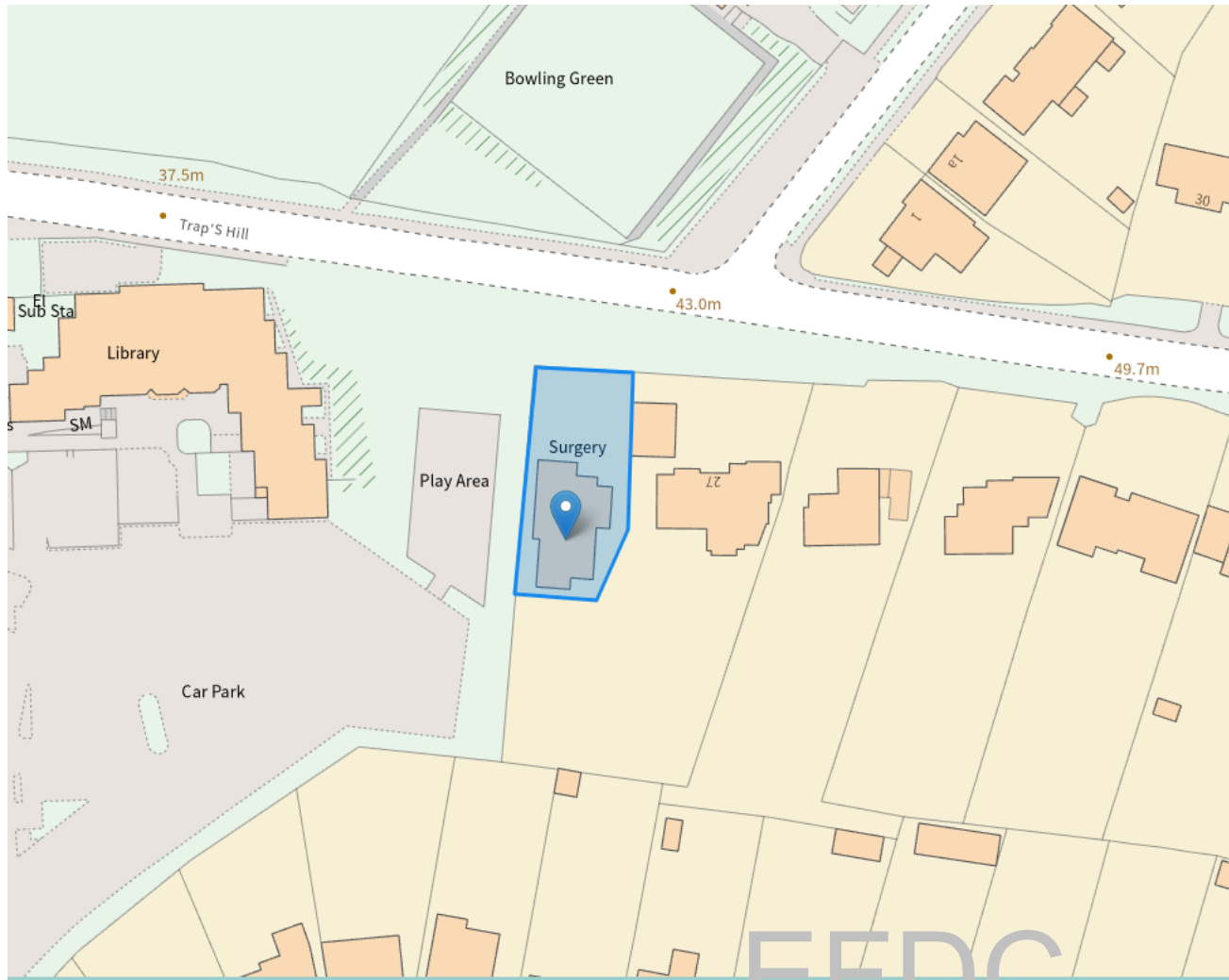




# Epping Forest District Council

# EFDC



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Application Number:	EPF/2255/22
Site Name:	25, Traps Hill, Loughton, IG10 1SZ

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# OFFICER REPORT

**Application Ref:** EPF/2255/22  
**Application Type:** Full planning permission  
**Applicant:** Dr L Larh  
**Case Officer:** Sukhvinder Dhadwar  
**Site Address:** 25, Traps Hill, Loughton, IG10 1SZ  
**Proposal:** Proposed additional floor extension to existing building to add consulting rooms and associated ancillary facilities  
**Ward:** Loughton St. Mary's  
**Parish:** Loughton  
**View Plans:** <https://eppingforestdcpr.force.com/pr/s/planning-application/a0h8d000000P70T>  
**Recommendation:** Approve with Conditions

***This application is before this Committee since the recommendation is for approval contrary to an objection from a Local Council and at least one non-councillor resident, on planning grounds material to the application (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part 3: Scheme of Delegation to Officers from Full Council)).***

## **Description of Site:**

The application site comprises a large, detached building which is used as a doctor's surgery. It is located on the southern side of Traps Hill. To the west is the Loughton Library, car park and leisure centre. To its north is open land used for recreational purposes and to the east and northeast are large detached residential properties.

The application site immediately adjoins the western boundary of the Loughton Town Centre and is in a use which is considered suitable for this location.

## **Description of Proposal:**

Permission is sought for an additional floor extension to existing building to add consulting rooms and associated ancillary facilities.

The additional 212 sq. m created will provide 8 no. consulting rooms, with associated waiting area and toilets. The extended building will have a maximum height of 11.18m.

Materials will match those of the existing building.

## **Relevant History:**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
EPF/1818/79	Erection of a car port.	Grant Permission
EPF/1689/89	O/A for doctor's surgery.	Grant Permission
EPF/1689A/89	Details of doctor's surgery	Grant Permission
EPF/0880/94	Single storey side extension.	Grant Permission
EPF/0921/15	Proposed two storey front extension and reconfiguration and raising of existing roof at rear.	Grant Permission

EPF/1391/17	Resurface footpath with concrete interlocking pavers, pedestrian paved access and replacement of existing fencing with close boarded timber fence with access gate along the western boundary of the site.	Grant permission
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## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan currently comprises the Epping Forest District Council Adopted Local Plan (1998) and Alterations (2006).

The following policies within the current Development Plan are considered to be of relevance to this application:

CP2	Protecting the quality of the rural and built environment
CP3	New Development
CP4	Energy Conservation
CP5	Sustainable Building
CF1	Traps Hill Loughton
CF2	Health Care Facilities
RST1	Recreational, Sporting and Tourist Facilities
ST1	Location of Development
ST4	Road Safety
ST6	Parking Provision
DBE1	New Buildings
DBE3	Design in Urban Areas
DBE9	Loss of Amenity
U3B	Sustainable Drainage Systems

## **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (JULY 2021)**

The revised NPPF is a material consideration in determining planning applications. As with its predecessor, the presumption in favour of sustainable development remains at the heart of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF provides that for determining planning applications this means either; (a) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (b) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making, but policies within the development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the Framework.

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN SUBMISSION VERSION (2017) (LPSV)**

Although the LPSV does not currently form part of the statutory development plan for the district, on 14 December 2017 the Council resolved that the LPSV be endorsed as a material consideration to be used in the determination of planning applications.

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF provides that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The LPSV has been submitted for Independent Examination and hearing sessions were held on various dates from February 2019 to June 2019. On the 2nd August, the appointed inspector provided her interim advice to the Council covering the substantive matters raised at the hearing and the necessary actions required of the Council to enable her to address issues of soundness with the plan without prejudice to her final conclusions.

The Council has prepared a number of changes, known as Main Modifications (MM) to the Epping Forest District Local Plan Submission Version 2017 (LPSV) to address issues of soundness and/or legal compliance identified by the Inspector. These were put forward without prejudice to the Inspector's final conclusions on the Plan.

Representations were invited on the Main Modifications and supporting documents only, and the consultation ran for 10 weeks from Thursday 15 July 2021 to 5pm on Thursday 23 September 2021.

The most recent update dated 16 June 2022 (ED141) outlines that changes are required to the text of the submitted Plan and the Main Modifications (consulted upon in 2021) in order to meet the tests of soundness as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. The note sets out a number of Actions for the Council and requires a new schedule of Main Modifications to be produced and consulted upon. The Council is immediately directing resources to be able to respond on all of the Inspector's Actions as swiftly as possible and, upon agreement to a new schedule of Main Modifications, to undertake the required consultation in order to be able to move towards the conclusion of the Examination and the final adoption of the Plan as quickly as possible'. It is therefore at an advanced stage of preparation. The following policies in the LPSV are considered to be of relevance to the determination of this application, with the weight afforded by your officers in this particular case indicated:

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Weight afforded</b>
SP2 - Spatial Development Strategy 2011-2033	Significant
T1 - Sustainable Transport Choices	Significant
DM5 - Green and Blue Infrastructure	Significant
DM9 - High Quality Design	Significant
DM11 - Waste Recycling Facilities on New Development	Significant
DM16 - Sustainable Drainage Systems	Significant

### **Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received**

Number of neighbours consulted:

Site notice posted: No, not required

Responses received:

27 TRAPS HILL: OBJECTION The building has already been extended several times. The Architects drawings doesn't show how far the rear of the building extends beyond the line of our house. Its extends 12 metres beyond the line of our house and then to add an extra story to the full length of the building as proposed, will be very overbearing and cause a sense of enclosure.

PARISH COUNCIL: The Committee OBJECTED to this application on the grounds that it was an overdevelopment by reason of its bulk and height. The proposal resembled a block of flats which would result in a negative impact on the street scene and neighbours; and would set an unwelcome precedent.

Agent's response:- the Applicant would reiterate that the proposals have been developed in response to the demonstrable existing and impending demand for a diverse range of medical services in this locality.

The bulk and height of the building have been scrutinised by both the design team and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and, as a result, the proposals have been revised and moderated in scale to take into consideration the physical relationship between the application and neighbouring sites based on actual measured surveys.

In terms of appearance, the proposed building takes its cues from the aesthetic of the existing building which it seeks to replicate and extend, whilst being sympathetic to the palette of materials and the prevailing aesthetic of the surrounding buildings.

The Applicant considers that the proposed development represents an organic response to both increased demand and lack of medical space, as well as being an appropriate form of development with respect to its context and continued use and will be of significant benefit to the local community.

### **Main Issues and Considerations:**

Chapter 8 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions should ensure that "facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community".

Policy CF2 -Health Care Facilities requires that planning permission will be granted for proposals to develop or extend existing health care facilities to meet the needs of the residents of the district subject to the development not causing excessive environmental or amenity problems, the site is readily accessible by car and public transport and the site is not in the Green Belt.

The proposal is located within an area protected for community purposes. The submitted Design and Access Statement indicates that approval of this application will allow for the following benefits:-

- Practice will have additional capacity to accommodate the increasing list size
- Better patient experience and fit-for-purpose premises
- Provision of a wider range of service
- Facilitate integration and collaborative working with other health and social care organisations and agencies in the third sector
- Expand training plan for undergraduate students, GP trainees, student nurses
- Will aid recruitment and retention of staff and resources

The site is situated within a highly sustainable location close to public transport links and there are 11 car parking spaces on the site along with a public car park in close proximity to the site. The proposal will also not cause excessive environmental or amenity harm. (See design and neighbouring amenity sections below).

It is therefore considered that approval of this application will ensure that the local community get better access to health facilities which will contribute towards better health outcomes for the local community the proposal therefore complies with the requirements of chapter 8 of the NPPF together with policy CF2 of the Local Plan. Accordingly, the principle of the proposal is acceptable.

### Design

The current design is as a result of pre -application discussions where a larger scheme was amended to take into consideration the impact of the proposal on the neighbour and to allow the site to adequately meet the need to accommodate the increasing patient list size.

Whilst the addition of a third storey does not reflect the design of neighbouring residential properties, given that the site acts as a transitional location between the town centre and the residential part of Traps Hill; along with the community character and use of the building as surgery being distinct from that of neighbouring residential dwellings and of a type where additional stories can be expected; the natural ground levels of the application site being approximately 1.25m lower than those at 27 Traps Hill; it is considered that there is more scope to diverge from strict adherence to maintaining the residential character and appearance of the wider street than would ordinarily be the case.

The front hipped roof would be approximately 38 cm higher than the ridge height of no 27 Traps Hill this section is part of the northwestern section part of the building, which would be furthest away from residential dwellings and nearest to the Town Centre. The majority building would remain approximately 0.7m lower than the ridge of no 27 Traps Hill and as such would not appear unduly incongruous to the heights of neighbouring properties.

The external appearance of the building would be in keeping with it Tudor pastiche

There are no changes proposed to the footprint of the building

It is for these reasons considered that the proposal will have a neutral impact on the character appearance of Traps Hill in accordance with policy DBE1 of the Adopted Local Plan and DM9 (D) of the Local Plan

A system of PV panels is proposed on the flat roof of the proposed extensions. Along with this a battery pack system is proposed to be installed for energy storage. This can also act as a back-up energy source and as a means to reduce the use of mains electricity.

The design accords with the June 2022 update of Approved Document Part L of the Building Regulation. (Floors, walls, roofs, doors, and windows will be specified to have high thermal performance to minimise heat loss/gain.)

It is for these reasons considered that the proposal will improve the energy efficiency of the building in accordance with CP5 of the Adopted Local Plan and DM9 (A) and DM20 of the Submission Version Local Plan.

### Impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties

The existing surgery already extends 10.6m beyond the rear elevation of number 27 Traps Hill. All upper floor windows facing this property are obscure glazed. The first-floor side flank wall of this neighbour is 11.2m away from the proposed extension. It contains two windows, the first serves a bathroom and the second is a blocked up secondary bedroom window. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not result in any significant loss of light or privacy.

The tallest part of the extension is located within the northern corner of the building. The distance between the application building and the dwelling at 27 Traps Hill is at least the total height of the

proposal and there are no habitable room windows facing the proposal. The proposal therefore accords with the Essex Design Guide in regard to avoiding overshadowing to the main garden area.

All other neighbouring residential properties are sufficiently distant to ensure that they are not materially affected. It is on this basis considered that the proposal complies with the requirements of policy DBE 9 of the Adopted Local Plan and DM 9(h) of the Submission Version Local Plan.

### **Parking**

There will be no increase in the current level of 11 car parking spaces on the site. A Public 'Pay and Display' car park is within a 3-minute walk of the site.

In addition three cycle hoops where bicycles can be secured adjacent to the entrance of the surgery will also be provided for staff. Given the sustainable location of the site, this provision is considered to accord with the requirements of ST6 of the Local Plan and T1 of the SVLP.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the proposal will allow the surgery to increase its patient list and provide other medical services to the community in an accessible and sustainable location. It has an acceptable appearance and will not have an adverse impact on highway safety or congestion. Furthermore the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers will not be excessively greater than the existing situation. It is for these reasons that the proposal complies with relevant planning policy and is recommended that planning permission be granted.

***Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:***

***Planning Application Case Officer: Sukhi Dhadwar  
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564597***

***or if no direct contact can be made please email: [contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)***

### **Conditions: (7)**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and retained strictly in accordance with the following approved plans:

Design and Access Statement, 854-200-L-X01, 854-200-L-X02, 854-200-L-X03, 854-200-L-X04, Arboricultural Report by Tim Moya Associates dated September 2022.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the proposal is built in accordance with the approved plans.

- 3 The solar panels shall be installed in accordance with the details shown on plan number 854-200-L-301 and shall be built in accordance with the Approved Document Part L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations 2010.

Reason: To promote sustainable building design in accordance with CP5 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and Policies SP3, DM 9 and DM20 of the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan Submission Version 2017.

- 4 Tree protection shall be installed as shown on Tim Moya Associates 'Tree Protection Plan' drawing number 170540-P-32 dated 21st September 2022 prior to the commencement of development activities (including any demolition). The methodology for development (including Arboricultural supervision) shall be undertaken in accordance with the submitted Tree Survey/ Arboricultural Method Statement reports.

Reason: To comply with the duties indicated in Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and to enable full and proper consideration to be given to the impact of the proposed development on existing trees / hedges, so as to safeguard and enhance the visual amenities of the area and to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in accordance with policy LL10 of the adopted Local Plan 1998 & 2006, policies DM3 and DM5 of the Local Plan Submission Version 2017, and the NPPF 2021.

- 5 If any tree, shrub or hedge shown to be retained in the submitted Arboricultural reports is removed, uprooted or destroyed, dies, or becomes severely damaged or diseased during development activities or within 3 years of the completion of the development, another tree, shrub or hedge of the same size and species shall be planted within 3 months at the same place. If within a period of five years from the date of planting any replacement tree, shrub or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed, or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree, shrub or hedge of the same species and size as that originally planted shall, within 3 months, be planted at the same place.

Reason: To comply with the duties indicated in Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as well as to safeguard the amenity of the existing trees, shrubs or hedges and to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development, in accordance with policies LL10 and LL11 of the adopted Local Plan and Alterations 1998 & 2006, and policies DM3 and DM5 of the Local Plan Submission Version 2017, and the NPPF.

- 6 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity of the area, in accordance with policy DBE1 of the adopted Local Plan 1998 & 2006, and Policy DM9 of the Local Plan Submission Version 2017, and the NPPF.

- 7 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (GPDO) 2015 (or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that



Order) the premises shall only be used as a medical surgery as specified in the application and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class E of the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or any provision equivalent to that Class in any Statutory Instrument revoking and/or re-enacting that Order).

Reason: This use only is permitted and other uses, either within the same Use Class, or permitted by the GPDO are not acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in this location because other uses may have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of this locality , in accordance with Policies CP7 and DBE1 of the adopted Local Plan 1998 & 2006, Policy DM 9 of the Local Plan Submission Version 2017, and the NPPF.

**Informatives: (1)**

- 8 The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.