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FUTURE OF NEW COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE AT LAUDER

Plans for the new health centre in Lauder are now on display.

Lauder is one of three new health centre projects planned in the Borders.

The two existing medical practice premises in Memorial Medical Centre and Factors Park will be replaced by a specially designed, modern facility offering much improved health services to the community. The project will also see the minor relocation of the main football pitch, and the creation of a new grass pitch at the rear of the park, new sports changing facility and new and improved children's park play area.

Dr Paul Cormie of Stow and Lauder Medical Centre said: "Our current premises at Factors Park, a converted bungalow, are no longer sufficient to meet the needs of patients. Lack of space, difficulty with confidentiality and parking and access problems are some of the main issues. A purpose-built modern health centre in Lauder would be a welcome solution."

Dr Iwona Reid of Memorial Medical Centre said: "We welcome the opportunity to relocate to the new health centre. Such a move will allow improvement and an expansion of the health care services from an easily accessible and central location."

Calum Campbell, Chief Executive of NHS Borders, has suggested however that the project may be delayed or progressed elsewhere in the Borders if an acceptable site for the new facility is not identified and confirmed immediately.

"We have worked with the Council and community representatives to ensure due process has been followed and a number of potential sites for the new centre will be considered. The only viable option, identified to date, that will allow us to meet the statutory requirements and clinical needs for NHS community health centres as well as provide a sustainable community facility and offer value for money is the Croft Road site," he said.

"Given this, it is disappointing that an action group, Protect Our Greenfield Site (POGS) which represents the people of Lauder, does not wish this development on the proposed site as they allege it will reduce green space in the town.

"I have met with the group to discuss its concerns. Two potential sites on the periphery of the town have been identified as potentially suitable. We will quickly examine the viability and affordability of these.

"The Scottish Government, however, is likely to reduce capital spending in the near future. So unless we can take forward the project on an agreed site quickly, NHS Borders will have to consider using the money set aside for Lauder to improve health facilities elsewhere in the Borders."

Councillor David Parker, Leader of Scottish Borders Council said: “The Council, NHS Borders and the community have been working hard for three years to deliver a new health centre in Lauder. There really is now only one viable site for this new centre. So I hope the community grasp this opportunity and all the other benefits this development will bring with it, otherwise I am afraid this opportunity could be lost.”

Ends

Contacts:

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