Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0289/13 **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **Southlands Hospital Upper Shoreham Road Shoreham-By-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Single-storey temporary building in car park on north side for medical record storage and sound studio**

Date of site visit: 15.03.2013

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The site is located within the main Southlands Hospital campus comprising the main car park.

Permission is sought for a single-storey modular building to be located within the car park area, to the west of the Rheumatology and Rehabilitation block (R&R) and north of the Main Corridor to provide storage for patient medical records, associated administration and sound studios for the 'South Coast Radio' service. The proposed L-shaped building would be a maximum 29.9m deep and a maximum 24m wide attached to the Main Corridor by a narrow link. The external finish would consist of painted, smooth render above a plinth, with a warm flat-roof construction (3.15m high overall). Access to the building would be from the north side, via 2 ramped entrances.

The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states:-

"Southlands Hospital is entering a period of radical change to both renew revitalise and improve the level of service to the patients attending the Hospital. This change is being made possible by a combination of the disposal of a large area of the existing site, including the buildings and/or rationalising services with Worthing Hospital nearby. ……In order to progress these changes, the Harness building is being progressively emptied and closed down. Therefore, temporary accommodation is required for the safe, secure storage of patient medical records and also operational space for the radio sound studio."

It is anticipated the building will be required for a period of 5 years.

Consultations:

WSCC: The Highway Authority comments as follows:-

"This proposal has been considered by means of a desktop study, using the information and plans submitted with this application, in conjunction with other

available WSCC map information. A site visit can be arranged on request. I refer to your consultation in respect of the above planning application and would provide the following comments:

The application seeks approval for the placement of a temporary building on the hospital's car park.

From inspection of the plans and information available it is not clear how many spaces will be lost due to this temporary development. However from Drawing No.2 it would appear that approximately 38 spaces will be lost in total that currently serve the public. It is presumed that there are no issues with the current level of parking and that this temporary structure will still allow for cars to turn within the car park and exit on to the internal access road.

In this instance, there would be no concerns raised from a highway safety perspective as it is unlikely to cause a detriment to highway safety."

Adur and Worthing Councils: The Planning Policy Manager has commented that the proposal raises no policy issues.

Representations: No third party comments received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, ACS4, ACS5
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle
A residential development is currently under construction by Crest Nicholson on land previously identified as redundant at Southlands Hospital. The refurbishment and enlargement of Thakeham House as a new medical centre for Northbourne Medical practice is also under construction to the north and west of the site and will utilise the main site access from Upper Shoreham Road shared with the Hospital. Although it is anticipated that other land and buildings at Southlands Hospital will be declared redundant in due course, there are no precise details of the extent of land/buildings or a timescale for their disposal. This aside, the rationalisation of services and facilities is on-going and to this effect the Harness building, which currently accommodates medical records storage and radio studio, is being progressively emptied and is understood to be 95% vacant at present. The provision of an alternative location for medical records storage and the radio service will enable the Harness building to be closed.

There are no specific policies within the adopted Local Plan relating to the operational land at Southland Hospital. Policy ACS4 supports the provision of healthcare facilities subject to the effect on the amenities of surroundings dwellings and on-site car parking and access arrangements being acceptable. Policy ACS5 supports proposals to develop, extend or improve community facilities.

There is no specific policy relating to Southlands Hospital (or the release of redundant land) within the draft Local Plan. Policy DP30 states that the Council will work with healthcare providers to deliver up-to-date healthcare facilities. Paragraph 3.25 refers to the potential reorganisation of services and possibility of development for alternative uses in the future.

Visual amenity

The siting of the proposed temporary building has largely been influenced by the space available and proximity to the buildings on the east side of the Southlands Hospital site where it is anticipated existing services will be retained and the buildings refurbished in due course (R&R North and South Blocks, Day Services Unit, Theatres and Pharmacy). The building is a typical modular building of utilitarian appearance. Despite its reasonably large footprint it will not be visible in public views outside of the Southlands site, being screened by the larger bulk of the neighbouring buildings to the south and east, and by virtue of the difference in grounds levels, being on lower ground than the site entrance from Upper Shoreham Road to the north.

Residential amenity

The nearest residential properties are on Upper Shoreham Road over 100m to the north, and on the east side of Hammy Lane to the east (beyond the R&R North block). In view of the considerable separation distance it is not considered there would be any adverse effect on amenities.

The proposed sound studio would be located on the south side of the building (closest to the Main Corridor). Details show the internal walls of the sound studio would be sound insulated to provide suitable sound resistance. Given the distance from the nearest residential properties, no further details are considered necessary.

Accessibility and parking

The proposal will result in the loss of 39 parking spaces for use by the public (with 33 remaining). It is argued that existing car parking is already vastly under-utilised (as a result of services already rationalised). This is borne out by the Case officer's site visit at which time the car park was virtually empty.

No objection has been raised by the Highway Authority on highway safety grounds.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The standard of design and construction and utilitarian appearance of the proposed modular building falls considerably short of the high standards of design normally sought for new development but is considered acceptable for a limited period of transition to facilitate the on-going rationalisation of services and facilities at the Southlands site. The proposed development would not detract from the local environment and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring

properties or highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, ACS4, ACS5) or the policies of the NPPF.

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Temporary permission expiring 30 April 2018.
2. Approved drawings
   Drawing No:1 Proposed Floor Layout, Elevations and Internal Partitions Wall Detail Date Valid: 7 March 2013
   Drawing No:2 Proposed Roof Layout, Site Plan/Level Survey & Proposed Site Section/Elevation Date Valid: 7 March 2013
   Drawing No:3 Site Location and Block Plan Date Valid: 7 March 2013

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 25 April 2013

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 26 April 2013