

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore

Briefing to Harrow Strategic Partnership on the proposed redevelopment of the site

Introduction

The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) is the largest specialist orthopaedic hospital in the UK, is regarded as a leader in the field of orthopaedics and provides a comprehensive and unique range of neuro-musculoskeletal healthcare, ranging from acute spinal injuries to orthopaedic medicine and specialist rehabilitation for chronic back pain sufferers.

The Stanmore site does not meet the current and future operational demands of service provision and patient care:

- 60% of the site's current buildings are more than 60 years old.
- Buildings are not energy efficient and the engineering infrastructure is out-dated.
- Car parks are located far from the buildings, which makes easy access to the hospital buildings difficult for patients.
- Many patient wards were originally designated for temporary war-time use only.
- The main ward area has a steep slope, which makes transporting patients and equipment difficult.
- Patients and staff frequently have to travel between buildings, often outdoors across uneven ground.

Background to the proposals

Planning permission was granted by the London Borough of Harrow (LBH) in 2007 and renewed in 2010, for up to 86,951 sqm (935,931 sq ft) of hospital, residential and education uses. A new planning permission is required as the current planning permission no longer secures the best outcome for the RNOH. The RNOH's aim is to secure the future of the RNOH as the specialist orthopaedic hospital of choice by providing outstanding patient care, research and education. To achieve this, the RNOH is preparing a new planning application, which is due to be submitted to the LBH in summer 2012 to deliver:

- An appropriate, comprehensive and sustainable redevelopment of its Green Belt site.
- Improved facilities for exemplary healthcare, along with enabling residential development.
- The transfer of surplus floor space to residential use in order to achieve the maximum land value.

The monies received from the disposal of land with outline planning permission for residential development will provide funds required to deliver the first phase of the new hospital development and secure the future operation of the RNOH from this site.

The Proposals

Within an integrated framework, the site is being formulated within 4 distinct zones. Each zone is set within a landscaped and topographic context which is generated by the existing nature of the site and makes clear relationships to the openness of the Green Belt towards the north. Preliminary visual impact assessments are currently being undertaken to evaluate and shape the scale and form of development as proposals emerge.

Access and movement to and within the site is being developed to provide segregated access for vehicles to each zone in order to avoid potential conflicts between uses. Consideration is also being given to improving potential public transport access to the uses on the site.

The New Hospital:

The basic principles of the Master Plan for the Central Development Zone (CDZ), which contains the new hospital, are to concentrate all of the future clinical facilities within a well-defined area, to limit travel distances and maximise planning efficiencies. The CDZ may also make provision for a potential Multi-storey car park, and for the potential inclusion of a Private Patients' Wing. Detailed phasing and decant proposals are also being developed, to ensure that all of the departments of the hospital will continue to function at all stages of this future development

The Master Plan seeks to:

- Demonstrate a phased and viable hospital development strategy;
- Improve the efficiency, connectivity and flexibility of the hospital estate;
- Rationalise and improve vehicular and pedestrian access and movement;
- Rationalise and formalise the provision of car parking, whilst substantially reducing the quantum of hard standing in the Green Belt;
- Create the opportunity for a corporate image that reinforces the national and international reputation of the RNOH;
- continue to support the provision of facilities to promote local employment; and,
- Maintain the historic setting of the hospital within a green context by preserving open views to the north and reinforcing / providing green 'buffers' to the east and west.

Openness and Connectivity:

- In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), the Master Plan will recognise the site's location within, and seeks to enhance the openness of the Green Belt;
- Provide open space with the potential for a range of recreational uses and landscapes, promoting healthy living and amplifying the public enjoyment of the outdoors;
- Improve access by defining new routes to improve pedestrian movement through the Green Belt;
- Create or reinforce views through the site towards and from the open space;
- Seek to enhance the reinforce the Green Grid and setting of Stanmore Country Park;
- Link the site to the wider network of adjacent parklands, open space and pedestrian and cycling routes;
- Enable the future phased provision of public transport via the site; and,
- Define a short, medium and long term access strategy for all components of the site.

Residential:

- Provide enabling residential development in the Western Development Zone (WDZ) and the Eastern Development Zone (EDZ) within clusters informed by the existing and previously developed land;
- Focus staff accommodation within the EDZ;
- Provide segregated access to each residential area to avoid conflict with access to the hospital;
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and unit sizes; and,
- Reflect the scale and mass of similar residential developments within the Stanmore area.

Figure 1 Development Zones – Work in Progress (see separate plan)