

# News Release

3 February 2017

## **DCH plans for Damers School site**

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is expected to take ownership of the Damers School site in April 2017 when the school moves to its new home at Poundbury.

In the short term the Trust will use the site to create additional staff parking spaces to ease pressure on the hospital car parks and free up more spaces for patient and visitor use.

The Trust is also looking at using the existing school building on an interim basis to free up office space on the hospital site. This may enable some clinical area improvement projects to start moving ahead.

The Grove Pre-school Playgroup will remain where it is on the school site for now and the Trust is keen to keep the nursery on site as part of any future plans.

Options for the longer term use of the site are currently being worked through. The Trust proposes mixed use for the site for healthcare provision and commercial use. Any commercial ventures will be aimed at generating income for the Trust which can be used to support and improve patient services.

The Trust's Director of Strategy and Business Development Nick Johnson said: "We are very excited to take ownership of the Damers site as it provides us with a once in a generation opportunity. We want to use the site to help us improve the patient experience, improve performance and generate income streams to contribute to the ongoing sustainability and success of the Trust.

"We are currently exploring options for funding the development of the site and have commenced a process to select a development partner and we will be working collaboratively with local authorities and community groups to ensure any proposals are sensitive to local needs.

"We will engage with staff and the wider public about any proposals as the plans develop."

**ENDS**

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