

Application Number

P/2014/0879

Site Address

South Devon Healthcare
Torbay Hospital
Newton Road
Torquay
Devon
TQ2 7AA

Case Officer

Mr Scott Jones

Ward

Shiphay With The Willows

Description

Demolition of existing main entrance and shop. Construction of new main entrance facilities, new critical care unit, new support facilities and plant room. New hard landscaping and planting around new building.

Executive Summary/Key Outcomes

The application is for the construction of a new main hospital entrance and critical care unit in a central position within the wider Torbay Hospital site. They are to be provided within a single three storey flat-roofed building that provides a floor area of 2670m².

The key element of the scheme is to provide a new 14 bed critical care unit in order to address expected capacity requirements and meet anticipated future care need. The scheme also provides an improved reception facility, including retail and café space.

The proposed building will provide a reception at ground floor (hospital level 4), the critical care unit at first floor level, with further critical care support aside the plant space provided at second floor level.

The building replaces the existing single storey main reception building with a building of greater presence and one considered more befitting for such a focal point. It will improve legibility within the site and improve the care capacity and facilities that can be provided for patients and visitors to the hospital.

The design is modern with elevations being a mix of a face fixed engineered cladding system that will be supplement by areas of glazed aluminium curtain walling and window openings. The principal elevation also features ventilation louvers to the upper storeys. The detailing away from this western "public face" of the building has a simpler form with less glazing and no cooling louvers.

The submitted drawings include some large scale signage however these should be considered as indicative only and should be considered on their own merit via a separate application under the Advertisement Regulations.

To the front of the building at ground level the scheme also includes some ancillary covered walkways around the entrance and drop off area and some localised landscape amendments.

The proposal would provide an additional 31 FTE (full time equivalent) jobs, the bulk of which are additional nursing staff, and clearly seeks to deliver improved facilities for people in need of care.

The proposal is considered consistent with the objectives of Policies CFS (Sustainable communities strategy) and CF13 (Torbay Hospital) of the Saved Torbay Local Plan, in that it would provide new improved facilities linked to the primary function of Torbay Hospital without detriment to landscaping, transportation needs or neighbouring residential amenity.

Recommendation

Conditional approval; suggested conditions are listed at the end of this report, with final drafting and determination of appropriate planning conditions to be delegated to the Director of Place.

Statutory Determination Period

The thirteen week target date for determination of the application is 20th December 2014. The decision should be issued within this timescale.

Site Details

The application site relates an area approximately 55m by 55m set centrally within the much larger Torbay Hospital site. The area currently holds a small main reception building and the head of a circular access and drop off area that fronts it. There is a degree of landscaping to the front and to the side (south) of the building there are two relatively significant trees within a walled planting bed.

The development area is chiefly accessed from the west where pedestrian and vehicular access approach on a gently rising gradient between other hospital buildings. The site abuts, or sits in close proximity, to other substantial hospital buildings on its other three sides.

Detailed Proposals

The application is to replace the current reception building with a larger building that will provide a reception and a 14 bed critical care unit. The proposal also includes to the front of the building a reconfigured drop off area, covered walkways and minor landscape detail.

The proposed building is a three storey rectangular structure with a flat roof. External materials show walls to be finished in an engineered cladding system inset by areas of glazed curtain walling and intermittent windows. In the principal elevation the upper two floors will feature a shading screen structure that also

shows some hospital signage.

Internally the buildings ground floor (Hospital Level 4) will provide an open-plan reception set behind a feature entrance lobby along with elements of retail space, a café/seating area and ancillary rooms such as toilets and baby changing facilities. The first floor will provide a 14 bed critical care unit with ancillary rooms. The second floor largely offers space for the plant requirement, although there is a degree of ancillary rooms in support of the critical care unit on this floor.

The proposal would provide an additional 31 FTE (full time equivalent) jobs.

Summary Of Consultation Responses

The Authority's Arboricultural Officer

Advises that two prominent trees will be lost to allow space for the build which will have a negative affect on the aesthetic benefits of that the landscape quality. The loss of trees should not preclude the proposed development however detailed mitigation landscaping should be achieved through a condition on the grant of any approval.

The Authority's Sustainable Transport Officer

Advises that the proposal does not provide clarity on whether the free flow of bus access into and out of the turning head is retained. This detail should be a condition to any grant of approval.

In addition S106 planning obligations should be sought if applicable to support walking, cycling and public transport links in the area. Based on new floor area the level of contributions is £66,282.00.

South West Water

No objection.

Police Liaison Officer

Recommends that the development be constructed to meet full Secured by Design standards. Useful guidance is provided in "Secured by Design for Hospitals".

Summary Of Representations

None.

Relevant Planning History

There are a number of applications that relate to the wider hospital site for expansion/redevelopment of area to improve the provision of care.

Key Issues/Material Considerations

The main issues are:

1. the principle of the proposed development
2. whether the design and scale would be appropriate in this location
3. highways and movement
4. landscaping
5. impact on residential amenity.

1 Principle and Planning Policy -

In the Saved Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011 Policy CFS (Sustainable communities strategy) supports development for new or improved healthcare facilities where proposals meet the need and improve the quality of life for residents. Policy CF13 (Torbay Hospital) supports expansion and improvements to the hospital where it supports the primary function, subject to landscape, transport and residential amenity considerations. These matters will be covered in subsequent sections of this report. National guidance, notably Para 70 in the NPPF, promotes the delivery of services that the community needs to enhance the sustainability of communities.

The proposal seeks to provide a critical care unit and replacement reception facility, which will also house ancillary uses such as minor retail and café uses. These uses are considered to be aligned with the primary function of the hospital and the scheme is hence deemed to sit comfortably with the aims and objectives of broad planning principles and policy aims cited above.

2 Design and scale of building -

The scale and design of building is considered acceptable in the context.

The scale of the building will sit comfortably aside the large buildings that surround the existing single storey reception. Although the new building is itself substantial it will sit lower than the buildings that frame it to the north and south. This context (of larger buildings) provides an arrangement where the building will sit comfortably within the locality and where its scale does not raise concern.

In regard to design the buildings form and detail is considered to harmonise well with the fairly utilitarian feel of the wider building group. The design is also considered to offer a sufficient touch of visual interest to the principal elevation that is necessary for a structure to successfully sit as a focal point for the site and its users.

The detail of materials should be sought via planning condition to ensure that a quality finish to the building is achieved.

It is noted that the proposed plans detail signage and suggest that there will be some means of illumination. For the purposes of this planning application the signs are considered indicative only, as approval should be sought under a separate Advertisement Regulations application.

3 Highway and movement -

The proposal raises two matters for consideration, the wider impact of the additional floor-space on movement and parking, and the immediate impact of the ancillary works on movement and traffic flow in the turning head.

The proposal provides a building with 2670m floor-space, which is loosely segregated into one-third reception and ancillary use, one-third critical care, and one third essential plant space. The ground floor reception element should provide little additional movement to and from the site, replacing existing facilities with enhanced space for users of the hospital. The reception/retail/café floor space is not considered a trip-generator as users will generally come to the site for its core health provision rather than these elements. The critical care unit will increase staffing numbers and trips to and from the site for patients and families. Notwithstanding this the wider impact of the trips generated will be negligible within the context of the hospital site as a whole. As matters stand any incremental impact will be addressed by the hospitals proposals for improved parking facilities throughout the site (see report on this agenda) and also by maintaining and evolving the working travel plan. In the context the Authority's Sustainable Transport Officer does not raise the likelihood of any notable impact and suggests that any such impact will be mitigated by ongoing evolution of the travel plan and the improvements that are sought to the wider parking facilities. Finally the plant area is not considered a likely trip generator.

The Highway Department has questioned whether the revised layout will retain a functioning route for buses. In light of this concern it is considered appropriate to attach a condition for the submission of details (to include swept paths) to show that the area will retain functionality for buses.

Members should note the recommendations included in the report, on this agenda, for an additional 415 parking spaces on site. If DMC approves that application, a range of sustainable transport measures will be put in place that will support the development proposal subject of this report.

4 Landscaping -

The quality of the external environment should be an integral part of the development. Policy CF13 (Torbay Hospital) outlines that such proposals should maintain and enhance the amenity and wildlife features of the hospital site.

The proposal details the removal of two trees to the south of the site which are fairly substantial and offer some tangible visual amenity benefits, softening the built form locally. It also removes the small landscaped mini-roundabout, which is of lesser value.

Due to the restricted nature of the development site there is limited potential to provide mitigation within the red line boundary of the site. The applicant has agreed that landscape mitigation should be offered within the broader site boundary of the hospital. Again, this can be delivered as part of the additional

landscaping needed to support the additional 415 parking space, if approved.

The Council's arboricultural officer advises that the proposal is suitable for approval on arboricultural merit subject to a condition requiring submission of details of tree replacement/mitigation.

5 Impact on residential amenity -

The proposal is set centrally within the hospital site some distance from its borders and adjacent residential occupiers.

Considering the location and building arrangement the proposal will not affect the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties.

S106/CIL -

The proposal has been assessed against the aims and objectives of the Councils adopted SPD.

In this instance it would not be appropriate to seek a contribution towards sustainable transport as mitigation for job creation outweighs the level of transport funding triggered by the new floor-space.

Conclusions

The proposal is considered suitably scaled in the context of the adjacent building group.

The design is considered acceptable with a suitable form and palette of materials, and a suitable level of visual interest to the public face of the building.

There would be limited increase in trips to and from the site however the impact is considered negligible in the context of the site's wider traffic impact. It is also considered that mitigation is ongoing with the hospitals working travel plan and concurrent proposals to improve parking levels on the site.

The limited landscape implications of the scheme can be overcome with suitable replanting within the wider site.

In conclusion, the proposal would result in the provision of improved healthcare facilities that would provide a benefit to the community, which would be consistent with Policies CFS and CF13 in the Saved Torbay Local Plan.

Suggested conditions to include:

- Landscape mitigation submitted and approved
- Movement details around the turning head (to ensure bus access)
- Materials submitted and approved.

Condition(s)/Reason(s)

01. submission and approval of a landscape plan to provide suitable mitigation for the removed trees.
02. The submission and approval of details of the external materials to be used, including colour.
03. Details, which shall include swept paths, shall be submitted and approved that show that the revised layout will permit bus movement in and out of the turning head.

Informative(s)

01. The signage detailed on the plans hereby approved are considered as indicative only and shall be subject to a separate submission under the relevant Advertisement Regulations.

Relevant Policies

BES - Built environment strategy
BE1 - Design of new development
CFS - Sustainable communities strategy
CF6 - Community infrastructure contributions
CF13 - Torbay Hospital
TS - Land use transportation strategy
T25 - Car parking in new development
T26 - Access from development onto the highway
ES - Employment and local economy strategy
E9 - Layout, design and sustainability
LS - Landscape strategy
L9 - Planting and retention of trees
L10 - Major development and landscaping
NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework