

MacArthur Centre, Heath Lane Hospital

Planning Statement

Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
February 2024

Contents

- Introduction..... 3**
- Site Location and Description..... 4**
 - Site Location..... 4
 - Site Description..... 4
 - Planning History 4
- Proposed Development 5**
- Planning Policy Context..... 6**
 - Introduction..... 6
 - The Black Country Core Strategy..... 6
 - The Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document..... 7
 - Draft Sandwell Local Plan..... 7
 - National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF')..... 7
- Key Benefits and Considerations..... 9**
- Summary and Conclusions 11**
- Appendices 12**
 - Appendix 1 Site Location Plan..... 12

Introduction

- 1.1 This Supporting Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (hereafter referred to as “the Applicant”).
- 1.2 This Statement accompanies a detailed planning application for an extension to the existing MacArthur Centre Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), (hereafter referred to as “the Site”), which forms part of the Heath Lane Hospital site at Heath Lane, West Bromwich, B71 2BG.
- 1.3 Given the relatively small scale of the proposed extension development (i.e. less than 1,000 sqm), this should be categorised as a ‘minor’ application by the local planning authority, meaning a target determination period of 8 weeks.
- 1.4 The proposed scope of works is for the partial demolition of the existing seclusion suite on the corner of MacArthur PICU, originally constructed in 2009. There will then be construction of 2 new seclusion suites and an extra care suite and the widening of an existing service user bedroom to create additional floor space.
- 1.5 The remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2: Site Location and Description;
 - Section 3: Proposed Development;
 - Section 4: Planning Policy Context;
 - Section 5: Key Benefits and Considerations;
 - Section 6: Summary and Conclusions
- 1.6 This Statement is also supported by the following Appendices:
 - **Appendix 1:** Site Location Plan.

Site Location and Description

Site Location

- 3.1 Heath Lane Hospital comprises 1.85 ha (4.6 acres) and consists of five different buildings with various functions. The Macarthur Centre Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) was constructed in 2009 and is located in the north west section of the Heath Lane Hospital site. The full extent of the hospital, including a red line boundary denoting the boundary for the building work within this application, is shown on the location plan included in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The site is bounded by Heath Lane to the south, Heath Lane Cemetery to the north and east, and by residential development to the west.
- 3.3 Access to the site is via Heath Lane, which provides connections site to many other main roads including the A463, M5 and M6. There are also bus stops on Heath Lane approximately 130m – 215m from the Penrose Building, which provide frequent services between Wednesbury and West Bromwich.

Site Description

- 3.4 The site comprises the southwestern part of a single storey modern building (constructed in 2009), with associated parking, landscape, and external gardens, and is known as the MacArthur Centre.
- 3.5 The site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1 according to the Government's Flood Risk Map for Planning.
- 3.6 There are no listed buildings within the site boundary or in close proximity.

Planning History

- 3.7 A search has been undertaken using Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's online planning

Reference	Location	Development Description	Decision	Decision Date
DC/31376	Heath Lane Hospital	Proposed Mental Impairment Unit.	Grant Permission Subject to Conditions	Mon 10 Jul 1995
DC/99/36072	Heath Lane Hospital	Demolition of existing chest clinic with extended car park with new multi-surface playing pitch for patients and staff.	Grant Permission Subject to Conditions	Wed 02 Feb 2000
DC/09/51386	Heath Lane Hospital	Proposed single storey building together with link extension to the existing Gerry Simon unit.	Grant Permission Subject to Conditions	Thu 05 Nov 2009
DC/14/56718	Heath Lane Hospital	Proposed single storey extension and 3m high security fencing and gates.	Grant Permission Subject to Conditions	Wed 19 Mar 2014

application search tool, and relevant planning applications have been identified in the table below.

Table 1: Planning History

Proposed Development

- 4.1 This full planning application is proposed for an extension to the existing Macarthur Centre Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). The proposed development includes:
- Partial demolition of the existing seclusion suite on the corner of Macarthur PICU;
 - Construction of two new seclusion suites and an extra care suite / area (ECA);
 - Widening of an existing service user bedroom to gain additional floorspace;
 - Creation of a new vehicular access to serve the seclusion units only;
 - Secure external areas to each of the new seclusion suites for use by service users, bound by close boarded fences for privacy.
- 4.2 The new gross internal floor area to be created is 89.97m² and the gross external floor area to be 105.08m².
- 4.3 The development has been designed such that it has a non-institutional, bespoke feel incorporating natural materials and artwork imagery or icons and subtle colour zoning for wayfinding, to match and complement existing.
- 4.4 It is proposed to utilise the existing Heath Lane Hospital access and egress point to the overall site. Pedestrian access will accompany these access points to the entrance and will extend through the car park to the new building beyond.
- 4.5 There are no car park alterations proposed as part of this planning application.

Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 [and paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”)] requires that proposals should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 In this case the Development Plan for Sandwell comprises the Black Country Core Strategy (adopted 2011), the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD, and the NPPF. The Council are also preparing a new Local Plan which will set out how the borough will grow and regenerate by 2041 and will replace the current Development Plan Documents following its adoption.

The Black Country Core Strategy

- 5.3 The Black Country Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and provides the overarching strategy for development across the four Black Country Authorities. The relevant policies are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of Relevant Black Country Core Strategy Policies

Topic / Policy	Summary
Policy CSP3 Environmental Infrastructure	Development proposals will need to demonstrate that the strategic network of environmental infrastructure will be protected, enhanced and expanded at every opportunity.
Policy CSP4 Place-Making	All development must demonstrate understanding of the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area and show how proposals make a positive contribution to place-making and environmental improvement.
Policy HOU5 Education and Health Care Facilities	The existing network of health care facilities will be protected and enhanced. New and improved facilities will be secured through a range of funding measures.
Policy ENV2 Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness	Development proposals will be required to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality. Proposals should aim to conserve the historic character of buildings, structures and archaeological remains of the traditional manufacturing and extractive industries of the Black Country including coal mining.
Policy ENV5 Flood Risk, Sustainable Drainage Systems and Urban Heat Island	All developments should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems and create new green space, increase tree cover and/or provide green roofs.

The Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document

5.4 Supporting the Black Country Core Strategy, is Sandwell’s Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document which sets out the site allocations required to meet the development targets over the plan period, alongside detailed development management policies. Table 3 below provides a summary of the relevant planning policies.

Table 3: Summary of Relevant Policies

Topic / Policy	Summary
Policy SAD H4 – Housing for People with Specific Needs	<p>The Council will encourage and negotiate the provision of housing to cater for the special needs of people, including the elderly, people with mental ill health, and those with physical and learning disabilities particularly where a need has been identified. Proposals for specific forms of housing, including care homes, nursing homes, extra care facilities, or any other identified need will be considered in relation to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compatibility with adjacent uses; • The suitability of the site and building; • The character and quality of the resulting environment; • Accessibility by a choice of means of transport; • Proximity to facilities.
Policy SAD EOS 9 – Urban Design Principles	<p>The Council will assess all applications for new development in accordance with policy ENV3, Design Quality, of the Black Country Core Strategy. The Council will reject poor designs, particularly those that are inappropriate in their locality, for example, those clearly out of scale with or incompatible with their surroundings.</p>
Policy SAD DM 1 – Access for Disabled People	<p>In accordance with BCCS Policies CSP5 and TRAN1, developments will be required to demonstrate appropriate provision for access for disabled people and people with mobility difficulties, including access to transport, buildings, and the external environment. Specifically, the design and layout of developments which include public access must have regard to the needs of disabled people and others with mobility difficulties</p>
Policy SAD DM 4 – Car Parking for Disabled People and People with Mobility Difficulties	<p>Car parks provided must be accessible to all, including people with mobility difficulties. Where car parking is created as a result of development an appropriate level of parking for disabled people must be provided and be easily accessible to the development.</p>

Draft Sandwell Local Plan

5.5 The Council is currently consulting on a draft Local Plan and therefore, due to being at an early stage, only very limited weight would be placed on its policies in determining planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (‘NPPF’)

5.6 The NPPF was last revised on 19th December 2023. It sets out the national planning policies for England and it is a material consideration in planning decisions.

- 5.7 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11), this means that development should be approved where it accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Decision-making (paragraphs 38 – 59)

- 5.8 Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 5.9 Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Promoting healthy and safe communities (paragraphs 96 – 107)

- 5.10 Paragraph 96 requires that planning decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

Promoting sustainable transport (paragraphs 108 – 117)

- 5.11 Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual impacts on the road network would be severe.

Making effective use of land (paragraphs 123 – 130)

- 5.12 Paragraphs 123-130 are concerned with making effective use of land and achieving appropriate densities. Paragraph 123 specifically states that planning policies and decisions should promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Achieving well-designed places (paragraphs 131 - 141)

- 5.13 The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change (paragraphs 157 – 179)

- 5.14 When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment.
- 5.15 New development should be planned in a way that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design.

Key Benefits and Considerations

6.1 This section explores the key benefits of the scheme and the planning and policy considerations. Separate technical reports have been submitted (Coal Mining Risk Assessment and Ground Conditions) alongside the proposed drawings, which inform this assessment section.

Principle of Development

6.2 The proposed development is an extension to an existing facility to convert and extend 2no. bedrooms to a self-contained seclusion room of adequate size, alongside 1no. extra care accommodation (ECA). The overall bedroom numbers stays the same, however the floorspace increases by 89.97sqm.

6.3 Policy SAD4 of the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery DPD states that the Council will encourage the provision of housing to cater for the special needs of people, including for people of mental ill health, subject to meeting a number of criteria. The principle of the main use has already been established through the planning permission and subsequent completion of the purpose built MacArthur Centre, however we consider the policy criteria in relation to this additional floorspace in the table below:

SAD4 Criteria	Proposal
Compatibility with adjacent uses	The Heath Lane Hospital site is a specialist facility for mental health. Additionally the MacArthur Centre has already been established, and therefore the proposed extension is the most appropriate location for the seclusion suites.
The suitability of the site and building	The MacArthur Centre was purpose built for mental health patients, and is therefore appropriate for the extension and its use. The proposed development also includes a dedicated access, which also connects through to the wider centre.
The character and quality of the resulting environment	The proposed extension will use the same materials as existing and therefore the character and quality will be maintained. The proposal also includes an area of external garden / landscape which will be secure for use by the patients.
Accessibility by a choice of means of transport	The site is well located, with access possible by bus, foot or car.
Proximity to facilities	For patients, all facilities required are provided by the Hospital. For employees, a convenience store is located c.200m to the west.

6.4 Policy HOU5 of the Black Country Core Strategy (2011) states that the existing network of health care facilities will be protected and enhanced and that new and improved facilities will be secured through a range of funding measures. The proposed development has been funded by the NHS and seeks to enhance its existing health care facility in this location.

6.5 It is therefore asserted that the principle of the proposed extension is supported in policy terms.

Access and Parking

- 6.6 The proposed extension does not increase the number of bedrooms within the facility and therefore does not result in a need for additional car parking spaces. There is however, sufficient parking available within the wider Heath Lane Hospital site.
- 6.7 A new vehicle access will be created within the site, to serve the new seclusion units only, and will allow a vehicle to securely drop a patient off. A pedestrian crossing is proposed across the entrance to maintain priority for pedestrians throughout the Hospital site. The proposed access and parking in relation to the proposed extension is considered proportionate and acceptable.

Materials and Design

- 6.8 The design of the building and proposed materials will match existing, the exact details of which are set out in the Design and Access Statement prepared by Gilling Dod Architects. It is therefore considered that the proposed design of the building is acceptable.

Summary and Conclusions

- 6.9 This planning application seeks full planning permission for and extension of the MacArthur Exclusion Centre located within the Heath Lane Hospital Site in West Bromwich. The extension comprises 89.97sqm of additional floorspace to accommodate 2no. specialist seclusion rooms. To accommodate this, a small proportion of demolition is proposed alongside internal configuration.
- 6.10 The proposed development complies with the relevant planning policies and is therefore appropriate in this location.
- 6.11 Existing and proposed floorplans have been submitted with this planning application, alongside a Design and Access Statement, Ground Conditions Report, and Coal Mining Risk Assessment.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Site Location Plan



