

News Release

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Hospital submits multi-storey car park planning application

Dorset County Hospital (DCH) has submitted a planning application to build a multi-storey car park as part of its plans to develop clinical facilities on its Dorchester site.

The hospital wants to expand its Emergency Department (ED) and Intensive Care Unit (ICU) as well as establish an Integrated Care Hub as part of a long-term project to deliver the recommendations of Dorset's Clinical Services Review (CSR), which stated that DCH will continue to be an emergency and planned hospital for its communities.

In order to free up space on the site for the development of clinical facilities, the hospital is proposing to build a multi-storey car park to improve parking for patients, visitors and staff. It is also working in partnership to develop the land it owns on the site of the former Damers School and the current Trust Headquarters to raise income to contribute to the cost of the clinical facilities building work. The future development of the Damers/Trust HQ land could include a mix of health and care related facilities and housing.

Local residents, councillors and hospital staff were invited to hear more about the plans during engagement events held in July. The views, ideas and concerns gathered have fed into the planning application.

Dorset County Hospital's Director of Strategy, Transformation and Partnerships Nick Johnson said: "We really appreciate people taking the time to find out more about our plans and to give us their valuable feedback. We have since further developed our plans for the multi-storey to take this on board.

"We were heartened to receive a lot of positive feedback about the plans to expand our clinical facilities. There was also a lot of support for developing affordable housing and improving car parking facilities for patients, visitors and staff.

"The main concern raised was the visual impact of the multi-storey, particularly for people living in Damers Road. We have now developed a design to incorporate some innovative green walls so vegetation will grow on the building to help soften the look of it. We have also changed the plans to remove an area of parking on the southern edge of the multi-storey so that the building is further away from Damers Road and we can retain a greater number of existing trees to help with screening."

Building the multi-storey is the first phase of the hospital's longer-term plans to develop the site.

Nick Johnson explained: “Our Emergency Department now deals with twice as many patients as it was originally designed to cope with. Demand is only going to rise in the future so we need to expand and redesign the department to make it fit for purpose.

“Similarly, our Intensive Care Unit needs to be expanded so we can cope with the increased demand and provide care in the best environment possible.

“Building the multi-storey car park will free up the space we need on our site to expand ED and ICU and create an Integrated Care Hub. The hub will bring staff and services together on site to allow us to get patients home safely in a timely way as well as help avoid unnecessary hospital admissions.

“The multi-storey project will also have a positive impact on the local economy as we are committed to adding social value to our community. We will be asking contractors to employ local people and use local suppliers wherever possible.”

You can visit the hospital’s website to keep up to date with the latest information about the site development: www.dchft.nhs.uk/about/site-development

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PHOTOS: An architect drawing of the proposed multi-storey car park at Dorset County Hospital which has been submitted as part of the planning application.

For more information please contact the Dorset County Hospital communications team on 01305 254683 or 253394, or email communications@dchft.nhs.uk