COMMITTEE REPORT

Application Reference	14/01996/FUL
Site Address	Stratford On Avon General Hospital, Arden Street Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6NX
Proposals	Erection of new community hospital building and associated multi-storey car park and energy centre, with provision for public realm, and associated access roads and service yard.
Case Officer	Rebecca Lock
Presenting Officer	Rebecca Lock
Applicant	Mr John Stevens (South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust)
Ward Member(s)	Cllr T. Jefferson Cllr K. Lloyd Cllr J. Short
Town Council	Stratford-upon-Avon
Reason for Referral to Committee	• Objection from Town Council • Scale of development
Recommendation	Grant subject to s106 agreement

1. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to expand the facilities available at the existing Stratford Hospital, Arden Street.

The new hospital buildings, together with associated facilities, new public realm and car parking and servicing would consist of:

- 3-storey hospital building to provide a new ambulatory care-centre for Diagnostic, Ophthalmology and Oncology services to the community;
- Multi-storey car-park to replace the existing ground-level open car park, and expand the parking to 250 spaces;
- Energy building to provide heating/lighting, emergency generators and all oxygen and specialist medical gases for the existing and proposed hospital buildings;
- Service yard/waste collection area away from the hospital buildings and public areas;
- Internal alterations to access routes;
- A landscaped public realm.

The proposed ambulatory care-centre building is located to the south of the application site. It includes brick-work with a parapet (to hide plant/equipment) with a recessed entrance and atrium feature.

The multi-storey car-park lies to the north of the site and is treated with external vertical feature wooden cladding.

The energy centre is located behind the car-park building in the north-western, and is a triangular. Materials will be a combination of brickwork and timber cladding.

The existing access point from Arden Street remains unaltered. The internal access layout will be re-configured to provide access to the entire site via a perimeter road.

The application follows the permission granted under 14/01305/FUL, which included enabling works for the proposed extensions.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS (INCLUDING RELEVANT PLANNING CONSTRAINTS)

The Stratford Hospital is located to the north-western area of Stratford within its built up area boundary. It is found on Arden Street which connects Birmingham Road and Alcester Road. The hospital site is served by a single access road from Arden Street, close to the junction with Alcester Road. It is located behind the newer Stratford Healthcare Centre.

The application site consists of the existing hospital building and temporary surface car-park.

The Stratford Conservation Area is located to the south of the application site, with 'The Stratford' Hotel to the south within the Conservation Area.

There is a protected Holm-Oak tree on the south-western boundary between the hospital site and the railway station/Alcester Road.

Surrounding the site are a mixture of commercial and residential buildings (including those under-construction to the south-west) and a recent hotel development to the south-east.

To the north-west and north are the industrial units of Western Road, with the railway station to the west.

The site is level.

3. HISTORY/BACKGROUND

Reference Number	Proposal	Decision and date
14/02233/FUL	Extension of temporary surface car park approved under planning permission ref. 14/01305/FUL	Pending consideration
14/01305/FUL	(1) Formation of a car park, internal access road, waste compound and contractor's compound, including all associated perimeter fencing, for a temporary period of 1 year; and (2) construction of two ground floor plant room extensions on the northwest elevation of the hospital building.	Granted 03.07.2014
11/01579/FUL	Installation of solar panels and associated equipment (Located on south roof slope of main outpatient and 'Hathaway' buildings)	Granted 05.10.2011

4. RELEVANT POLICY CONTEXT

The Development Plan

STR.4	Previously developed land
PR.1	Landscape and Settlement Character
PR.8	Pollution Control
EF.7	Nature Conservation
EF.10	Trees, woodland and hedgerows
EF.11A & B	Archaeological Sites
EF.13	Conservation Area - Preservation
DEV.1	Layout and Design
DEV.3	Amenity Space
DEV.4	Access
DEV.6	Services
DEV.7	Drainage
DEV.8	Energy Conservation
DEV.9	Access for people with disabilities
DEV.10	Crime Prevention
COM.2	Retention of Local services
COM.9	Walking and Cycling
SUA.2	Town Characer
SUA.G	Arden Street – Medical Uses

IMP.1 Supporting Information
IMP.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance
IMP.6 Transport Assessments
IMP.7 Green Transport Plans

Other Material Considerations

Central Government Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework 2012
Planning Policy Guidance 2014
Appendix A of Circular 11/95 (Model Conditions)

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents
Car and Cycle Parking Standards 2007
Sustainable Low Carbon Buildings 2007
District Design Guide 2000
Urban Design Framework 2007
Town Design Statement 2002
Character Map
Developer Contributions towards transport schemes in Stratford-upon-Avon 2007

Other Documents
Statement of Community Involvement
Planning and Community Safety - Design and Crime Reduction 2006: Planning Advice Note
Corporate Strategy 2011-2015
Stratford on Avon District Council – Sustainable Community Strategy
Corporate Strategy 2011-2015

Proposed Submission Core Strategy 2014
Council on the 12th May 2014 approved its Proposed Submission Core Strategy. Proposed modifications were agreed at full Council on the 15 September 2014 and the Proposed Submission Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State with proposed modifications on 29th September 2014.

Other Legislation
Human Rights Act 1998
Equalities Act 2010
Localism Act 2011
National Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006)
CIL Regulations

Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a "General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions." Subsection (1) provides: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

5. APPLICANT'S COMMENTS

The applicant has submitted a letter explaining the background to the application and the need to update the care facilities, along with a comprehensive 'package' of documents, consisting the following:

- Planning Statement
- Design & Access Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Noise Assessment
- Drainage Assessment
- Ecology Report
- Site Investigation/Contamination
- Pre-Application Statement
- Photographic Survey
- Energy and Sustainability Statement

The applicant has commented as follows:-

Development Summary
The current application is the first of a number of potential phases of redevelopment for the Stratford Hospital, and represents a significant financial investment in providing new facilities and services at the Arden Street site and a clear commitment on behalf of South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust in improving the range and quality of healthcare services available to the residents of Stratford-Upon-Avon in their own town.

This first phase of the redevelopment of Stratford Hospital focuses on two aims, firstly improving the current infrastructure on the site to improve the ability of the site to provide excellent healthcare outcomes currently, but also to easily accommodate future improvements to and expansion of the services provided on the site. Whilst secondly providing new services at the Stratford Hospital that specifically that not only resolve current shortfalls in services available, but also addresses the specific healthcare needs of the rapidly growing population of Stratford-Upon-Avon.

To this end, the current application focuses on four main elements of development, the construction of a 251 space Multi-Storey Car Park, the construction of a new clean and efficient Energy Centre, the construction of a three storey Ambulatory Care Centre and the enhancement of the access routes and public realm across the site.

Multi-Storey Car Park
The importance of improving the accessibility and quantity of parking on the Stratford Hospital site is evidenced not only by the proposed investment in a 251 space Multi-Storey Car Park, but also by the fact that it will be the first of the three new buildings proposed to be constructed.

The new Multi-Storey Car Park will increase the amount of parking available on the site by 63% and will provide secure accessible parking over five storeys in a light, open timber faced structure, that will be directly connected to be both the existing and proposed clinical buildings on the site by the enhanced public realm.

Within the 251 parking spaces is an increased number of disabled parking bays over what is currently available, whilst all 9No. decks are serviced by two passenger lifts and a stair core, enabling simple and equal access for all patients, visitors and staff to a secure undercover parking space.

Also included within the Multi-Storey Car Park are a secure bicycle storage area, with a minimum of 18 bicycle racks, and 12 motorcycle parking bays, to enable a

mix of alternative modes of transport to be used by staff, visitors and patients alike, which should further reduce the pressure on parking spaces on the site.

It should be noted that whilst the Multi-Storey Car Park is by it's very nature is a significant structure, a great deal of care has been taken in determining it's shape and size to ensure it complements the other buildings on the site, both existing and proposed, and that it is a pleasing building in its own right, utilising an open timber 'skin' to lessen its scale and present a sympathetic and pleasing form.

Energy Centre
The construction of a new Energy Centre is recognition of the need to provide a new clean and efficient means by which to service the existing and proposed buildings on the site with heat and power in a sustainable and responsible manner.

To this end a small, but carefully designed Energy Centre is proposed for the north west corner of the site to contain a new combined heat and power plant to generate all of the power and heating needs for both the existing hospital buildings and the new buildings identified in this proposal. It has also been designed to accommodate sufficient space for future expansion to serve further phase of the proposed redevelopment of the site in the near future.

Whilst a functional building in its nature, great care has been taken in the detailing and massing of this timber and brickwork building to provide a visually interesting structure that is complimentary not only to the buildings on the Stratford Hospital site, but also to those existing buildings within the wider context of the area.

Ambulatory Care Centre
The Ambulatory Care Centre proposed in this application has been designed specifically to provide the Stratford Hospital with the ability to provide it's patients with new healthcare services, for which the residents of Stratford-Upon-Avon currently have to travel some distance to receive.

Central to the provision of these new services are the construction of a new Ophthalmology Out Patients Department, including an Ophthalmology Theatre, on the First floor and a new Ambulatory Cancer Unit on the Second Floor, centred around the provision of fourteen chemotherapy chairs. These departments and services have been specifically identified for this initial phase of the redevelopment of the Stratford Hospital in recognition of the current and projected near term future clinical needs of the population of Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Services proposed to be provided from this new building include Ophthalmology Clinics for the treatment of Macular Degeneration, Cataracts and Glaucoma, Paediatric Ophthalmology and a dedicated Ophthalmology Theatre and a Chemotherapy Suite for the treatment of various cancers, along with a supporting Cancer Clinic which will provide diagnosis and ongoing monitoring of patients referred to the unit.

As important as providing the new spaces in which to deliver these services, is the desire to provide these services within a sympathetic, comfortable and stimulating environment, that allows the patient to be comfortable and at ease with their surroundings, whilst at the same time providing an efficient and effective clinical setting for the clinicians undertake their work as simply as possible.

To this end, a great deal of time, careful consultation with staff and patients and professional design expertise has been expended to create a building that utilises natural daylight, views of the external environment and quality internal finishes, to create an environment that is more akin to a private hospital or health spa, whilst retaining the flexibility to respond to changing needs and patterns within healthcare with minimal change to the fabric of the building.

Access and Public Realm
Linking the new structures above with the existing hospital buildings and the wider Stratford area is a series of new access roads and areas of public realm, which will help to create a coherent hospital site that is easy to access for all, regardless of ability or method of transport, and which is a pleasant space through which to pass, or alternatively look upon from the within the hospital buildings themselves.

To this end, two courtyard gardens are provided for both staff and patient access alike from the ground floor, and generous areas of public realm are provided at the centre of the hospital site, to provide a 'green heart' to the development.

It should also be noted that as part of the design process for the external area careful consideration has been given to ensuring that permanent links to the wider community are established for this community healthcare facility, and to this end a pedestrian link has been provided to the new residential development to the south of the hospital, which also allows access to the bus stop and railway station beyond. Whilst the Hospital will be fully connected to both the local road network and a new cycle path to the south of the site.

The proposed redevelopment of the Stratford Hospital site represents a significant opportunity to enhance the quality and range of healthcare services and facilities available to the local community of Stratford-Upon-Avon, which will enable the Hospital to meet the future healthcare challenges of the local community and establish the foundations for further future expansion of the Hospital site".

6. TOWN COUNCIL

Object:
"The Town Council supports the principle of this development but has serious reservations about the traffic implications of this development and the age and time of year of the data used in the Transport Assessment. The local highway network is at capacity and this development, although to be welcomed, will clearly attract additional traffic to the town centre. Sustainable modes of travel are encouraged but in reality out patients are unlikely to walk or cycle to the hospital. A single access off Arden Street is not acceptable. A one way system through the site linking with the Arden Street car park should be explored.

Connectivity with the station and possibly Western Road should also be explored. People arriving by train would have a very contorted route so a link is a necessity.

There is no covered area for the pick-up and drop off zone or the connections to the existing medical faculties from the car park.

The design is considered to be satisfactory for this functional building. The timber cladding on the car park is an innovative solution.

The Town Council welcomes further discussion and amendments to the current scheme to address these issues." (02.09.2014)

7. WARD MEMBERS

Cllr T. Jefferson:
Comments as follows:
"I was present at the Town Council Planning Advisory meeting and we were very concerned about the traffic issues arising from the proposed development. On a personal level I am utterly unimpressed when traffic data from 2011 is used and traffic surveys are conducted in October and November. I have no idea whether October and November are representative or peak traffic months and I think that evidence needs to be provided that these are representative of peak traffic flows.

The proposed "traffic plan", although I believe not yet complete, appears to focus on cycling and walking to alleviate traffic. This is a hospital and we have an ageing population in Stratford, the extent to which cycling and walking could be used as alleviation must therefore, one would have logically thought, be limited.

We also noted that the people who work at the hospital will need their cars to visit other NHS facilities or patients.

Whilst there is absolutely no doubt that the upgrading of the hospital is of huge benefit to the community it is important that we there is complete rigour and credibility in the analysis of the impact of the additional traffic flows onto Arden Street and Birmingham Roads in particular.

Bringing Arden Street to a halt would not be a good outcome." (18.09.2014)

Cllr K.Lloyd & Cllr J.Short
None received

8. CONSULTATIONS

N.A.T.S. Safeguarding

No objection
"The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with our safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company ("NERL") has no safeguarding objection to the proposal.

However, please be aware that this response applies specifically to the above consultation and only reflects the position of NATS (that is responsible for the management of en route air traffic) based on the information supplied at the time of this application. This letter does not provide any indication of the position of any other party, whether they be an airport, airspace user or otherwise. It remains your responsibility to ensure that all the appropriate consultees are properly consulted.

If any changes are proposed to the information supplied to NATS in regard to this application which become the basis of a revised, amended or further application for approval, then as a statutory consultee NERL requires that it be further consulted on any such changes prior to any planning permission or any consent being granted." (19.08.2014)

Highways Agency

No Objection
"We understand the application seeks permission to erect a new community hospital building, associated multi-storey car park with associated works and access off the local road network. The nearest section of the Strategic Road Network is the A46 which is located over a mile to the north of the site.

The Highways Agency has reviewed the details of the application and considers the proposals as unlikely to adversely affect the safety and free flow of the SRN. This position is based on the nature of the proposals and the distance of the development from the A46 Trunk Road.

Please find attached a TR110 confirming our position as one of no objection." (19.08.2014)

Coal Authority

No objection – not within known area (21.08.2014)

Warwickshire Police

No objection:
"I would recommend that the below be incorporated into the build as it will go some way to reducing crime at this site.
The new hospital must be built in accordance with Secured by Design Hospital 2005 guidelines.
The main pedestrian access points shall be protected by a shutter, grille or a combination thereof.
I would recommend appropriate CCTV coverage for the whole site however I advise dedicated cameras on the entrance roads with the facility to record number plates.
Boundary fencing or railings shall be tested and certified and must not include anti-climb topping as part of the minimum height (2m)
Lighting on adopted footpaths, private roads and footpaths and car parks must comply with BS 5489-1:2003.
I recommend that the new car park be building in accordance with the guidelines of the Park Mark Scheme." (20.08.2014)

WCC Archaeology

No representation (10.09.2014)

WCC Water Officer

No objection subject to condition (26.08.2014)

WCC Museum (Ecology)

No representation
"Please could we seek some clarity regarding the ecological assessment carried out by WSP. Have any nocturnal bat surveys been carried out this summer on the buildings to be demolished, or do WSP feel the most appropriate way forward is a precautionary demolition strategy for those buildings which are considered to have some bat potential? If the latter, please could we request that the precautionary demolition strategy is submitted for consideration." (29.08.2014)

SDC Environmental Health

No Objection
"The noise report is acceptable and I have no comments on this.
I note the energy centre will contain two dual fuel boilers and an emergency generator. Clean Air Act (1993) approval under sections 13 and 14 will be required for the height of the stacks serving the boilers and emergency generator and this application should be submitted and approval gained prior to the plant being brought into use. There is no need to delay consideration of the planning application unless the height of the stacks is a relevant matter to be considered as part of the application." (02.09.2014)

Building Control

It is proposed to use solar P.V's to meet the 10% on site renewables requirements. (03.09.14)

Environment Agency

No objections (03.04.2014)

English Heritage

No objection – Refer to your local guidance/advice. (04.10.2014)

Conservation Officer

No objection
"The development site proposed lies just outside the Stratford-upon-Avon Conservation Area. There are no Listed Buildings immediately adjoining the site proposed, and although there are several within the section of the conservation area nearest to the site, the setting of these cannot reasonably be said to depend heavily on the existing hospital and other buildings in and around the development site. Their setting could therefore only be significantly altered by something dramatically different from what exists in and around the hospital site.

I do not believe the setting of any listed buildings would be affected in terms of their core significance.

The other main heritage issue to consider in relation to the proposed development is assessment of the impact on views into and out of the conservation area, and whether these are significantly harmed, with consequent harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area itself.

Having visited and walked around the site, my main concerns are the height and massing of the buildings. In particular, although there are several large industrial and utilitarian buildings in the vicinity, the specific location of this development at the top of a gentle rise in the ground level approaching from the conservation area boundary to the south, combined with the 16m height of the main building, will make it stand out. Is this level of visual dominance acceptable? On balance, I believe the existing character of the wider site will be able to absorb this development, with the impact on views into and out of the conservation area being only modestly affected.

The design is not particularly innovative, but is functional and broadly acceptable for this site, which already has a very robust character, with buildings of simple form and materials.

Overall, the level of harm to the conservation area is in my opinion very minor. We should condition samples of all external materials." (15.09.2014)

Natural England

No objection
Will not harm the Racecourse Meadows S.S.S.I which is 2km distant. Refer to standing advice on protected species and bio-diversity. (08.09.2014)

WCC Highways

No objection:
Subject to conditions relating to wheel washing during construction; installation of bollards or similar protection to protect pedestrian link and Developer Contribution of £13,849 as required by the Council's Developer Contributions towards Transport Schemes in Stratford-upon-Avon SPD. (30.09.14)

9. ASSESSMENT OF THE KEY ISSUES

Principle of Development

The application site falls wholly within area SUA.G, identified within the Local Plan for medical and medical-related uses, as part of the Government's strategy for improving and extending primary and secondary health-care. Medical use is well-established at the site.

The site is also identified within Policy AS.1 B of the Submission Core Strategy 2014 as one which supports the provision of emergency services and the enhancement of health and medical services facilities at Stratford Hospital. This policy was most recently modified and agreed by resolution of the Council on 15th September 2014.

Local Plan Policy COM.2 is partially compliant with the requirements of the NPPF and supports the retention of existing services which meet the needs of the local community, and a similar policy is included in the Submission Core Strategy 2014 (CS.24).

Section 8 of the NPPF discusses 'Promoting healthy communities', and expects that decisions should ensure that community services are not lost and that they are able to develop and modernise sustainably and be retained for the benefit of the community (paragraph 70).

I conclude that the construction of additional hospital facilities at this site is acceptable in principle, having regard to the provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies SUA.G and COM.2, subject to an assessment of other material considerations.

Visual Impact on Streetscene/ Character of Conservation Area

Good design is expected by the NPPF, whilst addressing the connections between people and places and Saved Policies PR.1 and DEV.1, which are broadly compliant with the requirements of the NPPF, expect development proposals to have regards to the general character and quality of the surrounding area.

The existing hospital building (and the nearby health centre) is of a typical modern design constructed from a uniform brick and with a concreted tile clad roof with some flat-roof elements. It is predominantly two storeys.

It is a functional building of utilitarian appearance, although reasonably well screened due to the surrounding commercial and industrial buildings.

There is a substantial modern hotel building which shields the site from the conservation area. The nearby railway station and the older buildings on Arden Street are of more traditional Victorian vernacular and intricate architectural design. The buildings within the Conservation Area are also of more traditional architecture.

The proposed hospital building will be larger taller than the other hospital building, however the design ensures screening of roof-top plant with a parapet wall, utilising feature brick-work and having a recessed entrance element.

The building has a functional appearance and is positioned within the site, mirroring the existing building, thereby substantially reducing its impact when viewed from Arden Street and the access road from the highway.

It would be visible across the former cattle market site from Alcester Road, although would be partially screened by the new residential development currently under construction. It would be screened from other directions by the industrial and commercial development on Western Road.

The multi-storey car park and energy buildings would be largely screened by the hospital and other buildings, and the car-park building has external timber cladding to screen the bulk of the building.

The Conservation Officer has confirmed that the development – due to the separation distance – would not harm the setting of any listed buildings and the key issue is the impact on views in to and out of the Conservation Area and its setting.

Due to surrounding buildings, the new development would not be prominent in relation to views either into or out of the Conservation Area, and the Conservation Officer has concluded that there would be only very minor harm, to the setting of the conservation area. Due to the character of the wider area and its ability to absorb the development, the character of the Conservation Area is therefore preserved.

I consider that the design of the new development building will remain in keeping with its predominantly commercial surroundings and will have any adverse impact on the quality of the locality. I conclude that the proposals will not cause harm to the visual amenity of the street scene or the character of the area.

Having regard to the above I consider that the development complies with paragraphs 56-59 and 131 of the NPPF and saved policies PR.1, DEV.1 and EF.13 and the statutory test in the legislation.

Impact on Highways Safety and Car Parking

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that the accessibility of development must be carefully assessed; and paragraph 32 states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are "severe".

Policy DEV.4 of the Local Plan which is broadly in compliance with the NPPF refers to the access arrangements associated with new developments.

Policy DEV.5 of the Local Plan Review relates to car parking. This policy, however, is not considered consistent with the NPPF on the basis that it requires maximum parking standards to be used whereas the NPPF seeks to provide localised solutions for parking provision.

The proposal utilises the existing access, suitably upgraded and the applicant has shown that service vehicles can be accommodated. Improved parking is provided at the rear of the new hospital building – where the surface parking was previously – and the new multi-storey car-park will provide for both the new development and to replace parking that is lost due to the development.

The level of parking is considered to be appropriate.

The County Highways officer has raised no objection to the level of parking. I am satisfied that the applicant has adequately addressed the level of parking required through detailed analysis. The parking for patients, staff and service vehicles is acceptable. I have also taken into account the central location of the hospital, which can be reached easily on foot, bicycle, train or bus.

On highway safety, the agent has pointed out that:-

- They undertook an extensive pre-consultation exercise with the local highway authority (LHA), dating back to July 2013 when they submitted our "request for pre-application advice" form and fee. We also held a meeting that month to kick off the dialogue process.

- Due to the nature of the Stratford Hospital Development it was agreed to submit a series of Technical Notes showing the basis of the Transport Statement and how the base flows, trip generation figures and car parking numbers were derived. In total five Technical Notes were submitted during the dialogue process with the LHA.

- They have sent the responses from the LHA in respect of the technical notes which sets out their responses and ultimate approvals. The technical notes accompanied the Transport Statement and it was verbally agreed with Highway Officers that the Transport Statement was fit for purpose and there was no need to submit a draft for comment.

- The Travel Plan was also agreed back in November 2013

It would be usual to impose a planning condition to any planning permission requiring the implementation of the submitted travel plan.

In reply to the comments of the Town Council, the agent states that:-

- A one way system through the site linking with the Arden Street car park was explored early in the design process for the Stratford Hospital Redevelopment, however physically this option was not possible due the presence of the 'back up' generator for the Stratford Healthcare Building

- It would also have been necessary to omit c.16 staff parking spaces belong to Stratford Healthcare to facilitate a route through from the

Stratford Hospital with no obvious place to relocate them, which clearly wasn't an attractive proposal for Stratford Healthcare.

- Finally, notwithstanding the technical issues above, it was felt that the cost of undertaking these works would be prohibitive within the constraints of a finite project budget.

- Connectivity with the station and possibly Western Road was also explored as part of the early design work, with a secondary entrance to the south western corner of the site being proposed to allow a connection with Western Road.

- Whilst discussions were held with Redrow Housing who own the majority of the land in this area and a local landowner the cost of purchasing this land was ultimately prohibitive as it was seen as something of a 'ransom strip' by the local land owner and Redrow were not enthusiastic regarding amending their current proposals to accommodate the proposed access road, particularly as at the time they had already had to amend their design for this part of their site as a result of a refused planning application, which was reflected by the cost to purchase the land.

- People arriving by train would have a very contorted route so a link is a necessity - Provision has been made through close co-operation between ourselves and Redrow to allow both pedestrians (including those arriving by bus) and cyclists to access the Stratford Hospital site directly from the railway station through the residential development currently being constructed. It should be noted that this is a considerable improvement over the current access conditions on site.

- There is a covered area for the main patient pick up and drop off area to the south elevation of the Ambulatory Care Centre provided by the overhang of the first floor over the undercut ground floor (refer to below). This detail that has been specifically included in the design to provide a covered area for those waiting without the need for an obtrusive proprietary canopy or shelters.

- The drop off area for the existing Nicol and Outpatients Department buildings is included within the adjacent Multi-Storey Car Park, where there is a dedicated drop/taxi space, which allows for all visitors to these existing facilities to be dropped off and picked up under cover.

The applicant has discussed the proposals at length with the County Highways Officer to ensure that there is no harm to highways safety. The County Highways Officer has not raised any objections, subject to the conditions listed previously. The installation of bollards or similar street furniture or planting will allow for proper protection of pedestrians using the link route from the Cattle Market Site.

With the nearby proximity of the railway station, and ready access to the town centre, and that the hospital is already located at this site, the development is a sustainable one, and any 'less-than-ideal' highway issues are quite clearly out-weighed by with the benefits to the community arising from the proposed community use.

The application triggers the requirement for a contribution to help mitigate the traffic impacts of the development. Due to the high trip rate and the use of the site, it has been difficult to apply the standardised methodology to calculate this contribution. However, in discussion with the applicant, the County Highways

Authority has requested £13, 849 and this has been agreed by the agent. The application of the methodology has been detailed by the County Highways response.

With the travel-plan, the pedestrian 'links' referred to by the Agent, and with the additional car-parking within the new multi-storey car park, I therefore consider that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of saved policies DEV.1 and DEV.4 and Paragraphs 29 - 40 of the NPPF.

Energy Conservation

Paragraph 96 of the NPPF requires development to comply with adopted Local Plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supplies unless it can be demonstrated it is not viable. Policy DEV.8 of the Local Plan and the Sustainable Low Carbon Buildings Supplementary Planning Document require all new developments of 1 or more dwellings or more than 100 square metres of floor space to provide a detailed energy statement demonstrating how carbon emissions from the development will be reduced by a minimum of 10% through the use of on-site sustainable energy sources.

The application includes the construction of the energy building in order to provide energy for both the new buildings and the existing buildings. This has been designed to cater for any future development at the hospital site too. Energy efficiency is also to be incorporated into the build methods, with the building to comply with Part L of the 2010 building regulations, and achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating. The applicant has stated that inclusion of photovoltaic panels will result in 20% reduction in emissions.

I recommend a condition to ensure that the energy savings measures are met as set out in the proposals.

Taking into account the above, I am therefore satisfied that the requirements of the Sustainable Low Carbon Buildings 2007 SPD are met, and that the proposals have had regard to paragraph 96 of the NPPF.

Impact on trees

Paragraphs 58 and 109 of the NPPF seek to ensure development is visually attractive as a result of appropriate landscaping and to protect and enhance valued landscapes and Saved policies PR.1 and DEV.2 reflect these policies and therefore remain consistent with the NPPF.

Further to this, Local plan policy EF.10 seeks to preserve the amenity and nature conservation value of trees. Policy EF.10 has a degree of consistency with the NPPF, however, the NPPF is less restrictive.

There is a protected Holm-oak tree on the southern boundary of the site, although this is already affected by the gas-governor house and the existing access drive.

The submitted scheme takes in to account the tree and the need to protect its root system and in proximity to the tree, the access road is unchanged, and therefore no additional disturbance would occur.

A comprehensive scheme of additional planting for the public realm, open areas and boundaries of the site is proposed in order to assist in integrating the new development into the street scene, and I therefore consider that the proposed

development is acceptable in terms of saved policies PR.1, DEV.2 and EF.10 and Paragraphs 58 and 109 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The NPPF in its core planning principles states that decision-making should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy DEV.1 seeks to ensure that developments do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The key concern with regards to this application is to ensure that the new building would not unacceptably overbear, overshadow or overlook surrounding residential properties, although there are none close to the site and the hotel is some distance to the S.E and would not be affected.

The buildings would not impact on surrounding commercial property for similar reasons.

The applicant has submitted detailed noise assessments in relation to surrounding developments, and in my opinion the new developments would not unacceptably overlook, overbear or overshadow any of the surrounding properties or subject them to excessive noise and I therefore conclude that the proposals are in accordance with Policy DEV.1 and the principles of the NPPF.

Ecology

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment, as expanded upon by paragraphs 109 118. Policies EF.6 and EF.7 of the Local Plan Review accord with the NPPF as they relate to the retention, protection, management and where appropriate creation of wildlife habitats.

The site has been 'cleared' of buildings and other structures as part of an earlier approval, and the applicant has submitted an ecology and bat survey in support of their application which identifies that there are no protected species at the site.

The County Ecologist has raised no objection to the proposals subject to conditions requiring additional surveys, although in view of the 'cleared' nature of the site, this is un-necessary, and I therefore consider that the development is acceptable having regard to Paragraph 118 of the NPPF and Policy EF.7 of the Local Plan Review together with guidance within the NERC Act 2006.

Flooding and Drainage

Paragraph 103 of the NPPF expects Local Planning Authorities to ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere as a result of development proposals. This is expanded in the NPPF Technical Guidance Document. Saved policies PR.7 and DEV.7 are generally consistent with this insofar as they expect development proposals to have regard to flood defence measures where appropriate and to incorporate sustainable drainage systems which provide for the disposal of surface water.

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and since the site area is less than 1 hectare the Environment Agency standing advice sets out that the main flood risk issue to consider is usually the management of surface water run-off.

The site already has an effective drainage system that is to be amended to take account of the increase in floor area and a detailed drainage appraisal has been submitted, and the issue of drainage can be dealt with by condition.

I am therefore satisfied that the development is acceptable in this respect having regard to paragraph 103 of the NPPF, the Technical Guidance Document and saved policies PR.7 and DEV.7 of the Local Plan Review.

Amenity Space

Local plan policy DEV.3 requires that an appropriate amount of amenity open space for users/occupiers is incorporated into developments and the N.P.P.F recognises the important and green spaces and that open space should be seen as an integral element of any design. I consider that adequate amenity space – both for the public realm areas, and to provide hospital patients with open areas – is to be provided around the grounds as well as dayrooms within the design of the building. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be acceptable in terms of Local plan policy DEV.3 and the N.P.P.F.

Assessment of Sustainable Development and Conclusion

The 'golden thread' running through the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para.14). Paragraph 6 of the NPPF guides that, "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The policies in paragraphs 18 to 219, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system."

The NPPF further guides that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, economic and environmental and that these roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependant (paras.7-8).

Taking into account the assessments detailed in the report, I consider that this site comprises sustainable development by the provision of needed additional facilities at the current hospital site - ensuring that such facilities are available 'locally' - helping to promote a vibrant and healthy community whilst at the same time making efficient use of this site and not causing harm to the environment.

The provision of improved community facilities is acceptable in this location, given the provisions within the NPPF and its presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 14) and Saved policies SUA.G and COM.2 of the Local Plan Review.

The layout and design of the proposed scheme is an acceptable addition to the existing situation and in particular, it would not harm the character and setting of the conservation area (which is therefore preserved) or harm the future health of a protected tree, and its impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene and neighbouring amenity are considered acceptable, subject to the imposition of conditions, having regard to Sections 7 and 11 of the NPPF and Saved policies PR.1, PR.8, EF.7, EF.10, EF.13 and DEV.1 of the Stratford District Local Plan Review.

Access and car parking levels are considered to be adequate and no harm would be caused to highway safety and allows for pedestrian 'links' through adjacent development, and the layout also provides adequate provision of private and public amenity open space, having regard to the aims and objectives of

Paragraph 39 of the NPPF and Saved policies DEV.3 and DEV.4 of the Stratford District Local Plan Review.

I have also given consideration to energy conservation, sustainability and services (Saved policies DEV.6 and DEV.8), ecology (Saved policy EF.7) and the provisions within the NPPF (paragraph 96) and find these acceptable.

Overall, I consider the scheme to be acceptable and which complies with National and Local Policies and there are no material considerations that warrant making a different decision, and I am therefore recommending approval.

10. RECOMMENDATION

That, subject to the securing of a S106 legal agreement to secure:

- £13,849 Developer Contribution towards Transport Schemes in Stratford-upon-Avon

the Planning Manager be authorised to issue the formal Notice of Decision GRANTING planning permission, subject to the following conditions and notes, the detailed wording of which is delegated to officers:

1. 3 year time limit
2. Plans to which decision relates
3. Materials to be approved
4. Provision for parking/loading/unloading of vehicles
5. Multi-storey car park before hospital building is brought in to use
6. Implementation of travel plan
7. Sustainable Energy Scheme.
8. Surface and foul water drainage.
9. Provision of water supply & hydrants
10. Finished floor levels – as indicated
11. Hard Landscaping – to be submitted
12. Soft Landscaping – to be submitted
13. Tree Protection details to be submitted
14. External lighting as advised by EH
15. Noise from plant/equipment as advised by EH
16. Construction Management Plan
17. Any other conditions as advised by Highway Authority

Notes

1. Paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF.
2. Damage to the Highway note
3. Highway Section 149 and 151 notes.
4. Protected species licence
5. E.H note – Clean Air Act approval required
6. Crime Prevention.
7. The applicant is advised to contact the Town Council, Ward Members and the Local Planning Authority prior to preparing the construction management plan.
8. S.163 Highway Act 1980 note

ROBERT WEEKS
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING