

Vanessa Bainbridge
Chief Accountable Officer
NHS Northumberland CCG
County Hall,
Morpeth
NE61 2EF

Cumbria and the North East

Waterfront 4
Newburn Riverside
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NY

Telephone: 011382 53318

Email address: Christine.Briggs2@nhs.net

10 August, 2018

Dear Vanessa

Re: NHS England assurance of Berwick hospital redevelopment plans

I am writing to outline NHS England's proposed assurance position in relation to both the service change and financial aspects of the CCG's consideration of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's planned redevelopment of Berwick Infirmary. This follows a review of the proposals undertaken by the Cumbria and North East Director of Commissioning Operations' (DCO) team.

An assessment of the scope of the proposals confirms that the rebuild will continue to provide the same service range with only minimal reduction in the previously proposed bed capacity, which is in line with the CCG's assessment of current utilisation rates and future demand.

It is evident that the proposals have been influenced by a number of public consultations over the last four years and the DCO team takes confidence from the more recent public engagement activities that have been undertaken. The plans to involve local people in the design and build phases of the redevelopment are also endorsed as a proportionate engagement approach.

Based on this we feel that the proposed redevelopment does not represent a significant service change under the definitions of the NHS England's 'Planning, Assuring and Delivering Service Change' and as such the associated assurance process would not apply. However, we recognise that you do not yet have the final view of your local Overview and Scrutiny Committee on whether or not they consider the change as a substantial variation from their perspective. If this does prove to be the case and formal public consultation is required we will agree a proportionate

service change assurance process focused on ensuring that Test 1 - Strong public and patient engagement is being met.

Regardless of our approach to service change assurance, further financial assurance of the proposals will be required, given that the CCG is currently operating under legal directions from NHS England.

It is expected that the CCG will demonstrate appropriate rigour and robustness in its assessment of the revenue financial implications of the proposals, setting out how it has secured best value in the full and final business case presented to the CCG Governing Body and that the CCG will proactively engage with NHS England finance team sufficiently early in the process to allow for the necessary assurance.

I do hope that this is helpful in setting out NHS England's assurance expectations prior to you moving to the next stage of the redevelopment process. Please liaise directly with Audrey Pickstock and her team in relation to the financial assurance required. If you require any further information or advice around the service change assurance process please contact Ben Clark via ben.clark2@nhs.net or Jill Simpson via jill.simpson2@nhs.net, both in the Clinical Strategy Team.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Briggs
Director of Delivery and Commissioning
NHS England North: Cumbria and the North East

CC:

- Stephen Young, Head of Strategic Commissioning, Northumberland CCG
- Rachel Mitcheson, Corporate Affairs Manager, Northumberland CCG
- Audrey Pickstock - Director of Finance, NHS England: North (Cumbria and the North East)
- Ben Clark - Assistant Director of Clinical Strategy, NHS England: North (Cumbria and the North East)