

Media Release

Temporary building will provide solution to Hospital's theatre needs

Plans to install a temporary building providing additional operating theatre space at Jersey General Hospital are to be lodged with the planning department today.

The proposed new facility, containing two operating theatres, will be sited in the Gloucester Street car park and attached to the main theatre suite at the Hospital, enabling refurbishment work to be carried out on the existing theatres.

The project will also increase capacity at the Hospital from four to six theatres, including the Maternity Theatre, spanning a 10-year time-frame that will cover the period until the anticipated major project for a new hospital facility for Jersey is realised. Of the six theatres, four, rather than the current two, will be equipped with superior ventilation systems, meeting the standards required for complex or high-risk surgery.

"The existing theatre block is now over 30-years-old and in need of refurbishment, meaning that additional theatre space is required in order to carry on with our operating lists whilst the upgrading work takes place," said Hospital Managing Director Helen O'Shea. "After refurbishment is complete, the Maternity Unit will relocate its theatre cases to the main operating block, in line with modern practice.

"Additionally, and very importantly, demands for planned surgery are growing, and we need to increase capacity in order to meet this demand."

In developing the proposals, all possible avenues for the siting of the new theatres have been explored. Mrs O'Shea adding that the chosen option was considered the only feasible solution that would deliver the required capacity for winter 2014 within the available budget.

The Health and Social Services department's project management team has worked closely with Jersey Property Holdings on the planning application, which is being submitted following consultation with the Jersey Architecture Commission, Planning Officers and the Island's Historic Environment Officer. The proposed building will not have any permanent impact on the Listed Granite Building at the Hospital.

Additional benefits of the new facility will include the provision of far more spacious theatres, enabling those cases requiring the greatest number of staff and equipment to be housed in the new block, as well as providing additional storage for equipment that is necessary to keep pace with advances in medical technology.

The proposals for the new theatres have been welcomed by Minister for Health and Social Services, Deputy Anne Pryke, who said: "This is an important, and very necessary,

investment in our hospital infrastructure. If we are to continue to meet the growing demand for operations in Jersey, and ensure that we do that with appropriate and modern facilities and equipment, then it is vital we take this project forward.”

The project has also been supported by Treasury and Resources Assistant Minister Deputy Eddie Noel: “We recognise the need to ensure we have the best facilities for the people of Jersey and this approach to providing an interim solution for operating theatres delivers good value and makes good sense.”