



View to the south of the study area showing the Wentworth Health Service facility.

## **HISTORIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

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### **WENTWORTH HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT**

WENTWORTH, NSW

MAY 2023

Report prepared by  
OzArk Environment & Heritage  
for NSW Health Infrastructure



#### **OzArk Environment & Heritage**

145 Wingewarra St  
(PO Box 2069)  
Dubbo NSW 2830

Phone: (02) 6882 0118

Fax: (02) 6882 0630

[enquiry@ozarkehm.com.au](mailto:enquiry@ozarkehm.com.au)

[www.ozarkehm.com.au](http://www.ozarkehm.com.au)

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Prepared for	Prepared by	
Gert Halbgebauer Project Director Rural & Regional Health Infrastructure M 0475 415 775 E Gert.Halbgebauer@health.nsw.gov.au 1 Reserve Road St Leonards, NSW 2065	Brendan Fisher and Dr Jodie Benton Archaeologist OzArk Environment & Heritage 145 Wingewarra Street (PO Box 2069) Dubbo NSW 2830 P: 02 6882 0118 brendan@ozarkehm.com.au	
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### **Acknowledgement**

OzArk acknowledge the traditional custodians of the area on which this assessment took place and pay respect to their beliefs, cultural heritage, and continuing connection with the land. We also acknowledge and pay respect to the post-contact experiences of Aboriginal people with attachment to the area and to the Elders, past and present, as the next generation of role models and vessels for memories, traditions, culture and hopes of local Aboriginal people.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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OzArk Environment & Heritage (OzArk) has been engaged by NSW Health Infrastructure to provide a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) for the proposed Wentworth Hospital redevelopment. The proposal is in the Wentworth Local Government Area.

The Wentworth Hospital redevelopment covers 3.8 hectares of land adjacent to the Darling and Murray Rivers.

Desktop database searches show two listed heritage items to be located within the study area:

1. 'Original Buildings' listed on the Department of Health's Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register
2. Wentworth Water Tower listed on the Wentworth Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP, item I94).

In relation to the Department of Health's s170 listing, the listing information is scant, but the description, a '*single-story building surrounded by an attached verandah*' and '*brick with corrugated iron roof*', together with the two images provided, appear to relate to the buildings that currently occupy the site. It is possible that this listing, which may have been made at a desktop level (?), has confused the buildings currently on site that date from the late 1940s with the original buildings constructed on site in the late 1880s. As a result, it is likely that this listing does not refer to the buildings currently present at the site. There is no data from this listing to suggest that any elements of the current buildings have been directly assessed for their heritage significance / values and the main emphasis of the listing relates to the early date of the buildings.

The Wentworth Water Tower is distant to the proposed works and will not be harmed.

As the current hospital buildings are not the original buildings referenced in the Department of Health's s170 listing, and because the current buildings do not have aesthetic or architectural values, this HIS has determined that the proposed new Wentworth Hospital development will not have a negative impact on the heritage values present within or adjacent to the study area.

Management recommendations concerning the impacts to historic values relevant to the study area are as follows:

1. As a result of the new Wentworth Hospital development, there will be changes to structures present at the site. To mitigate this, recording and documentation of the site is recommended, including:
  - a. Preparation of a labelled site plan showing the location, function, and date of buildings (if able to be deduced) currently present
  - b. Archival photographic recording should be carried out prior to the proposed works. This will provide a record of the current health precinct prior to modification for future

generations. This should include the interior and exterior of the primary buildings. A record of this recording should be deposited with NSW Health Infrastructure, the Wentworth Shire Council, and the Wentworth Library.

2. As has been noted in this study, there are accuracy issues with the 'Original Buildings' listing relating to the Wentworth Hospital and this listing should be removed from the Department of Health's Heritage and Conservation Register. As per Heritage Council (2005) requirements, all state agencies are required to notify the Heritage Council at least 14 days prior to removing, transferring, or ceasing to occupy any asset on their s170 register. As the original buildings are no longer present, an approval for excavation from the NSW Heritage Divisions not required.
3. All works must be contained within the assessed study area, particularly along the southern boundary that intersects with the Wentworth Water Tower LEP listing curtilage.
4. No further investigation or management is required for the Wentworth Water Tower (I94), as there are no direct impacts, and indirect impacts have been managed through design as is detailed in this assessment.
5. Although the risk of the project affecting archaeological deposits at the study area has been assessed as low, the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 1**) should be followed if potential significant heritage items are encountered during construction.

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It is of note that during the OzArk 2022 options assessment, it was unknown that the Option 1 study area did in fact include an item that was listed on the Department of Health's s170 Heritage and Conservation Register. This was due to the name of the listing ('Original Buildings') not mentioning Wentworth Hospital or similar, as well as the listing having no GPS data attached to show its physical location. As will be discussed further in this report, the listing in fact relates to buildings that are now demolished where the existing Wentworth Hospital complex is situated.

### 1.3 STUDY AREA

The study area is comprised of approximately 3.8 hectares (ha) of land at the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers, as well as Tuckers Creek, at Wentworth NSW (**Figure 1-2**). The study area is situated on an elevated terrace associated with these three waterways and has been utilised as a health facility since the late 1800s.

The main buildings currently present on the site are the late 1940's hospital building and ambulance station, along with several other associated smaller buildings.

### 1.4 PROPOSED WORK

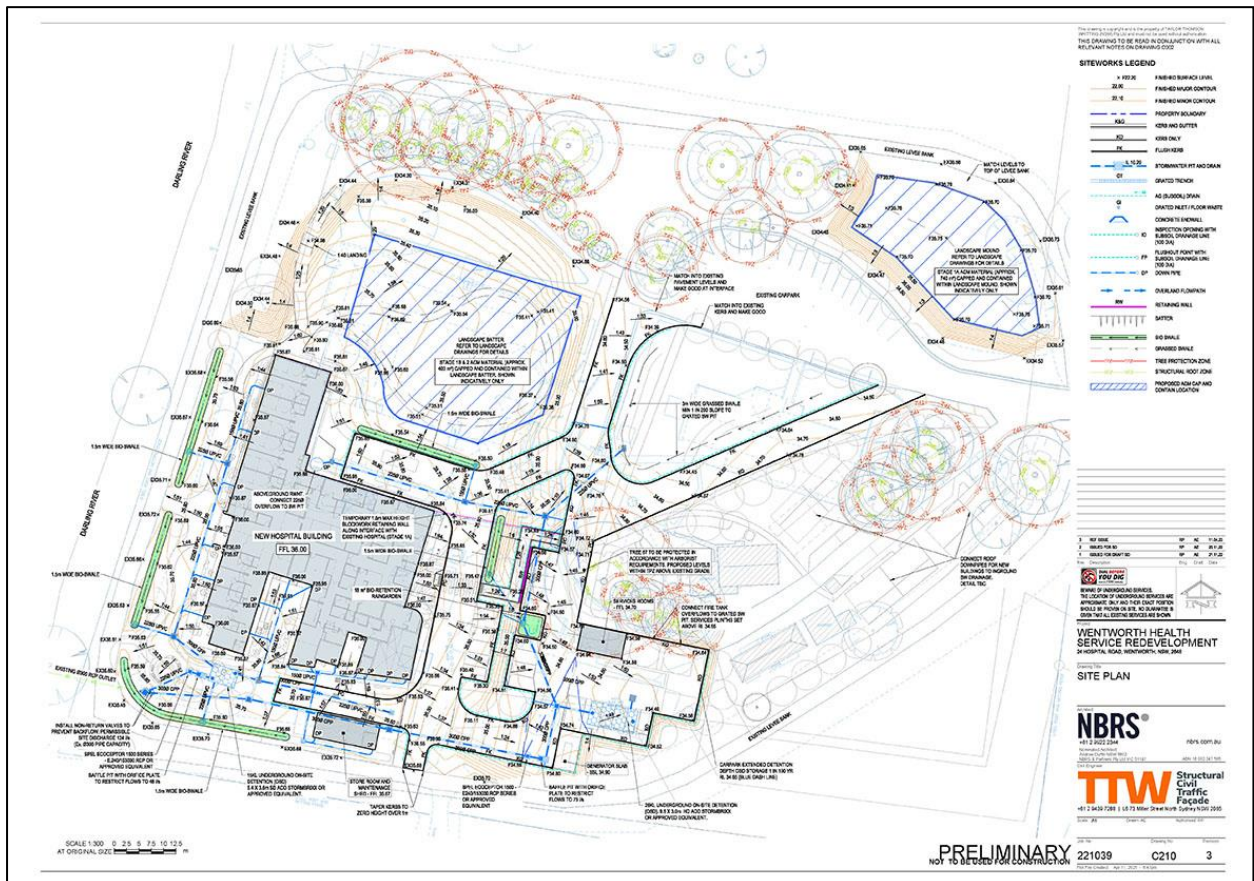
The proposed work will involve the demolition of the current Wentworth Hospital complex, and the construction of an improved and larger facility within the area shown on **Figure 1-3**. The redevelopment will also include the removal of up to 20 centimetres (cm) of soil from beneath the current buildings due to the presence of asbestos.

**Figure 1-2: Aerial showing the study area.**





Figure 1-3: New development area shown in blue outline.



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## 2 HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The current assessment will apply the Heritage Council *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice* (Heritage Council 2006) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites' *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (Burra Charter 2013) in the completion of a historical heritage impact assessment.

### 2.2 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

#### 2.2.1 Commonwealth legislation

##### ***Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*** (EPBC Act)

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), administered by the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, provides a framework to protect nationally significant flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places. The EPBC Act establishes both a National Heritage List and Commonwealth Heritage List of protected places.

The assessment and permitting processes of the EPBC Act are triggered when a proposed activity or development could potentially have an impact on one of the matters of national environment significance listed by the Act. Ministerial approval is required under the EPBC Act for proposals involving significant impacts to national/commonwealth heritage places.

#### 2.2.2 State legislation

##### ***Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979***

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes requirements relating to land use and planning. The main parts of the EP&A Act that relate to development assessment and approval are Part 4 (development assessment) and Part 5 (environmental assessment). The purpose of the Part 5 assessment system is to ensure public authorities fully consider environmental issues before they undertake or approve activities that do not require development consent from a council or the Minister. The Minister responsible for the Act is the Minister for Planning.

The EP&A Act currently provides the primary legislative basis for planning and environmental assessment in NSW. The objects of the EP&A Act include encouragement of:

- The proper management, development, and conservation of natural resources
- The provision and coordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land

- Protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats
- Ecologically sustainable development.

The objects also provide for increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.

The EP&A Act includes provisions to ensure that the potential environmental impacts of a development or activity are rigorously assessed and considered in the decision-making process.

The framework governing environmental and heritage assessment in NSW associated with public authorities is contained within the following part of the EP&A Act:

- Part 5: Environmental impact assessment on any heritage items which may be impacted by activities undertaken by a state government authority or a local government acting as a self-determining authority.

### ***Heritage Act 1977***

The *Heritage Act 1977* established the Heritage Council of NSW. The Heritage Council's role is to advise the government on the protection of heritage assets, make listing recommendations to the Minister in relation to the State Heritage Register (SHR), and assess/approve/decline proposals involving modification to heritage items or places listed on the SHR. Most proposals involving modification are assessed under Section 60 of the Heritage Act.

Automatic protection is afforded to 'relics', defined as 'any deposit or material evidence relating to the settlement of the area that comprised New South Wales, not being Aboriginal settlement, and which holds state or local significance'.

Excavation of land on which it is known or where there is reasonable cause to suspect that 'relics' will be exposed, moved, destroyed, discovered, or damaged is prohibited unless ordered under an excavation permit.

### **2.2.3 Wentworth Local Environmental Plan 2011**

Heritage items on the Wentworth LEP are subject to the following heritage conservation objectives:

- to conserve the environmental heritage of Wentworth
- to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings, and views
- to conserve archaeological sites
- to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.

The relevant clauses of the LEP are shown in **Table 2-1**.

**Table 2-1: Wentworth LEP provisions.**

Clause
<p>(2) Requirement for consent</p> <p>Development consent is required for any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. demolishing or moving any of the following or altering the exterior of any of the following (including, in the case of a building, making changes to its detail, fabric, finish or appearance): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a heritage item,</li> <li>(ii) an Aboriginal object,</li> <li>(iii) a building, work, relic or tree within a heritage conservation area,</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,</li> <li>3. disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,</li> </ol>
<p>(5) Heritage assessment</p> <p>The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. on land on which a heritage item is located, or</li> <li>5. on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or</li> <li>6. on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),</li> </ol> <p>Require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.</p>

## 2.2.4 Applicability to the proposal

There are no Commonwealth or National heritage listed places within the study area, and as such, the heritage provisions of the EPBC Act do not apply (see **Section 2.5.1**).

The proposal will be assessed under Part 5 of the EP&A Act.

Any items of local or state historical heritage significance within the study area are afforded legislative protection under the Heritage Act.

The provisions of the Wentworth LEP must be considered if significant harm to an item of local heritage value is likely.

## 2.3 HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The current assessment will apply the Heritage Council's *Historical Archaeology Code of Practice* (Heritage Council 2006) in the completion of a historical heritage assessment to meet the following objectives:

**Objective One:** To identify whether historical heritage items or areas are, or are likely to be, present within the study area or nearby

**Objective Two:** To assess the significance of any recorded historical heritage items or areas

**Objective Three:** Determine whether the proposal is likely to cause harm to historical heritage items, including:

- To assess the impacts associated with the Original Buildings listing on the Department of Health's s170 register

- To assess the impacts associated with the Wentworth Water Tower LEP listing curtilage that intersects the study area

**Objective Four:** Provide management recommendations and options for mitigating impacts.

## 2.4 BRIEF HISTORY

### 2.4.1 Wentworth township

Wentworth is situated at the confluence of the Murray and Darling Rivers in southwestern NSW.

According to tribal maps (Tindale 1974) Aboriginal people of the Barkindji language group inhabited the Lower Darling region at the time of first contact with the British. From early British accounts and archaeological evidence, it appears that Barkindji were hunter-fisher-gatherers living a semi-sedentary lifestyle. The Murray River is thought to have been quite densely populated, with a large number of Aboriginal sites recorded along it and the Darling River, including middens, artefact sites, burials etc. (Hassell & Ass. 1989).

The story for most of the Barkindji tribe, however, was that within about ten years of the advance of pioneering British settlement, they were living adjacent to pastoral homesteads, often working as shepherds or in other labouring activities (Cupper 2003:B-14). By the turn of the nineteenth century many Barkindji resided on the Darling River near Pooncarie where an Aboriginal mission had been set up in 1911 (Hardie 1969).

After discovery and mapping of the area by explorers and surveyors from the 1830s, British occupation of Wentworth Shire began in the late 1840s with the expansion of pastoralism into the region (Hassell & Ass. 1989). These endeavours were completely dependent upon the rivers as a water supply and as a transportation route.

By the 1850s, a regular river boat trade passed through Wentworth carrying wool to markets and importing domestic items which enabled the development of the area. Due to its distance from Sydney, however, the area was not well-resourced administratively and ties were often closer with Victoria and South Australia. During this period, settlement along the rivers expanded with large stations being established. With the advent of steam, the rivers became an even more dominant thoroughfare enabling the export of agricultural produce and the import of a wide variety of commercial produce, with the junction of the Murray and the Darling being the hub of such trade.

Floods, droughts, rabbit plague, and the decreasing viability of agricultural land characterised Wentworth Shire during the early decades of the twentieth century. Combined with increasing improvements to road and rail networks, river trade decreased, and from the 1950s, Mildura became the region's major administrative and commercial centre.



## 2.4.2 Hospital / Health Services complex

The primary source for the following historical context for Wentworth Hospital is a booklet prepared by Robertson (1985) as part of the centenary celebrations. This source has significant reference to funding, fund-raising, salaries, staffing etc., and although this provides a descriptive picture of the day to day issues the hospital has faced since its earliest days, for the purpose of this study, information has been selected that pertains to the structures built on site, as well as the changes over time. The *Wentworth Shire Heritage Study* was also consulted (Hassell & Ass. 1989).

The first medical services in Wentworth Shire were administered by the retired Dr Fletcher, owner of Tapia Station. Dr Renner arrived in Wentworth township in 1855 and set up a small hospital in 1859, with some private homes also used as hospital wards. In 1884, a committee was established due to the need for the creation of a purpose-built hospital at Wentworth.

The Wentworth Hospital building was built on the opposite side of the Darling River from the township during 1887 and was completed in 1888. A doctor working there later that year described the location as isolated and picturesque and the building as well appointed, although missing an operating theatre. The structure was built of brick and the wrap-around verandah was noted as required for shelter from the harsh sun with screens necessary to manage mosquitoes (Robertson 1985:7). The reason for choosing the 10 acre site on the east bank of the Darling River was unclear but possible reasons include the fact that the land is more elevated when compared to the western bank, that it had better access to the Darling River (which was the main transport route at the time), and/or isolation from the community in case of infectious diseases. Patients had to be rowed across the river from the township by a wardsman, whose attention was caught using a bell.

In 1901 there is reference to issues of drainage from the 'wooden' hospital building (Robertson 1985:9). It is unclear what building this is referring to considering that the main hospital was constructed of brick. Between 1901 and 1917 records attest to some additions, including a mosquito-proof screened house for the matron, who was troubled by the heat; the installation of a tennis court (**Figure 2-5**), and the construction of a detached weatherboard and iron building called the 'Private Ward'. Tents were erected at times to manage infectious disease, such as diphtheria in around 1916. In 1917, there are records of repairs because of flooding and in 1918 a fire destroyed the Private Ward (Robertson 1985:16).

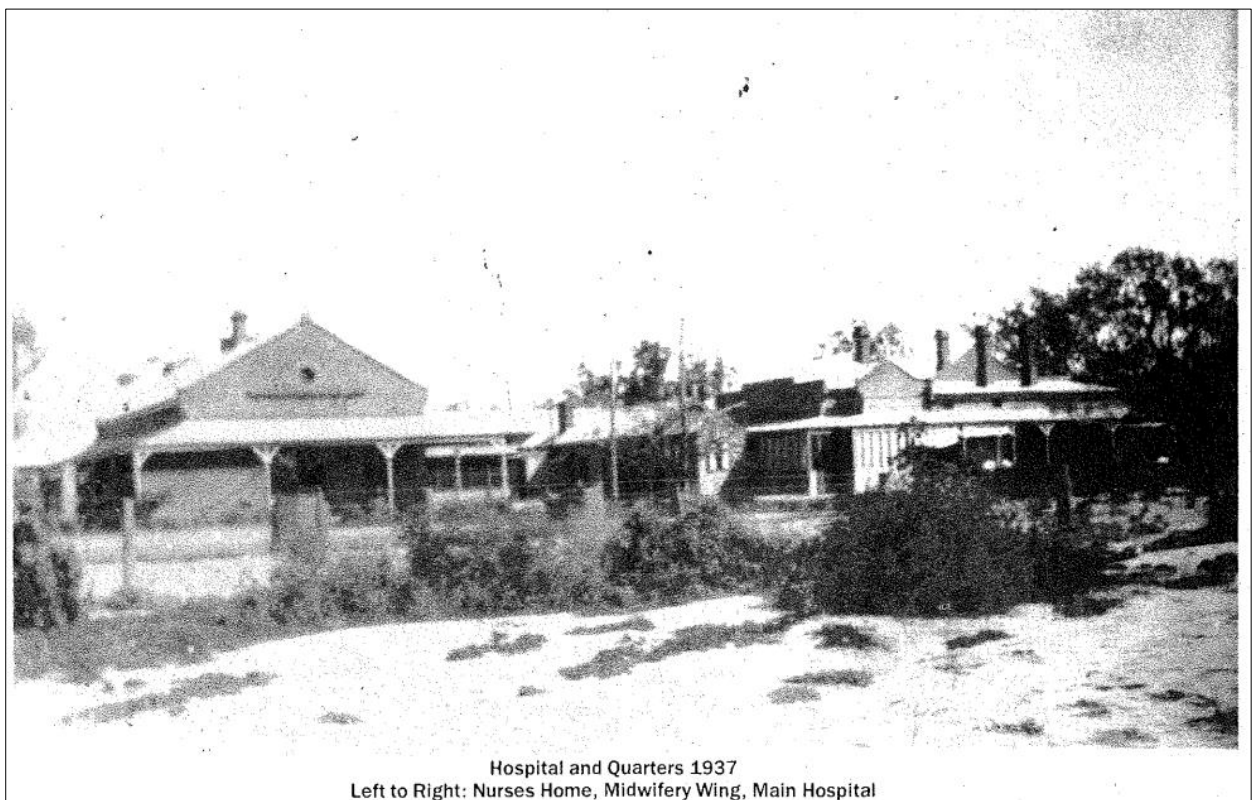
In rebuilding the Private Ward, assurance had to be made that it was not to be used for private patients and once agreed, two additional wards were added, and their verandahs gauzed in 1920 (**Figure 2-1**). Following this a covered walkway was constructed between the buildings. In 1926, new buildings including a new kitchen were funded, with agreement that as much material from

old buildings be re-used as possible. By 1937, an image of the hospital precinct shows the nurses' quarters building, a maternity building, and the main hospital building (**Figure 2-2**).

**Figure 2-1: Image of the hospital from 1920 (Robertson 1985:19).**



**Figure 2-2: Image of the hospital from 1937 (Robertson 1985:27).**



From the late 1930s and into the early 1940s requests were made to the hospital board for an upgraded hospital. It is unclear if this was to replace the suite of buildings then present on the site, or just the main hospital building. Records indicate money was not available, and it was not until 1944 that plans for the new hospital were approved by the hospital board. A foundation stone

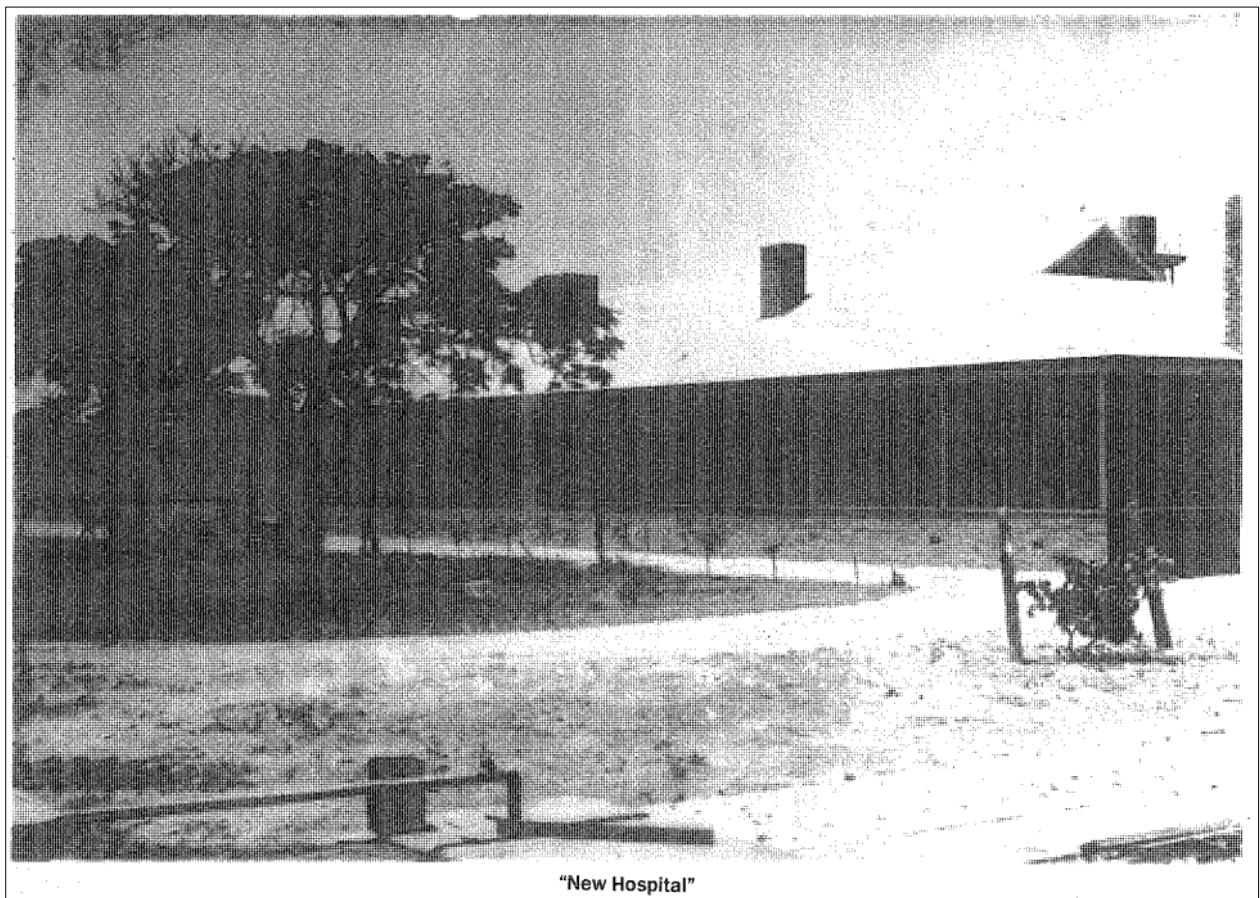


for the new building was to be of coloured Italian granite, but due to being hard to source, this was changed to red granite.

In 1946 the original hospital was demolished (Hassell & Ass. 1985) although new buildings were not completed on the site until 1948. Several images show the new buildings in 1949 (**Figure 2-3, Figure 2-4**). A bird bath was to be installed in the front lawn, opposite the main entrance, and although its purchase is recorded, no trace of it has ever been found according to Robertson (1985:36). By mid-1956, with floodwaters rising, emergency measures were taken to create a levee around the hospital, seen on **Figure 2-6**. Although the hospital was largely protected by the levee, its grounds were destroyed. The Council then determined a different approach to the levee which was then reconstructed at its current location.

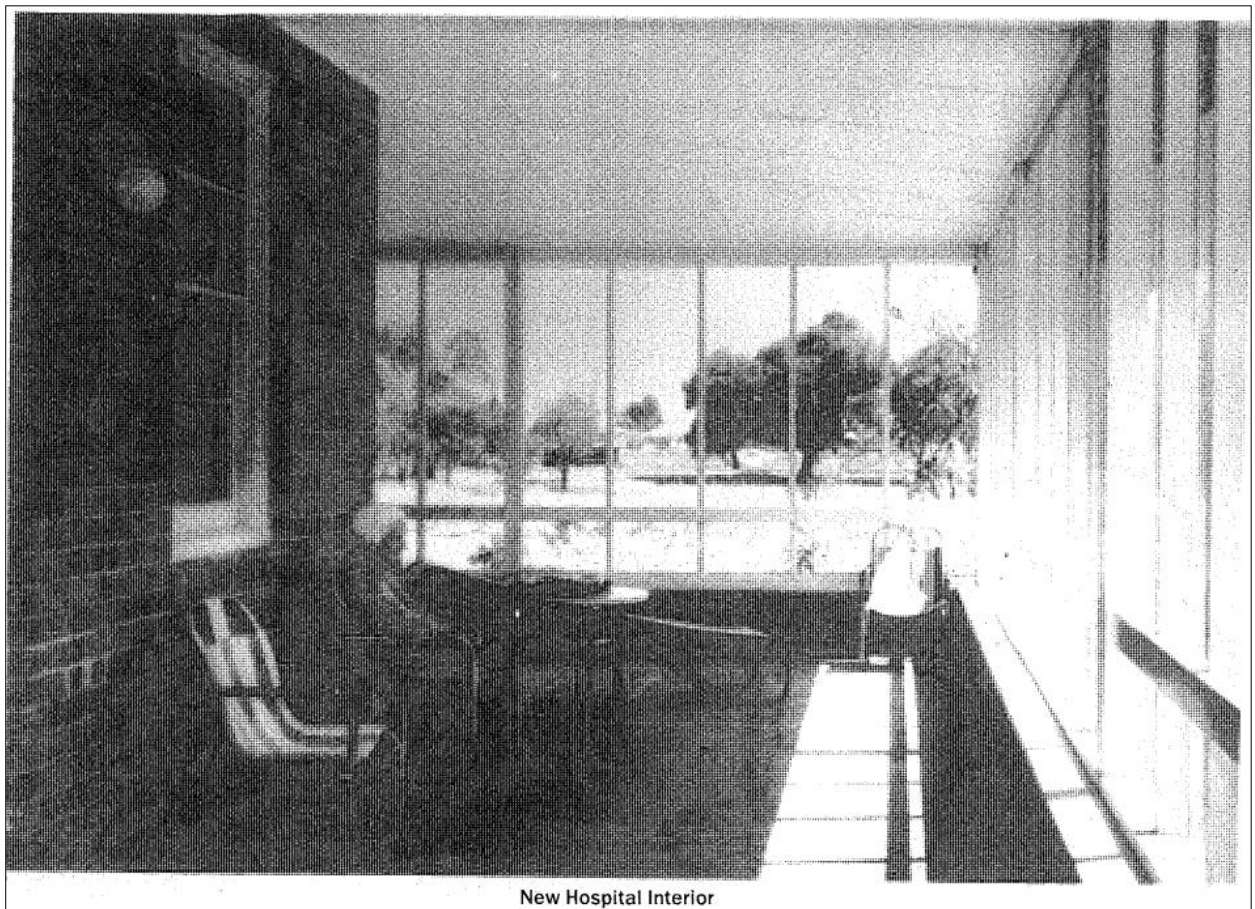
By 1959, works had been completed to return the hospital grounds to pre-flood condition in time for the hospital's centenary celebrations. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s reference is made to continuing minor changes to buildings, as needed for improved functionality and to meet changing standards of medical care. There were also maintenance issues including the need for repainting and managing white ants.

**Figure 2-3: Images of the new hospital built 1949 (Robertson 1985:35, 36).**

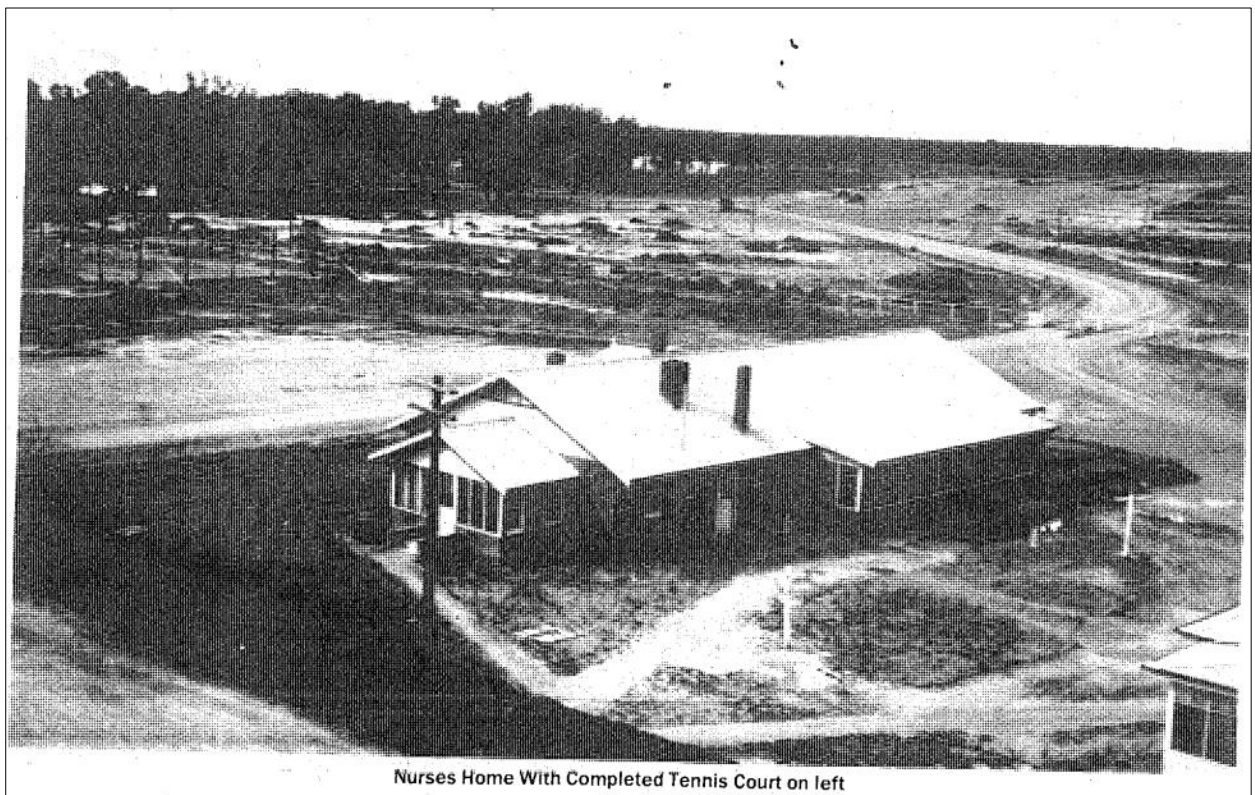




**Figure 2-4: Image of the interior of the new hospital built 1949 (Robertson 1985:35, 36).**



**Figure 2-5: Image of the new nurses' quarters with tennis court (Robertson 1985:35, 36).**





**Figure 2-6: Flood image from 1956 showing the levee around the hospital, and importantly the buildings present on the site in 1956 (Robertson 1985:39).**



Reference is made to the demolition of the old geriatric wing in 1977, but it is unclear whether this was a building from the pre-1946 rebuild or from the 1946 construction phase. By the very late 1970s, the midwifery department had closed as had the x-ray department, likely as a result of Mildura base hospital becoming the primary major regional health care provider. In 1981 it was determined that Wentworth Hospital would become a Community Hospital. Concluding the history of the hospital in 1985, Robertson ponders the future of the hospital and the need for the community to remain engaged and supportive of the facility if it was to continue to be funded into the future. Robertson also notes the need for '*consideration and financial justice from the government*' to ensure remote communities were not forgotten.

## **2.5 HERITAGE LISTINGS RELEVANT TO THE STUDY AREA**

### **2.5.1 Desktop database searches conducted**

A desktop search was conducted on the following databases to identify any potential previously recorded heritage within the study area. The results of this search are summarised in **Table 2-2**.

**Table 2-2: Historic heritage desktop database search results.**

Name of Database Searched	Date of Search	Type of Search	Comment
National and Commonwealth Heritage Listings	15/11/22	Study area	No results
State Heritage Register (SHR)	15/11/22	Study area	No items within proximity of the study area
Department of Health Section 170 register	15/11/22	Study area	One relevant result: Original Buildings (original Wentworth Hospital buildings)
Wentworth Local Environmental Plan (LEP)	15/11/22	Study area	One relevant result: Wentworth Water Tower (I94).

A search of the Department of Health's s170 register returned one relevant result record for a historic heritage item within the study area, being item No. 11/2/1/1000. This listing is labelled 'Original buildings' with the date noted as 1889 (see **Appendix 2**).

In addition to this, a search of the Wentworth LEP returned one item (I94) adjacent to, and slightly overlapping, the study area. This is the Wentworth Water Tower (I94 on the Wentworth LEP), the Lot/DP curtilage for which extends slightly into the southern portion of the study area. This is likely to be a mapping error.

**Figure 2-7: The Wentworth Tower (I94) listing and curtilage in relation to the study area.**

## 2.6 LISTED HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEMS AT THE STUDY AREA

Information about the 'Original Buildings' and 'Wentworth Water Tower' heritage items below has been adapted from the Department of Health's s170, Heritage and Conservation Register and State Heritage Inventory (SHI) listing for the Wentworth LEP.

### 2.6.1 Original Buildings (original Wentworth Hospital complex)

A search of the Department of Health's s170 register returned one relevant result record for a historic heritage item within the study area, being item No. 11/2/1/1000. This listing is labelled 'Original buildings' with the date noted as 1889 (see **Appendix 2**). The listing information is scant, but the description, a '*single-story building surrounded by an attached verandah*' and '*brick with corrugated iron roof*', together with the two images provided, appear to relate to the buildings that date from the late 1940s that are currently on site. It is possible that this listing, which may have been made at a desktop level (?), has confused the buildings currently on site with the original buildings constructed on site in the late 1880s. As a result, it is likely that this listing does not refer to the buildings currently present at the site. There is no data from this listing to suggest that any elements of the current buildings have been directly assessed for their heritage significance / values and the main emphasis of the listing relates to the early date of the buildings. It must also be noted that the heritage item is not included as a local heritage item on the Wentworth Shire Local Environment Plan.

**Location of site:** 24 Hospital Road, Wentworth NSW 2648

**Description of site:** The original buildings constructed in 1887/88 are known from images only as seen in **Figure 2-1** and **Figure 2-2**.

The complex consisted of several buildings, a 'nurses' home', a 'midwifery wing', and the 'main hospital'. The main hospital structure was a single storey brick construction, with four brick chimneys and a pitched roof. The chimneys are in pairs with one pair at the front of the structure and one pair at the rear. The roof has a prominent brick gable over what is assumed to be the front entrance. The building had an overhang veranda that was supported by twelve wooden posts. The architectural style of this structure is classified as being 'Federation'.

The nurses' home is of a similar design to that of the main hospital and is constructed of brick and surrounded by a verandah. This building also has a prominent brick gable. The midwifery wing sat between the nurses' quarters and the main hospital and appears to have been constructed from weatherboards.

In the s170 listing, the buildings are assessed as having medium historical significance, however, only to the town of Wentworth.

These buildings no longer exist at the site.





## 2.6.2 Wentworth Water Tower (I94)

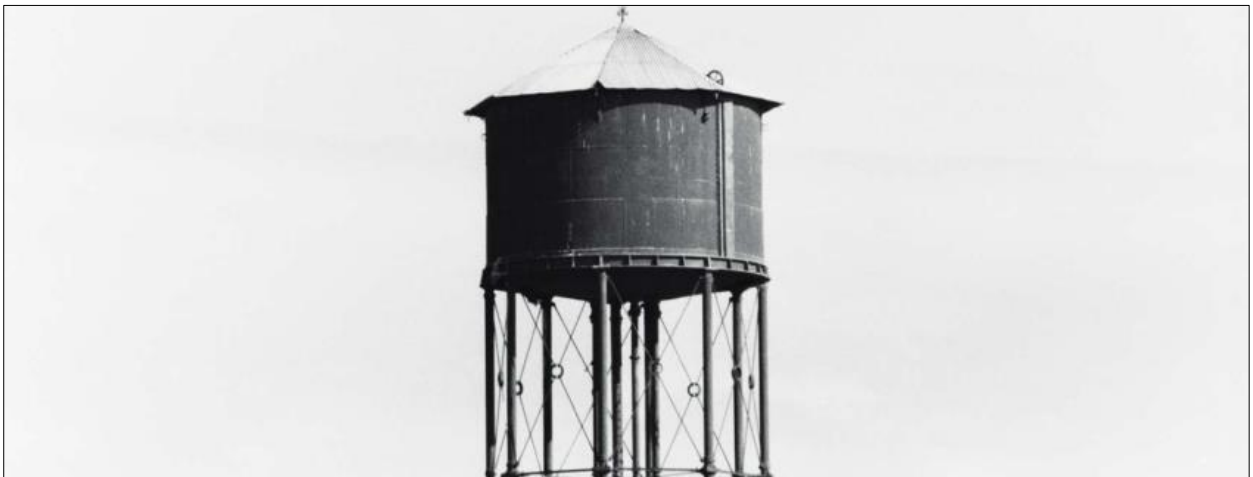
**Location of site:** Ski Reserve Road, Wentworth NSW 2648

**Description of site:** The water tower is recorded as being built in 1885 (Hassel & Ass. 1989) and is located immediately south of Wentworth Hospital (**Figure 2-8**). The following description comes from the LEP listing:

*The ornate structure is comprised of a tall pre-stressed tower of nine cylindrical iron columns bolted in four sections, supporting a water tank with a galvanised iron polygonal roof and decorative wrought iron finial.*

*The water tower was made by Hudson Brothers Ltd, of Clyde and imported to Australia. The towns water supply commenced in 1888. The impressive tower is an important feature of the Wentworth skyline and a fine representation of the provision of services in the initial years of municipal government.*

**Figure 2-8: The Wentworth Tower (I45) (source: Wentworth Shire Council website).**



## 3 RESULTS OF HISTORIC HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

### 3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSESSMENT

No specific targeted fieldwork for the historic heritage assessment was conducted. The study area was, however, inspected by OzArk archaeologists Brendan Fisher and Barry Kerton on 28 February 2022 for the purpose of Aboriginal heritage and the preliminary constraints assessment.

General review of the hospital buildings in the landscape was undertaken, and the interior condition and information of the Wentworth Health Facility has been extrapolated from other specialist reports and background research.

The Wentworth Water Tower was assessed visually.

### 3.2 DETAILS OF ITEMS

No additional items of historic heritage significance were recorded in the study area beyond those listed items known to be present and discussed in **Sections 2.5** and **2.6**. Observations of these items is provided in this section.

#### 3.2.1 Extant hospital buildings

As was discussed in detail above (**Sections 2.5** and **2.6.1**), the Wentworth Hospital buildings from the late 1940s remain extant on the site, having been modified and upgraded as needed over the past 70 years. Although a detailed survey of the building was not undertaken, review of historical images demonstrates that the original 1887/8 hospital buildings were demolished ahead of the late 1940's rebuilding phase, and no buildings of this phase remain.

These buildings are constructed of brick with tin roofs and up to two chimneys. Most of the buildings (wards, janitors' rooms, storage areas) contain cracking and gapping in the exterior and interior brick. This cracking is most likely the result of earth movement over the past 70 years, although poor drainage within the levee bank could also be a cause.

**Figure 3-1** shows views of the current buildings on the site. When compared to the images on **Figure 2-1** and **Figure 2-2**, it is clear that the current buildings are not the 'original buildings' on site and that the current buildings are the 'new hospital' illustrated on **Figure 2-3**.

**Figure 3-1: Views of the extant buildings.**

	
<p>1 View to the southeast of the extant buildings in the study area.</p>	<p>2 View to the west of the extant buildings in the study area.</p>
	
<p>3 View to the northwest of the main health service building in the study area.</p>	<p>4 View to the east of the main health service building in the study area.</p>
	
<p>5 View to the east of the study area showing sheds and small brick buildings</p>	<p>6 View to the south of the community centre building.</p>



### 3.2.2 Wentworth water tower

The Wentworth Water Tower is currently the highest structure in the township of Wentworth and was observed during the options assessment for the proposal. The water tower is in good condition and did not seem to be in a state of disrepair. The water tower is located approximately 60 m to the south of the study area (**Figure 3-2**).

**Figure 3-2: Views of the Wentworth Water Tower (I94).**

	
<p>1 View to northwest showing the Wentworth Water Tower from Ski Reserve Road. The new development would be situated behind the tree line and would not alter this view.</p>	<p>2 View of the Wentworth Water Tower.</p>
	
<p>3 View to the south showing the Wentworth Water Tower from within the study area where the new development will be constructed.</p>	<p>4 View to the west showing the Wentworth Water Tower from within the study area on the levee bank.</p>

### **3.3    ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

The study area has been progressively landscaped, is subject to flooding with flood levees created and modified, and has had new buildings and carparks constructed since the late 1880s. It is likely that the second main phase of hospital rebuilding in the 1940s was at the same location as the 1880's hospital and it is likely that this renovation removed any substantial subsurface archaeological deposits.

Building of the levee bank in the mid-1950s to protect the hospital from the 1956 flood would have had a significant impact to the land surrounding the hospital. The renewal and modification of this levee by the Shire Council in the 1960s/70s to its current form / location also saw significant ground disturbance, as evidenced by the borrow pits to the north of the hospital.

Due to asbestos being present beneath the late 1940's hospital building, approximately 20 cm of deposit will need to be removed. It is unlikely this activity will impact significant archaeological deposits.

## 4 ASSESSMENT OF HISTORIC HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

NSW Heritage Office's publication *Assessing Heritage Significance* (NSW Heritage Office 2001) defines the criteria for heritage significance. A historic heritage site must satisfy at minimum one of the following criteria to be assessed as having heritage significance:

**Criterion (a):** *An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

**Criterion (b):** *An item has a strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

**Criterion (c):** *An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).*

**Criterion (d):** *An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

**Criterion (e):** *An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

**Criterion (f):** *An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).*

**Criterion (g):** *An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).*

Significance assessments are carried out on the basis that decisions about the future of heritage items must be informed by an understanding of these items' heritage values. The *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter* (Burra Charter 2013) recognises four categories of heritage value: historic, aesthetic, scientific, and social significance.

Items are categorised as having local or state level, or no significance. The level of significance is assessed in accordance with the geographical extent of the item's value. An item of state significance is one that is important to the people of NSW whilst an item of local significance is one that is principally important to the people of a specific LGA.

### 4.1.1 Assessment of significance of historic items

### 4.1.2 Original Buildings (original Wentworth Hospital complex)

The Original Buildings listing from the NSW Department of Health's s170 register, discussed in detail in **Section 2.6.1**, is interpreted as referring to the buildings of 1887/8 that are no longer extant on the site. Although these buildings were assessed as having local significance (most likely from a desktop study), they no longer exist.

### 4.1.3 Extant buildings at the Wentworth Hospital

The buildings currently present on-site date to the late 1940s. Although these are not believed to be the buildings listed in The Health Department's s170 register, it is these buildings that will be assessed for significance as these are the buildings that remain extant on the site today.

It is of note that the 1989 *Wentworth Shire Heritage Study*, that assessed the shire's heritage for the purpose of providing recommendations for local heritage listing on the LEP, did not recommend for Wentworth Hospital to be listed as having heritage significance, and in fact, the hospital is rarely mentioned in this study.

Of associated relevance is the assemblage of historic medical instruments and photographs held by Wentworth Hospital. This archive is currently being catalogued.

**Table 4-1: Assessment of heritage significance – Extant Wentworth Hospital buildings.**

Criterion	Comments	Significance
a	The buildings present on the hospital site are important only insofar as they represent the continued use of the site in providing health services for the local community. In this way the use of the site for health service provision is where the significance / value to local cultural history lies, not in the buildings themselves.	Local – site None - buildings
b	There is no specific person or group associated with these hospital buildings. The Hospital Board, over time, included many interested and proactive community members, but no specific individual; and furthermore, the Hospital Board was relevant to use of the site to provide health services not any one building or suite of buildings.	The item does not meet this criterion
c	The extant Wentworth Hospital buildings do not demonstrate aesthetic characteristics or a high degree of creative or technical achievement. They are of standard materials and design and have been added to and modified frequently over time as attested to by historical records.	The item does not meet this criterion
d	There is no specific cultural group associated with these hospital buildings, although the history indicates that Wentworth Hospital has had a significant role in delivering Aboriginal health services over the past 70 years.	The item does not meet this criterion
e	The buildings present on the hospital site have limited potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Wentworth's cultural history. The significance lies in the continued use of the site over time to be adapted to provide health services to the local community.	The item does not meet this criterion
f	The extant Wentworth Hospital buildings do not possess uncommon, rare, or endangered aspects of NSW's or Wentworth's cultural history.	The item does not meet this criterion
g	Although the 1948/9 Wentworth Hospital buildings do demonstrate the general characteristics of local health service provision from the mid-twentieth century, the additions and changes to the site over time ensure the buildings do not meet this criterion.	The item does not meet this criterion

**Table 4-2** details the assessed significance of existing historic heritage item in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office guidelines and the *Burra Charter*.

**Table 4-2: Historic heritage: assessment of significance for Original Buildings (original Wentworth Hospital complex) and existing Wentworth Hospital buildings**

Site name	Level of significance
Original Buildings (believed to refer to the original 1887/8 Wentworth Hospital)	None, no longer extant
Wentworth Hospital -1940's buildings	Hospital site has local heritage significance from its role in the provision of health services. The current buildings do not have heritage significance.

#### 4.1.4 Wentworth Water Tower (I94)

The Wentworth Water Tower is listed in Schedule 5 of the Wentworth LEP as item I94. The tower being the highest structure in the town has landmark values, as well as values associated with its civic role due to its association with Wentworth's water supply.

The Wentworth Water Tower has local heritage values.

## 4.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.2.1 Wentworth Hospital

The 1887/8 Wentworth Hospital buildings are no longer extant having been demolished in the late 1940s.

The buildings currently on site date to the late 1940s, with many additions, changes, and alterations over time, both in terms of buildings and function. The main building is of brick, single-storey, iron roofed, and enclosed by screened verandahs. Although the buildings represent mid-twentieth century local health service provision, they are not unique or of significant aesthetic or architectural value. The buildings' values instead derive from their role in illustrating the role of local health services that have significance to the local community.

It is of note that the 1989 *Wentworth Shire Heritage Study* (Hassell & Ass.) did not recommend for Wentworth Hospital to be listed as having local heritage significance.

### 4.2.2 Wentworth Water Tower

This iron water tower, with a base in four sections, supporting a water tank with a galvanised iron roof and decorative wrought iron finial was made by Hudson Brothers Ltd of Clyde and imported to Australia. It is associated with the provision of services in the early years of Wentworth's municipal government which included the establishment of Wentworth's water supply system in 1888. The tower remains impressive and is considered an important feature of the Wentworth skyline. It has local heritage significance.



## 5 LIKELY IMPACTS TO HISTORIC HERITAGE FROM THE PROPOSAL

The entire existing hospital site is proposed for redevelopment. As the original hospital buildings from the 1880s are no longer extant, they will not be impacted by the proposal. The 1940's hospital buildings are proposed for demolition.

The Wentworth Water Tower is outside the impact footprint for the proposed hospital redevelopment. As it is near to the hospital, however, indirect impacts in regard to visual amenity will need to be considered.

**Table 5-1: Impact assessment.**

Site Name	Will this site be impacted?	Management required
Original Buildings	No, these buildings are no longer extant	None
1940's hospital buildings	Direct impacts	Yes
Wentworth Water Tower	No direct impacts, but landscape to be considered	Yes, in relation to visual amenity

### 5.1.1 Original Buildings

As the Original Buildings listed on the Department of Health's s170 register describes the original buildings constructed in 1887, which have since been demolished, there will be no impacts to this listing. As was discussed above in **Section 4.2**, no significant archaeological remains from the late 1800s are likely to remain extant. As such, no further management with regard to the demolished 1880's buildings is required.

### 5.1.2 1940's Hospital Buildings

The extant 1940's buildings do not meet the threshold for local heritage significance. They were not listed as part of the 1989 *Wentworth Shire Heritage Study* and nor does the assessment undertaken for this project indicate they have significant values (**Section 4.1.2**). The site itself, as the location from which health services have been provided to the town of Wentworth since the late 1800s, does have significance to the local community. As a result of the overall importance of the site in providing health services, recording the buildings present on site prior to demolition is recommended.

### 5.1.3 Wentworth Water Tower

A small portion of the north-eastern corner of the LEP item's curtilage overlaps with the study area (**Figure 2-7**), although this is likely to be a mapping error and is not specifically relevant to this impact assessment. The significant element of this listing is the water tower itself, which is located approximately 60 metres (m) south of the southern boundary of the study area, and as such, there will be no direct impacts. The new proposed hospital development will, however, alter the amenity of the area, which could impact on the landscape values of the water tower.

## 5.2 HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

The NSW Heritage Manual poses a series of questions that comprise the minimum information to form a HIS which is required to properly address the impact of a project to items of heritage significance.

The following assessment refers to the extant Wentworth Hospital buildings and the Wentworth Water Tower.

### 5.2.1 Demolition of a building or structure – the extant Wentworth Hospital complex

As outlined in **Section 4.1.2**, the current Wentworth Hospital buildings from the late 1940s do not meet the criteria for local heritage listing. They are, however, valued by the local community for the health services provided over the years. As such, the demolition of the 1940's buildings would only result in a minor loss of social value significant to the locals of Wentworth. However, the social values of Wentworth having a health facility will be retained following the demolition of the 1940's buildings and construction of the new complex.

Alternative decisions to the current buildings being demolished were explored to minimise any loss of values, by selecting an alternative location for the health redevelopment in Wentworth. However, the other location options would have resulted in further and greater losses in values, including locally significant values (i.e. The Wentworth Town Hall).

### 5.2.2 New development adjacent to a heritage item – Wentworth Water Tower (194)

This section considers the impact of the proposed new hospital complex to the Wentworth Water Tower.

**How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?**

As the new development will only be impacting the area inside the existing hospital levee bank, there will be no direct impacts close to the water tower.

The new buildings have been designed to not dominate the landscape and will remain single storey as all previous hospital buildings have been.

**Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item (the water tower)?**

The proposed new Wentworth Hospital is to replace the existing hospital facility on the same site. This site has been the location of health service provision for the town of Wentworth since the 1880s has always been located adjacent to the Wentworth Water Tower (**Figure 2-7**). It is important to the community that the hospital remain on the same site as it has been historically and furthermore, the result of the NSW Health Infrastructure's options study regarding the preferred location resulted in the existing hospital site being chosen.

**How does the curtilage around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?**

The curtilage is primarily relevant to Lot and DP boundaries, however, to appreciate the water tower from the town of Wentworth, it is important to retain space around the structure to ensure its continued visibility. The proposed new hospital does not encroach on this curtilage.

**How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item?**

As noted above, the new hospital will occupy the same site as the existing hospital and will remain single storey. This ensures that the landscape context of the water tower and hospital remains relatively unchanged because of the new hospital building. Views from the water tower are less relevant than views from the township to the water tower, and these also will remain relatively unchanged, with no encroachment of curtilage.

In respect of views to the water tower from the new hospital, it is relevant that careful design principles have formally incorporated views to the tower from the new proposed family room, and through the establishment of a courtyard that has been oriented to provide views south towards the tower.

**What has been done to minimise negative effects?**

Detailed sympathetic design has ensured no negative effects to the water tower from the proposed new hospital.

**Is the development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?**

No, the potential for significant archaeological deposits at the site has been assessed as low, see **Section 4.2**.

**Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?**

Yes. The general form and siting of the new hospital is not greatly altered from that of the existing facility.

**Will the new development visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?**

The new structures will not visually dominate as they are distant from the tower and will be single storey.

**Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?**

Yes, public access to the heritage item will not be hindered in any way, noting the water tower is not a location to which public is encouraged. The views to the water tower from Wentworth will

not be interrupted and the tower's heritage significance within the landscape will not be negatively impacted.

## 6 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 ARCHIVAL RECORDING

Formal recording will occur prior to impact, including a site plan and photographic record, to document this phase of hospital development. Photographs for the extant buildings will include photos of features, such as roof design, chimneys, and gutters, as well as the general setting of the buildings. These will be compiled into folders to be archived as a historical record.

### 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This HIS has determined that the proposed new Wentworth Hospital development will not have a negative impact on the heritage values present within or adjacent to the study area.

Management recommendations concerning the impacts to historic values relevant to the study area are as follows:

1. As a result of the new Wentworth Hospital development, there will be changes to structures present at the site. To mitigate this, recording and documentation of the site is recommended, including:
  - a. Preparation of a labelled site plan showing the location, function, and date of buildings (if able to be deduced) currently present
  - b. Archival photographic recording should be carried out prior to the proposed works. This will provide a record of the current health precinct prior to modification for future generations. This should include the interior and exterior of the primary buildings. A record of this recording should be deposited with NSW Health Infrastructure, the Wentworth Shire Council, and the Wentworth Library.
2. As has been noted in this study, there are accuracy issues with the 'Original Buildings' listing relating to the Wentworth Hospital and this listing should be removed from the Department of Health's Heritage and Conservation Register. As per Heritage Council (2005) requirements, all state agencies are required to notify the Heritage Council at least 14 days prior to removing, transferring or ceasing to occupy any asset on their s170 register. As the original buildings are no longer present, an approval for excavation from the NSW Heritage Divisions not required.
3. All works must be contained within the assessed study area, particularly along the southern boundary that intersects with the Wentworth Water Tower LEP listing curtilage.
4. No further investigation or management is required for the Wentworth Water Tower (I94), as there are no direct impacts, and indirect impacts have been managed through design as is detailed in this assessment.

5. Although the risk of the project affecting archaeological deposits at the study area has been assessed as low, the *Unanticipated Finds Protocol* (**Appendix 1**) should be followed if potential significant heritage items are encountered during construction.

## REFERENCES

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- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
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## APPENDIX 1: HISTORIC HERITAGE: UNANTICIPATED FINDS PROTOCOL

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A historic artefact is anything which is the result of past activity not related to the Aboriginal occupation of the area. This includes pottery, wood, glass, and metal objects as well as the built remains of structures, sometimes heavily ruined.

Heritage significance of historic items is assessed by suitably qualified specialists who place the item or site in context and determine its role in aiding the community's understanding of the local area, or their wider role in being an exemplar of state or even national historic themes.

The following protocol should be followed if previously unrecorded or unanticipated historic objects are encountered:

7. All ground surface disturbance in the area of the finds should cease immediately, then:
  1. The discoverer of the find(s) will notify machinery operators in the immediate vicinity of the find(s) so that work can be halted
  2. The site supervisor will be informed of the find(s).
3. If finds are suspected to be human skeletal remains, then NSW Police must be contacted as a matter of priority.
4. If there is substantial doubt regarding the historic significance for the finds, then gain a qualified opinion from an archaeologist as soon as possible. This can circumvent proceeding further along the protocol for items which turn out not to be significant. If a quick opinion cannot be gained, or the identification is that the item is likely to be significant, then proceed to the next step.
5. Notify Heritage NSW as soon as practical on (02) 9873 8500 (heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au), providing any details of the historic find and its location.
6. If in the view of the heritage specialist or Heritage NSW that the finds appear not to be significant, work may recommence without further investigation. Keep a copy of all correspondence for future reference.
7. If in the view of the heritage specialist or Heritage NSW that the finds appear to be significant, facilitate the recording and assessment of the finds by a suitably qualified heritage specialist. Such a study should include the development of appropriate management strategies.
8. If the find(s) are determined to be significant historic items (i.e. of local or state significance), any re-commencement of ground surface disturbance may only resume following compliance with any legal requirements and gaining written approval from Heritage NSW.



## APPENDIX 2: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH S170 LISTING – WENTWORTH HOSPITAL

<b>NAME:</b> Wentworth District Hospital Original Building		<b>HERITAGE REGISTER NO:</b> 11/2/1/1000
<b>ADDRESS:</b> Silver City Highway Wentworth NSW 2648		
<b>HEALTH DEPT REGION:</b> South West	<b>HISTORICAL SUMMARY:</b> Stands on land granted on 17th May, 1889, on a 4ha site located outside of town on the neck of land between the Darling and Murray Rivers. Ideally located for the treatment of contagious diseases.	
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:</b> Wentworth		
<b>S.H.I.P. CATEGORY:</b> 1003		
<b>CURRENT USE:</b> Hospital		
<b>FORMER USE:</b> Hospital	<b>DESCRIPTION:</b> A single storey building surrounded by an attached verandah.	
<b>KEY DATES:</b> 1889		
<b>ARCHITECT / DESIGNER:</b>		
<b>ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:</b> Federation	<b>CONSTRUCTION:</b> Brick with corrugated iron roof.	
<b>NO. OF STOREYS:</b> 1		
<b>CONDITION:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR <input type="checkbox"/> POOR		
<b>SIGNIFICANCE:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> HIGH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MEDIUM <input type="checkbox"/> LOW	<b>SIGNIFICANCE:</b> Of historical significance to the town of Wentworth.	
<b>HERITAGE LISTINGS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A.H.C. <input type="checkbox"/> P.W.D. <input type="checkbox"/> P.C.O. <input type="checkbox"/> L.E.P. <input type="checkbox"/> N.T. <input type="checkbox"/> D.R.L.E.P. <input type="checkbox"/> R.A.I.A. <input type="checkbox"/> R.E.P. <input type="checkbox"/> N.P.W.S.		
<b>DEMOLITION CONSENT REQUIRED:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<b>RECOMMENDED CONSERVATION STRATEGY:</b> Subject to further investigation. Requires reasonable care to protect external architectural integrity and the character of key internal spaces and structural systems.	
<b>HEALTH ASSET REG. NO.</b> 11-2-26-01	<b>STUDY REFERENCES:</b> "History of Wentworth".	
<b>NSW DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION REGISTER</b> SCHWAGER BROOKS AND PARTNERS PTY LTD ARCHITECTS AND HERITAGE CONSULTANTS <div style="float: right; font-size: 2em; opacity: 0.5;">DRAFT</div>		

**NAME:**  
Wentworth District Hospital  
Original Building

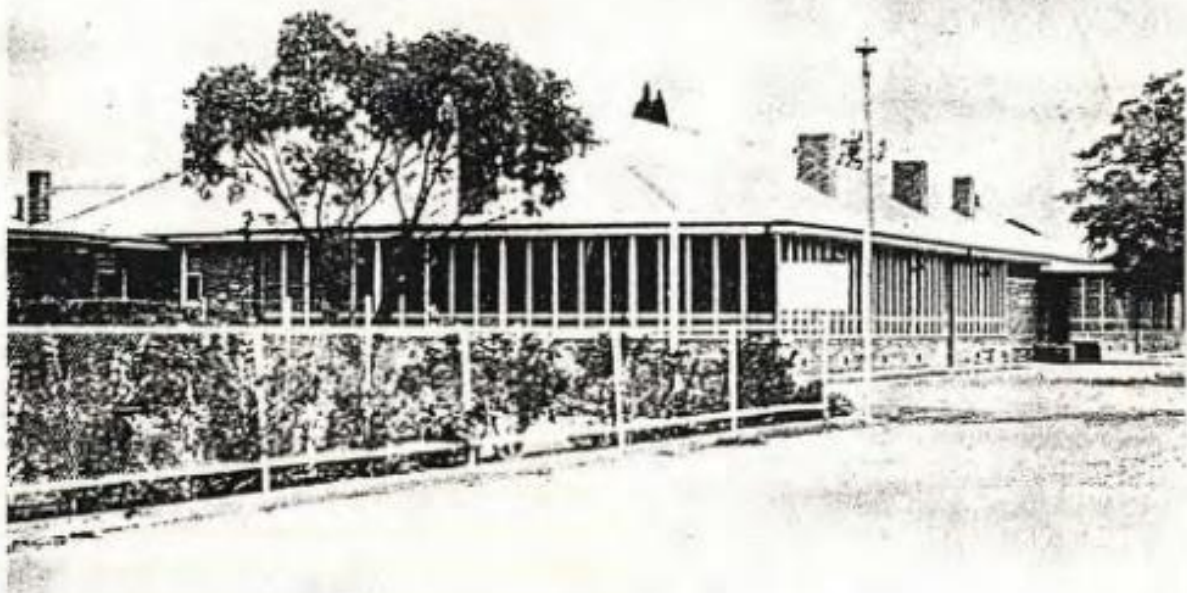
**HERITAGE REGISTER NO:**  
11/2/1/1000

**ADDRESS:**  
Silver City Highway  
Wentworth

NSW



LEFT: AERIAL PHOTO OF WENTWORTH HOSPITAL SURROUNDED BY WATER DURING 1936 FLOOD. THE JUNCTION OF THE MURRAY AND DARLING CAN BE SEEN IN TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER AND TUCKERS CREEK BOTTOM RIGHT HAND.



WENTWORTH DISTRICT HOSPITAL

**NSW DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION REGISTER**  
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