

Southmead Hospital Redevelopment Project Transport and Access Improvements for the new Southmead Hospital

1. Introduction

This paper provides a briefing on progress with public transport and road infrastructure proposals to improve access to the new Southmead Hospital by the time of its opening in 2014.

2. Background

In 2007, the Trust signed a Section 106 agreement to provide funding to support improvements in road and public transport infrastructure as part of its outline planning application for a new hospital to be built at Southmead. The section 106 provides funding for:

- £425,000 to fund the cost of road improvements in Bristol. The funding to be passed to Bristol City Council two years prior to first occupation. Scheme to be completed ready for hospital opening.
- £500,000 to fund the cost of improvements to the North Fringe Development Major Scheme for South Gloucestershire (now confirmed in a Section 278 Agreement agreed in 2010) to support access improvements to the new hospital.
- £1.5 million (split equally across three years) to pump/prime public transport services prior to assumed commercial viability. No further funding is available from the Trust in the event that commercial viability is not achieved so it will be essential to get the right routes in place from the start so that they become self financing. The transportation is to support improved access to Southmead Hospital for Bristol and South Gloucestershire residents. Proposals that improve access for North Somerset residents will be actively considered as part of the overall suite of options to be developed. The first instalment of funding is to be made by Project Co one year prior to first occupation of the hospital, the second on first occupation and the third on the first anniversary of first occupation.

3. Progress

The West of England partnership completed an accessibility study which looked at provision of public transport in relation to where NBT patients and staff live and the development of the new hospital. It put forward proposals about possible changes and additions to bus routes to improve transport to the new hospital. The report was reviewed at the Joint Transport Executive Committee in November 2009 with the recommendation to proceed to develop the options in greater detail.

In order to take this work forward and as set out in the Section 106, a group has been formed comprising members of North Bristol Trust, and the transport departments of Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council. Additional representatives will join the group as required to address particular issues. Terms of reference for the group have been drafted and will be subject to sign off by the respective organisations. Its key objectives (which are subject to approval) include:

- Improve access to the Southmead site and wider area for residents of Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset by public transport, cycling, pedestrian and road infrastructure.
- Oversee and implement road and transport schemes as funded by the Section 106 Agreement in Bristol
- Oversee and implement the Section 278 works in South Gloucestershire
- Ensure best possible access is delivered for the largest proportion of the population served by NBT whilst achieving value for money.

- Actively promote use of alternative forms of transport such as cycling or walking through engagement with other council departments and join up plans to improve access to Southmead Hospital.
- Review and advise on access controls to the site to support bus and blue light movements.
- Investigate the impact of the redevelopment on neighbourhood parking and respond accordingly.
- Ensure appropriate engagement and consultation is undertaken with BCC Neighbourhood Partnerships and NBT User Groups

Proposals for road infrastructure improvements in Bristol are being prepared and will be subject to detailed review prior to proceeding to consultation. Similar discussions will be held in relation to road infrastructure in South Gloucestershire. Groups including Neighbourhood Partnerships, NBT's User and Access and Transport and Access groups will be engaged in the developing proposals.

NBT is keen to ensure that its sites are integrated with the cycle networks in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Proposals to improve cycling opportunities in relation to the wider cycle network will be reviewed with staff from relevant parts of the councils asked to join the Group as required for these items.

Discussions will be held with North Somerset council regarding transportation issues and consideration will be given to how transport proposals could support improvements in access to Southmead from North Somerset.

4. Timescales

A project plan has been drafted setting out timescales for completion of key pieces of work. The clear aim is to ensure public transport and road improvements are in place by the time of the hospital opening in 2014 and ready for when patients and staff will no longer travel to Frenchay Hospital.

The project plan will be further developed by the group. It provides for consultation on the proposals developed by the Group. The work will include a review of the accessibility study undertaken for NBT, analysis of current transport and road infrastructure proposals and options to improve access to Southmead.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that a six-monthly update on progress with regard to transport and road infrastructure improvement proposals is provided.

The active engagement of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils and NBT is essential in order for effective transport and road infrastructure solutions to be identified and taken forward. Commitment from all parties to releasing capacity to support the work of this Group is required.

Prepared by:

Tricia Down
Deputy Director of Projects
North Bristol Trust
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