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**Statement of Case for  
Croxley Rail Link Public Inquiry**

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**Louse Gaffney  
Director of Strategy & Infrastructure  
West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust**

## Introduction

This Statement from West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (the Trust) is submitted to the Croxley Rail Link (CRL) Inquiry on behalf of WHHT and in particular services at Watford General Hospital and the Watford Health Campus scheme.

As expressed in Professor Thomas Hanahoe's letter dated 13 February to the Secretary of State, we support the CRL scheme. We would ask that the Inquiry is mindful to ensure that proper mechanisms are put into place to ensure the coordination between the delivery of the CRL and the Health Campus schemes should the CRL be recommended for approval.

## Site Description

The Watford General Hospital site is located off Vicarage Road in west Watford. It is situated adjacent to Watford Football Club. The buildings of the hospital occupy a site accessed from Vicarage Road. The Hospital site was developed over many years in an ad hoc manner with a range of different buildings which also includes the original Union Workhouse building. Adjacent to and immediately to the south of the building complex are open car park serving the hospital. The location of Watford General Hospital is approximately 450m from proposed Watford General Hospital CRL station.

The whole of Watford Health Campus site has an area of 26.4 hectares. It comprises a number of different sites including Watford General Hospital, Cardiff Road Industrial Estate, the former Carriage Sheds site (off Wiggshall Road) and Oxhey Playing Fields. Areas adjoining the site to the west, north and east are predominantly residential, comprising Victorian terraced housing in west Watford.

Overall, the Health Campus site is mixed character and generally of poor quality, with large areas of industrial contamination and flood plain close to the River Colne.

## West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust

The Trust provides acute healthcare services to a core catchment population of approximately half a million people living in west Hertfordshire and the surrounding areas. The Trust also provides a range of more specialist services to a wider population, serving residents of north London, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and east Hertfordshire.

The Trust is one of the biggest employers in west Hertfordshire, employing around 4,000 people and seeing nearly a million patients each year.

We operate from three main hospitals, Watford General Hospital, Hemel Hempstead Hospital and St Alban City Hospital.

Watford General Hospital is at the heart of the Trust's acute emergency services, the core location for inpatient emergency care and for all patients who need the specialist emergency facilities (such as intensive care) of a major district general hospital. It also provides elective care for high risk patients together with a full range of outpatient and diagnostic services. Watford is the focus of the Trust's Women's and Children's services, including neonatal care.

Since March 2009 when emergency services centralised at Watford, Watford has been the main acute hospital in west Hertfordshire. The site now includes a newly expanded

A&E department with a 120 bed Acute Admissions Unit. These new facilities were granted planning approval on a temporary basis ahead of the delivery of the Watford Health Campus scheme.

In 2010/11 the Trust increased capacity on the Watford site with a Clinical Decision Unit (CDU) and 18 bed Portacabin surge ward.

The Trust's maternity service is amongst the largest in south-east England with 6000 deliveries per annum. A £750k investment in Maternity services has delivered an increase in capacity, with a new six bedded transitional care unit linked to the Special Care Baby Unit for mothers and babies; three extra delivery beds; two antenatal beds; and four additional triage beds.

The Trust is in the process of obtaining Foundation Trust state which will help us to pursue our medium term objectives of developing new facilities to deliver our services. The CRL scheme will provide a direct rail link to the Watford General Hospital from our major catchment towns and will improve significantly the accessibility of the hospital to the 500,000 people who live in west Hertfordshire as well as for the hundreds and thousands who live beyond our current catchment area. Our Watford site generates close to 200,000 outpatient visits a year and the vast majority of these patients drive, or are driven to the hospital. In addition close to 2,000 staff work at the site at any one time. The hospital provides about 1,000 parking spaces to accommodate the traffic generated. The availability of a new rail link will markedly reduce traffic.

The Trust is joint sponsor of Health campus scheme which is a large important regeneration scheme and will among other things facilitate some of the key enabling developments and specifically Watford General Hospital site. For this reason we at the Trust feel it is vitally important that coordination exists between the CRL scheme and the Health Campus scheme.

### Watford Health Campus Scheme

The Watford Health Campus scheme originates from the outline planning permission granted planning approval in 2010 (07/00958/OUTM) by Watford Borough Council.

The Health Campus scheme is being brought forward by a number of stakeholders including Watford Borough Council, the Trust and Watford Football Club. This masterplan obtained planning permission for a mixed use scheme comprising:

- Re – provision of Watford General Hospital
- 500 new homes
- 25,000 sq. m. of commercial floorspace
- 15,000 sq. m of hotel, leisure and hospitality facilities
- CHP/ energy provision
- Associated delivery of infrastructure and public realm including new access roads, public square and green landscaped areas

This application sought the redevelopment of the Watford General Hospital as the main acute hospital for west Hertfordshire along with a new access road to relieve heavy congestion on Vicarage Road. Vicarage Road is currently the only vehicle access into the Hospital. The Hospital Trust successfully secured a grant of approximately £7million from the Department of Health to development a new access road and bridge over the railway line of the proposed Croxley Rail Link. The Trust, along with the Health Campus team are working hard to ensure that road and bridge can be delivered ahead of the possession of the site by Croxley Rail Link. This road together with CRL will ensure that

Watford General Hospital and the Health Campus have the infrastructure for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Given the constraints of the Health Campus site, the Borough Council have successfully secured at least £3million funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership. This funding will ensure that site preparation works (including flood and site contamination mitigation works) are brought forward to help with delivery.

The redevelopment proposals for the Health Campus scheme have anchored Watford Football Club within the town at adjacent to the Health Campus site. It should be noted that CRL and proposed new Watford General Hospital station will provide a new convenient public transport link to football fans visiting the ground.

Watford Borough Council and the Trust are procuring a private sector partner to help delivery the Health Campus scheme, including facilitating the re provision of the Hospital. We have recently selected a Preferred Bidder; Kier Property and are working towards signing contracts with them at the end of this year. Kier have expressed the view that the Croxley Rail Link is vital to supporting the aims and delivery of the Campus. Their masterplan and therefore business plan has been developed with the new Station on Vicarage Road including a new bridge over the reinstated railway line.

It is clear that the whole Health Campus scheme would provide additional potential patronage for the Croxley Rail Link.

As well as a key underpinning to the commercial and residential viability of the Health Campus site, the new Croxley Rail Link will make a significant difference to the ability to attract and retain staff at Watford General Hospital and a marked improvement in the quality of life of the resident of west Watford.

The Trust consider Croxley Rail Link is of vital importance in providing a new and alternative mode of transport for our patients, staff and visitors as we develop out our plans for redeveloping our Watford site. A key consideration would be improving public transport access to our site and a new station on the Croxley Rail Link would be provide a key opportunity for sustainable sub-regional access and will underpin the successful redevelopment of the health Campus scheme.

We would like to ensure that both the Health Campus and CRL schemes achieve environmental economic and social benefits and would therefore seek conditions and or obligations (S.106 or equivalent agreement) if the Secretary of State is mindful to grant planning approval for the CRL scheme. These conditions for the successful integration of both schemes relate to:

1. Confirmation as soon as possible of the longitudinal track levels along the railway for the Health Campus scheme area (establishment of the clearance level to the underside of the Health Campus Access Road Bridge and the top of rail levels for Croxley Rail Link).
2. The maximum extent of surface/ flood water storage volume to be retained on the Watford Health Campus site.
3. A high quality boundary and demarcation treatment between railway line and area of Watford Health Campus.
4. High quality upgrade works for pedestrian bridge over the railway (Cardiff Road Bridge works).

Obligations for the successful integration of both schemes relate to:

1. TfL specific signage for customers using the new Watford General Hospital station to and from the Health Campus site; Watford General Hospital; and Watford Football Club.
2. Improved pedestrian access arrangements between the proposed new Watford General Hospital Station and the current and future Hospital and wider Health Campus scheme.