

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE OFFICE ESTATE STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT 2022-2026

18 June 2026





Section 1 – Executive Summary 4

Section 2 – NICS Office Estate Statistics 7

Section 3 – Priorities for 2026/2027 12

Version No.	Date	Comments	CM Ref:	Author	Branch/ Directorate
1.0	12 June 2026	NICS Office Estate Strategy Progress Report 2022-2026 Published	FI1/26/566596	Niall Hobbs	Properties Division

Section 1 – Executive Summary

1. The [Northern Ireland Civil Service Office Estate Strategy](#) was drafted by the Department of Finance (DoF) Properties Division (PD) in June 2024 and provided a vision for the NICS Office Estate to 2035 in two stages:

Stage One	A Leaner NICS Office Estate (2022-2028) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Right sizing the NICS Office Estate• Reducing operational costs
Stage Two	A Greener and Modern NICS Office Estate (2028-2035) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving Energy Efficiency; and• Modernising the NICS Office Estate.

2. The baseline for the Estate Strategy is the property and accommodation data for the year ending 31 March 2022 which was gathered as part of [The Office Estate Review](#).
3. At that time, the NICS Office Estate consisted of 99 buildings. This included 33 Jobs and Benefits Offices (JBOs) exclusively used by the Department for Communities (DfC). The JBOs are deemed 'out of scope' of the NICS Office Estate Review as the locations and ability to rationalise these can only be determined by DfC. DoF is working closely with DfC on their future demand for office accommodation which will be progressed in parallel with the NICS Office Estate Strategy.
4. As such, the 'in-scope' NICS Office Estate refers to 66 offices within Belfast and across the wider regions.
5. The implementation of the NICS Office Estate Strategy is overseen by an Estate Development Committee which was established in November 2022. The Estate Development Committee meets quarterly with ad-hoc meetings scheduled for any urgent matters impacting on delivery of the Strategy.
6. Regular consultation is ongoing with Departmental Accommodation Officers and Central Trade Union Side. Local Trade Union Side is also engaged on individual right-sizing or refurbishment projects.

7. This second Progress Report covers the implementation of Phase 1 of the Estate Review (i.e. right sizing the NICS Office Estate and reducing operational costs) for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026 and includes high level priorities for the work planned for 2026/2027. The first progress report can be found on the DoF website at [NICS Office Estate Strategy Progress Report 2022-2025](#).
8. Table 1 below provides a summary of the progress of Phase 1 of the NICS Office Estate Strategy at 31 March 2026 and how it compares to the progress at 31 March 2025:

Table 1: Summary of Progress over last 2 years		
Descriptor	Progress at 31 March 2025	Progress at 31 March 2026
Number of Buildings	Reduction of 16 Buildings	Reduction of 19 Buildings
Net Internal Area (NIA) m²	Reduction of 30,965 m ²	Reduction of 48,445m ²
Annual rates costs (£m)	Reduction of £1.3m	Reduction of £3.3m
Annual rent (£m)	Reduction of £2.3m	Reduction of £2.6m
Energy Consumption (kWh)	Reduction of 12,287,443 kWh	Reduction of 19,900,453 kWh
Number of Workstations	Reduction of 3,385	Reduction of 5,214

9. Table 2 below outlines the progress against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), for achievement by 2028, detailed in the NICS Office Estate Strategy (against the 2022 baseline). The tables show the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status of each of the KPIs to indicate the likelihood of these being achieved by 31 March 2028.
10. Table 2 indicates that Phase 1 of the NICS Office Estate Strategy is on track for delivery by 2028 for 4 out of 6 of the KPIs. The sales of Clarence Court, Victoria Hall and the lease exits of Bankmore House and Molesworth Plaza, 1st Floor have progressed.

11. The Estate profile is assessed on an ongoing basis and the divestment of a number of sizeable buildings initially included in 'Stage 1, A Leaner NICS Office Estate (2022-2028)', will now take place beyond March 2028. This has affected the RAG status of both KPI1 & KPI2, as below.

Table 2: Progress against the NICS Office (In-Scope) Estate 31 March 2028 Key Performance Indicators			
KPI No	KPI Detail	Progress at 31 March 2026 against the 2022 baseline	RAG Status for KPI delivery by 31 March 2028
KPI1	28 buildings divested (40%)	19 buildings divested (29%)	
KPI2	Reduction of 42.7% in Net Internal Area (NIA)	NIA reduction of 48,445m ² (19%)	
KPI3	At least 20% reduction in Rates Bill	£3.3m reduced from the Rates Bill (22%)	
KPI4	At least 40% reduction in rent costs	£2.6m reduced from the Rent costs through lease exits (30%)	
KPI5	At least 40% reduction in energy consumption (of the in-scope NICS Office Estate)	7,613,010 kWh reduction in total energy consumption of the in-scope estate to the end of the 2024/25 financial year (38%)	
KPI6	42% reduction in workstations	5,214 reduction in workstations (31%)	

Section 2 – NICS Office Estate Statistics

Baseline Data

12. The baseline data was developed during the Estate Review carried out by the Strategic Investment Board under the Reform of Property Management Programme in 2022.

13. Table 3 below provides information on the 2022 baseline 'in-scope' NICS Office Estate.

Table 3: Baseline at 31 March 2022						
Number of buildings	NIA (m ²)	Rates Cost (£m)	Annual Rent (£m)	Energy consumption (kWh)	Number of Workstations	Annual Operating Costs (£m)
66	252,380	14.8	8.7	52,860,135	16,826	37

14. Table 4 below outlines the annual progress against the 31 March 2022 baseline.

Table 4: NICS Office Estate (In-Scope) 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2026						
	2022 (Baseline)	2023	2024	2025	2026	Totals
Number of Buildings	66	65	57	50	47	19 Buildings Divested
Reduction in Net Internal Area (NIA) m ²	252,380	251,318	239,476	221,415	203,935	NIA reduction of 48,445m ²
Reduction in Annual Rates (* includes out of scope reductions)	£14.8m	£47,457	£559,161	£696,387	£2,033,938	Rates reduced by £3.3m
Reduction in Annual Rent	£8.7m	£110,510	£1,252,125	£900,000	£333,230	Rent reduced by £2,595,865
Reduction in Total Energy Consumption (kWh)	52,860,135	7,186,321	5,101,122	7,613,010	-	kWh reduced by 19,900,453 up to the end of the 2024/25 Financial Year*
Number of Workstations	16,826	16,783	15,953	13,441	11,612	Workstations reduced by 5,214

*Actual energy consumption figures for the 2025/26 Financial Year will be available in August 2026.

15. The baseline data showed that at 31 March 2022, the operating costs for the NICS Office Estate were £37m. The operating costs include rates, rent, electricity, maintenance and some soft FM services (e.g. cleaning, waste management etc). Despite having reduced the rates bill and rent costs through divestment and vacating properties in preparation for disposal, operating costs have increased year on year. The most recent audited information on operating costs (i.e. 2024/2025) shows a 6.7% increase in operating costs against the 2022 baseline of £37m.

Right-Sizing (Number of Buildings)

16. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to reducing the in-scope Office Estate from 66 to 38 buildings by 31 March 2028.

17. As of 31 March 2026, 19 buildings indicated in the NICS Office Estate Strategy have been removed/divested from the Office Estate portfolio through the following asset management measures:

- Lease Exit;
- Disposal/Sale;
- Demolition; or
- Transfer.

18. Table 5 below shows the annual progress on divestments within the NICS Office Estate Strategy:

Table 5 – Annual Progress on the 19 Building Divestments				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Number of Divestments	1	8	7	3*

* While 3 buildings were divested in 2025/26, a further site was also divested (i.e. Clarence Court, Victoria Hall and Bankmore House - plus Molesworth Plaza (1st Floor)).

19. Details of the buildings and methods of divestment are provided in Annex A.

20. In addition to divesting of 3 office buildings in 2025/26 one further site was divested through an inter-departmental transfer of the lease to DAERA (Molesworth Plaza 1st floor).

21. DoF has cleared 4 further buildings which, once divested, will reduce the overall portfolio by NIA 21,053m². These are Dundonald House (vacated with options being considered), Waterside House (vacated in preparation for sale), Castle Barracks, Enniskillen (vacated in preparation for sale) and Massey House (vacated in preparation for demolition).

22. One property sale planned for 2025/26, Fermanagh House, was sold on 2nd April 2026, this property will be included in the divestments for 2026/27 and the statistics of the 2026-27 progress report.

Net Internal Area (NIA) Reduction

23. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to reducing the NIA of the in-scope Estate which was 252,380m² by 107,806m² (i.e. 42.7%) by 31 March 2028.

24. As of 31 March 2026, the NIA has been reduced from 252,380m² to 203,935m² equating to a **19% reduction** in NIA.

25. Table 6 below shows the NIA reductions for each year:

Table 6 – Annual Progress on Reduction of 48,445 NIA				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
NIA Reduction (m²)	1,062	11,842	18,061	17,480

26. Further details of the NIA reductions are included in Annex A.

Annual Rates Bill Reduction

27. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to reducing the Baseline Annual Rates Bill of £14.8m by £3m (i.e. 20%) by 31 March 2028.

28. Table 7 below shows £3.3m reduction to the Rates Bill against the 2022 baseline which equates to 22.3%.

Table 7 – Rates Bill Reduction against Baseline				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Rates Bill Reduction against Baseline	£47,457	£559,161	£696,387	£2,033,938

29. Further details of the Rates reductions are included in Annex A.

Annual Rent Costs Reduction

30. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to a reduction of 40% against the 2022 baseline for Annual Rent Costs (i.e. reductions of £3.5m) by 31 March 2028.

31. Table 8 below provides details of the Rent Bill reductions of **£2,595,865** over the 4 years. This equates to a reduction of 30% against the baseline.

Table 8 – Rent Costs Reduction against Baseline				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Rent Costs Reduction against Baseline	£110,510	£1,252,125	£900,000	£333,230

32. Further details of the rent reductions are included in Annex A.

Energy Consumption Reduction

33. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to reducing the Energy Consumption (kWh) from 52,860,135 to 21,144,054 (i.e. 40%) by 31 March 2028.

34. Table 9 below shows the reduction in energy consumption for the In-Scope Office Estate (a reduction of 19,900,453 kWh from the baseline year to the end of the 2024/25 financial year) which equates to a reduction of 38%. The total energy consumption information is currently being gathered for the 2025/26 financial year and will be available in August 2026.

35. The total reduction in the energy consumption includes both reductions due to the divestment of buildings and energy efficiency measures in buildings.

Table 9 – Total Energy Consumption Reduction (kWh) against Baseline				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Total Energy Consumption Reduction of the In-Scope Office Estate	7,186,321	5,101,122	7,613,010	-

36. Further details of the reduction in energy consumption is provided at Annex A.

Workstations Reduction

37. The NICS Office Estate Strategy committed to a reduction of 7,049 workstations by 31 March 2028 which equates to a reduction of 42%.

38. Table 10 below shows a reduction of 5,214 workstations against the 2022 baseline which equates to a reduction of 31%. The workstations reductions for each year are listed below.

Table 10 – Workstations Reduction against Baseline Year				
Year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Workstations Reduction against Baseline Year	43	830	2,512	1,829

39. The 2025/26 reduction includes the workstations which have been removed from buildings which have been vacated in preparation for sale or demolition. Further details of the reduction in workstations is included in Annex A.

Section 3 – Priorities for 2026/2027

40. There are a number of 2026/27 priorities to progress Phase 1 of the NICS Office Estate Strategy including:

- 4 further sites to be divested to further reduce the in-scope Office Estate NIA by 15,995m². Note that Fermanagh House was Sold on 2 April 2026 (NIA: 1,217m²).
- Stormont Estate – Proceed with the demolition of the Stormont House Annex and progress possible demolitions of other unused structures on the Estate.

41. In preparation for Phase 2 of the NICS Office Estate Strategy, a flagship sustainability project is underway on the Stormont Estate, with approval now secured for a 400kVA solar photovoltaic array. Design consultants were appointed in late 2025 and, while planning timelines may be challenging, this “solar farm” will supply clean, renewable energy to the Estate, reducing reliance on grid electricity and cutting emissions over the long term.

42. The Department will complete the procurement of a Carbon Footprint Exercise for the NICS Office Estate.

43. Investing in Modern, Net Zero-Ready Workplaces: while some buildings have been divested from the estate, others are being or will be upgraded to meet modern standards. Major investment has already been made in Orchard House in Derry, with more planned for:

- Ballymena
- Omagh
- Coleraine

Future upgrades will deliver our first carbon net zero buildings in the NICS estate, improve energy performance and support the wider public sector’s climate action.

The Department is planning for a programme of work for Phase 2 of the Strategy to continue to invest in its retained estate as well as engaging with DfC on the assessment of its Jobs and Benefits Office Estate.

ANNEX A Divestment Details and Impact on Costs

Summary

Year	NIA (m ²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£m)	Annual Rent Reduction (£m)	Energy Consumption (kWh) Reduction for the whole In-Scope Office Estate	Number of Workstations Reduction
2022-2023	1,062 m ²	£47,457	£110,510	7,186,321	43
2023-2024	11,842m ²	£559,161	£1,252,125	5,101,122	830
2024-2025	18,061m ²	£696,387	£900,000	7,613,010	2,512
2025-2026	17,480m ²	£2,033,938	£333,230	-	1829
Accumulated Total	48,445m²	£3,336,943	£2,595,865	19,900,453	5,214

Annual Progress

2022-2023	Divestment Method	NIA (m ²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£)	Annual Rent Reduction (£)	Number of Workstations Reduction	
Park House	Lease Exit	1,062m ²	£47,457	£110,510	43	
1		1,062m²	£47,457	£110,510	43	Total

2023-2024	Divestment Method	NIA (m²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£)	Annual Rent Reduction (£)	Number of Workstations Reduction
Design Centre	Lease Exit	3,794m ²	£237,084	£710,000	353
Carlisle House	Lease Exit	4,029m ²	£222,761	£542,125	350
Downpatrick Social Security Office	Sale	548m ²	£11,262	-	0
Dundonald House Annex D	Demolition	725m ²	£10,779	-	26
Dundonald House Annex B	Demolition	340m ²	£8,928	-	15
Elmview	Departmental Transfer	204m ²	£5,885	-	15
Corporation Street Roads Depot	Departmental Transfer	1,834m ²	£62,462	-	71
Arvalee		368m ²	-	-	0
8		11,842m²	£559,161	£1,252,125	830
					Total

2024-2025	Divestment Method	NIA (m²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£)	Annual Rent Reduction (£m)	Number of Workstations Reduction	
Klondyke Building	Lease Exit	5,208m ²	£375,586	£900,000	441	
Cookstown Social Security Office	Sale	405m ²	£9,864	-	0	
Netherleigh House	Sale	5,528m ²	£217,530	-	114	
Falls Rd SAU	Sale	541m ²	£30,416	-	39	
56 Ann Street	Sale	278m ²	£24,007	-	22	
Walled Garden (Stormont Estate)	Demolition	274m ²	£21,128	-	19	
Hillview Buildings	Demolition	340m ²	£17,856	-	59	
7		18,061m²	£696,387	£900,000	694	Total

2025-2026	Divestment Method	NIA (m²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£)	Annual Rent Reduction (£m)	Number of Workstations Reduction	
Victoria Hall	Sale	1,680	£128,726	-	7	
Clarence Court	Sale	13,880	£1,190,578	-	707	
Bankmore House	Lease Exited	1,488	£106,457	£297,500	48	
Molesworth Plaza – 1st Floor - DAERA	Lease Transferred	432	£17,776	£35,730	28	
3 Buildings (4 sites)		17,480	£1,443,537	£333,230	790	Total

In addition to the above, a further 4 buildings have been cleared						
2025-2026	Divestment Method	NIA (m ²) Reduction	Rates Cost Reduction (£)	Annual Rent Reduction (£m)	Number of Workstations Reduction	
Waterside House	Vacated in preparation for sale	4,084m ²			408	
Castle Barracks, Enniskillen	Vacated in preparation for sale	559m ²			42	
Massey House	Vacated in preparation for Demolition	1,851m ²			119	
Dundonald House	Vacated – future to be determined	14,559m ²	590,401 [Zero Rated]		470	
4		21,053m²	590,401		1,039	Total
Total Number of Workstations Reduction					1,829	