

Developers seek more land for care homes



Demand for care homes throughout the UK remains very strong despite the fragmented nature of the market. The majority of development activity is in the ‘for profit’ sector and is aimed at private customers in the more affluent parts of the country.

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Demand for additional care home beds is predicted to rise steadily over the next decade with some experts suggesting a requirement of close to 7000 new places per annum, reflecting the UK’s ageing population.

With this underlying and consistent demand it is unsurprising that care home investors and developers are actively seeking new sites in good regional locations across the country.

Operators typically offer a range of care options for customers. These include; nursing care, dementia care, residential care, day care and personal care. The main differences between these types of care home is the level and quality of care provided, although some of the larger homes will provide a range of care solutions under one roof. The basic principle being that the higher the level of care required the higher the annual cost.

Care home development

The majority of new care home developments have a capacity of between 60 and 100 beds with associated car parking. In planning terms it is a C2 use classification and in general terms it can be regarded as a ‘soft’ planning use owing to the low traffic generation and the general nature of the use itself. Care homes are also

employment generating (unlike standard housing) and this can assist with change of use arguments on former employment sites. Typically, the more intensive the care provided the higher the employment generated.

The high consumer demand and current under-supply has resulted in an increasing number of developers seeking new opportunities for care home development, which in turn has led to an increase in prices being paid for new opportunities. The requirements are typically 1-3 acres in area and can be located on the edge of town centres or suburban locations in areas with strong financial demographics.

Prominence is not essential but sites with good frontage to main roads and close to local amenities are highly desirable. Some examples of suitable properties include former car dealerships, large pubs, and industrial premises.

Rapleys has been successful in identifying and acquiring a number of sites on behalf of care home developers and we urgently seek additional development opportunities. If you have any surplus land/sites that would be suitable for a care home please contact Alun Jones.