



August 2021

Redevelopment update for stakeholders

Headline news

Our redevelopment plans are often in the news locally - you may have seen or heard recently that we were asked to submit a £400m option for our redevelopment plans to the New Hospital Programme. This does not mean that we have been capped at this sum or that there have been any decisions about our funding.

All of the eight 'pathfinders' (trusts that are in line for significant funding) have been asked to submit an option in line with their original allocation. Ours was £400m, as announced by Boris Johnson in 2019 when the national hospital rebuilding scheme was established.

We were also asked to submit a phased option and our preferred option, which is for as much new build as possible at Watford and significant refurbishment at our hospitals in Hemel Hempstead and St Albans.

The New Hospital Programme (NHP) aims to deliver 40 new hospitals by 2030, backed by an initial £3.7 billion. There are a further eight trusts whose schemes are already underway. This is the biggest hospital building programme in a generation and we are delighted that our plans are part of this ambition. With such a large project, it is understandable that the NHP team wants to monitor costs and make sure all that all trusts are pursuing the best value for money. The interim submissions support this work and the costs they contain are preliminary only.

Detailed costs will be shared at the next stage when we have completed our outline business case (OBC), we expect this to be in early 2022.

The New Hospital Programme team is a Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England and NHS Improvement joint team. You can find out more about their work [here](#). And you can read our press statement about this interim submission [here](#).

Firm plans

We remain committed to our three-hospital configuration and the potential it offers to define each site along these lines:

- Emergency, inpatient and complex care will remain at Watford General Hospital
- Hemel Hempstead Hospital will be the site for planned medical care & long-term conditions
- St Albans City Hospital will provide planned surgery and cancer care.

Urgent care services and some outpatient services will be provided at all three sites. Diagnostic facilities will be significantly upgraded at all three hospitals and the latest digital technology will be incorporated. We will also increase the number of 'one stop' clinics which will combine several steps of treatment in a single appointment.

Site options

There are no plans to consider any options which require an alternative site. Our decision last year to retain our three hospital sites follows the same decision in previous years. On both occasions the trust board has considered independent expert advice on the feasibility of alternative sites. [This paper](#) provides further detail.



Timescale

We are developing an outline business case (OBC) - the document on which the funding decision will be made. We are required to include options which range from 'do minimum' to having all the clinical services currently at Watford General Hospital in new buildings at this site. The Watford options will include a varying number of existing buildings that could be retained.

We await feedback from the NHP on the recent submissions as well as the output of national work on standardisation, ie. room sizes, building methods and the ratio of single occupancy rooms. This will shape the OBC, as will costs of digital integration, which is so important for the improvements we wish to make.

We hope to complete the OBC in 2022. It will undergo rigorous scrutiny by the NHP before a final funding decision from the Treasury.

The NHP's window for construction to start for pathfinder trusts is between April 2023 and September 2024. We aim to get some enabling work underway before that date, if possible. Whilst the overall completion date for the NHP is 2030, pathfinder trusts are expected to have some new facilities open before that date. We are doing all we can to rebuild and refurbish our buildings as soon as possible because we recognise the urgency and we know that our patients and staff deserve better than what we can offer at the moment in terms of our estate.

See our redevelopment roadmap below.

Costs and funding

The latest published (potential) investment figure is £590m which is referenced in a [letter](#) from the Department of Health and Social Care last June. However, this figure is more than a year old and pre-dates the creation of the New Hospital Programme. It does not account for inflation, the increased emphasis on net zero carbon (reducing our impact on the environment), the costs of digital integration, the lessons learnt from Covid-19 or updated demand and capacity modelling to correctly size our hospitals for the future.

The next step in sharing firm information on our costs will be when the OBC is finished. The next milestone for firm information on the investment (ie how much we will get) will come once the Treasury has considered our OBC and is clear as to which option will be funded.

There have been many cost and potential investment figures announced over recent years but the **only figure that really matters** is how much the Treasury agree to invest so that we can deliver new and better buildings!

Plans for each site

We had unanimous approval from Watford Borough Council for our [outline planning application](#) for new hospital buildings on land next to the existing Watford General Hospital. Plans for Hemel Hempstead Hospital and St Albans City Hospital are being developed and will be ready towards the end of this year.

Staff support

Despite the considerable challenges of the last 18 months, our staff have been fully engaged in our developing a [clinical strategy](#) and a [clinical brief](#) which set our ambitions for the healthcare we want to provide for our patients across west Hertfordshire and beyond.

We now have clear goals for the way we wish to work and the improvements we intend to deliver from our new and refurbished buildings to transform our care and enhance the working lives of our staff. In a survey earlier this year more than 70% of staff who completed it agreed that our proposals would increase the quality of the care we provide.



Conclusion

There are different views on the best options for the location of our buildings, which is why we have considered this issue so carefully over many years.

We are delighted to be in the New Hospital Programme after such a long wait to secure funding and we are pursuing the option which we believe will deliver new facilities in the shortest time possible.

More information

If you would like more information, you can [find presentation slides outlining how we plan to redesign our sites and services on our website](#). The most up to date FAQs on the redevelopment can be read [here](#) and here are links to our [engagement documents](#) and [meetings](#) which took place for Your Care, Your Views during the initial engagement.

If you have any questions, please do email westherts.redevelopment@nhs.net

