



MEDIA RELEASE

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Lochaber initial agreement approved by Scottish Government

The redesign of services in Lochaber has taken another significant step forward this week after the Scottish Government's Capital Investment Group (CIG) approved the initial agreement. The approval sets out the earliest possible start date of April 2026 for construction on the new site in Fort William.

Professor Boyd Robertson, NHS Highland Chair, said: "I am pleased that we have reached this major milestone for the redesign project. The news that construction of the new Belford Hospital has been approved is of huge significance.

"We can now proceed to the next stage which will involve a more detailed development of the replacement Belford Hospital, workforce plan, and redesign of community services across Lochaber and I know the local communities will be delighted to hear that we are making progress.

"We can now appoint design teams to develop proposals for the replacement Belford Hospital and take them forward to the planning permission stage. This also provides us with an opportunity to demonstrate through our processes and decision making that we will do what we can to minimise our carbon footprint and provide facilities to support greener choices for staff, patients and visitors."

Louise Bussell, NHS Highland's Chief Officer for Community Services, said: "This is an exciting time for Lochaber and underlines the commitment we made in November 2020 to work closely with the local communities to refresh the redesign of services in the area.

"The approval of the initial agreement is a very important first step in modernising health and social care in Lochaber and I am pleased the next stage of planning can now begin."

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