

**Application No: 09/3056M**

**Location: THE MARY DENDY UNIT, CHELFORD ROAD, NETHER ALDERLEY, MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE, SK10 4SY**

**Proposal: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS & ERECTION OF 3 NO 15 BED LOW SECURE, MENTAL HEALTH UNITS WITH SUPPORT BUILDING & SECURE OUTDOOR SPACE (TO MATCH AN EXISTING NHS INSTITUTIONAL USE). PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENTS ARE TO BE SERVED BY NEW INFRASTRUCTURE & PROVIDE PARKING & BIKE STANDS FOR 50 STAFF AS EXISTING.**

**For MR BRYCE IRONS, CHESHIRE & WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP NHS**

**Registered 26-Oct-2009**

**Policy Item Yes**

**Grid Reference 382225 376702**

**Date Report Prepared: 12.11.09**

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions and receipt of any further representations.**

**MAIN ISSUES**

- Impact on the Green Belt
- Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Design
- Impact upon highway safety;
- Impact on trees and ecological issues

**REASON FOR REPORT**

This Major application is before the Northern Planning Committee as the proposed floor area is over 1000m<sup>2</sup>.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The site is located on Chelford Road, Nether Alderley, on land opposite Soss Moss Wood. The site has a long history of use as a hospital and most recently as a secure facility since 1985. The general area is made up of fields, wooded areas and sporadic farms and dwellinghouses stretched out as a loose ribbon along Chelford Road.

**DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

The application seeks to demolish all the buildings on the site (approximately 12) and replace them with 3 no. single storey units and a two storey administration area. The development would be phased in 4 Phases.

The proposal would accommodate 45 patients, which is an increase from the existing 15.

The first phase (which is aimed for commencement in 2010) would consist of a second 15 bed unit to increase the number of patients to 30, with refurbishment of the exiting operational unit. Although this application is for two further units, these would only be built as and when required. The applicant believes that the development would help to enhance the security of the site. The same level of care would be provided to an increased level of patients in modern, purpose built units, which would include up to date security features. This would include an anti climb fence, lair locked doors and CCTV.

The development would be broken up into the following phases: -

Phase 1 – Enabling development which would include the demolition of Hanover House, Lancaster House, Windsor House, and Tudor House, the construction of a new road infrastructure around the erection of the first unit. A Bat roost would also be erected.

Phase 2 – Once the bat roost and mitigation has been established, Stuart House would be demolished and the first 15 bed unit would be erected.

Phase 3 – The second of the 15 bed low secure units would be erected.

Phase 4 – The final buildings would be demolished and final 15 bed unit and reception would be constructed.

The application includes a reference to the submission of a separate application (to be submitted in due course) which would be lodged for the temporary accommodation to the Mary Dendy Unit. This building would remain in place until the commencement of phase 4. The temporary accommodation would provide approximately 158m<sup>2</sup> of accommodation. As this accommodation will be demolished in due course, this will ensure that the existing footprint of development is not exceeded.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

09/0200P - Replacement of windows, single storey side and internal courtyard extensions and external alterations at York House - approved with conditions 15.04.09.

06/3005P

Erection of portacabin for offices with covered walkway link  
- approved with conditions 25.01.07

00/0289P - Single-storey rear extension to provide additional accommodation to existing unit - approved with conditions 25.20.01.

00/1364P - Agricultural access onto Chelford Road - approved with conditions 23.08.00.

81898P - Single-storey extension to provide 6 bedrooms and ancillary accommodation - approved with conditions 21.12.95

40445P - Additional car parking spaces - approved 09.04.85.

41198P - Proposed development of secure facility - approved 03.07.85.

43646P - Crown Development (Circular 18/84)  
Extension and conversion of facilities to form common support service unit and new drainage - approved 16.01.86.

## **POLICIES**

### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

DP1, DP5, DP6, DP7, RDF4

### **Local Plan Policy**

NE11, BE1, GC10, DC1-DC3, DC6, DC8, DC9, DC57.

## **CONSIDERATIONS (External to Planning)**

Comments from the Environmental Health Officer, Arboricultural Officer, Nature Conservation Officer, Landscape Officer and the Highways Engineer were awaited at the time of report preparation.

Manchester Airport (Aerodrome Safeguarding) raise no safeguarding objections.

Great Warford Parish Council recommend the application for refusal. The Parish Council seek clarification that the unit is purely for low secure classification of patients both now and in the future. In addition, the Parish Council were disappointed at the level of public consultation, and consider that residents on Warford Crescent should have been made aware of the event. Comments were also made regarding the design of the buildings. It was suggested that a more sympathetic design of building to blend in with the green belt would be more appropriate.

## **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

None received at time of report preparation.

## **APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

A Design and Access Statement has been submitted to accompany the application which considers issues such as policy context, constraints, the use, public consultation details, access and landscape information. The report is available on the application file

The following documents have also been submitted: - Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Report, Transport Statement, Tree Survey, Ecological Assessment and a Travel Plan have been submitted.

## **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

### **Principal of Development**

The determining issues are whether the replacement 4 buildings would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Green belt, would harm visual amenity and reduce the openness of the Green Belt and whether they would be materially larger than the current buildings on the site; the potential impact on local residents; the impact on trees; and the impact on parking and highway safety.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The applicants' agent held a public consultation event in September 2009. 7 neighbours attended this and their comments are included within the Design and Access Statement.

### **Policy**

The Mary Dendy site lies within the Green Belt and operates as a low secure mental health unit. This use falls within Class C2 of the use Classes Order, as a Residential Institution. The proposed development seeks to carry on the NHS institutional use, on a single footprint that would be no larger than the combined total of the proposed independent buildings that are to be demolished.

PPG2 makes it clear that inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. However, PPG2 Annex C (C14) Redundant Hospitals indicates that if the site is to be redeveloped in line with the criteria set out in Annex C (C14), that it will not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Policy DC57 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan relates specifically to C2 Residential Institutions.

In order to be 'appropriate', an application for replacement buildings in this context, the Council must satisfy itself that the proposed development is not materially larger than the current buildings, and that the visual amenity of the Green Belt would not be injured and that there would not be a reduction in openness.

Development Control Policies DC1 and DC3 relate to the standard of design and amenity. Policy DC6 relates to circulation and access. Policy NE11 relates to nature conservation and policies DC8 and DC9 relates to landscape and tree issues.

### **Highways**

Although no formal comments had been received from the Highways Engineer, it is initially considered that there is sufficient land available to provide the necessary car parking provision and that the improvements to the visibility at the access point are likely to be welcomed.

### **Design**

The design of the proposed development seeks to incorporate buildings in a circular fashion, with the aim of providing a circular road around the site and an internal courtyard area in the centre. The design follows an approach to a secure mental health facility at Rose Mount on Chester Road, Macclesfield. The retention of trees and proposed planting is considered to be an essential attribute in making this scheme a success. The design is contemporary and incorporates mono pitched roofs and a green roof system to the reception building. The current buildings are not too visible from the road, and with a successful landscape scheme and the relatively low heights of the buildings proposed, it is considered that the impact from the road will be acceptable.

Each of the three buildings would be constructed from the same materials. This would consist of a grey coloured aluminium roof, which would include photo voltaic cells. The outer curved areas would be constructed from a buff brick and a blue brick is proposed for the two storey element and one single storey part. A red brick is proposed for the inner courtyard façade.

### **Amenity**

Although there are several dwellings to the north on Chelford Road and Stelfox Hall Farm to the south, it is considered that these are sufficient distance away from the application site, so as not to be affected by the proposed development.

### **Ecology and trees**

The Ecological Report requires a bat roost to be erected. This is proposed during Phase 1 of the development. Once the bats have migrated to the alternative roost the other buildings will be allowed to be demolished. Comments are expected from the Nature Conservation Officer in relation to this, and the impact of the development on the number of ponds sited within close proximity of the site.

The Councils Arboricultural Officer will comment on the relationship of the development on the trees around and within the site, including a number of trees which are protected by TPO's.

## **OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The proposed development has been designed in relation to its end user, the impact on the Green Belt, topography, tree cover, distance from other development and accessibility. In addition, it is considered that the site would serve East Cheshire's requirements for Low Secure Mental Health Accommodation.

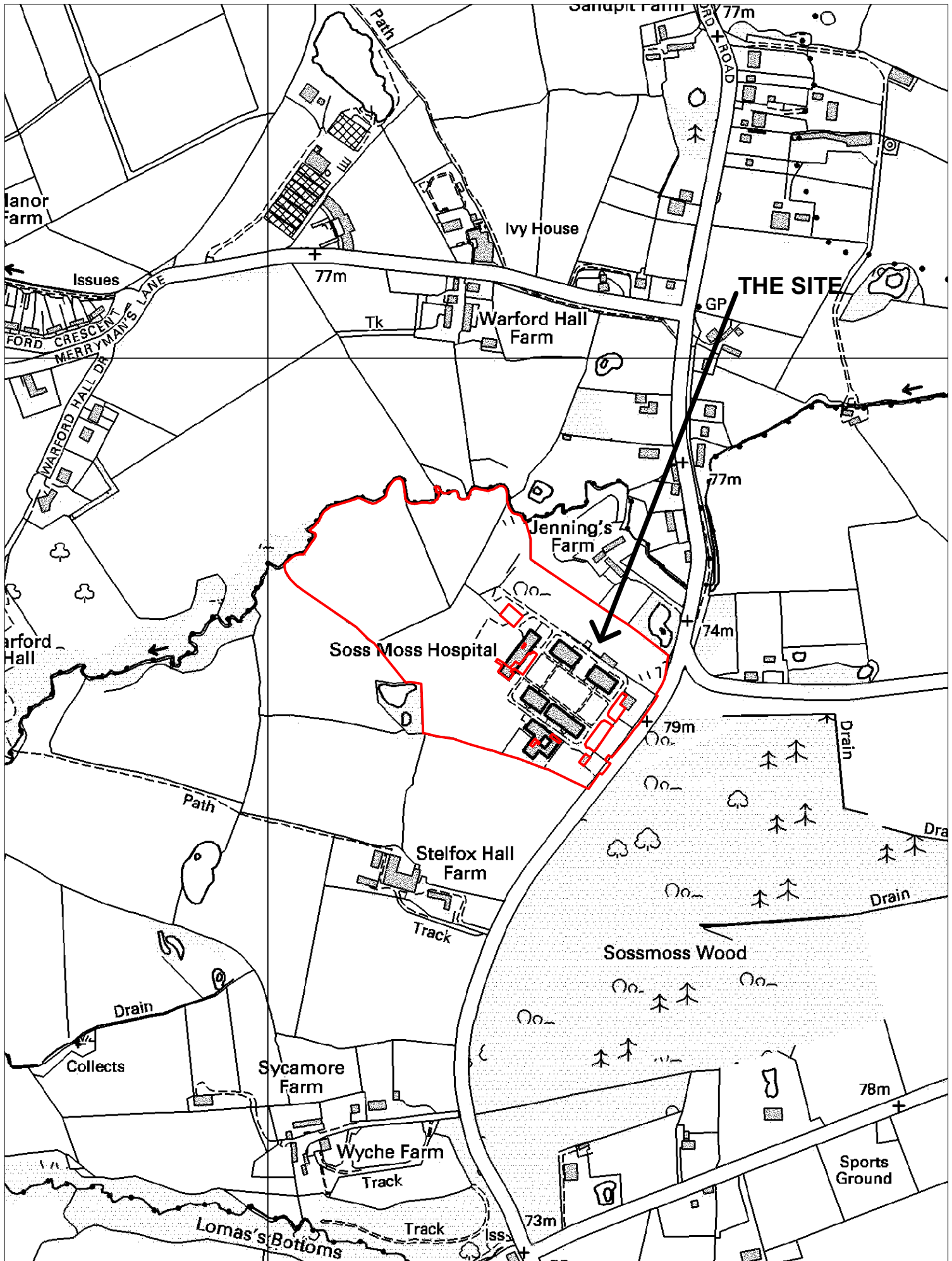
The comments made by the Parish Council are noted. It is considered that the consultation event held could possibly have gone further to include more residents, however, public consultation is not mandatory and therefore, the scheme can not be refused on this basis. Similarly, the Parish Council requests confirmation that the facility would remain within the low secure classification. The way that the site is managed however, does not fall for consideration within the planning process and therefore, this also would not constitute a reason for refusal. It should be noted however, that the application form does confirm that the development is for low secure, mental health units. The design of the building has been considered above, and although contemporary, it is considered that the scheme would not appear incongruous in its surroundings. Members should bear in-mind the advice of PPS1 that the planning system should not stifle good, albeit, innovative design. This is a good example of such a design.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

There is an existing institutional function and operation on the site. The current existing accommodation is unsuitable for the NHS needs and does not comply with the National minimum standards and guidance for such accommodation. It is noted that the existing Mary Dendy Unit will remain in operation until the 4<sup>th</sup> phase commences.

The low secure units would provide support accommodation which would consist of leisure rooms, patient examination rooms – all of which would be low security. The outdoor space would be sufficient to prevent interaction and prevent escape to the outside. This will be provided through planting, wire fencing, foliage and the form of the building.

Overall, the scale of development would be no greater than the existing buildings and as a result it is not considered that there would be a significant impact on the Green Belt. The design is considered to be acceptable. The benefits of the proposed development are considered to outweigh any negative aspects and a recommendation of approval is offered, subject to any further representations from neighbours/consultees.



**THE MARY DENDY UNIT, CHELFORD ROAD, NETHER ALDERLEY, MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE, SK10 4SY**

**NGR 382,249 : 376,659**

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Application for **Full Planning**

**RECOMMENDATION : Approve subject to following conditions**

1. A03FP - Commencement of development (3 years)
2. A05EX - Details of materials to be submitted
3. A01LS - Landscaping - submission of details
4. A04LS - Landscaping (implementation)
5. A02LS - Submission of landscaping scheme
6. A06NC - Protection for breeding birds
7. A08MC - Lighting details to be approved
8. A24HA - Provision / retention of service facility
9. A01HP - Provision of car parking
- 10.A04HP - Provision of cycle parking
- 11.A05HP - Provision of shower, changing, locker and drying facilities
- 12.A02TR - Tree protection
- 13.A04TR - Tree pruning / felling specification
- 14.A06TR - Levels survey
15. Ground levels