

A statement by the Applicant, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust in support of its Planning Application for development at

Ferndene Children and Young People's Mental Health Unit

Proposals for Ferndene are a vital part of the Trust's broader CEDAR Programme, which comprises three components: changes to children's services at Ferndene, changes to adult services in Newcastle and a new Medium Secure Unit at Northgate Hospital; the latter having gained Planning Approval in January this year. CEDAR (total value circa £74m) identifies over £60m of capital investment in the Northumberland NHS estate; securing sustainable employment and retaining access to services locally. Each part of the CEDAR Programme depends on the successful delivery of the whole to secure £54.2m of funding from the Department of Health and Social Care, with the remaining balance sourced from Trust reserves and land sales. Planning consents are now in place at Northgate Hospital and St Nicholas Hospital. This, the Ferndene planning application, is the final piece of the jigsaw. If successful it will enable the Trust to submit its Full Business Case to the DHSC on 3rd June 2020.

Specialist in-patient assessment and treatment facilities for young people with severe mental and neurodevelopmental disorders (including learning disability and autism) are provided typically in four settings: medium secure (MSU), low secure (LSU) and psychiatric intensive care units (PICU), each offering a range of security measures not required general admission wards. This ensures effective treatment and care whilst ensuring the safety of young people, staff and the public.

Proposals in this application deliver all these elements, with MSU facilities currently at the Alnwood Unit, Nicholas Hospital, Gosforth, moving alongside the general admission, low secure and PICU wards already present at Ferndene.

MSUs accommodate young people with elevated levels of risk and potential harm to themselves and others; including on occasions, mentally disordered offenders detained by Law. Low secure facilities accommodate young people with disorders requiring lower, but still significant levels of security.

PICUs manage short-term behavioural disturbance, which cannot be contained within a general admission ward. Physical security in PICUs is similar to low secure.

General admission wards provide inpatient care without the need for enhanced physical or procedural security measures.

Multi-disciplinary treatment packages recognise that many young people admitted to Ferndene are often very vulnerable, perhaps intrinsically fearful; with high levels of dependency and low levels of trust. They require patient, focused and consistent approaches from their care givers, enhanced by well-designed, functionally appropriate, interesting accommodation that stimulates optimism and well-being.

All young people admitted to Ferndene are encouraged to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. This is achieved through programmes of therapeutic and recreational activities, as well as formal education. The educational and recreational facilities at Ferndene are highly valued, adding greatly to the therapeutic regime that offers a variety of psychological interventions, problem solving approaches, mood stabilisation and a range of treatments.

The therapeutic milieu at Ferndene is supportive and resilient; delivering individualised treatment and care, often for protracted periods of time, with some youngsters experiencing chronic challenging behaviours arising from past significant adversity. Robust safeguarding systems guide standards of treatment and care, balancing individual rights and protection with and the safety of patients, staff, visitors *and* the local community.

Ferndene is already a modern, welcoming environment where young people can address their problems in safety and with dignity. This will be further enhanced by these proposals: increasing levels of security to meet higher national standards, bespoke internal design features, bolstered security measures and new external fencing to the rear and sides of the facility to meet mandatory MSU design and operating standards. Highly defined standards of service and risk-assessed security operating procedures are a mandatory requirement also.

In response to several FOI questions from a Humble's Wood resident about the current Adolescent MSU, Alnwood Unit at St Nicholas Hospital, Gosforth, the Trust confirmed the following:

During the last three years -

There have been no formal or informal complaints by members of the general public;

There have been no incidents involving unauthorised absence or escape;

The number of patients classified as mentally disordered sex offenders was 2.

The Trust has been twice judged as *Outstanding* by the Care Quality Commission. It's aim at Ferndene is to have all specialist child and young people's in-patient facilities in one location, to optimise best use of experience, expertise, the environment and resources, thereby offering the very best possible delivery of treatment and care.

The Trust is pleased to note that the Planning Officer supports the application and there are no consultee objections. It is hoped that the Committee can support the application, thus enabling this and the wider CEDAR Programme to progress.

The CEDAR Programme Team

26 May 2020