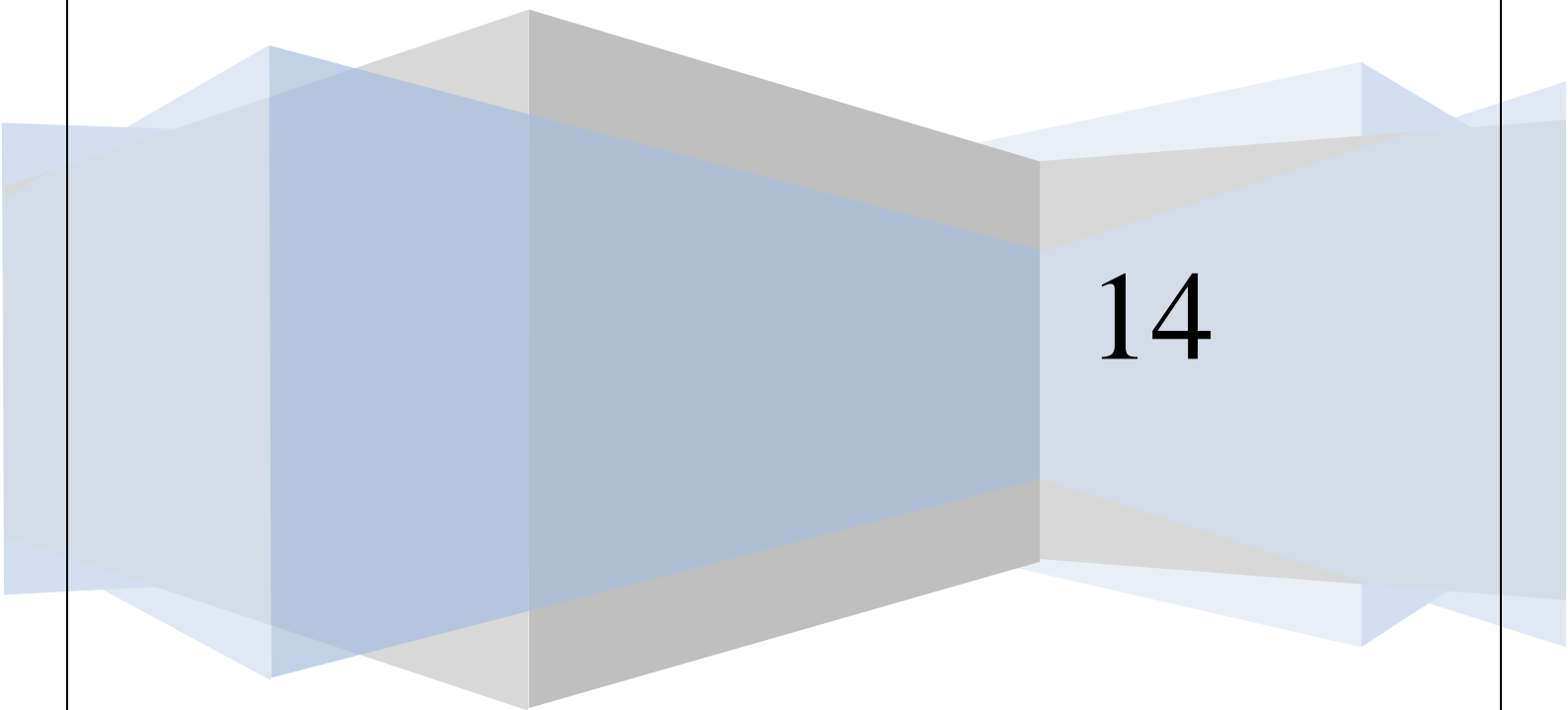


Business Case

**150 Bed Nursing Home at Little Warley Hall
Farm, Brentwood**



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1- Introduction

Improved healthcare has led to an ageing population and a further decrease in the number of old age homes threatens to severely burden Britain's current meagre provisions for the elderly. It will be no guerrilla attack however; several institutions have warned us of this possibility including writers for the BMC Geriatrics Journal, the RCN and independent market researchers. There are simply not enough spaces. However, leaving this till the crippling need actually arises will only lead to a hasty construction of grim and cramped cubicle-like living spaces that will agitate the elderly who will then have no choice but to live out their dreary but certainly avoidable fates. Their dreams, of a serene life in the classic English countryside where they can relax, will be quashed, as they look out of their assigned broom cupboard-like living quarters, by the view of concrete, the ceaseless honking of cars and the cacophony only a bustling town centre offers. It does not look promising.

The elderly require care, attention and a quiet place to live the next phase of their lives; they do not deserve a scenario as outlined above especially if it is a scenario that is avoidable. To realise this vision, we presented a viable and achievable proposal to build residential homes amidst the serenity provided by the 15 acre site at Little Warley Farm in Brentwood, five years ago to the Brentwood Borough Council Planning Department as part of the Local development Plan. The plan envisioned a 150 bed nursing home with state-of-the-art facilities along with roughly 70 full time and 60 part-time staff to medically assist the residents around the clock. This document aims to both address the criticisms received before and to consider the implications of constructing this site against the criteria set forward in the upcoming review of the Local Development Plan.

2- Capacity of Key Infrastructure

The proposed location at Little Warley Hall Farm is spacious and not a huddled up location in the middle of a town would serve as a more tranquil and spacious place where relaxation, recreation and recovery can all merge together to provide a home instead of a boxed space to habituate in. However, as a nursing home, it is undeniable that the facility requires easy access ways and roads for ambulances, other emergency services and delivery lorries. Our plan allows for three separate access routes to and from junction 29 of M25, A127 and B186. We plan to improve one of the existing routes to the highest standards at our own expense to allow for smooth access; undeniably this will both benefit the purpose of access to the nursing home while simultaneously benefiting the local neighbourhood greatly. Furthermore, provisions for 50 parking spaces are planned for staff

and visitors, including two for disabled drivers and a separate parking area for bicycles. All facilities therefore are indisputably accessible and the nature of the proposed usage will generate significantly less traffic than the battery of cars say an office, sport centre or light industry might attract. This will most surely be appreciated by the local community who are currently enjoying the peaceful nature of the area.

Since, the neighbourhood already has numerous houses and a large commercial health club in the vicinity, key utilities like water and electricity will undoubtedly be easy to connect to the facility using existing infrastructure.

3- Transport: public, walking and cycling provision

Most services and community facilities are available at a walking distance inside the facility itself, to aid our residents who may not be able to travel to further distances without supervision due to their health conditions. However, for patients who are able to travel outside the facility and willing to do so, there will be a shuttle bus service available that will drive them to the town centre which is a 15 minute journey approximately. These supervised visits will allow them to access any amenities, that aren't available on the site itself, freely. The shuttle bus services can also be extended to nearby train stations, with journey times less than 15 minutes for national rail stations such as Brentwood station.

The parking area for cycles will also encourage employees to access the facility by bicycle which is possible due to the variety of roads which lead to the facility – by widening the roads suitably, walking may also be a valid and reliable option to access the facility. It is important, however, to reiterate that, since this facility is primarily a nursing home for the elderly, access to cycling and walking routes, while available, aren't entirely necessary due to the shuttle service system which will provide an easier and more comfortable means to access places outside the nursing home.

4- Access to services, such as libraries, shops, GPs and community facilities

It is necessary to emphasise that the considerable dimensions of this site due to its location will allow the nursing home to be a compact community centre on its own with a wide range of amenities available including shops, GP surgeries, a chemist, post office and even a place of worship. However, the nursing home aims to increase the residents' worth by elevating them from simply passive recipients of care to independent individuals who retain control over their lives by having both immediate access to most amenities and providing a shuttle bus service to the town

centre in less than 15 minutes in case they require something that isn't available in the unit itself. There is also a church, a racquet club and a health club which offers further facilities like a gym, swimming pools, group exercise classes, tennis courts and a relaxing café, all easily accessible within walking distance, which the residents can visit without having to rely on the shuttle bus service.

We'd like to provide a unique, inclusive, non-institutional environment for the residents that are self-contained, with a scope for stimulating friendships with other residents and recreational activities in the large space already available on the site itself while offering further freedom to access a different environment for a short period of time.

5- Justifications for new development within the Green Belt

The currently vacant 15 acre site available beside the peaceful Little Warley Farm is large enough to realistically construct and maintain a 150 bed nursing home with all the extra services and community facilities mentioned above which, as statistics show, is desperately needed in the near future due to Britain's ageing population. Presently, the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states that development in the Green Belt can be approved only in the presence of 'very special circumstances'. However, it does give the example of appropriate developments, one of which is the 'limited infilling in villages and limited affordable housing for local community needs'. Bearing this in mind, the nursing home is both an affordable housing option for the local elderly community and meets the communities needs for increased nursing homes.

The proposed development is such that the bullet points in paragraph 85 of the Framework would be satisfied as the development is planned so as to overcome harm to the Green Belt. The five purposes that the Green Belt serves and the circumstances that negate them are as follows.

- *To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas:* This area is currently not physically attached to any large built-up areas.
- *To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another:* As mentioned above, the land is located away from large built up towns and provides us the perfect location for a tranquil area for the elderly to relax in.
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment:* Some encroachment is long established through the existing highways and access routes to junction 29 of M25, A127 and B186. The nearby health centre is also an example of existing encroachment though the

existence of various open golf centres and playing fields in the vicinity clearly show that the currently vacant plot of land is 'surplus to requirements' which is stated as a valid exception to building restrictions in the Green Belt in the first bullet point of paragraph 74.

- *To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns:* This is not a risk that pertains to the land in question.
- *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land:* The land in question is currently derelict despite being of the Green Belt designation and redevelopment would make better use of land. While, the concern over losing a couple of acres of empty greenery which currently provides no economical benefit is questionable in itself, surely a small, cramped building in the middle of a busy metropolitan area will only regress the quality of geriatric care to neglect and impasse.

A blanket approach of denying all green-belt areas planning permission does not take a sensitive approach to the fact that elderly residents want a home that provides independence and an ability to maintain friendships and family contacts while resting adequately in tranquillity: not simply a box to live in which provides health or social care. Therefore, it is urged that this development be seen as an exception to the general rule of inappropriate development.

6- Economic benefits to the area

In today's tough economic climate, the original aim of the green belt to prevent urban sprawl is outdated for developing on these opportune lands will create a multitude of economic benefits and opportunities. In our own proposal, we envision that by creating 150 living spaces for the elderly, we also provide approximately 70 full-time and 60 part-time jobs due to the facility's labour intensive nature. The employment opportunities presented by this project encompass a range of occupations from highly professional staff, skilled social workers to manual workers and drivers. Additionally, there will be business opportunities for local companies, such as Shuttle Bus Services, Pharmacies, Post office, Hairdressers, Gardeners, Catering, Cleaning and so on. However, the opportunities created have no direct negative impact to the land itself and arguably is a far more sustainable and eco-friendly approach development compared to a concrete jungle of offices or a smoke emitting warehouse or factory. It seems counter-productive therefore for the council to disagree with this proposal when the development of the nursing home incurs these many unequivocal community benefits for Brentwood as a whole.

The proposed 150 bed nursing home will make a highly valued contribution to not only the old

people and their families, but also to the Borough. The nursing home will be a large and stable employer in the area, supplying jobs, incomes and sustainability to other local area businesses. Therefore, the nursing home's economic health and value to the community and the borough cannot be overlooked.

The expenditure by the nursing facility within the borough's economy expands as the money passes through the hands of supply chain firms. Nursing home employees spend their income on other goods and services in the local economy and the nursing home itself purchases goods and services from supply chain businesses. The firms along the supply chain in turn pay wages and salaries and purchase goods and services from business further along the chain. As a result, due to the multiplier effect, the total money spent by the nursing home on wages, goods and services expands to a larger monetary impact in the regional economy and while some of the money is lost to other regions by out-of-borough purchase of goods and services by employees and supply chain businesses in a process known as leakage, the bulk of the economic benefits are reaped in and by the local community itself.

The nursing home creates jobs and local demand for goods and services. The nursing home will not only play a significant role in the health care of the borough's elderly citizens, it will also contribute to the health of the local economy. This aspect of the development clearly adheres with National Planning Policy Framework (2012) which in paragraph 59 states that development must 'function well' and 'add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development'.

7- Social benefits

This nursing home will provide assistance to the elderly with typical daily task that become increasingly difficult with old age such as bathing, dressing, eating, drinking, using the restroom, running errands and administering medicine. As many old people lose their driving license due to age related issues such as decreased hearing or vision, they are no longer able to drive to meet friends or participate in the local community. Consequently, many senior citizens suffer from depression due to feelings of isolation from living alone and not having access to social outlets. Therefore to foster a sense of social community and increase cohesion, the proposed nursing facility provides the elderly with a built-in social network of their peers along with a network of shops and amenities to foster independence within the unit. The elderly residents can enjoy the company of others who are living in the same facility and share their experiences while participating in the

organised social events that nursing facilities offer.

Other arduous tasks such as cooking and cleaning for the ageing residents will also become easier as the majority of it will be performed by the nursing home staff or the outsourced businesses. This included laundry services such as washing and dry cleaning and other general cleaning services as well alongside kitchen and catering services. Having an on-site cleaning and catering staff can prove to be valuable and save time and energy. It will also allow for the services to be more personalised and familiar as the residents and providers will be working and living close to each other. This allows for a more individualized plan for each resident including meal plans to cater to different tastes and dietary requirements and even the option of meal planning services with a licensed dietician to ensure that the residents are enjoying a healthy and balanced diet. These options not only give the residents more time to relax and interact socially but they also ensure that the service provided to them is of a higher quality than what they would receive from a carer who visits them for a few hours each week.

Amongst the benefits of skilled nursing facilities, the most obvious one is the personalized health care services that we will offer to residents. These services typically include regular administration of daily prescriptions, medical attention when needed, emergency medical services, 24-hour health monitoring services. Having on-site medical care available from registered nurses and health care providers is crucial to an old person's safety and well-being.

Furthermore, the elderly are frequently targets of physical, emotional and financial abuse and so living in an assisted living facility offers the elderly a protected environment to help insulate them from possible abuse. It also reduces the chances of crime and accidents majorly; hypothetical situations where a an elderly person is put at risk because they are living alone and forgot to lock their front door at night due to Alzheimer's or dementia suffering or a situation where they forgot to take an important prescription would become extremely unlikely. Thus, nursing homes offer greater levels of security and protection to elderly people who are living alone or un-supervised and creates a safe and nurturing environment where they can receive the necessary assistance they require without any attached stigma.

While living in a nursing home, residents can also enjoy easy access to whatever resources they might require; nursing home residents do not need to be concerned with learning to use the internet or talking on the phone with hearing difficulties because the on-site staff and network of residents offers them various channels of assistance to procure help without any frustrations. The nursing home staff will help residents find the information they need quickly and efficiently.

Many family members become caretakers for elderly parents or relatives. Many of these people have their own lives with busy work schedules, children, obligations and other responsibilities and do not have enough time to attend to their own personal lives while providing constant care to their elderly family members. By living in a nursing home, the elderly person is taking a burden off their younger family members and is also receiving care from dedicated professionals who are available 24-7. Furthermore, the proposed nursing home will be staffed by registered nurses who have the ability to provide proper health care to the elderly with serious health conditions, thus relieving the pressure on local hospitals which are already stretched to their limits. This level of care is above and beyond what a family member can provide. Many of the serious diseases that plague the elderly such as Alzheimer's, Parkinsons, dementia, cancer and diabetes require healthcare by a medical professional. Living in a facility with 24-7 health care services will maximize an elderly person's health and safety.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this executive summary is to highlight the expectations and aspirations deriving from the above development and how it will benefit the residents of Brentwood and the community of the Brentwood Borough Council as a whole. It demonstrates to the Local Planning Authority the very special circumstances required to over-ride policy restraint.

- The creation of a Nursing Home which addresses an existing and forecast need for care and additional facilities and accommodation for the elderly in particular.

The entire 15 acre site is currently in private ownership. Apart from a public footpath running along the southern boundary, the site has limited accessibility because of overgrown vegetation and very uneven ground.

The contribution towards this project would be as follows:

The site habitat having deteriorated significantly in recent years through lack of appropriate management. Funding for the implementation of the Ecological Management Strategy and Outline Management Plan

- A five year contribution for the ongoing management of that plan;
- Specific measures for increasing and optimising the biodiversity of the site and enhancing the ecological interests, including the provision of significant areas of new woodland and wetland habitat;

- The creation of new ponds that will help achieve targets set by the Brentwood Wildlife Partnership within the Ponds and Lakes Action Plan;

Recently launched by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), in partnership with Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Department of Health, the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation) report calls for positive action in response to the UK's ageing population. With the number of over 60 yearolds projected to increase by 7 million over the next 25 years and much of the UK's existing housing stock inaccessible or unsuitable, the lack of good quality homes for older people is a real concern.

As a borough, Brentwood has the highest percentage of older people .It is widely recognised that there is a need to increase the level of locally available flexible, specialist accommodation for older people in order that the appropriate levels of support and care can be tailored to individual needs.

This group would otherwise face the stark choice of a traditional Care Home which may mean separation from their partners and loss of autonomy; or reliance on Social Services to provide care at their current home with care packages that cannot always be as comprehensive or responsive as their changing needs require.

- A purpose-built community which complements the local infrastructure where residents can enjoy flexible, responsive care and support that focuses on reablement and rehabilitation; and will be available around the clock to enable individuals to remain in their own homes for longer – and in most cases, for the rest of their lives. All this is combined with the use of communal facilities and activities designed to promote individual health and wellbeing. This ensures residents retain as much independence as possible;
- To encourage independence across all client groups, every resident will receive a minimum level of care through the on-site CQC registered Domiciliary Care Agency and general administration of the Care Village. Everyday services such as washing-up, hoovering and bag carrying are important to ensure longer term independence.
- The main client group will comprise elderly and frail people needing care and support, some of whom will have high dependency needs including;
 - very frail elderly;
 - terminally ill;
 - rehabilitation;
 - post operatives;

- partially sighted;
- dementia care;
- acquired brain injury;
- adults with a disability or other health problems including neurological conditions, eg. Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone Disease and Parkinson's disease.
- The Village includes a nursing care unit that can provide end of life care close to home and more intensive episodes of care and rehabilitation for those who need it.

This care may include;

- short-term health and social care;
- treatment and support;
- specialist respite care;
- rehabilitation and intermediate care to enable early discharge and prevent acute hospital admission;
- palliative care;

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- A Wellness Centre will be part of the development. As well as delivering physical and mental stimulation and prescribed programmes of fitness, it can provide;
- falls prevention services
- stroke rehabilitation
- assessment clinics
- physiotherapy
- long term conditions management
- promotion of self-care
- expert patients programmes
- cognitive stimulation
- pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation programmes
- Helping health and social care providers to deliver health and community services more efficiently to one location and on-site care and support for residents and nonresidents alike to help alleviate the burden on the local health service.
- Opportunities to release significant numbers of under-occupied properties to families in the wider community as local older and often single residents take up more appropriate accommodation within the site.
- Employment opportunities for local communities and enhanced viability of local services.

The contributions package on offer includes a range of wider benefits including funding towards improvement of St Peter Church, and the provision of additional car parking for use by this important existing community hub, in addition to financial support for the off-site provision of affordable housing.

Health almost always deteriorates with age. To date, many people have had to move away from family and friends to get the care they needed. Brentwood Nursing Home allows residents the flexibility to transfer within the different types of accommodation (e.g. from the Close Care Units to the Nursing Unit), or to receive extensive care and support at their original choice of accommodation without the major and often distressing upheaval of physical relocation. By remaining in the same community there is a continuity of relationships, as well as care and support staff. This removes many of the anxieties older people face about their future.