

A new multi-storey car park for QEH - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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If you have a question that we do not yet have an answer to please email our dedicated email address: newhospital@qehkl.nhs.uk

Q: What is the proposal for a new multi-storey car park?

Alongside our plans to bring a new QEH to King's Lynn and West Norfolk, we have developed proposals for a two-phase multi-storey car park (MSCP) development on our current hospital site. With the increasing demand for more patient, visitor and staff parking, multi-storey car parks are commonplace around the country. They are an integral feature of the majority of plans for new hospitals. QEH is no different.

Our plans for a new multi-storey car park will help address our short-term need for spaces, providing a better experience for patients, visitors and staff. Our proposal is the most effective way of using the space we have and it is a critical enabling scheme which allows us to keep the current hospital open until the new QEH opens its doors in 2029 (subject to necessary approvals).

We are proposing that this happens in two phases:

- phase one will see a new car park to serve the current hospital (in addition to the existing main car park). This phase will be developed in such a way that the initial phase one car park can remain operational while phase two is being built
- phase two will follow when funding for a new hospital is announced (to replace the spaces lost when the main car park is developed).
- The proposal (following an appraisal process involving staff, Governors and patient representatives) is for the development of the MSCP on the current Inspire Centre site and car park. The Inspire Centre is a Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) building and there are plans for its demolition early in 2023 with current Centre occupants being relocated on the QEH site.

Q: Why does QEH need a new car park?

Like many other hospitals up and down the country, providing enough car parking spaces for our patients, visitors and staff is a challenge at QEH. A recent travel survey has shown that the number of people traveling to QEH by car continues to increase, and this has been more noticeable since COVID-19 visiting restrictions were lifted.

Our preferred new hospital scheme would see the new hospital built on our existing car park. We have been thinking about how we provide enough parking for patients, visitors and staff both while the proposed new hospital is being built and once it is up and running.

Our proposal is in line with most new hospital schemes across the country which include plans for car parking facilities using multi-storey car parks, recognising that for patients,

visitors and staff, good access to parking has a significant impact on their overall experience. QEH is no different.

Q: What will the impact be on patients, visitors and staff if we don't have a new car park?

For patients, visitors and staff, good access to parking has a big impact on their experience of visiting or working at the hospital. We need more spaces in the short-term to take account of immediate parking needs, especially as more people are visiting the hospital now that COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. We think our plans will help provide a better overall experience for patients, visitors and staff.

Our proposal is the most effective way of using the space we have to provide parking facilities for our patients, visitors and staff. Importantly, it is a critical part of our plans for a new hospital as it will help keep the current hospital open until the new QEH opens its doors in 2029 (subject to necessary approvals).

Q: How will it help the building of a new hospital?

We have until 2025 to carry out 'enabling' works that will facilitate the hospital build – this includes ensuring we replace the existing car park that the new hospital would be built on. After careful consideration we think that the best solution to car parking at the QEH, both in the short and long-term, is to build a multi-storey car park.

This will ease parking challenges in the short-term by creating more spaces and will free up the current car park space as a construction site for a new hospital. It will help alleviate any parking disruption when a new hospital is built and provide enough spaces to meet future demand.

Q: How much will it cost?

Phase one of the MSCP will cost circa. £15m.

Q: What will the car park look like?

You can find more information including some visuals of the proposed new car park on this website. These are working drafts and are likely to change in some ways as we further develop the plans.

Q: What are the key features of the proposed multi-storey car park?

The proposed MSCP would be built using 'Modern Methods of Construction' principles that guide all NHS new builds. Our developing plans include plenty of space to access vehicles for patients with reduced mobility, energy efficient LED lighting and motion sensors (helping to reduce light pollution), a wheelchair area, natural ventilation and 24-hour security. The new car park will include spaces for staff and visitors to charge their electric vehicles, with flexibility to increase this provision in the future as we work to better understand and model demand.

Q: How do you know the car park you're proposing is sized correctly?

The MSCP has been developed based on anticipated use and experience from other multi-storey car parks across the country. A series of traffic surveys were undertaken earlier in 2022 to help provide a robust evidence base to support the sizing calculations and we've also looked at data from different clinical departments and visitor numbers to inform our proposals. The car park proposals also follow NHS best practice guidance.

Q: Have you thought about how to make the proposals as 'green' as possible?

We will promote the use of carbon efficient principles through the construction and delivery process, in line with the Government's Net Zero Strategy, which sets out to reduce emissions and reduce the carbon footprint of all sectors of the economy.

We are working to keep car parking demand to a minimum wherever practical and possible to do so, for example through our travel plan, staff car parking permit system, and public transport.

The new car park will include spaces for staff and visitors to charge their electric vehicles, with flexibility to increase this provision in the future as we work to better understand and model demand.

Q: How many spaces will there be for patients/visitors/staff?

The new Phase One car park would provide approximately 500 parking spaces.

- 218 of these would replace those lost by building on the Inspire Centre's current car park
- 282 would be new, additional spaces on the site

Phase 2 of the proposal would provide 879 spaces, to replace those currently provided in the main car park. In total, Phase One and Two of the multi-storey car park would provide 1,379 car parking spaces.

Q: Will there be electric charging points for vehicles?

The new car park will include spaces for staff and visitors to charge their electric vehicles, with flexibility to increase this provision in the future as we work to better understand and model demand. In so doing, we recognise that our hospital parking spaces should not become a destination for charging electric vehicles.

Q: How much will it cost to use the new car park?

We don't anticipate any specific changes to car parking charges related to the MSCP. We will continue to review our charges each year as we do now and ensure these are benchmarked with other hospitals.

Q: Will patient transport pick up and drop off points be affected?

The patient pick up and drop off points outside the main hospital entrance are not affected by the MSCP plans. These will also be considered at a later stage as more detailed plans are developed for a new hospital.

Q: How will you make it easy for people to navigate their way round the proposed MSCP?

Graphics will identify lifts, stairs and car park level location, which has benefits for those with dementia or are partially-sighted, and symbols will identify parking bays and electric vehicle charging points.

Internal signage will help patients, visitors, and staff identify where links to the new hospital are located.

We are proposing the strong use of colour to support wayfinding at different levels with colour themes for each floor and having painted walkways and architectural features on each floor to help with orientation and user experience and maximise accessibility.

Q: Will it be possible to pay online for parking using apps or mobile payment methods?

Usability is a key consideration for us as we develop the proposals for the new MSCP. We are proposing to digitise the way we manage the car park with use of modern payment methods and mobile and app devices.

This will include Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems, to align with modern practices and the Government's 'Digital first' agenda. ANPR systems have the benefit of being an automated payment system which mean visitors will be able to pay as they leave, rather than having to estimate how long they will need to park for.

Q: Where will the helipad go?

One of the options is a rooftop helipad on the new hospital building (again, consistent with many other new hospitals around the country and which is considered the a suitable clinical solution). This will be determined and worked through as we proceed to outline and full business case stage.

As an interim solution we are currently working with health and care partners to explore some off-site solutions during the enabling works period and while the new hospital is being built.

Q: What will be the impact of the proposed multi-storey car park on local residents?

We are aiming to minimise the impact of the development, so we are sensitive and respectful of our closest neighbours. We will use a developer registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme to minimise disturbance for our neighbours and the public.

Q: What is the impact of the proposals on our local highways?

We are working with Norfolk County Council around minimising the impact of construction traffic and the short-term displacement of some car parking at QEH during construction. We are committed to a temporary solution to manage any displaced parking and ensure that any impact on the wider highway network is minimised.

Q: When will the new car park building work begin and how long will it take to build?

We hope to start work on the new car park in 2023, subject to securing funding. The first phase of the build is expected to open in 2024.

The second phase of the car park build is expected to begin in

Q: How will you get the funding you need for the car park?

We are currently exploring a range of options for funding, including nationally through Government, as well as looking at other external funding routes.

Q: Why are you building a new car park when the hospital is in such a state of disrepair. Wouldn't it be better to spend the money on the existing building?

A new car park is a key enabler for a new hospital. Under our plans, the new hospital would be built on the existing main car park area and therefore we need to replace the existing car park to ensure there will be enough parking spaces on-site.

We have already been allocated £80m national funding to enable our ongoing, rolling programme of work to install failsafes across the first floor of the hospital over the next three years 2022/23 to 2024/25. This work is to address our unique RAAC challenge and maximise the safety of our existing hospital buildings. This money is separate from the funding we intend to secure for the MSCP and monies associated with the new hospital programme.

Q: What will happen to the services that are provided in the Inspire Centre?

We have already had planning permission granted to demolish the Inspire Centre. Teams housed within the centre have already been relocated to new modular units on the Trust site.