

VALKENBERG HOSPITAL FORENSIC PRECINCT PROJECT

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Valkenberg Hospital Forensic Precinct Project is a long-term, strategic infrastructure initiative led by the Western Cape Government: Health and Wellness (WCGHW) to modernise and expand the historic psychiatric hospital in Observatory, Cape Town. The project integrates heritage conservation, sustainable design and improved mental health infrastructure. Valkenberg Hospital currently operates across two sites, Valkenberg East and West, divided by the M5 highway and the Liesbeeck River. The project aims to rationalise and consolidate all forensic mental health services onto the Valkenberg West site, thereby improving operational efficiency, safety and patient care. The Forensic Mental Health Service (FMHS) at Valkenberg provides a multidisciplinary approach to the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of forensic patients referred by the courts. It also serves as a hub for academic research, training and outreach. The new precinct will enhance these functions by providing purpose-built infrastructure that supports high-security, medium-security and low-security forensic care, as well as outpatient services, pharmacy and an acute village.

Following the project brief initially issued in 2006, the project is structured into multiple phases. Phases 1 and 2, which included the construction of administrative buildings, were completed in June 2017. Phase 3, which encompasses the Forensic Admissions, Assessment and High-Security Unit, is currently in Stage 3b (Design Development) and is expected to be completed by April 2030. Future phases, including medium and low secure units, outpatient services and the acute village, are scheduled for completion between 2032 and 2040. The total estimated investment for the entire precinct exceeds R1.25 billion.

The project aligns with the Western Cape Government's broader goals of spatial justice, public value and socio-economic development. It is situated on a well-known brownfield site with excellent access to major transport routes, ensuring accessibility for patients, staff and stakeholders. The development supports the City of Cape Town's Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) by preserving ecological zones and promoting sustainable urban design.

MAP OF THE PROJECT



PROJECT STATUS



The project is currently in Stage 3b (Design Development) of the Infrastructure Delivery Management System (IDMS). The current phase focuses on forensic admissions, assessment and high-security facilities, scheduled for completion by April 2030. This phase will provide 135 beds with a current budget estimated at R335.5 million. The project has undergone peer review by the National Department of Health and is being developed in close consultation with stakeholders, including facility staff, technical departments and the community, and aligns with PFMA requirements. It incorporates sustainable design principles, local resource utilisation and socio-economic development goals, including local labour employment and environmental compliance.

FINANCIAL NEEDS



Approximate value: R1.25 billion

Current Budget	R335.5 million
Stage 3b Elemental Estimate	R518.2 million (subject to review)
Total Estimated Investment	Over R1.25 billion

TIMELINE



Phases 1 & 2 (Admin Buildings)

Completed 29 June 2017

Phase 3 (Forensic Admissions, Assessment & High-Security Unit)

In progress, Construction completion expected by April 2030

Future Phases

Phase 4: Forensic Medium Secure – April 2032
Phase 5: Forensic Low, Chronic & OT – April 2034
Phase 6: Pharmacy & OPD – April 2036
Phase 7: Acute Village – April 2040

KEY PARTIES



- National Department of Health
- Western Cape Government: Health and Wellness (WCDHW)
- Department of Infrastructure (WCG - DOI)
- City of Cape Town
- Justice System
- Other implementing departments

PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR OPPORTUNITY



The site underwent Social participation in obtaining the current Environmental Authorisation and heritage Impact Assessments, and this conversation continues with stakeholders. The project provides public value as it provides a function to hold high-risk patients who have mental health challenges. It protects the public from potentially dangerous patients, while also protecting the patient and providing a means of treatment. The relocation of Ward 20, currently located on the Eastern Valkenberg precinct known as Oude Molen, now frees up that site for the planned mixed-use redevelopment by the WC Department of Infrastructure.