



Italian steel parking deck specialist Fast Park is making its mark in the UK healthcare sector

A quick cure for hospital parking problems



Fast Parks have been built at hospitals in Chorley, Portsmouth and Stockton

Hospitals are dynamic sites, with new wards, wings and buildings continually being fitted into limited plots. As building works inevitably mean that surface car parks are among the first areas earmarked for redevelopment. One way of coping with the loss of surface parking is to build upwards, though conventional concrete multi-stories are not always the best option — they are costly and fairly permanent structures. An alternative approach is to opt for a steel-framed car park — which is quicker to erect and can be designed to be demountable. Italian steel car park specialist Fast Park has been making an impact on the UK health

sector scene in recent months, winning a number of contracts that have seen it build 1,800 spaces.

The first NHS Trust to opt for the Fast Park system was the Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, which ordered three structures for its Stepping Hill Hospital. The three car parks created 800 new parking spaces for a site which was undergoing extensive redevelopment.

The trust required a minimum number of spaces to be maintained. The decks meant that parking provision never fell below 65% of total during the works. Each car park was configured to the specific dimensions of the plots concerned. Reducing the aesthetic impact of the car parks was a

priority, so their exteriors were clad in a light green concrete panelling finished in an Alpine-quarried aggregate.

A Metric Parking barrier system controls spaces allocated to staff. The trust has 17 barriers across the site that can be activated by proximity cards.

The John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford opted for a 315-space steel deck, built over an existing surface car park close to the main reception and outpatients clinic. The new car park was built to enable the hospital to cope with major developments in coming years that will see 1,200 personnel relocate from the Radcliffe Infirmary. In addition, bus services to the site are being enhanced ahead of the move.

Chorley & South Ribble District General Hospital (The Lancashire Teaching Hospital) increased its parking capacity by erecting a 220-space modular Fast Park. The area selected for the car park was prepared in stone rather than surfaced — the light weight of the Fast Park system means that the need for major civil engineering works such as retaining walls is reduced.

The fact that Fast Parks can be disassembled when no longer used was a factor in the system being selected by the Portsmouth Primary Care NHS Trust for its St Mary's Hospital. Here 2,600m² of parking was erected within three months of having been ordered. www.fastpark.com