

Health hub planned for Wester Hailes

- ✘ Plans for a new state-of-the-art health hub in Edinburgh have taken a major step forward.

Planning permission for the Wester Hailes Healthy Living Centre, a joint project between NHS Lothian and the City of Edinburgh Council, was approved by councillors on the city's planning committee.

The chosen site, Harvesters Way, is close to the Wester Hailes shopping centre and will bring together a range of services that will promote health and wellbeing in the local community.

The development will provide new accommodation for the Wester Hailes Medical Practice and a wide range of community health services including physiotherapy, dentistry, podiatry, speech and language therapy, midwifery, paediatrics, mental health and learning disabilities.

There will be Council services located in the building too, in particular the Health and Social Care, Children and Families and Criminal Justice social work practice teams.

The Centre will also accommodate the Wester Hailes Health Agency, which is now based in Dumbryden, along with space for other voluntary sector services. The Health Agency will provide a range of therapeutic services, such as counselling, massage and relaxation, as well as group activities such as walking groups and exercise classes. A healthy eating café to promote healthier lifestyles and other community facilities will also be included in the building.

- ✘ Councillor Paul Edie, Health and Social Care Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "This is an exciting time for people living in Wester Hailes as the new centre will

bring together all their health and social care services in one building.

“Having all these facilities in one location can only be of benefit to everyone in the community and the new site will transform a derelict part of the neighbourhood into a thriving arena.”

Charles Winstanley, Chair, NHS Lothian, said: “It’s great to see this project take another step forward. This is such an exciting and innovative development which, once completed, will bring substantial health and wellbeing benefits to the local community.”

Work is expected to be completed on the new centre by early 2013.