

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

A new mental health unit for Tamworth (Banksia)

Community Engagement Statement

December 2022

Background

1.1 Purpose

This engagement statement should be read in conjunction with the Design Consultation and Engagement Report produced in May 2021 and unveiling of the schematic design in October of that year.

Consultation on the project started in 2018, with the development of the Clinical Services Plan. To date, consultation has directly involved almost 1000 staff, consumers, carers and community members. To co-design the new Banksia Unit, the project team has been consulting with a large number of staff, carers and consumers with lived experience of mental illness.

We also visited communities in the NSW New England North West, provided an online survey and by the end of 2021 had logged more than 380 comments on the design received from co-design meetings, consultations and working groups.

Of these, 72 were incorporated into the design during the concept design and schematic design stages. An additional 71 comments were providing information or confirmation on the design.

Of the remaining comments received, 44 related to the operations of the new unit, while 181 related to the detailed design and have been flagged for review during this next stage in the design process.

During this consultation period, the project team has received a large number of suggestions and feedback related to the design of the new mental health facility.

In developing the design for the new Banksia Unit, the project team is guided by the Australasian Health Facility Guidelines which sets the parameters for the design of the mental health facility. Where possible, we have adapted the design to accommodate the feedback received, noting that the feedback received has been significant, varied and in some instances conflicting.

Feedback related to the new unit's operations has been logged for future discussion with the Local Health District.

The Tamworth Mental Health Unit project recognises the need for meaningful, proportionate and tailored engagement.

Recognising consistent, transparent and proactive engagement is essential to delivering a successful project outcome, engaging with the right people at the right time informs planned design and delivery, as well as linking the community, stakeholders, and consumers at all levels of the health system, to the capital works project.

Well-planned stakeholder engagement throughout the lifecycle of the project has helped the project team identify project risks early and to put effective mitigation measures in place to manage them.



An information session at a Tamworth shopping centre.

1.2 Project description

The NSW Government is investing in a complete rebuild of the Banksia facility at Tamworth Hospital to better care for the acute mental health needs of Tamworth and New England North West communities.

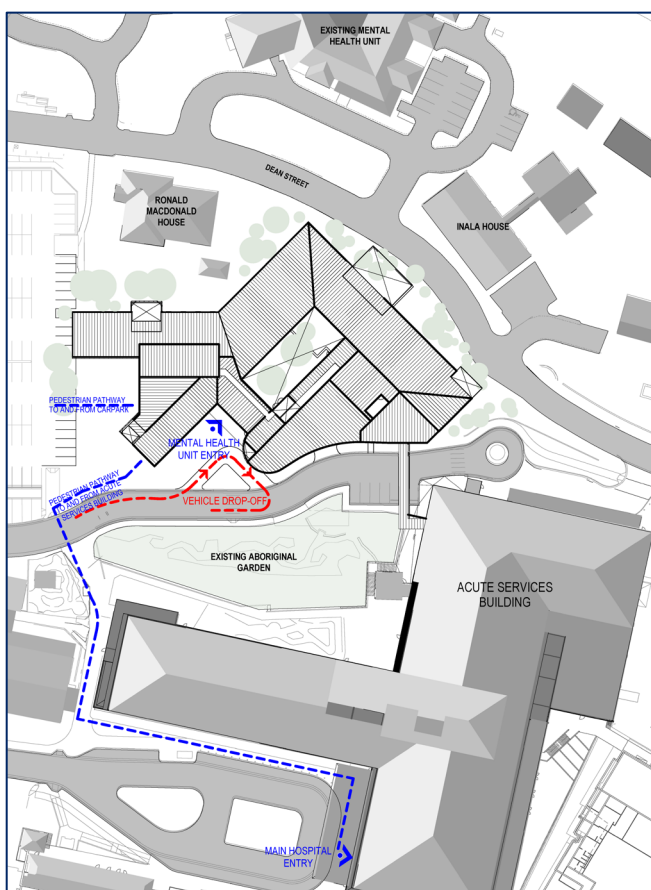
Recognised as a priority project in the \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program, the new unit will be co-located with Tamworth Health Service. It will accommodate general inpatients, older persons, and facilities for adolescents and vulnerable people.

The concept design was released in April 2021 and the schematic design was unveiled in October 2021.

Consultation has involved a dedicated co-design team which has been active during 2021 and 2022, and includes consumers, carers, staff and people with lived experience. The project team has also undertaken targeted engagement with key stakeholders from within the New England North West area that the unit services.

In May 2022, the detailed design was completed on the original project scope; however, in June the NSW Government announced an additional \$14.6 million towards the project to expand the scope. This additional funding is targeted at providing further infrastructure in the design to support enhanced services for children and adolescents.

Updated concept designs were released in December 2022 and further fine-tuned in consultation with project user groups.



The updated site plan for the new facility on the grounds of Tamworth Hospital.

Engagement

2.1 Objectives:

- Ensure that engagement activities have been strategically assessed and planned to provide the best opportunities to inform, consult and involve
- To build facilities that reflects the unique health needs of the communities within the Hunter New England Local Health District, and particularly the Tamworth area
- To provide proactive, meaningful engagement for the community and key stakeholders throughout the planning, design, deliver and commissioning phases of the project.
- To be transparent in all that we do
- Reduce risks by involving all stakeholders at key points in the project's delivery
- To encourage participation from local community and staff to generate a sense of community ownership in their hospital
- To engage in a manner that is collaborative, informative, innovative, adaptive, and sustainable
- Leave a positive legacy
- Provide clear information about project milestones and opportunities for feedback



Members of the co-design team reviewing plans for the new mental health unit.

2.2 Engagement undertaken

The Tamworth Mental Health Unit project has been strategically and proactively engaging the community and key stakeholders including staff, health providers, government agencies, patients, neighbours and surrounding communities - from planning and design through to construction and handover.

2.2.1 Internal consultation

At the core of the planning and design process is project user groups and working groups which are established to inform the functional design brief, schematic, and detailed design of the project.

Meetings are led by Health Infrastructure, Hunter New England Local Health District and Tamworth Hospital with project managers and architects.

They are attended by hospital and LHD staff. When relevant, they also include community representation.

The process has generated more than 300 touchpoints with staff and consumer or community representatives.

2.2.2 Engagement in 2022

User groups and the co-design team have continued to meet throughout 2022, discussing the detailed design for the new unit.

In late 2021, furniture samples were brought to Banksia for staff and consumers to view and provide feedback and selections on.

We have now received 470 comments on the designs, over half relating to the detailed design.

During this consultation period, the project team has received a large number of suggestions and feedback related to the design of the new mental health facility.

Landscaping, the façade and the internal journey within the unit have been the most popular items we have received feedback on.

We respect and value all feedback and will continue to work hard to achieve the best possible design outcome.

Funding was announced in June 2022 so the facility could be expanded to support enhanced services for children and adolescents.

Key engagement activities in 2022:

- Project newsletter, February 2022: Enabling works started to build a new Rotary Lodge and staff accommodation to service the Tamworth Hospital campus.
- Project newsletter, July 2022: Announcement of additional funding to further expand the design to support enhanced services for children and adolescents. We also called for expressions of interest to form an Arts in Health Working Group.
- Connecting with Country and Arts in Health Working Group both started in November.
- December 2022: Ministerial announcement of updated concept designs, followed by distribution of public and staff project newsletters. The staff newsletter flags early works to create new car parking spaces to compensate for those that will be removed as part of construction.
- January 2023: Plans for public and staff information sessions on the updated concept designs, as well as the next round of user groups.