

Controversial hospital demolition plans stalled by major judicial review

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A campaign group has won the right to a judicial review against the demolition of Huddersfield Royal Infirmary (HRI).

Hands Off HRI mounted its campaign against the closure or downgrading of hospitals or health services within the Huddersfield and Calderdale area in 2016, with a particular focus on the planned closure of Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, its A&E department and acute service.

Yesterday the group won its verbal appeal to have a judicial review against the full business case to demolish Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, which it says will leave the town with only a cottage hospital.

The chair of Hands Off HRI, Mike Forster, argued

that the grounds of the review will be a flawed consultation, breach of public law, inadequate travel and transport provision, lack of community care provision, and potential breach of equality law.

According to the campaign group, an independent survey revealed the structure of the hospital is in good condition, and that if it is maintained, it is “likely to be safe and serviceable for many years to come.”

It claims that the report was necessary in order to test the trust’s claims that the HRI could not be used beyond 10 years due to “concrete cancer” and the “impracticality of carrying out future maintenance and improvements.”

However, the surveyor found that “there are no grounds for concern about the strength of the structure” and that with adequate maintenance the buildings are “likely to remain safe and serviceable for many years to come.”

Regarding the win, Forster said: “To those who told us this was a done deal, you were wrong. If you stand and fight, you can win. This is a huge hurdle we’ve passed but the fight goes on. Hand off HRI.”

Chair of **Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust**, Andrew Haigh, said: “We note the judge’s findings today.

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“We will continue to work with our healthcare partners, local communities, scrutiny and campaign groups.

“We believe that the proposed reconfiguration of hospital services is the best way to secure safe and sustainable services into the future.”

Source: NHE

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