

APPLICATION REPORT – FUL/351352/23
Planning Committee 20th September 2023

Registration Date 24th July 2023
Ward Royton South

Application Reference FUL/351352/23
Type of Application Full Application

Proposal Construction of a Community Diagnostics Village consisting of two, two-storey medical diagnostics buildings, a single storey PET CT Scanner, a mobile CT Scanner and making permanent the previously approved Community Diagnostics Hub Building (ref: FUL/347717/21) with associated landscaping and parking.

Location Land to the north of Salmon Fields and south of Turf Lane, Royton

Case Officer Graham Dickman
Applicant Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust
Agent Euan Connolly

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application has been referred to Planning Committee for determination in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation as a Major development which would involve a departure from the development plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in this report.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 This application relates to a site comprising largely vacant of land located between Salmon Fields to the south and Turf Lane to the north, with existing commercial buildings to either side.
- 3.2 The undeveloped portions of the site generally comprise unkempt grassland with tree cover to the external boundaries.
- 3.3 The south-western part of the site presently includes a Community Diagnostic Hub consisting of a hub building with three associated scanning units with associated access, car parking and landscaping. It was granted planning permission in December 2021 for a period of 5 years.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposal involves the permanent retention of the previously approved Main Hub building.
- 4.2 In addition, the remainder of the site will be developed with additional health facilities.
- 4.3 The new development will comprise:
- a) A modular CT Scanner linked directly into the main Community Diagnostics Hub.
 - b) An Endoscopy Unit which will largely provide single storey, with a first floor plant room. It will provide accommodation of a waiting room for around 20 people, 4 consultant rooms, 3 standard procedure rooms, 18 1st phase recovery area, 1 second stage recovery unit, ancillary accommodation, decontamination unit and an enclosed first floor plant room.
 - c) A PET CT Scanner comprising a PET CT Scanner, control room, uptake rooms and a Hot Lab. Part of this building will be surrounded by a 1.8m high fence set 2m away from the building to prevent access close to the building due to the radiation output of the scanner.
 - d) A Urology Unit will be a two-storey building comprising a waiting room for around 30 people, 4 standard procedure rooms, 1 enhanced procedure room, 1 lithotripter room, 6 consultant rooms, ancillary accommodation and first floor staff accommodation and internal plant room.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 FUL/347717/21 – The erection of a Community Diagnostic Hub consisting of a single storey hub building with three associated scanning units with associated access, car parking and landscape for a temporary period of up to five years. Approved 10 December 2021.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

- 6.1 The adopted Development Plan is the Joint Development Plan Document (Local Plan) which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham. The site is allocated within a Business and Employment Area on the Proposals Map associated with this document.
- 6.2 As such, the following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

Policy 1 – Climate Change and Sustainable Development;
Policy 5 – Promoting Accessibility and Sustainable Transport Choices;
Policy 6 – Green Infrastructure;
Policy 9 – Local Environment;
Policy 19 – Water and Flooding;
Policy 20 – Design;
Policy 21 – Protecting Natural Environmental Assets;
Policy 23 – Open Spaces and Sports; and,
Policy 24 – Historic Environment

7. CONSULTATIONS

CONSULTEE	FORMAL RESPONSE
Highways	No objections subject to conditions in respect of implementation of the access, parking and turning area, wheel cleaning equipment during construction, and a green travel plan.
TfGM	Recommend implementation of any necessary works including reinstatement of redundant access points and footway resurfacing, footways within the site, cycle parking and a travel plan.
Environmental Health	Recommend conditions in relation to the site investigation and landfill gas as a detailed remediation strategy is required.
Environment Agency	No comments received.
G M Ecology Unit	No objections as the scheme will achieve biodiversity net gain.
Trees Officer	It is noted that the site has been cleared. However, the submitted details of proposed replacement planting are acceptable.
United Utilities	No objections subject to implementation in accordance with the submitted drainage design.
Coal Authority	No objections
G M Police	No objections subject to the development being implemented in accordance with the submitted Crime Impact Statement.

8. PUBLICITY AND THIRD PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

- 8.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, the application has been advertised as a major development by neighbour notification, display of a site notice, and publication of a press notice.
- 8.2 In response, an existing business on Salmon Fields has submitted a comment that there has been a noticeable increase in traffic on Salmon fields since the initial facility opened leading to lengthy queues. Therefore, consideration should be given to changing the phasing at either end of Salmon Fields (10.5).

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

9. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Impact on employment land

- 9.1 The application site is located within a designated Business and Employment Area (BEA7) which aims to assist the delivery of a range of sites to support the local economy.
- 9.2 Local Plan Policy 14 sets out the types of development which would be appropriate in such areas. However, this does not include development of the type proposed in this case. The Policy goes on to state that developments other than those listed will not be permitted unless one of the following can be demonstrated:
- (a) through a marketing exercise that there is no market for the uses listed above. The marketing exercise to be agreed with the council before commencing and be of a professional standard, or,
 - (b) through a viability exercise that the continued use/development of the site for the uses listed above is unviable; or
 - (c) that the development of the site for alternative uses would benefit the regeneration areas identified by the council as being in need of investment or would benefit the community of an area.
- 9.3 In this regard, similar factors apply to those in determining the Phase 1 application.
- 9.4 In respect of criterion (a), the Council has previously marketed the site through local agents. There was a lot of interest in the site and a number of bids were received, however, site disposal did not progress.
- 9.5 During this period, the initial enquiry for the current proposed use came forward and whilst it took some time for the preferred site to be formally selected, the site was temporarily held to help facilitate the project having regard to the importance of the development for the local community and to improve access to diagnostic facilities for the residents of Oldham and beyond.
- 9.6 Nevertheless, it has to be concluded that this criterion alone has not been satisfied.
- 9.7 In this regard, it is nevertheless noted that the development will generate employment opportunities (33FTE positions).
- 9.8 Criterion (b) is not applicable to this case.
- 9.9 With regard to criterion (c), alternative development can be considered appropriate where that development would benefit the community of an area.

Assessment of community benefit

- 9.10 Amongst the primary objectives of Local Plan Policy 2 is the improved health and well-being of the community, and in this regard the Council will support the development of new and improved health-related facilities.

- 9.11 NPPF paragraph 96 advises that local planning authorities should work proactively and positively to ensure faster delivery of public service infrastructure such as hospitals.
- 9.12 The following supporting information has been presented.
- 9.13 The proposals form part of the development of Community Diagnostic Hubs as a key focus of national NHS strategy, recognising the need for significant future expansion of diagnostic infrastructure and workforce to keep pace with forecast future demand and achieve comparable levels with other OECD countries.
- 9.14 Nationally it is recognised that the CT scanning capacity in the NHS in England needs to nearly double over the next 5 years. The national policy is clear that the vast majority of this diagnostic growth should take place away from main acute hospitals. It is considered that the current model is too hospital-centric, with unnecessary visits to acute hospital sites and a poor separation between scanning facilities for emergency patients/in-patients and planned out-patient scans. This causes delay and cancellation and often a poor patient experience.
- 9.15 The national policy reconciles very closely with the local diagnostic strategy of the Northern Care Alliance (NCA). In this there is a clear strategic ambition to:
1. Diagnose disease (e.g., cancers, cardio-respiratory) at an earlier stage where it is more treatable, with better outcomes.
 2. Improve access to patients, especially those from socio-economically disadvantaged groups.
 3. Improve patient experience and transform care pathways, with 'multiple tests on the same day' models of care.
 4. Reduce congestion, pollution, and unnecessary journeys to acute hospital sites.
 5. Achieve national performance standards.
- 9.16 The NCA is recognised to be at the forefront of thinking in Greater Manchester and the wider NHS and is in the first-wave of the 5-year national Community Diagnostic Hub programme. The CDH in Oldham will be therefore one of the first in the region, securing improvement in access, experience, and outcomes for the people of Oldham and the wider Pennine area.
- 9.17 The facility will provide diagnostic testing appointments including:
- Imaging – scans including X-Rays and ultrasounds
 - Cardiology – heart diagnostic tests such as echocardiograms
 - Respiratory – lung tests
 - Pathology – blood testing
 - Endoscopy – tests to look inside your body including colonoscopies
 - Ophthalmology – Eye tests including retinal imaging

- 9.18 The significant benefits of the development which have been identified include:
- Patients are able to have multiple tests on the same day in the same place, providing more convenient access to diagnostic tests.
 - Waiting times for appointments are shorter.
 - Disease can be diagnosed at an earlier stage of progression, improving the chances of successful treatment.
 - Local patients will have access to some of the most advanced diagnostic technology available to the NHS.
 - Earlier diagnosis of both cancer and cardio-respiratory disease, resulting in improved outcomes for patients.
- 9.19 In this context, it is clear that the development offers substantial community benefits whilst not undermining the employment objectives of the local plan.

10. HIGHWAY ISSUES

- 10.1 The application is accompanied by a robust Transport Assessment which considers the likely traffic generation and sustainability of the site, and explores the accessibility of the site, opportunities to travel by more sustainable modes of transport, and the likely effects of the development on the local highway network.
- 10.2 As part of the first phase works a new access to Salmon Fields has been constructed which was designed to be able to service the wider future development. No additional works to the access would be required at this stage.
- 10.3 On-site provision includes secure cycle parking, and provision of both accessible parking spaces and electric recharging facilities.
- 10.4 The Highways Officer has reviewed the submission and does not anticipate that the development will result in an adverse or significant impact on the network to the detriment of highway safety.
- 10.5 A representation has been received regarding the queuing that currently occurs at each end of Salmon Fields and the concern that the additional traffic associated with the proposed development will exacerbate this.
- 10.6 The Transport Assessment that was submitted with the application looked at existing conditions, the amount of traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development, and the effect that that would have on the highway network.
- 10.7 The expected level of traffic generation is low and it is unlikely that the proposed development will significantly adversely affect the existing conditions. The queuing that occurs now will be at its worst during traditional peak periods during the morning and evening. The traffic generated by the development will be spread throughout the day and any peaks in traffic generation are unlikely to coincide with the wider morning and evening peak periods.
- 10.8 The level at which intervention is considered is an additional thirty vehicles per hour. All of the predicted levels are below this. Mitigation measures are therefore not required as part of this planning application.
- 10.9 Transport for Greater Manchester have been consulted and did not raise any

concerns about the operation of either of the junctions.

11. ECOLOGICAL ISSUES AND BIODIVERSITY

- 11.1 The application is accompanied by an updated Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey & Preliminary Ecological Impact Assessment.
- 11.2 The site is not subject to any statutory or local nature conservation designations and no on-site activity by protected species has been identified.
- 11.3 NPPF Paragraph 174(d) requires that development should minimise the impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.
- 11.4 Whilst GMEU had reservations about the baseline value of the site for the previous application, current draft guidance on net gain is that January 2020 is the cut off for determining this status. Therefore, it is considered that treating the site as brownfield is justified. Despite the present low ecological value of the site, this will be replaced primarily with buildings and hardstanding, with improved planting to the site margins.
- 11.5 80 trees are proposed around the site, 70 of which are native, along with small areas of ornamental shrubs, amenity grassland and hedges. An approximate BNG calculation has been carried out by GMEU based on the loss of 2.3ha of low ecological value habitat in poor condition with habitat creation restricted to 80 urban trees. If only small trees are planted and therefore none achieve medium size after 30 years, a significant net loss occurs. However, if 50% of the trees achieve medium size after 30 years, 10% net gain can be achieved. This would be feasible for the silver birch and wild cherry which are both relatively rapid growing species.
- 11.6 With regards to wildlife, currently the site has negligible value, but did have some value for nesting birds. It is therefore recommended that 6 bird boxes should be incorporated as mitigation/enhancement on the retained boundary trees.
- 11.7 Consequently, it is accepted that adequate mitigation and enhancement is feasible on the site and the details can be conditioned.
- 11.8 Furthermore, the Council's Trees Officer is satisfied that the submitted arboricultural details and the proposed landscaping/tree planting are all acceptable. These will be required to be implemented by means of planning condition.

12. DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

- 12.1 External public views towards the site are generally restricted to the access on Salmon Fields and from neighbouring commercial developments.
- 12.2 Both the frontage to the site and the rear boundary to Turf Lane are lined with significant nature tree planting which assists in screening the site from the surrounding area, particularly during the months when the trees are leaf.
- 12.3 In the context of neighbouring large industrial buildings, the proposed structures have a relatively low profile, rising to a maximum of two storey in height. Primary materials comprise a mix of buff brick slips and off-white cladding panels.
- 12.4 The external areas of the site will include a mix of soft landscaping and vehicle

parking/ manoeuvring areas.

- 12.5 In view of these factors and form of development is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

13. AMENITY ISSUES

- 13.1 The immediate environs have a predominantly commercial character.
- 13.2 The nearest residential properties are adjacent to Thomas Street to the north of the site at a minimum separation from the nearest proposed building (the PET CT Scanner) at a minimum distance of 50 metres.
- 13.3 Subject to conditions requiring details of the acoustic properties of plant and equipment, floodlighting, and measures to reduce potential disturbance during construction, all of which are capable of adequate mitigation, no adverse issues in respect of amenity are anticipated.

14. GROUND CONDITIONS

- 14.1 The Coal Authority (CA) has confirmed that the application site does not fall within the defined Development High Risk Coal Area and therefore there is no requirement for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be submitted. An informative note will be required to direct the developer to CA's Standing Advice.
- 14.2 The Environmental Health Officer has requested that additional landfill gas site investigation and assessment work should be undertaken as set out in the submitted Geo-environmental Appraisal. These matters are therefore subject to a planning condition.

15. DRAINAGE AND FLOODING

- 15.1 The site is identified as being situated within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's fluvial flood zone map. Similarly, the site is shown as having a low probability of pluvial (surface water) flooding.
- 15.2 A surface water drainage scheme has been submitted. This identifies feasible SUDS methods to ensure satisfactory discharge rates.
- 15.3 United Utilities is satisfied with the principles of the proposals. Therefore, there are no objections subject of approval of those details by condition.

16. CONCLUSION

- 16.1 The proposed development would involve a departure from the provisions of the development plan as it does not involve a form of development identified as appropriate within Business Employment Areas. It is nevertheless accepted that the proposal will provide substantial community benefits, whilst also providing some employment opportunities and securing the early development on the site.
- 16.2 Therefore, it is considered that the overall benefits outweigh any localised harm in

this instance.

17. 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 additional development shall commence, other than site clearance, until a site investigation and assessment in relation to ground contamination and landfill gas risk has been carried out and the consultant's report and recommendations 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 - In order to protect public safety as the site is located within 250m of a former landfill site, having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
4. In the event that ground contamination, groundwater contamination and/or ground gas are encountered on the site at any time before the development is occupied, then development shall cease and/or the development shall not be occupied until a report detailing what measures, if any, are required to remediate the land (the Remediation Strategy), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Remediation Strategy. If no contamination is found, then a post-completion report shall be submitted to evidence this. REASON - To ensure that the presence of or the potential for any contaminated land and/or groundwater is detected, and appropriate remedial action is taken in the interests of public safety having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
5. The building and/or externally mounted plant and equipment shall be insulated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is first brought into use. Any work implementing the scheme shall be completed before use commences and shall be retained at all times thereafter. The level of insulation to be provided and/or noise permitted from externally mounted machinery shall aim to be such that the rated level of noise emitted from the development is below the existing background level by at least 10dB(A). REASON - To ensure the protection of nearby premises having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
6. Any floodlighting or security lights within the curtilage of the proposed development shall be positioned and operated in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lights shall only be brought into use in accordance with the approved details. REASON - To protect the amenity of occupants of nearby premises having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
7. The drainage for the development hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with principles set out in the submitted Foul & Surface Water

Drainage Design Drawing 22-2352- 0200, Rev P1- Dated 12/2022 which was prepared by CCS Consulting. For the avoidance of doubt surface water must drain at the restricted rate of 3.2l/s. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development. REASON - To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to prevent an undue increase in surface water run-off and to reduce the risk of flooding having regard to Policy 19 of the Oldham Local Plan.

8. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until the access to the site, turning areas, and car parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved plan DAY-XX-XX-DR-A-05-20101 Rev H, and 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 access and parking spaces. Thereafter the parking spaces and turning area 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.
9. The use of the development hereby approved shall not commence until a scheme for the provision of secure cycle parking has been implemented in accordance with the approved plan Ref: 20-0102 Rev L. The facility shall remain available for all users of the development thereafter. REASON - In order to promote sustainable means of travel having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
10. 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 development. REASON - To ensure the development accords with sustainable transport policies having regard to Policy 5 of the Oldham Local Plan.
11. Prior to the commencement of the construction period, adequate wheel cleaning equipment, the details of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, shall be installed on the site. Before leaving the site all vehicles, which have travelled over a non-tarmac surface, shall use the wheel cleaning equipment provided, such that they are in such a state of cleanliness that they do not foul the highway with mud or other material. The equipment shall, for the duration of the construction works, be maintained in good working order, and shall not be removed unless approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON - Prior approval is necessary since the facility is fundamental to the initial site preparation works in the interests of highway safety having regard to Policies 5 and 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.
12. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use unless and until details of facilities for the storage and removal of refuse and waste materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved scheme has been fully implemented. Thereafter approved facilities shall at all times remain available for use. REASON - To ensure that the site is not used in a manner likely to cause nuisance to occupiers of premises in the

surrounding area having regard to Policy 9 of the Oldham Local Plan.

13. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan Ref: 7118.03 Rev C; prior to the occupation of any additional part of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed with the local planning authority. Thereafter any trees or shrubs which die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of five years from the completion of the development shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size, number and species to comply with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON - To ensure that the landscaping scheme is carried out and protected in the interests of visual amenity and to safeguard the future appearance of the area having regard to Policies 9, 20 and 21 of the Oldham Local Plan, and saved Policy D1.5 of the Unitary Development Plan.
14. Prior to the commencement of any part 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 and hedges 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 2.3 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 BS5837:2005, 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.
15. No works to trees or shrubs shall take place between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present which has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON - To ensure the protection of bird habitats, which are protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 having regard to Policy 21 of the Oldham Local Plan.

SITE LOCATION PLAN (NOT TO SCALE)

