

New GP Premises, King Street, Stroud

Locking Hill Surgery and Stroud Valley's Family Practice are looking to move together into new premises, subject to the NHS granting their approval. The premises will be located at 16 King Street, Stroud. Local residents will know this as the old Woolworth's Building. Stroud Regeneration Ltd will fund the development. The NHS will pay the assessed rent to the GP practices, who intend to sign a lease for 25 years.

The new premises will offer much more space, additional consulting and treatment rooms, and will help both practices provide a wider range of Primary Care Services to their patients. A new building will also bring improvements in the patient environment, as it will be designed to meet the needs of patients with mobility, sensory and other types of impairment.

As part of the initial phase of the proposed development, we are inviting comments on our outline plans. We have developed responses to a series of questions that we think will be asked frequently. We will add to these questions and responses if additional queries arise from our patients or from members of the public.

We have grouped the questions and the responses into themes.

Section 1: Questions about transport, location of the new premises and access

Q: Where are the proposed new premises?

A: The new premises are proposed to be in the old Woolworth's building, in King Street in the centre of Stroud. The practices will take the ground floor and first floor.

Q: How much parking is available?

A: The Five Valley's multi-storey car park, which is located adjacent to the proposed new premises, has 360 spaces that can be used for patients attending our surgeries.

Q: Will patient parking be available?

A: Yes, patient parking will be available within the multi-storey car park and patients can use any spaces. There will be disabled parking spaces close to the entrances to the building. There will be direct access from the car park into the surgeries via the lift.

Q: Will parking be free?

A: Free parking will be provided for all patients with an appointment at the surgery. Patients will be required to enter their vehicle registration number at the surgery reception desk.

Q: Can I drop people off outside the main entrance?

A: The developer has submitted an application to Gloucestershire Highways to create a dropping off point and an ambulance pick up point outside the main surgery entrance on King Street.

Q: Is it on a bus route?

A: The proposed site is on local bus routes, is outside the taxi rank in the centre of Stroud and is also close to the railway station. The main Merrywalks Bus Station is accessible by stairs as well as by a lift.

Q: Will there be access for disabled people and those with limited mobility/eyesight issues etc.?

A: The building will be designed to ensure that it meets the requirements for people with disabilities and other mobility issues, for example it will have wide doors, assisted toilets and induction loops for those who are hard of hearing.

Q: Will the surgery be open at weekends?

A: We will continue to review our appointment capacity and if we identify that there is a need or a patient preference to open at weekends, we will consider offering weekend appointments.

Q: Will it be easy to get an appointment?

A: Appointments can be booked online, or by calling the surgery. The new surgery development would enable the two practices to work together and to offer additional services such as Physiotherapy, a wider range of community clinics and better treatment such as Minor Surgery. We will aim to make appointment booking as easy as possible and offer routine appointments within 7-10 days.

Q: Are there lifts in the new development?

A: Yes, there are two lifts in the development. These lifts will serve all three floors of the building. They can be accessed from the ground floor reception as well as from the car park to the rear of the building.

Section 2: Services

Q: Will there be a pharmacy nearby?

A: There are a number of pharmacies in the centre of Stroud and we are assuming that these will continue to operate as they do now.

Q: Will I be able to see my own GP or my usual practice nurse?

A: If you need an urgent appointment or home visit, the duty doctor or any member of the healthcare team will see you. You will continue to have a choice of doctor or nurse for your routine appointment.

Q: Are you planning to provide any new services as part of the development?

A: Yes, it is national and local NHS policy to increase the range of services offered in GP surgeries and in our local communities. We hope that that we will be able to increase the range of services available to our patients. Patients will still be able to access the full range of services that each practice provides, such as blood tests, Specialist Practice Nurses such as COPD and Asthma, Diabetes, Mental Health, Midwifery and District Nursing.

Q: Are you planning to share any services with each other?

A: The practices see the new development as an opportunity to work closely together whilst retaining their individual identity. Although we will be working as separate GP practices, we are planning to share our clinical skills as well as our administration and reception functions, which will help us, provide more resilience and a wider range of services to our patients.

Q: Are you planning to merge as practices, either now or in the future?

A: We are not planning a merger from the outset, but this may be something that both sets of partners consider in the future. Any proposed merger, should this be agreed between the practices, would need formal approval from NHS England and NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Q: What is happening to Poundland?

A: This is question for Poundland to answer. We anticipate that the practices will be taking vacant possession of the current building. If Poundland chooses to cease trading they will need to consult their employees. New jobs are being created as part of the Five Valleys Development.

Section 3: Premises

Q: What is the proposed name of the new GP premises?

A: The proposed name of the new premises is yet to be decided.

Q: When will you be in the new building if it goes ahead?

A: We have to take a Business Case to NHS Gloucestershire CCG in either December 2019 or February 2020. If the business case were approved, Stroud Regeneration Limited would expect to start the building works in the summer of 2020, with a move in date around 9-12 months later.

Q: How is this paid for?

A: The NHS will assess the fair market rent payable for the premises and provide this to the GP practices. The rent assessment is made independently to ensure that the level of rent agreed represents a fair amount for the type of development in Stroud. The rent will then be paid to the developer by the GP practices, for the term of the lease, which is expected to be for 25 years.

Q: What will happen to the Locking Hill site?

The GP partners own the current surgery building at Locking Hill and are evaluating a range of options for the site. They will share information on their plans as they develop.

Q: What about Beeches Green Health Centre?

A: There are currently two GP practices working out of the Health Centre and therefore, assuming that the Business Case is successful and Stroud Valley's Family Practice move into the new building, the remaining practice, Dr Salter & Partners of Beeches Green Surgery, will stay in the Health Centre as this is their preferred option.

Q: What do the staff at the surgeries think?

A: Our staff have reviewed the plans and have been consulted on them. They understand the need for more space and can see that the development will bring a better working environment for them.

Q: Will there be any staff redundancies?

A: The partners do not plan to make any staff redundancies as a result of the proposed premises development.

Q: Do the doctors/surgery team want to move to the new premises?

A: The doctors and staff of both surgeries are very committed to moving into the new premises and they see this as an opportunity to bring more services into the town and to increase the range of primary care medical services available.

Q: Why do the surgeries need a larger building?

A: Our current buildings are too small to meet the needs of our patients now and we need to plan for sufficient space to allow for growth in the future.

Q: Will I have to change my GP?

A: No, you won't have to change your GP.

Q: Can I see a GP from either practice in the new premises?

A: Not initially. The practices will continue to be separate so you will continue to have access to the GPs from your current surgery. However, this may be something that both practices offer in the future, for example by sharing home visits, or duty doctor sessions.

Q: Can I still get my prescription delivered to a Pharmacy of my choice?

A: Yes, there will be no changes to how you choose to collect your prescription.

Q: What is the Patient Participation Group and how can I join?

A: Both practices have a Patient Participation Group, called the PPG. The PPGs represent patients, giving them an opportunity to help make their views heard. They meet with the GPs and the management team at both practices to ensure that issues relating to patient experience are discussed. They can also help with fundraising for new equipment and offer support to the practices for events such as the flu clinics. Both groups welcome new members and details can be found on the practice websites or in our waiting rooms.

Q: Will there be other services based in the building?

A: The developer, Stroud Regeneration Ltd, is in discussion with another care organisation to try and bring health services into the 3rd floor of the building.

Q: Where do I go for more information/who should I contact if I have more questions/concerns?

The GP partners and all the surgery staff are keen to hear your feedback and answer your questions. Please get in touch with your surgery if you have further questions.