

Members Present:

Councillor Chaplin (Chair)
Councillor Alfonso
Councillor Cutkelvin
Councillor Kitterick
Councillor Riyait
Councillor Willmott

Officers Present:

Ben Parks – Senior Project Manager, Property Services, LCC
Kalvaran Sandhu – Scrutiny Policy Officer, LCC
Nick Green – Architect, Saunders Boston Architects
Ruth Lake – Director of Adult Social Care and Safeguarding, LCC

Background

The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission was briefed on the initial designs for the proposed intermediate care facility.

As part of the consultation to the designs commission members made many comments and suggestions. These have been captured below in a summary of the discussions during the meeting.

Introduction

The designers are working through the feasibility study to have a two storey, 60 beds site on Tilling Road in Beaumont Leys ward. The site is near local bus routes and is very close to Home Farm Shopping Centre.

The front of the building will be a public space that could consist of:

- Café
- Activity Room
- Hairdressing/consultation room
- Interview room
- Therapy room
- Exercise Room
- Office for Leicester Care

The residential accommodation will include the following:

- 60 bedrooms, 15 rooms per wing in clusters of 4/6 rooms
- Four wings, two per floor
- Four bariatric rooms
- Two self-contained assessment flats
- Assisted bathrooms

- Communal lounges/dining rooms
- There won't be defined long corridors as the aim is for it to feel like a large home rather than an institutional setting

There will also be a staff area, communal kitchen and an internal courtyard, which will be outward facing in order to feel open to the wider community. Domestic textures will be used on the outside of the building to give it a homely feel.

Café

Members believed that there is a history of cafés not working in these settings as the footfall may be low and it could end up being a baron space. It was felt that there needed to be a business case for the café and if it was to be included then it needed to be an open space and not closed off.

Officers stated that the café and the footfall for it had been considered in great detail, but it is hoped that the general public will use it as it is near the Home Farm Shopping area and there is potential for a VCS group to run it.

Hairdressers

Concerns were also raised about footfall for the hairdressers and suggestions were made that it could be a commercial unit used for the whole community. Opening out the space for the community to use is important and perhaps more important than having the café.

It is anticipated that the hairdresser's room will be a multi-functional room and not just used for hairdressing. The desired outcome will be for local hairdressers to come in and use the room when requested by the residents.

Dementia care

The potential disruption from dementia patients on other residents was raised and the need for a mechanism to help disorientated people know where they are. It was reported that there will be people with different levels of needs accessing the service, with some requiring rehab and others respite care and there may be those that have dementia. Those with dementia will be in a more settled environment with their needs dealt with in a different way to others

Members were informed that there would be a consultant with specialist knowledge in dementia involved in the design process to cater for the needs of those with dementia.

Outdoor Spaces

Members highlighted the importance of access to an outdoor space and particularly for those that have rooms on the first floor also have access to outdoor space from their room. It was confirmed that people on the first floor will still have access to the garden courtyard but there is consideration being made to them having large balcony areas with outdoor seating and planting.

One-Storey vs Two-Storey

Commission members raised concerns that it was only a two-storey building that was being considered and not a single-storey. They stated that the lifetime and maintenance costs would be less than those of a multi-storey building and that the revenue costs may add value to housing a one-storey design and it might also help the environmental performance of the building. The commission had previously identified a single storey building would be large which is why they recommended it be on two sites.

A two-storey fitting is the desired option for service providers, supported by the designers and nearly all schemes across the country were two-storeys or more. Officers stated that the cost of a single-storey building is significantly more than that of a multi-storey. Assurances were given that environmental sustainability is included in the build. It was stated that the land is on a sloping site so a redesign would also need to take that into consideration.

Breakout spaces

Concerns were raised that when finances are squeezed and efficiency savings are sought there may be a revert back to corridors instead of breakout spaces in the design. Also members asked if the areas that are intended to break up the space would be used or potentially become dead spaces.

Earlier designs had many more spaces and the current design is considered the best in being efficient but still meeting the needs of the brief. It is unlikely that plans will lead to having corridors as they have no natural lighting, which is not good for dementia care. The breakout spaces are small so they won't be large unused spaces as it is expected that they will be a nice space for informal catch-ups with friends and family.

Building Design

Members asked whether this model of building has been done anywhere else in the country and if it is a model we're following or one in which we're pioneering? A needs analysis was done in the city and practice from other areas across the country was considered but there is nothing exactly the same as what we're commissioning but designs from similar areas have been built upon and used in this design. Members thought it would be useful to see past work of the architects.

It was highlighted that the critical point will be the way in which the care is delivered in the facility. Officers stated that the rooms are based on CQC guidance and having four clusters of rooms will allow for a stable staffing arrangement for the period that someone will stay in the building and therefore ensure good quality of care.

Other Areas/Rooms

- Will there be enough space to use mobility scooters within the building?
 - Mobility scooters are rarely used inside but there would be enough room and there would be charging points.
- Will the exercise rooms be big enough for group sessions?
 - Exercise rooms are based on the need for individual rehabilitation with a trainer, however the activity room is a larger space that can have other uses.
- Are there spaces factored in for relatives to have private conversations with people they are visiting other than the bedroom?
 - There will be rooms for private conversations on each wing.
- Will there be a play area for visitors with young children?
 - This has not been considered yet but this will be taken into consideration.
- Will residents have access to computers?
 - The assistive technology room will have space for using computers and there will also be support workers on hand to provide 1-2-1 support where required.

Actions Agreed

The following actions were agreed:

- Past work of the architects to be shared with commission members
- Information on the costs of having a one-storey building compared to a two-storey to be provided to commission members
- Two further briefings to be provided to members in January and March
- Notes of this briefing to be shared at the next commission meeting