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Planning Statement

Change of use from a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a Residential institution (Use Class C2) for adult mental health care.

At

Hinxworth Place, Hinxworth, SG7 5HB.

July 2025



1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by M Scott Architectural Design on behalf of Lannock Manor Mental Health Ltd. to support an application for the change of use of an existing dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a residential institution (Use Class C2) for adult mental health care.
- 1.2. The proposed care home will provide supported accommodation for 7 adults aged 18 to 65 enduring mild to moderate mental health illnesses. The home will offer a safe, structured, and inclusive environment for bespoke rehabilitation and recovery within a residential setting.
- 1.3. Lannock Manor Mental Health Ltd. has been trading for 10+ years. Their centres focus on recovery, rehabilitation, and person-centred care. Their team is committed to supporting residents in identifying and achieving both short- and long-term goals, promoting independence, community integration, and, where appropriate, employment outcomes.
- 1.4. The core aim of the proposal is to provide a safe, stable, and homely environment where residents can live as independently as possible, while receiving tailored support as needed. The setting is

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intended to foster personal development and integration into the wider community, within a non-institutional, domestic-style environment.

- 1.5. Staffing will be provided on a shift basis, with a total of up to 14 staff employed. A maximum of 4 non-resident carers will be present on site during the day, with 2 staff members on site overnight to ensure continuous support and supervision.
- 1.6. The property is a Grade II* and Grade II listed. The proposed change of use does not involve any physical alterations or interventions that would affect the fabric or significance of the listed structures and therefore does not require a separate Listed Building Consent.
- 1.7. This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the application and should be read alongside the accompanying documents. The statement provides a summary of the existing site and its context, reviews the relevant planning history, and sets out the justification for the proposed change of use. It aims to assist North Hertfordshire District Council in the assessment of the application by demonstrating how the proposed change of use aligns with the objectives and requirements of the adopted Development Plan and other relevant policies.
- 1.8. The structure of the report is as follows:
 - Section 2: Site and Surroundings
 - Section 3: Planning History
 - Section 4: Use and Amount
 - Section 5: Layout
 - Section 6: Access and Parking
 - Section 7: Justification
 - Section 8: Planning Policy and Assessment
 - Section 9: Historic England Listing
 - Section 10: Conclusion

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1. Hinxworth Place is a Grade II* and Grade II listed property located on the eastern edge of the village of Hinxworth, just under 1km from the village centre. It is approximately 5.5km north of Baldock and 6km to the southeast of Biggleswade. The nearest junction with the A1(M) is a little over 3km to the south, and Baldock Railway Station lies 4.5km due south. It is within the district of North Hertfordshire.

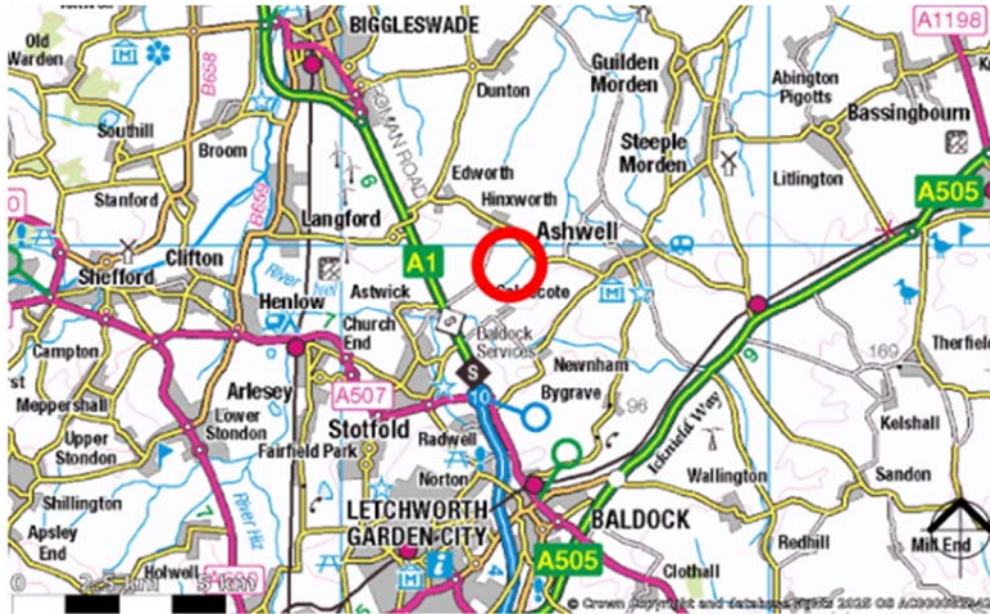
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Area Map

- 2.2. The surrounding area is predominantly rural in character, comprising open fields and scattered residential properties, with the village centre of Hinxworth located a short distance to the west. The site benefits from a sense of privacy and tranquillity, while still being accessible via local road networks.
- 2.3. Hinxworth Place is a medieval manor house, and records indicate construction started around 1390. The site comprises a substantial main house which is Grade II* Listed and a Grade II Listed barn, part of which forms an annex. Within the grounds there is also a new workshop. The property is set within grounds extending to 2.5 acres and incorporating a pond, which is one of the sources of the River Rhee, a major tributary of the River Cam. The property is currently being used as a Dwellinghouse.



Hinxworth Place Site Photograph



Hinxworth Place Google Map Satellite View

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- 2.4. A structural survey of the property was completed in June 2025. The report confirms that no significant structural issues were identified either inside or outside the main house. The barn also shows no signs of structural distress, including both the workshop and the annex. The annex appears to have been converted to a good standard, while the workshop, constructed with a modern steel frame, also presents no major structural concerns.
- 2.5. Part of the house was sold in the 1960s and is currently held on a separate Freehold Title now. This element does not form part of the Change of Use Application.
- 2.6. The proposed use will be entirely contained within the existing structure, with no physical alterations proposed that would affect the heritage asset or the wider setting.

3. Planning History

- 3.1. North Herts District Council's website shows the following historic Planning Applications: -
 - Ref: 07/02917/1 An application for single and two storey rear extension to facilitate conversion of existing studio to 2-bedroom dwelling - withdrawn.
 - Ref: 08/00301/1LB An application for single and two storey rear extension to facilitate conversion of existing studio to 2-bedroom dwelling - withdrawn.
 - Ref: 05/01173/1HH Erection of single storey, detached building for use as studio – approved September 2005
 - Ref: 90/01547/1 Conversion of existing barn into self-contained dwelling, erection of two detached double garages to serve the new dwelling and existing south wing of Hinxworth Place – approved February 1991.
- 3.2. The property is Grade II and Grade II* Listed. No external or internal alterations are proposed to the building to facilitate the change of use.
- 3.3. The property is located within the Local Authority of North Herts District Council, whose Local Plan was adopted 8 November 2022. It is not located within a Conservation Area. The proposals map attached to the Local Plan shows the property is designated within a rural area beyond the greenbelt. The property is situated in Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk).

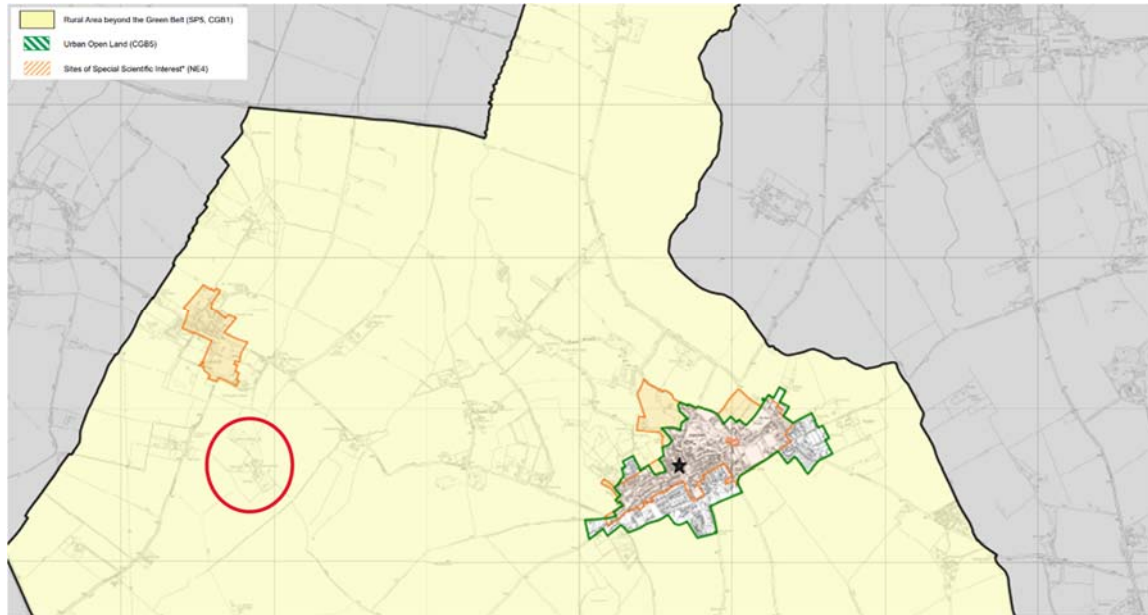
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North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031: [Map D Northern Areas and Baldock](#)

4. Use And Amount

- 4.1. The planning application seeks consent for the change of use of Hinxworth Place from a private dwelling (Use Class C3) to a supported living residential home (Use Class C2) for up to 7 fully functional adults with mild to moderate mental health needs.
- 4.2. No external or internal alterations are proposed that would impact the architectural or historic character of the Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings. As such, the proposal does not require Listed Building Consent. Moreover, due to the nature of the use and the retention of the building's residential form, there will be no material impact in terms of overlooking, overbearing, visual intrusion, or loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.
- 4.3. The proposed use is considered wholly compatible with the rural and residential character of the area and is expected to contribute positively to local social infrastructure. The use is low-intensity and consistent with the continued conservation and appropriate long-term use of this significant heritage asset.

5. Layout

- 5.1. Hinxworth Place consist of the main house, barn, 2.5-acre plot with woodland & natural pond, single storey outbuilding. Adults will be accommodated in the main house and barn. No physical alterations or extensions are proposed to the existing property to facilitate the change of use. The property is currently in good structural and decorative condition and requires no adaptations for its intended purpose.

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Hinxworth Place Floor plans

- 5.2. The Main House benefits from generous living, dining and kitchen areas on the ground floor, and comprises five bedrooms on the first and second floor. On the first floor, there are three bedrooms alongside two bathrooms. The second floor accommodates two further bedrooms, one with sink. The property therefore retains its traditional residential layout, with bedrooms predominantly located on the upper floors and shared living areas on the ground floor.
- 5.3. Each resident will share the communal kitchen, dining and living area on the ground floor and the carers shares and participates in the domestic and living activities with the residents.
- 5.4. The Barn benefits from a self-contained 1-bedroom annexe with living room, kitchen, bedroom, dressing room and glazed dining room all at ground floor level.
- 5.5. Staff will be fully integrated into daily domestic routines. No bedroom is required for staff as they will be working on a shift basis only.
- 5.6. The property also includes additional space within the existing barn and the single-storey outbuilding. No alterations are proposed to these structures, and their use will remain ancillary to the main residential care use - serving, for example, as additional amenity space such as a games or activity rooms for residents.

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6. Access and Parking

- 6.1. The proposed change of use does not require any alterations to the existing access arrangements - neither from the main road nor within the site itself. The existing site access and layout are considered to offer safe, efficient, and convenient access, with sufficient space available for vehicle manoeuvring, parking, and servicing,
- 6.2. Given the nature of the proposed change of use, it is anticipated that there will be no significant increase in vehicle or pedestrian movements to and from the site. Consequently, no adverse or unacceptable impacts on the local highway network are expected.
- 6.3. The Main House has sufficient existing provision for parking to the front and to the rear of the property. No changes are proposed to the existing hardstanding or parking arrangements.

7. Justification

- 7.1. Hertfordshire, in line with national trends, is facing increasing demand for mental health support services. According to the Hertfordshire JSNA, 1 in 4 adults will experience a mental health problem each year. Despite this, provision of supported residential accommodation remains limited, and local NHS Trusts report growing pressures on inpatient and outpatient services.
- 7.2. This Change of Use proposal seeks to address an identified shortfall in provision for individuals with mild to moderate mental health issues, particularly those who do not require institutional care but cannot live entirely independently during their crisis and recovery. Currently, individuals are often placed out-of-area or remain in unsuitable accommodation, disrupting continuity of care and recovery.
- 7.3. By delivering early-intervention support for individuals with mild-to-moderate conditions, this will reduce escalation to severe illness and therefore lessen demand on acute services and inpatient care pathways.
- 7.4. By being a small residential home, Hinxworth Place will be able to respond to individual need and facilitate one-to-one support plans, personalised care, and continuity with external support. This will reduce fragmentation between providers and aligning support around individuals rather than systems
- 7.5. It will also help deliver priorities outlined in the Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, particularly in promoting recovery and reducing health inequalities.
- 7.6. Hinxworth Place offers an ideal setting for adult mental health residential care due to its peaceful rural environment, which promotes rest, recovery, and emotional well-being. Located within a quiet village setting yet within reasonable reach of nearby towns such as Baldock and Royston, the site offers both seclusion and accessibility.
- 7.7. Its setting encourages a sense of stability and privacy for residents, while allowing for community integration at an appropriate level, in line with best practices in modern mental health care. The large grounds and surrounding landscape provide a calm, low-stimulation environment - well-suited

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to therapeutic routines and structured support. The property itself also benefits from existing infrastructure, including generous internal space, private outdoor areas, and access routes that support safe and discreet service delivery.

8. Planning Policy and Assessment

- 8.1. The proposed change of use is guided by the following relevant policy considerations:
 - North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011 - 2031, including the accompanying Proposals Map
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), notably the North Hertfordshire Parking SPD
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- 8.2. The North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011 - 2031 outlines several key policies relevant to the proposed change of use. Policy HS4 supports the provision of supported, sheltered, and older persons' housing; the proposal aligns with this by delivering specialist accommodation that meets the identified needs of vulnerable adults within a residential setting, thereby contributing to a balanced and inclusive housing mix. Policy D1 on Sustainable Design is also addressed, as Hinxworth Place offers a high-quality, inclusive environment with appropriate access, parking, and integration with the surrounding area. In accordance with Policy D3, the proposed change of use will not negatively affect the living conditions of neighbouring residents in terms of noise, privacy, or visual impact. The proposal also meets the requirements of Policy T2, as the existing parking arrangements are sufficient and no alterations are necessary. Finally, Policy ETC2 is supported, as the change of use will create local employment opportunities within the health and care sector.
- 8.3. North Herts Parking SPD sets out parking standards specific to C2 uses, often based on staff numbers, shift patterns, and visitor needs, rather than per resident. It also considers on-site manoeuvrability, safe access, and impact on on-street parking or highways. The existing property provides the required parking and on-site manoeuvrability for the proposed change of use. The proposed use is not considered to result in a material change or level of intensification that would adversely affect neighbouring amenity or highway safety.
- 8.4. The proposal meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which supports the delivery of a wide choice of homes and specialist accommodation to address the needs of different community groups, including older and vulnerable individuals (Paragraphs 60 - 65). It aligns with the NPPF's emphasis on sustainable development by reusing an existing building and contributing to a healthy, inclusive, and safe community, as outlined in Chapter 8. The proposal also complies with the NPPF's requirements for changes of use, ensuring there are no unacceptable impacts on highway safety or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers (Paragraphs 110 and 130). The proposal aligns with Paragraph 126 by promoting the reuse of an existing building to provide a high-quality and sustainable environment. Although this is a change of use application, the scheme contributes to the creation of a well-designed place that meets local needs and supports community well-being, consistent with the principles of good design as outlined in national policy. Additionally, it respects the character of the local area and provides safe and convenient access for various modes of transport, in accordance with Paragraphs 130, and 112.

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9. Historic England Listing

9.1. Historic England listing details are as follows:

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 17 September 2021 to remove superfluous amendment details and to reformat the text to current standards

TL 23 NW 3/118

HINXWORTH HINXWORTH ROAD Hinxworth Hinxworth Place

9.6.52

GV II*

Manor house, now two properties. Late C15. South east wing added in C16. Whole house rewindowed early-mid C17 and extended with lean-to at rear. Clunch walls. Flint rubble plinth. Plain tile C18 hipped roof with two three-light leaded casement dormers. Two storeys and attics. The front (north east) elevation has four mullioned and transomed stone casements, the upper floor with three lights, the two left-hand ground floor windows with four lights and moulded cornices. Original door towards right has pointed arch in hooded and moulded square frame. An original cinquefoiled two-light window to right of door. The other C15 windows were reset in lean-to at rear, four windows in all, one at side of lean-to and others at rear. At left on front is a blocked door with moulded depressed arch. The wing has plastered and jettied upper floor. Five-light mullioned and transomed window to ground floor south west end retaining some original armorial glass. C16-17 external red brick stack on north west side. South east side has a C16 four-centre arch door and a restored three-light mullioned window. 1980 lean-to extension on front.

Interior: hall to left of door was built as two storeys with heavy moulded floor beams. Large fireplace, now blocked. Adjoining door is a timber partition with two four-centre-arch doors to former service rooms. In room above are extensive c.1500 wall paintings. Red ochre brocade pattern on yellow background. Above the fireplace are many graffiti in an early script. Another stone fireplace in passage above hall.

(RCHM Typescript).

Listing NGR: TL2388339597

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. The proposed change of use from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a residential institution (Use Class C2) at Hinxworth Place represents a sensitive and appropriate response to a clearly identified local need for supported mental health accommodation for fully functional adults.
- 10.2. The proposal will deliver high-quality, person-centred care within a unique and historically significant property, without any physical alterations that would affect its heritage value.

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- 10.3. It complies with the relevant policies of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011–2031 and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework, promoting sustainable development, social inclusion, and community well-being.
- 10.4. The use is low-intensity, compatible with the rural character of the area, and provides valuable local employment opportunities. As such, the application presents a well-considered and policy-compliant proposal that merits the support of the Local Planning Authority.

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