

PLANNING STATEMENT

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION for CONVERSION of Guysfield House redevelopment of remainder of care home and its replacement with detached THREE / FOUR STOREY BUILDING to FORM a CARE HOME for OLDER PEOPLE (USE CLASS C2) WITH ASSOCIATED CAR/CYCLE PARKING, AMENITY SPACE, and LANDSCAPING

**GUYSFIELD HOUSE, WILLIAN ROAD
LETCHWORTH**

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On behalf of: Caring Homes Group Ltd

WBP REF: DB/8401

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CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. RECENT PLANNING HISTORY (EVOLUTION
of THE PROPOSALS)**
- 3. THE SITE**
- 4. THE PROPOSAL**
- 5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**
- 6. HOUSING LAND SUPPLY**
- 7. CARE HOME NEED AND SUPPLY**
- 8. MAIN ISSUES**
- 9. VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES / PLANNING BALANCE**

Annexes

- 1. Care Homes and the application of Green Belt policy and planning balances**
- 2. Refurbishment floor plans and cost plan**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application submission for the redevelopment of Guysfield House Care Home to a new Class C2 use Care Home.
- 1.2. The application follows on from an earlier proposal (Application 20/02219/FP) that was moved to Part 2 of the Planning Register and recorded as “not proceeded with”, following discussions and communications with the Council that indicated that the redevelopment of the current Care Home for additional but much improved facilities could be justified in Green Belt very special circumstances terms. However, more work was required in respect of the design and composition of the replacement Care Home building to which consultation with the Letchworth Heritage Foundation (LHF) was a pre-requisite.
- 1.3. As a result, the applicants have reviewed and evolved the design of the proposal following extensive pre application dialogue with the LHF and a further pre application submission and response from the Council (23/02439/PRE). This dialogue has resulted in a scheme that has retained Guysfield House, which although not Listed, is a locally important building within the Conservation Area. The design, composition and siting of the new Care home has been discussed and agreement in principle with the LHF. This in turn allows the Council to recalibrate the planning balance that we consider, and this statement confirms, now points to the approval of planning permission.
- 1.4. This Planning Statement sets out the characteristics of the site and surrounding area, provides information on the planning history for the site, lists the relevant planning policies, addresses the supply and demand for a new, part replacement Care Home and then sets out an analysis of the proposal against the relevant planning policy context in a detailed main issues section.
- 1.5. The application is accompanied by several technical reports, including those relating to Heritage, Landscape, Care Home Needs, Operational Analysis of the Existing Care Home, a Transport Statement, Ecology (including a Habitats Regulations Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Calculator), Arboriculture, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, and a Design and Access Statement. The full list of plans and documents submitted as part of the planning application is set out in the covering letter accompanying the application.

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- 1.6. This Planning Statement concludes that the proposal satisfies two tests, firstly, the heritage test of public benefits outweighing any perceived¹ less than substantial harm to the conservation area by the Council; and secondly, confirming that the proposal secures a number of 'Very Special Circumstances' that clearly outweigh the accepted harm arising from the fact that the proposal is 'inappropriate development' in the Green Belt as defined by the terms of national planning policy, and any other perceived Green Belt harm and any other harms. In these circumstances the application, when considered as a whole, can be approved.

¹ Contrary to the Council's perception of heritage harm, the applicant's Heritage Statement concludes minor degrees of betterment to the Guysfield House and the conservation area as a result of the proposals

2. RECENT PLANNING HISTORY (EVOLUTION of THE PROPOSALS)



The above images illustrate the reductions of the scheme as the scheme has evolved

First Pre application

- 2.1. In February 2019 Caring Homes submitted for Pre-Application advice for the erection of a 60 Bed Care Home and demolition of the existing 50 Bed Care Home including Guysfield House, reference 19/00504/PRE.
- 2.2. A response was issued by North Hertfordshire Council on 20 October 2019 and can be summarised as follows:
- It was acknowledged that the initial proposal was intended to provide a more viable size of Care Home to meet local needs and improve sub-standard accommodation to meet current Care Commission Standards.
 - “Very Special Circumstances” would need to be presented as part of the application to assess the benefits against any identified harm to the “Green Belt”.
 - Justification would be required in the form of a comprehensive Design and Access Heritage Statement which should address the points raised with a detailed examination as to how the development would better enhance or reveal, the significance of the Conservation Area.

- Car Parking should be in accordance with the Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Detailed Landscaping enhancements, Tree Condition Survey and Tree Protection proposals to be submitted.
- Impact upon neighbouring properties to be considered.
- Developer contributions may be required towards mitigation of development.
- Archaeological Impact Study to be submitted.
- Ecological Survey to be submitted.
- Consultation with Environmental Health Department would be required.

2.3. A Planning Application for the erection of a 60 Bed Care Home following demolition of the existing 50 Bed Care Home was registered on 6 October 2020 under reference 20/02219/FP.



2.4. A letter from Letchworth Heritage Foundation was received by NHDC on 12 October 2020 advising their formal consent was required for these works under the Scheme of Management operated within Letchworth Garden City or covenants contained within the lease. As a result, LHF received a formal application which was submitted to them by Oliver and Robb Architects on 20 October 2020.

2.5. On 6 January 2021, LHF advised that our application would be presented to their Board of Trustees at the end of the month for consideration.

- 2.6. On 1 February 2021, LHF advised that the Board of Trustees were:
- Supportive of the principle of enhanced facilities at Guysfield.
 - That demolition of the existing building was not supported.
 - That a design approach retaining the original building and redeveloping previous additions would be preferred. This may include a more contemporary approach towards the design of the new buildings.
 - LHF agreed that they would not formally refuse the application to enable ongoing discussion.
- 2.7. NHDC provided initial comments on the planning application on 25 February 2021. These are summarised as follows:
- The public benefits of the scheme would outweigh any perceived harm to designated heritage assets.
 - Consultee responses were favourable.
 - Removal of trees screening Greenway from the development was of concern but noted that appropriate new planting could have more long-term benefits.
 - Classification of ownership of easement strip along north boundary required.
 - Further dialogue with LHF encouraged as without their agreement our proposals would not progress through Planning.
 - Advised that it was the Planning Officer's last day at the Council.
- 2.8. On 30 March 2021, Sam Dicocco (SD) advised that he was the new Planning Officer, and a meeting was subsequently held on 14 April 2021 to discuss the application.
- 2.9. Meeting with LHF was arranged for 15 April 2021 to discuss amended proposals presented in "freehand" format. The "freehand" proposals were issued to SD of NHDC on 28 April 2021.
- 2.10. Following meeting of 15 April 2021, a response was received from LHF on 20 May 2021 advising Committee would support nothing other than a proposal which retains the existing Guysfield House building with a well-designed contemporary extension.
- 2.11. ORA issued an e-mail to SD on 31 May 2021 suggesting a joint meeting with LHF to discuss way forward.

- 2.12. In light of LHF's comments regarding the retention of Guysfield House, the applicants accepted that the scheme would be amended to retain Guysfield House with a standalone new build Care Home in contemporary style.
- 2.13. NHDC (SD) advised on 12 July 2021 that this amended scheme would need to be withdrawn and new application submitted as the old and new proposals were materially different. SD also stated that Senior Management were aware of the balance that he had applied in negotiating the application and the Green Belt/Heritage implications of the options discussed. His professional opinion was that the benefits of retaining the building and extending outweighed the Green Belt benefits of a slightly smaller replacement building. This opinion would be passed onto the next Case Officer.
- 2.14. SD email of 9 August 2021 advised:
- That he was leaving NHDC on 18 August 2021.
 - NHDC currently await updated plans and elevations which retain the important original section of the existing building with contemporary additions to it.
 - The above is to preserve the heritage importance of the site and the contribution it makes between Willian and Letchworth Garden City.
 - Although larger in size than that currently proposed, it was felt the heritage benefits outweigh the additional Green Belt harm.
 - In respect of the impact on the Green Belt it was considered by the previous Planning Officer that the retention of Guysfield House, alongside the social benefits of expanded and enhanced Care Home facilities for the elderly, will clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt thereby representing very special circumstances.
- 2.15. The applicant's architect met with LHF on 1 September 2021 to discuss the updated proposals retaining Guysfield House.
- 2.16. The applicant's architect issued the updated plans to the new NHDC planning officer Sarah Kasparian (SK). SK advised on 7 September 2021 that:
- Potential for 70 beds would not be ruled out.

- Believes that Planning Department can support the principle of the site layout and design with a focus on contemporary architecture and materials.
- Further information required on use of Guysfield House to ensure it forms an important part of the Care Home.

2.17. On 10 September 2021 ORA confirmed to LHF and NHDC that based on positive feedback from both parties, their client had accepted that ORA proceed with a revised Planning Application, based on a 70 Bed scheme with the associated statutory fee.

2.18. Meetings were held with LHF on 1 September 2021 and with NHDC on 6 September 2021. The minutes of the meetings (which were forwarded to each party) noted:

LHF – 1 September 2021

- Revised design approach welcomed and perceived to be a positive response to retention of Guysfield House and integration of a new contemporary Care Home consisting of 70 Beds.
- Site Layout considered to be an appropriate response with existing house and new Care Home set against a strong landscape setting.
- Car parking and service arrangements considered to be an improvement.
- Landscaping and existing trees should be retained and reinforced along the east boundary.
- Consideration to be given to sustainability.
- Simple palette of materials was welcomed.
- Financial and operational information requested for Board Meeting on 17 September 2021.
- Resident concerns in respect of boundary planting between Care Home and Greenway, acoustic issues, car parking and northern site boundary location to be taken into consideration.

NHDC – 6 September 2021

- In principle, revised proposals were a more appropriate architectural approach.

- Site layout, in respect of car parking and service arrangements was a definite improvement.
- Any re-submission requires robust justification to be submitted to demonstrate “built form” shall not harm Conservation Area and Green Belt and verify that “very special circumstances” exist.
- Increase in bedrooms to be justified by viability statement.
- Proper use of Guysfield House to be demonstrated and that accommodation is fully supportive of adjacent Care Home.
- Further consideration to be given to planting along north boundary.
- ORA to highlight existing floor space and volume against new proposals.

2.19. SK of NHDC confirmed on 13 September 2021 that meeting minutes reflected the discussion.

2.20. Following a LHF Board Meeting they advised on 27 September 2021 that:

- LHF supportive of principle of the development and retention of existing building and welcome its inclusion in the revised development.
- In agreement with overall approach of contemporary building and manner that it is linked to original building.
- Further consideration to be given to scale and amount of development extending towards Willian Road.
- Car parking is an improvement on previous proposal.
- Matters raised by adjoining neighbours to be addressed going forward.
- Continuing dialogue recommended.

2.21. LHF confirmed in an e-mail dated 12 November 2021 that further revised proposals responding to their e-mail of 27 September 2021 are a reasonable basis on which to base detailed design for the formal submission.

2.22. LHF reiterated that they are supportive of a contemporary addition and acknowledged that part of the massing has been reduced following previous comments of 27 September 2021.

2.23. LHF noted that they shall comment on detailed elements such as fenestration design, materials, landscaping and relationship with neighbours as design evolves.

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- 2.24. Views of the scheme from Willian Road requested as part of ongoing process.
- 2.25. An issued e-mail on 1 February 2022 to NHDC advised that 'in principle' agreement had been reached with LHF.
- 2.26. The Applicant's Architect received an email from NHDC on 10 February 2021 advising that due to staff shortages, workload pressure etc. the current application could not be re-allocated to another Team Member and that current application be withdrawn and revised plans submitted as part of a new pre-application enquiry.
- 2.27. Further correspondence between ORA and NHDC over the period 11 February to 7 March 2022 established that the current application would be held in abeyance on the understanding that it would be withdrawn following issue of pre-application advice as part of current application 20/02218/FP.
- 2.28. Pre application advice was received from NHDC dated 1st July 2022. This in summary indicated:
- "We are mindful of the advice given by the previous case officer Sam Dicocco in his last email to you relating to the outstanding submitted application and the general support for the now obsolete scheme. The proposal has obviously evolved since then with a greater footprint, bulk and massing, a change in site levels and of course a change in design. It is accepted that the social benefits will continue to be delivered as part of the proposal. However, it is apparent that the encroachment of the building into the front of the site will have significant harmful impacts on both the character and appearance on the Conservation Area and the Green Belt including its openness. As presented, it is unlikely that the social and other benefits will now outweigh this harm. In the circumstances, a formal revised proposal along these lines is unlikely to be supported by officers".**
- 2.29. It is apparent that this proposal and the location means that it will be a challenge to reconcile the aspirations of the Heritage Foundation and meet the objectives of national and local development plan policies".
- 2.30. Following this "pre-application" response, application 20/02218/FP was placed on the Part 2 Planning Register by NHDC. The Council suggested that any revised proposal should, in the first instance, be submitted to the authority as a pre application submission.

2023 Pre application process.

- 2.31. The Council's pre-application response is dated 29th January 2024. As accepted, the proposal represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt therefore requiring very special circumstances to clearly outweigh any identified harm to the Green Belt and any other harm. In this regard, the pre-application response confirms:
- "On balance I believe that very special circumstances could be demonstrated as part of any future planning application submission".**
- 2.32. One of the purposes of this Planning Statement is to demonstrate the existence of these very special circumstances. The pre-application response highlighted the information required to assist the Council in coming to such a conclusion which is addressed later on in this Statement.
- 2.33. In respect of conservation area and appearance, the Planning pre- app highlighted that the proposal has moved on from earlier schemes noting that Guysfield House is now to be retained and refurbished which is welcomed by the Council as it would assist to preserve the heritage importance of the site.
- 2.34. As to the design of the new care home, the comments from the LHF in the email dated 25 July 2023 have been noted and that the local planning authority welcome the approach to adopt a more contemporary design for the proposal and agree that this would provide a more complementary contrast with the host building.
- 2.35. It was noted that careful consideration should be given to the overall bulk and massing of the building, in particular consideration should be given to the design of the proposed north east and south east elevations of the building especially in terms of softening the bulk and massing of these elevations given that these will be viewed as the most prominent elevations of the building from the public cycle/footpath to the east of the site from Willian Road to the front of the site and from the central part of Willian village itself.
- 2.36. In respect of highways, it was noted that the proposed access utilises the existing access from Willian Road and that the application needs to demonstrate that the planned 27 parking spaces correlates with the Council parking standards for elderly persons residential homes.

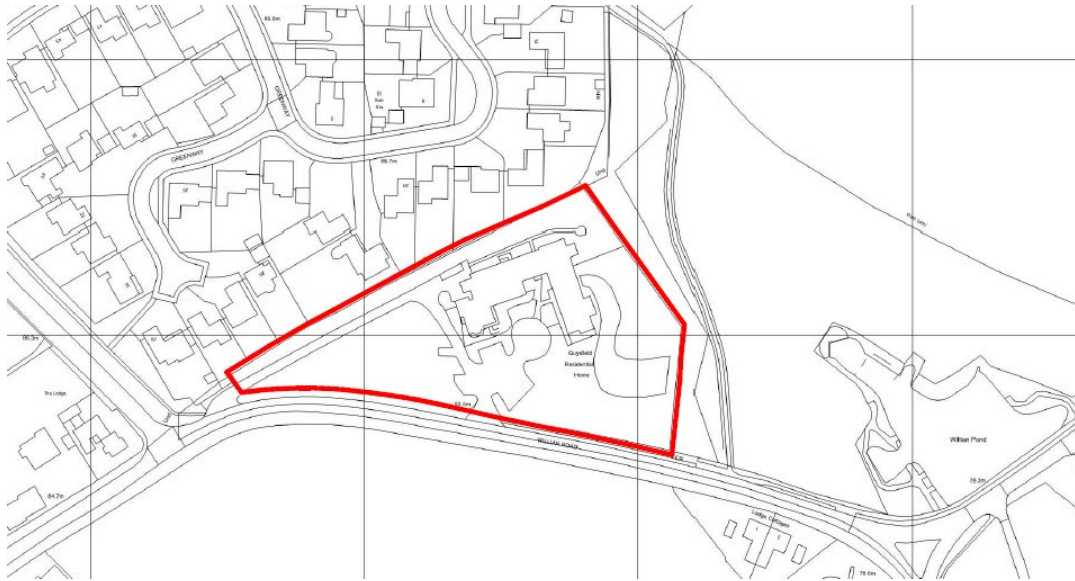
- 2.37. In respect of impact upon neighbouring properties, the pre-app response confirmed that the proposed built form would not have any greater impact upon neighbouring properties to the north in terms of the effects upon levels of daylight/sunlight. As to privacy, careful consideration should be given to the positioning of windows and doors in the proposed replacement building to ensure there is no unacceptable loss of privacy and that consideration be given to retaining as much of the trees and vegetation along this boundary as it currently provides an excellent visual screen for the neighbouring residents. Where trees and vegetation are to be removed, the applicant is encouraged to replant adding trees and vegetation where possible to maintain and improve the visual screen.
- 2.38. A variety of other issues raised including trees and landscaping, archaeology, sustainable design and climate change mitigation, ecology, flooding and drainage, environmental health, and section 106 matters and financial contributions all need to be (and are) addressed in the formal planning application submission.
- 2.39. The pre-application response concluded stating:
- “On balance, it [sic] is considered that very special circumstances could be demonstrated in this instance which would clearly outweigh any harm to the Green Belt.**
- As previously indicated, additional information/evidence is required to justify the benefits identified in chapter 8, section G of the Planning Statement and consideration should be given as to how ‘very special circumstances’ can be comprehensively demonstrated as part of the proposal.**
- This in turn will assist in the assessment of the very special circumstances case as part of the overall Planning balance”.**

Summary.

- 2.40. In summary, the initial proposals for the redevelopment of the site were supported by NHDC on the basis that the social benefit of the new and enhanced care home would clearly outweigh Green Belt and conservation (heritage) harms. The scheme was not acceptable to LHF owing to the loss of Guysfield House. An alternative proposal retaining Guysfield House with a new 70 bed Care Home was prepared. This was supported in principle by LHF. However, NHDC believed that this amended scheme resulted in greater bulk by comparison to the original comprehensive redevelopment scheme together with a building that has encroached into the front part of the site resulting in “significant harmful impacts” to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the Green Belt including its openness that would then outweigh the social benefits of the new improved care home.

- 2.41. Since those observations, the applicant has engaged further with LHF with an amended proposal which has received favourable feedback by retaining Guysfield House and improved the design, scale and positioning of the new care home. The Council can see the merit in the evolving proposals, welcome the retention of Guysfield House and believe that in this instance that very special circumstances could be demonstrated that would clearly outweigh any harm to the Green Belt.
- 2.42. In light of this recent history, this statement addresses two matters. Firstly, an explanation as to how the new proposal has been amended since the Council's comments of 1 July 2022, particularly in relation to the scale of the development in the Conservation Area and Green Belt terms. Secondly, with these amendments incorporated, and with the benefit of the supporting information and plans, where the planning Green Belt /Heritage benefits and harm balance now lies.

3. THE SITE



- 3.1. The application site is described in more detail within the Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.
- 3.2. For the purposes of this planning statement, the site lies beyond but bounds the defined built-up area of Letchworth, and therefore lies within the Green Belt, designated countryside and within the Willian Conservation Area.
- 3.3. The site comprises previously developed land accommodating an existing 50 bed care home. Part of the care home includes Guysfield House, a non-designated heritage asset.
- 3.4. The site is triangular in shape with existing residential development to the north. The site is well defined and contained by Willian Road to the south with mature tree belts to the east, beyond which lies more recognisable Parkland.

4. THE PROPOSAL



Proposed Site Layout plan



Elevational form of the proposed replacement care home

- 4.1. The proposal is described in more detail within the supporting Design and Access Statement. For the purposes of this planning statement, the proposal comprises the redevelopment of an existing but dysfunctional and poorly designed Care Home comprising 50 bedrooms (but only 42 are operational) attached to Guysfield House.
- 4.2. The new scheme creates a new, high-quality, custom designed Care Home, incorporating 70 bedrooms all with ensuite wet rooms, as a separate standalone building to Guysfield House.

- 4.3. The existing access off Willian Road is retained with 27 car parking spaces planned to the west of the new care home.
- 4.4. The proposed new care home and car parking have been planned around the successful retention of important trees, whereby the root protection zones associated with these have been respected. A loss of a conifer belt along the northern side boundary is being replaced by new high-quality, more native planting species. New native planting is also proposed along the Willian Road frontage.
- 4.5. The grounds will be landscaped around a focal point of an existing mature tree (Atlantic Cedar) to create an attractive landscape setting to the home. The rural setting to Willian Road will also be preserved.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1. For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan, against which the application proposal will be determined, comprises:

- North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011- 2031

5.2. The development plan policies against which the application should be considered are set out below.

North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011-2031 (November 2022)

5.3. The application site lies on the southern edge of Letchworth within the Green Belt and the William Conservation Area.

5.4. Relevant policies include:

SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire

SP5: Countryside and Green Belt

SP6: Sustainable Transport

SP8: Housing

SP9: Design and Sustainability

SP13: Historic environment

T1: Assessment of transport matters

T2: Parking

HS2: Affordable Housing

HS3: Housing mix

HS4: Supported, sheltered and older persons housing

HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing

D1: Sustainable Design

D3: Protecting living conditions

NE2: Landscape

NE4: Biodiversity and geological sites

NE7: Reducing the flood risk

NE8: Sustainable drainage systems

NE10: Water conservation and wastewater infrastructure

NE11: Contaminated land

HE1: Designated heritage assets

HE3: Non-designated heritage assets

IMR2: Local plan early review

- 5.5. In respect of care home provision local plan policy SP8(g) confirms a clear need for at least 350 bed spaces in suitable, supported accommodation to meet the needs of those who cannot live in their own home over the plan period 2011-31. The Council's monitoring report does not include any information on delivery of these older persons homes/accommodation. As the Carterwood report submitted with the application confirms the strategic housing allocations that may incorporate a care home remain long term projects with additional care home provision potentially coming forward many years from now. Therefore, these homes will not be contributing to current needs, the characteristics and nature of which are immediate.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:

Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011)

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2023)

- 5.6. In terms of other relevant policies, the following is relevant:

Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan May 2018

Policy LTP4

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.7. The NPPF, December 2023, is also a relevant material consideration in assessing the application. The relevant paragraphs are:

Paragraph 8: Economic, social and environmental sustainable objectives.

Paragraph 60: Boost significantly the supply of housing.

Paragraph 63: Meeting the needs of different groups in the community including older people.

Paragraph 66: Care homes do not trigger affordable housing.

Paragraph 85: Significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

Paragraph 96: Achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction.

Paragraph 115: Highways.

Paragraphs 123, 124, 126a, 127a and 128: Efficient use of land.

Paragraph 129: Densities.

Paragraph 135: Design.

Paragraphs 152 - 155: Green Belt.

Paragraph 159: Climate change.

Paragraphs 186 -189: Biodiversity.

Paragraphs 200, 205 and 208: Heritage.

6. HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

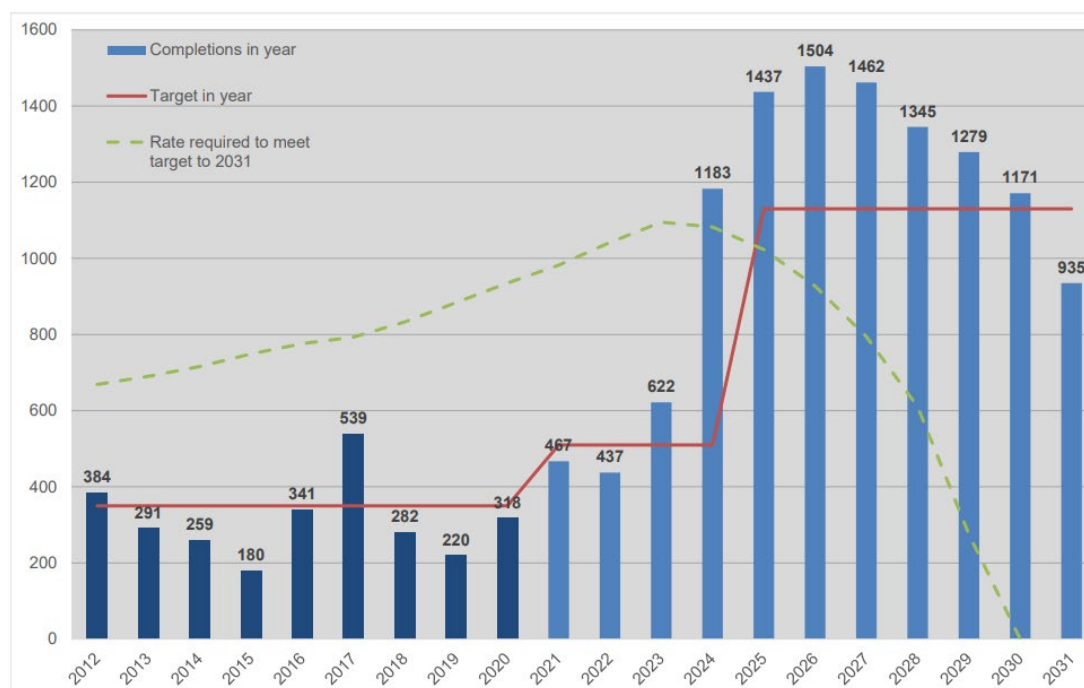
- 6.1. The NPPG is clear that the provision of specialist housing for older people counts against a local authority's housing requirement. Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626 states:

"Plan-making authorities will need to count housing provided for older people against their housing requirement. For residential institutions, to establish the amount of accommodation released in the housing market, authorities should base calculations on the average number of adults living in households, using the published Census data."

- 6.2. In terms of determining the equivalent contribution of care home bedrooms to meeting a Council's housing need, the July 2018 Housing Delivery Test Measurement Rule Book sets out a conversion rate of 1.8. Therefore, the number of net bedrooms created, 20 in this case, should be divided by 1.8 to calculate the equivalent number of C3 residential units that the proposal represents. This is the equivalent delivery in terms of contributing to a Council's housing land supply, and in the case of this application, would represent the equivalent of 11 new homes after apply the 1.8 conversion rate.
- 6.3. The Council's housing land supply position remains marginal. Accordingly, the small net additional contribution arising from this replacement care home scheme is still nevertheless a relevant and important consideration.
- 6.4. The marginal housing land supply position is evident from the adopted local plan, and the circumstances in which the Inspector found it sound.
- 6.5. The Inspector accepted that the Plan would show a five-year supply on the proviso that the Liverpool approach was followed. The assumptions for land supply using this approach were as follows:

	Five-year supply (Liverpool) RECOMMENDED APPROACH	1 April 2020	1 April 2021	1 April 2022	1 April 2023	1 April 2024
A	Cumulative completions since 1 April 2011	2,814	3,281	3,718	4,340	5,523
B	Cumulative target since 1 April 2011	3,150	3,650	4,150	4,650	5,150
C	Shortfall against target as at 1 April	-336	-369	-432	-310	+373
D	Target for next five years	3,120	3,740	4,360	4,980	5,600
E	Shortfall to be addressed in five year period (Liverpool method) (-C annualised * 5)	153	185	240	194	n/a
F	Buffer to be applied	+20%	+20%	+20%	+20%	+20%
G	Total five year requirement (D + E) * F	3927	4709	5520	6209	6720
H	Projected delivery in five-year period	4,146	5,183	6,208	6,931	7,027
I	Years land supply (H / G) * 5	5.28	5.50	5.62	5.58	5.23

6.6. The associated trajectory was:



6.7. The Local Plan Inspector accepted the Council's approach on the basis of the 3 steps to the requirement alongside an early review stating:

116. It seems to me that the 'three-stepped Liverpool approach' sets the only measure against which the Plan would not be condemned to fail. In the circumstances, therefore, I agree that it represents an acceptable method of setting the five-year housing land supply requirement in the short term. However, this is not ideal and is a situation that should not be allowed to persist any longer than necessary. Indeed, I consider it appropriate only on the basis of an early review of the Plan.

6.8. The Council has not prepared an updated assessment of supply beyond those associated with the April 2020 base date. It still relies upon this together with its adoption of the Local Plan to show a five-year supply.

6.9. Therefore, there is no up to date appraisal of the realism of the expectations including from allocations within the Local Plan to deliver the trajectory above.

- 6.10. Policy IMR2 requires a review of the local plan by the end of 2023. The most recent LDS (Nov 2022) confirms that a review is to be undertaken. It does not specify the timetable but confirms it will be completed by the end of 2023. There is no indication of the progress on this review although it is clear from the associated policy (IMR2), that it is only once the review is completed that the Council can then decide whether an updated Local Plan needs to be prepared.
- 6.11. The above matters indicate that housing land supply is marginal and therefore opportunities to boost supply should be taken. Accordingly, weight should be applied to the additional units created by the replacement care home scheme.

7. CARE HOME NEED AND SUPPLY

- 7.1. As noted, the NPPF at paragraph 60 makes it clear that the Government's objective is to boost significantly the supply of homes, and in doing so, ensure that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. Paragraph 63 of the NPPF notes that the housing needs of older people should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. In this regard, two points arise. Firstly, National Planning Practice Guidance states at paragraph 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626 that:

"The need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help to reduce costs to the social care and health systems..." (My underlining)

- 7.2. This represents a nationally acknowledged future exponential growth in the 85+ age cohort.
- 7.3. Secondly, the local plan policy SP8(g) confirms that at least 350 bed spaces in suitable, supported accommodation to meet the needs of those who cannot live in their own home need to be provided. The local plan does not set out any mechanism by which these 350 bed spaces be provided.
- 7.4. Accordingly, there is a clear policy framework at the National and development plan levels supporting the need for additional care homes. In light of this, the applicant has commissioned an up-to-date Care Home local needs assessment to quantify the need from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective at the local level. This is addressed below.

Local evidence of need

- 7.5. Local evidence of need comes in two forms. Firstly, the inadequacies of the existing care home and the need to replace it in order to maintain a care home on site. This matter is addressed in the report by Christie & Co, which is submitted as part of the planning application. Secondly, a shortfall in the quantum and quality of care homes in the surrounding area. This is established by the submitted local need assessment prepared by Carterwood.

Guysfield House Care Home, its operational / layout inadequacies : The Christie & Co Report

- 7.6. The submitted Christie & Co Report analyses the existing care home concluding that the building is number of relevant considerations as follows.
- 7.7. The quality, layout and condition of the existing Guysfield Care Home.
It concludes that this is very poor. The existing building is found to be materially compromised due to a specification that is obsolete and not fit for purpose relative to the needs of the client group. Specific deficiencies include a poor layout, narrow corridors, small bedrooms, the lack of any en suite wet rooms, narrow doorway widths, the lack of a stretcher lift and limited day space. Furthermore, the bedrooms on the top floor are not suitable for occupation by residents with the effective capacity of the home reduced to 42 residents as a consequence.
- 7.8. The financial viability of the existing care home.
It concludes that it is not viable. Due to a combination of the above characteristics, the reduced capacity and associated operational issues, the business is non-viable in its current format having been materially loss making for the last five years.
- 7.9. Analysis of new care home proposal. Analysis compares the existing and proposed care homes, confirming how the new proposal addresses the shortcomings of the existing facilities and represents a high-quality purpose-built care home that meets the existing/future needs of the elderly.
- 7.10. Comparisons of current specification versus the proposed specification is set out clearly indicating not only the inappropriateness of the existing facility, but the much needed requirement to significantly upgrade this facility with a new redevelopment scheme.
- 7.11. Bedroom specification and market benchmark requirements, highlighting the existing Guysfield specification and the proposed new specification. The graphic illustration reaffirms the outdated and poor-quality nature of the existing bedroom specification and the proposed bedroom layout and how that is designed to meet the rapidly changing needs of today's elderly population.
- 7.12. The need to redevelop the care home is clear and overwhelming.

Demand /Supply analysis: the Carterwood Report

- 7.13. Supply analysis. This confirms that even with the proposed Guysfield House redevelopment scheme in place that there is an under supply of market standard of proof care beds in Letchworth. In the circa- 5 mile market catchment, 91 per cent of registered bedrooms are at minimum market standard and 66 per cent provide full market standard accommodation. The equivalent figures for the North Hertfordshire Council area are a little lower, at 87 per cent and 64 per cent, respectively.
- 7.14. Wider regional analysis. The analysis confirms the average size of successful custom built, fit for purpose, Care Homes are 68 bedrooms which reflects the scale of the new proposal.
- 7.15. Care Home Need analysis. The assessment, based on 2027, the earliest the proposed redevelopment of Guysfield Care Home could be made available, indicates a net need for 194 full market standard care home bedrooms in the 5-mile market catchment and 124 in the North Hertfordshire Council local authority area. Additional demand is arising from dementia diagnosis. The local area of Northeast Hertfordshire has a higher proportion of the local population, living with dementia, compared to the UK. In this regard, in terms of care home bedrooms dedicated for dementia care, our assessment indicates a net need for 302 full market standard care bedrooms in the 5-mile market catchment and 229 in the North Hertfordshire Council local authority area. As these shortfalls are subsets of the total undersupply of care beds, based on 2027, they clearly indicate the requirement to increase the provision of dedicated dementia care bedrooms in both assessed catchment areas.
- 7.16. It is clear from the above analysis that there is both a qualitative and quantitative need for additional care home beds within Letchworth. The existing supply which includes Guysfield House is characterised by not only an inadequate number of Care Home beds but also a significant shortfall in the quality of the supply which is sadly highlighted by the quality of the existing facility on the site. Accordingly, the proposal will be replacing the 50 poor quality beds, but also adding to the supply in a significantly enhanced form of qualitative supply.

National evidence of need

- 7.17. National evidence is available to corroborate the need to plan to meet the accommodation needs of older people that arise in a local context. This is set out in the Carterwood Report submitted with the planning application.

The Nature of Care Home Need

- 7.18. Older people who need care cannot afford to wait until appropriate levels of provision become available. Inspectors have acknowledged this². The inspector observed:

“Elderly people requiring car (sic) home accommodation are less able to wait than those in the general population needing accommodation because their needs are immediate. Accordingly, there is an urgency in meeting this unmet need and for all these reasons, significant weight is given to these housing and people care benefits”.

- 7.19. Accordingly, older people who are in need of care cannot afford to wait until appropriate levels and quality of provision become available. The PPG³ is clear that:

“where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need”.

- 7.20. The above analysis confirms the importance and requirement to meet the needs of the elderly at the national level (NPPF paragraphs 60 and 63, and PPG, which highlights the need to provide for housing for older people as “critical”); at development plan level (policy SP8 (g)); and through a more finally grained local needs assessments, firstly Christie & Co in respect of the inadequacies of the existing home and the need to replace it; and secondly, the Carterwood Report that quantifies the need for additional bedrooms. Reports). Drawing these factors together, the issue of need in all its forms is a weighty material consideration that attracts **very substantial weight** in support of the proposal.

² Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/W/20/3259161 Chelford House, Coldharbour Lane, Harpenden AL5 4UN (September 2021), para 34

³ Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626

8. MAIN ISSUES

8.1. The Main Issues section of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- A) The Council's consideration of the previous pre application submissions (pre application reference 19/00504/PRE and 23/02439/PRE.)
- B) Appropriate development within the Green Belt?
- C) Impact on openness and purposes of Green Belt
- D) Impact on designated/non-designated heritage assets
- E) Impacts on the character and appearance of the area
- F) Residential amenity
- G) Design
- H) Other matters: Parking/Highways, SuDS, Ecology, Landscaping and Trees
- I) Benefits

A) The Council's determination of pre application references 19/00504/PRE and 23/02439/PRE.

- 8.2. The Council's first pre-application response dated 28/10/19 confirmed that whilst the replacement care home scheme resulted in an increased amount of development, **"the proposals follow the form of the existing building and, it is acknowledged that they do not add significant bulk where existing footprint exists"**.
- 8.3. The Council's response confirmed that the scheme would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt, and that there would be a need to demonstrate very special circumstances. In this regard, it was acknowledged that the proposal would free up housing stock (although to a limited amount) and that this was a factor in support of the proposal.
- 8.4. It was acknowledged that the replacement care home is required to be upgraded, is a much-needed facility and the overall increase in the number of bedrooms has been reduced from an earlier pre-application submission.
- 8.5. It was also accepted that the proposal is intended to provide a more viable size of care home to meet local needs, with an improved standard of accommodation, including kitchen, laundry,

and staff accommodation. From a site visit, it was very apparent that the existing older section of the building is not fit for purpose with access, heating and general layout being problematic for staff. The lack of lift access to the upper floors was particularly noticeable and this would have a limiting effect on care and safety.

8.6. It was noted that the building would be bulkier than the existing structure and would be set further forward and so be more prominent from Willian Road. That said, it was confirmed that: **“The prominence would to some extent, be mitigated by the landscaping at the site, and it is noted that the majority of this is to be retained”.**

8.7. The second pre application scheme has evolved from the 1st and these helpful comments. As recorded in Section 2 of this statement, the applicants accept that the proposal represents inappropriate development within the Green Belt and that very special circumstances still need to be justified. The proposal has been amended to retain Guysfield House, a locally designated heritage asset, the retention of which is welcomed by the Council. The scale and positioning of the building has also been improved by comparison to earlier schemes and been designed via detailed dialogue with LHF and positioned further back from Willian Road. Further changes have been made following design and scale comments received through this second pre application process. The Council officers concluded:

“On balance, it [sic] is considered that very special circumstances could be demonstrated in this instance which would clearly outweigh any harm to the Green Belt.

As previously indicated, additional information/evidence is required to justify the benefits identified in chapter 8, section G of the Planning Statement and consideration should be given as to how ‘very special circumstances’ can be comprehensively demonstrated as part of the proposal.

This in turn will assist in the assessment of the very special circumstances case as part of the overall Planning balance”.

8.8. This is a clear indication that very special circumstances do indeed arise and by their very nature could outweigh the identified harm in this instance to the Green Belt. The very special circumstances will be re-emphasised below, but also expanded upon in the statement, whilst the quality of the proposal in terms of its design is enhanced. The more sensitive location and composition of the replacement care home than previous schemes together with mitigating landscaping allows the authority to recalibrate the balancing exercise between the significant weight to be attached to Green Belt harm, and the other considerations, namely, the very

special circumstances that now clearly outweigh those identified harms. As a result, the application scheme proposal allows the Authority to conclude that the balance is now firmly in favour of the grant of planning permission.

B) Appropriate development within the Green Belt?

- 8.9. The site falls within the Green Belt. Pre application discussions (see Section 2) confirmed that owing to the scale of the replacement care home by comparison to the existing building it is accepted that the proposal is ‘inappropriate development’ within the Green Belt as it does not fall within any of the exception categories in Paragraph 154 of the Framework. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. When considering any planning application, the NPPF is clear that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. This statement will examine whether those ‘other considerations’ represent very special circumstances that clearly outweigh any Green Belt harms and any other harms.

C) Impact on Openness and Purposes of Green Belt

- 8.10. Caselaw has established that the concept of openness of the Green Belt is not narrowly focused on a purely volumetric approach, but other factors may be relevant too⁴. It has also established that openness is a broad concept of policy not law; applying the policy imperative of preserving openness requires realism and common sense; the word ‘openness’ is open textured, and a number of factors are capable of being relevant, including visual as well as physical and spatial impacts⁵. In other words, it is wrong to always assume an increase in volume will necessarily always have a significant impact on openness.
- 8.11. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out the factors that can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of a development on the openness of the Green Belt, including spatial and visual effects, permanence and levels of activity.

⁴ Turner v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2016] EWCA Civ 466

⁵ R (Liverpool Open and Green Spaces Community Interest Co) v Liverpool City Council [2020] EWCA Civ 861



Proposed site layout

- 8.12. In terms of spatial effects, the proposal would introduce additional floorspace to the site in the form a larger replacement Care Home on part of the existing site of the care home. As the plans in DAS confirms there is a significant degree of overlap between the existing and proposed buildings.



External perspective looking north from within the landscaped gardens.

- 8.13. As illustrated above, a visible gap will be created between the new care home and Guysfield House thereby, in part, breaking up the building mass on the site. So, whilst the proposal would result in an increase in footprint and built form development on the site, the spatial pattern of development will be similar and therefore any reduction of spatial openness of the Green Belt will be moderate.
- 8.14. With regard to visual effects, the site is enclosed to a certain extent by existing mature tree cover, and as such, this will reduce the visual prominence of the proposed replacement care home within the wider area. The visual impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and therefore on the visual aspect of Green Belt openness would therefore be localised and would reduce over time as the landscaping matures. The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) confirms this finding too. The only clear view of the scheme will be from Willian Road to the south will be closed off and filtered by additional planting along the southern boundary of the site.
- 8.15. The existing care home is visible within the public realm but softened by roadside landscaping. However, owing to the design of the proposed replacement care home together with proposed landscaping, the visual perception of buildings on the site in a similar location remains but with only a marginal difference in visual impact arising. The Council's conservation officer pre

application response (dated 10/05/2024) noted: **“In terms of assessing distant views, having viewed the site this week, it is apparent that the soft landscaping on Willian Road screens the existing built form to a large extent and that due to the tree cover on the eastern boundary for buildings cannot be seen across the village pond (even though this is not considered a key view in the Willian conservation area character statement).”** (My underlining). This observation suggest that the proposal will not have a significant impact upon the visual aspect of openness. The submitted LVIA further reinforces the moderate visual impact of the proposal within the Green Belt and conservation area.

- 8.16. In respect of permanence, the built form would be permanent and therefore the loss of openness that would occur would be permanent, therefore the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would continue in perpetuity. However, the degree of increased perception of permanence of a scheme replacing one building with another and any perceived difference between the two over time being limited is also considered to be moderate.
- 8.17. Finally, in terms of levels of activity, whilst the proposal is for a slightly larger replacement care home (an increase from 50 bedrooms to 70 bedrooms) the degrees of activities will be marginally different in terms of vehicular movements and parked cars, the perception of which will also be limited.
- 8.18. In summary, the impact of the proposal in terms of Green Belt openness will be **moderate**.
- 8.19. With regard to the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, in terms of purpose ‘a’, **to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas**, the site makes minimal contribution to containing outward sprawl given its close proximity to Letchworth and given the fact that the proposed replacement care home will overlap the existing building and remain within the confines of a well-defined and contained site. The scheme will not extend the built-up area of Letchworth any further than currently defined or come close to extending built form beyond Willian Road into a more open Green Belt/landscape compartment that could be attributed to unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area. The proposal will **not impact** on purpose ‘a’ of including land within the Green Belt.
- 8.20. For these same reasons, under purpose ‘b’, **to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another**, given the siting of the proposed replacement building there would be no spread of

development further southwest than existing development that lies to the West of the application site towards the neighbouring settlement of Hitchin to the south. The proposal would **not impact** on purpose 'b' of including land within the Green Belt.

- 8.21. In terms of purpose 'c', **to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment**, the land on which the replacement care home will be sited is largely overlapped by the current building and lies within the grounds of the current home. As noted, this area is well contained by Willian Road and mature trees. Beyond which lies Parkland and even more open countryside. The grounds of the care home do not have the character or appearance of countryside. That said, if any encroachment of the building within these grounds is perceived to be countryside, then the magnitude of this encroachment (12.85m beyond the current edge of the Care Home) is limited. The proposal will not constitute encroachment into the countryside and hence, will **not impact** on purpose 'c' of including land within the Green Belt. If it was, the degree of any encroachment would be minimal.
- 8.22. With regard to purpose 'd', **to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns**, the site is not located within or adjacent to an historic town and would not therefore affect the setting of one. The site does not make any contribution to this purpose and the development would **not therefore have any effect** on purpose 'd' of including land within the Green Belt.
- 8.23. Purpose 'e' is **to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land**. The site does not consist of such land, and therefore, the site makes no contribution to this purpose and would have no effect on purpose 'e' of including land within the Green Belt.
- 8.24. In conclusion and drawing all these factors together, the proposal would **not cause harm to any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt**. However, and as acknowledged, harm to the Green Belt will arise by the scheme not meeting any of the exceptions set out in the NPPF due to the scale of the replacement care home building and therefore comprising inappropriate development within the Green Belt. This gives rise to definitional harm. Additional harm will arise by virtue of a slight (moderate) reduction in spatial and visual openness to the Green Belt. This however would only be a moderate degree of harm. The NPPF requires that any harm to the Green Belt, including from inappropriate development, is, by definition, harmful, and that substantial weight should be given to the existence of these harms. Such development should only be approved in Very Special Circumstances, and these

will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Very Special Circumstances therefore needed to exist for the proposal to be looked upon favourably. This matter will be returned to in the planning balance section of this Statement.

D) Impacts on designated/non-designated heritage assets.

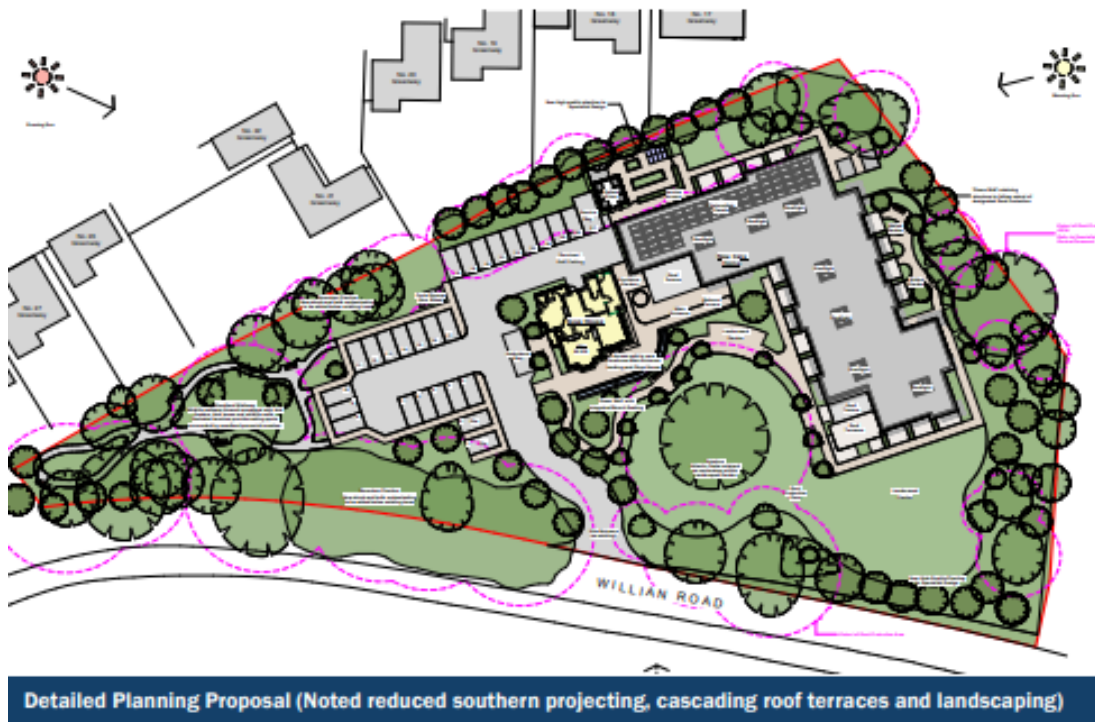
8.25. The submitted LVIA, Heritage Statement and DAS assess the impact of the proposal regarding the Willian conservation area and Guysfield House, a non-designated heritage asset. However, at this stage, there are a number of different effects arising from the proposal.

8.26. Firstly, the proposal replaces the existing care home that is currently attached to Guysfield House. The removal of this building and its replacement by a structure that is detached from Guysfield House will return this non-designated heritage asset back to its original detached form. Accordingly, a degree of betterment arises in respect of this aspect of the scheme. The submitted Heritage Statement supports this stating:

“Overall, the low significance of Guys will be enhanced by a small, but noteworthy, degree as a result of the reduced abutment of new development on its north-eastern corner to better reveal its original footprint, the landscape improvements to the south, and general increase in the quality of the new architecture within its immediate setting”.

8.27. This aspect of the scheme is “welcomed” by the Council in its pre application response (dated 29th January 2024). Consistent with NPPF Paragraph 203, the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage assets is a material consideration.

8.28. Secondly, the redevelopment scheme seeks to preserve an existing use within the Conservation Area, but at the same time, enhance and better reveal the significance of a non-designated heritage assets within the Conservation Area. Consistent with NPPF. Paragraph 203, this represents a material consideration.



- 8.29. Thirdly, the application site is well contained within a natural landscape setting. Within this context, as incorporated into the site layout (see above) there is the ability to supplement existing planting with new landscaping features, in particular along the south eastern boundary with Willian Road, which would result in the proposal only having a very limited and localised impact on the character and appearance of the area.



- 8.30. The replacement scheme will largely overlap the existing building; is a contemporary flat roof structure to minimise scale and prominence; will remain setback off the southern boundary; incorporates an amended further cascading of the south eastern section of the building to reduce further its visual prominence from Willian Road (seen in the above image) and as suggested by the Conservation officer in the pre app response dated 10/05/2024; and will be seen within the context of the existing building, sitting marginally forward in the foreground and filtered by new landscape planting. In combination, the proposal will have a very limited impact on the character and appearance of the site and the wider and more immediate area.



Proposed high quality design.

- 8.31. Fourthly, and as highlighted in the design and access statement and heritage statement, the design of the proposed replacement Care Home is of a high quality being responsive to Guysfield House. The amended scheme from earlier proposals creates an improved relationship to Guysfield House, better revealing it so that it allows it to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the conservation area. This is emphasised and a further cascading of the units on the top floor adjacent to Guysfield House that increases the degree of separation from Guysfield House. This is illustrated in the images below.



Illustrations of the form of separation to Guysfield House with a single set back unit on the top floor

- 8.32. The use of Guysfield House associated with a new, viable and invigorated care home as opposed to or in contrast to the failing one will also secure the future of this non designated heritage asset. The proposal to retain Guysfield House in its original detached form is also “welcomed” by the local planning authority in its pre application response.

8.33. Finally, the site is characterised by a belt of mature trees that lie on the eastern side. Beyond this significant landscape feature lies the remainder of the Willian Conservation Area and its interests. Having regard to section 72 of the Planning (listed buildings, and conservation areas) Act, decision-makers have to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. In these terms, owing to the strong physical and visual containment of the site on its eastern side, also acknowledged by the conservation officer in the pre application response dated 10/05/2024, and the LVIA, the creation of a new high quality designed care home, partly replacing an existing structure, and creating a physical and visual divide with Guysfield House, the proposal will not have a materially harmful impact on the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

8.34. The Heritage Assessment confirms a neutral impact (no harm) on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area concluding:

“The character of the Willian Conservation Area will not be materially altered by the proposals but minor benefit is offered through the landscape scheme and replacement of modern development with architecture of a considerably higher quality”.

8.35. In this regard, the proposal at least preserves aspects of the character or appearance of a Conservation Area consistent with section 72 of the Planning (listed buildings and conservation areas) Act.

8.36. Consistent with the Act and the NPPF (paragraph 205), when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, in this case the Willian Conservation Area, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. In this regard, the proposed development has been sensitively designed and laid out and great weight given to ensure that the conservation area is being preserved or enhanced. The character of the William Conservation Area will not be materially altered by the proposal, but minor benefits is offered through the landscape scheme and replacement of modern development with architecture of a considerably higher quality that more than outweigh the larger building and its slight repositioning within the site. Therefore, our overall assessment of the scheme concludes a beneficial improvement to the conservation area.

8.37. If any heritage harm is perceived by the Council, this is considered to be at the lower level of less than substantial harm where NPPF paragraph 202 is then engaged with regard to whether

public benefits outweigh any identified less than substantial harm whilst still attaching significant weight to that harm. NPPG (020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723) confirms that public benefits that may outweigh any perceived heritage harm can include benefits that flow from a development that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives, not just heritage benefits.

- 8.38. This matter is returned to in the Planning balance section below.

E) Impacts on the character and appearance of the area

- 8.39. The application is supported by a LVIA which confirms the well contained nature of the site and the limited visual impact of the proposed development in views from the north, east and west. The only clear view of the scheme is from the south. From here, the existing care home building is visible and forms part of the character and appearance of this developed countryside site. For the reasons set out in respect of heritage matters, the proposal will give rise to a change in the quality and appearance of buildings on the site that can be seen as improvements. The new build care home has been sensitively designed and modelled, including a cascade on its southern side to reduce its visual impact in this view from Willian Road. Unlike a development on a greenfield site, where there will be a marked change from an undeveloped site to a developed site, here the proposal will represent a replacement of an existing building in a similar location, albeit slightly closer to Willian Road. The various iterations of the scheme have resulted in increased setbacks of the scheme from this road frontage with additional landscaping along the southern boundary of the site. The result is a moderate additional impact of development commensurate with the moderate effect on Green Belt openness. The degree of change is not considered overriding or determinative of the proposal in respect of its impact on the character and appearance of the countryside and the area generally. In this regard, the proposal has had regard to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside consistent with NPPF paragraph 180b.

F) Residential Amenity

- 8.40. Existing residential properties, lie to the north of the site (no.s 17–28 Greenway). These are shown on the site layout plan below.



Proposed site layout plan and relationships with existing residential properties to the north

- 8.41. It is evident that the replacement Care Home follows the same building line as the existing structure (edged red on the site layout plan) with a small protrusion to the east. This though is more than compensated by the loss of the building on its Western side in the vicinity of Guysfield House. Accordingly, the presence of a building in this general location should be little different to the existing situation. In order to improve upon the immediate setting to the Care Home, and of the existing residential properties, the belt of conifer trees is to be replaced with native spaces that are considered more sympathetic in respect of both a domestic residential and Care Home setting. The Council's pre application response (October 2019) indicated that the existing belt of conifer trees were **"of poor amenity value with the only benefit being as a screen to prevent overlooking. During demolition and construction the existing trees may be at risk of damage or removal as the design of the proposal itself may put some of the existing trees and shrubs at risk of removal due to shading issues"**. There appears to be acceptance that this poor quality, non-native tree belt can be replaced. The second pre application response also emphasised the need for any replacement planting to be of a high quality in order to preserve the visual enclosure of the site and the privacy of the neighbouring properties. Accordingly, the proposals rightly include a new belt of tree planting which will be of native species thereby enhancing the visual quality of this landscape feature from a residential

amenity outlook and a Conservation Area perspective. The new planting can be agreed with the Council and include semi mature specimens. In respect of separation, the closest distance (with no. 17 Greenway) is 25 m. This distance together with new intervening semi mature native planting is considered to preserve the mutual residential amenity by reason of overlooking, privacy and outlook between the private residential properties to the north and the Care Home to the south.

- 8.42. The proposed car parking area on the western side of the site will in part replace an existing driveway that runs parallel to the northern boundary of the site. Nevertheless, the car parking area (spaces 11–17) are set back off the northern boundary and separated by a section of mature woodland that is being retained as part of the scheme. Proposed parking spaces 18–27 also lie away from the northern boundary and will be screened by the proposed new semi mature planting and an appropriate fence screen in order to preserve the amenities of no.s 19–20 Greenway. That said, these properties lie at a considerable distance (22m) away from the site boundary.
- 8.43. The sole means of access from Willian Road to the south and the closure of the other vehicle access from the west and its replacement by landscaped communal grounds and a wildlife walkway should represent a more sensitive access arrangement from a residential amenity perspective.
- 8.44. In summary, the proposed development will not adversely affect the amenities of any adjoining properties.

G) Design

- 8.45. The DAS sets out the considerable thought behind the proposed design of the replacement Care Home from both an architectural and operational perspective. Whilst development plan policy and national guidance look for good quality design as a basic policy requirement there are instances where positive weight can still be attached to good designs. One instance is a recent appeal decision⁶, co incidentally also relating to a Care Home within the Green Belt

⁶ Former Hotel Felix, Whitehouse Lane, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0LX Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/W/22/3307903 Decision dated 2nd June 2023

involving a replacement of a non-designated heritage asset. The Inspector commented in respect of design at paragraph 61 that:

“The design of the building and associated landscaping would be of high quality, although there was a dispute about the weight this should attract. The Council says there is a renewed emphasis on good design in the Framework: in particular, the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve as is the fostering of well designed, beautiful places. Therefore, it is argued, high quality design is not an optional extra, but a basic requirement of policy. Whilst I note the Council’s comments, much thought has gone into the design and landscaping to achieve a very pleasing building with attractive gardens. The new facility takes some design cues from the current building and would employ a varied and attractive palette of materials. I find that the design of the scheme, including its landscaping carries moderate weight”.

8.46. This same principle and weighting should apply here.

H) Other matters: Parking/Highways, SuDS, Ecology, landscaping and Trees

8.47. The application is supported by a number of reports which confirm the proposal is acceptable from a technical point of view. These include matters relating to:

- Highways and car parking
- Trees
- Landscaping
- Ecology including net biodiversity gain
- Drainage.
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

8.48. The Tree Report advises that the removal of certain trees is acceptable and that the retained trees will not be adversely impacted by the proposed development owing to the development being located beyond defined root protection zones.

I) Benefits of the proposal.

8.49. It is relevant to set out the benefits of the proposal before conducting the planning balance. The benefits of the scheme include:

-
1. Provision of replacement Care Home accommodation (The pros and cons of the existing Guysfield House Care Home compared to the qualitative enhancements of a new 21st century Care Home facility;
 2. Need for additional Care Home accommodation;
 3. Release of existing housing stock;
 4. Economic development;
 5. Health and well-being outcomes/ social cohesion and NHS efficiencies and savings;
 6. Enhancement of a non-designated heritage asset; and
 7. Design.

8.50. These are addressed under separate headings as follows.

1) Provision of replacement Care Home accommodation

8.51. The evidence is clear that the existing Care Home is no longer fit for modern day purposes and comprises a poor-quality facility. The assessment and analysis of the existing facility is set out in some detail within the submitted Christie & Co report which confirms this. The report also confirms that the existing Care Home by reason of its poor quality and limited size is no longer viable. The Council's first pre application response which had the benefit of a site visit also accepted these points too. The evidenced for this is now set out in Christie & Co report submitted with the application. This highlights the characteristics of the replacement Care Home highlighting the important differences and why this new proposal will represent a significantly improved facility. In response to the Council's planning and conservation area pre application comments, the architects have prepared a feasibility layout which confirms that the existing building could only accommodate 29 rooms. The floor plans together with a cost plan (see Annex 2) confirm that it is not economically or operationally viable to refurbish or reconfigure the existing building into a viable care home. As noted, this is too small to be a viable care home. A modern care home must now provide more than 60 places to be viable and be efficient and effective in terms of economies of scale etc ⁷. As a result, the only option to retain a suitable care home facility on the site and deliver the benefits of the scheme is the planned redevelopment scheme.

8.52. It will therefore make a much needed qualitative as well as quantitative improvement to the supply of Care Homes within the Letchworth and wider surrounding area. This aspect alone attracts substantial weight in the planning balance.

2) Meeting the wide-ranging needs of vulnerable older people

⁷ London Plan Housing SPG paragraph 3.7.15

2(a) Meeting an established C2 Care Home need

- 8.53. The NPPG confirms the need to plan for older people is ‘critical’. The submitted Carterwood report confirms that there is an outstanding need for additional and improved care home beds.
- 8.54. Immediate action needs to be taken to meet these identified needs. The challenges that the country has faced in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic should serve as a lesson that the health and well-being of all sectors of the population demographic is important, and that the needs of older ‘last time buyers’ are just as important as those of ‘first time buyers’. Addressing the quality of the existing care home and the wider supply and the shortfall in supply to meet the need for specialist accommodation for older people consistently features in appeal decisions as a factor that should be afforded substantial weight in the planning balance. The latter point is supported by case studies set out in Annex 1 to this statement. The need to replace the existing poor quality home with a new facility that is viable and better should, on its own be a compelling benefit of substantial even overriding weight.
- 8.55. As well as the efficient re-use and redevelopment of previously-developed land, the scheme would make optimum re-use of previously developed land, in a District that is heavily constrained in respect of development opportunities given that the majority is restricted by Green Belt. Substantial weight should therefore be afforded to the re-use of the site for the proposed development, given that the site is brownfield, and allows an opportunity to not only improve an existing facility in situ but on an already developed site. The benefits of the redevelopment are maximised by the fact that the scheme will make optimal use of the land to meet an identified housing need in an area with limited land opportunities and on a site that does not serve strong Green Belt purposes.
- 8.56. Need in this case is twofold. Firstly, the quality of the existing home is no longer fit for purpose. The submitted Christie & Co report confirms this. In addition, owing to the size and poor quality of the Care Home accommodation, the existing facility is no longer operationally viable. Again, this is confirmed in the Christie & Co report. Annex 2 and the DAS also confirm that the current care home facility cannot be refurbished or reconfigured in order to continue in an operationally viable manner. As noted, a refurbished / reconfigured scheme has been prepared that only delivers 29 rooms, the cost of which (£3.36m) is unviable too. This is too small to be a viable care home. The Christie and Carterwood Reports confirm this too. Therefore, the need

to replace and upgrade this existing facility is urgent. Without such improvements, the Care Home will close with the resulting loss of much-needed supported elderly accommodation and loss of jobs. In addition, the non-designated heritage assets (Guysfield House), and the remainder of the site will become vacant, a less than ideal scenario within the Willian Conservation Area. These material considerations are on their own compelling benefits of substantial even overriding weight.

- 8.57. The second aspect of need relates to an identified shortfall in the supply of Care Home bedrooms within Letchworth itself, the wider (5 km) catchment area and at district level. This need is in both a shortfall in number of bedrooms and in relation to the quality, or lack of quality, of the existing supply. This is highlighted in the supporting Carterwood report and summarised in Section 7 above.
- 8.58. The Council's pre-app response indicated that the council currently has a plan for care home provision on a need evidenced basis. In order to establish evidence of need it has to be presented to contradict the Council's approach and demonstrate it is out of date.
- 8.59. Firstly therefore, the Council's evidence base. This is set out in the North Herts Stevenage SHMA Part 2 update November 2023.
- 8.60. The updated SHMA paragraphs 6.6–6.21 address housing for older people. More specifically, paragraphs 6.12–6.21 confirm that the population age 75+ is likely to increase by around 3,232 in North Herts between 2022 and 2031 (paragraph 6.13 and figure 69). Paragraph 6.14 and figure 71 confirm that there is a current supply of 1,774 units across the owned and rented sectors in North Herts.
- 8.61. Paragraphs 6.15–6.21 quantify the need for specialist elderly accommodation. Having identified the levels of population increase, the SHMA's model of needs arising from the aging population and the supply of units confirms a significant shortfall in North Herts of 2,399 homes between 2022 and 2031, comprising unmet need at 2022 (1,638) and additional need arising in the intervening 10-year period to 2031 (761). The acknowledgment of the scale of unmet need at 2022 is not only significant but clearly material in the need issue generally and the nature of the need (it is immediate) for elderly accommodation.

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- 8.62. Paragraph 6.20 of the updated SHMA confirms:
- “In practice, the level of delivery identified as being required is unlikely to be achievable given that it represents almost half of the overall local housing need based on the standard method. However, it is important to recognise that the provision of dedicated older person housing schemes will form an important part of the overall housing mix.”**
- 8.63. The 2023 SHMA update postdates the adopted North Herts local plan (dated November 2022) which has been based on a much earlier evidence base.
- 8.64. It is therefore clear that a significant level of unmet need has been identified.
- 8.65. Secondly, the Carterwood report submitted with the planning application is an evidence based bespoke needs assessment that quantifies the level of need for specialist care homes and compares this with the current and projected levels of supply. The assessment, based on 2027, the earliest the proposed redevelopment of Guysfield Care Home could be made available, indicates a net need for 194 full market standard care home bedrooms in the 5-mile market catchment and 124 in the North Hertfordshire Council local authority area. Additional demand is arising from dementia diagnosis. The local area of Northeast Hertfordshire has a higher proportion of the local population, living with dementia, compared to the UK. In this regard, in terms of care home bedrooms dedicated for dementia care, our assessment indicates a net need for 302 full market standard care bedrooms in the 5-mile market catchment and 229 in the North Hertfordshire Council local authority area. As these shortfalls are subsets of the total undersupply of care beds, based on 2027, they clearly indicate the requirement to increase the provision of dedicated dementia care bedrooms in both assessed catchment areas.
- 8.66. It is clear that the Council’s most up-to-date (post local plan) evidence of need and the applicant’s care home need assessment both point to significant levels of need.
- 8.67. The nature and extent of this need is a very weighty material consideration in the determination of the application. As will be set out below, the weight to be attached to this consideration is substantial and represents a significant part of the justification for the proposed development having regard to not only its scale, but also, its impact in Green Belt terms and any perceived impacts in relation to the Conservation Area and the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area.

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- 8.68. In the light of the recognition at the national level that **“the need to provide housing for older people is critical”** (published in an update to NPPG on 26th June 2019), further corroborated by the evidence and research published at a national and local level regarding the need for accommodation to meet the needs of older people (as set out above), substantial weight should be afforded to the provision of accommodation for older people as part of the overall planning balance.
- 8.69. In particular, the provision of a C2 Care Home would help meet the acute need for additional Care Home bed spaces, including dementia beds, in a modern, purpose-built setting. Sadly, this is particularly pertinent in the light of the Covid-19 health crisis, where the format of purpose-built Care Homes, with shared facilities for each floor, accompanied by individual en-suite shower rooms, provide a far more efficient and safe way for carers to manage infection control.
- 8.70. The adopted development plan does not offer an imminent resolution of this which reinforces the case/need for this particular proposal.
- 8.71. Whilst sites large strategic allocations for C3 residential development make reference to Care Homes, these may only materialise later into this decade or more probably in the 2030’s. That said, no site allocation proposal will address the site specific issues at Guysfield house which requires an onsite solution involving the redevelopment of the existing home in situ.
- 8.72. As noted in Section 7 older people who need care cannot afford to wait until appropriate levels of provision become available. Inspectors⁸ have acknowledged this observing that elderly people requiring care home accommodation are less able to wait than those in the general population needing accommodation because their needs are immediate. Accordingly, there is an urgency in meeting unmet needs. For these reasons, significant weight should be given to these housing and people care benefits. In this regard, the PPG (Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626) is clear that: **“where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need”**.
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⁸ Appeal Ref: APP/B1930/W/20/3259161 Chelford House, Coldharbour Lane, Harpenden AL5 4UN (September 2021), para 34

- 8.73. The proposed improved Care Home will therefore help meet the acute need for additional Care Home bedspaces, including specifically designed dementia beds, with the added benefit (exclusive to this site and scheme) of replacing the poorer quality Care Home on site by re-providing (and increasing the number of beds) in a high quality, modern and purpose-built setting, well located to meet these important needs.

2(b) Meeting general housing needs

- 8.74. Recognising that the proposal will meet an established need for C2 Care Home accommodation, the scheme will also be catalytic in terms of freeing up existing C3 housing stock. The properties occupied by older people have the potential to meet the housing needs of other groups in the demographic profile in the District. This was acknowledged by an Inspector in an appeal decision into the Extra Care Home proposal in West Malling, Kent, referenced above (APP/H2265/W/18/3202040). The Inspector stated at paragraph 42 that:

“As the Government has recognised in paragraphs 4.42 to 4.44 of the White Paper ‘Fixing our broken housing market’, helping older people to move at the right time and in the right way can help their quality of life as well as freeing up more homes for other buyers. Under-occupied homes could then be released onto the market where they would be particularly attractive to those in younger age groups in need of larger houses to raise families. The provision of specialist housing more suited to the needs of older persons is likely to encourage them to move and would make a valuable contribution to overall housing needs which should be weighed in the balance.”

- 8.75. With specific regard to this proposal, it is clear that a number of local residential dwellings will be freed up by building the new larger Care Home. Using the Government’s Housing Delivery Test Guidance conversion figure of 1.8 bedspaces freeing up 1 open market dwelling, this would be equivalent to creating availability of 11 ‘newly available’ homes. This would represent an equivalent increase of those 11 new homes, thus, contributing to five-year housing land supply based on a simple numeric calculation through the delivery of Care Home bedspaces. As section 6 confirms, the Council’s five-housing land supply is marginally above the minimum requirement. Therefore, this additional multiplier effect, given the strong likelihood that additional C3 housing capacity will be generated through the release of existing accommodation to meet other housing needs in the local authority’s demographic is an important additional benefit.

- 8.76. Concluding on this point, meeting general housing needs is a positive additional benefit, consistent with the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing, and within this, meeting specialist Care Home/Older People's accommodation needs is also of significant benefit, particularly given the scale of growth predicted in households where the HRP is aged 75+. Every opportunity to maximise the delivery of new homes in the local authority's administrative area should be supported.

2(c) Social cohesion and health and well-being outcomes

- 8.77. The provision of high quality replacement and additional C2 bed spaces for older people will make a material contribution towards meeting significant and important needs, particularly in respect of the health and well-being of local residents through a specialist care offer: a care package; monitoring of residents' well-being; facilities to encourage activity and mobility; and reduced isolation and associated mental health issues (something that has come sharply into focus in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic). These aspects have been recognised in two recent reports: 'All the Lonely People: Loneliness in Later Life'⁹ 'Homes for Later Living: Healthier and Happier Report'¹⁰.
- 8.78. These demonstrated that high quality Care Home accommodation for older people has an important role to play in reducing loneliness in older age, and that each person living in a home for later life enjoys a reduced risk of health challenges, caused by mobility problems, falls, difficulties in keeping a home warm, and the consequent health issues arising, and social isolation, which can lead to depression, dementia, and other chronic illnesses.

2(d) NHS efficiencies and savings

- 8.79. An added benefit of meeting these needs is the knock on benefit to the NHS. Meeting these needs can contribute to fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of approximately £3,500 per year per person. The research also concluded that building 30,000 more retirement housing dwellings every year for the next 10 years would generate fiscal savings across the NHS and social services of £2.1bn per year, and that on a selection of national well-being criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10

⁹ All the Lonely People: Loneliness in Later Life, Age UK, September 2018

¹⁰ Homes for Later Living: Healthier and Happier Report, Home Builders' Federation, September 2019

years younger after moving from mainstream housing to housing specially designed for later living.

8.80. This evidence confirms the social and economic benefits that would arise from the proposal. The on-site Care Home support will also reduce the need for residents to make use of primary health care services or social services in the area, as well as relieving pressure on hospital bedspaces.

8.81. This is corroborated by research carried out by Aston University. From 2012 to 2015 the Extra Care Charitable Trust commissioned Aston University to undertake a study looking at the benefits for older people of living in a retirement village, with some of the findings also transferable for the purpose of understanding the health and well-being benefits of residing in a C2 Care Home. The study highlighted for the first time the benefits of allowing older people to live in a retirement community with on-site support services. Key findings of the research included:

- Residents experienced a significant reduction in the duration of unplanned hospital stays from 8 to 14 days to 1 to 2 days;
- Routine GP appointments for residents fell 46% after a year;
- NHS costs for residents were cut by 38% over 12 months compared with their costs when they first moved in.

8.82. Accordingly, there is evidence that the new improved/part replacement Care Home scheme, accounting for the nature of on-site care provided, will reduce pressures on existing local healthcare facilities such that in fact, no improvements will be required to existing healthcare. There is in fact often less need to call on local healthcare services, rather than more. In addition, residents are frequently already living in the local area, therefore registered with a GP practice in the locality, hence not resulting in a net additional demand on the GP system.

8.83. This latter point is corroborated by Care Home operators, who report that for the most part, over 70% of people who move into a Care Home do so from within a 3-mile radius of the home. At an average age of 88, where the choice exists, people prefer to stay within their local environment for ease of access to friends and family. This then means that the majority of the people living within the home will remain registered to their current local GP practice and

therefore the care home would not be adding any additional burden to the local surgeries. Therefore, given the predominantly local catchment for Care Homes, for the most part, it will not create net additional people within a new location per se. Nevertheless, for the remaining residents that do move from outside the catchment area of the local surgery, they will in turn be freeing up a space/allocation in their existing surgery, resulting in no net additional demand on the NHS in any event.

8.84. Operator experience also suggests that a combination of solutions is in place to meet the residents' medical needs. Some Care Homes have regular visits from GPs who attend the home outside core surgery hours, and see residents 1-2-1 over a short, focused, period of time. This is seen by all as a huge benefit to local GPs, who can see more people in a short space of time, thus supporting the Care Home residents, but also being far more efficient in terms of demand on GPs' time. Other local GPs carry on as they would normally, and the Care Home operator arranges transport to/from the local surgeries. Thus, there are a variety of ways that the residents can see a GP without this becoming an additional burden on a local Clinical Commissioning Group.

8.85. This view is affirmed in the findings from the Inspector's appeal decision in Tonbridge and Malling Borough in 2018¹¹, which related to the provision of a Care Home. With regard to health and well-being benefits, paragraph 43 of the Inspector's Report commented that:

"I acknowledge the Appellant's evidence, which the Council does not dispute, that the development would be likely to provide health and well-being benefits including: the care package; monitoring of the residents' well-being; facilities to encourage activity and mobility; and reduced isolation. The on-site support would be likely to reduce the need for residents to make use of primary health care services or social services as well as relieving pressure on hospital bed-spaces..."
(Underlining added)

8.86. In addition, it should be reiterated that, in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the format of purpose-built Care Homes (unlike the current home), with shared facilities for each floor, accompanied by individual en-suite shower rooms, provide a far more efficient and safe way for carers to manage infection control. Moreover, this provides residents with a safe place to

¹¹ Appeal Reference APP/H2265/W/18/3202040, Land to the rear of 237-259 London Road, West Malling

call 'home' that can support their day-to-day needs. This is a very important health and well-being benefit.

8.87. Finally, in the light of research into the need for specialist accommodation to meet the needs of older people, and the evidence that this bespoke accommodation has significant fiscal and well-being benefits, including tackling feelings of isolation in older age, the physical and mental health and well-being benefits arising from the provision of this specialist accommodation is indisputable. In fact, without such provision, given the clear evidence regarding health and well-being benefits of providing specialist accommodation for older people as set out above, in the light of the household projections (which suggest that there will be more than an additional 1 million households aged 75+ between 2020 and 2030) the consequences for the public adult social care and NHS budgets would be even more far reaching.

8.88. In summary, there are notable overall net benefits to health and well-being of the local community that would arise from the proposal, and these should be given **significant weight** in the planning balance given the social objective set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF in respect of the delivery of sustainable development.

8.89. To conclude, on second benefit, by meeting an identified need for improved and additional care home bed provision, the proposal:

1. Address the existing inadequacies of Guysfeild House Care Home by a replacement high quality, fit for purpose care home.
2. Preventing an existing unviable and out of date care home facility from closing.
3. Meets a need that is by its very nature an immediate one that cannot wait.
4. Meets an identified evidence based need (both local authority and applicant sourced).
5. Contributes to the council's housing land supply.
6. Releases former homes of the care home residents to the market, creating an additional added source of housing supply.
7. Provide an enhanced level of care meeting specific and important needs of vulnerable elderly residents.
8. Delivering positive health outcomes for elderly residents.
9. Reducing bed blocking in the NHS and delivering wider efficiencies and savings for GPs and the NHS.

Benefits 1-3 are both wide ranging and important and should attract substantial weight in the Planning/Green Belt/Heritage balancing exercises.

3. Economic development and employment benefits

- 8.90. As noted in the Christie & Co report, the existing operation is no longer viable, and without the proposed redevelopment scheme, it will close. Accordingly, this proposal represents a scheme that will not only retain the existing employment on site but increase it with the associated rise in number of bedrooms. In this regard, this form of economic development, consistent with paragraph 85 of the NPPF, obligates local planning authorities to place significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, reinforced by the new Government's economic policy. That same significant weight should apply to this proposal.
- 8.91. The proposal will represent a substantial multi-million-pound investment into the area. Not only will there be the direct short-term economic benefits arising from the construction phase for the development, but there will also be direct long-term economic benefits arising from retaining (and preventing closure: see Christie & Co report) and increasing the employment opportunities associated with the day-to-day operation of the Care Home.
- 8.92. In addition, there will also be indirect economic benefits arising from employment and activity in the supply chain companies providing support services for the enlarged Care Home. An induced economic benefit will also arise through expenditure from employees spending their income on goods and services in the local economy. This delivers an enhanced economic use, therefore contributing to the resilience of a local economy.
- 8.93. These economic benefits are corroborated by an appeal decision on land in Arun District¹²:

“46...Economically, the scheme would support the construction industry during the build phase and a significant number of jobs would be created when the centre is operational. Spending by users of the care centre would support local businesses such as the nearby public house. All of these benefits must be factored into the planning balance.”

- 8.94. In addition, in the light of the HBF Homes for Later Living: Healthier and Happier Report, other indirect economic benefits will include annual savings to the NHS and Adult Social Care budgets (see Benefit 2).

¹² APP/C3810/W/19/3227374: Land to the rear of Bairds Farm Shop, Crookthorn Lane, Littlehampton BN17 5SN

- 8.95. In this context, the provision of specialist accommodation for older people is strongly aligned with the economic objectives set out in the NPPF, and accordingly, added weight can be added into the planning balance on account of the economic benefits that would arise from the proposal.

9. VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES / PLANNING BALANCE

- 9.1. Annex 1 highlights, by reference to a number of appeal cases, the consistency of a number of significant benefits that arise from new Care Home developments that affirm that the benefits highlighted above have been accepted elsewhere. Secondly, those benefits were capable of clearly outweighing the substantial harm that arose in those cases due to the schemes being inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The examples therefore provide comfort and evidence that these matters can indeed amount to very special circumstances clearly outweighing harm to the Green Belt. Accordingly, it would be perfectly reasonable and rational for the Council to support this application.

Analysis

- 9.2. It is evident from the above together with the supportive examples in Annex 1 that new Care Homes can deliver important positive outcomes, attracting significant/substantial weight that individually or collectively can amount to very special circumstances, clearly outweighing the substantial harm to the Green Belt and any other harms.
- 9.3. Accordingly, and in respect of this application, it is clear that:
- Address the existing inadequacies of Guysfeild House Care Home by a replacement high quality, fit for purpose care home.
 - Preventing an existing unviable and out of date care home facility from closing.
 - Meets a need that is by its very nature an immediate one that cannot wait.
 - Enhancing the quality of Care Home accommodation generally (in addition to the site) (where the current Care Home and general stock (supply) is poor and no longer fit for purpose);
 - Meeting identified unmet Care Home need, in particular for nursing care and dementia residents, which government policy confirms is “critical”. The proposed Care Home will deliver much needed accommodation for dementia residents;
 - Providing high-quality, purpose designed accommodation and care for an increasing proportion of the population suffering from dementia;
 - A form of development that releases former homes of its new residents;
 - Reducing social isolation for vulnerable elderly residents;
 - Alleviating pressure on the NHS hospitals and services by treating residents on site; and
 - Creating varied and additional employment opportunities in the Care Home and through supporting services/agencies.
- 9.4. In addition to these, and unique with this planning application, are the following additional circumstances:

-
- Securing a long-term optimal viable use of the non-designated heritage asset, a material consideration in itself (NPPF paragraph 203). Substantial weight in favour of the proposal is given to this consideration (moderate weight) (confirmed by the conservation officer pre application response dated 10/05/2024);
 - Enhancement to the setting of Guysfield House through re-establishing its original detached form, and a new high-quality setting including a planned sculpture court and high quality landscaping (moderate weight) (confirmed by the conservation officer pre application response dated 10/05/2024);
 - Enhanced planting to filter views of the replacement care home thereby adding to the rural character to Willian Road and its contribution to the conservation area (moderate weight) (confirmed by the conservation officer pre application response dated 10/05/2024);
 - Continued use of Guysfield House to sustain its upkeep and condition (moderate weight) (confirmed by the conservation officer pre application response dated 10/05/2024);

9.5. Individually and collectively, these comprise very special circumstances. All of these considerations arise in this application. The evidence therefore supports this balancing exercise.

9.6. Very special circumstances are a matter of planning judgement. The courts (*Basildon District Council v Secretary of State EWHC 2759 (admin)*) have established that the case of very special circumstances is a two-stage process. The first is to determine whether any individual issue taken in isolation is sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. The second stage is to determine whether some, or all, of the factors in combination outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. In *Basildon* it has been established that a number of factors may exist, but none of them are “very special” when considered in isolation but when combined together can amount to very special circumstances. The judgement went on to confirm that “there is no reason why a number of factors ordinarily in themselves cannot combine to create something very special”.

9.7. The identified considerations that arise from this scheme meet these tests.

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- 9.8. Accordingly, collectively, the application gives rise to a number of significant benefits. When looking at the proposal as a whole, the outcomes are extensive in number and in nature, with deep rooted and long-lasting benefits of significant magnitude. These collectively amount to very special circumstances that clearly out way the substantial weight given to the definitional Green Belt harm and the moderate harm to the openness of the Green Belt. As to and any other harms, the impact of a larger replacement Care Home on the Conservation Area and rural landscape are perceived as less than substantial harm and only moderate harm respectively. Accordingly, having identified the harms and their weightings, the assessment now remains whether 'other considerations' individually or collectively clearly outweigh the harms identified such as to amount to very special circumstances necessary to justify the development. The analysis suggests that they clearly do. Consequently, very special circumstances exist, and the development is therefore justified such that planning permission can be granted.

Annex 1

Care Homes and the application of Green Belt policy and planning balances

- 10.1. Six recent appeal decisions are attached but summarised below before highlighting the characteristics /benefits arising from the application scheme that reinforce and confirm the genuine case for very special circumstances here.

Case studies

1. Chapelfield, Waltham Abbey, PINS reference 3289822. Decision date 2nd September 2022.

80, bed care home.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt attracting substantial weight against the proposal (DL 16).

60 beds will make a significant quantity of high quality specialist nursing care accommodation towards the needs - weighs heavily in favour (DL32).

Alleviating pressure on NHS and local services by providing on-site nursing care – significant weight (DL32).

Net, biodiversity gain and removal of open storage attract moderate weight (DL33 and 34).

Significant benefits clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt (DL 52).

2. Billericay Essex. PINS reference 3302878. Decision date 24 November 2022

2 storey care home.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (DL9).

Inappropriate location by reason of access to services and facilities (DL 18).

Substantial unmet need (DL 36).

Absence of a strategy to meet the need and lack of alternative sites to meet the need – considerable weight (DL37).

44-unit contribution to housing land supply deficit – significant weight (DL39).

Employment benefits – moderate weight (DL42).

Identified harm collectively of a high order (DL 47).

Care home need attracts considerable weight/contribution to housing land supply attracts significant weight.

Economic benefits- moderate weight.

Social benefits (proximity to garden centre) limited weight.

Collectively benefits of a very high order (DL48).

Extent of harm clearly outweighed by benefits, therefore representing very special circumstances (DL 49).

3. Sevenoaks, Edenbridge PINS reference 327 1595. Decision date 2 November 2021.

Care retirement community.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (DL 95).

Significant weight to meeting an identify need (DL97).

Improve well-being and health outcomes – moderate weight.

Employment opportunities – moderate weight .

Local highway improvement – moderate weight (DL 98).

Cumulatively these benefits outweigh the harm to the Green Belt (DL101).

4. Bromsgrove PINS reference 3300186. Decision date 27 January 2023.

72 bed care home.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (DL5/6).

Meeting unmet care home need with a lack of any strategy is a significant weight in favour of the proposal (DL 38/39).

Contribution to housing land supply, coupled with freeing up market housing - significant weight (DL41).

Reducing pressure on local NHS services significant weight (DL45).

New employment opportunities significant weight (DL 48).

Totality of harm to Green Belt clearly outweighed by aforementioned benefits (DL 51).

5. Solihull PINS reference 328 5876. Decision date 25 March 2022.

85 bed care village (class C2).

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (DL 10).

Detrimental effect on character and appearance of the area albeit limited (DL 21).

Unmet need and a lack of identified sites/strategy to meet care home needs weighs in favour (DL37).

Housing land supply shortfall and freeing up general market housing weighs in favour (DL 38).

New employment opportunities – weighs in favour (DL 40).

Social benefits weighs in favour (DL 43).

None of the benefits are particularly unusual, but collectively clearly outweigh the Green Belt harm and other harms (DL 47).

High level of need; no adopted strategy to address it; uncertainty as to when strategy will be in place and start to deliver care home accommodation; absence of other identified sites – the plus job creation (a more modest benefit) were found to clearly outweigh Green Belt harms, and therefore very special circumstances arose (DL 47/48).

6. The Priory, Burnham PINS reference 3291352. Decision date 30 December 2022.

75 bed care home.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt (DL 26).

Less than substantial harm to the setting of a listed building (DL 45).

Less than substantial harm to the special character of the conservation area (DL 47).

Contributing to care home needs attracts very significant weight (DL66).

Contributing to a housing land supply shortfall and releasing former homes of its new residents attracts significant weight (DL67).

Care home reducing risk of social isolation and reducing potential calls on the NHS as well as improving health and well-being of residents attracts moderate weight (DL 68).

Employment/economic benefits – moderate weight (DL69)

Net biodiversity gain – moderate weight, sustainable location – moderate weight (DL 71).

Facilitating use of a heritage assets – significant weight (DL 72).

Enhancing landscape setting to a listed building significant weight (DL73).

Development need can still outweigh Green Belt harms (DL88).

Looking at the proposal as a whole the other considerations (benefits) collectively amounted to very special circumstances (DL90).

Analysis

It is evident from the above analysis that new Care Homes can deliver important positive outcomes, attracting significant/substantial weight that individually or collectively do amount to very special circumstances, clearly outweighing the substantial harm to the Green Belt and any other harms.

Accordingly, and in respect of this application, it is clear that:

- Enhancing the quality of Care Home accommodation (where the current Care Home and general stock (supply) is poor and no longer fit for purpose);
- Meeting identified unmet Care Home need, in particular for nursing care and dementia residents, which government policy confirms is “critical”. The proposed Care Home will deliver much needed accommodation for dementia residents;
- Absence of a development plan led strategy to meet identified Care Home needs. The local plan does not allocate or set out a strategy to deliver additional, much needed Care Homes.
- Absence of identifying sites/opportunities for new Care Home developments;
- Providing high-quality, purpose designed accommodation and care for an increasing proportion of the population suffering from dementia;
- A form of development that releases former homes of its new residents;
- Reducing social isolation for vulnerable elderly residents;
- Alleviating pressure on the NHS hospitals and services by treating residents on site; and
- Creating varied employment opportunities in the Care Home and through supporting services/agencies.

In addition to these, and unique with this planning application, are the following additional circumstances:

- Enhancement to a non-designated heritage asset (Guysfield House).
- A high quality design to the replacement Care Home.

10.2. Individually and collectively, these comprise very special circumstances. All of these considerations arise in this application. The evidence therefore supports this balancing exercise.

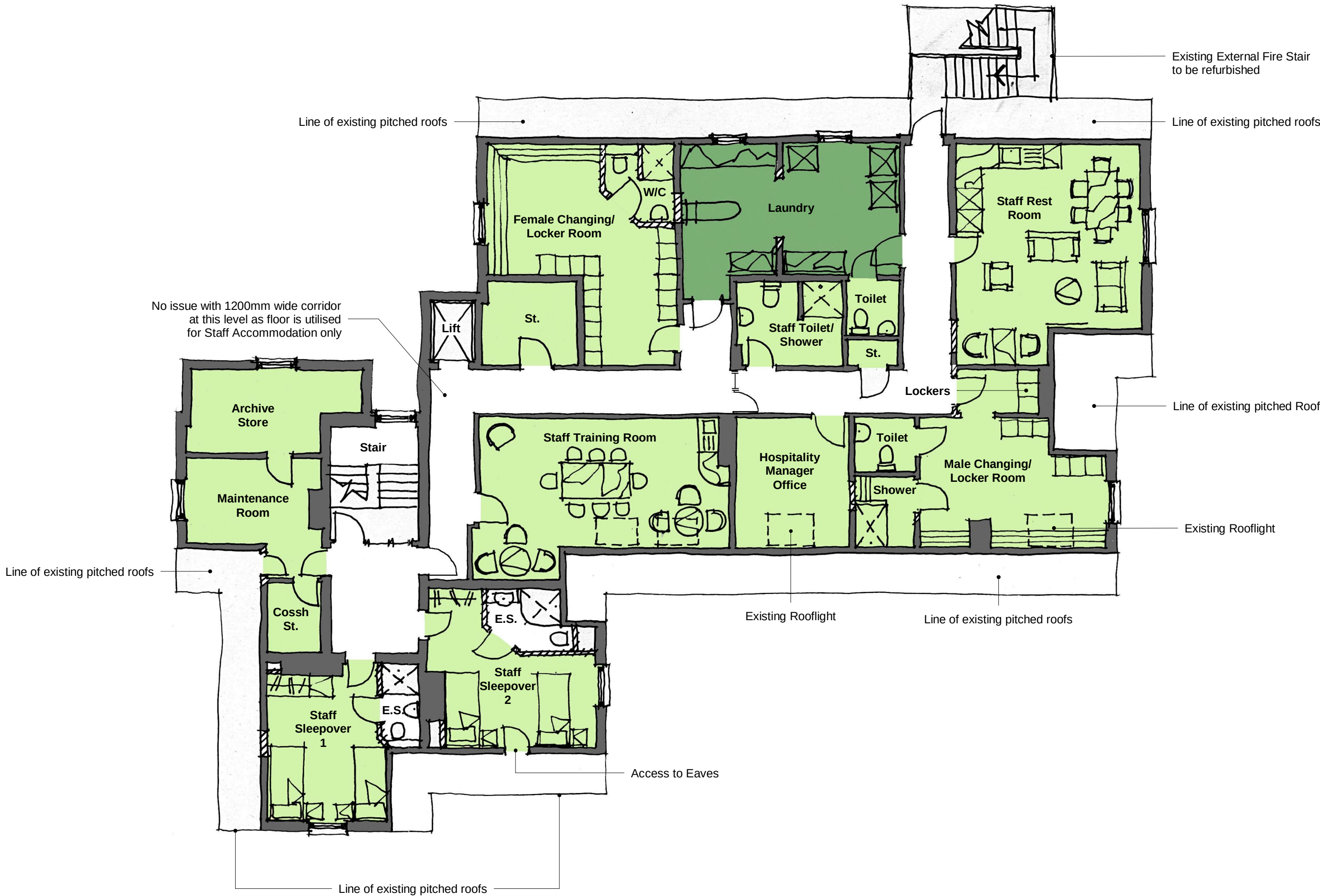
Annex 2

Refurbishment floor plans and cost plan



HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT CONSEQUENCE TABLE

Likelihood		Consequences				
		1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
Almost Certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
Possible	3	3	6	9	12	15
Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
Rare	1	1	2	3	4	5



KEY/LEGEND

- Existing Partitions/Walls retained
- New Partitions

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Resident Bedrooms
- Shared Resident Space
- Nursing / Admin
- Catering / Plant

Area Analysis

Basement: 190m² (4no. Resident Bedrooms)
Ground Floor: 750m² (12no. Resident Bedrooms)
First Floor: 616m² (13no. Resident Bedrooms)
Second Floor: 302m² (0no. Resident Bedrooms)

Total Resident Bedrooms: 29no.
(Average Size: 15.5m²)

Total GIFA: 1858m²
(64m² per Bedroom)

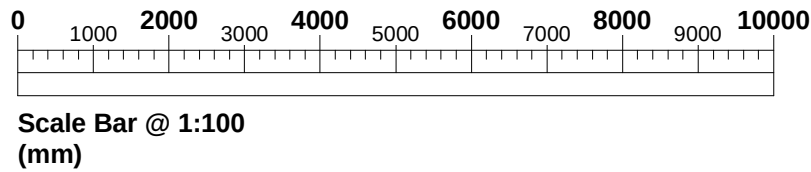
Resident Dayspace
Lounge & Dining Space: 147m²
(5.06m² per Bedroom)

Total Resident Dayspace
& Other Resident Space: 184.5m²
(6.36m² per Bedroom)

Staff Sleepover Sizes

Staff Sleepover 1: 15m²
Staff Sleepover 2: 16m²

1 Second Floor Plan
1 : 100



PLANNING

Concept Design

Second Floor Plan
Refurbishment Viability Study
(Total 29no. Bedrooms)

Guysfield Care Home at
Willian Road, Willian,
Letchworth for
Caring Homes Group Ltd

DATE CREATED 06/03/24
DESIGNER BAR
SCALE @ A2 As indicated

ORIGINATOR PROJECT NUMBER
4870

ISO DOCUMENT REF. 4870-ORA-01-02-DR-A-37100
REV

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HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT CONSEQUENCE TABLE	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
Almost Certain	5	5	5	5	5
Likely	4	4	4	4	4
Possible	3	3	3	3	3
Unlikely	2	2	2	2	2
Rare	1	1	1	1	1

KEYLEGEND

- Existing Partitions/Walls retained
- New Partitions

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Resident Bedrooms
- Shared Resident Space
- Nursing / Admin
- Catering / Plant

Area Analysis

Basement: 190m2 (4no. Resident Bedrooms)
Ground Floor: 750m2 (12no. Resident Bedrooms)
First Floor: 616m2 (13no. Resident Bedrooms)
Second Floor: 302m2 (0no. Resident Bedrooms)

Total Resident Bedrooms: 29no.
(Average Size: 15.5m2)

Total GIFA: 1858m2
(64m2 per Bedroom)

Resident Dayspace
Lounge & Dining Space: 147m2
(5.06m2 per Bedroom)

Total Resident Dayspace
& Other Resident Space: 184.5m2
(6.36m2 per Bedroom)

Resident Bedroom Sizes

First Floor Plan

Bedroom 17: 14.5m²
Bedroom 18: 21.5m²
Bedroom 19: 21.5m²
Bedroom 20: 16.5m²
Bedroom 21: 18.5m²
Bedroom 22: 20m²
Bedroom 23: 15.5m²
Bedroom 24: 18.5m²
Bedroom 25: 17.5m²
Bedroom 26: 14.5m²
Bedroom 27: 25m²
Bedroom 28: 16.5m²
Bedroom 29: 19.5m²

Rev.	Description	Auth.	Date
REVISION			

STAMP
PLANNING

PROJECT STATUS
Concept Design

DRAWING TITLE
First Floor Plan
Refurbishment Viability Study
(Total 29no. Bedrooms)

PROJECT
Guysfield Care Home at
Willian Road, Willian, Letchworth for
Caring Homes Group Ltd

DATE CREATED
06/03/24

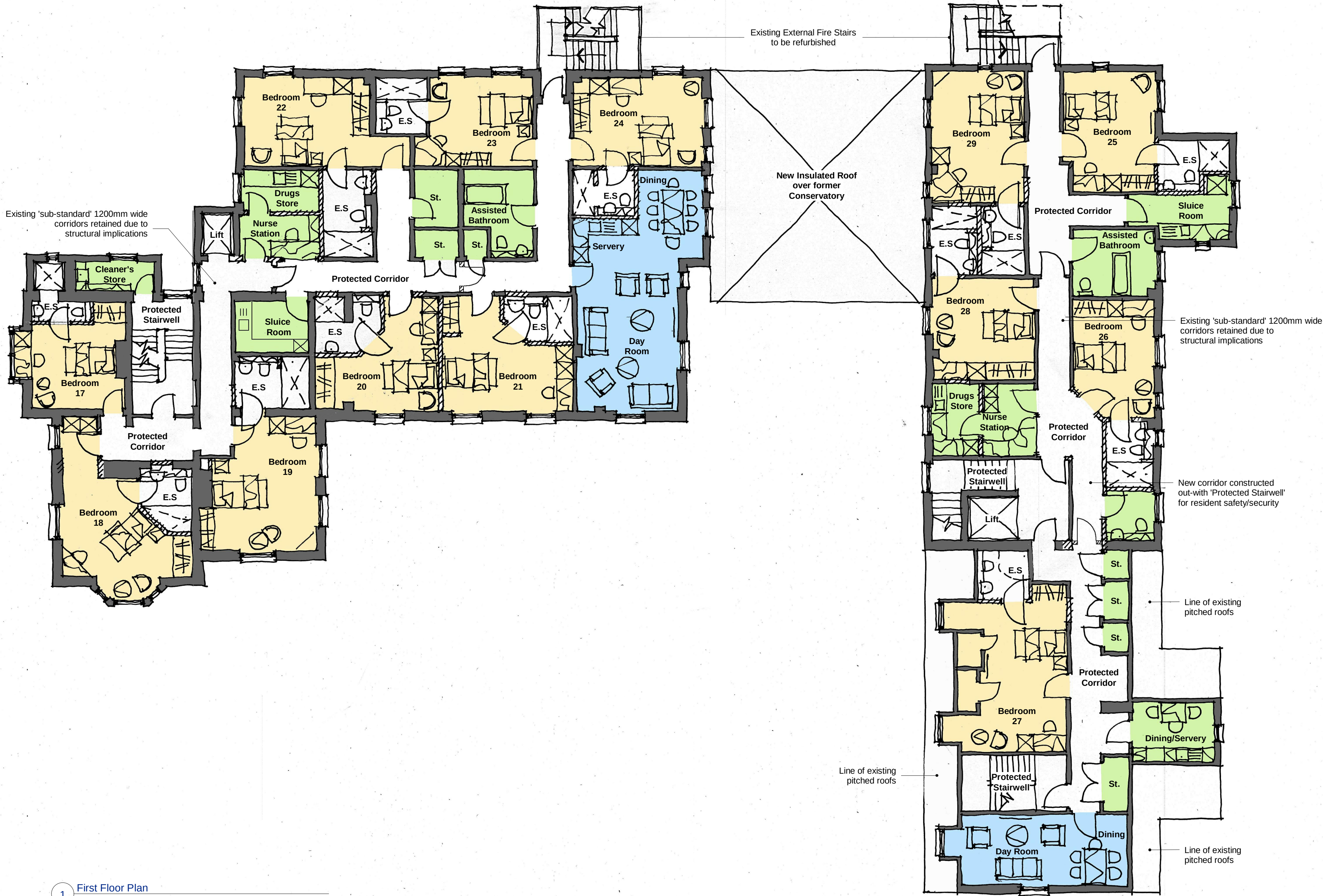
DESIGNER
BAR

SCALE @ A1
As indicated

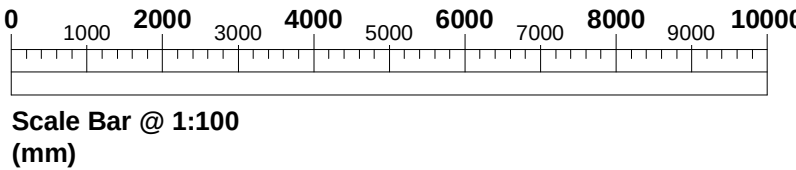
ORIGINATOR PROJECT NUMBER
4870

ISO DOCUMENT REF.
4870-ORA-01-01-DR-A-37100

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1 First Floor Plan
1:100





HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT CONSEQUENCE TABLE		Consequences				
Likelihood	1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost Certain	5	10	15	20	25	30
Likely	4	8	12	16	20	24
Possible	3	6	9	12	15	18
Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10	12
Rare	1	2	3	4	5	6

KEYLEGEND

- Existing Partitions/Walls retained
- New Partitions

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Resident Bedrooms
- Shared Resident Space
- Nursing / Admin
- Catering / Plant

Area Analysis

Basement: 190m2 (4no. Resident Bedrooms)
Ground Floor: 750m2 (12no. Resident Bedrooms)
First Floor: 616m2 (13no. Resident Bedrooms)
Second Floor: 302m2 (0no. Resident Bedrooms)

Total Resident Bedrooms: 29no.
(Average Size: 15.5m2)

Total GIFA: 1858m2
(64m2 per Bedroom)

Resident Dayspace
Lounge & Dining Space: 147m2
(5.06m2 per Bedroom)

Total Resident Dayspace
& Other Resident Space: 184.5m2
(6.36m2 per Bedroom)

Resident Bedroom Sizes

Basement Floor Plan

Bedroom 1: 13.5m2
Bedroom 2: 12.5m2
Bedroom 3: 12.5m2
Bedroom 4: 13.5m2

Ground Floor Plan

Bedroom 5: 13.5m2
Bedroom 6: 11.5m2
Bedroom 7: 14.5m2
Bedroom 8: 16.5m2
Bedroom 9: 12.5m2
Bedroom 10: 14.5m2
Bedroom 11: 14m2
Bedroom 12: 12m2
Bedroom 13: 12m2
Bedroom 14: 13.5m2
Bedroom 15: 12.5m2
Bedroom 16: 13m2

Rev.	Description	Auth.	Date
1	REVISION		

STAMP
PLANNING

PROJECT STATUS
Concept Design

DRAWING TITLE
Basement & Ground Floor Plan
Refurbishment Viability Study
(Total 29no. Bedrooms)

PROJECT
Guysfield Care Home at
Willian Road, Willian, Letchworth for
Caring Homes Group Ltd

DATE CREATED
06/03/24

DESIGNER
BAR

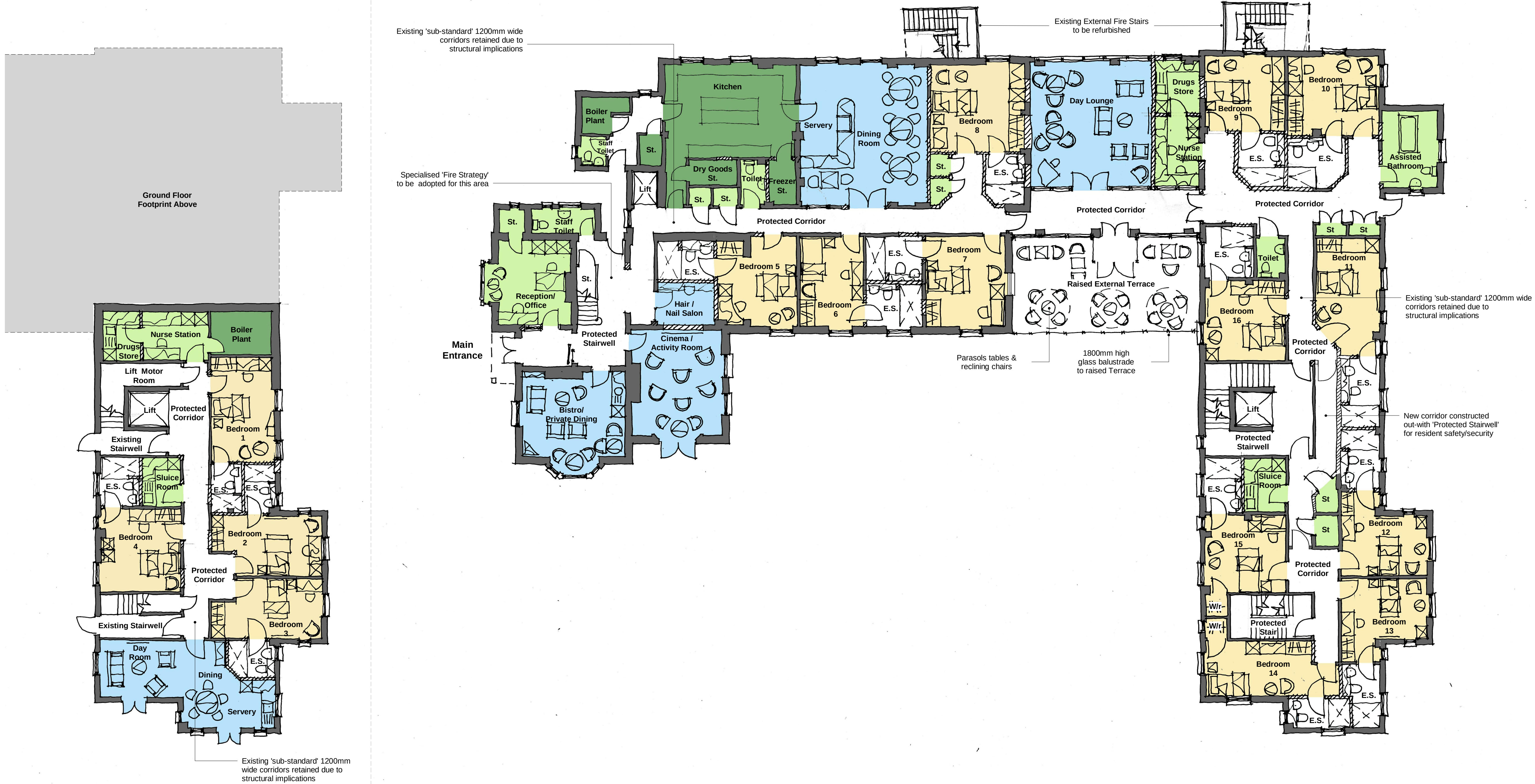
SCALE @ A1
As indicated

ORIGINATOR PROJECT NUMBER
4870

ISO DOCUMENT REF.
4870-ORA-01-00-DR-A-37100

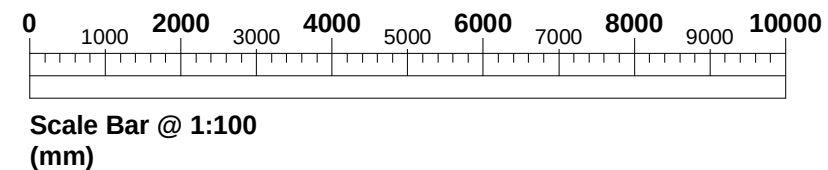
REV.

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1 Basement Plan
1:100

2 Ground Floor Plan
1:100





Guysfield Care Home, Letchworth

24/027

Estimate

27 March 2024

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Facilitating Works				
A	Allowance for fabric repairs to Grade II listed building	1.00	Item	84,000.00	84,000.00
	Demolition Works				
B	Internal soft strip of existing building; floor coverings, wall tiling, skirting, ceilings, architrave, internal doors, mechanical and electrical services	1.00	Item	48,580.00	48,580.00
	Alteration Works				
C	Forming openings	8.00	Nr	481.60	3,852.80
D	Infill former door	24.00	Nr	140.00	3,360.00
E	External paintwork – fascias & soffits, canopies, decorative metalwork	1.00	Item	15,680.00	15,680.00
	Stairs				
F	Refurbishment 2 x external fire stairs	1.00	Nr	11,760.00	11,760.00
Section 1/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					167,232.80

COLLECTION	£
Section 1/Page 1	167,232.80
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 1	167,232.80

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Roof				
A	New lightweight roof over former conservatory	86.00	m2	324.80	27,932.80
B	Replacement roof windows	1.00	Item	4,480.00	4,480.00
C	Full strip and reslate of Guysfield House and extensions, including replacement flashings, decorative ridges etc	1.00	Item	218,400.00	218,400.00
D	Replacement rainwater goods	1.00	Item	14,000.00	14,000.00
	Windows & External Doors				
E	Windows to former conservatory	27.00	m2	840.00	22,680.00
F	New window to drug store	1.00	Nr	616.00	616.00
G	New front entrance power assisted pair of doors	1.00	Nr	19,040.00	19,040.00
H	Enclosed lobby leading to raised external terrace	1.00	Nr	20,160.00	20,160.00
J	Pair of doors leading to raised external terrace	1.00	Nr	4,480.00	4,480.00
K	New replacement double glazed windows and doors throughout	1.00	Item	84,000.00	84,000.00
Section 2/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					415,788.80

COLLECTION	£
Section 2/Page 1	415,788.80
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 2	415,788.80

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Internal Walls and Partitions				
A	New wall	491.00	m2	109.76	53,892.16
B	Full height screen/ window	16.00	m2	672.00	10,752.00
	Internal Doors				
	Entrance lobby, aluminium				
C	New automated sliding door with side screen	1.00	Nr	14,560.00	14,560.00
	Veneered door in painted softwood frame, including ironmongery				
D	Corridor/ stairs	21.00	Nr	1,041.60	21,873.60
E	Corridor/ stairs (double)	1.00	Nr	2,004.80	2,004.80
F	Front of house	6.00	Nr	985.60	5,913.60
G	Front of house (double)	2.00	Nr	1,909.60	3,819.20
H	Bedroom	31.00	Nr	862.40	26,734.40
J	Bed en-suite	29.00	Nr	778.40	22,573.60
K	Back of house	61.00	Nr	784.00	47,824.00
L	Back of house (double)	5.00	Nr	1,624.00	8,120.00
Section 3/Page 1					218,067.36
Carried To Collection					

COLLECTION	£
Section 3/Page 1	218,067.36
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 3	218,067.36

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Wall Finishes				
A	Plaster skim finish to walls	5,277.00	m2	17.92	94,563.84
B	Allowance for repairs to existing walls	1.00	Item	11,200.00	11,200.00
C	Paint to walls	4,197.00	m2	10.64	44,656.08
D	Tiling (PC Sum £30.00m2)	875.00	m2	89.60	78,400.00
E	Hygienic cladding to kitchen and laundry	205.00	m2	123.20	25,256.00
F	Wallpaper (PC Sum £15.00m2), quantity assumed	850.00	m2	39.20	33,320.00
G	Acoustics to cinema	1.00	Item	11,760.00	11,760.00
H	Windowboard, softwood or mdf painted	110.00	m	47.04	5,174.40
J	Boxings	170.00	m	58.24	9,900.80
K	Access panels, quantity assumed	75.00	Nr	140.00	10,500.00
L	Handrail to corridor	257.00	m	64.96	16,694.72
M	Curtain batten	145.00	m	14.00	2,030.00
N	Corner protectors	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Section 4/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					343,455.84

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Floor Finishes				
A	Allowance for repairs to existing floor	1.00	Item	11,200.00	11,200.00
B	Carpet to circulation spaces	273.00	m2	64.96	17,734.08
C	Carpet to stairs	134.00	m2	84.00	11,256.00
D	Carpet to communal areas	191.00	m2	70.56	13,476.96
E	Vinyl to common wet rooms	160.00	m2	72.80	11,648.00
F	Vinyl to staff areas	246.00	m2	64.96	15,980.16
G	Entrance matting	1.00	Item	560.00	560.00
H	Carpet to bedrooms	491.00	m2	67.20	32,995.20
J	Floor tiles to bedroom en-suites	140.00	m2	66.08	9,251.20
K	Timber skirting, painted	1,115.00	m	21.28	23,727.20
L	Vinyl cap & cove	485.00	m	20.72	10,049.20
M	Tile skirting	248.00	m	23.52	5,832.96
N	Stair nosings	128.00	m	14.56	1,863.68
Section 4/Page 2					Carried To Collection
					165,574.64

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Ceiling Finishes				
A	Suspended metal frame ceiling, 12.5mm plasterboard, skim coat plaster, painted	887.00	m2	71.12	63,083.44
B	Double layer insulation to warm roof, 12.5mm plasterboard, skim coat plaster, painted	396.00	m2	77.84	30,824.64
C	12.5mm plasterboard, skim coat plaster, painted	285.00	m2	35.28	10,054.80
D	Replacement loft insulation	315.00	m2	14.56	4,586.40
E	Allowance for service penetrations	1.00	Item	3,920.00	3,920.00
F	Access panels, quantity assumed	70.00	Nr	168.00	11,760.00
G	Allowance for entrance ceiling feature	1.00	Item	3,360.00	3,360.00
H	Coving, quantity assumed	700.00	m	13.44	9,408.00
Section 4/Page 3					Carried To Collection
					136,997.28

COLLECTION	£
Section 4/Page 1	343,455.84
Section 4/Page 2	165,574.64
Section 4/Page 3	136,997.28
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 4	646,027.76

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Fittings, Furnishings and Equipment				
A	Reception/ Office	1.00	Nr	10,080.00	10,080.00
B	Day Room Servery	1.00	Nr	22,400.00	22,400.00
C	Bistro/ Private Dining	1.00	Nr	22,400.00	22,400.00
D	Dining Servery	2.00	Nr	22,400.00	44,800.00
E	Day/ Dining Servery	1.00	Nr	22,400.00	22,400.00
F	Cinema/ Activity room	1.00	Nr	16,800.00	16,800.00
G	Hair/ Nail Salon	1.00	Nr	3,360.00	3,360.00
H	Hospitality manager office	1.00	Nr	2,800.00	2,800.00
J	Kitchen	1.00	Nr	56,000.00	56,000.00
K	Laundry	1.00	Nr	8,960.00	8,960.00
L	Drugs store	4.00	Nr	1,680.00	6,720.00
M	Dry goods store	1.00	Nr	2,240.00	2,240.00
N	Freezer store	1.00	Nr	2,240.00	2,240.00
P	Sluice room	4.00	Nr	5,880.00	23,520.00
Q	Nurse station	4.00	Nr	3,136.00	12,544.00
R	Male changing	1.00	Nr	6,720.00	6,720.00
S	Female changing	1.00	Nr	6,720.00	6,720.00
T	Staff rest room	1.00	Nr	4,480.00	4,480.00
U	Staff training room	1.00	Nr	5,600.00	5,600.00
V	Store, not all to be fitted out	8.00	Nr	1,288.00	10,304.00
W	Maintenance room	1.00	Nr	1,120.00	1,120.00
X	Archive store	1.00	Nr	1,120.00	1,120.00
Y	Cleaners store	1.00	Nr	1,344.00	1,344.00
Z	COSHH store	1.00	Nr	1,232.00	1,232.00
Section 5/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					295,904.00

COLLECTION	£
Section 5/Page 1	295,904.00
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 5	295,904.00

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Services				
	Sanitaryware				
A	Bedroom en-suite	29.00	Nr	2,128.00	61,712.00
B	General WC	6.00	Nr	1,792.00	10,752.00
C	Assisted bathroom	3.00	Nr	16,800.00	50,400.00
D	Staff changing	2.00	Nr	3,360.00	6,720.00
E	Staff toilet & shower	1.00	Nr	2,800.00	2,800.00
	M&E Installation				
F	Mechanical installation	1,734.00	m2	240.80	417,547.20
G	Electrical installation	1,734.00	m2	218.40	378,705.60
H	Lifts, replacement in existing shafts	1.00	Psum	100,000.00	100,000.00
J	Kitchen ventilation	1.00	Item	16,800.00	16,800.00
K	Sprinkler system	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
L	Unspecified feature light fittings	1.00	Item	22,400.00	22,400.00
M	AV Installation	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
N	Nurse call system	1.00	Item	28,000.00	28,000.00
P	BMS, basic system	1.00	Item	5,600.00	5,600.00
Q	Lighting Control System, basic system	1.00	Item	5,600.00	5,600.00
R	Refuge Alarm	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Section 6/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					1,107,036.80

COLLECTION	£
Section 6/Page 1	1,107,036.80
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 6	1,107,036.80

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Drainage				
A	Allowance, no scope	1.00	Item	16,800.00	16,800.00
	External Works				
B	Raised external terrace with balustrading	1.00	Item	17,668.00	17,668.00
C	Allowance for lifting inappropriate external paving, tarmac repairs, remove tarmac path to existing entrance, new ramps in and around new entrance etc	1.00	Item	31,360.00	31,360.00
D	Landscape allowance, including decorative lighting	1.00	Psum	150,000.00	150,000.00
Section 7/Page 1					215,828.00
Carried To Collection					

COLLECTION	£
Section 7/Page 1	215,828.00
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 7	215,828.00

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
A	Preliminaries Preliminaries	1.00	Item	302,400.00	302,400.00
Section 8/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					302,400.00

COLLECTION	£
Section 8/Page 1	302,400.00
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 8	302,400.00

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Design Fees				
	Client Design Fees				
A	PM and QS	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
B	Architect	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
C	Structural Engineer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
D	Service Engineer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
E	Interior Designer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
	Contractor Design Fees				
F	Architect	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
G	Structural Engineer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
H	Service Engineer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
J	Acoustic Consultant	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
K	Landscape designer	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
L	Building Control	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
M	CDM Co-ordinator	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
N	EPC	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
P	Air Test	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
Q	BREEAM Consultant	1.00	Item	EXC	EXC
Section 9/Page 1					Carried To Collection
					0.00

COLLECTION	£
Section 9/Page 1	0.00
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 9	0.00

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Clarifications				
A	We have assumed free unfettered access and normal working hours to the site	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
B	Any items not mentioned within this estimate have been specifically excluded and will be subject to further costs	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
C	All finishes have been assumed therefore they are provisional	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
D	All decoration is assumed mid range paint supply, prices do not cover premium paints	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
E	No allowance for roof works other than to re-cover conservatory	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
F	No allowance for replacing internal stairs. Included to refurbish external fire escapes	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
G	No allowance for thermal improvements to external walls	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
H	All M&E is provisional sum and a specialist survey will be required	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
J	The provisional sum for mechanical, allows for new heating & plumbing throughout	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
K	The provisional sum for electrical, allows for a full rewire throughout	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Section 10/Page 1					0.00
Carried To Collection					

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	£
	Exclusions				
A	VAT. Will be charged at standard rate	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
B	Professional fees	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
C	Price and design risk	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
D	Contingency	0.00	Item	UNP	UNP
E	Inflation beyond the financial quarter of the date	0.00	Item	UNP	UNP
F	Contaminated ground, high water table, obstructions or build over agreements (services or drainage diversions)	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
G	Moving or altering existing services running over or under the site	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
H	Alterations or upgrades for incoming supplies or trenches	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
J	Temporary works	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
K	Skip permits or parking permits	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
L	Soft landscaping	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
M	Works in connection with Partywall	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
N	Section 106 payments	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
P	Cil payment	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Q	Underpinning	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
R	Steelwork	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
S	Legislation changes following issue	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
T	Out of hours working	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
U	Servicing/ maintenance outside of Defects Liability Period	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
V	Surveys & Investigations, including Asbestos R&D	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
W	Air tightness test/ air permeability test	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
X	SAP/ EPC	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Y	Toxic/ hazardous/ contaminated material/ toxic treatment	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Z	Removing/ encapsulating any asbestos	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
AA	Eradication of invasive plant growth	1.00	Item	UNP	UNP
Section 10/Page 2				Carried To Collection	0.00

COLLECTION	£
Section 10/Page 1	0.00
Section 10/Page 2	0.00
CARRIED TO COLLECTION AT END OF Section 10	0.00

COLLECTION	£
Section 1	167,232.80
Section 2	415,788.80
Section 3	218,067.36
Section 4	646,027.76
Section 5	295,904.00
Section 6	1,107,036.80
Section 7	215,828.00
Section 8	302,400.00
Section 9	0.00
Section 10	0.00
TOTAL OF Guysfield Care Home, Letchworth	3,368,285.52