



Proposed 54No Bed Low Secure Unit & Housing
Land off Mold Road, Gwersyllt,
Wrexham LL11 4AF

PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT LOW SECURE UNIT

PREPARED FOR A HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION
(INCLUDES FULL & OUTLINE APPLICATIONS)



Main Entrance Visual

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Support Statement addresses the type of service and need for the Low Secure Unit, and is written in response to the Gwersyllt Community Council's written objection to the Low Secure Unit Planning application, which is for a Hospital to serve the local and wider North Wales community. The objection was sent to the Planning Department on 29th January 2018, the principal objections being:

- a. *"Security implications that have not been fully considered for the low secure unit (in particular regarding the clients of the unit)"*
- b. *"The development is in close proximity to education establishments and adjacent to Ysgol Bryn Alyn (with again the security implications for local school children)"*.
- c. *"There is a lack of information regarding the future management of the site"*
- d. *"The development will contribute to added traffic flow exiting onto Mold Road. We consider that this is already a busy junction where turning right is a particular problem".*

The applicant considers that the above issues have been addressed in responses to specific questions raised by both the Community Council and Planning Department, however it is useful to collate all of the information in one document, and to add additional information, where this may assist an understanding of the case.

This Statement therefore seeks to clarify the nature of a Low Secure Unit, including the local need, under the following headings:

2. The nature of a Low Secure Unit/Hospital
3. How and who are referred
4. The case of need
5. Operation
6. Security – Operational
7. Security – Physical
8. Conclusion

The development application site of 2.58 Hectares (Red line plot, including access road) is located to the west of Mold Road on disused industrial land.



Fig 1: Site Location Plan [NTS] indicating Full & Outline Planning application extents

2.0 The Nature of a Low Secure Unit

2.1 Definitions of High, Medium and Low Secure Hospital services

The definitions of High, Medium and Low Secure Units are defined by the government, including the levels of security that apply in each case.

High Secure	Services are provided for people who “require treatment under conditions of high security on account of their dangerous, violent or criminal propensities” (as defined under the NHS Act 2006).
Medium Secure	Services have a fixed level of security and standards with which they must comply.
Low Secure	There is less around what constitutes ‘low secure’ (compared to high or medium secure services) the Department of Health have stated that: <i>“low secure services are for people aged 18 years and over detained under the Mental Health Act who cannot be treated in other mental health settings because of the level of risk or challenge they present. Patients will not require the level of physical security provided by medium secure services”</i>

The proposed Low Secure Unit at Wrexham is designed to provide accommodation for adults aged 18 and over. This service will provide care and treatment for people with mental health problems.

The Low Secure Unit will provide a home for 40 No residents, accommodated in a modern purpose built environment, in a landscaped setting, conducive to wellbeing and recovery. In addition, the unit will have a 14 bed assessment treatment unit (ATU), to cater for those in crisis, who can be brought in for assessment and recovery.

3.0 How and who are referred

3.1 Commissioning of Services

Commissioners in Wales are responsible for commissioning Low Secure Hospitals

3.2 Referrals to the Low Secure Hospital

Patients admitted to this service will be detained under one of the sections of The Mental Health Act 1983, as amended in 2007, and will be referred by Local NHS health boards, from across North Wales and areas covered by the Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW)

Patients will usually suffer from a Mental disorder such as schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, phobias. This group of patients will usually need psychological and pharmacology intervention in order to stabilise their mental state, prior to re-integrating them back into the community.

The service will have some exemptions from admission, which will include patients with a history of sexual offenses, arsonist and patients with substance abuse/addiction.

4.0 The case of need

4.1 In 2016-17, there were 8,723 admissions to Mental health facilities in Wales, of which a proportion has been placed out of Wales, due to limited bed availability within Wales. There is therefore a need for low secure placements within North Wales.

The importance of having facilities within the local area is that residents can be treated within, or close to, their communities, which assists the maintaining of family ties, visiting and later with in re-integration into the community, once their treatment is completed. The community would also benefit from new employment opportunities.

5.0 Operation

5.1 Low Secure Hospital Management

The Unit will be operated and funded by a private company, ASC Healthcare with ongoing service fees payed by the NHS. ASC Healthcare:

- runs two independent hospitals and has experience in delivering outcomes under NHS Contracts
- has a good track record on safety and has had no absconsions since inception.

5.2 Clinical assessment and treatment

Individuals admitted to the low secure unit will be assessed on a highly intensive and personalised basis by a dedicated team of clinical professionals. The low secure unit is an intensively staffed environment which provides services that work to ensure that individual's needs are assessed and treated effectively with the aim to manage risks posed to reduce further offending/challenging behaviour and support recovery throughout the person's stay.

The multi-disciplinary clinical team includes clinical psychologists and assistants, forensic psychologists, consultant psychiatrists, nurses and support workers that can provide inputs and treatment around the following elements:

- Individually tailored recovery and rehabilitation pathways keeping length of stay to a minimum.
- Robust risk assessment and management
- Treatment delivered following My Shared Pathway
- Positive risk taking
- Strengths based approach
- Positive behaviour management strategies
- Care planned psychological therapies
- Access to at least 30 hours of meaningful activity 7 days a week
- Developing independent living skills and community engagement
- A strong emphasis on safeguarding
- Robust clinical governance
- Access to independent advocacy
- Strong multiagency and family partnerships to ensure a holistic package of care and pathway

Ultimately, the low secure services aim to deliver the following outcomes:

- Improvements in mental health and patient symptoms
- Effective management of behaviour
- Reduction of risk
- Preparation for successful step down
- Good physical health
- Improved self-esteem and self-worth
- Social inclusion

5.3 Assessment Treatment Unit

Assessment Treatment Unit is exclusively for adults aged 18 and over who have experienced a crisis/complex needs. The service will provide a combined programme of enhanced therapeutic and clinical support which incorporates flexible and creative care pathway solutions for individuals who have likely experienced varying degrees of difficulty or crisis in previous care and support settings, or for those who may have suffered a crisis at home.

- 5.4 The unit nurse in charge at any time will check all patients on general observation every hour to confirm each individual's whereabouts. Further to this, any patient deemed at risk of absconding will have an enhanced level of observation i.e. staff monitoring 24/7.
- 5.5 Any 'at risk' patient will also be accompanied to all external hospital appointments and will be transported in a secure van with adequate staff numbers (dependent on individual risk assessments) to manage any attempts to abscond.

6.0 Security – Operational

- 6.1 The physical management of security for patients will be achieved by the following:
- A swipe/key system will ensure that patients will not be able to leave the building without authorised leave.
 - A nominated person, in charge of the physical security of the whole premises, will make sure that regular audits/interval checks are carried out both within and outside the physical building.
 - All staff will be fully inducted to ensure that all security protocols are fully adhered to.

7.0 Security – Physical

- 7.1 The building is designed to meet and comply with all of the security standards relating to Low Secure Hospitals, which includes security to prevent escape, as well as design features to keep residents secure in terms of health and wellbeing, which also involves managing and minimising the risk of self-harm.
- 7.2 The security strategy of the building includes:
- 1 No main personnel entrance, with 'air-lock' security control lobby through which all residents, staff and visitors have to pass when entering and leaving the building
 - A second external entrance for deliveries and services, comprising an external secure compound, which works on the 'air-lock' principal. This allows servicing vehicles to back into a secure service area, where the building doors can only be opened once the vehicular access gate is locked down
 - The individual residential accommodation units are accessed by further dedicated secure 'air-lock' lobbies, ensuring that residents are contained within their units
 - Access to resident facilities outside accommodation units, still within the 'secure' hospital environment, is on an individual risk assessed basis
 - The Low Secure accommodation units have further internal subdivisions, to allow residents to be segregated into smaller groups, to best assist harmony and recovery, as well as security
 - External amenity areas are protected by 3m high anti-climb security fencing
 - A further enclosed maintenance and landscaping perimeter zone wraps round the secure unit from the south west to the east, providing a visual screen to the development

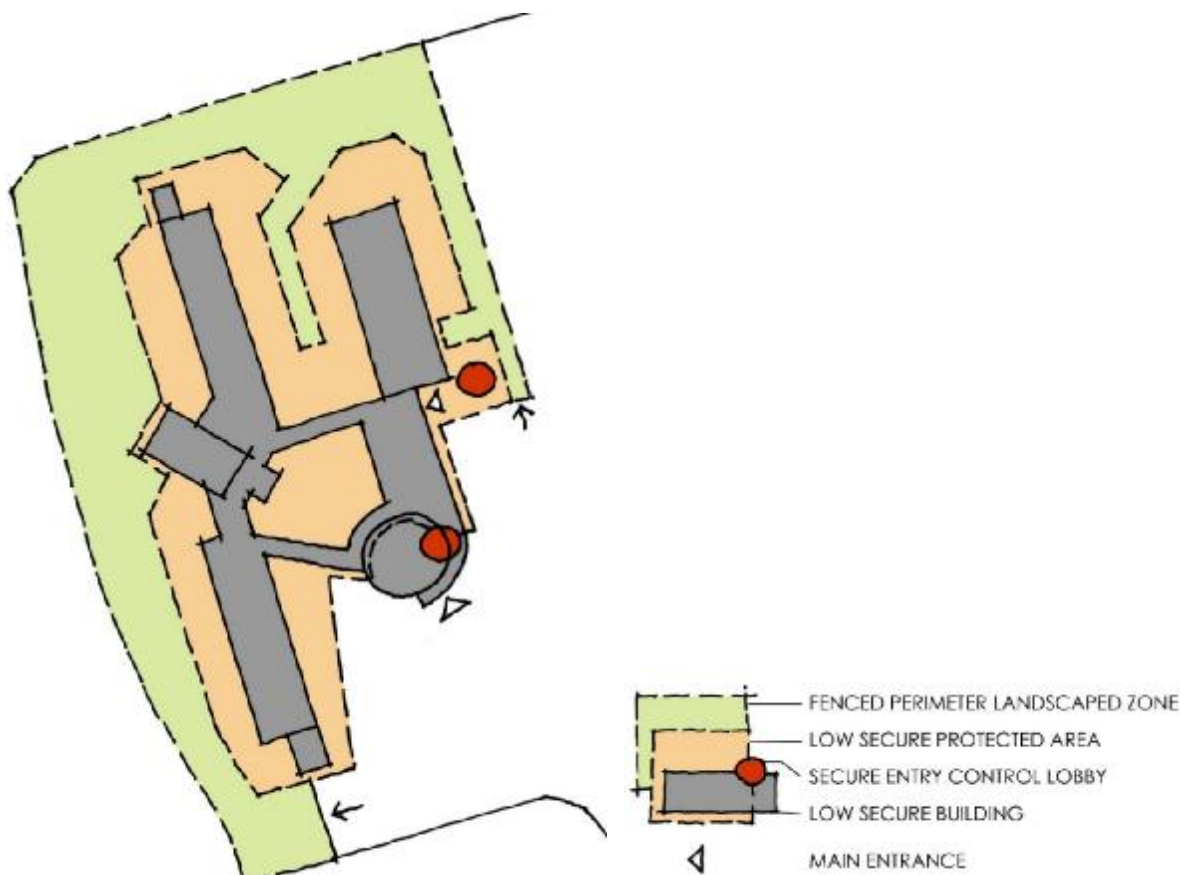


Fig 2: Security Strategy, illustrating dual air-lock entry points

8.0 Conclusion

The provision of a Low Secure Hospital, in Wrexham, is intended to address a clinical need for Wales, where there is currently a shortage of places, resulting in a number of patients being sent out of area.

This Statement addresses the 3 No objections to the Secure Unit as follows:

- a. The Security implications have been fully considered, and meet the government and NHS guidelines for the hospital.

The nature and level of security at a Low Secure Hospital is defined by the government, and is designed to address the nature of risks posed by the resident's mental health needs.

- b. The abovementioned security measures are designed specifically to keep the community safe, as well as ensuring the safety of residents, who may have issues with self harming, amongst other things.

The local community is protected by the abovementioned security provisions, and it is not at risk from those being treated in the hospital. Furthermore, this Statement clarifies the admissions exemptions which will apply to the service.

- c. The operation of the Hospital has also been clarified. This is defined and governed/NHS standards and care provision guidance, with which the operator, or any operator for that matter, would need to comply to receive referrals
The proposed operating company, ASC Healthcare, has a good track record in running secure hospitals, and meeting NHS care outcomes for patients referred to their hospitals.

In addition to the above, extensive local consultations took place prior to the application being submitted, in compliance with Planning legislation, and whilst some concerns were raised about a few issues, mainly concerning traffic, there were no concerns raised about the Low Secure Hospital itself.

Given the above, the applicant hopes that the Hospital would be welcomed by the local community, Wrexham and North Wales as a whole.

It is hoped that the Gwersyllt Community Council, and the Planning Authority, will be able to support the scheme, so that it can be recommended for approval, and supported at the Planning committee.