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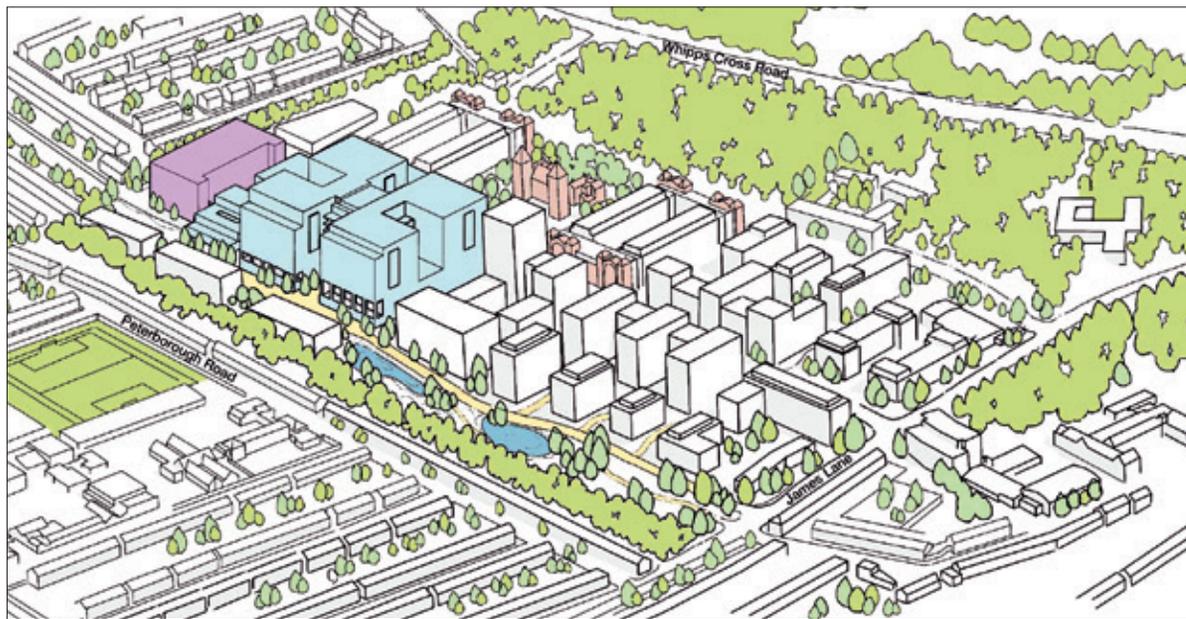
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Updated designs for Whipps Cross unveiled



“More single rooms and garden terraces” planned – but 51 beds still to be lost, new proposal shows

by Elizabeth Atkin

Barts Health NHS Trust have released updated, proposed designs for the development of Whipps Cross Hospital in Leytonstone – following public feedback sessions in November 2020.

Plans for the “new, state-of-the-art NHS hospital” – due to be built by 2026 – include the addition of more single rooms and garden terraces.

The new designs are still at the proposal stage, with an illustration highlighting the hospital in blue, with a multi-storey car park denoted in purple.

Of the remaining white space, Barts Health told the *Echo*: “The white buildings show potential

plans for the wider site, with new homes, green spaces and local facilities. These will be decided at a later stage, and be subject to a further formal planning application in the coming years.”

Notably, the new designs “have changed to ensure the hospital has space to grow in the future”, on the back of resident feedback.

The updated designs also state that the new hospital will be around 80,000 sq m, smaller than the current hospital’s 91,000 sq m – though 15% more space (5,000 sq m) will be devoted to clinical activities.

Plans state: “The layout of the new hospital will be organised much more efficiently than the current one, with clinical depart-

ments closer to each other so that journeys between them are much shorter for patients and staff.”

Controversial plans to cut 51 beds remain in place, though – with 525 beds proposed instead of the 2018/19 average of 576 (as laid out in the trust’s earlier Strategy Outline Case document).

When asked about the 51-bed cut, Barts Health told us: “The new hospital will make better use of space, have more room for clinical activities, and be able to respond efficiently to changes in clinical models of care.

“We expect a modern state-of-the-art hospital to need fewer overnight beds but do more day-cases, diagnostic tests and same-day emergency care.

“As is the case in all hospitals, the number of beds is not fixed but flexible to respond to operational pressures.”

Residents have also raised concerns about the future of The Margaret Centre, a specialist palliative care unit currently located at Whipps Cross.

Barts Health did not explicitly mention The Margaret Centre in their response, but said “vital” specialist palliative and end of life care will still be provided by the new hospital, as well as in the local community.

“We have agreed to review the future model of care and are working with our clinicians and partner organisations in the local health and care system to agree next steps,” the trust added.

Locals are once again invited to feedback on the latest plans before a planning application is submitted to the London Borough of Waltham Forest in spring 2021.

Virtual meetings take place on Tuesday, 2nd March at 12pm and Thursday, 4th March at 6.30pm. Slots can be booked at [whipps-cross-development2.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.whipps-cross-development2.eventbrite.co.uk)

An online survey is also available at bartshealth.nhs.uk/future-whipps

Redevelopment director Alastair Finney said of the project: “The prospect of a fantastic new hospital in five years’ time is hugely exciting for everyone.

“We really hope people will take the time to have their say on our updated plans so that we can ensure our designs meet the needs and aspirations of patients, staff and the public for years to come.”

Three days prior to the reveal, campaigning group Action-4Whipps coordinated 1,941 north-east London residents to sign a letter to local MPs – urging them to procure sufficient

government funding for the project.

Mary Burnett, spokesperson for Action4Whipps, told the *Echo*: “Whipps Cross is a severely overstretched hospital. North east London residents desperately need a new hospital at Whipps Cross, but it must be fit for purpose and built to last.

“We expect a modern state-of-the-art hospital to need fewer overnight beds but do more day-cases, diagnostic tests and same-day emergency care”

“North-east London MPs must act now before plans get the green light. Our MPs must work together to ensure the government fully funds the new hospital that our communities so badly need.”

Last year, 5,700 local residents called for the Department of Health to ensure sufficient funding for the new hospital.

To see the full proposed plans for Whipps Cross, visit:
bartshealth.nhs.uk/future-whipps

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