

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0009
Valid 10/01/2024

CAR PARK
NEWTON HOUSE
CHEDDLETON ROAD
LEEK

PROVISION OF TEMPORARY
MOBILE BREAST SCREENING
UNIT (3 CYCLES WITH 20
MONTH BREAK - TOTAL
9YRS)

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

The principle of development in this location.
The impact on the character and appearance of the area.
The impact on highway safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site comprises a parking and service area in front of a large two-storey flat-roofed concrete and glass office building on the south edge of Leek between the town and Birchall, a residential area to the south. The office premises lies on the east side of A520 Cheddleton Road and is occupied by Co-Operative Bank. A roundabout on the road provides access to this and another large offices premises to the west of the road (Britannia House). There are large car parks to the north of the building next to the site and the office building also sits within green landscaped open grounds and the premises largely surrounded by open land and woodland which rises up towards the east. The site is within the Development Boundary of Leek.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for the temporary stationing of a portacabin type structure on the parking/service area for the use of breast screening. This would be provided by the North Midlands Breast Screening Service which is part of the Royal Stoke University Hospital. The Service provides a mobile unit which is moved around various locations across the north midlands to improve screening services and presumably allow an easier and more convenient access to such a health facility for people outside the larger towns and cities. It would be moved around on a nine year cycle and the applicant proposes the unit to be in place for five months before returning for another five month stay after a 20 month period of being stationed in other locations.

Further details are given in the applicants Statement of Need submitted with the application which also states that the application is a result of the loss of the previous site in this location, Britannia House (on the other side of the road), where it has been operating following a 2017 planning approval.

The unit is a portacabin type structure with a flat roof, a length of 13 metres, a height of 3.1m and which would be finished with a white powder coated metal walls bearing the NHS logo.

It would be placed over four parking spaces immediately in front of the building (to the west of it).

The breast screening clinic will have a waiting room, 2 changing rooms and an X-ray room, it will operate Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm and have 2 full time employees.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (Adopted September 2020)

SS5 Leek Strategy
C1 Community Facilities
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023)

Sections 8 (Healthy and Safe Communities) and 12 (Design Considerations).

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2017/0734: Planning permission for the temporary mobile breast screening unit at Britannia House on the opposite side of the main road.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 20.2.24
Neighbour consultation period ends: 20.2.24
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

Support.

Local Highways Authority

No objection. The car park (within the red outline plan) currently has 30 spaces, the siting of the unit will occupy 4 spaces leaving 24 standard spaces and 2 disabled spaces.

There is sufficient car parking, if required, within the wider site to accommodate parking for the 2 additional staff and patients to the unit or any displaced parking from the loss of the 4 spaces. It is noted within the Statement of Need that the proposal is designed to have minimal impact on the existing site and parking arrangements and is supported by Co-operative Bank. It is assumed however, if necessary, that parking within the site will be managed.

The provision of this service locally will reduce the number of longer journeys to larger hospitals in towns/cities.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The Local Plan is supportive of new community facilities particularly within the development boundaries. There are sustainability advantages with the proposal as the unit would not only be very close to large numbers of office workers who could use the facility but also within a safe walk from large residential areas preventing the need to use the car to access the nearest such screening facility presumably in Stoke on Trent. It is intended to replace a similar unit a short distance away at Britannia House which was approved by the Council in 2017. The principle of the proposal is therefore acceptable.

The unit would be seen from the road against a much larger grey concrete office building adjacent to it and would be placed on an area of hardstanding. It would not harm the character and appearance of the area.

The temporary loss of parking spaces would not be detrimental to highway safety as there are much larger car parks a short distance away to the north of the building. There is also one hour short stay parking available on the main road. The local highways does not object to the proposal. There would still remain 26 spaces immediately around the proposed unit in the particular car park where it would be located. The two disabled parking spaces lost to make way for the unit can easily be replaced elsewhere within this car park using other unrestricted parking spaces.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal is acceptable in principle and would be a benefit to the community and help to reduce journeys by private car to reach healthcare services. It would not harm the character or amenities of the area or be detrimental to highway safety. The proposal would comply with the Council's Local Plan and government planning guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and therefore planning permission is recommended to be granted.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 6.3.24

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council