

## **The Royal Hospital for Sick Children – Public Consultation Overview**

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The third public exhibition was held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at St Catherine's Argyle Church of Scotland, 61- 63 Grange Road, Edinburgh between 2.30pm and 7.30pm. The public exhibition was advertised in Edinburgh Evening News on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

142 people attended over the course of the day. Attendees included Cllr Cameron Rose, Daniel Johnson MSP, members of Marchmont & Sciennes Community Council, members of Grange & Prestonfield Community Council and representatives of the Marchmont & Sciennes Development Trust.

Further to the event itself both the Exhibition Boards and 3D model were placed on public display within the Amnesty Bookshop, 12 Roseneath Street, Edinburgh between Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February. This afforded interested parties a further opportunity to view the proposals and provide feedback to Downing.

The consultation period closed on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. A total of 68 feedback forms were received - either completed at the public exhibition or submitted subsequently by post or email.

A summary of the key issues raised is provided below:

### **Which Aspect of the Proposal do you like?**

Responses continue to indicate clear support for the retention/refurbishment of the Main Hospital and existing terraces on Millerfield Place / Rillbank Terrace (x23), and the provision of the pedestrian/cycle thoroughfare through the site (x21).

The decision to remove all car parking from the front of the Main Hospital building and create a “memorial garden” has been viewed positively (x13), similarly the overall approach to the provision of public space, green spaces and landscaping (x11).

The intended approach to mortuary chapel i.e. public access / retention of murals continues to be viewed positively (x9).

### **Which Aspect of the Proposal do you dislike?**

The proposed height and massing of the student accommodation and its relationship with existing properties on Sylvan Place remains the main primary focus of concern (x 22).

As with Public Exhibition 2, the number of student beds proposed by the development (x12) and the number of purpose-built student housing developments within the area (x8) are also issues of concern.

The general approach to design of the new build elements has generated various comments, the main thrust of this feedback relates to the “blocky” design and its relationship with the existing area (x9).

The proposals for the corner block at Sylvan Place / Rillbank Crescent and provision of affordable housing on Sylvan Place resulted in a variety of comments, the general theme underpinning feedback being the relationship with adjacent properties and the wider character of the area.

A range of comments relating to parking provision were again received, the most commonly expressed view being that there is inadequate parking provision to serve the development and this will increase parking pressures in the immediate area (x8).

The potential provision of a retail unit at the corner of Sciennes Road/Sylvan Place and resulting impact on existing retail premises in the area has also been raised by some as a concern (x7).

### **Suggestions Regarding the Proposed Development**

A wide and varied range of suggestions have been received. In line with the key points of concern outlined above, many of the suggestions relate to the relationship between the 'new-build' elements and Sylvan Place, and the size of the student accommodation block.

Suggestions include a general reduction in height of the new build elements (x8) and an increased set-back from Sylvan Place. Additional responses suggest a specific reduction in the height of the student accommodation (x4) and a reduction in the number of student beds (x3).

Further suggestions include the provision of more affordable housing at the expense of student housing (x7), the provision of community space instead of retail provision (x4), the need for additional/more accessible refuse storage (x3), the provision of space for use by Sciennes Primary School (x3), and an increased use of stone throughout the development (x3)

### **Any Other Comments**

A wide range of feedback has been received covering most aspects of the development e.g. its relationship with Sylvan Place, construction management arrangements, scale and design of new-build elements, public realm proposals, transport/parking matters, implications for existing services/infrastructure and inclusion of community facilities (e.g. healthcare, space for school).

**A full list of all comments received in response to Public Exhibition 3 is provided below**

### WHICH ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL DO YOU LIKE?

1. Retention/reinstatement of Main Hospital Building and Millerfield/Rillbank terraces (x23)
2. Pedestrian/Cycle thoroughfare through site (x21)
3. Removal of parking at front of main hospital building / replacement with memorial garden (x13)
4. Proposed public spaces/green space/gardens/tree planting/landscaping (x11)
5. Retention of / access to mortuary chapel (x9)
6. Affordable housing provision on-site (x7)
7. All changes from Public Exhibition 2 are in the right direction / steps taken to reduce height and impact of student block on Sylvan Place (x4)

The mix of housing types proposed (x4)

Removal of parking between Millerfield Place / Rillbank Terrace (x4)

Spacious / open feel to proposals (x4)

8. Opportunity to refresh the area, bring more interest, tidy up the site, improve it for present and future residents (x3)

Removal of parking at front of main hospital building will assist School's proposals to close Sciennes Road (x3)

Proposed use of stone (x3)

Lowering of elevation of student accommodation block on Sylvan Place / mass of student accommodation is reduced and more appropriate than last exhibition (x3)

Underground parking provision (x3)

Idea of community space / potential provision of community space (x3)

The fact that a mixed-use development is proposed (x3)

9. Proposals are sympathetic to the site (x2), quite restrained considering what might have been suggested

Extent of cycle parking provision (x2)

Welcome fact that public feedback has been taken onboard and changes made (x2)

10. Entrance to new accommodation at the top of Sylvan Place from Rillbank Terrace

Provision of new housing opportunities in the Meadows area

Respecting roof heights of the existing buildings (other than Main Sick Kids Building)

Increased use of pitched rather than flat roofs

Poor quality later buildings will be replaced with housing

Reduction of parking across the site

Provision of student accommodation (will relieve pressure on Marchmont)

Lack of windows facing onto Sylvan Place on top level of student accommodation

Demolition of less attractive additions to original hospital

Keeping areas of the site car-free

Not having offices as part of the proposal

Location of affordable housing

### WHICH ASPECT OF THE PROPOSAL DO YOU DISLIKE?

#### **Student Housing Related**

1. Height/ Massing of student accommodation (22) – still too high in relation to properties opposite on Sylvan Place / does not respond to drop down from tenement to terrace on opposite side of Sylvan Place (x2) / potential to overlook and overshadow / impact on privacy of existing properties
2. The Large number of student housing units proposed (x12)
3. Already too many purpose built student housing blocks in the area / additional provision is unnecessary (x8)
4. Exhibition boards indicate that student accommodation has been reduced in height by 2.7m when only sections of the building have been subject to such a reduction. Overall height and resulting impact remains as per the proposal presented at Public Exhibition 2. (x3)
5. Height of student accommodation does not sit well with shape of upper storey of west wing of hospital building (x2)

Do not believe that students will not have cars (x2)

Space allocated for student accommodation still too much / balance between student accommodation and mainstream housing (x2)

6. Not appropriate to place high density student accommodation on such a narrow street at such short distance from a primary school

Principle of student housing is inappropriate for historic conservation area which is owner-occupied – owner occupation essential for maintaining/preserving character for future generations. Properties in Sylvan Place demonstrate that residents are not a “passing community”

Height of student accommodation impacts upon terraced buildings on west-side of Rillbank Terrace and proposed affordable housing

Question the long-term viability of student housing – what else can be done with student housing if students no longer flock to Edinburgh?

Students cause litter and noise issues

Lack of outside/amenity space associated to student accommodation

Student block remains higher than comparable student accommodation nearby

### **Corner of Sylvan Place / Rillbank Crescent**

1. Design of corner block on Sylvan Place / Rillbank doesn't blend in with other end blocks along route (x3)
2. Height of the proposed building at corner of Sylvan/Rillbank (x3) – visual incongruity with its neighbours on Sylvan Place, dormer storey is higher than top of the opposite terrace. Scale of street should be respected rather than a size based on general area

Flat roof design of corner block at Sylvan Place / Rillbank Crescent (2)

Demolition of corner block at Sylvan Place / Rillbank Crescent (x2)

3. Elevation of corner block on Sylvan Place /Rillbank Crescent is out of keeping with surrounds, require sloping roofs and 3 columns of windows rather than 2

Demolition of existing block affects views from Meadows

Lack of details of appearance of north face of corner block on Sylvan Place / Rillbank Crescent

### **Affordable Housing Related**

1. Higher proportion of social housing required – less student accommodation (x4)
2. Design of affordable housing does not reflect character of existing housing on west side of Sylvan Place, particularly in relation to height. 4 floors + dormer proposed compared to two floors opposite. Will overlook and impact upon privacy / reduce daylight. Design does not reflect common architectural features in comparable streets. Intrusiveness of new build exacerbated by narrowness of Sylvan Place, not enough set back provided, consequently linear distance from new build windows to existing Windows on Sylvan Place will be barely 12 metres – in violation of planning regulations (x2)

Not enough affordable housing – should be greater than minimum requirement, more family affordable housing required instead of 1 and 2-bedroom properties (x2)

3. Uncertainty about quality of affordable housing, needs to be high quality in keeping with the area

Design of affordable housing block is dull and too dense, more space should be given to it

Inadequate/badly located refuse arrangements, resulting impact on immediate area

### General Design

1. Utilitarian / Unimaginative / Blocky / Box / Squat design of new build elements, should be softer/more sympathetic to surrounding area, do not “enhance the area” (x9)
2. Materials used in new build elements need to be in keeping with adjacent listed buildings and conservation area i.e. stone not brick (x4)
3. New build on Sylvan Place does not “step down” from north-south as per buildings opposite (x2)  
  
Use of Zinc / massing of Zinc roof not in keeping with listed buildings (x2)
4. Proposed materials will not wear well  
  
Lack of roof garden provision

### Parking / Traffic Related

1. Inadequate parking provision. Parking no’s insufficient to serve the no of residents proposed who will use existing permit holder spaces / additional pressures (x8)
2. Increased traffic / parking pressure arising from development (x2)  
  
Cycle parking provision appears limited given the number of beds and the location (x2)  
  
Parking pressures arising from tourist lets outside term time(x2)
3. Proposed location of underground cycle parking – any cyclist entering/exiting will have to go through the whole length of underground car park, dodging cars at busy times. Better to have cycle parking nearer the car park entrance  
  
Too much space for cars provided  
  
Visitor cycle parking needs to be clearly identified

### Retail / Commercial Related

1. Potential provision of retail space at corner of Sylvan Place/Sciennes Road (x7) – impact on existing retail in the area where there are already vacant units, concern re: loading/unloading of deliveries blocking the road, impacting on safe route to school, implications for blocking up of Sciennes Road
2. Lack of retail space

Commercial proposals rather vague

## **Public Realm Related**

1. Levels difference within public realm – potential impact on its function, dangerous to young and old people e.g. wheelchair users, pushchairs, unacceptable for cyclists (x2)
2. Landscaping is too angular and not in keeping with Victorian Style

No provision for children's play area

Landscaping design is "boring" – too much paving

Memorial Garden is "pointless"

## **Local Services / Infrastructure**

1. Concern re: impact of additional people generated by the development upon local services/infrastructure (x3)
2. Sciennes Primary and Gillespies High already full – where will extra children go to school and how will they be accommodated in local schools? (x2)
3. The numbers of new flats and the impact of this upon neighbourhood

## **Community Bid / Community Facility**

1. Community ownership bid not taken seriously

No clear answer re: community facility

## **General Comments**

1. NHS "sold out" and "asset stripped"

Would have preferred mix of uses to include a health centre

Not enough environmental measures – more electric car charging points, underground bins

Lack of provision of street views from the South of Sylvan Place, provide additional section analysis, three-dimensional street view (Board 2) is poorly drawn and misleading

### THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WERE MADE:

#### **Sylvan Place Related**

1. Reduce scale of new-build elements on Sylvan Place – reduce height (x8), increase set-back (x7)
2. New build elements on Sylvan Place should reflect height of existing buildings opposite (x2)
3. Redesign Sylvan Place with greater emphasis/understanding of Edinburgh skylines – development will “darken the landscape”

Widen Sylvan Place

Reduce number of windows facing onto Sylvan Place to protect privacy of existing residents

Final proposals to include three dimensional views from all directions of Sylvan Place

#### **Student Housing Related**

1. Further reduce height of student accommodation block (x4)
2. Reduce no of student beds proposed (x3)

Design of student housing must be “future proofed” for use as domestic housing in the future in response to changing market demands

Break up frontage of student accommodation to improve massing and maximise light both for student accommodation and existing housing

Enforce no parking permits to students

Bin stores poorly located – will result in students using existing bins in area, increase litter etc

Why do we need more purpose-built student housing / area is already saturated?

More mainstream housing less student housing

#### **Affordable Housing Related**

1. More affordable housing less student housing (x7)
2. Bin provision for affordable housing looks inadequate and inaccessible / will lead to pressure on surrounding area bins / needs to be reconsidered (x3)
3. Replace proposed student block with affordable housing (x2)  
Include sheltered housing in addition to affordable housing (x2)
4. Reduce height of affordable housing by one floor

Redesign dormer windows on affordable to face rear of property

Amount of affordable housing appears minimal, if feasible it should not only be separate new build but integrated throughout the accommodation and available in the restored historic area. If not feasible, then a smaller and more interestingly designed group of affordable or sheltered housing in place of the student block would be an innovative feature

Set back affordable housing block by at least 5 metres from the existing line of hospital buildings

Build mews-style houses with their backs directly to the boundary wall in Sylvan Place, with no windows facing out onto Sylvan Place

Small block to rear of affordable housing, whilst adding some housing, reduces the limited back green provided. Should be removed.

Cycle provision for affordable housing looks inadequate and inaccessible

### **Parking Related**

1. Provide more parking spaces / increase underground parking area (x6)
2. More bike storage required

### **Retail / Commercial Related**

1. Avoid retail use which would damage/compete with existing good choice of local shops (x4)
2. Small retail units required

The idea of a retail facility at corner of Sylvan / Sciennes is a good one

### **Community Use / Sciennes PS Related**

1. Provision of community space not retail/commercial provision at corner of Sylvan PI /Sciennes Rd (x4)
2. How can the needs of Sciennes PS be accommodated – can they access some space within the site? (x3)
3. Lost opportunity in lack of provision of clinic/medical facilities/primary care which are much needed and provide continuity from the service provided by hospital (x2)
4. Given past use of site, much greater emphasis on affordable housing, community activity, health and welfare use, and sheltered housing should be included in final development plans.

Is “Good Neighbour” assistance being given to Sciennes PS to assist with closure of Sciennes Rd?

If proposals for community space do not progress, then preference for additional residential rather than retail/commercial at corner of Sylvan Pl / Sciennes Rd

Definite provision of community space

Area is lacking community space – this could also be also be a facility for student housing

Provision of studio/artistic spaces could benefit students and creative bodies

Use Mortuary Chapel as community hub – possibly a café?

Help Sciennes PS extend its playground by closing Sciennes Road to motorised traffic in front of school

Could the potential community space be used for After School or other School clubs?

Incorporate facilities for community /school use into project

Having a hall available for community use will help bring the development into the wider community / a very positive idea

### **Public Realm / Landscaping / Open Space Related**

1. More “green” space within landscaping proposals / across the development (x3)
2. Need to ensure community garden / public spaces are attractive and usable – plans do not suggest that is the case

Provide tree planting between Sylvan Place footpath and Student Block

Perplexed by ‘Private Terrace’ ‘Semi Private Terrace’ to front of Main Hospital Building adjacent to Sciennes Road – should be removed and areas turned over to Memorial Garden

More open spaces, play areas, back greens for washing lines

Are there sufficient trees planned?

Provide an easy to use cycle route through the site from north to south

Reconsider small area between Student and Affordable blocks – who has access to it?

Provide ample signage for cyclists to ensure existing cycle routes rather than pedestrian paths are used

Incorporate smooth cycle lanes into the development

### General Design / Materials

1. Increase the use of stone (x3)

Design of new buildings still appears relatively high and solid / more variation in building height required / break-up right angles of “blocky” design (x3)

2. Lighter and more varied materials should be utilised (x2)

3. Increase set back from Sciennes Road e.g. in line with hospital to give more open aspect

Additional detail on finish / heights required to understand relationship to adjacent properties

New build elements should respect the style of listed buildings, such as the Sick Kids, by adopting a style that coexists with the existing buildings. Avoid ruining beautiful buildings, such as the Sick Kids, with soulless new building that doesn't stand the test of time.

Hope that new build is “carbon neutral” – roof insulation, solar panels, double/triple glazing, upgrade main hospital building / villas to increase fuel efficiency (add solar panels where possible)

Please limit amount of brick finish within development

Increase use of slate rather than zinc

Incorporate roof gardens

### Corner of Sylan Place / Rillbank Crescent

1. Retention of all de-listed buildings on Rillbank Crescent and Terrace (x2)

Retain corner block on Sylan Place / Rillbank (x2)

2. Window line of new build corner block at Sylan / Rillbank should align with existing buildings nearby

Drop the ground floor of corner block at Sylan/Rillbank so it becomes a lower ground, like the building at north-east corner of Rillbank Terrace

Additional detail to reduce massing of pavilion block at corner of Sylan / Rillbank

### General Suggestions

1. Further community consultation / further consultation with Community Councils

Important to mitigate noise and traffic disruption during construction phase

Developers and Councils get together to improve roads in immediate vicinity of site – replace and recover setts would have regard to conservations area, would slow traffic.

Would have preferred the hospital to be retained

# Briefing Note

Please respect the expectations of residents that Downing improve the area

Continued lack of detail re: proposals for former pharmaceutical store at SE corner of the site

### OTHER COMMENTS:

#### **Sylvan Place Related**

1. Both old and new buildings on Sylvan Place are very overlooked

Development has the effect of creating a tunnel along Sylvan Place

Set new block further back away from Sylvan Place, possible given that central space looks more generous than Sylvan Place side

Pleased at reduction in height on Sylvan Place

Please retain leafy residential feel of area / avoid overdevelopment on Sylvan Place

#### **Construction Related**

1. Hope developers take existing residents into consideration during construction – make as little noise as possible, minimise dust, minimise vibrations etc (x2)

2. Concern about access arrangements for construction vehicles

Concern re: protection of Traquair murals during construction works

#### **Student Housing Related**

1. Question need for more student housing in area but recognise it may lead to less pressure on tenement properties

There should be less student housing in overcrowded residential areas unless the developer pays for additional infrastructure

Lower student accommodation block by 2.7m in its entirety

Sciennes Road frontage of student block should be set-back or top storey set back.

#### **Affordable Housing Related**

1. Affordable housing element only proposed 2-bed properties – why not 3-bed?

What is affordable housing? What kind of prices will be sought?

Area needs more affordable housing rather than student housing

## **Proposed Corner Block Related**

1. Roof line of new corner block at Sylvan/Rillbank is monotonous, should be redesigned to break the monotony

Roof of corner block at Sylvan/Rillbank should not be flat

## **Consultation Related**

1. Poor attitude of Downing Group representatives (x2)

Proposals are a considerable improvement from Public Exhibition 2

Difficult to distinguish PR and real consultation – Quartermile consultation proposals on height/density/public access have not been upheld

Exhibition well-staffed in a pleasant venue

Would like to see another public exhibition of the final proposals being submitted for planning permission

## **Public Realm / Memorial Garden / Open Space Related**

1. Hope materials used will not stain as badly as most new paving seems to

Unclear who will service/maintain Memorial Garden

Memorial garden unnecessary given retention of chapel/mortuary

## **Transport / Parking Related**

1. More electric car spaces/charging points (x2)

An increase in commercial vehicles would not be desirable – relationship to school (x2)

2. Suspect owners of homes within Main Hospital building would prefer more adequate parking within area to front of hospital, rather than Memorial Garden

Please provide more bike parking instead of encouraging more local traffic

Public transport in the area is not good / few bus routes – lack of parking provision will increase demand for public transport, has this been considered?

No reference to traffic associated to commercial use and how this will relate to the School

### **Local Services / Community Use / Sciennes Primary Related**

1. Developer contributions toward education and primary healthcare should be increased – indicative amount seems small in comparison to scale of project

A pity the development couldn't accommodate a medical practice.

Unfortunate that not even a corner of the site could be added to school playground

Make sure developer gives enough money to Council to provide extra school places and facilities

### **General Comments**

1. Hope the development won't be as ugly as Quatermile

How will retail space be allocated – will the community have a say?

Pleased to note the intention that the project will be delivered in a fairly short time period

You have a remarkable site with outstanding character – please preserve and improve

Surprised that “plodding” design has got this far