



# Hospital transformation well on track

Kim Newth

In late April, construction crews returned to St George's Hospital and began working safely on site in line with Alert Level 3 guidelines and are making good progress on the third and final phase of the hospital's \$120 million building redevelopment.

The long running project has been progressively transforming the hospital campus in Merivale since 2014 with new facilities including state of the art operating theatres and wards, high tech sterilisation services, a fully equipped ICU, new cancer care facilities, plus a new atrium and reception area.

Lead contractor Higgs Construction Ltd has worked closely with St George's from the outset

**"We've had an excellent relationship with Higgs Construction over many years and we've been really satisfied with how they have managed and organised the works programme."**

and that strong working relationship continues as work resumes on the final phase comprising the construction and fit-out of the hospital's Cressy Wing. This new building will include basement car parking; a new laundry, plant room, engineers' workshop and combined staffroom on the ground floor; new day surgery theatres and recovery beds on the first floor; second floor ancillary services; and a maternity ward on the third floor.

Maintaining excellent on-site health and safety practices has always been of paramount importance, with Higgs Construction taking additional care to manage Covid-19 risks throughout Alert Level 3 and beyond.

"We adopted the government's guideline protocols on-site, including initial start-up cleaning and wash stations positioned for everyone coming on site," says Dave Freeman, who is Higgs' construction manager and joint managing director.

"People need to complete a declaration saying where they've been, what they're doing and so on and include their contact names and numbers. We have been maintaining social distancing on site and where that has not been possible then people have worn the appropriate PPE."

Only a safe and limited number of workers were being permitted on site at any one time, including in lunch or other meeting areas.

As with other construction projects across New Zealand, the lockdown period combined with new ways of working had an unavoidable impact on the completion timeline.

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The third and final phase of the St George's \$120 million redevelopment is again making good progress after COVID-19 restrictions.



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# Hospital development is well on track

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St George's Hospital preliminary estimate for completion is now April or May 2021 but with building occupancy in December 2020.

Meanwhile, the construction and fit-out work is not affecting the hospital's day to day routines. Temporary walls are in place in corridors at each level to separate the Cressy Wing work from connected operational areas.

"Once the building has been completed, these will be removed and then all these buildings that have been constructed separately will effectively become one big building," says St George's project coordinator Tony Hunter.

The entire redevelopment has been carefully staged, so as to minimise impact on the operation of the hospital.

The end result will be truly impressive. From a clinical perspective, once this last stage is complete, around 80-85 per cent of the hospital will be brand new post-earthquakes.

"If you look at the new Randolph Wing, the standard is really high: it's spacious, it's much better equipped and is very well presented and finished.," says Tony.

Higgs Construction's first successful tender with St George's Hospital was the Canon Wilford Wing (commissioned in 2002) and it has since completed many other projects on campus.

"We've had an excellent relationship with Higgs Construction over many years and we've been really satisfied with how they have managed and organised the works programme."



The redevelopment is not affecting the hospital's daily routines with temporary walls in place to keep construction separate.

**Around 80-85 per cent of the hospital will be brand new post-earthquakes.**

The sentiment is echoed by Higgs Construction: "The strength of the relationship between ourselves and the client has been central to this project and what we have been able to achieve," says Dave.

Once Cressy Wing is finished, the hospital also plans to refresh the Canon Wilford Wing to bring it in line with the rest of the redevelopment with that refurbishment due to be completed in early 2022.



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The long running project undertaken by Higgs Construction has been progressively transforming the hospital campus in Merivale since 2014.



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