

Information about the new oxygen storage tank at Heartlands Hospital

Dear parent/carer

I am writing with some important information about the installation of a new oxygen storage tank on at Heartlands Hospital.

I would like to firstly reassure you that the tank is:

- **Safe:** it will only contain liquid oxygen and will have a number of enhanced security features to ensure it works safely; including 24-hour CCTV. The storage tank will not produce any radiation.
- **Necessary:** the oxygen is needed to treat patients at the hospital; without enough oxygen supply, we would be unable to provide patients with the life-saving care they need. Most hospitals have oxygen storage tanks.

The location and size of the tank are necessary to ensure it can supply enough oxygen, to the areas of the hospital that need it the most. The areas are the: critical care unit, operating theatres, children's wards and infectious diseases wards.

What is happening?

Due to more patients being treated at Heartlands Hospital, it is important for the hospital to upgrade and improve our oxygen storage capacity, to ensure that we can provide safe and effective care to local people. This is also especially important in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, where the demand on oxygen has massively increased, in order to provide life-saving care to thousands of patients from Birmingham and Solihull.

Why is it needed?

Oxygen is a life-saving medical treatment that is used in all hospitals to support patients who have a wide range of medical needs, as well as in emergency situations, such as accidents.

It is needed for patients having surgery, as well as treating respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19 and pneumonia. Most other hospitals across the UK have similar oxygen storage facilities and they are extremely safe.

This oxygen tank will be used to provide oxygen to patients in some of the most important departments in the hospital, including the: critical care unit; operating theatres, children's wards and the infectious disease ward.

Is it safe?

The storage tank will only contain liquid oxygen. Safety measures will be put in place to ensure the secure storage of the oxygen, including: a brick wall; steel fencing;

bollards; and CCTV. Additional security measures will also be installed, with a direct link to the 24 hour security team within the Heartlands Hospital.

There will also be regular monitoring of oxygen levels, to ensure strict safety standards are met and maintained.

The storage tank is tested and certified to operate at safe pressures. There has never been an incident involving an oxygen storage tank exploding at a hospital in the UK. The storage tank will not produce any radiation and only very minimal noise.

Why does the storage tank have to be that size and in that specific location?

The size of the storage tank is based on how much oxygen is needed at the hospital. A smaller tank would not guarantee enough oxygen supply and would not be suitable for a hospital the size of Heartlands Hospital.

The location of the oxygen storage tank has been agreed for resilience and supply, as it is the furthest point from the oxygen storage tank that is already in place, and is close to the operating theatres and critical care unit. The tank is eight meters away from the property boundary.

The storage tank is a neutral colour and the area in which it is situated will be landscaped, to help to minimise any impact to local people. This will include planting trees, plants and shrubs.

The substation that is being installed is the responsibility of Western Power Distribution, who are the electricity distribution network operator for the Midlands. The substation is not only required to provide electricity to the hospital, but also to ensure the adequate supply of electricity to Yardley Green Road.

Have you got planning permission?

The hospital has undertaken all necessary steps to get permission for the oxygen storage tank, including notifying The Health and Safety Executive.

The planning permission process and engagement of local residents is the responsibility of Birmingham City Council. The Council sent letters to neighbouring/adjoining properties, displayed planning notices, and notified other local stakeholders.

Full planning permission was granted by on 3 September 2021; all conditions will be met.

What if I want more information?

For more information about this, please contact: TheBigBuild@uhb.nhs.uk

Yours faithfully,

Paul Boocock
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