Whangarei Hospital Looks To The Future

NORTHLAND DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
Te Poari Hauora Ā Rohe O Te Tai Tokerau

Northland District Health Board is planning a major redevelopment of Whangarei Hospital.

The District Health Board (DHB), which is responsible for funding and providing health services in Northland, has identified the need to redevelop the hospital site in Maunu due to the growing health needs of the population.

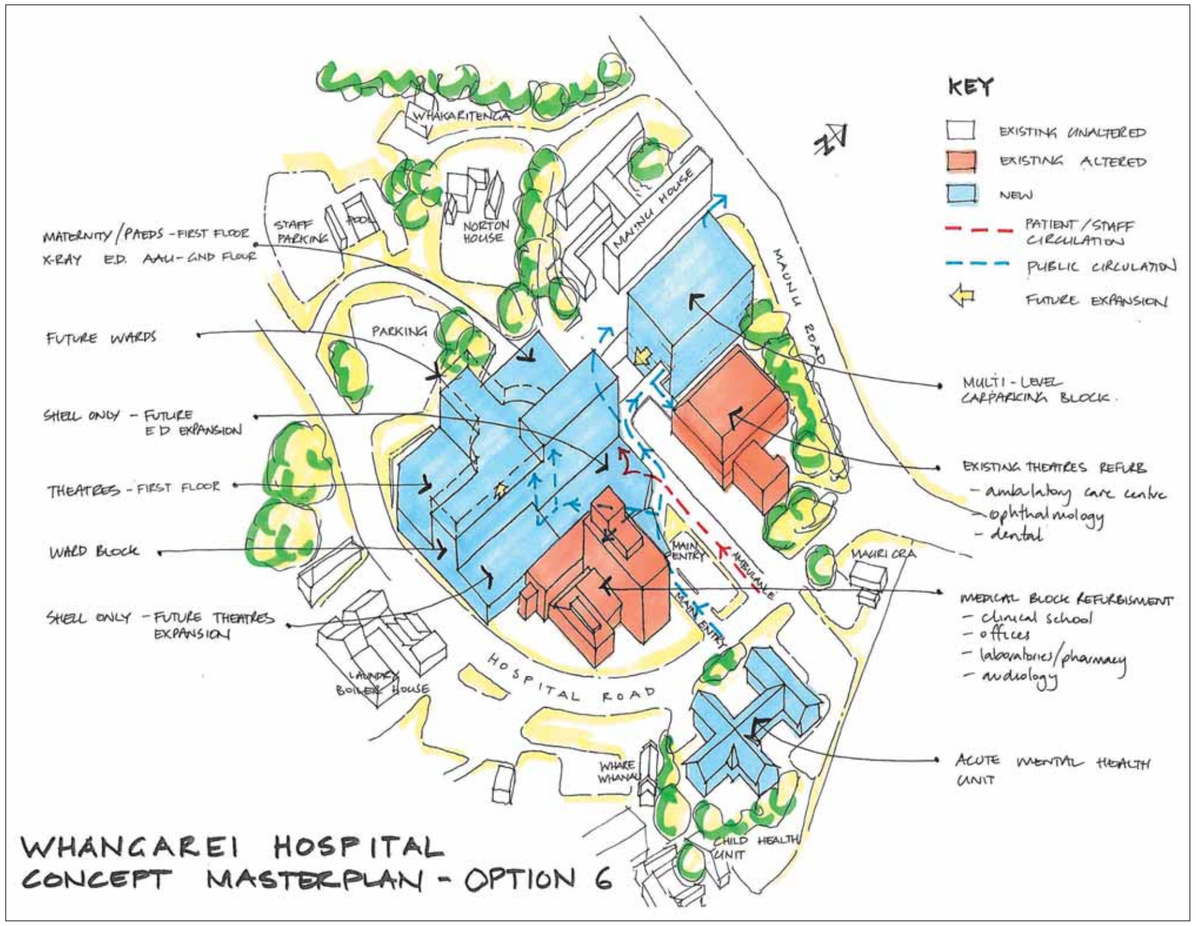
It is now entering a process of long-term planning for the future, and has developed a Whangarei Hospital Site Master Plan, based on projected needs for each service within the hospital.

An important part of the long-term planning process involves looking at the services the DHB provides to the people of Northland. The DHB needs to ensure that its facilities allow staff to provide the best care possible. As the services the organisation provides and the way they are provided - known as "Models of Care" - develop and change over time, the facilities need to be flexible enough to adapt to these changes.

Northland DHB is now consulting with the many interested parties involved with the hospital. This ranges from consultation with health professionals and care providers through to the general public. Neighbours living in the vicinity of the hospital will also be able to give their views.

In drawing up the Site Master Plan, the DHB developed six potential options for the future. These ranged from "do nothing" - which was rejected on the grounds that meeting future demand will require changes to the current facility - to building a new hospital on a "green fields" site.

The remaining four options were various "rebuilds" on the existing site, and of these, the Board endorsed one preferred option. This option, costed at around $180 million, was chosen because it offered flexibility and value for money and would minimise disruption during the construction process.



Any redevelopment will be carried out in stages, to minimise disruption to services. Phase one of the proposed redevelopment includes two stages, with the first being the construction of a new mental health inpatient unit.

If approved, this would be followed by construction of a new three-storey building, housing, among other things, a new emergency department; an assessment unit/observation suite; a new imaging department, maternity unit, paediatric ward and neonatal unit.

Subsequent stages, which will be the subject of separate business cases, would include:

- The construction of operating theatres on the site of the former mental health inpatient unit.
- Up to three floors of wards above the operating theatres, with each floor having three wards.
- Construction of more outpatient and day surgery facilities.
- Conversion of vacated wards into clinical school facilities and offices.
- Conversion of former operating theatres for ophthalmology, dental and other services.
- Demolition of surgical and link blocks, and formation of a new main entrance roadway.

Karen Roach, Northland DHB's Chief Executive, said: "Over the years there have been various changes made to the Whangarei Hospital facility, in order to meet the demand for services. These changes have provided a temporary respite and allowed the hospital to increase its capacity, but they have not been long-term solutions and they have created a physical environment which is not well integrated.

"The result has been services that are of a high standard, but operate in a physically fragmented environment. Northland DHB is now seeking to implement well-planned, long-term solutions, to create a physical environment that enhances cooperative and efficient ways of working.

"The development of the Site Master Plan is based around clinical models of care for patients and built on service delivery principles, and we expect that the infrastructure of the redeveloped hospital site will support these models of care."

Anyone who wishes to comment on the proposed redevelopment should write to Site Master Plan, Northland DHB, PO Box 742, Whangarei, or email consultation@northlanddhb.org.nz.

Whangarei Hospital Patient Volumes

Actual and Projected Numbers of Patients Using Whangarei Hospital

	ACTUAL 2007	PROJECTED 2016	PROJECTED 2026
Inpatient discharges	18,516	21,306	24,048
Operating theatre sessions	2,901	3,621	4,626
Outpatient attendances	60,275	68,008	71,590
Emergency department presentations	28,501	42,416	65,707

Models Of Care

The health care services provided by the DHB and the way in which they are provided are referred to as "Models of Care".

The models of care provided by the DHB will guide and direct the planning of any health care facilities. This means that the DHB needs to have well-developed and documented models of care prior to commencing any detailed facilities planning.

While the DHB already has consumer feedback mechanisms, should anyone wish to comment specifically on models of care, please contact: **Site Master Plan, Northland DHB, PO Box 742, Whangarei; or consultation@northlanddhb.org.nz.**

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History Of Whangarei Hospital

The history of Whangarei Hospital, from its establishment in 1901 to the present day, is also the story of the social, environmental and financial changes affecting the health of a population and the nature and delivery of health services over that time.

The original Whangarei Hospital was built following a major public fundraising effort as the area's population expanded at the end of the nineteenth century.

A committee was set up in April 1897 to report on the advisability of establishing a hospital to serve the growing population of Whangarei and what was then known as the North Auckland District. After a year of debate, with some residents opposed to the idea, a unanimous vote was achieved in favour of the scheme and a search began for a suitable site.

This was finally successful in February 1899, when a large block of land on Maunu Road was bought, and has remained the site of Whangarei's hospital facilities ever since.

After a fundraising drive by the local community, a Cottage Home was built on the site in 1900, which served as a home for elderly men. A year later in 1901 the first Whangarei Hospital - a Cottage Hospital - was completed, at a cost of £1,440. This contained two five-bed wards, a three-bed accident ward, an isolation room, an operating room and a committee room.

Over the following years there were a series of changes to the site. The original Cottage Home was converted to become a maternity annexe in 1918, and with some major alterations in 1948, continued to be used as a maternity facility until the late 1970s. The building was then used as an elderly day care centre and subsequently as an office building, until it was sold in 1997 and relocated to Awanui.

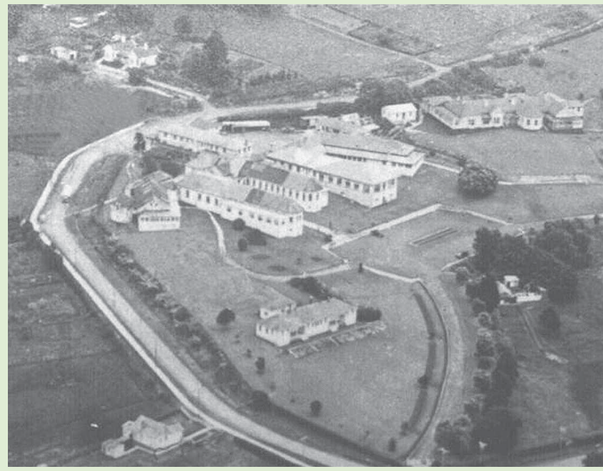
By 1918 the Cottage Hospital had been expanded to include five wards - two for men, two for women and one for children. Expansion lulled during the Depression years, and it was not until the 1940s and 1950s that further development took place, with buildings including an isolation ward, outpatient clinic, TB shelters for men and women and a splint department being created.

In the late 1950s work began on the existing surgical ward and service wing, which was completed in 1964 and housed medical and surgical wards, operating theatres, laboratory, radiology and physiotherapy departments.

Further development took place in the 1970s, when the existing medical ward block was constructed and maternity facilities were relocated to the main hospital.

The 1990s was a period of further change, with the medical wards relocated, the existing theatre block opened and the mental health inpatient unit opened.

The last period of development commenced in 2001. The first stage of this was the reconfiguration of the theatre block to include the surgical admission unit, day surgery unit and central sterilising unit. The second stage saw the construction of the new emergency department, intensive care unit and imaging department, and the third stage comprised the reconfiguration of the outpatient department.



Whangarei Hospital aerial view, circa 1947

Aerial view 1962

Aerial view 2007