Agenda Section: 2

Application No: 05/02133         Ward: Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom

Address: Orpington Hospital, Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 9JU

OS Grid Ref: E: 545961       N: 164687

Applicant: Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust

Objections: Yes

Description of Development:
Two storey intermediate care facility comprising 64 bedrooms and associated facilities

Proposal

The site is located on the eastern side of Orpington Hospital and on land between the main building and a new residential development at Vancouver Close. The proposal is for the erection of a two storey 42-bedroom intermediate care unit with associated facilities. It has been reduced from the original plans, which proposed a 64 bedroom facility. Four car parking spaces are also proposed.

The current proposal involves a separate building, detached from the existing hospital, and having a length of approximately 101 metres, a width of 12 to 14 metres and a maximum height of about 8.8 metres.

The site is located in an area currently occupied by old single storey modular buildings together with a long covered way linking all the cabins. The portacabins house the Physiotherapy unit, the Facilities Department and Training.

The applicants submit that the new building fully meets the requirements set out in a specification from the London Borough of Bromley Social Services and Bromley Primary Care Trust.

The current intermediate care service at Orpington Hospital offers an integrated service within the Canada Wing. At present it has 40 beds and offers 24-hour care for patients who have been assessed to require no more than 6 weeks rehabilitation and support in order to return to their own home or in some cases residential care homes. The average age of the patients is 83 years and the average stay is 36 days.

The planned building is intended to function as a stand alone building creating a home from home setting. The service will provide an agreed rehabilitation to
individuals over the age of 18. They will receive 24-hour care and nursing. The service will be time limited, not normally longer than 6 weeks but often as little as one to two weeks or less.

The Physiotherapy Unit and Training can be accommodated within the area vacated by the current Intermediate Care Facility. This is presently located on the second floor of the Canada Wing. The Facilities Department will be relocated within the existing accommodation at the site.

The applicants indicate that the existing Canada Wing is on three storeys and has a height of around 11 metres with windows on all three storeys. On the South Eastern boundary the site has an earth bank varying in height from 1200mm and 2700mm. Beyond this bank is the recently erected housing.

The boundary to the housing development is 24 metres from the face of the Canada Wing.

The entrance will be at the eastern end of the site facing Tregony Road. The existing access at this point will remain stopped up. The applicants have indicated that circulation inside the building will be against the residential boundary and will have a blank wall in this elevation, preventing overlooking. The remaining accommodation would have "Courtyard Blocks" with habitable rooms facing inwards.

The roof will have a green roof system. The applicants indicate that this would:

- reduce the scale of the building
- provide a green space and improve the outlook from Canada Wing
- bear environmental benefits

The proposal will have a "Net pave" system to allow plants to grow through whilst allowing access for services.

Consultations

There have been a number of detailed objections. The comments are summarised as follows:

- overdevelopment of the site
- too close to residential properties
- increased parking in the surrounding roads
- lack of parking from the staff and visitors
- noise and disturbance
- affect on property values

The full text of correspondence received is available for Members to consider.
From a highways point of view, data was requested from the applicant in terms a Travel Plan. On the basis of the information received, it would appear that as far as facilities being provided is concerned there would be little difference in terms of activity from the current scenario and this gives a degree of comfort in respect of the transport impact. It is noted that an offer has been made to fund a waiting restriction scheme for the surrounding streets and this is welcomed. If permission is granted it should be subject to a legal agreement to include such a provision.

**Planning Considerations**

The proposed application has to be considered against policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan.

Policy C1 of the UDP states, interalia, that proposals, which meet an identified health need, will normally be permitted provided the development is accessible by modes of transport other than the car.

Policy BE1 requires a high standard of design in new development generally, and has a particular aim to protect the amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties.

In terms of highway issues, policies T2 and T3 are relevant in this case.

Policy T2 states that applications for developments likely to be significant generators of travel or with “unusual travel characteristics” should be accompanied by a transport assessment and will require the implementation of a travel plan. The applicants have provided a Travel Plan to accompany the application. Policy T3 requires parking at levels to meet but not exceed the Council’s parking standards.

Such a facility would also have to accord with the London Plan policies relating to Health and Healthcare provision (3A.17 and 3.18). These policies state that UDPs should promote the objectives of the NHS, local delivery plans and modernisation programmes and delivery of health care in the borough together with supporting the provision of additional healthcare within the borough in appropriate locations.

**Conclusions**

The major considerations of this case appear to be whether the principle of development is acceptable, whether the privacy and amenities of adjoining properties are adequately protected and whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of parking and highway safety.

Whilst the provision of such a care facility on the hospital site appears to accord with Policy C1 and is not questioned, the development also has to be assessed against other relevant policies of the U.D.P. In particular, Policy BE1, which requires among other things that the development is of a high standard of design
and safeguards residential amenity. The new development will be two storeys in height with pitched roofs interspersed with flat roof sections. Its overall height will be approximately 8.8 metres and there will be an unrelieved flank wall to the building, approximately 3 metres high, running along the south-eastern elevation over a distance of about 97 metres. This part of the building is adjacent to the new residential development in Vancouver Close. The dwellings at numbers 4 and 6 will have rear elevations/windows facing the building and will be separated by rear garden depths of about 12.5 metres. Number 8, Vancouver Close is located at right angles to the proposed building and its flank elevation will be virtually on the boundary with the development, whilst number 36 is also in close proximity to the building. Given the limited impact of the current cabins on the site, the erection of the new building will result in a significant change in outlook from the dwellings, will create a greater visual impact from their windows and gardens and will inevitably harm the amenities currently enjoyed by the occupants of these dwellings.

In terms of traffic and parking, no highways objections are raised, following the receipt of further information.

On the basis of the above, it is recommended that planning permission be refused.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref. 05/02133, excluding exempt information.

As amended by documents received 28th November 2006

**Recommendation – Permission be Refused**

01 The proposal constitute a cramped over development of the site, by reason of the bulk, height and layout of the development proposed, detrimental to the spatial standards and character of the surrounding area, and thereby contrary to Policy BE1 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan

02: The proposals would, by reason of the height and size of the building proposed, and its close proximity to neighbouring properties, have a seriously detrimental impact on the amenities that the occupiers of adjacent dwellings might reasonably expect to continue to enjoy, thereby contrary to Policy BE1 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan.