

14 August, 2012

Harness Block: period closed for submission of detailed plans for future use of Harness Block building

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust has received two responses to its request for detailed plans for the future use of the Harness Block at Southlands Hospital.

The responses have been submitted following an extension of the deadline to give the two interested parties more time to develop their proposals.

The submissions will now be assessed by independent, external experts who will advise the Trust on whether they represent viable plans for the block.

The Trust is keen to find a community use for the site if possible, and so has approached a wide range of people and organisations to give them the first opportunity to develop detailed plans for the future of the building.

This approach to local organisations was first made in December last year, and the Trust has now twice extended deadlines for responses to be received, to maximise the chances of a positive plan being developed.

Spencer Prosser, Director of Finance at the Trust, said: “The responses will be given to independent advisors, and they will now assess the information they have been given. When they have completed that assessment they will advise us whether the plans are felt to offer a viable future for the Harness Block.”

The Trust Board will then consider the advice from independent experts, and continue to act at all times in accordance with the national guidance set out in the NHS Estates Code.

Notes:

The Harness Block is no longer appropriate for acute inpatient care, and so patients of Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust are no longer being treated on wards there.

The Trust does not provide community, primary or social care, and so cannot simply continue to use the block for those purposes.

The other parts of Southlands Hospital, except the Harness Block, continue to offer a wide range of treatments, diagnostics and appointments and this will continue, along with a new ophthalmology centre which will be opened on the site.

Ends

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