

# Tamworth Mental Health Unit Design Jam Outcomes Report

This document outlines the process and the key outcomes synthesised by Yerrabingin for the delivery of an authentic design narrative for the Tamworth Mental Health Unit. The document recounts the process of collaborative innovation between Hunter New England Local Health District, RP Infrastructure, Taylor Brammer, Silver Thomas Hanley, Health Infrastructure, and members of the local Aboriginal community. It explains the purpose of the design methodology and how the outcomes for creative and culturally sensitive placemaking were reached.

The key attribute Yerrabingin offers is a focus on empathetic design solutions. Throughout the project, we engaged with different partners, connecting innovation and ideation with the wisdom of our culture. Yerrabingin engages with partners we can learn from and create alongside, resulting in Indigenous design narratives that reflect the Country a project takes place on. Yerrabingin acknowledges the Kamilaroi Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which this project takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and honour their legacy throughout the design process.

Unlike traditional consultation or engagement, Yerrabingin ensures First Nations Peoples are active co-designers of the project and a collective voice is presented, instead of individuals. Ideation was explored through the lens of design thinking, using collaborative events such as Design Jams. The key first step was identifying needs, desires and apprehensions, whilst discussing the opportunities for meaningful engagement for the precinct programs.



Although not all discussion could occur on site, the cultural landscape context of the site was maintained at the front of mind during the Design Jams. The empathetic design approach commenced at the beginning of the design process, ensuring that First Nations culture is at the core and foundation of the project. The collaboration with the Aboriginal community members and a multidisciplinary design team brought a diversity of knowledge and perception to the design thinking process. The process realised rapid prototypes for broader user testing and reiteration framed by cultural protocols and key project principles. The below sections of the report outline key insights and outcomes from the process to date and the recommendations for the project.

## Wanggani Dhayar Process

The Wanggani Dhayar process is fluid, with reiteration and organic formation of the design throughout. The below graphic represents the stages of the Wanggani Dhayar design process, including framing the design, identifying the audience/users, the Design Jam, logic and assumption testing, cultural checking, and sharing the solution through the pitch.



The first stage of the design process, Framing the design, is all about bringing clarity and focus to the design space. The goal of the first stage is to craft a meaningful and actionable challenge statement – this is what we call a point-of-view or 'How might we' question.

*How might we ensure the new Tamworth Mental Health Unit provides a safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal patients and the wider community?*

The first stage is about sense-making. It results in your point-of-view (POV): the explicit expression of the challenge. It involves considering the needs of the future users/audience, the opportunities offered, and the problems encountered. The first stage is also an endeavour to synthesise findings into insights. The below image summaries the steps involved in the design process.

## **Design Jam Format**

### **“How Might We?”**

#### **Brainstorming**

In your breakout groups, spend five minutes writing down as many ideas as you can onto your Jam Board that meet the challenge of “How Might We?”. We ask that you also include bad ideas as they can bring action guiding principles forward.

#### **Sharing Ideas**

After five minutes, talk your ideas through with your team and cluster similar or complementary ideas together. As a team, pick the top two or three ideas to go forward with.

#### **Team Sketches**

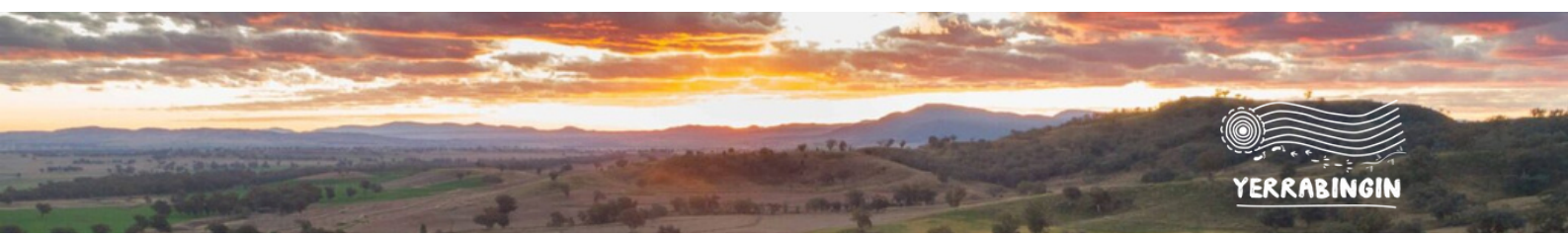
With the themes as a prompt, team members can describe their ideas and how they see them meeting the “How Might We?” question. Ideas can be sketched to show the evolution of the idea, empathising with the user’s perspective.

#### **Flowers and Flamethrowers**

Nominate one team member to be a presenter. The presenter has five minutes to outline the team’s ideas to the rest of the group. During the presentation, everyone else will silently record feedback in a matrix that includes positive and negative feedback, ideas for change and questions asked. The host does not engage with the audience and will take the information back to their teams to discuss.

#### **Redesigning the Idea**

Teams discuss feedback and also the inspiration from other teams’ and redesign (if necessary) and prepare to deliver a five minute pitch to the whole group.





## The Pitch

Each team is given a maximum of five minutes to present their refined ideas to the group. These will be recorded to ensure all key themes, features and narratives are recorded.

## Discussion and Silent Critique

Time for silent critique, everyone is given the chance to vote for their favourite idea, not from their team. Consider some reflective questions such as:

- Which features of ideas stood out?
- Which are most intriguing and exciting?
- What seems most challenging and difficult to achieve?
- Where do we see areas that are clear no-gos?
- What must-haves are we seeing?
- What was a challenge? What conflicts emerged?

## Outcomes of the Session

### Connection to Sky

- Morning sun over the hills and valley sunsets
- Connection to the sky and stars. Connection to the ancestors.
- Grounded by landscape context; providing views out to Country and bringing the outside in through natural materials and colours of Country.

### Cultural Care

- Make the space inviting / welcoming at the entry of the unit but also throughout the design and master plan.
- Family spaces for visitors. Creating safe places that families and visitors can come to when seeing a patient in the unit. This should have views out to Country and provide spaces for large and smaller groups.
- Interpret local Aboriginal stories within the design. This can ensure successful wayfinding throughout the unit as well as being educational for staff, patients and visitors
- Having safe cultural spaces for smoking ceremonies, healing access
- Creating various sized spaces within the unit; for individuals, small groups or larger group

### Country as healing

- Ability to see landscape and Country by providing lots of natural light and large windows to see beyond the boundary and out to the surrounding landscape
- Country as a healing mechanism. Being out on Country and connecting with it adds to mental and physical wellbeing. This is important for patients in this unit.
- Enhance the senses across the design; smells, touch, sound, sight, taste
- Eco tonal colour palette inspired by Country. Inspired by the mountains and the grasslands
- Creating warmth and a sense of place
- A connected green heart. Green spaces are connected to a larger central space where gatherings can occur
- Bringing the outside in; texturally, with colours, materials
- Soundscapes of natural environment; birds, trees, local fauna, pollinators
- Endemic gardens that patients can care for and contribute to
- Natural materials used in furniture pieces

