

New Hospital Site Consultation



Conscientious Consideration of Closing Report - August 2023

Contents

Purpose of Conscientious Consideration	3
Process undertaken for the Conscientious Consideration.....	4
Conscientious Consideration feedback - Stakeholders.....	5
Feedback summary	5
Initial reactions to findings analysis	5
Travel and access	6
Recruitment and Retention	6
Future proofing and site design	6
Mitigations the UHB should consider	7
Equality Considerations.....	7
Other considerations / final points	8
Conscientious Consideration feedback - Board Members.....	9

Purpose of Conscientious Consideration

Public Consultations are developed and carried out in line with Gunning Principles. These are four rules which can support consulters in developing a fair, worthwhile, and accessible consultation.

Should a consultation be brought to Judicial Review (the process for challenging decisions made by public bodies) Gunning Principles are one of the tools used to determine whether consultation is fit for purpose.

The first three Gunning Principles are satisfied during consultation planning and delivery. The fourth principle is met after the consultation closes and states:

'that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision'

The conscientious consideration process allows the Board to demonstrate that it has:

- Properly considered the material produced by the consultation
- Not made up its mind or come to its own decision
- Taken into account relevant issues and matters that the public feel the Board should be aware of

Process undertaken for the Conscientious Consideration

The following groups were asked to consider the report in virtual meetings and received a presentation of key findings from Opinion Research Services(ORS):

- 11th August – A Healthier Mid and West Wales (AHMWW) Programme Team
- 14th August - AHMWW Equality and Health Impact (EHIA) Workstream
- 15th August, 2023 - Llais
- 16th August - AHMWW Transport Workstream
- 18th August - AHMWW Programme Group (with additional invites to those on Exec Team who are not currently invited)
- 22nd August - Stakeholder Reference Group

and asked:

- Is there anything that surprises you about the findings of the report?
- Are there any further mitigations we should be considering?
- Do you think we have identified all the equalities issues? Or if not please note any other issues.
- Are there any final points you would like to make, anything not captured in the report?

The following groups were asked to review the report:

- Public Services Boards in Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion
- Staff Partnership Forum
- Clinicians involved in the Consultation process
- Welsh Ambulance Service Trust

and provide electronic answers to the questions below:

- Are there any further mitigations we should be considering?
- Do you think we have identified all the equalities issues? Or if not please note any other issues.
- Are there any final points you would like to make, anything not captured in the report?

Conscientious Consideration feedback - Stakeholders

6 virtual meetings were held.

5 electronic responses were received.

Feedback summary

- The closing report developed by Opinion Research Services mirrors the comments and themes heard at the events.
- Agreement on the recurring themes in particular transport, accessibility, recruitment and retention of staff.
- Travel and transport and transport poverty are concerns. (Transport workstream also undertook their own analysis of the data from the closing report which was provided at Board Seminar 24th August, 2023).
- Equalities issues have been captured.
- Strong feeling that there will be a need for accommodation on the site.
- Opportunities for carbon reduction schemes.
- Positivity around the biophilic concept.
- The need to ensure we communicate well on our strategy and the need for continuous engagement. UHB needs to promote proposed health and wellbeing centres as well as the plans for the new urgent and planned care hospital.
- Board will need to consider the future state as some assumptions made by the public are based on the current status quo.

Initial reactions to findings analysis

- There was no reference to the air ambulance that was provided at any of the consultation events attended and in relation to ambulance handover delays because of the current picture.
- Less than 1% of the population within the HB, who could have responded/commented, have provided information to produce this report. Contextually very important to remember.
- The findings are not surprising. Many Staff Side Organisations Reps have voiced similar opinions particularly regarding lower paid staff, access to affordable accommodation and travel costs.
- In relation to the ORS report, travel times and concerns regarding ambulance response times were a common concern raised by key stakeholders across all of the proposed site options. This is reflective of the discussions held at the various public engagement and consultation events.
- Importance of dedicated ambulance space on site, such as an Ambulance Liaison Supervisor area – along with a dedicated arrivals and departures lounge (aka discharge lounge) with access into the hospital site and key departments (e.g., Emergency Department, Outpatients).
- Availability of vehicle parking – for both EMS & NEPTS – and WAST. Volunteer car driver vehicles is also an important aspect to consider for the new site.

Travel and access

- Raised as the main key issue in the consultation.
- A lot of detail captured in the report, similar comments on 3 sites in relation to transport and access.
- Public are very focused on the roads and transport situation as it currently stands, rather than what improvements might be possible in the future.
- Public transport will be more challenging in the more rural/remote areas.
- Transport poverty, and cost of public transport and fuel were also concerns and this was in the report as reported at events.
- Car parking concerns and ability to expand car park was felt as important as we've seen what's happened in existing sites and again impact on poor transport links of those visiting loved ones.
- Thinking of 3 sites we need to ensure we can get public transport vehicles into sites or at least close to the sites. We have to ensure that the site chosen is accessible by local bus or we can get buses as close as possible to the sites.
- Those people who are in poverty may not be able to afford public transport even when those links go to the sites. Those people are typically reliant on third sector support, which has considerably declined since covid due to lack of volunteers. Community transport and how that has dwindled since covid did come through in the report.
- Holiday traffic and the frequency of road closures was something heard quite a few times in the events attended.
- The impact of poor transport links on visitors wishing to visit patients in hospital was noted.
- Importance of the St Clears railway station in terms of providing a sustainable transport option for staff as well as visitors.

Recruitment and Retention

- Staff wellbeing will be important (following the move).
- There was a lot of positivity regarding, e.g., a State-of the art facility making it easier to attract staff.

Future proofing and site design

- There are public concerns about site size and adequate space for expansion for the three sites especially for car parking and accommodation.
- Positive to see housing and accommodation mentioned in the report as these are key areas that would need to be looked at.
- Positive that we are looking at environmental aspects and biophilic. Green space around the hospital is really important and opportunity for friends and family to be close by. Topography issues will therefore be important.
- Need to look at innovation. The car parking issues raised now will be different in the future e.g., autonomous vehicles.
- Some of the assumptions made on current status quo e.g., comments based on transport issues today. Need to balance discussion on what will be different in the future.

Mitigations the UHB should consider

- Consider for future consultations, specific session for some of the volunteers that support the hospitals.
- Carbon reduction schemes to mitigate the carbon around building projects, there are possibilities to invest in local growing projects.
- People see Carmarthen and Haverfordwest as population centres where people live and work. May be useful to look at hospitals based outside centres where it has worked well as lessons learnt / good practice to share with public.
- There is insufficient detail on the investment in primary and community care, without this it is difficult to see how the new secondary care pathways can be developed. Many people are working on this but it doesn't appear to be linked in to those developing TCS, it is not prioritised and relies on pilots and temporary funding to prove those concepts essential to our future model. This needs focus now.
- Health and Social Care Services in this area are not suitable in their current form. Things have got to change but it needs to be in a sensitive way.
- Additional areas already included although for slightly different mitigations would be: 1) For Patient visitors was the concern of the impact to immediate patient (relative) health and wellbeing which may increase patient recovery and therefore length of stay for Visitors travelling to either Site/s. 2) For opposing the New site location based upon current Ambulance Handover Delays at DGH's rather than relating this to once the site is ready (timeline). 3) For information provided to the members of the Public, which was extensive there were still an amount of Patients who did not realise or understand the Strategy bigger picture or benefits of UCCC including HB plans for Community Care.
- Key mitigations include: 1) Following identification of the 'preferred' new hospital site we recommend that more detailed modelling is undertaken to understand the impact on both the EMS & NEPTs services to identify any 'additional capacity' that may be required as a result of the proposed changes. 2) Further detailed discussions regarding the requirement to enhance Transfer & Discharge capabilities for both inter-hospital transfers (step up / step down) and patient repatriation. 3) Continue the collaborative working to identify and build on the opportunities of WAST to support the clinical model and support the management of patients at home or in the community.

Equality Considerations

- In terms of demographics of respondents, a good cross-section of the general population responded to the consultation.
- It would be interesting to look at the demographics in terms of responses from disabled and older people. It's possible that people who are not able to easily access the current provision might be more vocal because of the impact on them.
- It would be worth highlighting messages coming from specific groups e.g. do the LGBT community have clear themes?

- In terms of conversations with the Disability Partnership, Transport is the main consideration when it comes to any strategic plans – so it would be good to have further conversations as you prepare the Transport and Accessibility Strategy.
- The consideration would also be on parking and how you designate accessible spaces – if you can go above the normal 6% allocation and make sure of the width of parking spaces.
- In terms of electric car charging, specialist disability settings will need to be included.
- Communities in St David's peninsular and Fishguard face the longest journey times and are the most disadvantaged in this proposal, work must be done to mitigate this and invest in local services for this population. They already have poor primary care infrastructure, small and fragile GP practices and relatively little community care with long journey times to the existing sites.

Other considerations / final points

- Llais requested that the UHB notes that the public raised a lot of other health and care issues at the public drop in events in addition to discussions on land selection. These included issues such as long waiting times and GP access.
- Some session locations although had low public attendance were very detailed discussion with clear concerns. Members of the Public came to the table with statistical knowledge to support their queries. It was key for all relevant key stakeholders to be present e.g., local authority, Councillors, Health Board Strategy leads and Transport as well as WAST.
- The Transport Workstream provided an additional piece of analysis on the consultation findings which were presented at Board Seminar 24th August, 2023.
- Partners keen to share learning on how we can engage more with young people.
- Always mention the community infrastructure alongside any mention of new hospital site development so that it is clear that not everyone will be expected to travel down to the new site for their care. We will have provision locally also. This will be important in our communication.
- We heard positivity from the public also, it's hard to know if people we spoke to completed questionnaires. A lot of positivity came through at the recent County Show also.
- Some scepticism is it going to happen? It is likely that positivity will grow as plans progress.
- We need modelling of number of vehicles per hour at peak times at proposed sites and the implications. We need the modelling for number of women delivering in Hywel Dda for Whitland or St Clears options. We need staff surveys to see who would travel if their site change, what that will cost them (especially those on under 20K).
- Concerns about Public Access to wherever the site is cannot be understated.

Conscientious Consideration Themes - Board Members

The Board met on the 24th August, 2023 to receive the consultation findings from Opinion Research Services (ORS) and also received the feedback from the conscientious consideration undertaken by stakeholders.

The consultation findings were presented by Opinion Research Services (ORS) chaired by an associate of the Consultation Institute (TCI)

During this session the Board also undertook its own conscientious consideration of the consultation findings. The Board discussed:

Consultation activities and responses

- ORS reported a good questionnaire response with wide engagement with a range of people.
- It was also noted that a large proportion of the population did not engage with our questionnaire, the awareness of the consultation, however, has been far greater.

Workforce Implications/Staff recruitment and retention

- Post pandemic and during the pandemic in rural areas, it was recognised that nurse recruitment and sourcing local accommodation was challenging.

Travel and access

- Issues presented in the report are issues familiar to the board in particular for those people who attended and listened to the public and partners in some of the meetings. Overwhelmingly, is the issue of transport.
- The Board noted the comment in the consultation feedback on the lack of control that the health board has in relation to transport and recognised the need to work closely with partner organisations to progress this matter. As a Health Board assurance needs to be sought and provided on the transport issues and in particular the increased volume of traffic within the summer months. The three sites all have the same or similar challenges of accessibility.

Green considerations and biophilic design opportunities

- One of the issues that was reinforced was the advantages to the biophilic design strategy. People seem to be passionate about biophilic design. A bigger site would be more complementary to a biophilic hospital, and future proofing.

Future flexibility/future proofing, site design, and infrastructure

- Expansion space and access issues are important considerations.

Housing and accommodation needs

- Finding a housing solution needs to be considered.
- There are potential opportunities adjacent to the sites for housing development
- Accommodation is particularly important in a rural area especially when people's loved ones stay in hospital for a period of time and visiting is a challenge.

Renewable Energy

- Renewable energy considerations important

Equalities Impact

- The Board discussed the importance of a robust Equality and Health Impact Assessment.
- Noted that the EHIA is an ongoing process and an updated EHIA will be provided for 14th September, 2023 Board Meeting

Feedback in relation to individual sites

- Reinforced advantages to biophilic design
- Bigger site would be complementary to a biophilic hospital, ensuring future proofing
- Expansion space is an important consideration
- Concept designs have already been worked up, includes some accommodation on each of the sites. All sufficient for hospital developments, at threshold of 35 acres.
- The opportunity for solar farm on site was flagged. There was a comment in the consultation that 'emissions targets not ambitious enough'. It was noted that the cost for incorporating a solar farm was not included in any of site options for the Programme Business Case (PBC).
- Opportunities to approach choosing a site through a positive lens to be explored e.g. which one gives us the best option accounting for the biophilic design? Which one gives us the best opportunity for energy and decarbonization? and which one has the best flexibility for expansion, which has the best option for medical stability? Etc
- Considered the points relating to community impact

Alternative sites proposed

- The board noted the limited number of alternate sites (i.e. showground in Nantyci, Canaston Bridge, Penblewin near Narberth) however the limitations of the sites were recognised.

- Many participants across all consultation methods remain opposed to idea of new hospital and support refurbishing existing Glangwili and Witybush sites and retaining services there. However, also recognition that modern, fit-for-purpose hospital of sufficient size not possible on existing sites.

Feedback from the conscientious consideration undertaken by stakeholders.

The Board were provided with the feedback submitted by other stakeholders as part of the conscientious consideration process. The Board will further review this feedback at the Public Board meeting schedule to be held on 14th September, 2023.

Communities impact and the need for continuous engagement

- The board noted the importance of communicating the strategy and overall timescales to the public.
- The UHB need a process of continuous engagement with our communities and there is a need to reflect on the negative feedback and understand it more.
- There is a commitment to listening to what our public have said to us.
- It is interesting to see the points around community, there are concerns around the town of Whitland, feedback within the report notes St Clears already being a bottleneck. There is work to be undertaken look at the community angle and what the community concerns are, also exploring socioeconomic impact. Having a very local conversation about how we make this work for this community.
- Importance of continued learning from previous projects
- In terms of young people ensuring their opinions influence this consultation and the outcomes.

Engagement with young people

- The board noted the importance of young people's opinions - recognition that many of our young people today are the future workforce of Hywel Dda. It was highlighted that young people are prepared to travel within the region. We aim to retain those young people, and then they in turn will, support their communities, the ripple effect is a huge positive, we need to balance this in terms of what the official consultation presents, which is a certain view, it's not perhaps the whole view.
- Board will contemplate the responses with what we know through our work with partners across the public, private and third sectors, and demonstrate the positive effects that this can bring and engage in a wider conversation on those positives.

Other comments

- The public are focussing on the current state of public transport and housing, also need to consider future state.

- Advances in digital and technology, these things will naturally change, and we have little influence over them. There will be other things that would naturally happen when you build a new hospital, and then they'll be other things, which the Board could be influencing during this time period.
- ORS also highlighted a range of other important issues raised in the consultation feedback such as the need to ring fence elective capacity, impact on paediatric services.
- It was noted that several themes are already part of the work programme but there are others raised in the consultation, which will require further work at the Outline Business Case stage such as housing, accommodation requirements and engagement programmes with the directly impacted community.
- Query about number of respondents who did not give postcodes was raised. ORS advised that feedback from the questionnaire is only one element of the feedback gathered a lot of feedback has also come from participants in the different localities and at the different events which match the feedback coming in through the questionnaires. The views by geography are well covered.

Other important issues/points

- The key themes raised will form part of the programme's workplan and mitigation of risks going forward and be further discussed at Public Board on 14th September, 2023.
- Conscious consideration by Board Members will continue up until the Public Board Meeting which members will make a note of those and feed them into the board discussion on the 14th September.