

## Trust Board Briefing Paper

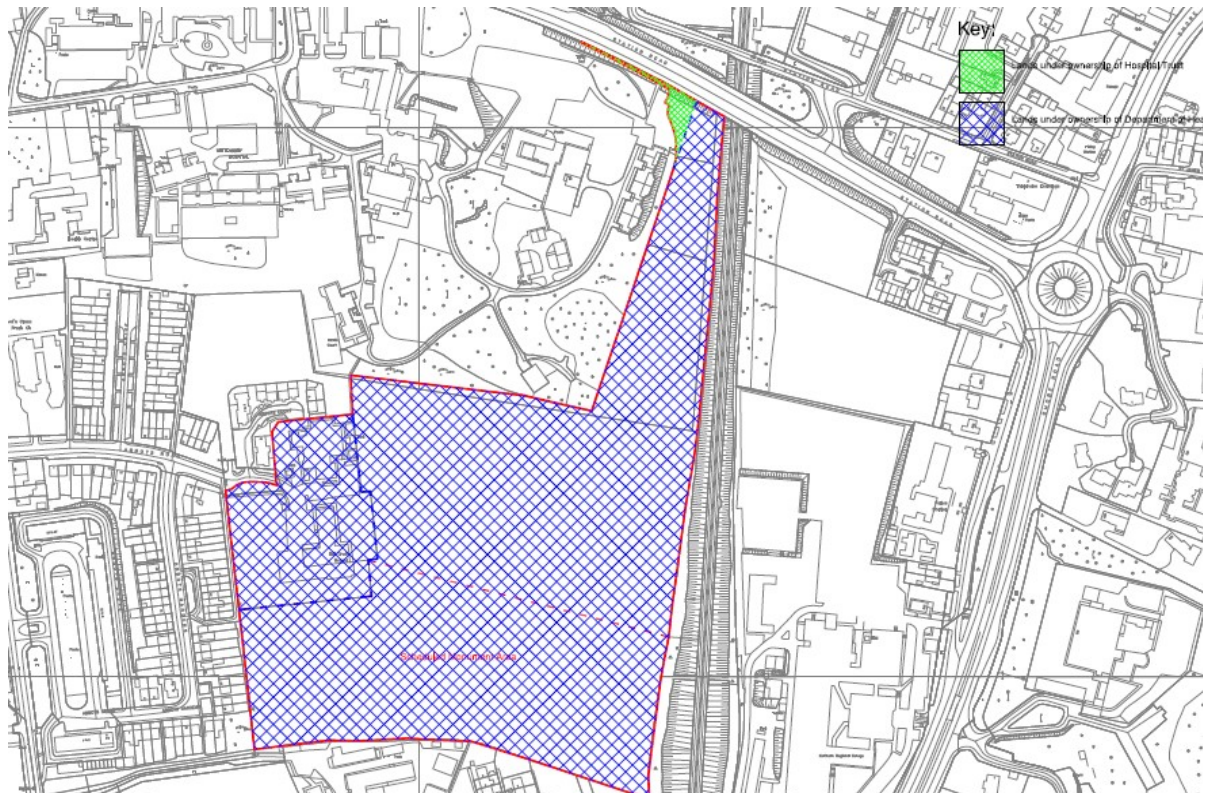
**Date of Meeting:**

**Subject:** Declaration of Surplus Retained Estates –  
(Formerly) Hillcroft Special School, 27 Abbots Road,  
Newtownabbey  
&  
Whiteabbey Hospital farmland, 34 Station Road,  
Whiteabbey

**Presented by:** Owen Harkin, Director of Finance

**Purpose:** Declaration of Surplus NHSCT Retained Estate (from DoH) -Former Hillcroft Special School & farmland to the rear of Whiteabbey Hospital site

**Background:**



## **Background:-**

Two separate property/land assets make up the entire area hatched in blue on the map above. They are currently both retained estate, managed by NHSCT but owned by Dept of Health (DoH). This blue hatched area is now being considered as surplus by NHSCT, and to be put forward for disposal by DoH.

**The former Hillcroft Special School** is located at 27 Abbotts Road/Manse Way, Newtownabbey and is adjacent to the Whiteabbey Hospital site (shown in outline 'blue' above). The property is 726 m<sup>2</sup> and sits on a site which is 0.814 hectares. The premises had become surplus to requirements of the North Eastern Education and Library Board and was acquired by the Dept of Health and Social Services for N Ireland. This was then licenced to Homefirst Community Trust (now NHSCT) since Dec '06. The Trust upgraded and refurbished the premises and re-located the 'New Ways' satellite service from Broadway Workshops which has since been demolished. The former Hillcroft Special School has now been vacant since October 2018, when 'New Ways' relocated to Ward 10 on the Whiteabbey Hospital site. At that time the licence terminated with DoH and the property became retained estate.

In April 1963, the **Whiteabbey Hospital** and **farmland** to the rear of the site, transferred from Newtownabbey Urban Borough Council to the Dept of Health and Social Services for N Ireland (now DHSSPSNI). In June 2002, Whiteabbey Hospital site transferred ownership to United Hospitals Trust however, approx. 8.29 hectares/21 acres farmland to the rear of the site remained under DoH ownership/Trust retained estate. It is this area which is under consideration to be declared surplus.

## **Current risks:-**

The former Hillcroft Special School now causes a potential further risk to the Trust due to the risk of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. There have been issues in recent months when the PSNI have been called to the premises. If not declared surplus by NHSCT, and disposed of by DoH, it will be recommended that NHSCT demolish of this property which will require significant investment i.e. approx. £165k.

As the Whiteabbey Hospital farmland is currently owned by the DoH, and managed by NHSCT, they are vulnerable for accident liability for anyone who may stray onto this land.

There have been a number of enquiries from both the public sector and private sector, as to the potential to acquire this land.

It has been confirmed by NHSCT Capital Development, that neither area will be required as part of the future Whiteabbey hub or other site developments.

## **Disposal Process:-**

The Central Advisory Units "Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property in Northern Ireland, Oct 2018 states in sections 2.2.-2.5, "In June 2013, the Northern Ireland

Executive approved the Asset Management Strategy (AMS). This establishes two pivotal strategic objectives for the management of all Central Government assets across Northern Ireland, specifically:

Objective 1: to reduce the net cost of service delivery through the efficient use of public sector assets; and

Objective 2: to promote effective asset management processes that unlock value.

The disposal of surplus government owned property is an important part of the Asset Management Strategy and helps support the drive to improve estate management and create an efficient, fit-for-purpose and sustainable estate that meets future needs.

### **Site valuation:-**

All disposals must be dealt with in accordance with the recommendations of Land and Property Services (LPS). LPS have been asked to provide a Market Valuation for the property and this is currently being completed.

As with all valuations it should be noted that the proceeds from the sale of surplus land and property go directly to the Department of Health. The Trust are expected to complete the sale within the 19/20 financial year and if this does not happen then the Trust's CRL (capital resourcing limit) will be reduced by the value of the sale that wasn't completed so there can be a financial penalty if disposals do not complete as proposed.

**Conclusion/ Action Required: eg for noting or approval**