



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

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Dyddiad / Date: 07/06/2021

Matthew Phillips
Wrexham CBC

P/2021/0436 Outline Planning Application for 600 dwelling on Land South of Holt Road, Wrexham

Dear Matthew,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the outline application for 600 dwellings within KSS2 on Land south of Holt Road, Wrexham. We note that this is a re-submission of application P/2019/ 0005.

GP capacity remains a significant issue in Wrexham with current ratios far exceeding the UK National average of c1 full time GP : 1800 patients. In Wrexham town, the ratio is 1:3185, addressing the GP staffing deficiency remains a challenge but clearly a responsibility for the health board.

Currently there are 5 practices which could be called upon for new patients in this area to register with: Strathmore, Caia Park, St Georges Crescent, Plas Y Bryn and Hillcrest.

1. Strathmore surgery currently has 13,475 registered patients, being approx 2000 patients per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) GP
2. Hillcrest surgery has merged with Borrass Park and now has a list of 16,824 with an approx 5,500 per FTE GP.
3. Plas Y Bryn surgery has 12,832, approx. 2,135 patient per FTE GP
4. Caia Park surgery has 3,936 patients and is single-handed GP
5. St Georges Crescent has 6,473 and has approx. 2,354 patients per FTE

The additional increase in population would broadly equate to a need for an additional 0.4 full-time equivalent GP. Whilst funding for GP service relates directly to practice list size, staffing shortages and difficulties in recruitment persist across the UK and Wrexham is no exception.

The Health Board undertook a full review of the Primary Care estate in 2016 articulating the main issues with capacity and utilisation.

In Wrexham Town the following information was identified:

Across the 5 practices there is approx. £28,000 of work needing to be done on the practices current buildings to keep them up to standard and suitable for delivery of services. The Primary Care team has supported one practice with an improvement grant to expand their premises, which will support their growth. However, Hillcrest surgery was taken over by a private provider, who has had to shut Borrass Park surgery branch practice due to COVID and staffing issues, which has further reduced additional estate capacity from the system.

The main issues identified with the current premises by the survey was capacity. From the 5 practices mentioned, 3 were identified as overcrowded and 2 were identified as fully used. Again, we acknowledge that addressing existing capacity constraints is the responsibility of BCUHB.

The Health Board's capacity, infrastructure and continuing financial constraints present considerable challenge in accommodating growth and expansion of health services and to obtaining full alignment of strategic plans.

Section 4 of the Infrastructure plan (2018) references previous discussion with Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board and highlights the concerns we have expressed in terms of the health service capacity to support development and in particular of Key Strategic Sites. Section 4.14 acknowledges that the predicted growth within the deposit plan will present specific challenges for primary care and community as well as hospital services. It describes the measures the health board will take through development of a model of care, in this case for the Central Wrexham locality, to increase capacity within available resource. A full and viable solution to bridging the gap in required health infrastructure to meet the potential increase in demand fully has yet to be agreed. However, work is ongoing to develop a strategic business case linking the redevelopment of Wrexham Maelor to a purpose built Primary care health estate.

Following the pandemic we are concerned that once the recovery programme starts within Primary Care there will be a period of 'catch up' for patients who may not have been attending Primary care and who will need to be seen. This could be a considerable surge initially and put additional pressure on the practices within the area. The growth of virtual consultation methods during the pandemic may assist with physical capacity needs; however, some patients are not comfortable using

virtual consultation and there are benefits of face-to-face consultation for some conditions to aid diagnosis and support.

Some new ways of working such as telephone triage and video consultation will support some of these pressures but in the majority, our main concern is the sustainability of Strathmore, Hillcrest and Caia Park. The Health Board are working to set up a diagnostic clinic to support the recovery process however, this will need to access the current estate or an alternative site will need to be used to deliver this.

From previous discussions with Wrexham CBC we understand that this specific development will take place over a 5-6 year period, starting with a build of 50 houses in the first year and then 100 houses on the subsequent years. We can predict that it may potentially grow by about 1400 people depending upon internal / external migration.

In summary, there are existing significant challenges in the future delivery of primary care and other healthcare services to meet the needs of the population. The growth attributable to the proposed developments will add to the pressures and we do have concerns regarding sustainability. We are currently working through plans to address this and would wish to remain in discussion regarding any potential future opportunities, but are not currently in a position to quantify any specific additional requirements arising from the proposed developments.

I hope these comments are of help.

Sincerely,

Chris Jones
Health Planning Manager
on behalf of Sally Baxter Asst Director of Health Strategy