

Ross Street site's future is unclear

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Services in separate buildings surrounding the existing hospital quarters will remain, including the ambulance station and the community care centre which deals with substance abuse and extended mental health.

But the future of the Ross Street building is still in question.

The RVH board said it will be available for community use and only one group - Victoria Village - has shown interest.

Victoria Village is a multi-level community living concept including a long-term care component.

"We're going to be off this site in 1997, but there will be ongoing costs," said RVH president Ted Long.

RVH officials hope a group will make good use of the property and maintain it.

But Long is concerned that the older half of the building, constructed more than 40 years ago, may cost more to run than it's worth and it may have to be taken down.

"There's always a view that we can take buildings like this and convert it to great purposes... it's a very expensive proposition," he said.

"We've studied the situation and we know that converting the site to long-term care was very expensive."

The C-wing, with beige brick which was built in 1967, may be the only viable part of the existing facility.



MARGARET BRUINEMAN PHOTO

DOCUMENTING FROM ABOVE - Herman Koeslag flies his model aircraft at the site of Barrie's new hospital on Georgian Drive.

RVH construction captured from sky

The helipad doesn't need to be cleared for the launch.

The model helicopter, mounted with a remote-controlled camera, is placed on a dry section of the pad next to the new Royal Victoria Hospital.

Herman Koeslag gets the model aircraft into gear and the device is soon airborne.

"We hover the helicopter relative to the hospital," said Koeslag, who uses a headset to communicate with his wife Carol.

While he runs the helicopter from the ground, she, using a video link which gives her the camera's view through a monitor, operates the camera.

The Koeslag's fledgling company, Eye in the Sky, is chronicling the construction of Barrie's new hospital.

By sending their equipment up to 350 feet straight up, they can capture the historic moment on film throughout the remainder of the project.

Koeslag will continue to fly his model helicopter around the hospital, taking pictures.

"We'd like to leave behind pictures of how it looked before, from an open field and later on, they can refer back to it," said RVH spokesman Paul Swain.