



PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE RELEASE 10TH JUNE

SAVE UNVEILS ALTERNATIVE PLANS FOR THE MID-WALES HOSPITAL, TALGARTH, WALES AS ITS FUTURE ONCE AGAIN HANGS IN THE BALANCE

A model Edwardian hospital of 1900 designed by London architects Giles Gough and Trollope, with an unusual echelon plan set in rolling green fields on the lower slopes of the Brecon Beacons National Park, was saved from demolition in October last year by the unanimous vote of members of the planning committee of the National Park Authority.

Now the site is under threat once more as local officers recommend that Members of Brecon Beacons National Park Authority vote tomorrow for the inclusion of the site for significant development in the Local Development Plan. This would entail the demolition of the handsome hospital buildings.

Following a SAVE visit in January 2013, Graham Frecknall Architects produced a series of designs showing how the Mid-Wales Hospital could be adapted for residential use whilst retaining the majority of the original buildings. Mr Frecknall and SAVE both consider a successful scheme can be undertaken at Talgarth. He has prepared plans showing how the principal old buildings can be maintained. The scheme as shown shows 57 residential units created on the site, the majority in the old buildings, with a number of workspace units.

Some of the residential units can also make excellent holiday lets for National Park visitors. This will allow the old hospital to play a significant local role in tourism and local employment.

Graham Frecknall Architects are behind the successful residential conversion of the nearby Pen-y-Fal Hospital in Abergavenny. Frecknall informed us that the Mid-Wales Hospital is in a better condition than the Abergavenny site was prior to its conversion.

The Mid-Wales Hospital site offers the opportunity to retain an important group of historic buildings in their original setting, whilst creating new homes and new jobs through the restoration and conversion of the site buildings.

SAVE President Marcus Binney wrote to the Members of Brecon Beacons National Park Authority last Friday with the plans pointing out that the site was a strong candidate for one of the new Heritage Enterprise Grants, recently announced by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

SAVE has also spoken to the Heritage Lottery Fund and established that they would be interested in seeing an application for the site.

SAVE has given strong support to a gathering band of local campaigners, Mid-Wales Hospital Adjacent Adjoining Neighbours Group (MWHAAANG), arguing that numerous purpose-built Victorian and Edwardian mental hospitals have been successfully converted to new uses, both as houses and apartments and as complete village communities.

SAVE Director Clem Cecil says: "The hospital buildings have lain empty for over ten years and their treatment should be seen as a national scandal. They are not listed but last year the conservation area was extended to include it as an acknowledgement of its significance."

SAVE President Marcus Binney says: "We continue to maintain our strong opposition to the demolition of the historic buildings, which runs wholly counter to the conservation area designation and will result in the loss of a significant local landmark."

One of a series of designs for the reuse of the Mid Wales Hospital by Graham Frecknall Architects



Birds Eye View of the Mid-Wales Hospital showing its echelon plan



For more information and images, please contact the office on 020 7253 3500 or office@savebritainsheritage.org

NOTES TO EDITORS: SAVE Britain's Heritage has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architects, journalists and planners. It is a strong, independent voice in conservation, free to respond rapidly to emergencies and to speak out loud for the historic built environment.

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