

Application No: 12/2560N

Location: LEIGHTON HOSPITAL, MIDDLEWICH ROAD, LEIGHTON, CREWE, CHESHIRE, CW1 4QJ

Proposal: Proposed development consists of: New build theatres, Recovery & CCU and associated plantroom connected to the existing treatment centre building. New VIE plant in connection with new theatre development. Extension to the existing energy centre to accommodate new theatre development. 2No New bed lifts within an existing courtyard area off the existing main hospital street. Refurbishment of Ward 6A with associated demolition of part of Ward 6A to enable construction of new theatre development. New hospital site wide parking rationalisation with associated landscaping

Applicant: Paul Swindells, Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Tr

Expiry Date: 26-Oct-2012

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE with conditions

MAIN ISSUES:

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design and Layout**
- **Amenity Access and Parking**
- **Landscape**
- **Ecology**
- **Drainage and Flooding**
- **Noise, Air Quality and Contaminated Land**

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The Leighton Hospital Site is located within 5km of the North West of Crewe, within a rural setting. The hospital is the only major development within the immediate area. The hospital site is accessed off the A530 Middlewich Road or Smithy Lane which bound the West and South of the site.

The application relates to the existing Treatment Centre which was built in 2003 and is situated in the North West area of the site, adjacent to the access road off the A530 Middlewich Road. The building occupies 4000m² of the hospital site, and is mainly on one storey, but with a two storey plant space to the eastern and rear block. The building is designed around a central courtyard and can be split into a number of linear blocks located around this courtyard. A feature entrance spine cuts through the

courtyard and provides double height space within the reception area. The building is accessed via the western elevation, and circulated internally from a point within the centre of the courtyard.

The Treatment Centre is finished in terracotta rainscreen feature fin wall; White render; Light Grey insulated cladding panels; Dark grey rainscreen cladding; Dark grey bullnose profile to eaves; Dark grey aluminium window frames, doors and louvres;

It is bounded to the North by the hospital site boundary, the South by existing departments within the hospital estate and to the East and West by Car parks. Approximately 30 metres to the East of the building the existing Energy Centre is located.

1. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent for an extension to the treatment centre to provide 8 no. new operating theatres; 14 no. recovery bays; Critical Care ward for 14 no beds; Staff change and rest rooms; Associated non clinical support services; Associated Plant Space and Links to the existing Treatment Centre and the rest of the hospital site.

The existing Treatment Centre occupies a Ground Floor footprint of 4000m² with the proposed extension to the South and East occupying 3880m² at Ground Floor level and 1300m² provided at First Floor level to accommodate the necessary mechanical plant. The proposals have been designed to integrate fully with the existing uses of the Treatment Centre and therefore wrap around this building to the East and South. This means access can be created from both the East and South elevations of the existing Treatment Centre, as well as the corridor which links back into the rest of the hospital site.

The proposals require the removal of parts of another building (ward 6a), the accommodation within this being provided elsewhere within the hospital site boundaries. In reference to the existing Treatment Centre, plant space has been located on the first floor to the East of the extension. As a long block wrapping round back into the existing one storey element this forms a U shaped overall plant space which hides the extensive plant required for the uses of the building.

Existing car parking spaces lost by this development will be replaced with the hospital site boundary, which is described within WSP Transport Statement. These are created by reconfiguring the existing car park to the east of the Treatment Centre, the majority of the new spaces created to the south of this car park.

The application also seeks consent for any extension to the existing Energy Centre to meet the requirements of the new facility.

2. PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

There is a lengthy history of planning applications at Leighton Hospital the most recent of which are:-

12/1193N	Refurbishment and upgrade of Ward 26 – Approved 4 th June 2012
P09/0213	Demolition of Timber Framed Flat Roofed Building and the Provision of Additional Car Parking – Approved 17 th June 2009
P09/0153	The Erection of a Single Storey, Free Standing Unit – Approved 24-Apr-2009
P09/0143	Extension Within Internal Courtyard to Form New Maternity Operating Theatre and Associated Rooms to Existing Woman and Childrens Division 21 st April 2009
P08/1038	Construction of Reinforced Mass Concrete Pad (Retrospective) – Approved 13-Oct-2008
P08/0588	Provision of a Modular Style Building in an Enclosed Courtyard to Provide Additional Accommodation for the adjacent Pharmacy Department – Approved 30-Jun-2008
P08/0099	Variation of Condition Four on Planning Permission P07/0505 relating to Roof Mounted Plant on the A&E Department Building – Approved 25-Mar-2008
P07/0505	Extension to Accident & Emergency Department – Approved 31-May-2007
P07/0284	Medical records building. Approved 10 th April 2007.
P06/1343	Medical Discharge Lounge. Approved 22 January 2007
P06/0787	Oncology Day Centre and Replacement Car Park. Approved 5 September 2006.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan policy

- BE.1 (Amenity)
- BE.2 (Design)
- CF.1 (Leighton Hospital) This relates to land adjacent to the existing hospital site not the application area.
- CF.2 (Community Facilities)

Other Material Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework

4. OBSERVATIONS OF CONSULTEES

Environmental Health

- Prior to the development commencing, an Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted and agreed by the planning authority. The plan shall address the environmental impact in respect of air quality and noise on existing residents during the demolition and construction phase. In particular the plan shall show mitigation measures in respect of;
 - Noise and disturbance during the construction phase including hours of working
 - Waste Management: There shall be no burning of materials on site during demolition / construction
 - Dust generation caused by construction activities and proposed mitigation methodology.
- The Environmental Management Plan above shall be implemented and in force during the construction phase of the development.
- Prior to its installation details of the location, height, design, and luminance of any proposed lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall ensure the lighting is designed to minimise the potential loss of amenity caused by light spillage onto adjoining properties. The lighting shall thereafter be installed and operated in accordance with the approved details.
- No development shall take place until a scheme to minimise dust emissions arising from demolition / construction activities on the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of all dust suppression measures and the methods to monitor emissions of dust arising from the development. The demolition / construction phase shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme, with the approved dust suppression measures being maintained in a fully functional condition for the duration of the demolition / construction phase.
- The application area has a history of hospital use and therefore the land may be contaminated. As such, and in accordance with the NPPF, recommend that the following conditions, reasons and notes be attached should planning permission be granted:
 - Should any adverse ground conditions be encountered during excavation works, all work in that area should cease and this section be contacted for advice.

5. VIEWS OF THE PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL:

No response.

6. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

None received at the time of report preparation.

7. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

8. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site, which is located to the north west of the town of Crewe, is “washed over” by open countryside within the Local Plan. According to Policy NE2 only development which is essential for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, essential works undertaken by public service authorities or statutory undertakers, or for other uses appropriate to a rural area will be permitted within the open countryside.

It could be argued that the provision of additional hospital facilities constitute “*essential works undertaken by public service authorities*”. Furthermore, the position of the proposed building is firmly within the built up, brown-field, area of the existing hospital complex, and would be situated, partially on the footprint of the existing Ward 6a, car-park and ancillary grassed areas. It would also be viewed against the backdrop of the existing hospital buildings. Consequently, it is considered that there would be no incursion into undeveloped open countryside, and any impact on the open character and appearance of the surrounding area would be negligible.

The Written Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth (23 March 2011) issued by the Minister of State for Decentralisation (Mr. Greg Clark) states that “*Government’s clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be ‘yes’, except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy.*”

The Statement goes on to say “*when deciding whether to grant planning permission, local planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development.*” They should, inter alia, consider fully the importance of national planning policies aimed at fostering economic growth and employment, given the need to ensure a return to robust growth after the recent recession; consider the range of likely economic, environmental and social benefits of proposals; and ensure that they do not impose unnecessary burdens on development.

This has been reinforced through the NPPF, which states that, the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. “*Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves do not mean worse lives for future generations. Development means growth.*” There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles including, an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and co-ordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

According to paragraph 17 of the NPPF, within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of 12 core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. According to the 12 principles planning should,

inter alia, proactively drive and support sustainable economic development, always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; take account of the different roles and character of different areas, protecting the Green Belts, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

Paragraph 19 states that *“the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.”*

The NPPF goes on to state that to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century and, inter alia, support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting. *“Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations.”*

The proposed development represents a substantial investment of public funds in infrastructure provision within Crewe and would bring direct and indirect economic benefits to the town including additional trade for local shops and businesses, jobs in construction, economic benefits to the construction industry supply chain. The new facility, which will provide replacement state-of-the-art facilities, to replace ageing operating theatre accommodation will allow the hospital to continue to provide quality services going forward into the future and will help to safeguard jobs within the hospital itself in the long term.

It is also important to consider the community benefits arising from such a significant improvement in healthcare provision within the town. The NPPF also stresses the important social role which planning plays, supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

These are important material considerations that would outweigh any minimal potential conflict with Policy NE.2. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

Design and Layout

The existing hospital complex comprises a mixture of single and two storey modern buildings including 1960's flat roofed, prefabricated concrete structures, post-modern buildings of traditional brick and tile construction, dating from the 1980's and 90's and contemporary additions. The Treatment Centre, to which this extension is to be added constructed in 2003 is one of the most up to date and contemporary of the buildings on the hospital site, and as stated above, the proposed extension will wrap around three sides of the existing building. The elevational treatment of the proposed extension has

been designed to reflect the existing treatment centre both in terms of massing and materials.

The most prominent part of the proposed extension is the north east corner, where the building will be visible from the car park, access road and open countryside to the north. This has been articulated using dark grey rainscreen cladding already used on the entrance spine of the existing building, in order to create a focal point and “end-stop” to the building, which will balance the entrance feature at the opposite end of the north elevation.

According to the Design and Access Statement, a long block relating to the plant space on the existing building is located to the South of this corner, maintaining the same proportions and appearance to the existing. A light grey metal cladding will be used for this element, to match the existing.

The single storey elements within the extension will be faced in render with dark grey copings to match those to the North, South and West elevations of the existing. The proportions of the elements are also maintained.

The fenestration to each area reflects the uses within the building. These provide the necessary privacy or views out required by the use. There are essentially three window types to the proposed building as follows:

- *Dark Cladding Vertical Ribbons* – The external floor levels offer full height windows within the operating theatres whilst maintaining the privacy of the users. To further emphasise the feature corner these have been included with the required louvers to the plant space above to form a vertical feature;
- *Horizontal Strip Windows* – These windows are included to operating theatres and recovery wards. They allow for privacy with all areas due to the external levels, whilst affording a view out from the users. The height above ground floor level allows for equipment, beds etc to be placed in front without impacting on the external appearance;
- *Full Height windows to South elevation* – Large full height windows have been included to the Critical Care Unit ward which allows for the maximum natural light to the ward to aid with recovery of patients. Due to the southern orientation, shading has been included, also offering privacy from outside. These windows face into the proposed landscaped area.

The proposed Energy Centre extension has been designed to reflect the existing, the form being extruded to the North, with elevations of buff brick and dark cladding. The existing roof profile will also be replicated. A 16m high chimney is also proposed as part of the Energy Centre extension, this will be located on the eastern side of the building.

The demolition of ward 6a will leave a gable end on the south east corner. This will be faced in render which corresponds with the proposed Theatre and CCU extension that it will face. Window replacements are also planned for the remaining parts of this building.

It is therefore concluded, that the elevational detailing of the proposal is acceptable and in keeping with the character of the development on the existing site and therefore complies with Policy BE2 of the adopted Local Plan and advice within the NPPF in respect of design.

With regard to layout, the extension itself is surrounded by existing buildings and is mainly visible from the access road off the A530 Middlewich Road and the car park to the North of the site. The proposed extension to the Energy Centre will also sit in front of the long East elevation. Therefore, as stated above, the proposal will be viewed against the backdrop of existing development and will not impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding open countryside. Therefore the layout and siting of the proposed new buildings are considered to be acceptable and also in accordance with Policy BE2 of the adopted Local Plan and advice within the NPPF in respect of design.

Amenity

There are no nearby residential properties which could be affected by the proposed extensions. The locations and layout of the extensions take into account the constraints of the site the function of the proposed building. The layout provides pleasant external day spaces. The extensions have been designed to comply with current NHS guidelines and, as detailed above, an adequate standard of amenity will be achieved and retained for the existing and proposed rooms, within the ward complex including those fronting on to the courtyard which will be created between the proposed new theatre block and the truncated Ward 6a.

Access and Car Parking

The existing treatment centre and car park is accessed directly off the A530. Given that the proposal involves primarily a replacement of existing out-dated facilities within the hospital, there is no intention to increase staff or patient number due to the extended footprint. Consequently, it is not considered that the scheme will result in an intensified use of this access or significant additional traffic generation on the surrounding highways network.

The amount of additional car parking is a key issue in determining this application. The proposed footprint of the extension results in the loss of circa 90 spaces. It is the intention to replace these spaces with the reconfiguration of existing car parks within the hospital site. No additional spaces will be provided. However, this is considered to be acceptable given that the proposal will not increase the number of patients

The hospital already has a Travel Plan in place which has been operating for a number of years to reduce dependency on car based travel.

On the basis of the above it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy BE.3 (Access and Parking) and that a refusal on highway safety grounds could not be sustained. However, comments from the Highways Department had not been received at the time of report preparation and a further update will be provided to committee Members at their meeting.

Landscaping

The existing landscaping on the site consists of a mixture of hedging, shrubbery and some ornamental trees. The proposed extension is located within an existing car park and therefore impact on existing landscaping will be minimal.

With regard to hard landscape proposals, the scheme includes a brick sett pathway around the building which corresponds with that to the existing Treatment Centre building, maintaining ease of pedestrian movement around the hospital site. The proposals also include for the reconfiguration of existing vehicular routes to accommodate the new building.

The site plan outlines the broad soft landscaping proposals and consists mainly of grassed areas, hedgerows and shrubs. To the South of the site, and within the existing courtyard, there is a small garden used for the recovery of patients. Due to the demolition of part of the existing building (Ward 6 and 6a) this garden will become part of a larger landscaped area.

A condition is recommended to require a full scheme of landscaping to be submitted and approved.

Ecology

Given that the proposal involves alterations to modern buildings and development predominantly on the footprint of existing buildings, hard surfaced car park and ancillary grass verge areas, it is not considered that any ecological issues are raised.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Comments from United Utilities and the Environment Agency were awaited at the time of report preparation. However, given that the building is located within the existing complex, is a replacement for existing facilities and is sited predominantly on the footprint of the existing buildings and car parking, it is not anticipated that any drainage or flooding concerns will be raised. However, a further update will be provided to Members at their meeting.

Noise, Air Quality and Contaminated Land

With regard to matters of noise, air quality and contaminated land the application has been considered by Environmental Health officers, who have raised no objection subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. It is therefore not considered that a refusal on these grounds could be sustained.

9. CONCLUSION

The site is located within the Open Countryside where there is a presumption against new development, unless it falls into one of a number of categories, including "*essential works undertaken by public service authorities*" which it is considered would include a hospital extension. The proposal would also have significant economic,

community and social benefits which would outweigh any conflict with Open Countryside policy.

The proposal reflects the character and appearance of the existing development on site and is considered to be acceptable in design terms. It will not have any adverse impact in terms of amenity, highway safety, landscape ecology, drainage and flooding, noise, air quality or contaminated land. The proposal is considered to represent sustainable development and as a result, having regard to the provisions of the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. Accordingly it is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

10. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Standard**
 - 2. Materials including surfacing materials**
 - 3. Provision of Replacement parking**
 - 4. Covered Cycle Storage Facilities**
 - 5. Submission of landscape scheme**
 - 6. Landscape Implementation**
 - 7. Submission / approval and implementation of Environmental Management Plan**
 - 8. Submission / approval and implementation of details of the location, height, design, and luminance of any proposed lighting**
 - 9. Submission / approval and implementation of a scheme to minimise dust emissions arising from demolition / construction activities**
 - 10. Should any adverse ground conditions be encountered during excavation works, all work in that area should cease and Environmental Health be contacted for advice.**
-

(c) Crown copyright and database rights 2012. Ordnance Survey
100049045, 100049046.

