

Urban Design Observations

To: Katherine Williams, Development Management

From: Anna Kramarczyk-Dillon, Architect/Urban Designer, Mid Sussex DC

Application ref: DM/25/0396

Date: 12/03/2025

Address: Queen Victoria Hospital, Holtye Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex

Description: Proposed development of a single storey Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) at the existing Queen Victoria Hospital with associated car and cycle parking, landscaping and ancillary development

Stage: Planning

This is a well-thought-through scheme that had addressed most of the concerns raised at the previous consultations.

The scheme sufficiently addresses the principles set out in the Council's Design Guides and accords with policy DP26 of the District Plan; I therefore raise no objection to this planning application.

Layout and Massing.

The site predominantly features mid-20th century architecture, with significant modern additions and refurbishments enhancing its facilities. The site is located within a predominantly suburban setting.

The existing hospital campus appears as if it has grown in an ad hoc way with little underlying design strategy. The existing buildings appear to trip over each other, resulting in an unattractive and incoherent jumble that lacks legibility.

The single storey Community Diagnostic Centre is designed prior to finalizing the Masterplan for the hospital site.

There are great advantages of keeping this building and associated landscaping closer to the main road and separate to the hospital complex.

- Locating CDC in front of the main building, between the existing hospital and Holtye Road, where there is a large undeveloped, sloping green area is well-suited for both functionality and accessibility (by bus, foot or car).
- It's important to emphasise that the proposed location will not jeopardize the future masterplan or planned site renovations.
- Additionally, the Jubilee Building's setback from Holtye Road seems too big in this urban context and as a result it fails to adequately define the street. Positioning a new development of this scale and massing closer to Holtye Road seems appropriate in this setting and will enhance street enclosure.

Elevations.

The proposed QVH CDC building is easily identifiable as a separate unit. It's designed to be simple in form, which is hugely dictated by how it will operate.

A clean, crisp, and contemporary approach with material choices and brick detailing that echo those used on the wider site is welcomed.

Deep reveals with portrait-oriented window and panel above, add interest and rhythm to the elevations through the play of light and shade.

Pergolas, canopies, railings, and landscape treatments enhance the layout's legibility.

Summary:

I have no objections to this application. To secure the quality of the design, I would nevertheless recommend conditions requiring the approval of the following details/information:

- Detailed landscape drawings: hard and soft landscaping details including boundary treatments.
- Details and samples of the facing materials.
- Details of curtain wall glazing, roof level balustrade, retaining walls with stone cladding, screen and fencing to the plant area, downpipes with boxing, spandrel panels, metal doors with louvers above, pergolas, canopies and external railings.
- 1:50 scale plans, elevation, and sections of entrance zone to the building.
- 1:20 sections and front elevations of the typical features (shown in context) including windows and doors detail.