

Garden City Surgery
57-59 Station Road
Letchworth
SG6 3BJ

14th March 2019

By Email

Anthony Roche
Deputy Chief Executive
North Herts District Council

Dear Anthony

RE: Letchworth Health Hub, The High Street Fund

I am writing on behalf of Garden City Surgery to support your bid for the Future High Streets Fund.

In addition to Letchworth Town Centre itself, Primary Care services in Letchworth are facing huge challenges at the moment. One local practice has in recent years gone through a prolonged period of instability following the departure of the incumbent partners. The ongoing pressures on our healthcare system, alongside severe and seemingly ever worsening difficulties in recruiting GPs and other primary care medical staff, mean that all GP surgeries are continually at risk of suddenly entering similar difficulties.

There is a clear shared vision amongst local GP practice colleagues that the best way of delivering high quality and sustainable primary care to the residents of Letchworth is by having one Health Hub at the centre of our town. Three practices in Letchworth have agreed in principle to merge and come together under one roof as part of this vision. The aspiration is for the fourth Letchworth practice to also join once phase one is established. In realising this vision we can, in to the future, offer a more stable and more integrated health service for the whole town's population, with improved access to health care appointments, along with an improved patient experience and the provision of additional services, all made possible by working closely together and at scale.

Work toward this vision for the future provision on healthcare across Letchworth has been ongoing, with input and support from a variety of organisations including the CCG, Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, North Herts District Council, Public Health England, and NHS England.

The centre of Letchworth is ideally placed to serve this purpose and with the proposed Health Hub in phase one serving over 30,000 residents of the town, the daily footfall to the area will be

huge. The Letchworth Heritage Foundation official estimate is an increased footfall of 5000 per week, but our view is that it may be considerably higher, when taking into account relatives and carers attending with patients. Also, as additional ancillary services (such as Health Visitors, Mental Health teams or Voluntary Sector Organisations, for example) come on board further increased footfall will be generated into the centre of town. In addition to the benefits to local businesses of the increased footfall into the Town centre which is predicted, such a location is also the most ideal site for a Health Hub of the kind envisaged, with good transport links and proximity to large car parking facilities.

In summary, we believe this project would be mutually valuable to both the Letchworth High Street and to local Primary Care, and prove a wonderful legacy to the Garden City for a generation.

A successful bid for the High Street Fund would be a vital vehicle to assist with the progression of this large project to the benefit of all the residents and businesses of this historic Garden City, and we wholeheartedly support the bid.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adrian Wood MBChB MRCP
GP Partner – Garden City Surgery, Letchworth