**New hospital ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ (FAQs)**

**October 2021, v3.0**

**Q: Why do we need a new hospital?**
**A:** Our hospital buildings are in a desperate state and have reached the end of their life - with 213 steel and timber props in 46 areas of the hospital, we believe we are the most propped hospital in the country.

As a RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will continue to need significant annual investment until a long-term sustainable solution for the hospital can be confirmed. This is why it is so important for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to get on the Government’s list of eight new hospitals.

The Trust Board at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is very clear that a new hospital is the only long-term sustainable solution to the challenges we face.

A new hospital that is fit for the future will enable us to provide outstanding care in world-class facilities and meet the demands of our growing and ageing population. We want to become the best District General Hospital for patient and staff experience and a new hospital is central to achieving this ambition.

**Q: What is wrong with the hospital’s building?**
**A:** The Queen Elizabeth Hospital has reached the end of its life. It was built in 1980 with prefabricated sections and includes a Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) plank flat roof structure. RAAC plank roofs were only designed to last 30 years and our building, which is now over 40 years old, is in a desperate state. In 46 areas of the hospital, 213 steel and timber props have been installed to maximise the safety of the building.

We have a planned programme of improvements and service moves which will take place during 2021/22 to improve the safety and delivery of some services including a new state-of-the-art endoscopy unit, a new outpatient facility and refurbished wards by year-end which are possible thanks to £20.6m of national emergency capital the Trust has received.

In addition, this funding is allowing the installation of failsafes (to reduce the risk of RAAC plank failures) which will improve the safety and delivery of some services.

The final element of our approach is doing what is necessary to have a fit for the future hospital that our patients and staff deserve.

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**Q: Are the hospital buildings unsafe?**
**A:** We are taking proactive steps to maximise safety at our hospital. This includes a rolling programme of onsite surveys and maintenance as well as a £20.6m emergency national capital investment in facilities to allow the installation of failsafes (to reduce the risk of RAAC plank failures) which will improve the safety and delivery of some services. The final element of our approach is doing what is necessary to have a fit for the future hospital that our patients and staff deserve.

We expect to find out in the autumn if we have been selected to go through to the next stage of the assessment process for the Government’s New Hospital Programme, with a final decision on the eight new hospital schemes to be announced by the Government in spring 2022.

**Q: Why have you submitted bids for a single-phase new hospital build and one for a multi-phase development?**

**A:** We have submitted two Expressions of Interest to the Department of Health and Social Care so that we have the best possible chance in bringing a new hospital to King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. Whilst a single-phase full new hospital would cost less and deliver much greater benefits, we understand the restraints of national capital budgets.

A multi-phase development provides a scalable option that still delivers some benefits and would be a vast improvement on our current estate. Submitting the two bids gives us the best possible chance of securing the national funding we so badly need.

**Q: Do you think that one of the bids will be approved?**
**A:** We are confident we have a very strong case. Our buildings are in a desperate state and have reached the end of their life - with 213 steel and timber props in 46 areas of the hospital, we believe we are the most propped hospital in the country.

**Q: When will you know if one of your bids has been successful?**
**A:** We expect to find out this autumn if we have been selected to go through to the next stage of the assessment process for the Government’s New Hospital Programme, with a final decision on eight new hospital schemes to be announced by the Government in spring 2022.

**Q: What is the Government’s New Hospital Programme?**
**A:** It is the biggest hospital building programme in a generation with 40 new hospitals to be built across the country by 2030. This will help to build a better NHS and transform NHS services for local communities.

During the Summer the Government announced a selection process for a further eight new hospitals. Expressions of interest were invited from mental health, community and acute NHS trusts by 9 September 2021. We have submitted two expressions of interest for a new hospital as part of this process which have unanimous support from our health and care partners across Norfolk, Waveney and Cambridgeshire and our key partners and stakeholders.

**Q:** **What criteria will the Government use to choose eight further new hospitals to be built?**
**A:** The Government has said it will prioritise plans for:

* Services which transform joined up care for people and provide an effective working environment for NHS staff
* Fair allocations of investment to level up across regions and provide value for money
* Stronger and greener NHS buildings that make the most of modern methods of construction to support sustainable, greener and efficient design.

**Q: What work on a new hospital is happening in the meantime?**
**A:** Whilst the national selection process is underway, we will continue to focus on the development of our Strategic Outline Case for a new hospital so that we can ensure that if selected for investment our schemes are ready to go.

**Q: How can I keep updated on progress being made?**
**A:** We will keep our patients and the local communities we serve across Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire informed of developments via regular newsletters, via local media updates, and the latest information can be accessed via our website at <http://www.qehkl.nhs.uk/NewQEH.asp>.

**Q: How can I get involved and support the bid for a new hospital?**
**A:** You can show your support for a new hospital by signing our petition and urging your friends and family to do the same. It will take less than a minute and can be found [here](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/590390).

Our aim is to reach 100,000 signatures to demonstrate the strength of feeling about the need for a new hospital for King’s Lynn and trigger a debate in Parliament.

You can also access some campaign resources at <http://www.qehkl.nhs.uk/NewQEH.asp> or request them via our communications team at: CommunicationsQEH@qehkl.nhs.uk.