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Media Release

RUH submits plans to further improve surgery capacity at Sulis Hospital Bath

Plans to increase capacity at Sulis Hospital Bath for non-emergency orthopaedic surgery will take another important step forward if proposals submitted to B&NES Council by the Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH) NHS Foundation Trust get the green light.

A planning application has been submitted to the council by the RUH for a new wing at Sulis Hospital, a fully operational independent hospital owned by the RUH which treats both NHS and private patients. The RUH acquired the former Circle Bath hospital in June 2021, with the main objective of securing additional elective capacity for NHS patients across Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire.

Situated at Sulis Hospital's Peasedown St John site, just outside Bath, the new Sulis Elective Orthopaedic Centre (SEOC) would act as an NHS elective surgery hub, helping to tackle the backlog of elective, non-emergency surgery across the south west.

The new development, which has secured £25m in national NHS funding, would see:

- Two additional modular theatres
- Four extra inpatient beds
- Seven extra day case pods
- Conversion of two existing theatres to laminar flow theatres, providing a work area with sterile conditions and the very highest standards of cleanliness.

The SEOC would be a centre of excellence working to national best-practice standards and providing high quality care.

Surgery would be protected from disruption and cancellations caused by surges in emergency hospital admissions because Sulis is not an acute hospital with an emergency department, and as such the SEOC will enhance the resilience of services into the future.

The SEOC would serve patients from the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) area, and beyond, from the whole of the South West region.

Around 60% of capacity would be used to carry out elective orthopaedic procedures that would otherwise be managed at the RUH's main Combe Park site, with the remaining 40% available to support the wider region's NHS elective recovery programme and future growth in demand projected to arise from the ageing population in BSW.

If approved, the scheme will see the construction of a single storey wing to the east of the hospital with some refurbishment works to the existing hospital top floor. The building has been designed to appear contemporary and in-keeping with the existing site, while minimising visual impact on both the award-winning design of Sulis Hospital and the rural views to the south.

Cara Charles-Barks, RUH Chief Executive, said: "The construction of the Sulis Elective Orthopaedic Centre will have a really positive impact on people across BaNES, Swindon Wiltshire and the wider region.

"If approved, the new centre will offer a more sustainable model of care delivery and improved elective orthopaedic capacity to meet the needs of region and further afield.

"We plan to increase the number of operations performed each year by around 3,750 cases, which will make a real impact on the back log of elective surgery across the region."

If planning permission is granted for the new hospital wing, construction would begin early in the new year and completed during the summer of 2024.

You can view the planning permission and comment on the proposals on the B&NES Council [website](#).

Ends

Notes to Editor:

At the RUH we're proud to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community.

We provide a wide range of services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

We also provide specialist services for rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME via the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases which we acquired in 2015.

In 2021, we acquired Sulis Hospital Bath, an independent hospital that provides care for both private and NHS patients. This has enabled us to provide more care for NHS patients, as well as continuing to provide private care to those who choose it. Any additional income earned through private care is reinvested in services for the benefit of the people we care for at both Sulis and the RUH.

We're currently building a new Cancer Centre at the RUH. The Dyson Cancer Centre, which is set to open in autumn 2023, will help transform the care we provide for patients, families and carers.



Royal United Hospitals Bath

NHS Foundation Trust

We work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board. We strive to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in our community by working together build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

We are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk