

CASEMENT PARK REDEVELOPMENT

Status Update and Financial Position

January 2026

Executive Summary

The Casement Park redevelopment project is progressing towards delivery phase in 2026 following the decision in September 2025 to withdraw from hosting UEFA Euro 2028 matches. The project has been refocused on delivering a 34,500-capacity provincial GAA stadium in Belfast. Planning permission expires in July 2026, creating urgency for commencement of works.

1. Current Project Status

Site Preparation

Demolition programme is scheduled to recommence in January 2026. Site clearance works have been undertaken, and the Casement Social Club has been relocated to temporary premises at St Agnes' Hall to facilitate demolition of the old stand.

Design and Planning

Planning permission for a 34,500-capacity stadium was granted in July 2021. Planning permission expires in July 2026. The Planning Service has accepted the principle of phased delivery, allowing construction to proceed in stages to ensure works commence before planning permission expires.

Project Timeline

Technical design work and cost option analysis continued throughout 2025. The project is entering the delivery phase in 2026, with demolition completion followed by remediation and bulk dig contracts to prepare the site for future development.

2. Financial Position

Historical Cost Progression

Year	Capacity	Estimated Cost
Initial (2013)	38,000	£78.5m
Revised (2021)	34,500	£260m (2025)
Current Target (2026)	34,500	£220m (approx)

Secured Funding Position

Funding Source	Amount	Status
Northern Ireland Executive	£62.5m	Secured
Irish Government (Shared Island Fund)	£42m	Secured
GAA (Ulster GAA contribution)	£15m	Secured
UK Government	£50m	Pledged
Additional Inflationary Funding	£50.5m	Anticipated
Total Funding Package	£220m	Target

Draft Budget 2026-2029/30 Allocation

The Northern Ireland Draft Budget 2026-2029/30 includes Capital DEL earmarked funding for Flagships Casement under the Communities department allocation.

2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
£14.1m	£30.0m	£10.3m	£47.1m
Total Budget Allocation: £101.5m			

3. Key Issues and Risks

Funding Gap

A funding gap remains between the secured £169.5m and the target £220m total project cost. Additional inflationary funding of approximately £50.5m is being pursued to close this gap.

Planning Permission Deadline

Planning permission expires in July 2026. The acceptance of phased delivery by the Planning Service mitigates this risk, allowing construction to commence in stages before the deadline.

Historical Delays

The stadium has been closed since 2013. Planning permission for the original 38,000-capacity design was quashed by judicial review in 2014. Revised planning permission for 34,500 capacity was granted in 2021. The withdrawal from UEFA Euro 2028 hosting in September 2025 refocused the project on GAA requirements.

4. Conclusion

The Casement Park redevelopment has achieved renewed momentum entering 2026. With demolition works set to recommence in January 2026 and a clearer funding pathway established, the project is positioned to deliver a 34,500-capacity provincial GAA stadium in Belfast. Success depends on securing the remaining £50.5m funding gap and maintaining momentum ahead of the July 2026 planning permission deadline. The phased delivery approach provides flexibility to ensure construction commences within the planning timeframe.

Sources: Minister of Finance Written Ministerial Statement (Draft Budget 2026-2029/30), Ulster GAA Annual Convention 2025 Secretary's Report, BBC Sport NI (6 January 2026)