

SITE PLAN

BEXHILL

RR/2022/1920/P

16 Beeching Road



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Not to Scale

Rother District Council

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| Report to | - | Planning Committee |
| Date | - | 13 October 2022 |
| Report of the | - | Director – Place and Climate Change |
| Subject | - | Application RR/2022/1920/P |
| Address | - | 16 Beeching Road, Bexhill |
| Proposal | - | Change of use of Car Sales/Showroom and Workshop (Sui generis) into a Community Diagnostic Hub (D1). To include minor external alterations and internal alterations, external signage to the main building, and the siting of one mobile unit within the car park. |

[View application/correspondence](#)

RECOMMENDATION: It be **RESOLVED** to **GRANT FULL PLANNING**

Director: Ben Hook

Applicant: East Sussex Healthcare Trust
Agent: HDS Architects
Case Officer: James Laibach
(Email: James.Laibach@rother.gov.uk)

Parish: BEXHILL – KEWHURST WARD
Ward Members: Councillors B.J. Drayson and L.M. Langlands

Reason for Committee consideration: Site owned by Rother District Council

Statutory 8-week date: 23 September 2022
Extension of time agreed to: 20 October 2022

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application seeks permission for the Change of use of Car Sales/Showroom and Workshop (Sui generis) into a Community Diagnostic Hub (D1). To include minor external alterations and internal alterations, external signage to the main building, and the siting of one mobile unit within the car park.
- 1.2 The Community Diagnostic Hub would be a clinical area to provide ultrasound, X-Ray, phlebotomy and other diagnostic services within the community, alongside the required administration spaces. A relocatable unit housing a CT/MRI scanner would also be positioned within the car park on a long-term temporary basis.

- 1.3 The proposal is considered to be a sustainable development, providing medical/health services and also providing a community service that would support a range of jobs equating to 22 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. The view is taken that the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the site and is not expected to give rise to harm to neighbouring amenity or highway safety. It is, accordingly, recommended that planning permission be granted.
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2.0 SITE

- 2.1 The application relates to the part of 16 Beeching Road, which was previously used for car sales and vehicle maintenance, with the south west park of the premises still in use as a vehicle accident repair centre.
- 2.2 16 Beeching Road sits on a detached plot which an area of parking to the rear. The site is on a stretch of Beeching Road which consists of mainly commercial premises, while the land opposite is currently vacant having recently been used as a COVID-19 testing centre. The site sits within the development boundary for Bexhill as outlined in the 2019 Development and Site Allocations Local Plan (DaSA).
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3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application is for a change of use of part (542sqm) of the existing building (1,185sqm total) at 16 Beeching Road that was previously used as Car Sales/Showroom and Workshop area into a Community Diagnostic Hub. Works would include minor external alterations and internal alterations, external signage to the main building, and the siting of one mobile unit within the car park. The intended use would fall within the Use Class E(e).
- 3.2 The Community Diagnostic Hub would be a clinical area to provide ultrasound, X-Ray, phlebotomy and other diagnostic services within the community, alongside the required administration spaces. A relocatable unit housing a CT/MRI scanner would be positioned within the car park on a long-term temporary basis. The existing lobby and main entrance do not meet the needs of Part M of the Building Regulations with a replacement entrance lobby proposed on the north east (side) elevation. Two kiosks serving UKPN power terminations would be required, the one serving the building would be located on the north east (side) elevation, while the other serving the CT/MRI scanner would be in the car parking area near the western boundary adjacent to the scanner. A plant room is also proposed, which would be similar in size to the existing paint store that it replaces on the north west elevation (rear). New air handling equipment would also be located externally, at the rear of the building, along with a secure clinical waste enclosure.
- 3.3 The proposed use would require 22 FTE employees with the proposed hours of operation being 08:00 to 21:00 weekdays and 08:00 to 18:00 weekends and bank holidays. The plans indicate there would be 33 No. parking spaces in total, including 4 No. disability spaces and 6 No. cycle spaces. The car park would be served by a new entrance gate on the existing access, while the existing floodlights in the car park would be replaced with 5 No. 50W LED Asymmetric Floodlights on 6m high poles.

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 RR/87/2975 Conversion of existing warehouse to form car showroom and garage with offices parking etc. Approved Conditional.
- 4.2 RR/97/1656/P Retrospective application for raised display area, canopy and lights and proposed canopy. Approved conditional. Approved Conditional.
- 4.3 RR/2000/1402/P Change of use of parts store to second showroom including associated elevational changes and new external spray booth to existing bodyshop. Approved Conditional.
- 4.4 RR/2003/135/P New automotive refinishing spraybooths. Approved Conditional.
- 4.5 RR/2022/25/P Siting of 1 No. mobile unit within car park for CT and MRI scanning. Withdrawn.
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5.0 POLICIES

- 5.1 The following policies of the [Rother Local Plan Core Strategy 2014](#) are relevant to the proposal:
- BX1: Overall Strategy for Bexhill
 - OSS3: Location of Development
 - OSS4: General Development Considerations
 - EN3: Design Quality
 - TR3: Access and New Development
 - TR4: Car Parking
 - CO2: Provision and Improvement of Healthcare Facilities
- 5.2 The following policies of the [Development and Site Allocations Local Plan \(DaSA\)](#) are relevant to the proposal:
- DCO1: Retention of Site of Social or Economic Value
 - DEN1: Maintaining Landscape Character
 - DEN7: Environmental Pollution
 - DIM2: Development Boundaries
- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance are also material considerations.
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6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Estates Officer – No comments received.
- 6.2 Planning Notice – One letter of support.

6.2.1 *I fully support this much needed facility! A very good idea and very accessible hopefully!*

6.3 Bexhill Town Council – No comments received.

7.0 LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The application is not liable for Community Infrastructure Levy.

8.0 APPRAISAL

8.1 The main issues for consideration are:

- Principle of development
- Highway safety and parking
- The impact on nearby properties
- The impact on the character and appearance of the locality

8.2 Principle of development

8.2.1 The site is within the development boundary of Bexhill as identified within the DaSA.

8.2.2 The proposal makes use of a vacant car sales/showroom and workshop area with a use which would provide medical/health services and would provide a community service in addition to creating a range of skilled and specialist jobs equating to 22 FTE staff which would add to the prosperity of the area. Policy CO2 seeks increased provision and improvement of healthcare facilities which this use would meet, with the site readily accessible by public transport and relatively close to the Bexhill Town Centre.

8.2.3 Community Diagnostic Hubs such as the proposal form part of the Governments' strategy to decentralise some medical services back into the community, meaning that patients can be seen more easily, and the backlog NHS lists can be reduced. Given the above, the change of use is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

8.3 Highway safety and parking

8.3.1 Policy TR4 (i) states that proposed developments shall: (i) meet the residual needs of the development for off-street parking having taking into consideration localised circumstances and having full regard to the potential for access by means other than the car, and to any safety, congestion or amenity impacts of a reliance on parking off-site whether on-street or off-street.

8.3.2 Policy CO6 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy states that a safe physical environment will be facilitated by (ii) ensuring that all development avoids prejudice to road and/or pedestrian safety.

8.3.3 Given the existing use of the site as car sales/showroom and workshop area, it is not considered that the proposed use as a Community Diagnostic Hub would have any greater impact on highway safety. The site is close to the

town centre, being accessible by public transport and is considered sustainably located.

8.3.4 The proposals would involve a total of 33 No. onsite car parking and 6 No. cycle spaces being provided, which is considered sufficient for the proposed use. Nearby offsite parking is also available in the public car park to the rear of the site.

8.3.5 With regards to the proposed floodlights in the car park, these would replace existing flood lights at the site, with the submitted lighting scheme proposal showing that they would not impact on safe vehicle movement along Beeching Road with no part of the main beam falling on the highway.

8.4 The impact on nearby properties

8.4.1 Policy OSS4 (ii) states that all development should not unreasonably harm the amenities of adjoining properties.

8.4.2 The site lies within an established industrial area and is not adjoined by any residential properties. The nearest residences are located in Downlands Avenue which is some 45m to the west, with trees and car parking areas separating them. Given this relationship, it is not considered that the proposed use would have any greater impact than the existing authorised use of the building.

8.4.3 There are existing conditions regarding noise which remain in force for the part of the building that continues to operate as a vehicle accident repair centre, it is therefore considered appropriate to include a similar condition should the application be supported to ensure that the residential amenities are not disturbed by noise from the proposed plant room and air handling equipment located at the rear of the building.

8.4.4 With regards to the proposed replacement floodlights in the car park, the submitted lighting scheme proposal shows that the lights would be angled down. As such given the relationship and distance between the site and the nearest residential properties, it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable impact on the nearby residential amenity.

8.5 The impact on the character and appearance of the locality

8.5.1 Rother Local Plan Core Strategy Policy OSS4 requires that all development to (iii) respect and does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality.

8.5.2 Policy BX1 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy states that the strategy for Bexhill is to (i) conserve and enhance the town's distinct and independent character.

8.5.3 Rother Local Plan Core Strategy Policy EN3 requires new development to be of high design quality by (i) contributing positively to the character of the site and surroundings, including taking opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character or with poor townscape qualities.

- 8.5.4 The limited external alterations to the building include a new Part M compliant replacement entrance lobby on the north east (side) elevation which is considered acceptable in scale and design. The plant room, air handling equipment and waste storage area are located at the rear of the building and would be well screened from wider views. The 2 No. kiosks serving UKPN power terminations are also considered of acceptable scale and design with their locations appropriate within the site.
- 8.5.5 The relocatable unit housing a CT/MRI scanner would be 13.5m by 3.4m and have a height of 3m. The unit would be positioned within the car park towards the western boundary on a long-term temporary basis. Given the temporary nature of the relocatable unit and its location within the carpark it is not considered to be out of character with the established industrial area and as such, it is not considered that the proposals would have an unacceptable impact on the character or appearance of the locality.

9.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal is considered to be a sustainable development, providing medical/health services and also providing a community service that would support a range of jobs equating to 22 FTE staff. The proposed onsite parking provision of 33 No. spaces would be adequate for the proposed use and given the existing use of the unit as a car sales/showroom and workshop area it is not considered that highways safety would be adversely affected.
- 9.2 Given the existing authorised use of the site as a car sales/showroom and workshop area, it is not considered that the proposed use as a community diagnostics hub would have any greater impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of any increased noise or activity. The external alterations proposed are relatively minor and would not have an unacceptable impact on the character or appearance of the locality. It is, accordingly, recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT (PLANNING PERMISSION)

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In accordance with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
Location Plan & Block Plan; Drawing No. D21019-HDS-A-R3-DG-XX-PL-1000 dated 29/07/22
Proposed Site Plan 52105/P/10; Drawing No. D21019-HDS-A-R3-DG-00-PL-105 Rev P3 dated 29/07/22.
Proposed Elevations; Drawing No. D21019-HDS-A-R3-DG-XX-EL-210 Rev P3 dated 29/07/22.

Existing & Proposed Street Elevations and 3D Views; Drawing No. D21019-HDS-A-R3-DG-XX-EL-220 Rev P2 dated 29/07/22
Waste Management Plan Rev P2 dated 29.07.2022
Lighting Scheme Proposal Ref LS01642 dated 28July 2022
General Arrangement; Drawing No. WHB3976-00 dated 30/06/21
Design & Access Statement Ref P4 dated 29.07.2022
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

3. The Community Diagnostic Hub as indicated on approved Drawing No. D21019-HDS-A-R3-DG-00-PL-105 Rev P3 dated 29/07/22 shall be used for the purposes falling within Class E(e) and E (g) only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class E of the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).
Reason: To ensure that the site remains as a community facility or employment site in accordance with Policies CO1, CO2 and EC3 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy.
4. The level of noise emitted from the plant room and air handling equipment hereby approved shall not exceed 47 dB LAeq when measured at the north west boundary of 16 Beeching Road on a line at 90 degrees to the north west elevation of the proposed plant room and air handling equipment.
Reason: To be in line with the environmental requirements for the existing building (RR/2003/135/P) and to safeguard the amenities of the locality and to control noise pollution in accordance with Policy OSS4 (ii) of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy and Policy DEN7 of the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan.
5. The use hereby permitted shall not be open to patients outside the following times 08:00 to 21:00, Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 18:00 weekends and bank holidays (except in emergency situations where use of the Community Diagnostic Hub is required) unless otherwise approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy OSS4 (ii) of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: In accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) and with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.