

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

7th June 2006

**S/0600/06/F – Papworth Everard
New Ward, Outpatients Department and Staff Accommodation
for Papworth Hospital**

**Recommendation: Refusal
Determination Date: 26th June 2006 – (Major Application)**

Members of Committee will visit the site on Monday 5th June 2006.

Site and Proposal

1. The site for the extension building, which would be approximately 7.7m high at its highest point, lies centrally within the hospital complex in the position of the old Mortuary building which was demolished on 5th December 2005. It sits in an elevated position bounded to the south by the stable buildings to Papworth Hall, to the west by the existing single storey ward and temporary modular office accommodation, to the east by a single storey brick building housing the Trust's R + D administration and to the north by the main hospital spine road.
2. A number of trees currently lie within and close to the site some of which are statutorily protected with Tree Preservation Orders. The most significant of these is a Horse Chestnut which is not subject to a TPO for unknown reasons.
3. There is an approximate 1.5m difference in levels across the site from north to south with the northern access road and existing ward being the low point.
4. The full planning application, received 27th March 2006, proposes the erection of a new 10 bed ward to extend the existing ward building, a new outpatients department and staff offices at first floor level.
5. The application will necessitate the removal of the mature Horse Chestnut Tree.

Planning History

6. The Hospital site has a long planning history. Of relevance is a previous application ref. **S/0039/06/F** submitted in January 2006 proposing a similar extension. The principal differences were the external elevation detail and the internal layout although essentially the differences are minor. The application was withdrawn due to inadequate supplementary information and to enable further discussion prior to re-submission.

Planning Policy

7. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (the Structure Plan) states that a high standard of design and sustainability will be required for all new development which minimises the need to travel and reduces car dependency, provides an appropriate mix of land uses and accessible services and facilities, a safe and people friendly environment and manages access for the private car and other motor vehicles. In addition development is expected to provide a sense of place which responds to the local character of the built environment and conserves

important environmental assets of the site and designing for the needs of all sections of the community.

8. **Policy P6/1** of the Structure Plan – Development-related Provision “Development will only be permitted where the additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposals can be secured, which may be by condition or legal agreement or undertaking...”
9. **Policy P7/6** of the Structure Plan – Historic Built Environment “Local Planning Authorities will protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment.”
10. **Policy EN5** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (The Local Plan) requires trees, hedges, woodland and other natural features to be retained wherever possible in proposals for new development.
11. **Policy EN6** of the Local Plan – Tree Preservation Orders and Hedgerow Retention Notices. “The District Council will make orders and notices to protect trees and hedges where it considers that they contribute to local amenity or have visual or historical significance.”
12. **Policy EN28** of the Local Plan – Development within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building. This policy states (in part) that proposals will be refused which would damage the setting, well-being or attractiveness of a Listed Building or would harm the visual relationship between the buildings and its formal or natural landscape surroundings.
13. **Policy EM7** of the Local Plan – Expansion of existing firms at villages. This policy supports expansion provided that (in part) there would be no adverse impact on residential amenity, traffic conditions, village character and other environmental factors.

Paragraph 5.39 states (in part) that development will not be permitted where it would cause problems with traffic or other damage to the environment.

Consultation

14. **Papworth Everard Parish Council**
Makes no recommendation. It comments:

“Current situation/background

The hospital site in the centre of the village is covered by a number of mostly ageing brick and mortar buildings of varying sizes that have been constructed throughout the past 70+ years, together with a variety of smaller terrapins and temporary structures that are used to provide ancillary services. There is little of any architectural value.

It is our understanding that as the hospital plans to relocate to the Addenbrooke’s site in 5-6 years time, and that they will be required to recover the capital cost of this new investment within that time frame, the expenditure on the construction needs to be kept to a minimum. For both business and medical reasons the hospital wishes to get this new unit completed and in service in the shortest time possible.

Hence, presumably, the functional design with its visually flat roof, blank elevations, and the colour and prefabricated nature of the external metal cladding, all of which would be alien to this site.

The Grade II* listed Papworth Hall lies immediately to the South of the proposed construction site.

Policy

15. The 2004 Local Plan supports the principle of approving the limited expansion of existing firms in villages on brown field sites. There is no specific mention of service organisations though there is an indication of some general approval for organisations of regional or national importance.
16. There appears to be no specific guidance on the impact or appearance of any associated buildings.

Recommendation

17. Papworth Everard Parish Council is not opposed to the principle of adding this new ward, and is in sympathy with the case for doing so, but is unable to positively support this application.
18. Under less constrained circumstances we would have no hesitation in recommending refusal of the application, as its design and finish are incongruous in this location.
19. If approval were to be granted for this new building, the applicant has stated that structurally it will have a 75-year lifespan. When the planned move of the hospital goes ahead in 5-6 years time the new site owners are likely to demolish many if not all of the aged brick buildings on the site, but there appears to be no reason why they should not choose to retain this structurally sound new building provided an economic and viable use can be found for it.
20. In this situation we would have been willing to recommend approval of this application if it

Either

- (i) Blended better with its surroundings i.e. was faced with bricks and mortar and had a pitched roof.

or

- (ii) There was some legally enforceable guarantee that it would be demolished if the hospital vacates the site *and* the then Parish Council members do not accept that it should be retained”.

21. **Conservation Manager**

“Location: The site is located adjacent to the Grade II* Listed Building of Papworth Hall. The Hall is located south of the site and the parkland grounds are allocated as ‘Protected Village Amenity’ within the Local Plan. The site is outside of the amenity area.

Considerations:

1. Impact on the setting of Papworth Hall and its parkland grounds.

The existing hospital complex is a mix of twentieth century buildings – the main three storey building to the western part of the site is the highest element with a series of one and two storey buildings behind this ,including a number of temporary cabin structures which would be retained and linked onto this proposal with a brick faced link.

The proposals are to extend the existing main ward by means of a two storey extension – on the site of the old mortuary. The mortuary building although not considered to be of Listable quality is never the less part of the history of the site and it is recommended that a condition be applied to seek the photographic recording of the building prior to its demolition.

The proposals will be within the building complex of the existing hospital complex rather than on a green field site – there will therefore be no loss of the parkland around the Hall.

The main consideration from a Conservation perspective is the potential impact on the setting of the Hall:

- (a) The creation of a hospital on the adjacent site now dominates the northern aspect of the Hall – the question is whether this extension will cause any significant harm over and above the current relationship.
- (b) The site is set down slope from the Hall and thus the imposition of a two storey element is not considered to dominate the setting visually.
- (c) The buildings will be located over 50 metres from the Hall – with the existing car park area and some other single storey buildings being retained between the two. This side of the Hall has been altered by the provision of a two storey extension.
- (d) The proposal is therefore on the side of the Hall where it will have least impact and will not have any detrimental impact on the visual relationship between the Hall and its landscape setting and the hospital complex.
- (e) The design of the structure is a modern modular flat roofed structure not of any architectural quality. It will appear as a modern intervention against the older parts of the hospital and the Hall its self. The main concern focuses on the choice of a plastic coated coloured cladding system and a large range of flat roofed buildings which will contrast significantly against the brickwork of the other existing hospital buildings which have pitched clay tile roof and red brick exteriors. It is considered that this would appear as an alien material on the site and not harmonise with the existing predominantly brick buildings of the hospital complex – the Hall itself being rendered. It is suggested that discussions take place over the choice of materials to see if a more appropriate cladding system can be proposed .
- (f) There are a number of important trees within the hospital site which help to soften the site and screen the site from the Hall. It is considered to be important to retain these as far as possible and any loss should be mitigated by replacement planting. The view of the Council's Tree's and landscape officer should be sought on this issue.
- (g) This part of the site has already been developed so the works are not considered to harm the archaeological interest of the site.

Conclusion: Generally the provisions of Policy EN28 have been complied with. The proposed two storey scale of building is not considered to dominate the Hall. The topography means that the Hall remains the dominant building of the complex.

However the materials will contrast significantly with the predominantly brick build hospital. Rather than a plastic coated system it is suggested that discussions take place to secure an alternative cladding system less alien to the site.

The flat roofed form of the building will also stand out against the pitched roofed buildings of the hospital and given the small size of the second floor area it is considered that a scheme which incorporates this in a pitched roof structure would be preferable and more in keeping with the surrounding hospital buildings.

The use of a timber means of enclosing the plant area is considered to be low quality and a brick wall is considered to be more appropriate.

Recommendation: No objection in principle but would like to explore further:

- (a) *The external cladding system selected for the building to seek one which has the appearance of brickwork.*
- (b) *Amending the design from a flat roofed system to one which has a pitched roof – the first floor being incorporated within this roof area.*
- (c) *The use of a brick wall to enclose the plant enclosure area.*

Suggested Conditions:

- i. Submission of details of a cladding system
- ii. Photographic recording of the existing mortuary building prior to its demolition
- iii. Details of the windows at 1:20 including details of how they are located within the depth of the facades in relation to the cladding .
- iv. Details of the rainwater system
- v. Hard landscape materials
- vi. Details of new lighting around the building”

22. Trees and Landscape Officer

“My objection to the loss of the Horse Chestnut still remains.

Mrs Dickinson’s report does not provide any specific evidence to support the removal of the tree. With regards to her ‘general advice’ that the significant crown thinning and reduction is required following ‘various inspections, reports and tests’; I have not seen the results of these documents to support this statement.

With reference to planning documents submitted as part of its application by Frank Shaw Associates I would comment as follows:-

Point 6 – The report by Eastern Landscape Service Ltd does not recommend extensive tree surgery. It recommends the removal of dead wood only.

Point 8 – I did attend a meeting on the 30th November 2005 as indicated. At that meeting I reiterated my objection to the loss of the tree. I did suggest that the Trust may wish to commission a ‘Picus’ test on the tree. This in effect ultra-sounds the tree and gives a definitive reading on the structural integrity of the tree. I understand that this test was undertaken but again I have not been made aware of the results.

The tree is correctly not subject to a TPO. If Committee are minded to refuse, a TPO should be served”.

The Trees and Landscape Officer has confirmed that his comments regarding other trees on site made in relation to the previous, now withdrawn application, ref. S/0039/16/F remain relevant:-

“Other trees indicated for retention are within the bounds of the criteria for root protection zones as specified in BS:5837:2005 bearing in mind their relative position to footprint”.

23. Environment Agency

Has no objection.

24. **Chief Environmental Health Officer**

Concerned that problems could arise from noise and suggests conditions to control the operating times of power operated machinery during the period of demolition and construction and to control the location and details of any power driven plant or equipment, including equipment for heating, ventilation and the for the control or extraction of any odour, dust or fumes from the building.

25. **Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Officer**

Comments are awaited

26. **English Heritage**

No comments.

Representations

27. None

Further Representations of the applicants

28. In a letter dated 24th April 2006 the applicants provide justification for the building massing and appearance. Essentially the reason behind the approach is time, cost and site constraints. A pitched roof approach was considered but felt it would add height to the building and not be appropriate to the site. To minimise visual impact and satisfy key functional requirements the building is to be cut into the existing ground level.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

29. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- (a) The visual impact of the development and its impact on the setting of Papworth Hall and its parkland grounds.
 - (b) The impact on available parking and increased pressure for additional parking
 - (c) The impact on existing trees
 - (d) The need for the facility

Previous withdrawn application

30. The previous application was withdrawn for the following reasons:
- (a) Further information was required relating to parking for the site and proposal
 - (b) Further clarification was needed in relation to the Trust's 'future' plans on the site
 - (c) The appearance of the building needed further consideration
 - (d) Further information in relation to impact on existing trees was required.
31. The Parish Council had previously objected to the earlier application. The main reason for its recommendation of refusal was "that the purely functional design and finish of the proposed two-storey extension in such a confined location is inappropriate and visually intrusive, and at best should only be granted temporary approval, with the condition that it should be removed when the hospital relocates."

Conservation Manager's comments

32. I note the concerns of the Conservation Manager. With regard to the requirement for photographic records of the mortuary building this is not possible because the building has been demolished. However, I have contacted the applicants to find out if any photographs were taken.

The need for the facility

33. Attached as appendix 1 is an extract from the supporting information to the application explaining the need for the facility, the health and community benefits and the suitability of other sites. I am satisfied that the information here adequately justifies the clinical need for the facility but I am not convinced of the need to relocate the offices.
34. The last 4 paragraphs of section 3 of the attached appendix concern the need for the office space which would occupy the whole of the first floor of the extended building. The last paragraph of Section 3 indicates that office staff are needed to cover for the clinic coordination role, but I remain concerned about this justification.
35. If the offices are not essential then part of the ground floor accommodation may be able to be relocated to this first floor area taking the development away from the mature Horse Chestnut tree and negating the need for its removal. There may be operational reasons why this cannot occur but more information is needed to consider this. Again Members will be updated if further requested information is received.

Design and Materials

36. The fundamental approach is for a flat roof structure. There are other flat roof permanent buildings on the site, notably at the entrance to the hospital and, albeit single storey, immediately opposite but the new building is within direct view of the Listed Building and it is considered by the Conservation Manager that this approach is not appropriate here. However, I have concerns that a pitched roof structure would increase the height and therefore the visual impact and do not therefore feel this is the correct way forward. In my view the significant concern is with the proposed materials. These need to be revised to give a more traditional appearance. The applicants have been approached to consider alternative cladding but should Members be minded to approve the application this could be considered through a planning condition.

Impact on the visual amenity of the area and the setting of Grade II* Papworth Hall

37. The site sits at a high point within the hospital complex and close to Papworth Hall. The proposed buildings have the potential therefore to impact on its setting and the visual quality of the area. However the building is read more within the context of existing hospital buildings than with the Hall and the flat roof approach attempts to minimise the height to lessen its impact.
38. I consider the impact could be minimised through the use of appropriate materials but that in the long term the setting of the Hall should be protected by a condition requiring the demolition of the building once the hospital has relocated if Members are minded to approve the application. I note that the Parish Council would support this approach.

Trees

39. The applicants have commissioned a report into the condition of the significant Horse Chestnut tree that, although not statutorily protected at this time, does make a significant contribution to the visual quality of the area. This is included at Section 9 of the Appendix.
40. The report essentially recognises that the tree currently forms a landscape focal point within the immediate area but states that there is some evidence of internal decay in the lower trunk and recommends significant crown thinning and reduction is undertaken to limit limb end weight plus bracing to lower the likelihood of splitting. Other factors such as root compaction and potential severance due to adjacent paths and car parking areas compromise the tree. Possible chemical damage due to previous uses of the area may also have occurred. The author of the report feels that the tree surgery required now and for its ongoing management will permanently lessen the visual impact of the tree.
41. The report concludes that the current extent of decay would not justify the immediate removal of the tree but its problems will only increase. The existing decay is already of concern to the hospital in the interests of general safety and for reasons of ongoing management costs.
42. The report goes on to suggest that the loss of this tree could be compensated for by the planting of new trees within the site.
43. I am mindful of the comments of the Trees and Landscape Officer in relation to the findings of this report. In my opinion there is insufficient information at this time to suggest that the new building has to extend out to the location of the tree for reasons given above and its removal has not therefore been demonstrated to be essential. The tree is not in imminent danger and whilst conditions could be imposed to remove the building the tree once lost cannot be replaced.
44. With regard to 'compensation' planting. It will take many years for new trees to reach the maturity of this Horse Chestnut and in considering approval of this building I would expect some landscape enhancement to take place in any case.

Car Parking

45. It is important for highway safety reasons to ensure that the proposed development does not result in any greater pressures on site for car parking either through the loss of existing provision or through the under provision of new car parking.
46. At Table 1 of the appendix it is indicated that there are currently 671 car parking spaces on the hospital site, 167 of which are to be lost due to existing consents and commitments and including 25 spaces that would be lost as part of this application. There are currently 174 spaces available off-site of which it is stated only 50% are used at any one time. New spaces are to be provided at the village shop, to the rear of the pharmacy and at the 'old barn' amounting to an additional 81. When balanced out this amounts to no reduction in parking provision although this does rely on the current under-use of the existing off site parking and does not take account of the additional need for the new building.
47. Table 3 indicates that the new building will require an additional 30 spaces and that 141 spaces will be provided in the future, 81 off site, as detailed above and 60 on site (see Table 2): 25 in front of the hospital on a grassed area and 35 temporary spaces adjacent to Papworth Hall.

48. It is clear from the above figures that the new building will rely on the future provision of additional car parking spaces that are by no means certain and are not being considered as part of this application. However, the above assessment involves a consideration of the site as a whole. Looking at the particular merits of this proposal, 25 spaces are to be lost and 30 are required resulting in the need for an additional 55 spaces to be provided. (The car parking standard for hospitals in the Local Plan is 1 space per 4 staff plus 1 per 3 daily visitors. The application indicates that 5 additional staff will be working in the new building at any one time, the offices will not require any further spaces as they are a re-provision of existing facilities with the vacated offices being used as additional staff facilities for existing staff. The additional 10 beds are supposed to attract 3 daily visitors though it is stated that some patients drive themselves in and it is assumed that the outpatients will be 12 visitors at any one time. In my opinion it is difficult to calculate the precise number of spaces that will be required using the Local Plan standards but it is likely that 30 spaces, as calculated by the applicants is realistic).
49. It is understood that the existing car parking is free, charging is shortly to be introduced for staff who park on site to encourage the greater use of off-site parking areas, a shuttle bus will be operating to ferry staff into work and the parking for patients and visitors will become pay and display.
50. In my opinion the introduction of car parking charges and the use of a shuttle bus will encourage greater use of off-site parking and has the potential to offset the relatively modest shortfall of 55 spaces that will result due to the proposed development. A S106 could require the submission and implementation of a satisfactory car parking scheme that would guarantee the above measures were put into place. However there is a difficult balance to be made here and Members may not accept this view. It could be argued that the main problems with parking within the site are only relevant to staff and visitors to the hospital and do not represent a danger to highway safety on the public highway and that to encourage more off street parking will result in not only the dedicated off-street parking areas being better used but also greater parking off-site within the public highway exacerbating congestion within the public highway.
51. In conclusion, in my opinion it is not sufficient to rely on the hospital's plans for further parking provisions to solve the on-site parking problems associated with the additional development as these may or may not be practical and are not being considered as part of this application. However, the proposal will result in a shortfall of 55 car parking spaces that may be offset by improvements to the overall parking strategy on site as described above which can be secured through a S106 agreement. Members will have to balance these issues, including the harm/benefits of encouraging increased off-site parking, with the stated need for the facility as well as the other material planning considerations.

Location

52. The building is required to be in this location as it is intended to extend existing wards and be accessed from them. There is a clinical requirement to locate the new beds as close as possible to the existing to ensure adequate staffing and patient care.

Future plans for relocation

53. The schedule in the appendix outlines the key dates for the proposed move to the Biomedical Campus adjacent to Addenbrooke's Hospital.

Conclusion

54. I consider that the need exists for the additional ward beds and outpatients facility and I note

55. that the Parish Council takes the same view. It is less clear to me why the office space needs to be relocated from elsewhere and I do not consider the application adequately justifies this.
56. The building could be better assimilated into its surroundings with the use of more appropriate materials which could be controlled through conditions as could its demolition in the future thus mitigating its long term impact on the setting of Papworth Hall.
57. Car parking on the site is a current problem and the proposal will put greater demands on this. An improved shuttle bus and charging arrangement may improve this but will put greater pressure on parking off-site in the vicinity. A proposal of this scale would justify the preparation and implementation of a Travel Plan.
58. The Horse Chestnut tree makes a significant contribution to the area and should be protected with a Tree Protection Order as acknowledged by the Trees and Landscape Officer. The loss of this tree would be seriously regrettable and I am not convinced that it is necessary as I am not satisfied that the office space needs to be relocated from its existing locations.

Recommendation

59. Refusal for the following reason:
 1. The proposal will result in the loss of a significant Horse Chestnut Tree that is worthy of being protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The tree makes a significant contribution to the visual quality of the surroundings and its loss will seriously harm the general visual amenity of the area to the detriment of the immediate surroundings and the wider setting of the Grade II* Listed Building Papworth Hall. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy P1/3 of the approved Structure Plan 2003 and Policies EN5 and EN6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, which aim to retain natural features of value within new development.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Planning Files reference S/0600/06/F and S/0039/06/F,
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004,
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003,

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