

Comments for Planning Application 19/02017/FULM

Application Summary

Application Number: 19/02017/FULM

Address: Plot 2A The Retreat 107 Heslington Road York

Proposal: Erection of 3 storey healthcare centre including 46 bed-spaces, associated treatment rooms and other ancillary floorspace, primary and secondary access points, car parking, servicing areas and landscaping works

Case Officer: Hannah Blackburn

Customer Details

Name: Dr Duncan Marks

Address: York Civic Trust, Fairfax House, 27 Castlegate, York YO1 9RN

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Consultee response

Stance: Customer made comments neither objecting to or supporting the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: York Civic Trust considered this application at its Planning Sub-Committee (casework) meeting on the 13th November 2019.

The Trust submits general comments for this application that are mindful of being of use to improve the proposed design scheme, of which, in principle, we would support due to its contribution to and continuation of a rich history of professional mental healthcare in York, and worthy in its own right as offering facilities for those with eating or personality disorders.

As long as there is proven sufficient need for these forms of treatment, that York is a suitable base for it, and that in-patients will include those via public-sector referrals (of which assessment the Trust defers to better informed organisations and individuals on these matters), we consider the proposed scheme's public benefit outweighs the loss of what is otherwise technically York Green Belt and part of The Retreat & Heslington Road Conservation Area.

As mentioned above, the Trust consider the attributes of the development to be the public benefit it offers York (and beyond) as a continued mental healthcare provider, despite the loss of a small amount of green land used for intermittent horse grazing and dog walkers. Consequently the Trust would suggest the applicant to be bolder in the choice of design for the scheme, to strive to create a statement building offering a similar message the original Retreat building by John Bevans would have made on its completion in 1797. While respecting appropriate height and massing, the Trust would urge the applicant to aim for a design that is recognisable as a leading healthcare facility. The applicant might draw inspiration from some of the fine Schoen clinics it has provided in Germany.

While the proposed massing is acceptable for the site itself, and we recognise the sensible use of a sunken basement in the hillside, there are reservations about the ability of the site to offer any future expansion of the clinic, pending its success. Any future growth would likely lead to expansion either vertically or by acquiring adjoining land (such as the Tuke Centre). As a point of note, neither would be welcomed by the Trust.

Finally, there are concerns over the positioning of vehicle access. Neither of the two access points off University Road are ideal due to the busy nature of this road and its steep gradient.

It is for the above reasons that the Trust makes these general comments that are mindful to help improve the application so that it might result in a revised scheme for which we might be able to offer our support.

[Comment submitted on 26 November 2019]