

APPENDIX 1

ASTLEY AINSLIE PLANNING BRIEF

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Astley Ainslie Hospital is owned and managed by the Lothian Primary Care NHS Trust. The Trust has established a need to provide new accommodation for its main hospital-based rehabilitation services presently situated at the hospital, and to cater for others presently located elsewhere, following a review of its future requirements. The Trust is conscious that its facilities at Astley Ainslie vary in quality and that large parts of it are incompatible with modern health care practice. The overriding objective of the Trust is to modernise and develop the Astley Ainslie campus to ensure that all its buildings are fit for purpose, allowing for the effective delivery of rehabilitation care.

1.2 To this end, the Trust propose to build new hospital facilities initially located on the southern half of the site, allowing clinical buildings to be located close to each other. Land to the north of this area, extending to Grange Loan, may also be required for hospital purposes, although a decision on this issue has yet to be taken by the Trust.

2.0 Description of site and surroundings

2.1 The hospital site extends to 17 hectares (42 acres). The site is bounded by Grange Loan to the north, and has a frontage to Canaan Lane to the west. There are shorter road frontages with South Oswald Road to the east and Cluny Place at the south-west corner of the site. Only two vehicular accesses are actively used: one from Canaan Lane and one from Grange Loan. An access from Cluny Place serves a boiler house. The area surrounding the hospital has a residential character, but includes several residential institutions.

- 2.2 Napier University occupy a building within the hospital complex as its college of nursing, to the west of the main hospital buildings and accessed via the Canaan Lane entrance. This property will continue in academic use and is excluded from consideration in this brief.
- 2.3 The use of the site as a convalescence hospital dates from 1921. The site which was acquired and brought together for that purpose at that time comprised a small golf course and, to its north, five detached villa properties fronting Grange Loan. Subsequent hospital development consisted of a series of single storey pavilions and other buildings, confined for the most part to the former golf course. The acquired villas were put to administrative uses, but retained their spacious and leafy settings, including much of their boundary walls and tree belts which continue to compartmentalise this part of the site. The only substantial new building in this part of the site is the 1960's Charles Bell Pavilion.

3.0 Policy Context

- 3.1 The Council's planning policies for the area are contained in the Central Edinburgh Local Plan (adopted 1997). The Local Plan Proposals Map shows the site within a broad 'housing and compatible uses' land use designation. The Plan's policies generally support new housing on sites suitable for redevelopment and covered by this designation, as well as other uses which would contribute to local community life. The Plan encourages a reasonable mix of house types and sizes on large sites coming forward for development, including housing to meet the need of special groups such as the elderly (sheltered housing). It encourages the conversion of suitable buildings to residential use, especially those built as dwelling houses. Business uses except on a very small scale would not be acceptable in this location, neither would other commercial uses likely to have detrimental impacts on residential amenity.

The Plan supports the further development of major institutional service functions of regional significance within Central Edinburgh, including hospital development, provided it is compatible with environmental and other objectives of the Plan. It supports also the provision or improvement of primary health care, educational, social and other community services required to meet the needs of the resident population.

- 3.2 The Plan sets quality objectives for new development covering such matters as layout, design, height and density, architectural design and treatment, all intended to achieve visual harmony, protect amenity, enhance character including the special character of conservation areas, and contribute positively to the city's unique environment.

4.0 Constraints

Architectural Interest

- 4.1 The statutorily listed buildings on the site are:

- Canaan House – Circa 1805, additions 1877. 2 storey and attic 3-bay symmetrical villa, currently used as administrative offices for the hospital, with 3-bay addition to the west. Listed Category B;
- Canaan Lane, North and South Lodges, Gatepiers and Gates (Canaan Lane) – Jamieson and Arnott 1932. Pair of two, 2 storey diagonally-set square-plan Neo-Georgian gate lodges linked by a curved gateway. Listed Category A;
- Grange Loan - Sentry Pavilions, Gatepost, Gates and Railings – Jamieson and Arnott 1932. Ornamental ironwork gateposts linked by railings and gates with 2 small single storey sentry pavilions. Listed Category B;

- St Roque House, garden fountain and Dragon Bench – Circa 1845. Large 2-storey L-plan Italianate villa with engaged entrance tower, large service wing and outhouse to east. Listed Category B.
- northern and western (part) walls to Grange Loan and Canaan Lane, respectively, and gateposts and walls to Cluny Place;
- semi-circular wall feature incorporating medieval stonework to the north of the Millbank Pavilion;
- 137 Grange Loan, St. Roque Lodge; and
- science block within the southern half of the site.

4.2 Proposals for the site should take full account of the special architectural or historic interest of these buildings and how this may be protected. They should give consideration also to how an appropriate setting can be retained or created. Particularly important in this respect are the villas of Canaan Park and St. Roque. The notable non-listed features of the site which should also be retained and incorporated suitably into the overall design are the remaining boundary and other walls not referred to in the above list.

Grange Conservation Area

4.3 The site lies within the Grange Conservation Area. The Council has prepared a Character Statement for the Conservation Area, which prospective developers should refer to. This is one of several ‘villa’ areas in the city. Its special character and interest derives from its historical development as a residential suburb of quality, with detached and semi-detached stone built dwelling houses, often set in spacious gardens behind high stone walls. Present day character is now enhanced by the maturity of the garden planting.

The hospital site is a major component of the Conservation Area and its northern part in particular (Area A), with its surviving villas and their garden settings, although not in residential use, is representative of the Conservation Area at its most distinctive. A determining consideration for the council when dealing with development proposals is that the character and appearance of the conservation area should be maintained and that features of the site which contribute to area character are preserved and assimilated sensitively into new design.

Landscape Setting

- 4.4 The main hospital buildings occupy relatively level ground, but the site overall slopes gently down from north to south, more steeply at its southern extremity, towards the partially culverted Jordan Burn and the South Suburban railway line. The site overall is relatively secluded behind its high boundary walls and planting. However, the summit and northern slopes of Blackford Hill including the Royal Observatory building, all major landmarks in the city, are extensively in view from the site. Conversely, Astley Ainslie Hospital with its abundant planting occupies a major part of the foreground of important views from Blackford Hill across the Grange and towards the city centre skyline. It is of the utmost importance that new development should not appear as an intrusive or alien feature in those views, but should sit comfortably and harmoniously in its setting.

Treescape

- 4.4 **The Council has made a Tree Preservation Order which includes all of the hospital grounds except for the coniferous plantation to the south of the site (yet to be confirmed).** A wide range of tree species make up the extensive treescape of the site. Through the Grange Association, the Council is advised that there are 54 species of tree present on the site – between 400 and 500 trees in total, not counting the coniferous plantation adjacent to the southern boundary.

The whole constitutes the most extensive and complete Victorian urban treescape left in South Edinburgh. It has several components: the tree belts around the hospital perimeter; the internal belts planted to provide enclosure for the original villas; isolated specimen trees planted within their grounds either contemporaneously or later; and planting undertaken by the hospital authorities to the south, including the incongruous plantation. The site therefore possesses in its extensive tree cover the basis of a mature landscape structure which should be retained and enhanced to become the principal organising element in the layout of the new development. Planning applications should accordingly include a landscape management plan outlining the proposals for the retention, enhancement and management of trees and landscaping within the site, in particular the woodland belts and other mature trees dispersed throughout the site. In order to minimise future threat to the treescape, new building should be set back by a minimum of 10 metres from the canopy edge of trees to be retained, or 20 metres from their bole, whichever is the greater.

Archaeology

- 4.5 The site contains an area of archaeological interest which is defined on the accompanying plan. This was the site of the 16th Century chapel of St. Roque, its attendant graveyard and leper colony, but has never been investigated. As soon as practicable, and before any decisions are taken by the Council on a planning application affecting this area, an archaeological field evaluation must be carried out, to determine the extent and significance of any surviving remains and to allow the Council to decide on the measures necessary to ensure their protection. This work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation in accordance with a brief which the Council's Archaeological Service will provide

Education

- 4.7 The site lies within the catchment area of schools which are operating at capacity at both primary and secondary levels. The Council is proposing to alleviate capacity constraints and provide for new development by, *inter alia*, building a new primary school in this locality. **A site is reserved for this purpose on part of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital site in Morningside. The Council has yet to decide how it might address difficulties being experienced at secondary school level and is giving consideration to the option of building a new secondary school at Astley Ainslie should it become surplus. Further housing development on a significant scale can only proceed in the area once this issue has been resolved.** In addition, the Council will also be looking for some form of contribution from developers towards the cost of expanding local educational capacity.

Transportation

- 4.8 The potential scale of development across the site as a whole is such that a Transportation Assessment **may be required** to be prepared by the developer(s) before any planning application can be considered. Development proposals for the site generally should comply with the Council's transportation policies and objectives which seek to discourage private car dependency, especially for journeys to work, and encourage more sustainable alternatives, principally the use of public transport, walking and cycling. The surrounding roads serving the site are predominantly residential in character and have been the subject of traffic calming measures. A Transportation Assessment **would** determine the impacts of development proposals on the surrounding road network, including the A702 Morningside Road, and the measures that should be taken to alleviate any consequent worsening of conditions. **Developer(s) will be required to fund** the cost of such measures.

5.0 Potential Uses

5.1 **The attached plan shows the site divided into two parts : the more northerly part, Area ‘A’, which may become surplus to the Trust’s requirements; and the more southerly area, Area ‘B’ which is to be retained by the Trust.**

5.2 Within Area ‘A’ new development should primarily be for a residential purpose. The Council generally encourages the provision of a diversity of housing forms in new developments on a significant scale, including housing suited to family occupation and housing for special needs groups such as the elderly. The inclusion of institutional residential uses and residential accommodation with care, such as a nursing home, would be appropriate in this location, especially as part of a mix of housing types. **Prospective developers will be required to make provision for an element of affordable housing (eg social rented housing and/or low-cost ownership) in association with proposals for private development, the requirement being in this location 25% of the total number of units (further guidance on this issue has been prepared in the form of non-statutory guidance and can be obtained by telephoning 0131 529 3596).**

5.3 **In the event that there is a substantial land release and the Council confirms its interest in acquiring a site for the development of a secondary school, a site of 4 ha. will be required within this area. Development for such a purpose would in principle be acceptable, but the various requirements of the brief, intended to safeguard environmental character and other interests, will have to be observed.**

5.4 Businesses and commercial uses would not in principle be acceptable in this location, unless on a small scale and they can be specially justified, for example, by the need to retain the character of a listed building and avoid its damaging subdivision.

5.5 Area 'B' is that to be retained by the Trust and developed for hospital purposes. Planning permission has granted to the first phase of development in this area – a new prosthetic and bio-engineering facility located beyond the most southerly pavilions and partly within the plantation. The Trust has prepared a masterplan to guide future hospital development on the site. Development within this area of the site will also be required to observe the development principles set out in section 6 of this brief.

6.0 Development Principles

6.1 The Astley Ainslie Hospital site is clearly an exceptional development opportunity in terms of its scale and location and its potential for a residential development of outstanding environmental quality. Proposals should be directed towards ensuring that its full potential is realised, the constraints of the site are fully taken into account and the character and appearance of the conservation area are preserved or enhanced. It is in these terms that development proposals, **whether for housing or other forms of development**, will be evaluated. **A site of this quality and significance within the Conservation Area will require urban and building design of the highest quality. Recognising in general, that higher standards are being sought via Scottish Executive and Council policies, this matter will be of significance in consideration of proposed developments.**

6.2 For all new development the major determinant of building form and layout must be the landscape structure which already substantially exists. For this reason, the plan accompanying the brief does not specify developable areas. The landscape structure, with the features of architectural or historic interest, is largely concentrated in the northerly part of the site (Area 'A'). The plan seeks to show non-definitively the main elements of the landscape framework and the extent to which they generate a cellular structure into which new development, to be acceptable, must be fitted. This will inevitably be modest in scale and intensity and subordinate to its landscape setting, reflecting in that respect the character of the Grange Conservation Area at its most distinctive.

- 6.3 Area 'B' on the plan, the southern half of the site containing the bulk of the purpose-built hospital buildings, is less constrained by features of interest and more amenable to a relatively more intense development and free layout. **It is in this area that the Trust intend to build its new hospital accommodation. It is an extensive area and tree planting will be required to augment the green framework and mitigate the impact of new development when viewed from Blackford Hill. This will be particularly important if the plantation is to be removed.**
- 6.4 An acceptable density will not be specified; the Council prefers that this should be determined by the environmental considerations indicated above. Buildings of two and three storeys should be the predominant form over most of the site, **particularly Area 'A' where, if it is to be developed for residential purposes, provision should be made for a mix of detached and terraced houses, townhouses and flats.**
- 6.5 Some provision of open space for communal use should be made, its nature depending on the types of housing to be provided. The Council's normal standard is 10% of total site area, **and this should be taken as indicative of provision that will be required on this site.** The development as a whole, having regard to the balance of garden ground and open space to building, should be reflective of the character of the Grange Conservation Area as a whole, and not an alien intrusion.
- 6.6 **Depending on the scale of development proposed,** the existing main entrances at Canaan Lane and Grange Loan are likely to be acceptable and adequate to serve new hospital development and development on surplus hospital land, respectively. The formation of an additional access from Grange Loan may also be acceptable, but will depend on the acceptability to Historic Scotland of a breach in the listed boundary wall. Alternatively, the re-opening of the gated entrance opposite Whitehouse Loan may be acceptable to provide a second access from Grange Loan, **subject to the completion of a Road User Safety Audit.**

- 6.7 **All internal roads should be designed as prospective public roads, requiring road construction consent (RCC).** In addition, they should be designed to inhibit speeds in excess of 20 mph (developers will be required to fund a Traffic Regulation Order for a formal 20mph speed limit) and to prevent any possibility of use by through traffic, i.e. traffic not having a destination in the site.
- 6.8 Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and children should be safe, secure, direct and designed to encourage walking and cycling to school in particular. It should be a comprehensive and dominant feature of the overall layout, **providing for routes through the site.** Car parking should be provided as unobtrusively as possible at the current parking standards. It is, however, the policy of the Council to encourage housing schemes with reduced parking provision ('car-free' **and** 'car-reduced' housing) and part of this site may be suitable for such an innovation.