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The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Secretary of State  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
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20 September 2021

Dear Secretary of State

In October last year, I wrote to the Prime Minister on behalf of my constituents and the staff of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, which is run by North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust, regarding the urgent need for investment to replace the current Hinchingsbrooke site.

Given your recent appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, I thought it essential to brief you on the critical need for investment in the Hospital and to provide you with up to date information on why this is so pressing.

Hinchingsbrooke is one of a number of 'best buy' hospitals, constructed in the 1980s using Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), which have been found to be seriously affected by structural issues relating to the concrete panels used in the construction of its roof and walls. The Hospital was completed in 1984 with a 30 year lifespan and is now life expired. In October 2020, our neighbouring 'best-buy' hospitals, James Paget and West Suffolk, who are also managing the same structural issues with RAAC panels as Hinchingsbrooke, were named in the Government's list of 40 new hospitals announced as part of the Health Infrastructure Plan 2. Hinchingsbrooke Hospital was not on the list as part of the HIP2.

The strategic aim set out by NHS England/NHS Improvement is that there should be no patient accommodation in buildings with these specific RAAC panels at the latest by 2035. The Board of Directors at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust is absolutely committed to finding a longer-term solution to ensure the safety of its patients and staff as time is of the essence to find a solution to meet this deadline. Currently, there is no such funding commitment available. Further delay will simply prolong the requirement for substantial investment in short term measures which do not contribute to a long term resolution of RAAC.

Not only does the site have RAAC covering 80% of the buildings in which clinical services are delivered but, in addition, there are wider issues affecting the entire site in relation to water, medical gases, electricity and other parts of the support infrastructure which are not able to support the Hospital.

Earlier this month, the Trust Board submitted an Expression of Interest for funding as part of the New Hospital Programme seeking to be one of the eight additional schemes to be announced in Spring 2022. The bid is not just for replacement of the RAAC buildings, but for the redevelopment of the site in its entirety. This is essential to deliver the transformational, cash-releasing benefits that whole site redevelopment will bring and which will contribute significantly to system sustainability for the delivery of elective care. This will transform the Hospital into an integrated care hub with ambitions for more system-wide mental health capacity, care home

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facilities, social services and primary care enhancement on site, whilst being an 'anchoring institution' for the system and will contribute to the levelling up agenda.

In the meanwhile, in view of the significant risks associated with RAAC, the Trust Board has already developed a Development Control Plan and invested £2.6m of its own resources to developing a SOC for full redevelopment. Four clinical leads are in post who are leading the programme. At this stage, no public consultation is envisaged.

The Board has also prioritised replacement of the seven main theatres by committing Trust capital to top up STP funded capital. The Trust already has a Development Control Plan for replacement of the existing hospital buildings and I am writing to ask for your support for the Trust's bid for national funding that will enable a new Hinchingsbrooke Hospital to be built by 2030.

Hinchingsbrooke Hospital is a key acute site, not only for the rapidly-growing population of Cambridgeshire, but also for communities in neighbouring Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. It is well-loved and championed by its patients for the good services it provides. The housing stock in the immediate catchment area of the Hospital is set to increase by 28% by 2036 whilst the expected growth in the over 65 year olds is more than 15%.

The Trust is also developing Hinchingsbrooke as its elective hub and stroke rehabilitation facility for Cambridgeshire.

On behalf of my concerned constituents and the patients and staff of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, I am appealing for the Trust's bid for funding to rebuild the hospital to be looked upon favourably as part of further funding decisions in the imminent future.

Yours sincerely