

Northern Care Alliance – NHS Foundation Trust

Installation of Temporary Car Park at Fairfield Hospital

Planning Addendum

Reference: 70979

1 | 4th September 2024

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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1. Introduction

This planning addendum has been prepared by Ove Arup and Partners Ltd (Arup) on behalf of the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust in response to the comments received by neighbours and general queries from the Local Planning Authority regarding planning application no 70979. The aim is to provide further information and clarity to respond to concerns raised, and to outline the client's position with regard to parking need. This addendum shall focus upon the following:

- Provision of further information to respond to the questions and concerns raised by neighbours in their initial correspondence.
- A response from the Trust outlining the situation with regard to EV charging.
- Confirmation of temporary period.

2. Background.

Parking at the Fairfield Hospital site has been a long-standing issue for the Trust, including on street with the site, and the neighbouring area outside of the boundaries of the residential permit area. Restricted development space on the site and a paucity of capital investment have also contributed to the problems at hand. The Trust has and continues to explore alternative options for the site to alleviate parking such as offsite staff parking in Bury with a shuttle service, but this has been hampered by a lack of a suitable location and again further investment. Another solution that has been and continues to be explored is the removal of non-essential administration services to offsite locations, though to date this has not proved to be successful.

The need for extra parking at Fairfield Hospital was again brought to the attention of the Trust by Ward Councillors in 2021 and as noted previously, the Trust continues to explore options to address this concern. The recent demolition of the former redundant nursing home has presented the opportunity to begin to alleviate the immediate problems being experienced by the site, providing much needed space for additional staff parking provision within the hospital. The lack of parking has had the knock-on effect of causing on-street parking within the site, which is often on double yellow lines and has created problems for safe pedestrian circulation and blue light access around the site. Although the Trust encourages working from home and agile working the Hospital has seen an increase in the capacity of health care facilities and outpatient visits which in turn have contributed to the pressure of limited car parking spaces within the existing hospital grounds. As a direct result the hospital is also experiencing up to a 30% of DNA's for outpatient appointments (Did Not Attend). This has largely been attributed to the lack of staff parking who will then access and use the patient and visitor car parks when they cannot locate a space on the staff car parks, resulting in further knock-on effects concerning care, resourcing and the day-to-day function of the hospital. This has all prompted the opportunity for the development of a temporary car park, whilst the Trust continues to seek alternative options and significant investment to alleviate the long-term problem.

The planning application seeks to regularise the development of a temporary car park with 97 spaces located on the footprint of the now demolished nurses' accommodation. Two car parks already exist adjacent to the application site directly to the north and south. The proposal effectively in-fills the area in between the existing car parks (see figures 1 and 2 below).



Figure 1 showing a birds' eye photograph of the current area.

Figure 1 denotes the layout of the application site and the surrounding area. The proposed temporary car park extent is outlined in red, the existing car parks to the north and the south are outlined in blue and the areas that will be landscaped are outlined in green. The area in between the proposed temporary car park and the existing car park to the north have stairs installed to connect the 2 areas due to the differing topographic levels.

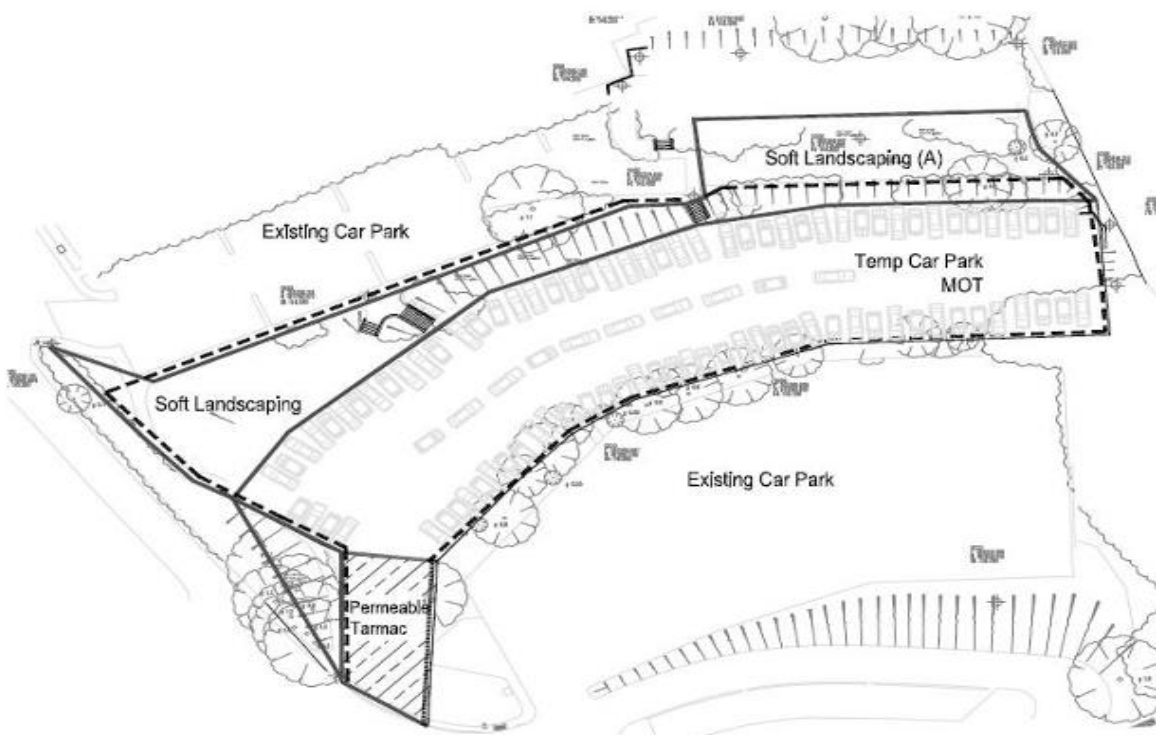


Figure 2 showing the site plan for the temporary car park

Figure 3 showing light level impact zone from new lighting columns.

3.2 Noise Pollution

Concerns have been raised by neighbours relating to a perceived increase in noise levels.

Existing background noise levels in and around the site are typically as a result of road vehicle movements on Rochdale Old Road, sound from the operation of equipment at the hospital itself, and some sound from low speed road vehicle movements within the existing car park. The question to address here is whether sound created from the proposed temporary car park would impact existing noise levels.

The proposed temporary car park would, as mentioned above, only be available to staff members who would be primarily shift workers. As such the majority of sound would be generated by staff parking their cars at the beginning of their shift and returning at the end of their shift to leave. In addition to this, cars manoeuvring the site will be driving at low speeds thereby producing low levels of noise which are unlikely to be significantly higher than at present. Noise from comings and goings would be intermittent and would effectively blend in with existing noise levels in this location.

The location of the additional car parking spaces would be further away than the existing upper car park, and would be expected to contribute less sound to nearby residences than movements at the existing car park. The proposed temporary car park would also be at a lower level resulting in a slight instance of natural attenuation. As such, the additional comings and goings of cars and people to the car park would expect to have a minimal contribution to noise in respect of what the existing conditions are.

3.3 Air Pollution

Although there will be an increase in vehicles to this area, the vehicles would not be active for extended periods of time and as such, air pollution would not significantly increase.

3.4 Security and Anti-Social behaviour

As outlined in the Crime Impact Statement of section 7 of the Planning Statement:

The site is located within the Fairfield General Hospital ground. Given the nature of the development, minimising car crime and threats to staff and visitors' personal safety is crucial. The location of the temporary car park has good natural surveillance from the surrounding footpaths, dwellings and roads along its northern and western boundaries. The site also has heavy vegetations to the east which blocks entry from outside the hospital. The southern boundary of the site is immediately adjacent to an existing car park, where the installation of the temporary car park will not significantly alter the features or setting of the area, whilst natural surveillance from the south will be enhanced by a new access next to the existing access of this large car park.

The development includes visually permeable boundary treatments along with 5no. high lighting columns. The Lighting Scheme shows the proposed lighting design will provide appropriate levels of lighting across the site aiding visibility and reducing fear of crime. Site security regularly patrol the site and the site will be within view of existing CCTV cameras on site.

Although a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour is not a planning matter, the Trust is committed to tackling any instances that occur within the hospital grounds. In any case, the installation of a new temporary car park in this location will likely not increase instances of anti-social behaviour.

3.5 Privacy Issues

It is considered that the installation of the proposed temporary car park will not give rise to any privacy issues. The application site is positioned approximately 40-50m from the rear of the dwellings on Rochdale Old Road and therefore further away and at a lower level than the existing upper car park to the north. Screening exists in the form of vegetation and garden fences and additional screening will be installed in the form of 5no trees to the north-east corner. The new path and stairs would be located in between the existing

upper car park and the proposed temporary car park for access between and due to the differing levels, and would not be on the boundary with neighbouring properties.

3.6 Biodiversity Net Gain

The requirement of BNG was sought prior to submission from correspondence with the Local Planning Authority who confirmed that retrospective applications are exempt from BNG. At the time of writing, BNG still does not apply to retrospective planning applications as set out in Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the BNG PPG.

Notwithstanding this, there will be 5no trees planted to the northeast of the site that will enhance biodiversity and the overall setting. The Trust do not presently have details of the type of tree that will be planted, but are happy for this to be conditioned.

4. EV Charging.

With regard to the installation of EV charging, the recently adopted Places for Everyone joint development plan supports EV charging points where achievable.

However, the site has limited incoming power supply off the high voltage grid and the Trust are presently nearing their upper limits of capacity for the site to operate safely.

There is a secondary issue which the Trust are also dealing with currently in terms of upgrading the ageing electrical infrastructure on the site, replacing older generators and electrical switchgear with new and uprated equipment. The Trust are currently concluding Phase 1 of a multiphase program which will see new equipment installed to protect the main hospital site (A&E, Heartcare, Theatres, ICU etc) and then The Trust will be moving into Phase 2 which will see the infrastructure supporting other non-clinical buildings on the site being upgraded as well. The investment required to complete these works is circa £5 million once complete and in the anticipation that the high voltage grid will be improved, the Trust will then be looking to install a number of additional EV points across the site. Another option the Trust is exploring is the use of solar panels to support EV charging, but this is still very much at the exploratory stage.

As such, EV charging points on the temporary car park are neither feasible or viable at this time, but as outlined above, the Trust has every intention of installing them across the site following Phase 2 of the programme.

5. Temporary Use Period

The Trust intends to maintain the temporary car park for up to 5 years whilst alternative parking strategies and facilities are explored elsewhere on site.

6. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, it is considered that the proposed temporary car park would not give rise or alleviate any of the concerns raised though consultation. The car park is needed to alleviate parking pressures within the hospital grounds and reduce DNA's thereby supporting healthcare. The proposal is non-intrusive being located between two existing car parks and will provide benefits for the long-term operation of the hospital.

