



NHS Lanarkshire
Monklands Hospital

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Dear Sir/Madam,

**NHS LANARKSHIRE
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MONKLANDS HOSPITAL**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposals for the proposed development of the new Monklands Hospital. GoBike is a voluntary group comprised of people who cycle and who see cycling as a significant mode of transport. Given good infrastructure we consider that many more people would cycle, to the benefit of their health and to the general improvement of our environment.

GoBike wishes to express its preference for the new hospital site to be at Wester Moffat.

We support the Wester Moffat site on the following grounds:

1. **Proximity to a large urban population.**

Wester Moffat's site at the edge of Airdrie is within 5km of most areas of the town and within 10km of most of Coatbridge (a combined population of around 80,000 people). It is also just across the road from the village of Plains where many lower paid staff at the current Monklands live (and who would be most affected by the hospital moving to Gartcosh/Glenmavis). Wester Moffat is more convenient for more patients, visitors and staff. There's also the advantage of keeping the hospital in Airdrie, as most people in the town want to happen. It greatly increases the likelihood that more people will walk or cycle across town to the hospital, if safe routes and crossings are provided to get them there.

Reducing car journeys to the site would bring further health benefits for individuals and the local population. This should be factored in to the design of the hospital at Wester Moffat, allowing for large, secure cycle storage facilities like those at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee or QEUH, Glasgow. These have been absent in videos about the new Monklands to date. Cycle parking is far more space efficient than car parking so could help reduce the footprint of the hospital. Also, there should be proper provision of basic facilities like 'Sheffield' stands for people visiting by bike, enough showers and lockers for staff (not the case at many NHS Lanarkshire sites, including issues at acute hospitals). The other two proposed sites are more remote from large populations so travel by car is much more likely.

2. **Proximity to the existing National Cycle Network route 75 (and potential for upgraded active travel links).**

NCR75 goes east-west through the Monklands area serving Coatbridge, Airdrie, Plains, Caldercruix (and includes the Airdrie–Bathgate off-road path). The section of the NCN from Plains to Wester Moffat is less safe as it's on the busy A89 road. However, building an acute hospital nearby is a huge incentive for upgraded active travel routes, including

protected cycleways. The former Springbank rail line could be incorporated into a route to Drumgelloch train station and link to Wester Moffat woods. While Gartcosh already has a shared use path, this builds in conflict with pedestrians and is less suitable for staff commuting to work. GoBike takes issue with the 'cycle route' marked to the south-east of the Gartcosh site map as it's not paved. While there is potential for this trail to be upgraded, it is not near major population centres so less likely to be well-used. The site near Glenmavis is remote, high up and exposed. Even if an active travel route is built with the planned East Airdrie Link Road, it will be less appealing (especially if it's the proposed shared footway).

3. **Proximity to an accessible train station at Drumgelloch (with ramped pedestrian/cycle bridge).**

This is a major improvement on Coatdyke station near the current Monklands Hospital. Drumgelloch is also on the same line as Coatdyke, Airdrie and most Coatbridge stations (and it runs between Glasgow and Edinburgh, where some staff may live). Also, both rail infrastructure and services are already in place. If the new hospital was built at Gartcosh it would need to have a regular train service established to run from Coatbridge (as current services go between Glasgow and Stirling). Many people would have to travel on the north-south line from Coatbridge Central, which has no accessible way to get to/from its southbound platform (only an underpass with stairs). There is no connecting station to link between the Airdrie line and Coatbridge-Motherwell line. Rail travellers from Airdrie/Caldercruix would have to disembark at Coatbridge Sunnyside and walk or cycle about half a mile to Coatbridge Central to continue their journey. There are no guarantees how ScotRail would respond to these issues, as reflected in the site scores. They only upgrade a few stations a year and Coatbridge Central is a very constrained site. The prospect of a new 'Coatbridge Junction' station to link the two lines would be very far down ScotRail's list of national priorities. Obviously, the proposed site near Glenmavis is even worse for public transport as it has no rail line at all.

4. **Proximity to bus routes, including Sunday services.**

The Fairer Scotland Duty document makes it clear that more bus services run past the Wester Moffat site, especially Sunday services. While it may currently lack bus stops, these could easily be included in the site or stances at a hospital transport hub (like the one at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee). Good bus provision will be essential to many visitors and staff, particularly those on lower incomes. While the other two sites could be added to bus routes, they are further from large population centres so would be less attractive to bus operators. If NHS Lanarkshire is serious about its obligation to reduce inequalities then Wester Moffat is the obvious choice.

5. **Proximity to greenspace.**

The Wester Moffat site is currently farmland so offers the most scope to incorporate existing trees, greenspace and the burn already there on site. The land is undulating but so is the site of the current Monklands. The Gartcosh site is flat but was a steelworks, which may contain hidden deposits of heavy metals and other materials (as Ravenscraig did). The site near Glenmavis reportedly has issues with soil contaminated by sewage. So, despite Wester Moffat being closest to a large urban area, it is also the greenest. Although this is technically 'green belt' land, incorporating the environment into the hospital design (and the fact it's next to a golf course and Wester Moffat woods) would retain greenspace. A successful hospital design to emulate is the new Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool (2015). Both its [main hospital building](#) and [Institute in the Park](#) have won architecture awards. They also have BREEAM Excellence ratings for environmental performance.

6. **Proximity to environmental features for energy generation.**

As well as aiming for a BREEAM Excellence rating, NHS Lanarkshire should investigate renewable energy sources at Wester Moffat. Small-scale hydro, like nPower's site at Blantyre Mill on the River Clyde, could use the North Calder Water to generate electricity (and avoid blackouts like the recent one at Wishaw General). The former Springbank

Colliery or the old quarry (at the southern corners of the site) have potential to use with a ground source heat pump. Measures like these would reduce running costs and mitigate climate change effects over the lifetime of the hospital building. If successful, there is also potential to make use of the Scottish Government's District Heating Loan to create a district heating system to supply homes over a large area. Especially nearby areas with low SIMD scores like Plains or Airdrie's Clarkston and Petersburn neighbourhoods (all in most deprived 10%). There is more potential for renewables and a much larger population to supply around Wester Moffat than Gartcosh/Glenmavis. District heating would make a great contribution towards reducing fuel poverty and inequalities and meeting NHS Lanarkshire's Fairer Scotland Duty obligations.

We trust that you will give our views serious consideration and we would be delighted to discuss them with you further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tricia Fort', written in a cursive style.

Tricia Fort
for Consultations, GoBike