

MOUNTAINHALL TREATMENT CENTRE

DESIGN STATEMENT

Mountainhall Treatment Centre (MHTC), originally known as Mountainhall House, traces its history back to the 18th century. The Georgian-style house, recognisable by its symmetrical design, sash windows, and classical proportions, later became the foundation for what would evolve into a major healthcare site for Dumfries and Galloway (D&G). Throughout the 20th century, the estate was significantly expanded and converted into the region's main acute hospital.

In 2018, acute services transferred to the newly built Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary on a separate site. Since then, MHTC has transitioned to a primarily outpatient-focused centre and is now also home to a wide range of corporate and administrative services. The facility continues to provide essential specialised healthcare, including orthopaedics, rehabilitation, and pain management.

This design statement focuses on the grounds of the treatment centre. Across all engagement groups, a shared aspiration emerged: that the landscape should form a calm, welcoming setting that supports wellbeing for patients, staff, visitors, and the wider community. The grounds should feel rooted in their local context, connect naturally with the town, and encourage everyday use for movement, rest, play, and quiet reflection.

1. Non-negotiables both groups selected

Non-negotiable performance specifications	Benchmarks- the criteria to be met and/or a view of what success might look like
<p>The treatment centre grounds must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have space for young people, children, staff, patients and community organisations to thrive • Be easy to move through and settle into • Create a welcoming and protective atmosphere • Feel like a thriving natural space 	<div data-bbox="712 411 734 798" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small;">Landscape design: erz. Photography: Christopher Swan</div>  <p data-bbox="1395 424 1944 544"><i>Photograph of Royal Edinburgh Hospital which has 1.4 hectares of wildflower meadows.</i></p> <p data-bbox="712 842 2018 911"><i>Have wild play spaces in nature, not formal playgrounds, encouraging exploration and social connection.</i></p> <p data-bbox="712 919 1861 951"><i>Have level access for all and sheltered, comfortable places to rest in all weathers</i></p> <p data-bbox="712 959 1883 991">Have parts that are allowed to grow wild and support biodiversity and animals alike</p>

The treatment centre grounds must:

- Provide opportunities for foraging and engagement with nature
- Provide flexible spaces for groups who would benefit from use of the grounds, such as young people, children, staff, patients and community organisations
- Prioritise the natural potential of the site, ensuring minimal and sensitive development



Photograph of brambles at Mountainhall Treatment Centre

Have areas where people can safely gather edible plants, such as native berries, accompanied by clear guidance and signage reminding users to forage responsibly and verify what they collect

Have areas where groups can naturally gather that feel inclusive and easy to share

Focus on natural landscape and limit the built structure to what is essential to maintain the sites existing character

2. Non-negotiables for 'stakeholder group'

Non-negotiable performance specifications	Benchmarks- the criteria to be met and/or a view of what success might look like
<p>The treatment centre grounds must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate naturally with the wider town• Connect well to the wider community	<p><i>Use materials and plants that reflect Dumfries & Galloways landscape and heritage, avoiding generic finishes</i></p> <p><i>Have transport routes for walking, cycling, public transport and cars to connect to the town</i></p>  <p><i>Photograph of Ayr and Ailsa hospital which has 20km of new/upgraded paths 3.2km of all-ability trails created. These are used for organised walks and by staff from the on-site nursery</i></p>

3. Non-negotiables for 'community panel'

Non-negotiable performance specifications	Benchmarks- the criteria to be met and/or a view of what success might look like
<p>The treatment centre grounds must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel like a pause, a gentle break in the day where time slows, thoughts settle, and the world feels just a little softer • Spark intrigue through diverse elements 	<p><i>Have outdoor spaces that invite pause through seating and views that create a restorative atmosphere</i></p> <div data-bbox="719 520 1361 914" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><i>Photograph of Ayr and Ailsa hospital which has seats at regular intervals to provide places to pause along wildflower lined routes</i></p> <p><i>Invite curiosity through unexpected features and details that encourage exploration and discovery</i></p>