to ten Adults. No external alterations are proposed; all works are internal and focused on reconfiguring the existing building to provide a stable, domestic environment for adults in need of specialist care, supported by a detailed Operational Management Plan (OMP).

Burleigh House has a long history of intensive residential and care-related occupation. It historically operated as a registered residential care home for up to 44 older people with dementia and physical disabilities (C2), before closure of the regulated service in November 2022 and subsequent marketing as a vacant 14-bedroom former care home on a 2.4-acre site. It is now trading as a 15-room hotel with food and drink facilities, demonstrating that the building and site are well suited to residential and hospitality uses.

The proposal would revert the property to a residential institutional use, this time providing up to ten specialist placements for adults in a carefully managed home environment. It represents a reduction in the intensity of occupation and traffic compared with both the former 44-bed care home and the current hotel/restaurant use, while reusing an existing building in a semi-rural yet accessible location. The scheme accords with the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (2014–2033) and the August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which together support reuse of existing buildings, specialist community-based accommodation and sustainable development, and it should therefore be approved subject to appropriate conditions.

2. Site and Surrounding Context

The proposed Burleigh House care home is located within an area offering good access to a range of local healthcare facilities, making it a suitable location for the proposed care of adults with special needs. The surrounding area provides a choice of GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals, including Werrington Village Surgery and Werrington Clinic, Meir Primary Care Centre, Tardis Surgery and Cheadle Community Hospital. A number of pharmacies are also located within the surrounding settlements, including Werrington Pharmacy, Meir Hay Pharmacy, Waterloo Pharmacy and Boots Pharmacy. These facilities provide convenient access to routine medical appointments, prescriptions and wider healthcare services, supporting the health and wellbeing of future residents.

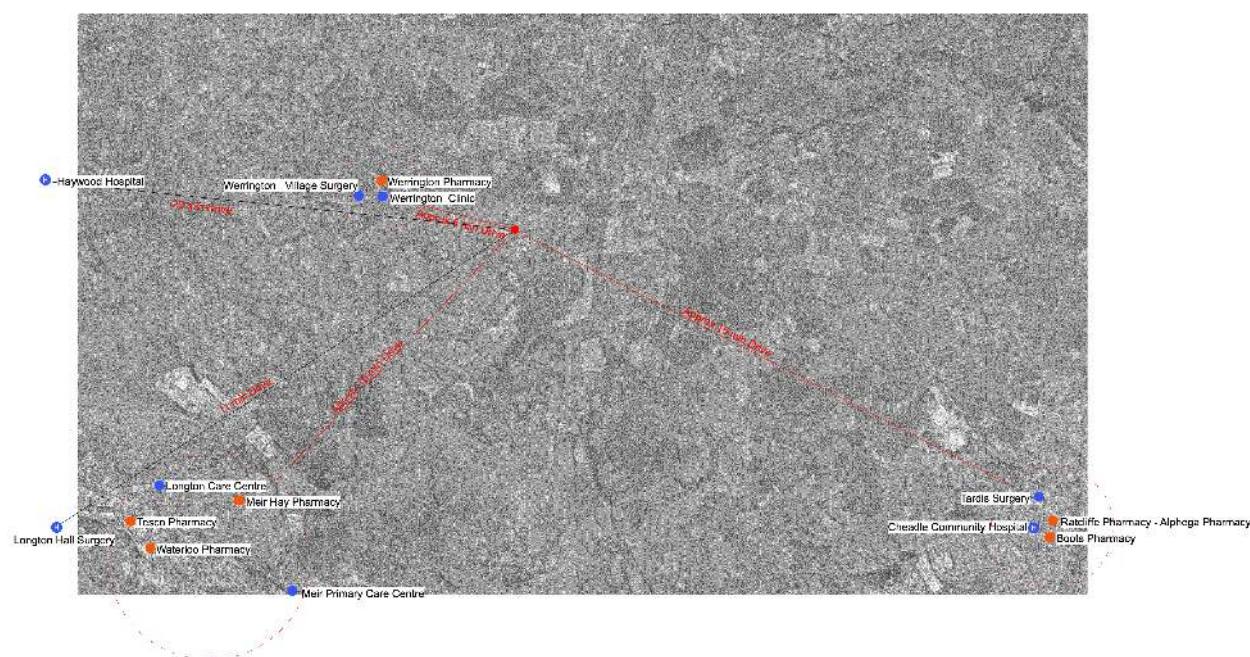
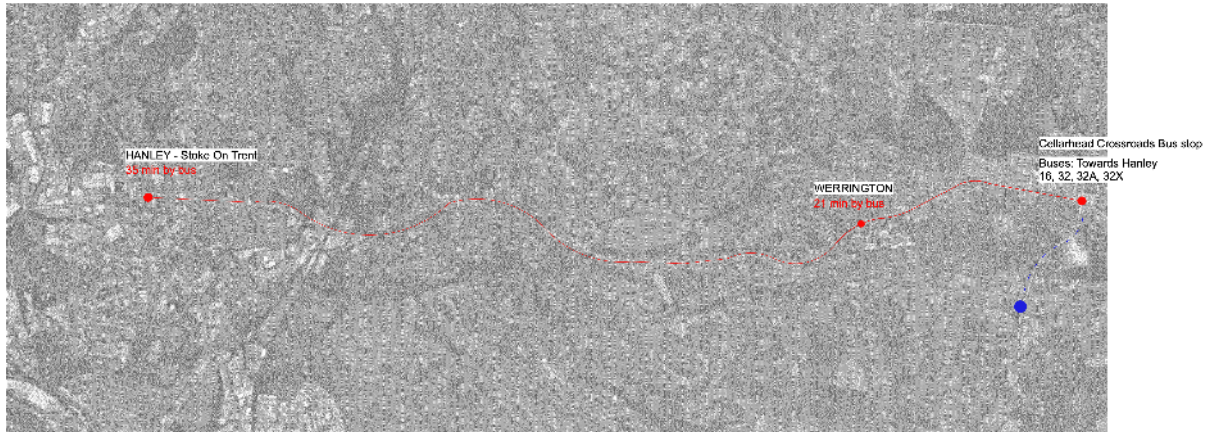


Fig1. Local Health Care Facilities

Burleigh House is a substantial detached building on the western side of Leek Road (A520), accessed via a private driveway and set within grounds of approximately 2.4 acres comprising lawned areas, woodland, parking and a range of outbuildings including garages and stables. The building comprises a large two-storey main house with a two-storey side extension, a conservatory to one side and an eight-bedroom single-storey rear wing, with a gross internal floor area of approximately 387.83 square metres (4,171 square feet). The existing configuration provides multiple bedrooms, reception rooms, a dining area, commercial-style kitchen and ancillary spaces, all of which lend themselves to continued residential institutional use.

The premises are described in marketing particulars as being in a semi-rural location directly off the A520 close to the village of Werrington, approximately 5 miles east of Stoke-on-Trent. Booking and hotel listings place the property in the Wetley Rocks/Werrington area, with easy access to nearby attractions such as Parkhall Country Park, Deep Hayes Country Park, Gladstone Pottery Museum and Churnet Valley Railway, illustrating the mix of countryside and urban facilities within a short drive. The wider postcode ST9 0DG lies within the Staffordshire Moorlands District, with Leek Road providing the main vehicular route towards Stoke-on-Trent and local centres including Werrington, Cellarhead and Wetley Rocks.



The proposed Burleigh House care home also benefits from good public transport connections, providing residents and staff with access to the surrounding settlements and wider Stoke-on-Trent area. The nearest bus stop at Cellarhead Crossroads is approximately a 15-minute walk from the care home and provides direct services towards Hanley, including the 16, 32, 32A and 32X bus services. These routes provide a convenient connection into Hanley, which acts as a key transport hub with onward services to a wider range of destinations across Stoke-on-Trent and the surrounding area. In addition, the journey from the Cellarhead Crossroads stop to Werrington is approximately a 5 min journey on the bus.

At a local scale, the site forms part of a small cluster of development set back from Leek Road, including neighbouring properties such as Meadow View, as shown on the submitted block plan. The combination of set-back siting, existing tree cover and topography means that the building is partially screened from the highway and surrounding land, so it reads as a large house within a wooded curtilage rather than a prominent institutional complex.

Recent Tree Preservation Order SM.334 (2025) covers trees at “Burleigh House and Foxearth, Leek Road, Moorville, Cellarhead”, confirming that parts of the woodland and tree belts within and around the site are protected as important landscape and ecological features. This reinforces the semi-wooded, landscaped character that defines the site’s relationship with its surroundings.

3. Planning History and Existing Use

CQC records identify “Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington, Stoke-on-Trent, ST9 0DG” as a registered care home providing accommodation with personal care for adults over 65, many living with dementia and physical disabilities. The CQC registration permitted up to 44 residents and describes the home as providing residential and residential dementia care, operated by Manage Care Homes Limited. The CQC confirms that this service was archived on 23 November 2022, indicating closure of the regulated adult care home on that date.

Following closure, Landwood Property Auctions marketed the property in October 2023 as “Lot 2 – Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington” on behalf of the joint liquidators, describing it as a vacant 14-bedroom former care home on a site of 2.4 acres with development potential subject to planning. The particulars describe a layout comprising two reception rooms, conservatory, dining area, an eight-bedroom single-storey rear wing with en-suite facilities, a lift, further bedrooms at first floor and a communal bathroom, as well as car parking for multiple vehicles and a range of outbuildings.

More recently, Burleigh House has been re-purposed and marketed as a hotel/guesthouse. Hotel booking platforms describe “Burleigh House” as a 3.5-star property with around 15 guest rooms, an on-site restaurant, bar/lounge, coffee shop, breakfast offer and garden, with free Wi-Fi and on-site parking available by request. Check-in and check-out times, front-desk hours and guest facilities are all described in detail, confirming that the building currently operates as a hotel/guesthouse with ancillary food and drink facilities (Class C1 with ancillary uses) rather than as a registered care home.

Companies House records list “Burleigh House Hotel and Restaurant Ltd” with its correspondence address at Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington, ST9 0DG, further evidencing the current hotel and restaurant operation at the site. Separate care-related companies have also historically used Burleigh House as a registered office, reflecting its long association with residential care activities even as its operating model has evolved.

A review of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council’s online planning register and weekly lists has not identified any recent planning permissions specifically referencing “Burleigh House, Leek Road, Werrington, ST9 0DG”, though there are applications on nearby land along Leek Road and within the wider Werrington/Cellarhead area. The most directly recorded planning constraint on the site itself in recent years is the Tree Preservation Order SM.334, rather than any new-build or extension permissions.

For this application, the existing lawful use is therefore treated as a hotel/guesthouse with on-site restaurant and bar (Use Class C1 with ancillary food and drink), operating within a building and curtilage that have long accommodated intensive residential and care-related uses.

4. Proposed Development

Description of Development

Planning permission is sought for:

- Change of use of the existing building and curtilage from hotel/guesthouse with restaurant and bar (Use Class C1 with ancillary food and drink) to a residential care home within Use Class C2.
- Residential accommodation for a maximum of ten adults aged 18 and over.
- Continuous staffing on a shift basis, including a Registered Manager, with detailed staffing levels, shift patterns and operational safeguards secured through an Operational Management Plan (OMP).
- Internal reconfiguration only, within the existing building envelope, to provide residents’ bedrooms, staff sleep-in rooms, communal living and dining areas, kitchen, bathrooms, quiet/therapy rooms and ancillary spaces.
- Continued use of existing parking areas and access arrangements via the private driveway from Leek Road, with staff and visitor parking managed through the OMP.
- Continued use of the private gardens and amenity areas for supervised recreation, outdoor activities and relaxation by residents and staff.

No external alterations to the building, access, boundaries or outbuildings are proposed. There will be no external signage, public bar or restaurant, or public-facing function. The building will retain its domestic appearance and relationship to neighbouring properties.

Operational Parameters

The details of day-to-day operation will be set out in an OMP and secured by condition. Key parameters include:

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- A maximum of ten adult residents aged 18 and over.
- A maximum number of staff on site at any time, with staggered shift changes to disperse vehicle movements.
- Pre-booked visits by professionals and family members, with limited evening visits and no open visiting sessions.
- Quiet handovers inside the building and no staff congregation outside the frontage.
- Managed waste, deliveries and maintenance arrangements.
- No use of the premises as any other form of C2 institution, such as a hospital, hostel or secure unit, without further planning permission.

5. Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in determining the application. The proposal should be assessed against the relevant national policies concerning the effective reuse of existing buildings, the provision of specialist accommodation, sustainable development, residential amenity and transport.

The proposed development would bring an existing building into continued beneficial use, providing specialist residential care accommodation for up to ten adults aged 18 and over. The proposal would make use of the existing building and established access arrangements, with all proposed works confined to internal reconfiguration.

The development would provide accommodation for adults requiring a supported residential environment, while retaining the established external appearance of the property. The proposed Operational Management Plan would set out the arrangements for staffing, visiting, safeguarding, noise management and day-to-day operation.

The proposal should therefore be considered in the context of national planning objectives relating to the effective use of existing buildings, the provision of appropriate accommodation to meet identified needs, and the creation of safe and inclusive communities.

Policy Summary

The relevant local and national planning policies support the assessment of development proposals having regard to:

The effective reuse of existing buildings and the efficient use of land.

The provision of appropriate specialist residential accommodation to meet identified needs.

The protection of residential amenity and the character of the surrounding area.

Safe access, suitable parking provision and the management of vehicle movements.

The use of appropriate planning conditions and management arrangements to address potential impacts.

The proposed change of use is therefore considered acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed assessment of its effects on residential amenity, highway safety, the surrounding landscape and the operation of the proposed care home.

6. Principle of Development

The proposal involves reusing an existing hotel/guesthouse with restaurant and bar as a residential care home for up to ten adults aged 18 and over. In land-use terms, the building and site have an established history of intensive residential and hospitality activities, including a former 44-resident care home and the current hotel operation.

The proposed change of use would return the property to a residential institutional use, providing specialist accommodation in a managed domestic environment. The proposed maximum occupancy of ten residents would be substantially lower than the historic capacity of the former 44-resident care home. The removal of the public restaurant and bar functions would also change the pattern of activity associated with the site.

The proposal would make effective use of an existing building without extending its footprint or altering its external appearance. It would retain the established access from Leek Road and make use of the existing parking areas and landscaped grounds.

The proposal should be assessed against the relevant policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, including those concerning development principles, rural and semi-rural locations, specialist accommodation, residential amenity, design and transport.

In this context, the principle of a small C2 adult care home at Burleigh House is considered acceptable, subject to the detailed assessment of the proposal and the implementation of appropriate operational controls.

7. Green Belt

The site is located within the Green Belt. The proposal comprises the change of use of the existing Burleigh House building from a hotel/guesthouse with ancillary restaurant and bar facilities to a residential care home for up to ten adults aged 18 and over. No extensions, external alterations or additional built development are proposed.

The proposal therefore represents the reuse of an existing, substantial building and would not result in the introduction of new built form or a material change to the established physical appearance of the site. The existing access, parking areas, gardens, landscaping and wooded setting would remain unchanged.

The proposed use would also be of a relatively low intensity, with a maximum of ten adult residents and continuous staffing, and would remove the public-facing restaurant and bar functions associated with the existing use. The proposal would therefore have no material effect on the openness or established character of the Green Belt.

Under national Green Belt policy, the reuse of an existing permanent and substantial building is identified as a form of development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, subject to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal involves the reuse of the existing building without extension or additional built form and is therefore considered to accord with this principle.

Accordingly, the proposed change of use would represent an appropriate reuse of the existing building within the Green Belt and would not undermine the openness or purposes of the Green Belt.

8. Residential Amenity

Noise and Disturbance

The main amenity considerations relate to noise and general activity compared with the existing hotel/restaurant use and the former care home.

The current hotel operation generates guest arrivals and departures, restaurant and bar customers, associated evening activity, vehicle movements, deliveries and servicing.

By contrast, the proposed adult care home will:

- Accommodate a maximum of ten adult residents aged 18 and over.
- Operate under an OMP that limits and manages visiting, deliveries and staff shift changes.
- Remove the public restaurant, bar and coffee-shop functions altogether.

The proposed care home would operate as a managed residential environment rather than a public-facing hospitality business. The proposed occupancy limit and operational arrangements would help manage activity and minimise potential disturbance to neighbouring properties.

The reduction in resident numbers compared with the former care home, together with the removal of public food and drink facilities, would help limit the potential for noise and disturbance. The OMP would provide a framework for managing staffing, visiting, deliveries and other activities associated with the operation.

Physical Impacts

No external alterations are proposed. There would therefore be:

- No increase in building height, bulk or footprint.
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- No new windows or changes to existing window positions.
- No new external plant, flues or structures.

The building would retain its established relationship with neighbouring properties and the wider landscape. The proposal would not introduce new overlooking, overshadowing or loss of outlook arising from external building alterations.

9. Living Environment for Residents.

The existing building provides generous internal floorspace, including former bedroom accommodation, reception rooms, dining spaces and a commercial-style kitchen. This enables the creation of:
Individual bedrooms for each resident.

- Staff room and manager's room.
 - Communal living, dining and recreation areas.
 - Quiet, therapy and sensory rooms.
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- Client meeting room and lounge area.
 - Accessible ground-floor bathroom facilities, a sensory bathroom and separate staff toilet.

The extensive gardens and woodland provide outdoor amenity space for supervised recreation, outdoor activities and relaxation. These areas would provide residents with opportunities to spend time outdoors within the grounds of the property.

The location offers access to healthcare and community facilities in Werrington, Wetley Rocks and Stoke-on-Trent. The suitability of the location for the proposed residents would be supported by appropriate care planning and the operational arrangements set out in the OMP.

Admission and care-planning procedures would ensure that the needs of each prospective resident can be appropriately met within the accommodation and staffing arrangements. Residents would be supported by suitably trained staff, with the care service operating in accordance with the applicable regulatory requirements.

Placement-matching and care-planning processes, as set out in the OMP, will ensure that only children whose needs can be safely met in this environment are admitted, and that their care is provided by trained staff under Ofsted regulation.

10. Transport, Access and Parking

Burleigh House is accessed via an existing private driveway from Leek Road (A520) and benefits from established on-site parking areas that have historically served both the 44-bed care home and the present 15-room hotel with restaurant and bar. Under the proposed use:

- Residents will not have access to private vehicles.
- Staff numbers, and therefore staff vehicles, will be fewer than under the previous care home and comparable with or lower than under the current hotel operation.
- Visitors will be limited, by appointment, and subject to management through the OMP.

The existing on-site parking capacity is therefore more than adequate to meet the needs of the proposed care home, measured against the C2 standards in Appendix 2 of the Local Plan. A Parking and Vehicle Movement Plan in the OMP will manage the distribution of staff parking and ensure that vehicle movements remain within the capacity of the access and the local highway network.

Given that the proposal reduces overall intensity relative to the historic and current uses, there is no evidence that highway safety or parking conditions would be adversely affected.

11. Trees and Landscape

Tree Preservation Order SM.334 applies to trees at Burleigh House and adjoining land, recognising the importance of the site's woodland and tree belts. The proposal involves no tree removal, works to protected trees or changes in hardstanding; all development is confined to internal reconfiguration of the existing building. The continued use of the site for a residential institution will support ongoing management of the grounds and trees, in line with the Council's objectives for landscape and biodiversity protection.

12. Safety and Regulation

The proposed adult care home will be subject to registration and regulation by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) prior to operation, providing an additional layer of safeguarding, oversight and quality assurance beyond planning controls. The provider's policies and procedures will cover:

- Safeguarding and protection of vulnerable adults.
- Behaviour support and de-escalation where required.
- Emergency evacuation and fire safety procedures.
- Incident reporting and appropriate responses to missing or absent residents.
- Complaints, care standards and resident welfare.

Planning conditions can also secure the Operational Management Plan (OMP), including staffing arrangements, visiting procedures, noise management and complaints procedures. In line with established planning principles and relevant appeal decisions, concerns regarding crime or anti-social behaviour should be supported by evidence and demonstrate a clear link to the proposed land use. Generalised concerns or stigma associated with care homes should not, in themselves, constitute a material planning consideration.

13. Social Benefits

The proposal would deliver a number of social and economic benefits:

- Providing up to ten specialist residential care placements for adults aged 18 and over, contributing to the availability of adult care accommodation.
- Reusing an existing building and grounds for a socially beneficial purpose, avoiding vacancy or the need for more intensive redevelopment.
- Supporting local employment in care roles and associated services.
- Providing a managed residential environment designed to support residents' care and wellbeing.

These benefits should be considered alongside the proposal's reuse of an existing building, the reduction in occupancy compared with the historic care home, and the removal of the public restaurant and bar functions.

14. Planning Balance

The key considerations can be summarised as follows:

Compliance with policy: The proposal should be assessed against the relevant Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan policies and national planning policies concerning the reuse of existing buildings, specialist residential accommodation, design, residential amenity and sustainable transport.

Reuse and reduced intensity: Reusing Burleigh House as a care home for up to ten adults would provide a beneficial use for the existing building. The proposed occupancy would be substantially lower than the historic 44-resident care home, while the removal of the public restaurant and bar would change the nature of activity at the site.

Amenity and transport: Potential impacts on residential amenity, parking and vehicle movements would be managed through the occupancy limit, staffing and visiting arrangements, and a Parking and Vehicle Movement Plan within the OMP.

Social benefits: The scheme would provide specialist adult care accommodation in a managed residential environment, support local employment and secure the continued beneficial use of the existing property.

The proposal would retain the existing building and its external appearance, with no external alterations proposed. Subject to appropriate conditions and adherence to the OMP, the development is considered to represent an acceptable reuse of the site, with its benefits outweighing any limited and manageable impacts.

15. Conclusion

Burleigh House is an existing, intensively used residential and hospitality site with a long history as a care home and current operation as a hotel with restaurant and bar.

The proposal to convert the property to a small, carefully managed residential care home for up to ten adults aged 18 and over, within Use Class C2, would represent a beneficial reuse of an existing building. No external alterations are proposed, and the development would retain the established character and appearance of the property.

The proposed use would provide specialist adult care accommodation while reducing the number of residents compared with the former 44-resident care home and removing the public restaurant and bar functions associated with the current use.

Subject to appropriate conditions governing occupancy, staffing, visiting, parking and adherence to the Operational Management Plan, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms. Planning permission should therefore be granted.
