



Our Ref: JP/Np/jac      Direct Line: 01633 435958

3 March 2017

Mr Mark Reckless  
Assembly Member  
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee.  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

**Re: Air Quality in Wales**

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 regarding the decision and making process in relation to appraising options for the location of the Specialist Critical Care Centre (SCCC).

Plans for the development of the SCCC from a clinical perspective were developed in the context of the Clinical Futures Programme, the aim of which was and still is to provide better local access to a broad range of services in recognition of the impact that this has on inequalities in health, promotion of health and well-being and integration of care. The future location of specialist and critical care services has been a central consideration for the Clinical Futures programme and was one of the priority issues that emerged from early public engagement work at the outset of the planning process in 2003. Whilst the public accepted the case for change in relation to specialist and critical care services, and endorsed the Clinical Futures model of care, they were concerned to ensure that the location of these services was as accessible as possible for the whole population. This was a particular concern in the rural and valleys areas to the north of Gwent where roads and access to transport is more problematic.

Whilst access to services can be achieved through advancements in technology, improved communications and telemedicine, geographical and physical access to specialist and critical care services is an important factor in planning particularly in terms of major emergencies, paediatric and obstetric care. The location of SCCC services in Gwent needed to reflect the fact that the catchment population covered a wide geographical area within which there are a wide range of transport and access issues, for example, low car ownership in deprived areas or poor public transport in rural communities, such as south Powys and north Monmouthshire. Although some parts of the catchment population are concentrated in urban areas such as Newport, other parts such as Monmouthshire and South Powys are widely dispersed.

In addition the mobility and location of the workforce has had to be considered in terms of the future location of services. Whilst all staff groups must be considered, in the context of specialist and critical care services which are currently delivered at both the Royal Gwent Hospital and Nevill Hall Hospital sites, the relocation of these services would have a particular impact on the clinical staff working in these areas. As these specialist skills are not transferable and are in short supply within the NHS this needed to be a prime consideration in determining the location of the SCCC.

In the context of the above and in order to identify optimum locations for the SCCC a travel times review was undertaken between 2005 and 2007 as set out below:

<b>Stage 1 2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel Times Analysis completed by RKW, Healthcare Strategists based on clinical activity data and model informed by patients and clinical staff</li> <li>- The analysis was based upon the Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust's patient activity in 2004/05, using a proxy for numbers of visitors, and including both private and public transport modes.</li> <li>- Weightings were used for emergency journeys and length of journey to reflect the need to get all patients to specialist and critical care services within an acceptable time.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Outcome</u></b></p> <p>The analysis showed that the best location for the SCCC would be within a 3 mile radius of Croes-y-ceiliog, Cwmbran, with good access to the A4042. At this location 95% of patients can reach the SCCC within 30 minutes and 100% of patients can get there within an hour. This level of access is key in achieving the investment objectives of the Clinical Futures Programme</p>
<b>Stage 2 (Jan – Sept 06)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Informal discussions regarding the outcome of the Travel times analysis took place with key stakeholders – South East Wales Transport Association (SEWTA), Welsh Ambulance service, Torfaen LA Highways Department, LHB Boards, Community Health Council, Clinical Futures Public Forum</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Outcome</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- widespread support for a central location and the approach</li> <li>- SEWTA commended approach taken</li> <li>- support from Welsh Ambulance Service</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3 (Sept – Dec 06)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal public consultation on the location of SCCC, with options for respondents to suggest alternatives</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Outcome</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Majority support for a central location (83 % of respondents)</li> <li>- Minority objection from Newport LA in favour of Newport locations</li> </ul> <p>The following paragraph is an extract from Community Health Council's Report on Public Consultation</p> <p><i>"Specialist and Critical Care Centre: 496 people or 95% of all respondents answered the question on the general location of the SCCC. A clear majority supported the location of the SCCC in the</i></p>

	<i>central location – 83% in support. Although there was a more substantial minority from Newport against this proposition, it was still supported three to one by city residents. There was a particularly low response from Blaenau Gwent residents, though an overwhelming majority favoured the central location. Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust has confirmed its support for the Clinical Futures proposals. It also preferred a site in the central zone "rather than any other location in Gwent."</i>
<b>Stage 4 (28 Feb 07)</b>	- Gwent Trust and 5 LHB Boards in Gwent formally note their support for the outcome of consultation

A study of the impact on staff working in the Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust was also undertaken. Information on current staff highlighted that the 10 most populous post codes in terms of staff residence were based on a reasonably well defined geographical area that runs along the A4042 with a concentration of staff residences in and around the towns of Newport, Cwmbran and Abergavenny, The staff residing in these areas represented approximately 58% (6211) of the total number of staff employed by the Trust. Of these top 10 postcode districts:

- 2577 members of staff resided in districts in and around Newport.
- 1513 members of staff resided in post code districts in and around Cwmbran
- 902 members of staff resided in postcode districts in and around Abergavenny

This indicated that a central location as defined above would minimise the impact on staff, whereas a Newport or a Nevill Hall location would require significant numbers of staff to travel from one end of the catchment area to the other.

Whilst the above has obviously focused on the key issue of accessibility to specialist and critical care services and the need for a central location, the Health Board, via a rigorous business case and option appraisal process, has also had to demonstrate that the SCCC itself is the best option for the delivery of these services from a clinical, financial and non-financial perspective. The business case process consisted of a Programme Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2008), an Outline Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2012) and a Full Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2015). It should be noted that at each stage identified above Welsh Government undertook a rigorous assessment process prior to their approval. This culminated in formal approval of the SCCC Full Business Case in October 2016 which has allowed the Health Board to proceed with its construction.

I hope that the above provides you with assurance that the decision to locate the new hospital at Llanfrechfa, Cwmbran has been made in the context of a very rigorous and detailed planning process. If you require any additional information or require copies of the above business cases please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Judith Paget**  
**Chief Executive/Prif Weithredwr**