



Freedom of Information Request – 5922

Please tell us what you are doing about the obsolescence problem at the James Paget at Gorleston. Do you have a risk assessment on the building's safety in view of its similar design to the Queen Elizabeth hospital at Kings Lynn? What does it say? What plans are there for any remedial building or extension and are there internal budget funds ring-fenced for this? Alternatively, what external expectations from the CCG or Government plans are there to achieve this development in the near future.

The James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust site is maintained via a comprehensive estates maintenance programme, and the Trust's Board of Directors receives regular assurance and updates on the risk assessment and inspections being carried out on the Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC) planks at its hospital site.

Construction of the James Paget Hospital was completed in 1981, one of the last in a series of 'best buy' hospitals to be built in the UK. Central to its construction was the use of RAAC planks in its roof and walls. In 2019, the Standing Committee on Structural Safety (SCOSS) reported the failure of a RAAC plank in a non-NHS site built of similar material and construction.

New additions/modifications and developments on the Trust's estate - such as the construction of the Day Case Theatres - has been used as an opportunity to inspect the original structure, including the RAAC planks, with appropriate records taken. When the Trust's Day Care Theatres complex was built in 2015, more than 340 square metres of new roofing was constructed. This major construction project involved removing a large section of the original roof – and inspections of the removed planks showed no unexpected deterioration. The hospital's roof has also been extensively resurfaced since it was built, to protect it from the elements, as part of an ongoing estates maintenance programme.

Following the SCOSS report on RAAC planks in 2019, the Trust's Estates team proactively conducted an inspection of the underside of the roof planks across our site. This inspection found nothing untoward. The Trust has also worked with a specialist surveying company, using laser equipment to conduct a comprehensive inspection of roofing planks at the hospital. This inspection found nothing that required immediate remedial action. Surveys of the hospital's roof and walls will continue on a rolling basis, so that the Trust can identify any planks that are showing signs of unexpected stress and can take any action required.

The Trust's estates team has developed plans for a series of installations and improvements aimed at securing the RAAC panels at its site over the next 5-10 years, including installing end bearing supports in primary ward areas and structural steel grillage supports in central theatres. The Trust is working closely with NHS England & Improvement, who monitor the national approach to managing RAAC issues across the NHS, to confirm these plans. The James Paget will receive £2.8m in 2021-22 to deliver some of the actions listed above.

The Trust's Board of Directors recognise that the main structure of the hospital is ageing and will require increased monitoring and maintenance going forward. In 2020, it was announced that the James Paget has received national seed funding to explore all options for the building of a new hospital – one of 40 which will be built across the country by 2030. At the moment the Trust is in the early planning stages, and aims to inform and involve hospital staff, local residents and health and care system partners in the development of plans going forward.