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MSC1 Design and Access Statement 31-10-06

Sussex MS treatment centre, Southwick recreation ground, Southwick.
Design Statement to accompany planning application to extend existing centre.

Introduction
This planning application is for alterations to an existing building. The current building is run by Sussex MS Treatment Centre Ltd. as a drop-in centre providing support and various therapies for Multiple Sclerosis sufferers. Members can take advantage of the range of therapies available at the centre including high dosage oxygen treatment using a decompression chamber similar to those used by divers, yoga, shiatsu, physio therapy etc. or they can just come in for a chat and light refreshments and meet other sufferers.

The Sussex MS Treatment centre is run on a 'self-help basis' by people with MS, their families and carers. The organisation is a registered 'not for profit Charity and is an entirely self-funded organisation. They rely on donations and fundraising events to stay open and offer vital services to people with MS from all over Sussex.

Site considerations and Design
The site on which the existing centre sits and the surrounding land is owned by Adur District Council as part of the Southwick recreation ground. The lease agreement limited the construction method of the existing centre to a 'removable' building so a prefabricated 'portacabin' type building was built in the mid 80's.

It is intended to extend the existing single storey prefabricated building, to add a larger general-purpose meeting / activity room which the centre lacks. The extension will sit on an adjoining grassed area between the existing treatment centre and a concrete block / profiled steel depot building used by the Local Authority parks department. It will not be necessary to remove any plants or trees in the clearance of the site.

The appearance of the new extension is intended to match the existing building in height, width and materials. The opportunity will be taken during the works to repaint the existing building to provide a uniform surface finish throughout.

Construction and sustainability
The extension will be single storey and of similar construction to the original building. It is intended that the extension be pre-fabricated away from the site to minimise cost. This construction method will enable groundworks to be reduced to the provision of a few screw piles and will also serve to reduce the site working period and associated hazards.

Floors, external walls and roof will be of timber-framed construction with insulation packed between the timbers up to if not beyond current Building regulations

requirements. External wallboards will be of Oriented Strand Board, manufactured from Scottish timber industry waste products.

During these works the existing roof insulation will be upgraded to reduce the centres running costs and energy requirements.

Access

The current site access via Croft Avenue and the entrance to Southwick recreation ground is generally satisfactory. The current vehicular movements relating to this building are approximately as follows:

Staff – 3 cars
visitors – 30 cars distributed between 9am and 5 pm.

There is good parking provision on the existing level hard standing in front of the Treatment Centre site with parking bays suitably sized for wheel chair users. Centre management report that they have very rarely seen the existing parking at capacity.

Many users of the present centre are limited in their movement ability so the centre has been made fully wheelchair accessible with an access ramp at the main entrance. The new extension will be laid out on the same level and will be accessed through the existing centre or via a new access ramp from the parking area.



South elevation of the existing treatment centre, car parking and neighbouring depot building.