

Update to Trust Board on major capital projects

Public Trust Board

6 November 2025

1.0 BACKGROUND

This paper is provided to public Trust Board to update on progress on the Trust's major capital projects.

2.0 NEW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PROJECT

Works on site continues to progress, with bulk excavation works due to be completed next month and the substructure phase now well underway. Work is also underway through the consultant design team to implement the changes which have been instructed to the water system. Full details of the programme and cost implications for the changes to the water system are not yet available.

Engagement with the contractor on the management of the works on site continues. The Trust will continue to monitor the impact of the construction traffic on the site, particularly during winter. The completion of bulk excavation works in advance of winter will assist in reducing the impact of construction traffic at this time.

3.0 ACUTE MENTAL HEALTH INPATIENT CENTRE (AMHIC) – REFURBISHMENT WORKS DUE TO WATER INGRESS

DoH Health Estates have confirmed their approval for the remediation works to the AMHIC building and the Mahee upgrade works to be managed by the Trust's Estates team. Health Estates have also approved the Trust's proposed procurement routes for the consultant design team for the project and for the contractor for the Mahee refurbishment. This has allowed the Trust to progress the business cases for these works. The business cases are due to be completed by Trust Estates and submitted for approval the next week (Friday 31 October 2025). As the business cases are below the Trust's delegated limits they do not require approval from the Department of Health.

Subject to Business Case approval and the successful appointment of the consultant design team the programme for the works is therefore as follows:

- **Overall Programme (40 months)**

Mahee design development	- completion due April 2026
Mahee refurbishment works	- May 2026 to December 2026
Mahee commissioning & decant	- December 2026 to January 2027
AMHIC ward refurbishments	- January 2027 to February 2029

The refurbishment of the wards in AMHIC is scheduled to take place separately across the five wards, with intervals for commissioning and decant of patients between each phase of refurbishment. The order by which the wards will be refurbished has not yet been finalised and is subject to further discussions with service leads. The forecast costs for the refurbishment works within the AMHIC building owing to water ingress is circa £5.5 – 6 million.

It should also be noted that the above programme is based on extant knowledge from existing survey information. The risk remains that as the refurbishment works progress, further evidence may come to light which could impact on the scope of the works. This may subsequently have an impact on the programme and the estimated costs.

4.0 NEW MATERNITY HOSPITAL

As previously reported to Trust Board, the report detailing the Trust's recommended option for progressing the remediation works on the water systems within the new Maternity Hospital was issued to the Department of Health in June 2025. The recommended option was option 2. This option involved the provision of a new water system within the neo-natal intensive care unit, with localised remediation works only throughout the remainder of the building. Following receipt of this recommendation the Minister for Health called an independent review into the Trust's decision making process and recommendation.

Belfast Trust has now received a copy of the Minister's independent report. The report has confirmed that the Trust's decision making process displayed "*a very reasonable level of governance*". The independent reviewer also confirmed that in light of the many factors considered by the Trust's multi-disciplinary review team, option 2 was accepted as the correct approach. Following receipt and consideration of the report, the Minister has confirmed that he is satisfied that the Trust should progress with the recommended remediation works.

The Department of Health has also now confirmed the allocation of funding to allow the appointment of the consultant design team for the new neo-natal water system and for the localised remediation works throughout the rest of the building.

It should be noted that the Trust's report to the Minister highlighted that proceeding with option 2 is not a final decision. In the event that Belfast Trust is not assured that the remediation works under option 2 are delivering a safe and robust water distribution system, the Trust reserves the right to reconsider the decision to proceed with option 2.

The appointment of the consultant design team has now been completed and the Initial meetings with the team have been scheduled for this week (w/c 20 October 2025). Health Estates have tasked the consultant design team with completing the RIBA Stage 1 Design Report by end of January 2026. This will provide the Trust with sufficient information on the design and the costs to allow completion of an addendum to the Business Case.

Work is underway within the Trust to investigate the potential for early occupation of parts of the new building where the localised remediation works could be completed in advance of the new water system being installed within the neo-natal area. While options for early occupation are being considered, it should be highlighted that any potential for early occupation of these areas is contingent on the success of the remediation works within the new building and the Trust's assurance of the safety of the water system.

Early occupation is also contingent upon detailed analysis and clinical risk assessments of patient safety, clinical flows, etc to demonstrate the viability of any proposed service models. Detailed assessments of staffing requirements and the sustainability of the associated staffing models for the service will also be undertaken before any option for early occupation can be agreed.