

News Release

30 July 2020

Millions in Government funding allocated for hospital development

Dorset County Hospital has been allocated £62.5million of Government funding to expand key clinical services on its Dorchester site.

At a meeting of Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's Board yesterday (29 July 2020), members heard that the money had been allocated to DCH as part of the national Health Infrastructure Plan and the project had been recognised as a priority.

The plans include the expansion of the Emergency Department (ED) and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) as well as the establishment of an Integrated Care Hub as part of a long-term project to deliver the recommendations of Dorset's Clinical Services Review.

The first phase of the development is freeing up land on the hospital site by building a multi-storey car park. Board members were told that the planning application for the multi-storey, which was submitted to Dorset Council in October 2019, is due to be heard at the Northern Area Planning Committee on 18 August 2020.

The hospital's Director of Strategy, Transformation and Partnerships Nick Johnson said: "We are delighted to have been allocated £62.5million of Government funding for the development of these essential clinical facilities and named as a national priority project.

"However, before we can progress with this major building programme we need to free up space on the hospital site by constructing a multi-storey car park to accommodate the lost spaces and improve parking for patients, visitors and staff.

"Anyone visiting our hospital knows that parking has been an issue for many years so we simply cannot build on our car parks without replacing the spaces. We're committed to green travel but many people coming to our hospital need to travel by car – the public transport links from rural areas of Dorset are simply not adequate.

"The development of these clinical facilities is vital to make sure we are able to continue to meet the ever increasing demand on our services and secure the future of Dorset County Hospital for a generation to come.

"Our existing Emergency Department and ICU were not built to accommodate the volume of patients we are seeing now. Our clinical teams have responded magnificently to the additional challenges coronavirus has brought, but it is now more clear than ever that we must create additional space and facilities to ensure the safety of our patients. The ED and ICU have been crucial to our COVID-19 response and have had to be temporarily expanded during the outbreak.

"As well as improving healthcare services for our population we are also committed to our role in benefitting the local economy. We will work closely with our contractors to make sure local people are employed and local suppliers are used for our building programme, bringing

over £4million into the local economy. We are also planning to develop other land on our site for affordable housing local key workers.

“Building the multi-storey is the first phase of this ambitious, once-in-a-lifetime development and the key to unlocking the expansion of clinical services.”

You can find more details about Dorset County Hospital’s site development plans at:

<https://www.dchft.nhs.uk/about/site-development/Pages/default.aspx>

The planning application for the multi-storey can be viewed on Dorset Council's online planning portal, where members of the public can also submit comments on the application:

https://planning.dorset.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=DCAPR_139869&activeTab=summary

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PHOTOS: Artist’s impressions of the proposed multi-storey car park which will be the first phase of a multi-million pound development of the hospital site. The sides of the building feature images of local landscapes.

For more information please contact the Dorset County Hospital communications team on 01305 254683 (voicemail service, please leave a message) or email communications@dchft.nhs.uk