

Buntingford Medical Centre – Premises update – July 2023

We are pleased to advise that we have written to the town and county councils to inform them of our agreement to work with Taylor Wimpey and consider proposals for a potential new surgery on land North of Hare Street Road.

Since 2014, anticipating the significant population growth and the limitations of our current site to provide medical services for the future, the GP Partners at the surgery have worked tirelessly to explore options for the redevelopment of the Buntingford Medical Centre. We had engaged with the developers of the Sainsbury site to the south of the town to develop a new surgery in 2014, which could have been completed by 2018. Unfortunately, at the time NHS England would not commit to the rental costs associated with the scheme.

Since then, we have considered the viability of redeveloping the existing site, as well as working with the Town Council and County Council to explore and consider several alternative sites in the town on which to locate a new modern facility for the current patient need, and with potential for any future increase in local population.

The size and cost of this project is considerable. There is no capital funding available from the NHS to meet these costs and therefore the funding for the building and grounds come from investment from the GP Partners at the surgery. It is hoped that in so doing we can look for a building that will be able to take on the challenges within primary health care in Buntingford for the next 30 years or more.

To inform our decision, we have been assessing key determinants such as capacity, access, parking provision and financial viability. We have also engaged the local community and have recently conducting a survey to understand patients' experience of the current facilities, as well as the convenience of travelling to and from the existing Medical Centre.

This site is still located in close proximity to the town, less than a mile from the existing site and will be accessible via existing road routes and footpaths, and would take traffic away from the increasingly congested schools area along Bowling Green Lane.

The new building will have the space to provide extra consulting room capacity, allowing us to employ more doctors and clinical staff to support existing demand, as well being able to provide training posts for new GPs and nursing staff. There will be space to extend as needed at a later date to meet anticipated future increases in demand.

We hope also that there will be the opportunity to provide other specialist services such as community diabetes clinics, leg ulcer clinics, physiotherapy, child health visitor clinics, mental health support worker clinics and possibly some imaging services, that currently patients may have to travel some distance to access.

Whilst our plans are at a very early stage, we are committed to continuing to share with you, our patients, the progress of discussions and detail of the proposed site as those details become clear.

We are conscious that time is of the essence, and we are now in a position to begin engaging on the proposals. Support from our local community will be key to helping us shape a facility that will provide the best possible care that our local population deserves for now and the future. We will be shortly arranging meetings with representatives of the Town and District councils and the Integrated Care Board, to set up initial discussions about the proposals, and will keep our patients updated as we progress.