

Ref: FOI/00121/CMICB  
10 November 2022

Your Request:

On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Wirral Council approved the final details of a planning application for work on the site of the former petrol station on the large traffic island at CH63 4JZ. The location is directly outside the main entrance to Wirral University Teaching Hospital (Clatterbridge). The documentation is here: [Wirral | Application | 226305](#)

The original application was for the demolition of the existing garage and the development of a new petrol station, shop, and coffee shop – Starbucks. In detail this was the “*development of New Petrol Filling Station with Convenience Store (Use Class Sui-generis\*) and Drive-thru [sic] Coffee Shop (Class E) with associated access, parking and landscaping.*” All the documentation linked to the decision on 5<sup>th</sup> October refers to the above arrangements. However a search of the Wirral Planning web site also reveals APP/22/00485 (details at <https://online.wirral.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=124363>) which asks for the “*erection of an electric vehicle charging station (Sui generis), retail unit, and urgent care medical centre (Use Class E).*”

Although the summary of this application shows no approval and the full details show the application is “*pending consideration*” I am informed that the developer was asking for a variation whereby the petrol station became six electric charging points and the footprints for the shop and café were decreased thus giving space for a private clinic. I am further informed that the decision was taken by officers and never came to committee.

The supporting statement attaching to the variation is in the form of what looks like a press release from the company which runs associated clinics. It says (without any referenced evidence) “*The growing pressure on the NHS means that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain a doctor’s appointment with GPs and waiting times in hospital accident and emergency departments commonly exceeding four hours*” and “*Urgent Care 365 provides a private daytime and out of hours service for minor injuries and ailments without the typical waiting times encountered in traditional doctor’s surgeries/A&E.*”

As far as I can discover, neither this use for ‘urgent care’ nor the name of the new occupant of the site appears anywhere in any of the planning documentation approved on 5<sup>th</sup> October. The company’s website however is very specific ([Clatterbridge - Urgent Care 365](#)) saying, “*You will find us in the new development on the roundabout next door to the Starbucks drive-thru [sic] and Instavolt EV station. This clinic will be opening Q1 2023.*” In fact it already advertises a “*15 minutes GP online consultation from £45.*”

## Questions

- 1) Were you aware of this development? On what date did you become aware?
- 2) When did the variation to the original planning application appear on the Council web site?
- 3) Did you publicise the varied application in any other way?
- 4) Why was such a major change in use not considered by a Council committee?
- 5) In fact, has final approval been given to the change of use and where is this recorded?
- 6) What due diligence has been carried out, and by whom, on the suitability of Urgent Care 365 to provide this facility?
- 7) Given that all the bodies associated with healthcare in Wirral have discussed and agreed activity related to urgent care:
  - a) Which of these bodies were consulted about or involved in this decision?
  - b) If none were consulted, why not?
  - c) If any were consulted what were their recorded opinions on this development?
  - d) How will this development impact upon publicly provided urgent care services?
  - e) Will Wirral residents be encouraged to use this centre?
  - f) What is the opinion of WUTH on having this development at its front door?

### Our Response:

1 - 7) NHS Cheshire & Merseyside ICB does not hold any information in response to the above questions posed regarding the planning application at CH63 4JZ.

Planning applications are the responsibility of the local authority. You may therefore wish to redirect your request for this information to Wirral Council, who can be contacted for Freedom of Information requests via the following link: <https://ww3.wirral.gov.uk/crmservicerequests/scripts/ServiceRequestMain.asp>

In respect of the question posed about the opinion of Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH) on this development, you may wish to redirect your request to WUTH, who can be contacted for Freedom of Information requests via: [wih-tr.AccessToInformationOffice@nhs.net](mailto:wih-tr.AccessToInformationOffice@nhs.net).