

COUNCILLOR CAROLINE COOPER-MARBIAH

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(Labour, Colliers Wood Ward)



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ESTH 2020-2030
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Dear Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

Re 2020-2030 Engagement

I am in support of improvement of St Helier Hospital at its current location in Rose Hill. I strongly believe that St Helier must remain on this site with all its current acute services intact because this is an area with the greatest clinical need and deprivation.

In figures I have seen, in 2015 alone, 2,987 babies were born at St Helier compared to 1,988 at Epsom Hospital. With such a large birth rate at St Helier, it is important that a consultant led maternity unit and major A&E services are maintained at St Helier. Also in 2015, there were 43,983 A&E admissions compared to 28,760 at Epsom hospital. This clearly shows where the greatest demand is.

I am aware that Epsom and Belmont are affluent areas, whereas 38% of the neighbourhoods within a mile of St Helier are within 40% of the most deprived neighbourhoods. Therefore, moving acute services from Rose Hill to Epsom or Belmont would literally be moving them from an area with bad health to an area with better health.

In your suggestion to build a new hospital in Epsom or Belmont, local people would struggle to access the services due to the distance they would have to travel and poor public transport links to both Epsom and Belmont. There are 3,465 people with bad or very bad health living within a mile of St Helier with less than half of that figure, 1,525 in Belmont and only 937 in Epsom. I am therefore very concerned that patients would be put at risk of not being seen quickly enough, leading to greater fatalities and poorer outcomes and recovery for certain emergencies.

St Helier is the biggest employer in the area and therefore attracts many people into Rose Hill who support the local businesses, shops and cafes. If services were to be downgraded or moved from Rose Hill, there would be a dramatic negative impact on the area which already has a large number of households without work.

Additionally, there has been a large increase in the number of families living locally and we have had to work on expanding our primary schools to provide 4,000 extra places. This therefore reinforces my belief that it is important for families to be able to access the full remit of services locally from St Helier with access to good transport links.

50% of the neighbourhoods within a mile of St Helier hospital are considered to be within 40% of the most deprived neighbourhoods for employment. For Belmont that figure is only 8%. All the areas within a mile of Epsom are considered to be affluent. It is clear that it would be local residents living in St Helier who would struggle to cope should St Helier moved and be downgraded.

Finally, I am surprised that you are conducting yet another engagement regarding St Helier hospital. We have had the same consultation in the past costing £40-50 million with the same result – that the hospital is in the best site. Running the same process again is unnecessary and a waste of public funds, when the funds could have been invested in improving St Helier at its current site.

Additionally, conducting your engagement during the summer break avoids the opportunity for parents and politicians to contribute to the process. I therefore disagree with your entire engagement process.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Caroline Cooper-Marbiah
Cabinet Member for Education