

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

AT

**BERKSHIRE INDEPENDENT HOSPITAL
SWALLOWS CROFT
WENSLEY ROAD
COLEY PARK
READING
RG1 6UZ**

FOR

PROPOSED MRI UNIT

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
REVISION B**

INTRODUCTION

The Berkshire Independent Hospital is one of Berkshire's leading private hospitals with an excellent reputation for delivering high quality healthcare, treatments and services. The hospital, built in 1993, has 43 individual patient rooms all with en-suite facilities. By investing in advanced medical technology, the hospital offers a wide range of treatments and services. The three fully equipped theatres with a seven-bedded recovery area are particularly suitable for orthopaedic procedures offered, such as arthroscopy, hip and knee replacement, spinal discectomy. A dedicated day surgery suite is suitable for minor surgery and endoscopy. The Hospital has the following facilities:

- WIFI access, direct dial telephone, TV and radio are available in all rooms for you and your visitor's comfort.
- Meals are served in your room and comprise a superb selection of dishes, all freshly prepared.
- Ample free car parking and disabled access is also available.
- The outpatient department adjacent to the hospital has 19 consulting rooms with associated examination and treatment facilities, and a minor operating theatre.

- Large physiotherapy department
- Diagnostic facilities including X-ray, Ultrasound and MRI scanning, mobile CT scanner.
- The three fully equipped theatres with a seven-bedded recovery area

RELEVANT RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference

[PL/24/0050](#)

Application type

Full planning permission

Description

Proposed new louvres dormers, replacement louvres doors to south and north elevation to provide ventilation to existing plant room.

Decision Made Decision Approve

Received Date 15/1/2024

Decision Date 13/3/2024

App. No.:	<u>150438</u>	Site Address:	Swallows Croft Wensley Road Reading RG1 6UZ
Description:	T1 London Plane (T37 within the TPO schedule): Tip reduce secondary and tertiary branches to give a 2.5m clearance to the adjacent building. T2/T3 Lime & T4 Ash: These trees are not subject to the TPO controls. T5 Horse Chestnut (T30 within the TPO schedule): Tip reduce branches to give a 2m clearance to the adjacent building. T6 Horse Chestnut (T29 within the TPO schedule): Tip reduce branches to give a 5.5m height clearance over the adjacent access road.		
Received Date:	12/03/2015	Decision Sent Date:	12/03/2015
		Decision Date:	12/03/2015

App. No.: **141450**

Site Address: **The Berkshire
Independent Hospital,**

			Swallows Croft Wensley Road Reading Berkshire RG1 6UZ
Description:	Proposed erection of single storey CSSD facility to replace existing non-compliant facility including link corridor to main hospital building. (Retention of existing installation constructed under planning permission reference 09/01432/FUL).		
Received Date:	09/09/2014	Decision Sent Date:	04/11/2014
		Decision Date:	04/11/2014

App. No.:	<u>120086</u>	Site Address:	Berkshire Independent Hospital Wensley Road Reading RG1 6UZ
Description:	Insertion of two external doors for boiler enclosure in existing hospital building		
Received Date:	17/02/2012	Decision Sent Date:	02/04/2012
		Decision Date:	02/04/2012

PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICE

A Pre-Planning application was made to Reading Borough Council and Level 2 Pre-application Advice was received from the Council dated 30th January 2025

Reference No. 24/1550

Case Officer – Nathalie Weekes

BACKGROUND

Berkshire Independent Hospital has been established since 1993 and has built up a strong local reputation as a quality healthcare provider, serving the local community effectively and enhancing local NHS Trust services. It provides a large range of facilities to acute surgical and medical patients, both private and those referred by the NHS.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Berkshire Independent Hospital has Coley Park House/Coley Park lodge, Coley Avenue listed as a Grade 2 Listed Building, 1113457 list entry first listed on 14th December 1978, set in extensive grounds at the end of a private drive, and the proposed extension would be in keeping with the existing Berkshire Independent Hospital, particular in relation to the proposed materials. The modular building proposed is approximately 50m in distance away, on the more modern Royal Berkshire hospital block rather attached to the listed building. as such the proposal for a new MRI Unit should not have any potential to impact on the listed building as it would be far enough away to be minimal.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The objective of the Reading Local Plan 2019 is to improve the quality of life for those living in Reading, with good access to healthcare services. The provision of this additional health care service would provide a great benefit to the local community and the new MRI unit is needed for the clinical needs of the hospital providing a vital service to help mitigate the extensive waiting lists for this type of scanning procedure within the reading area and beyond and would be a gain to the local community.

The objective of the Reading Local Plan 2019 is to improve the quality of life for those living in Reading, with good access to healthcare services. The provision of this additional health care services would provide a great benefit to the local community and the MRI unit is needed for the clinical needs of the hospital subject to a number of considerations set out within the Local Plan as set out below.

The social benefits would be enormous to the local community as the ever-increasing demand for MRI scans is expanding at a vast rate and this type of facility is now essential to its healthcare service to the local community that this is corrected by the provision of a replacement new MRI Scanner on site to help mitigate the extensive waiting lists for this type of scanning procedure which are at an all-time high.

The design is a ground floor extension with a parapet roof. Positioned at the front of the Royal Berkshire Hospital building, the proposed development will draw focus minimally away from the existing duality of the front of the hospital. A modular building is proposed but it has the appearance of a 'portacabin' with covered similar coloured materials.

The proposed modular unit should not we feel look out of context within its setting, in front of the symmetry of the existing main building. The brick slips to match the colour and texture of the existing brickwork on the building to be more in keeping with the existing building and to offset the difference in design to the front elevation of the Berkshire Independent Hospital.

This application supports Reading Borough Local Development plans and Core Strategy Documents in relation to location of community facilities on single sites where possible; in relation to sustainable development providing facilities designed to adapt to climate change; and in relation to providing access via public transport, walking, cycling and appropriate car parking facilities. The hospital is well served by public transport with regular bus services and stops close to its main entrance. The hospital also provides a car park, and surface level car parking for patients and visitor. The hospital provides cycle storage facilities at a number of locations throughout the hospital. The hospital's location adjoining the Listed building require that any developments should not detract from the character of that area, and seek to enhance it by sensitive building design and landscaping proposals. The proposals for these new facilities also reflect the Planning Policy on Service Provision. The Hospital emphasis is on developing efficient patient focused services to meet growing demands. The provision of replacement MRI scanning facilities achieves this by: • Replacing current sub-standard facilities • providing more efficient facilities to increase capacity and decrease the need for repeated patient visits caused by inadequate space for required assessments. The provision of a new MRI unit linked to the existing Hospital building will: • Increase the number and quality MRI scans to meet growing demand. • Enhance the patient's quality of care

PROPOSAL DETAILS

The proposals on which we seek planning approval relate to the delivery of and installation of a purpose- built modular MRI unit at ground floor level constructed at the front of the Hospital sat on a concrete plinth sited on the existing car parking area, with a single storey link corridor extension connecting the existing Out Patients Department within the main hospital to the modular unit via the existing double external door opening. This is the ideal location for such a unit adjacent OPD dept.

This new MRI Unit will replace the existing old MRI facility which is housed in the Listed Mansion building with the new unit being attached to the existing Hospital's Radiology department thus avoiding the need for patients to travel outside to the mansion building for these scans.

This purpose-built unit will be clad in brick slips to match the existing building and to all extensive purposes will be similar to that of a permanent building solution.

The existing external ramp handrails are to be removed, all as shown on the enclosed drawings.

There will be a new galvanised mild steel keyclamp type handrail installed in front of the two doors at the front of the proposed building. See Proposed elevation drawing.

This unit has a floor area of approximately 60.0 m2 internal gross area and overall

area of 64.0 m² gross external including the link corridor.

There will be an integral plant room within this unit.

Four existing car parking spaces will be lost with this proposal.

The site has the following number of existing/proposed car parking spaces

Existing 111 bays + 6 Disabled, Proposed 107 bays + 6 Disabled.

STATEMENT OF NEED

With the ever-increasing demand for MRI scans expanding, & due to its success in building up business, it is now essential to its healthcare service to the local community that this is corrected by the provision of a replacement new MRI Scanner on site to help mitigate the extensive waiting lists for this type of scanning procedure.

There will be 2 No. additional staff required for this proposal.

There will be a max 3 patients on site at any one time, one in exam room, one in change, one waiting. Hours of use will be 08.00 to 20.00 Monday to Friday, awaiting confirmation on the number of scans per day – this will be an average. The number of patient visitors should technically be no more than provided by the existing MRI facility within the mansion building.

DESIGN

The proposed new MRI Unit will consist a pre-fabricated modular unit sat on a concrete plinth designed by structural engineer all as shown on the attached planning drawings.

Construction details of the above are as follows:

1. The construction of a single storey link corridor extension to the main hospital building comprising brick slip clad timber framed/insulated link to match the existing brickwork on the main building with a flat roof area to form a parapet wall complete with pressed metal capping. White upvc window in side elevation to match existing windows. Flat roof area to be a light grey single membrane roof covering.

2. The modular unit will be constructed as follows:

80mm composite panels consisting of two 12mm layers of ply with a 30mm insulated foam layer. The external surface will be a 1mm layer of GRP with a brick slip outer

face to match existing brickwork on the main Hospital building and the inner layer will be a 1mm coloured laminate.

80 mm composite insulated roof panel with non-slip top surface, coloured white.

3. Various internal layout modifications to improve clinical/medical efficiencies and ancillary staff facilities to form new sub-wait and changing area.

External quench pipe as shown on the elevations.

Brick slip 'Eurobrick' Installation Guide enclosed. These brick slips will be chosen to match the brickwork on the existing building as closely as possible so as to blend in entirely to cover all possible external wall surfaces.

There will be a new galvanised mild steel keyclamp type handrail installed in front of the two doors at the front of the proposed building. See Proposed elevation drawing

No additional external lighting will be required, the existing lighting will suffice.

NOISE ATTENUATION

The new plant will be designed to not exceed any existing sound level readings taken at the existing boundaries and will be fully noise attenuated to ensure that when the development is completed the noise levels will be in accordance with the statutory standards. Noise assessment will be prepared.

TREES

Tree protection fencing will be installed around any existing trees within the close proximity to the proposed MRI Unit to avoid any damage, which should only be the existing Lime tree opposite but will meet the criteria set out in the Arboricultural Method Statement.

BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

It is our understanding that the proposed installation of an MRI modular unit linked to the existing hospital building is exempt from the requirement to increase onsite Biodiversity introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' (BNG) in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.

The exemption is because the proposal is subject to the de minimis exemption.

This development is exempt in this instance due to;

- *“the development is not impacting any onsite priority habitat; and*
- *There is an impact on other onsite habitat, however, this impact is less than 25 square metres (e.g. less than a 5m by 5m square) of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero and on less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat (such as a hedgerow).”*

The habitat impacted by this proposal is the partial removal of a small non-native managed shrub planted adjacent to carparking and so doesn't qualify for the priority habitat definition of a Hedgerow within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan;

“A hedgerow is defined as any boundary line of trees or shrubs over 20m long and less than 5m wide, and where any gaps between the trees or shrub species are less than 20m wide (Bickmore, 2002). Any bank, wall, ditch or tree within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow is considered to be part of the hedgerow habitat, as is the herbaceous vegetation within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow. All hedgerows consisting predominantly (i.e. 80% or more cover) of at least one woody UK native species are covered by this priority habitat”

The proposed partial removals on site totals less than 25 square meters specified and are also less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat removal.

Due to these points and from our understanding of the BNG metric this proposal constitutes a development where there is only a de minimis impact on other onsite habitat and so to ensure biodiversity net gain is applied proportionally there is no requirement to increase onsite habitats by the mandatory 10% net gain in this instance.

Finally it is proposed, as stated in the design & access statement that an equivalent area of native shrubs are to be replanted after completion of the works.

An Arboricultural Impact assessment/statement will be prepared as the site is located on a Green Link Policy EN12.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

We note the requirements of Policy CC2 & CC3 of the Local Plan to ensure that proposed development incorporate measures to adapt to climate change through the design of buildings and that site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

Ramsay Healthcare UK Limited has a commitment to continuous improvement in its sustainability performance by wherever possible implementing the following to minimise environmental impact, refer to Ramsay Health Care UK Social Impact Report 2025 copy attached.

Energy Efficiency - Utilising renewable energy sources by incorporating solar panels on the roof of the MRI unit and reducing energy consumption by use of energy efficient LED lighting systems etc. Including for an extensive maintenance programme to ensure all equipment/fittings are operating efficiently.

Waste Management - Implementing waste reduction measures with recycling programmes to minimise landfill waste.

Water Conservation - Reduction of water consumption by use of electrically operated sensor type taps to wash hand basins and use of dual flush toilets etc using less water. Promoting visitors, patients and staff to use water responsibly.

Transport - Supporting sustainable transport options for staff etc within the Hospital Travel Plan, use of buses/cycles etc where practicable.

Sustainable Sourcing - Sourcing of products/materials from sustainable and ethical suppliers.

Re-Use - The advantage of this type of modular construction is being constructed in close factory environment closer controls are kept on the use of materials therefore much less waste during construction and better use of resources in terms of energy use compared to traditional build methods. Also, this type of unit can be re-used on other sites as and when required therefore the sustainability of this type of unit is good.

Rainwater - There will be no increase in rainwater run off as the MRI unit sits on an existing hard surface car parking area with the same run off area.

The proposed MRI extension will meet the requirements of Building Regs Approved Document L2, and will aim to achieve a BREEAM 'very good' standard as a minimum.

The proposed new MRI Unit will be assessed against the criteria set out in the New Construction scheme and the developments are both targeting a rating of 'Excellent'. The following key criteria have influenced the building design and development of specifications The proposed development is part of the Berkshire Independent Hospital's continuing focus to provide improved patient services to meet the growing demands of the local community The documentation provided at building handover will include a Building User Guide, provided in a format appropriate to all users of the building. The Guide will cover all functions and uses of the buildings and will be written to ensure all building users are able to use the building effectively. All building users must understand the need for occupant management of the mechanical and electrical building services systems to provide maximum comfort and minimise energy use. Commissioning of all mechanical & electrical building services systems will be carried out in line with current Codes of Practice and Building Regulations, BSRIA, HBN's, HTM's, British Standards and CIBSE guidelines and other appropriate standards. Seasonal commissioning will be undertaken 12 months after the building has been handed over and is occupied (defects liability period). Any noise, dirt and dust generated through construction activities will be controlled in accordance with the Contractors method statements. The Contractors will be required to operate an EMSI/ISO 14001 Environmental checklist for the Prevention of

Pollution. Energy and water consumption arising from construction activities will be metered and recorded. Transportation of materials and waste to/from the site will be measured and recorded. Excavated material will be re-used on site as 'fill', wherever possible, to reduce off-site disposal. All timber used on the site will be sourced forest stewardship scheme certified

Washable floor finishes to heavily trafficked areas, kick plates, bollards, corridors walls etc, will be specified to severe duty. External walls will be constructed from robust and durable materials. Access for maintenance of the building and mechanical & electrical services will be carried out by the Hospitals team/specialists as required.

TRANSPORT STATEMENT

The existing car parking and pedestrian route into the Hospital should not be affected as the proposed footprint of the MRI Unit will be no more than if cars were parked in the existing four car parking spaces.

Four existing car parking spaces will be lost with this proposal.

The site has the following number of existing/proposed car parking spaces

Existing 111 bays + 6 Disabled, Proposed 107 bays + 6 Disabled.

The access doors opening onto this route will be for periodical access into plant and tech rooms for maintenance purposes only and would be by certified maintenance engineers only as and when required.

All patients using this new MRI facility will access and exit the new unit via the existing Radiology/out patient department of the main Hospital and via the main Hospital entrance, patients will not be exiting via any external doors, and will not be walking out into vehicle paths. There will be a new galvanised mild steel keyclamp type handrail installed in front of the two doors at the front of the proposed building. See Proposed elevation drawing

There will obviously be a diversion in place around the building site area whilst the construction of this new unit takes place but this should be a much quicker timescale due the fact that the MRI Unit is modular and that most of the construction process would have been carried out in the factory prior to delivery to site, this is a fairly standard way of providing specialist accommodation in Hospitals generally.

ACCESS

Access to the hospital itself for members of the public/patients will remain via the existing main hospital entrance which is fully disabled-user compliant.

The proposals included within this planning application will not impact adversely on the existing infrastructure of the hospital, and none of the Building Regulation compliant building entrances will be affected.

PHOTOS



VIEW OF PROPOSED AREA FRONT SOUTH ELEVATION



VIEW OF PROPOSED AREA FRONT SOUTH ELEVATION



PHOTO OF ANOTHER HOSPITAL SHOWING THE TYPE OF BRICK SLIP
EFFECT WHICH WILL BE ACHIEVED FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT
NOTE: COLOUR & TYPE OF BRICK SLIP TO BE APPROVED BY LOCAL
PLANNING AUTHORITY VIA PLANNING CONDITION

HALL NEEDHAM LIMITED
6738/FP/DAAS/HNL
FEBRUARY 2025
REVISION B