

APPLICATION REPORT - FUL/349659/22
Planning Committee – 9th November 2022

Registration Date: 17th August 2022
Ward: Shaw

Application Reference: FUL/349659/22
Type of Application: Full Application

Proposal: Three storey development of a new primary healthcare facility with associated parking and landscaping

Location: Land at Westway, Shaw, Oldham, OL2 8TB

Case Officer: Graham Dickman
Applicant: United Healthcare Developments Ltd
Agent: PRP Manchester

INTRODUCTION

The application is being reported to Planning Committee as a Major application involving the Council as landowner.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the application is approved subject to the conditions set out below.

THE SITE

The application relates to land at Westway/ Farrow Street East, Shaw. The site was formerly a local leisure centre and pool (Shaw Baths). The site is currently largely occupied by car parking, an electricity substation, pockets of landscaping and open space. The Lifelong Learning Centre is located immediately to the south.

The Memorial Gardens are to the west, Crompton Library to the north-west, and shops with residential accommodation above within the District Centre to the east.

THE PROPOSAL

The application is for a new Primary Care Centre which will facilitate relocation of existing services from Crompton Health Centre.

The proposal will replace two existing local medical practices serving Shaw/ Crompton, namely The Village Medical Practice and The Oak Gables Partnership, which occupy a building deemed no longer fit for purpose.

Accommodation will be provided over three storeys for GP practices, dental facilities, extended primary care facilities (treatment, consulting, counselling rooms, etc), a pharmacy and scope for shared facilities with the Lifelong Learning Centre.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The application has been assessed in the context of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

The proposal would represent an Urban Development Project within paragraph 10(b) of Schedule 2 of the Regulations. However, at 0.35 hectares it would not exceed the applicable threshold of 1 hectare, nor is the site located within any impact distance of a 'sensitive area' as defined in the Regulations.

Consequently, an Environmental Statement is not required.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PA/332935/12 – Extension of time relating to PA/056675/09 for erection of new Primary Care Centre with associated hard landscaping. Approved 28/11/2012

PA/056675/09 - Erection of new Primary Care Centre with associated hard landscaping. Approved 04/09/2009.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The 'Development Plan' is the Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham.

The site is primarily located within a 'centre' as allocated on the Proposals Map.

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

- Policy 1 – Climate Change and Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 – Communities
- Policy 5 – Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices
- Policy 9 – Local Environment
- Policy 18 – Energy
- Policy 19 – Water and Flooding
- Policy 20 – Design
- Policy 21 – Protecting Natural Environmental Assets

Saved UDP Policy D1.5 - Protection of Trees on Development Sites.

CONSULTATIONS

Highways Officer:	No objections to the provision of the proposed access, vehicle/cycle parking arrangements, and submission of a travel plan.
Environmental Health:	No objection subject to conditions in respect of the need for landfill gas and land contamination assessments.
Trees Officer:	No objections subject to the implementation of tree planting to comply with the 3 for 1 replacement policy.
G M Ecology Unit	No objection subject to measures to secure compensation for any biodiversity loss resulting from the development.
G M Police:	Recommend implementation of a full Crime Impact Statement.
United Utilities:	No objection subject to a condition in respect of submission of a drainage scheme following an investigation of the hierarchy of sustainable drainage options.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by Press Notice, Site Notices, and individual neighbour notification.

Shaw & Crompton Parish Council recommend approval along with a request that priority parking as near to the new facility as possible is given to those in most need.

No further written observations have been received.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

Local Plan Policy 2 indicates that the Council will support improvements to the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents to facilitate the development of new and improved health-related facilities.

NPPF Paragraph 96 requires Local Planning Authorities to work proactively and positively to ensure the faster delivery of public service infrastructure, including health provision.

The development will enable the delivery of Primary Care directly to a combined patient list of 13,000 local residents; whilst accommodating the provision of further community and extended services to a growing population of approximately 23,500 residents within the Shaw and Crompton locality, covered by the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group.

The site is centrally located in close reach to a range of facilities and public transport options.

Both existing surgeries which will relocate to the new facility already practice in the town centre, both being based within the existing health centre just 200m to the south of the application site.

Highways and Access

The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment, which includes an assessment of the potential impact on the local highway network.

A new vehicular access will be provided direct from Westway.

New car parking facilities will be provided within the site for 48 vehicles, including 4 adjacent to the health centre building for disabled persons, and 6 spaces with access to electric vehicle charging points. A further 9 spaces with access from the service yard to the rear of the Market Street shops will be provided for neighbouring properties.

Finally, covered cycle spaces will be provided for visitors, with secure lockers provided for staff.

The Highways Officer has commented that the development will replace the existing medical facility nearby, and it is not expected that volumes and patterns of traffic will change significantly.

The site is in a sustainable location with excellent links to public transport and opportunities for walking and cycling. A car park will be provided with accessible spaces, electric vehicle charging points and cycle parking spaces. There is plentiful public parking provision nearby for those members of staff and patients choosing to drive to the facility.

Consequently, it is not anticipated that there will be any additional significant increase in traffic generation or demand for on street parking to the detriment of highway safety. The Highways Officer therefore does not object to planning permission being granted for highway safety reasons.

Design & Layout

The application site is located within an area surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential buildings, none of which display any specific design or heritage value.

The Memorial Park is located across Westway to the south-west. However, the proposed building will occupy the north-east corner of the application site, roughly covering the footprint of the former swimming pool building, and therefore will not impinge on the setting of the park.

The proposed building must be designed to meet stringent standards laid down by the NHS which makes recommendations relating to space allocation, room layouts, relationships between the spaces, security, environmental conditions and health and safety, for example. The scale, layout and orientation of the building must also meet the detailed operational criteria of the end users.

Consequently, the proposed building will have a functional, contemporary design, comprising a mix of stone block and render finishes over three storeys. There will be a flat roof, reflective of the adjacent buildings to the east on Market Street. The height of the building will similarly reflect these properties.

In this context, the building will represent an appropriate addition to the street scene in accordance with Local Plan Policies 9 and 20.

Residential Amenity

The application site is located within Shaw town centre. However, residential accommodation is present on the upper floors of the commercial units which are adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site.

A minimum separate distance of 22 metres will be retained between facing windows, thus ensuring satisfactory protection of levels of privacy to the existing residents and future occupiers and visitors to the health centre.

A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted. The Environmental Health team has concluded that the impacts are not significant and no specific additional mitigation measures will be required during the operational period. An informative note is recommended to ensure that the construction process does not result in harm to any sensitive receptors in the vicinity.

The proposals have the potential to cause air quality impacts during construction and operation and an Air Quality Assessment has been submitted. Any construction impacts would be temporary, whilst the accessible town centre location will assist in minimising operational traffic generation.

Therefore, no significant adverse amenity impacts are anticipated in accordance with Local Plan Policy 9.

Landscaping and Ecology

At present the site comprises a mix of hardstanding and landscaping on the footprint of the former building.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) have been submitted.

In order to implement this application/development, there would be the requirement to remove all existing trees from the site, with some implications for retained trees off-site but directly adjacent to the site.

With regards to the proposed removal of the on-site trees, the Council's Trees Officer notes that although the trees if taken as individuals are not remarkable, they provide a significant level of visual amenity if taken as a coherent group. The most significant of these, an ash, is at this time in good health and not showing signs of Ash Dieback Disease which is prevalent on the site of the Memorial Gardens directly to the west of Westway.

Although it is not inevitable that the tree will succumb to Ash Dieback Disease, it is highly likely in the relatively short term. With the foreseeable loss of this tree, the collective amenity value of the group will be significantly reduced.

For these reasons, there is no objection to the removal of the on-site trees as proposed subject to replacement with a minimum 3 new trees for every semi/mature tree removed in accordance with saved UDP Policy D1.5. The replacements have been accommodated on the site.

Additional protection will be required in relation to the collective canopies of the off-site trees which extend beyond the existing car park edge wall, as reflected on the submitted Tree Constraints Plan, and protection will be needed within these areas during construction.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and a Biodiversity Net Gain statement have been submitted.

NPPF Paragraph 174 states that decisions should contribute to the natural environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. The proposed development site results in limited opportunities for on-site contributions and gain.

Consequently, it is recommended that the developer identifies, in liaison with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, local off-site opportunities for enhancement.

Flood risk and ground conditions

A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy have been submitted. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 at the lowest risk and is therefore appropriate for the type of development.

United Utilities has no objections subject to a detailed drainage scheme, which will be formulated by an assessment of the sustainability options within the drainage hierarchy.

The Environmental Health team has considered the submitted Phase 1 Desk Study Report and has recommended standard conditions in respect of the need for landfill gas and land contamination assessments in respect of the need for landfill gas and land contamination assessments.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development will involve the productive use of a highly sustainably located site and facilitate significantly improved healthcare facilities in the town.

It would therefore represent a welcome addition to the town centre.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission.

REASON - To comply with the provisions of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the Approved Details Schedule list on this decision notice.

REASON - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

3. No development comprising the erection of any external walls shall take place until a specification for the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development, including the roof, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The materials to be used throughout the development shall be consistent in terms of colour, size and texture with the approved details.

REASON - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable in the interests of the visual amenity of the area having regard to Policy 20 of the Oldham Local Plan

4. The building hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the car parking spaces, secure cycle parking, and associated vehicular and footpath accesses as indicated on the approved plan have been provided in accordance with the details of construction, levels, and drainage, which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the construction of the accesses and parking spaces. Thereafter the parking spaces shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles.

REASON - To ensure adequate off-street parking facilities are provided and remain available for the development so that parking does not take place on the highway to the detriment of highway safety having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan

5. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, an interim green travel plan for the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following acceptance of the interim plan, the occupier shall submit their travel plan to the Local Planning Authority for approval and the approved plans shall thereafter be implemented within 3 months of first occupation of the dwellings.

REASON - To ensure the development accords with sustainable transport policies having regard to Policy 5 of the Oldham Local Plan.

6. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works with an associated implementation plan, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The hard landscape details shall include proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; hard surfacing materials and street furniture, where relevant. The soft landscaping works shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants and trees, noting species, plant/tree sizes and proposed numbers/densities and the implementation programme.

All planting shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details in the first available planting season following the completion of the development, or such longer period which has previously been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It shall be maintained for a period of 5 years from the agreed date of planting. Any trees or plants which die, become diseased, or are removed during the maintenance period shall be replaced with specimens of an equivalent species and size.

REASON - Prior approval of such details is necessary as the site may contain features which require incorporation into the approved development, and to ensure that the development site is landscaped to an acceptable standard having regard to Policies 9,

20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, including site clearance, excavation or construction works or the entry of vehicles or plant into the site, all existing retained trees on and adjacent to the site, other than those indicated for removal on the approved plans, shall be physically protected from damage by plant, equipment, vehicles, excavation, deposit of excavated material and any other cause. This shall be achieved by the erection of 2 m high fencing using vertical and horizontal scaffolding poles, or other stout fencing to Local Authority approval with the uprights driven well into the ground, erected in accordance with BS5837:2012, outside the canopy. The fencing shall be maintained for the duration of the development operations and no operations or storage whatsoever shall take place within the fenced protection areas.

REASON - Prior approval of such details is necessary to protect existing trees and hedges having regard to saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

8. No construction of the building hereby approved shall commence until a scheme and timetable for the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The biodiversity scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details and timescale.

REASON - To ensure that the proposals result in enhancement of biodiversity having regard to Policies 9, 20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and paragraph 174 of the NPPF.

9. No development, other than site clearance, shall commence until the following information has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme. The drainage scheme shall be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards and must include:

- (i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365;
- (ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations);
- (iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD;
- (iv) Incorporation of mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and
- (v) Foul and surface water drained on separate systems.

Prior to the commencement of the use of the proposed development within that Phase, the drainage scheme shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

REASON - To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution having regard to Policy 19 of the Oldham Local Plan.

10. No development shall commence unless and until a site investigation and assessment into landfill gas risk and ground contamination has been carried out and the consultant's written report and recommendation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Written approval from the Local Planning Authority will be required for any necessary programmed remedial measures and, on receipt of a satisfactory completion report, to discharge the condition.

REASON - Prior approval of such details is necessary as they are fundamental to the initial site preparation works and in order to protect public safety as the site is located within 250 metres of a former landfill site having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

11. No development shall commence until a detailed energy statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The statement shall set out how the development will accord with the Energy Infrastructure Target Framework set out in Oldham Local plan Policy 18 and shall detail how: (i) a target area has been determined; and, (ii) how the development will meet this target. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme phasing arrangements and retained as operational thereafter.

REASON - To ensure that the development accords with the provisions of Policy 18 of the Oldham Local Plan.

Location plan (not to scale)

