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By Email.

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### Report of the Independent Review Panel

The report from the Independent Review Panel (IRP) on the process followed by NHS Lanarkshire Monklands Replacement/Refurbishment Project (MRRP) will be published on Thursday 27 June at 11:00 and I will be writing to the Convener of the Health and Sport Committee at the Scottish Parliament, to make him aware of the position as well as local elected representatives.

The report makes three specific recommendations for NHS Lanarkshire to address, however before exploring these in detail, I would like to highlight that in overall terms the IRP concluded that:

*'Our review found that NHS Lanarkshire had used all the correct guidance on how to conduct such planning. Our review also found that NHS Lanarkshire had conducted a process which was mainly in line with this existing guidance and overall very well conducted'.*

I would like you to ensure that your MRRP team is aware of that overall positive assessment of their performance and that I appreciate all the effort and work they have undertaken on behalf of this important project. The report highlights that some of the relevant guidance, which is complex and open to different interpretation, needs to be updated and we have already started the process of refreshing CEL 4 (2010). I would expect that the experience of the MRRP will be able to provide useful comment and reflection as the guidance is refreshed and updated.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings from this review, the IRP make the following specific recommendations for NHS Lanarkshire:

- NHS Lanarkshire should make provision for new independent (external) members to the MRRP board. This will help support greater objectivity and external vision, as well as increased understanding of the public perception of the MRRP process.

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- NHS Lanarkshire should re-evaluate the top two scoring options underpinned by credible and convincing detail on the non-financial benefit criteria and associated financial costs.
  - In particular, greater clarity should be provided on accessibility issues and costs affecting both sites, including changes to transport infrastructure and public transport for the alternative sites. This will require meaningful engagement with Transport Scotland.
  - NHS Lanarkshire should also engage with the local planning authority and relevant key agencies on likely development challenges associated with the two competing options.

This further evaluation should explicitly and transparently take account of the views of the public obtained following an inclusive process and in line with appropriate recognized approaches, such as multi-criteria analysis, citizens' panel, citizens' jury or consensus voting. This work should clearly and transparently reflect the Board's duty of public involvement.

- A clear vision for the existing site should be developed which takes account of views within the local community and which reflects emerging commitments to improved place-making such as the Place principle.

I have considered these recommendations and I would like you to take these forward in the following way:

**Recommendation 1** - I believe that additional independent involvement in this project is essential and I would like you to take the necessary steps to identify and add a suitably qualified independent member to the MRRP board. It will be for your project board to determine the appropriate professional background of this new member, but I would want the person to be known locally, as they will be a key person in assuring that there is greater public confidence in the project going forward.

**Recommendation 2** - While the IRP recommend that you re-evaluate the top two scoring options in the site option appraisal, I would like you to broaden out the process and work closely in partnership with the local planning authority to identify if there are potential sites beyond Gartcosh and Glenmavis. I have asked the Chief Planner at Scottish Government to engage with the local Head of Planning in Lanarkshire to ensure that they can support and contribute to a constructive, inclusive and open site option review which will be considered an exemplar that other projects would look to emulate.

I think the site option appraisal would also benefit from additional independent input and I have asked my officials to explore options around providing additional technical and clinical support. I am pleased that Dr Mike Higgins has indicated that he is open to provide clinical guidance and Health Facilities Scotland are in the process of securing external technical support. My officials will contact you direct once the position has clarified.

Finally, in respect of the site option appraisal, it is clear to me that building on the existing site is not a realistic or sensible option as it will take longer, cost more, risks infection and other patient safety issues, whilst creating significant performance and access issues during the construction phase. For these reasons, I do not think it is necessary or sensible to spend time and effort assessing the Monklands existing site option when it is so clearly flawed.

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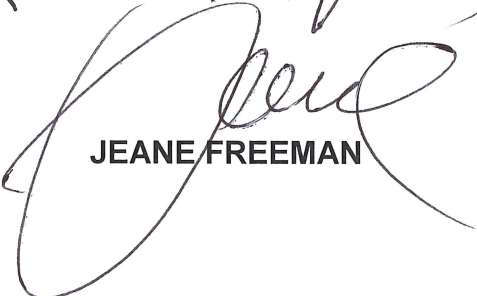
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**Recommendation 3** - I would expect that additional independent involvement and an increased focus on community engagement will also have tangible benefits when you come to consider options around the vision for the existing site and I would expect you to accept and implement this recommendation.

### Summary

This is clearly a significant and important capital investment project and it is essential that we restore public confidence in the process, I would therefore like you to provide me with a response to these recommendations by Friday 12 July and going forward, to provide regular updates on how you implement these recommendations and how the overall project progresses.

*Kind regards*  
  
**JEANE FREEMAN**

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