

## **Northumbria Healthcare announces the site of the new Berwick hospital**

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – in partnership with NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) - today announced the £25million investment in a new stand-alone hospital for Berwick will be located on the site of the current Infirmary.

The decision comes after the both organisations listened to, and reflected on, local views on previous proposals to develop a joint site with the Swan leisure centre. Following this feedback, and a review of the alternative options, a conclusion has been reached to develop a new hospital on the existing site.

“We are delighted to be able to announce that the new hospital will be built on the site of the much loved (Berwick) Infirmary,” said Northumbria Healthcare CEO Sir James Mackey.

“Following extensive joint public engagement, and a thorough review of all alternative sites, we believe this is the best option which also commands the support of both staff and the community - a factor which is very important to both the trust and the CCG.

“It is clear that the joint development was not what the town wanted. Instead, people demonstrated their support for a stand-alone hospital on the current site. Accordingly, we have listened, responded and worked together to come up with this plan as an alternative.”

Janet Guy, chair of Northumberland CCG agreed:

"This is great news for Berwick and we are delighted to see the project moving forward in a way that meets the needs of the local community. Patients are at the heart of our services and this decision is as a direct result of the feedback we have heard.

“We very much look forward to working with Northumbria Healthcare to provide a first class health facility for the people of Berwick.

“It’s very exciting and is brilliant news for both the NHS and the town.”

Both the trust and the CCG emphasised that the full £25million allocated for the project would be invested on the new hospital.

“It’s too early to have specific plans in place – though we are in preliminary talks with a number of possible developers – but we are working quickly to ensure we have plans to share as soon as possible,” continued Sir James.

“In particular we’ve listened to the local community’s concerns that they have to travel too far, too often for relatively minor or routine appointments. As such, eradicating the need to travel for minor or routine appointments will be a driving force

behind our plans and we will ensure we track and publish the number of miles patients have to travel on a yearly basis, with a clear aim to make significant reductions in this travel for patients.”

“The design will focus on flexibility, embracing new technology and, most importantly, ensuring outstanding care,” said Janet.

“The emphasis will be on delivering as much as we safely can as close to patients as possible – including in primary care; the opportunities for which we are very excited about.”

The new hospital will represent the very latest in design and be ‘future proofed’; with all current services being retained and with a view to incorporating more where safe to do so.

“We fully expect that the new hospital will adapt and evolve over time – the NHS is ever-changing after all,” said Sir James.

“I can confirm that all the services currently provided at the Infirmary will continue. In addition, I can also assure residents that we are looking very closely at what might safely be added - especially with the aid of new technology and ways of working - for instance, telemedicine.

“On a personal note, I would like to thank staff and the community for their patience and participation throughout this process. I know it’s been a long and sometimes frustrating road – a sentiment I share – but this is a big, positive step forward.

“Now we have a plan in place we are absolutely determined to get on with it. To that end, I very much look forward to working with the people of the town and surrounding area as we start work on the next phase.”