



Former Dellwood Hospital, Liebenrood Road, Reading.

Planning Statement

on behalf of: Montpelier Estates

August 2020

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Public Consultation Material

1 Introduction

Purpose of the Planning Statement

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Q+A Planning Ltd ('Q+A') to support an outline planning application submitted on behalf of Montpelier Estates, for the development of a new 55-bed care home (Class C2 Use) with ancillary accommodation, associated car parking at the former Dellwood Community Hospital, 22 Liebenrood Road, Reading, RG30 2DX.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to provide details of the application proposals, describe the site and surroundings, review the planning policy framework, identify key benefits of the application and draw conclusions as to the suitability for the proposed development.
- 1.3 Detailed research and investigations have been carried out by a professional team of consultants on behalf of the Applicant. Various documents have been submitted in support of the planning application in accordance with the relevant national and local validation requirements and are summarised in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Document Schedule

Document	Author
Design and Access Statement	IDPartnership Northern
Transport Assessment	David Tucker Associates
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Ramboll
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Advanced Arboriculture
Phase 1 Environmental Review	Ramboll
Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment	Baker Hall Ltd
Sustainability Statement	Hydrock MRB

- 1.4 The following plans have also been prepared by the applicant and IDPartnership Northern to accompany the application:

Table 1.2 Application Drawing References

Plans	Drawing Reference
Site Location Plan	100 Rev. D2
Existing Site Plan	101 Rev. D1
Proposed Site Plan	102 Rev. D2
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	200 Rev. D3
Proposed First Floor Plan	201 Rev. D3
Proposed Second Floor Plan	202 Rev. D3
Proposed Attic Floor Plan	203 Rev. D3
Proposed Roof Plan	204 Rev. D3
Proposed West and North Elevations	300 Rev. D4
Proposed South and East Elevations	301 Rev. D4

Structure of the Planning Statement

1.5 The remainder of the Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the location and characteristics of the application site and surrounding area and the pre-application consultation process which has been undertaken;
- Section 3 provides details of the proposed development, the general design principles and concepts which have been applied, and describes the key benefits of the application scheme;
- Section 4 sets out the planning policy context, having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the development plan and other material considerations;
- Section 5 assesses the compatibility of the scheme with the requirements of the NPPF and relevant development planning policy and demonstrates that the proposed development accords with those policies; and
- Section 6 provides our overall summary and conclusions.

2 Site Surroundings and Consultation

Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site extends to approximately 0.25ha and comprises the former Dellwood Community Hospital, a 2.5 storey building with a pitched tiled roof. The property has a side extension with single storey 1970s flat roofed sections. The site contains a large surface level car park which was previously in use associated with the subject building, fronting Liebenrood Road where access is provided from.
- 2.2 To the rear (east) of the building, the remainder of the site is in healthcare use (Class C2) which contains a single storey bungalow and The Duchess of Kent Hospice which are both unaffected by the proposals. The hospice has a reserved right of access over the application site along the northern boundary.
- 2.3 The western boundary of the site lies along Liebenrood Road, with Prospect Park beyond (designated as Public Open Space and an Historic Park). The site is located in a predominantly residential area, characterised by a mixture of semi-detached and modern low-rise apartments up to 3 storeys in height along a defined building line, albeit the existing building is set further back into the site than the neighbouring properties.
- 2.4 The majority of the housing provision in the area has off street parking with small communal and private gardens. Jenkins Close, immediately to the south of the site comprises a residential cul-de sac and to its rear (south of the Hospice) is a large single storey building accessed off Amethyst Lane which is allocated for residential development for between 32 – 48 dwellings (Ref: WR3n).
- 2.5 The hospital, formerly a maternity unit and latterly a GP surgery for the elderly, closed in 2005 following a decision by the Clinical Commissioning Group who declared the site as surplus to requirements, and has been vacant ever since. Services were relocated to nearby Prospect Park Hospital off Honey End Lane in order to ensure continuity of care within the area. The Applicant acquired the site from NHS Property Services.
- 2.6 The building is neither statutorily or locally listed, nor does it fall within a Conservation Area. As previously described, nearby Prospect Park is designated an Historic Park and Garden (Grade II). The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and there are no Tree Preservation Orders within vicinity. The closest bus stop to the site is located directly outside the hospital, there are also high frequency routes within 400m.
- 2.7 Access to the site is obtained from Liebenrood Road, a single carriageway road with a 30mph speed classification. Along the frontage of the site the carriageway width is approximately 6.7m and bounding the western side of the site frontage is a 2.6m wide footway alongside a grassed verge. The hospital site currently has a split vehicle access comprising of an existing singular point of entry and a separate exit point, taken from Liebenrood Road.

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- 2.8 Planning permission was recently approved in May 2020 to amend the existing north-western access point to facilitate two-way vehicular movements, thus allowing for the continued operation of the Hospice irrespective of any future redevelopment of the remainder of the site.

A Sustainable Location

- 2.9 The site is located in a sustainable location and is well equipped for pedestrians with lit footways on all roads as well as footpaths linking green spaces. The closest bus stop to the site is located directly outside the hospital, there are also high frequency routes within 400m.
- 2.10 The majority of trips that will be made by foot or cycle to the development will be for the purpose of short visits to the residents. Some of the more able residents may make trips on foot for shopping trips, and to bus stops as part of linked trips to other destinations. It is generally considered that for distances under 2km, walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car journeys. Accessibility by foot to local amenities has been determined by the transport consultants (David Tucker Associates).
- 2.11 Located approximately 1.2km west of the site is an Asda food store, this equates to a circa 15-minute walk. The nearest GP to the proposed development is Southcote Clinic which is located approximately 1.4km south west of the site. There is also a pharmacy located across the square from the GP Surgery.
- 2.12 There are a number of eateries and public houses in the area surrounding the site. The nearest of these is the Parkside Café which is 350m from the site. There are also several places of worship approximately 400m north of the site.
- 2.13 Overall, the site is considered to be well located in terms of accessibility to local facilities.

Figure 2.1 Application site boundary



Figure 2.2 View of application site from Liebenrood Road



Figure 2.3 View of application site from the rear illustrating shared right of access



Figure 2.4 Duchess of Kent Hospice



Planning History

- 2.14 Relevant planning history for the site (former Dellwood Community Hospital) is summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Planning History

Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision
191257	Retain and amend the existing site access to provide an entrance of 8m in width to facilitate vehicular movements both accessing and exiting the site.	Approved 11.05.20
160782	Confirmation of compliance with all pre-commencement conditions for planning permission 96/00518/OA.	Discharged 22.06.16
120438	Single storey front and side extensions.	Approved 18.02.13
111209	Proposed siting of a new portacabin for 5 years.	Approved 07.09.11
990236	Single storey extension to the rear of the building to create a quiet sitting area for patients and relatives.	Approved 09.01.01
991160	Determination as to whether the siting of a telecommunications tower is permitted development.	Observations sent 07.08.00
980225	Replace existing external fire escape and form new internal fire escape stair. Fire precautions work to existing building.	Approved 15.07.98
960922	Residential development for 9 No. dwellings (Social Housing).	Approved 22.10.96

- 2.15 The above planning history clearly illustrates the longstanding residential institution use of the site (Class C2).

Pre-Application Consultation

- 2.16 The applicant has been provided with pre-application advice which considered the site's redevelopment potential for up to 14 residential units (Class C3). At the time of the pre-application submission, the site was allocated for between 11-17 dwellings within the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (now superseded).
- 2.17 Notwithstanding, it is clear that the principle of redevelopment is acceptable given the previously developed nature of the site, subject to material considerations.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.18 The applicant has commenced an engagement exercise with a leaflet drop to residential and commercial properties in the vicinity of the application site. A copy of this leaflet can be found at Appendix 1. Feedback received as part of this exercise will be reported to the Borough Council in due course.

Summary

- 2.19 The application site is situated in a sustainable central location. It is in close proximity to a range of shops and services and is highly accessible off Liebenrood Road for cars, pedestrians and cyclists. The site was previously in Class C2 use and therefore in locational terms, provides an excellent opportunity for a care home development.

3 Proposed Development

3.1 This section details the development for which planning permission is sought and sets out a description of the development. The application proposals are fully described in the Design and Access Statement within this submission which should be read in conjunction with this Planning Statement.

3.2 The application seeks outline planning permission for:

'Demolition of existing hospital building (Class C2) and erection of three storey elderly care facility (Class C2) including ancillary office / administration facilities, amenity space and associated car parking.'

3.3 All matters are sought for approval at outline stage except for landscaping which will be submitted as a reserved matter.

Proposed Care Home

3.4 The proposed development comprises a three storey 55-bedroom care home (Use Class C2) with associated parking, amenity space and administration facilities. Details of landscaping are reserved for future submission. The proposed care home will be capable of providing care to residents of all dependency levels, including those with higher dependency, who require nursing care or dementia care within a specialist unit designed to cater for their needs.

Figure 3.1 Proposed Site Layout



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- 3.5 Full details of the appearance of the proposed development can be found in the submitted Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings. The proposed building will be located to the front of the site to create a more consistent building line to Liebenrood Road, to take advantage of views over Prospect Park and to enable car parking and a garden area to be screened to the rear of the site. The footprint of the building will be T-shaped comprising three short wings arranged around a centrally located nurses' station and assistance facilities.
- 3.6 The care home will be arranged over three floors with attic space used for staff facilities and plant rooms. A total of 55 en-suite bedrooms will be provided, including 12 larger 'premium' bedrooms. Nurses' stations, drug stores, assisted bathing facilities, disabled toilet facilities and communal day spaces will be provided on each floor. In addition, a bistro facility will be provided on the ground floor and cinema room, library, fitness suite, hair/beauty salon and private dining facilities will be available on the first floor. The attic space will include kitchens, laundry facilities, staff room and staff changing facilities, manager's office, plant room and stores. Lifts will serve all floors.

Figure 3.2 Proposed West Elevation from Liebenrood Road



- 3.7 Externally, the existing access road to the north of the site will be retained and combined into a single vehicular entry and exit point with wider turning radii. Car parking spaces will be provided for 18 vehicles to the south of the access road and to the rear of the site. Servicing facilities and bin stores will be provided to the north elevation. Areas of landscaping will be provided to Liebenrood Road and adjacent to the rear parking area, with a larger garden area provided to the south of the proposed building with direct access from the ground floor bistro area.

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- 3.8 In terms of the scale and massing, the building will comprise three storeys plus an attic serviced by a four-storey lift tower that will be dressed as a chimney. The roof will be pitched around the perimeter with a flat area to the centre. The attic will be lit by roof lights to the flat roof rather than by dormer windows. The height of the existing building is 11.7 metres to the roof ridge and the proposed building will not be significantly higher than this. So as to reduce the massing of the rear part of the building which sits adjacent to the Dellwood Physiotherapy Centre and in close proximity to residential properties on Jenkins Close, eaves to the south-east corner of the building will be lowered and a dormer window provided to the second floor bedroom in this location (see Figure 3.3).
- 3.9 The form, detailing and proposed materials have taken inspiration from the existing building and similar Victorian architecture found in the local area. The proposed elevation design therefore incorporates red brick, brick banding, brick window headers, bays topped with gable features and tall narrow windows.

Figure 3.3 Proposed South Elevation



Figure 3.4 Proposed View from Prospect Park



4 Planning Policy

- 4.1 This section describes the relevant adopted local planning policies as well as national planning policy and other material considerations which the decision taker should have regard to.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications must accord with the provisions of the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) represents a material consideration. The NPPF advises that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development in accordance with the development plan should be granted without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 11).
- 4.4 Reading Borough Council's adopted development plan for the area comprises the Local Plan and Proposals Map (November 2019). The new Local Plan replaces the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document which no longer apply.

National Planning Policy

- 4.5 The NPPF (2019) is a key material consideration in all planning decisions and sets out the overarching policy priorities for the planning system against which local plans will be prepared and decisions made on planning applications.
- 4.6 The document notes at paragraph 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Further, at paragraph 11 it notes that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision-taking means:
 - approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- 4.7 In terms of decision-making, the document advises at paragraph 38 that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive, creative way. They should work with applicants to secure developments that will improve the

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economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and in particular, approving applications for sustainable development where possible.

- 4.8 Paragraphs 39-46 encourage early engagement and pre-application discussions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system and outcomes for the community.
- 4.9 The NPPF considers over a number of chapters how the Government's objectives will be achieved. Of particular relevance to the current proposal are chapters 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 16 which are discussed in more detail below.

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy

- 4.10 Paragraph 80 advises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. National policy advances that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 4.11 Paragraph 91 encourages planning policies and decisions to *'promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhoods centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages'*.
- 4.12 Additionally, at paragraph 92 the NPPF encourages the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs. Pertinently planning policies and decisions should:
- *'plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*
 - *Take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
 - *Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
 - *Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
 - *Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.'*

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

- 4.13 The NPPF emphasises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development and in contributing to wider sustainability objectives.
- 4.14 When considering development proposals, paragraph 109 makes clear that *‘development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.’*
- 4.15 Within this context, paragraph 110 encourages development applications to *‘give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use.’*

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

- 4.16 Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 4.17 Specifically, paragraph 118 of the NPPF makes clear that planning policies and decisions should:
- *‘encourage multiple benefits from urban land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains;*
 - *Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land; and*
 - *Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure).’*

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

- 4.18 Paragraph 124 advises that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 4.19 Paragraph 127 advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

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- *'Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;*
- *Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.*

4.20 Section 12 goes on to state that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. It acknowledges that early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests.

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

4.21 Section 14 outlines that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk. It should help to: *'shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.'*

4.22 In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

- *Comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and*
- *Take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.'*

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

4.23 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by *'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecology networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'*

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

4.24 Section 16 of the Framework considers conserving and enhancing the historic environment at paragraphs 184 to 202 ensuring assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

4.25 The Framework defines 'heritage assets', in Annex 2, as:

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'

4.26 Paragraphs 189 to 192 deal with the general development management covering all heritage assets. Paragraph 189 places a duty on the LPA to require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal to a proportionate level of detail to enable an understanding of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 190 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess *'the particular significance of any heritage asset'*. This should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal.

4.27 The Framework defines heritage 'significance', in Annex 2, as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'

4.28 In accordance with paragraph 192, a number of considerations should be taken into account by the LPA, first of which is the (relative) desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It also requires the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and their economic viability to be considered, and finally, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.29 Consideration of the impact of the development on Prospect Park is provided at Section 6 of this Statement.

Conclusion in relation to the NPPF

4.30 The NPPF places a firm emphasis on promoting and supporting the development of under-utilised land and buildings and makes clear that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. These factors weigh heavily in favour of approving the scheme and is considered to embody sustainable development.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.31 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is an online planning guidance resource intended to make guidance more accessible and easier to keep up to date.

Design

- 4.32 The PPG stresses the importance of good design and states that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan makers and decision takers should always seek to ensure high quality design through creating places, buildings or spaces that work well for everyone.

The Development Plan

- 4.33 Reading Borough Council's Local Plan (November 2019) identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated, and where it will be restricted, and sets out policies for how planning applications will be decided. Key policies considered relevant to the application proposals are considered in detail below:

Policy CC1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development

- 4.34 Policy CC1 outlines that the Council will take a positive approach to considering development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out within the NPPF. Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

Policy CC2 – Sustainable design and construction

- 4.35 Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.
- 4.36 The policy dictates that to meet these requirements, all major non-residential developments are required to meet the most up to date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible.

Policy CC3 – Adaptation to climate change

- 4.37 All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures shall be incorporated into development:

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- Wherever possible, new buildings shall be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements;
- Proposals involving both new and existing buildings shall demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change;
- Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme; and
- All development shall minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development in the design of the drainage system, and where possible incorporate mitigation and resilience measures for any increases in river flooding levels as a result of climate change.

Policy CC4 – Decentralised energy

- 4.38 In meeting the sustainability requirements of this plan, large scale major developments (over 1,000 sq. m) shall demonstrate how consideration has been given to securing energy for the development from a decentralised energy source.

Policy CC5 – Waste minimisation and storage

- 4.39 Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

Policy CC6 – Accessibility and the intensity of development

- 4.40 The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with large-scale development taking place in the most accessible locations.

Policy CC7 – Design and the public realm

- 4.41 Policy CC7 makes clear that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to urban design objectives.
- 4.42 Developments will be assessed to ensure that they respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness. The creation of safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Schemes must also be visually attractive as a result of good high-quality built forms and spaces, using appropriate materials and landscaping.

Policy CC8 – Safeguarding amenity

- 4.43 Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties in terms of privacy and overlooking, access to sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development, noise and disturbance and artificial lighting.

Policy EN1 – Protection and enhancement of the historic environment

- 4.44 Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their setting will be protected and where possible enhanced. This includes historic parks and gardens. Policy EN1 goes on to state that all proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic environment and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.
- 4.45 Applications which affect historic parks and gardens will safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, features or setting of the park or garden, key views out from the park, or prejudice its future restoration.

Policy EN12 – Biodiversity and the green network

- 4.46 New development shall demonstrate how the location and type of green space, landscaping and water features provided within a scheme have been arranged such that they maintain or link into the existing Green Network.
- 4.47 On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should:
- Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and
 - Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements wherever practicable.

Policy EN16 – Pollution and water resources

- 4.48 Development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors through land, noise or light pollution. The policy goes on to state that proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution.

Policy EN18 – Flooding and sustainable drainage systems

- 4.49 All major developments must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards. Runoff rates should aim to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site.

Policy H6 – Accommodation for vulnerable people

- 4.50 Policy H6 confirms that provision will be made for at least an additional 253 residential care bed spaces for elderly people between 2013 and 2036, in addition to the overall housing need. Other specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will address the identified needs, which are primarily for accommodation that enables occupants to live as independently as possible, particularly for older people and people with physical disabilities.
- 4.51 Development for specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will fulfil the following criteria:
- Developments will, where possible, locate accommodation close to, or incorporate, relevant community facilities, such as healthcare services, or day care for elderly people;
 - Larger developments will include adequate provision for ambulance access;
 - Developments will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people; and
 - Developments within residential areas will be designed to respect the residential character of their surroundings.
- 4.52 Development catering for people with limited mobility will fulfil the following criteria:
- Located within 400m of an identified district or local centre and a bus stop on a strategic bus route; and
 - Include secure storage for mobility scooters.

Policy TR1 – Achieving the transport strategy

- 4.53 Planning permission will not be granted for major development proposals unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans, safe routes to local facilities and services.

Policy TR3 – Access, traffic and highway-related matters

- 4.54 In determining proposals involving new or altered access onto the transport network, improvement works to the network or the general of additional trips, consideration will be given to the effect on safety, congestion and the environment.

4.55 If a proposal includes one of these scenarios, development will only be permitted where:

- Access and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority;
- The development would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network;
- The proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles on unsuitable roads; and
- For non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.

Policy TR5 – Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

4.56 Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

4.57 Within communal car parks for non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.

Supplementary Planning Documents / Other Material Considerations

Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)

4.58 The parking standards SPD recommends guidelines for maximum parking provision for new developments based on location and use. The application site falls within Zone 3 (Secondary Core Area – defined as a variety of land uses, within 400m walk of high frequency bus services). Guidance for a nursing home (Class C2) equates to 1 vehicle space per FTE staff and 1 per 4 residents.

4.59 The SPD notes that the quality of any cycle parking should reflect the likely usage, either with Sheffield type stands for short term parking or more secure systems for longer term storage. Cycle parking should be based upon the land use, zonal area and floorspace of developments. This will better reflect the importance of cycling as a modal choice within an urban area. Standards for cycle parking are applied as a minimum and are reflective of the potential for cycling to each land use type. Guidance for a nursing home (Class C2) equates to 1 space per 3 staff.

Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn, February 2016)

4.60 The six Berkshire unitary authorities and the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP have co-operated in a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which examines the need for housing in the area, including affordable and specialist accommodation.

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- 4.61 Estimates of household groups who have particular housing needs is a key output of the SHMA guidance whilst the NPPF identifies that local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing which takes account of the needs of different groups in the community. The SHMA advises that a key driver of change in the housing market over the next few years is expected to be the growth in the population of older persons.
- 4.62 Population projections indicate that there is expected to be a notable increase in the older person population within the study area, with the total number of people aged 65 and over increasing by 73% over the 23 years from 2013. This compares with overall population growth of 17% and growth in the under 65 population of just 7%. The projected growth in the population aged 65 and over is higher than that projected for both the region and England as a whole. Within Reading, the projected change in over 65-year olds is 63.5% (2013 to 2036).
- 4.63 The demographic modelling indicates that in 2036 there will be 8,643 people aged 75 and over living in 'institutions', which on the basis of the current supply (5,181 beds in nursing and residential care homes) suggests a potential shortfall of 3,462 beds up to 2036 (151 per annum). In the case of Reading, this translates to a net need of 253 beds which is borne out in adopted development plan Policy H6.
- 4.64 It is clear therefore that there is a projected need for additional bed spaces within Reading which this application seeks to address.

Summary

- 4.65 This section has identified a series of development plan documents and other material considerations, including national policy to be taken into account in the determination of this application.
- 4.66 A full assessment of the scheme's compliance with policy, including the principle of development, is carried out in the following section.

5 Planning Assessment

5.1 The impacts of the development have been thoroughly considered in a series of studies and reports which form part of the application. Taking into account the development plan and the national planning policy context outlined in Section 4 of this Statement, we regard the key issues relevant to the determination of the application are as follows:

- Principle of the development;
- Accessibility, highways and parking;
- Siting, design and appearance, including heritage considerations;
- Preservation of existing and future amenities;
- Ecology and arboriculture;
- Ground conditions;
- Drainage and flood risk; and
- Building sustainability.

5.2 We summarise the scheme's effects in relation to each below.

Principle of the Development

5.3 The proposal relates to the erection of a new three storey 55 bed care home on an existing brownfield site currently occupied by a longstanding vacant building.

5.4 The applicant recognises that prior to its closure, the Dellwood Community Hospital (and former maternity unit) was highly regarded as providing an important and valuable community service within Reading. However, opportunities to retain and convert the building were not considered feasible in line with meeting modern healthcare standards befitting of the proposed operators' requirements. A sensitively designed facility that includes dedicated car parking, ancillary facilities and amenity space is therefore proposed in order to deliver the Council's identified need for additional residential care bed spaces to meet population projections.

5.5 Policy CC1 seeks to enable development that improves the economic, social and environmental objectives of the Borough in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.6 Policy H6 specifically confirms that provision will be made for at least an additional 253 residential care bed spaces for elderly people between 2013 and 2036, in addition to the overall housing need. The proposed development is designed to accommodate the identified needs of vulnerable people, whilst enabling them to live as independently as possible within a secure and caring environment close to established community facilities. It should also be noted that the applicant's operational model encourages integration of the proposed care facility with the local community with day care spaces being available to local residents, the café and beauty and therapy facilities will be open to the local community and meeting and event spaces made available to community groups (please see Appendix 1 for further details).

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- 5.7 National policy prescribes at paragraph 38 that *'decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.'* Moreover, planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.8 The appropriateness of the site for development has been accepted by the Council in the past during detailed pre-application discussions and as evidenced in its previous longstanding allocation. It is therefore clear that the principle of Class C2 residential care use in this location is entirely acceptable and constitutes sustainable development in accordance with adopted national and local planning policies.

Accessibility, Highways and Parking

- 5.9 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by David Tucker Associates. The TA considers the potential transport and highways impacts of the proposals, including the impact of development generated traffic on the capacity and safety of the surrounding road network.
- 5.10 The site is currently accessed through an 'in' and 'out' system, and as part of the proposals the southernmost access point is to be closed. As previously discussed, planning permission has recently been approved to modify the remaining access point in order to accommodate for all vehicle movements.
- 5.11 As part of the proposed access design, there is sufficient width for a refuse vehicle and large car to enter / exit simultaneously. Refuse collection for the care facility will take place on street approximately 20m from the proposed bin store, in line with guidance contained within Manual for Streets. Submitted track plots shows that service vehicles can safely deliver and exit the site in forward gear without impediment.
- 5.12 With regards to parking facilities, the development would result in a loss of 34 car parking spaces from the former car park. A total of 18 parking spaces are proposed for the care home (including two accessible bays), which results in a net loss of 16 overall. The Council's parking standards are expressed as a maximum and equate to 1 space per FTE staff and 1 per 4 residents.
- 5.13 The care home is expected to have 70 FTE staff and 55 residents at capacity, however only 28 staff will be on site at any one time. This leads to a maximum provision of 42 spaces, however it is clear that this would result in a significant over-provision on site. Based on the operational needs of similar care homes providing comparable parking spaces, and a TRICS car parking accumulation exercise, it has been demonstrated that the 18 spaces proposed for the site are acceptable for this development. Furthermore, in practice car ownership for residents of the care home will be zero and therefore the remaining spaces will cover visitors.

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- 5.14 The proposal illustrates 20 spaces retained for the existing uses on the site, which comprise the physiotherapy centre and hospice to the rear. Two of the car parking spaces will have electric vehicle charging points. The development will also provide 10 cycle parking spaces with 4 located near the main entrance, and the remaining 6 located at the service entrance adjacent to the access road. This will meet the requirements set out within the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.
- 5.15 In line with adopted policy TR3 and paragraph 109 of the NPPF, it is concluded that the additional traffic would have no material adverse impact on the safe operation of the local highway network. The TA concludes that the application site has good access to public transport links. In these circumstances, it is considered that the proposals will accord with Policies CC6, TR4 and TR5 of the Local Plan.

Siting, Design and Appearance

- 5.16 As described in Section 3 of this Statement, the design of the proposed development is intended to meet the needs of the proposed care home use whilst reflecting the character of the surrounding area and protecting the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposed building will be sited to the front of the site, reinforcing the existing building line to Liebenrood Road, taking advantage of views over Prospect Park, and enabling rear parking and garden areas to be screened from the main road. The building will read as a three-storey building to the front elevation with a pitched roof and lift tower dressed as a chimney. Eaves heights will be reduced to the rear of the site on the eastern elevation to minimise impacts on existing properties to the south and east of the application site.
- 5.17 In terms of the design and appearance of the proposed building, this is intended to take inspiration from the existing main building ('Dellwood') and Victorian architecture within the surrounding area. The elevations will therefore incorporate red brick, brick banding and brick window headers, bays topped with gables and windows with tall and narrow proportions. The appearance of the building will be further enhanced by new landscaping to the front of the site. The high quality design approach is considered to accord with Policy CC7 of the Local Plan and the objectives of Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 5.18 In terms of heritage assets, it is noted that the application site is not located within a Conservation Area and is not a listed or locally listed building. However, Prospect Park to the west of Liebenrood Road is Grade II listed and the application site forms part of the wider setting of the park. The listing entry for Prospect Park highlights its significant characteristics including panoramic views to the south from the Mansion House (subject to separate listing), semi-circular lawns surrounding the Mansion House, woodland at The Rookery, mature trees and fragmentary remains of 19th century avenues, and the Kitchen Garden. Whilst the application site original formed part of the grounds associated with the Mansion House, it was removed for alternative development in the late 19th century (see map regression contained within the submitted Design and Access Statement).

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- 5.19 The proposed development will lead to the loss of the 19th century house 'Dellwood', albeit this has been substantially altered and adapted over the last century, affecting its design and character and reducing any significance. The Council has previously accepted the principle of the redevelopment of the application in its former allocation for residential development. The existing property sits back from Liebenrood Road and is not, therefore, prominent in views along the road that incorporate Prospect Park. The former gardens have long been re-purposed to provide car parking with significant areas of hardstanding to the front of Dellwood.
- 5.20 The proposed development will sit forward of the existing building, following the building line of existing properties to the north and south of the application site. Car parking will be provided to the rear of the site. The removal of the existing parking area will reduce potential visual clutter and improve the setting of Prospect Park. As noted above, the proposed development has been designed to be sympathetic to existing development on Liebenrood Road in terms of its design, detailing and materials.
- 5.21 As such it is clear that the proposed development will not have any substantial impacts on the Grade II listed Prospect Park. It will have no direct or indirect impacts on features of significance and will have neutral to positive impacts on the wider setting of the park through the introduction of a new high quality development and the removal of the existing parking areas. The application scheme will therefore accord with Policy EN1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Amenities

- 5.22 To the north of the application site, the adjoining residential property at no. 24 Liebenrood Road is screened by dense vegetation on the northern boundary and the steeply pitched roof of a detached garage building. There is one first floor window to the side elevation of this dwelling, but it will be set a considerable distance from the proposed building which will be located to the south of the existing access road. At its closest point, the northern elevation of the proposed building will feature only two small windows at first and second floor which will provide daylighting to a stairwell.
- 5.23 To the south of the site residential properties are set back from Liebenrood Road on Jenkins Close. They are again screened by mature trees on the southern boundary of the application site. The proposed building will sit forward of the nearest dwelling at 1 Jenkins Close and would not overlook the side elevation or private garden space of that property. The rear eastern elevation will step down to reduce the massing of the proposed building at the closest point to properties on Jenkins Close and the hospice complex to the rear of the site.
- 5.24 Consequently, it is not considered that the proposed development will have any significant or unacceptable impacts on the amenities of existing properties in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing. Similarly, future occupiers of the proposed development will enjoy high standards of amenity in terms of privacy, outlook and external amenity spaces. The proposals will therefore accord with the relevant requirements of Policies CC8 and EN16 of the Local Plan.

Ecology and Arboriculture

- 5.25 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal that has been prepared by Ramboll and is based on the findings of an extended Phase 1 habitat survey. The appraisal found that the main building had high potential to support roosting bats and negligible potential to support hibernating bats. It recommended that further surveys were undertaken to determine the presence of roosting bats. These surveys are currently being carried out by Windrush Ecology. Two surveys have been completed and have identified one common pipistrelle bat and one soprano pipistrelle bat emerging from the building, associated with what are considered to be day roost sites under roof tiles. The final survey will be undertaken shortly and full results reported to the Borough Council in due course.
- 5.26 In terms of trees, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been prepared by Advanced Arboriculture. This has assessed all trees within the redline site boundary, noting that existing trees to the northern boundary of the access road will be unaffected by the proposed development. The highest quality trees are two limes located just outside the site boundary on the grassed verge of Jenkins Close. These are considered to be a significant feature within the wider Liebenrood Road landscape in keeping with the limes on the eastern boundary of Prospect Park.
- 5.27 The AIA notes that the design of the proposed development has been informed by tree constraints and that as a result the proposed building will be entirely outside of the root protection areas and crown spread of the larger trees on the southern boundary which are considered to be worthy of retention. The proposals do show the removal of other vegetation to the southern boundary including a holly hedge, oak and maple trees. However, the AIA finds that none of these are individually or cumulatively outstanding specimens and that their removal will be balanced by the indicative landscaping scheme. Overall, the proposals are considered to allow for the retention of all key trees with a negligible risk of harm as a consequence of construction activities. The site layout is considered to be sustainable from an arboricultural point of view, subject to appropriate care being taken during construction. The Tree Protection Statement included within the AIA sets out appropriate tree protection measures.
- 5.28 The proposals will therefore accord with Policy EN12 of the Local Plan and the objectives of Section 15 of the NPPF.

Ground Conditions

- 5.29 The planning application is also supported by a Phase 1 Environmental Review that has been undertaken by Ramboll. This notes that historically the site was undeveloped until the late 1890s when the current main building was constructed. The potential for historic on-site contamination is therefore considered to be low, as is the potential for off-site contamination. The site is located in a sensitive location with regard to groundwater resources, nevertheless overall groundwater sensitivity and vulnerability is considered to be low to moderate and surface water sensitivity and vulnerability is considered to be low. The review concludes that there is a low risk of the site being identified as representing a significant risk to receptors due to contamination. As such, the proposed development will accord with Policy EN16 of the Local Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.30 A Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared by Baker Hall Ltd. This proposes a surface water drainage strategy based on SuDS principles and incorporating permeable paving to parking areas and storm water attenuation for roof water. In terms of foul water, Thames Water has confirmed that the outflow from the proposed development can be accommodated within the existing public sewer network. In terms of flooding, the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding. Given the site area of 0.25ha, it is not necessary to undertake a detailed Flood Risk Assessment. In these circumstances it is clear that the proposals will meet the requirements of Policy EN18 of the Local Plan and accord with the relevant objectives of Section 14 of the NPPF.

Building Sustainability

- 5.31 A Sustainability Statement has been prepared by Hydrock MRB. This includes a BREEAM pre-assessment which concludes that 74.24% of credits could be targeted which would exceed the 70% threshold required to achieve a BREEAM New Construction 2018 Multi Residential (Residential Institution) Excellent rating. Furthermore, the installation of local low carbon and renewable energy technologies will be investigated during the technical design stage and incorporated where feasible to achieve compliance with Part L of the Building Regulations. The proposed development will therefore accord with the relevant requirements of Policies CC2, CC3, CC4 and CC5 of the Local Plan and the relevant objectives of Sections 11 and 14 of the NPPF.

Summary

- 5.32 In summary, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle. The application site was previously subject to a longstanding allocation for residential redevelopment and the proposed care home will assist in meeting the Borough's housing requirements and particularly the housing needs of vulnerable groups. The proposals will provide high quality care facilities, and this is reflected in the design of the application scheme which will be sympathetic to its surroundings including the setting of the listed Prospect Park, will provide suitable access (including via sustainable modes of transport) and will not have any significant impacts on the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 5.33 In terms of other considerations, the redevelopment of the site will not have any significant impacts on biodiversity or arboriculture, will present no unacceptable risks to future occupants as a result of ground contamination or flood risks, and will be constructed and operated in a sustainable manner that minimises energy consumption and wider environmental impacts. As such, the proposals are considered to accord with the relevant provisions of local and national planning policies.

6 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Montpelier Estates and supports an outline planning application for the development of a 55-bed care home at the former Dellwood Community Hospital on Liebenrood Road, Reading. The planning application is supported by a comprehensive suite of drawings and technical documents. This Statement has provided an overview of the application site and the proposed development, and has considered the compatibility of the application scheme with relevant local and national planning policies.
- 6.2 In terms of the principle of the proposed development, the application is in a sustainable location and comprises previously developed land that has been vacant for 15 years, having previously been allocated for residential redevelopment. The proposals will help to meet the Borough's housing requirements and, in particular, the needs of vulnerable groups through the provision of high-quality care facilities.
- 6.3 The application site is accessible via sustainable modes of transport with bus stops located immediately adjacent on Liebenrood Road. The application scheme incorporates new cycle parking provision. Planning permission has already been granted to widen the existing site access so this can provide a combined vehicular entry and exit point. Whilst parking levels will be reduced within the site, the Transport Assessment has demonstrated that the proposed parking provision will be suitable given the nature of the proposed use.
- 6.4 The proposed layout of the application scheme has taken account of the siting and orientation of neighbouring properties and the need to protect and preserve key trees on the southern boundary of the site that contribute to the character of the wider area. The design of the proposed building and the use of materials and detailing draws inspiration from the current main building and other Victorian architecture in the local area. This sympathetic, high quality design will preserve the wider setting of the nearby Grade II listed Prospect Park.
- 6.5 The planning application has been supported by a Sustainability Statement which confirms that the proposals could meet BREAM Excellent standard and would meet the requirements of Building Regulations Part L. The application scheme will incorporate sustainable drainage systems and is not at risk of flooding. Given the historic uses of the site, there are low risks of it posing any significant risks to future receptors due to contamination.
- 6.6 In these circumstances, it is considered that the application scheme represents high quality, sustainable development that will make efficient use of a long-term vacant site and introduce a new use that will provide a range of social and economic benefits. This will accord with the provisions of the Reading Borough Local Plan and support the objectives of national planning policy.

Appendix 1 Public Consultation Material

Dellwood Hospital Site, Reading

Redevelopment proposals to deliver up to 55 beds care home



Dear Occupier,

We are writing to you as a resident or a business close to the site of the former hospital Dellwood Hospital, Reading to inform you about our forthcoming proposals.

The site has been disused for over 15 years and we are planning to bring it back to the community as a high quality care home (C2 planning use).

We have carefully considered refurbishment and extensions of the existing buildings, but unfortunately none of the designs were unable to meet the current regulations for Registration and Building Regulations.

As a result, our proposal includes the demolition of the existing buildings and creation of a new, sustainable, purpose-built and high quality home for elderly that positively responds to the surrounding environment and exceeds the level of current care standards.

The building has been positioned to maintain the building line along Liebenrood Road and enhance the setting of Prospect Park by removing the obtrusive existing extensive parking area. The proposed appearance is taking design cues from the traditional architecture style of the area, including the former hospital and houses.

We are now about to apply for outline planning permission to Reading Borough Council and, if approved, the development will result in a sustainable local investment of over £9 million and on-going injection to the local economy of approx. £800,000 per annum. In addition, around 65-70 full and part-time jobs will be created, predominantly filled by local people.

Our proposal does not impact on the operation of the hospice and other users located behind the site.



Proposed Care Home

Artist's impression - view from Prospect Park



About Us,

Montpelier Estates was founded in 1996 to provide specialist solutions to clients in the healthcare sector. Our company specialises in designing and delivering nursing and residential homes, health centres, surgeries, hospitals and independent hospitals.

Montpelier is founded on the principle that good quality therapeutic design supports the delivery of high quality healthcare and leads to more positive outcomes for patients, families and carers. Over the years, we have provided over 1500 elderly care beds to numerous operators.

Our care homes are focused on integration. Rather than being self-contained and inward looking, they open their doors to invite local people to join at several levels:

- Offering day care space to local residents
- Opening the café up to the local community
- Inviting the community to join in musical recitals, quiz evenings, cooking demonstrations wine tasting, etc

- Make space available for local groups, for example drama or musical groups to use for rehearsals and parent and toddler groups
- Welcoming people to make use of beauty and therapy services

Care homes have evolved to have more and more activity space, which emulates daily life. In a residential area, these activities can be offered to the community to share. The integration is proven to benefit the care home residents through contact, stimulation and movement. The community gains facilities that would not otherwise be commercially viable on their own.

You can speak to us on 01844 203500 to discuss the proposal, email: mail@montpelierestates.me.uk or write to Montpelier Estates Ltd, Middle Hedge Barn, Chilton Business Centre, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP18 9LS

