Woodstock Surgery: Update

Summary.

- A single proposal, the Owen Mumford site, is being progressed by the Woodstock Surgery Steering Group because it has best met the four tests set by the steering group: Viability, Affordability, Adaptability and Immediacy.
- A spatial survey of the Owen Mumford site has been completed which confirmed that the building could physically accommodate a new surgery and outline surgery plans have been drawn up which are in the process of being approved by the GPs. The timeline for converting the Owen Mumford site is both more certain and faster than that of the other sites, meaning it best meets the Immediacy test.
- Heads of terms, a development appraisal, floor plans, car park plans, costings and financial plans are also being drawn up. These are necessary to establish Adaptability, Value for Money, Affordability and Viability.
- Blenheim Estates and the GPs through the consultancy Osmond Tricks, will prepare the detailed business case for submission to the ICB and the District Valuer (NHS).
- Working with the ICB, viable funding models to deliver the new surgery will be reviewed and finalised as part of the business case.
- If progress is maintained, we should expect planning permission by late 2026 and a new surgery to be opened by the end of 2028 (or earlier).

Location of the selected single proposal.

The principal criteria that the steering group used to consider sites were:

1. Viability: is there suitable land or a suitable building that could be developed to provide a surgery that meets the national requirements?
2. Affordability: can this be built and operated with the funding available?
3. Adaptability: does the site allow for expansion to reflect future demographic change and population growth?
4. Immediacy: how quickly could a surgery be delivered on this site?

The steering group had identified three options for a new surgery, all on Blenheim land.

1. The Owen Mumford site. Blenheim purchased this building recently and intends to repurpose it over time.
2. Banbury Road. Blenheim have planning permission from WODC for a development on this site.
3. Land south-east of Park View development. Blenheim have applied to CDC for permission to develop this site.

The Owen Mumford site has been chosen as the preferred proposal because it has best met the four tests set by the steering group which are Viability, Affordability, Adaptability and Immediacy.

The Owen Mumford site is the most **immediate** scheme as it would be a refurbishment, not a new build, on a still-to-be-developed site. It is **viable** as a spatial survey has confirmed that the building could physically accommodate a new surgery. The project can now progress towards a design layout acceptable to our GPs, and for a development appraisal and financial appraisal for consideration of Value For Money by the District Valuer.

The Owen Mumford site is considered as having the **adaptability** to allow for expansion which would follow anticipated demographic change and population growth, a key requirement for the ICB. Subject to work in the coming months on a detailed financial appraisal, it looks more **affordable** since it requires less initial capital outlay than the other sites.

What happens next?

The project will follow these steps:

- Blenheim Estates and the GPs through the consultancy Osmond Tricks, will agree workable plans which include floor plans, car park plans, a development appraisal, heads of terms, a financial appraisal which is intended to be submitted by the ICB to the District Valuer by March 31st.
- The Woodstock Surgery Steering Group will meet for a stocktake mid-March to review progress of the District Valuer proposal submission.
- West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council will meet to explore bus connectivity options for this proposal and engage with Woodstock Town Council and residents on possible solutions, as a precursor to the planning process.
- The Woodstock Surgery Steering Group will meet in June when it is anticipated the District Valuer will have responded to the ICB request for a value for money appraisal.
- Once a value for money proposal has been agreed by all parties, the ICB will be able to consider the Business Case
- A detailed planning application will be prepared and submitted over the summer.

The goal is to obtain planning permission by late 2026. If this is achieved, it should be possible to proceed to complete a new surgery by the end of 2028.

The Woodstock Surgery Steering Group will continue to work to achieve this goal and to share information regularly with the Town Council and other interested groups. The GPs will continue to consult their Patient Participation Group on the developing plans. If you have feedback or views on the proposal, you can share these with Calum Miller MP: calum.miller.mp@parliament.uk

Further background.

This information was previously provided with the update in October 2025.

Why is this an issue?

In June 2024, the GP partners at Woodstock Surgery wrote to all patients warning that the surgery might have to stop accepting new patients due to its longstanding capacity constraints. According to NHS guidelines, the current surgery is only 38% of the size it should be for the number of patients on the current roll. The GP partners would like to hire more doctors and healthcare professionals to

support patients but are unable to as there is no space. There have been efforts to develop a new surgery for a decade or so, yet none has been delivered due largely to funding constraints.

Who has been working on it?

In November 2024, a public meeting was convened by Woodstock Town Council to discuss the future of Woodstock Surgery. The panel was made up of those organisations that have the decision-making capacity and resources to deliver a new surgery: the GPs, the local NHS health board (the BOB Integrated Care Board, ICB), Blenheim Estates, Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. Calum Miller MP undertook to convene these parties in a steering group to deliver by summer 2025 a plan for a new surgery. The steering group has met regularly since November 2024 and minutes of those meetings have been shared on each occasion with the Town Council and interested residents.

How will it be funded?

There are two elements to the project: the capital investment to secure land and build (or adapt) and fit-out a surgery; and the ongoing revenue to pay for the building. The ICB does not provide capital. It is important to note that the project cannot proceed without an organisation willing to invest capital to build the surgery and without the ICB's agreement to fund the rent and operational costs of the surgery. The proposal for a new surgery building is based on the assumption that agreement can be reached for Blenheim Estates to provide land and build (or adapt) a surgery and that the ICB will give approval to fund the rent and operational costs of the surgery for a long period (e.g. 25 years) and that an appropriate planning consent is forthcoming from West Oxfordshire District Council.

To make the project affordable, the ICB has to be willing to meet the rent required to make a commercial return on the capital investment. The ICB will be guided in this by the District Valuer (DV - an agent of the Valuation Office, a government agency) who will determine their view on a value-for-money rent. However, in other surgery projects, this value has proven to be an obstacle as the DV has historically been very conservative in its assessments, resulting in rents being proposed below market rents (and so below the required return of investment), making it a challenge for the capital investment to be justified.

The steering group has identified two alternatives that could help to bridge a gap between the rent approved by the DV and that required by the capital investor to show an economic return. First, it might be possible to inject some "section 106" money held by the district council from previous developments in the area that is ear-marked for health. This would reduce the amount of capital that Blenheim had to invest, and therefore the amount they needed to recover through rent. Second, Blenheim might ask WODC to reduce the number of affordable homes required on its other developments so that it can make a higher return from market-value homes; Blenheim would then off-set the lower rent for the surgery against this higher return from house sales.