



INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL FUTURES



Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project

Social Impact Assessment Report

5/12/2024

Document preparation

This Social Impact Assessment was prepared on Awabakal and Worimi Land by the Institute for Regional Futures for NSW Health Infrastructure.

Version	Report author/s	Issue date	Description	Approved by
Final	Dr Jai Cooper, Dr Jenny Thompson, Myles Egan, Professor Roberta Ryan	December 5, 2024	Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project Social Impact Assessment Report	Professor Kate Senior

The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas: Awabakal, Darkinjung, Biripai, Worimi, Wonnarua, and Eora Nations.

We also pay respect to the wisdom of our Elders past, present and emerging.

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Executive Summary

This Social Impact Assessment

This Social Impact Assessment Report has been prepared by the Institute for Regional Futures, University of Newcastle, on behalf of NSW Health Infrastructure. It relates to the construction of a new Mental Health Facility which will provide services for consumers requiring forensic mental health care and support for rehabilitation.

The site is located at the Maitland Hospital Campus on Metford Road, Maitland, approximately 6.4km from the Maitland CBD. The project site is located within the development parcel, legally described as Lot 73 DP 1256781 and Part Lot 41 DP 1274253. The site is located to the east of the 'new' Maitland Hospital which commenced construction in 2019 and was officially opened in 2022.

This report accompanies a State Significant Infrastructure Development Application that seeks approval for construction and operation of a two-storey Mental Health Facility, including:

- Site establishment.
- Site preparation including earthworks.
- Construction of internal roads and addition of at-grade car parks.
- Construction of 2 storey mental health facility.
- 20 Medium Secure Forensic beds; 24 Low Secure Forensic beds; 20 Rehabilitation & Recovery General beds (64 beds total).
- Inground building services works and utility adjustments, including service diversions.
- Building foundation works.
- Tree removal.
- Associated landscaping.
- Bioretention basin.

For a detailed project description refer to the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Ethos Urban.

This SIA has been conducted in line with the methodology and requirements for an SIA outlined in DPIE's Social Impact Assessment Guideline February 2023.

This SIA has been prepared by Professor Roberta Ryan of the Institute for Regional Futures, University of Newcastle. Professor Ryan is appropriately qualified and experienced to prepare the SIA, and a signed declaration is included in Section 2.3 of this report. Research support for this SIA has been undertaken by Dr Jenny Thompson, Dr Jai Cooper and Myles Egan of the Institute for Regional Futures, under the guidance of Professor Ryan.

Methodology

This SIA provides a background to the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project proposal, analyses potential impacts on the social environment using the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guideline for State Significant Projects, and suggests mitigation measures to alleviate some of the negative impacts of the development. In line with the SIA Guideline requirements, this assessment has adopted the following approach.

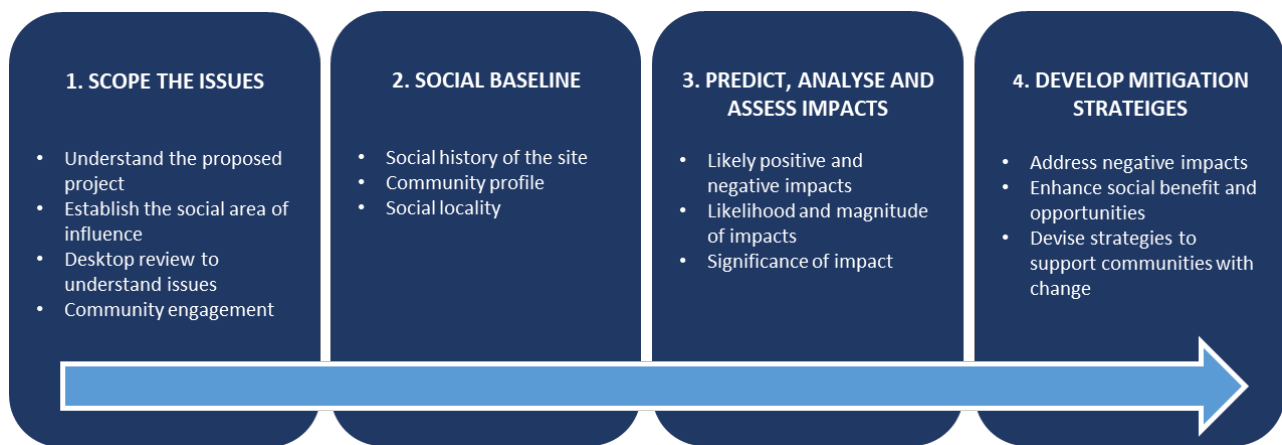


Figure 1: Social Impact Assessment approach

Background

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project is seeking approval for the construction and operation of a two-storey Mental Health Facility. The Project includes the relocation of mental health beds from the aged Morisset Hospital site to a purpose-built contemporary mental health rehabilitation facility at the new Maitland Hospital campus. It is funded under the Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program (SWMHIP). The facility will be designed as a modern mental health service that supports enhanced, consumer-focused services, supported by contemporary models of care.

The investment into the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project will improve the future capacity of the NSW mental health system and ensure the most vulnerable members of our community can be treated in a therapeutic environment that best supports their journey to recovery. This facility will better support the high-quality care already provided by staff at Morisset Hospital while also providing a more modern and therapeutic environment for mental health consumers as being co-located on the Maitland Hospital campus will provide a more holistic service, ensuring consumers have timely and coordinated access to other health and clinical care, as well as the specialists that they may need.

The purpose of the project's Forensic Mental Health Units is to provide safe high quality and extended care management to Forensic patients, as defined by s72 Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act NSW 2020 (MHCIFPA), with plans to transition to more independent living. Meanwhile, the purpose of the project's Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit is to provide safe high quality rehabilitation care within a secure, therapeutic environment, for individuals experiencing persistent symptoms, behavioural issues, and significant challenges in community living.

Summary of Potential Impacts

This SIA concludes that there are a range of positive and negative social impacts likely to be generated through the construction and operational stage of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project.

These impacts vary in likelihood, magnitude and dimension, with the negative impacts identified in this study being minor to moderate in comparison to the scale and type of development. In the short term, the development will have some impacts on the immediate social locality. There will be impacts associated with the construction period, and some impacts on the traffic flow surrounding the hospital, as well as impacts on parking during this stage. The negative impacts of the project can be successfully managed through the effective implementation of mitigation measures.

Potential social impacts to arise during the construction and operational phases of the project are summarised below, with Table 1 providing a summary of identified impacts, the assessed impact significance, and the residual impact (post mitigation).

Table 1: Social impact assessment and residual impact significance

Detail	Assessed impact significance	Residual impact (post mitigation)
Construction impacts		
Increased congestion on the surrounding road network and changes to parking availability due to increased construction vehicle movement	Medium	Low (negative)
Employment opportunities that arise from construction activity (direct and indirect), positively impacting livelihoods and the local community	High	High (positive)
Additional spending in the local economy by workers during the construction stage	High	High (positive)
Construction activity (noise, dust, vibrations, visual impacts from machinery, scaffolding) causing a potential decline in amenity and health	Medium	Low (negative)
Changes to the natural environment as a result of construction, including flora and fauna	Low	Low (positive)
Opportunities for community members and key stakeholders to be involved throughout later stages of the project should the development be approved.	High	High (positive)
Operational impacts		
Long-term employment and training opportunities, notably for mental health professionals	High	High (positive)
Upgraded amenities to a high quality, safe for staff, patients and the wider public, leading to better mental health outcomes	High	High (positive)
Reputational impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Medium	Low (negative)
Lost connection to the natural environment – a characteristic of the former Morriset site that some believe had therapeutic value	Low	Low (negative)
Parking (on and off-site) and public transport issues	Medium	Low (negative)
Policing and security impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Medium	Low (negative)
Impacts on how staff and patients interact with the environment – less freedom than provided at Morriset	Medium	Low (negative)
Closer proximity to amenities (shops, cafes, rail and buses) when compared to Morriset	High	High (positive)
Workforce attrition during the transition and early operation of the facility, especially among staff who are reluctant to move to new location in Maitland	Low	Low (negative)
Reduced capacity to smuggle contraband due to design and location of the facility	High	High (positive)

1 Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Social Impact Assessment Report has been prepared by the University of Newcastle's Institute for Regional Futures, on behalf of Health Infrastructure. It accompanies a State Significant Infrastructure Development Application that seeks approval for the construction and operation of a two-storey Mental Health Facility (the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project – see description below).

This SIA has been conducted in line with the methodology and requirements for an SIA outlined in DPIE's *Social Impact Assessment Guideline*¹ and *Technical Supplement*² February 2023.

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project is seeking approval for the construction and operation of a two-storey Mental Health Facility. The Project includes the relocation of mental health beds from the aged Morisset Hospital site to a purpose-built contemporary mental health rehabilitation facility at the new Maitland Hospital campus. It is funded under the Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program (SWMHIP) and will involve:

- Site establishment.
- Site preparation (including earthworks).
- Construction of internal roads and addition of at-grade car parks.
- Construction of a 2 storey mental health facility.
- Inground building services works and utility adjustments (including service diversions).
- Building foundation works.
- Tree removal.
- Associated landscaping.
- Bioretention basin.

The proposed scope of the facility includes:

- A Medium Secure Unit (MSU) - 20 Medium Secure Forensic beds.
- A Low Secure Unit (LSU) - 24 Low Secure Forensic beds.
- A Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit (RRU) - 20 Rehabilitation beds.
- A range of front of house and logistic support services.
- Staff office accommodation.

The purpose of the Forensic Mental Health Units is to provide safe high quality and extended care management to Forensic patients, as defined by s72 Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act NSW 2020 (MHCIFPA), with plans to transition to more independent living. Meanwhile, the purpose of the Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit is to provide safe high quality rehabilitation care within a

¹ NSW Government – Planning. 2023. *Social Impact Assessment Guideline February 2023*. Available at: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/under-review-and-new-policy-and-legislation/social-impact-assessment>

² NSW Government – Planning. 2023. *Technical Supplement February 2023*. Available at: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/under-review-and-new-policy-and-legislation/social-impact-assessment>

secure, therapeutic environment, for individuals experiencing persistent symptoms, behavioural issues, and significant challenges in community living.

1.3 SUBJECT SITE

The site is located at the Maitland Hospital Campus on Metford Road, Maitland, approximately 6.4km from the Maitland CBD. The project site is located within the development parcel legally described as Lot 73 DP 1256781 and Part Lot 41 DP 1274253 and sits to the east of the recently constructed Maitland Hospital.

While not directly fronting surrounding roadways, the project site would be accessed through the general, Maitland Hospital site, via Metford Road. Surrounding land uses largely comprise general residential, commercial and light industrial uses, public recreation (including sports fields), and special activities (East Maitland Cemetery). The site also sits close to environmental conservation land to the north. Victoria Street Station is located around 1.5 kilometres north-west of the Maitland Hospital Campus and can be accessed via a bus service.

The proposed Mental Health Rehabilitation Project site is located at the end of the existing, major roadway within the hospital campus, known as Pottery Rd. The site has the potential to connect with the landscape surrounds, through views and access to outdoor areas. The site is constrained by steep berms, a large open bio-retention basin, and a constructed wetland. It is close to the existing hospital, particularly the existing loading dock, and there is opportunity to connect with the surrounding bushland.



Figure 2: Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Facility – Lower Ground Floor



Figure 3: Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Facility – Ground Floor

1.4 SEARS TABLE

Table 2 provides the relevant SEARs requirement addressed by this report.

Table 2 SEARs requirement

Item	Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirement	Outcome
21	Provide a Social Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects	Social Impact Assessment Report

1.5 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This Social Impact Assessment report is structured as follows:

- **Executive Summary**
- **Section 1:** Introduction
- **Section 2:** Methodology
- **Section 3:** Social Baseline (including social locality for the project)
- **Section 4:** Stakeholder Engagement for SIA
- **Section 5:** Impact Assessment and Prediction
- **Section 6:** Social Impact Enhancement, Mitigation and Residual Impacts
- **Section 7:** Conclusion
- **Appendices**

2 Methodology

This section provides an overview of the SIA process, the methodology adopted in preparing this SIA, and required consultant declaration. It includes:

- Section **2.1** describes the purpose of social impact assessment.
- Section **2.2** provides an overview of the specific methodology used to prepare this social impact assessment.
- Section **2.3** provides an overview of the social impact assessment's authors and a completed consultant declaration form.

2.1 PURPOSE OF SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

State significant projects can affect people in many ways, both positively and negatively. Identifying and understanding social impacts helps to inform responses to avoid, mitigate or reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Every State significant project is subject to a social impact assessment (SIA). The SIA should be targeted and proportionate to the likely project impacts, and to the project's context.

'Social impacts' generally refer to the consequences that people experience when a new project brings change. For the purposes of the SIA, 'people' are classed as individuals, households, groups, communities, or organisations. The SIA aims to identify, predict and evaluate likely social impacts arising from a project and to propose responses to the predicted impacts. As illustrated in Figure 4, the SIA assesses projects from the perspective of 'people', which means developments are more likely to be socially sustainable.³



Figure 4: Social elements of value to people

³ NSW Government – Planning. 2023. *Social Impact Assessment Guideline February 2023*. Available at: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/under-review-and-new-policy-and-legislation/social-impact-assessment>

2.2 METHODOLOGY

NSW Health Infrastructure have engaged the University of Newcastle's Institute for Regional Futures to conduct the Social Impact Assessment for the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project.

The SIA provides a background to the proposed development, analyses potential impacts to its social environment, and suggests mitigation measures to alleviate its negative impacts and enhance positive impacts. In line with the State Significant Development SIA requirements, this assessment has adopted the approach outlined in Figure 5.

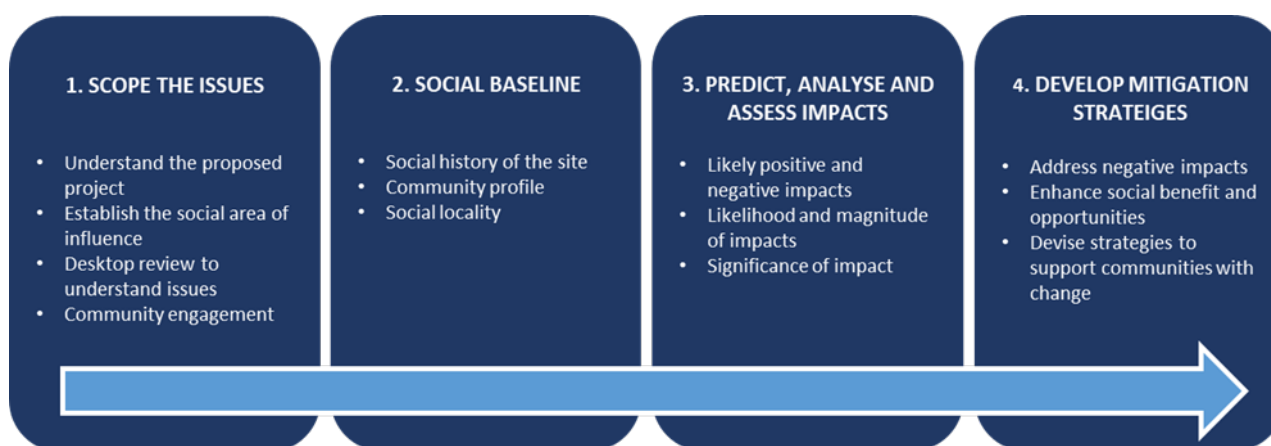


Figure 5: Social Impact Assessment approach

The methodology for the Maitland Mental Health SIA included:

- Establishing a social baseline, including the subject site and a high-level demographic profile of the Maitland Local Government Area and prominent population centres including East Maitland - Metford, Tenambit - East Maitland, and Thornton - Millers Forest (using Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data, site visits and desktop research).
- The designation of a suggested 'social locality' for the project.
- A review of the technical studies and consultant reports developed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment where relevant to the impacts identified in the SIA, including:
 - Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project Concept Design Report (BATESSMART)
 - Communications Action Plan – Concept Design Unveiling (HI)
 - Draft Models of Care – High, Medium and Low Units (HNEH)
 - First Nations Design Jam Data Report (Yerrabingin)
 - Landscape Concept Report (BATESSMART)
 - Traffic and Car Parking Report (Stantec)
 - Other key documents and communication/engagement activities as relevant to the Social Impact Assessment
- A review of the Communications and Engagement Plan prepared, and Staff and Stakeholder Engagement undertaken, by Health Infrastructure.
- Community engagement including:
 - A letterbox drop of residents and businesses in the immediate social locality inviting participation in community drop-in sessions at Maitland Hospital or an online survey.
 - Interviews with key agencies, stakeholders, community members and interest groups

using predetermined sets of questions that were provided to participants prior to interview.

- An ongoing Connecting with Country Framework has been adopted including an Indigenous Design Jam as part of engagement.
 - A short online survey of 15 questions (including open-ended questions).
 - Project information drop-in sessions held at Maitland Hospital on 21 August between 10am-12pm and 3pm-5pm.
- Identification and analysis of social impacts (both positive and negative) using the categories outlined in the *Social Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects*
 - Mitigation strategies.

2.3 SIA AUTHORS

This SIA has been prepared by, Dr Jai Cooper, Dr Jenny Thompson and Mr Myles Egan of the Institute for Regional Futures, University of Newcastle.

Dr Jai Cooper

Dr Jai Cooper is Consultant for the Institute for Regional Futures and a leading environmental sociologist with over thirty years' experience working directly with regional communities in NSW, nationally and internationally. Jai's qualifications include completion of a PhD in Sociology/Anthropology in 2022. Jai has significant professional experience and academic background in social research methodology with expertise in qualitative and quantitative data analysis and managing social and environmental impacts in regional communities. Jai has direct experience working in community support and development on the mid-north coast of NSW. Jai's diverse background includes working within the textiles, tourism and adventure industries through to the education and training sector, land management, and Aboriginal communities. Jai's published works address the fields of mobility, environmental sociology, Australian history, and economic development. Jai convenes the Environment and Society thematic group of The Australian Sociological Association and the convenor and is a member of the International Sociological Association. Jai is also currently leading the project team for the social impact assessment for the Grafton Base Hospital Redevelopment.

Dr Jenny Thompson

Dr Jenny Thompson is a Senior Research Consultant with the Institute for Regional Futures. Jenny brings over 30 years of experience across a variety of fields of practice, having worked as a social worker, community educator, Community Services teacher, Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator and Faculty Director Human Services Tourism and Hospitality, within the TAFE sector. Jenny has worked for 15 years as a senior manager within a local government organisation, leading strategy, planning and delivery of community and cultural development, social infrastructure, libraries and aged and volunteering services. She has served widely on boards of not-for-profit organisations and on educational and government advisory committees, with the contribution she has made within the sector recognised in 2022 via her admission to the Order of Australia for services to community welfare. Jenny holds a Master of Public Administration and PhD with the University of Wollongong, and a Bachelor of Social Work. Jenny


sits on the Board of Directors for Regional Development Australia and the Social Work Advisory Group for the University of Wollongong.

Mr Myles Egan

Myles Egan is Research Analyst for the Institute for Regional Futures and a socio-economic researcher with extensive quantitative and qualitative research experience. Myles' primary research interest lies in understanding social impacts faced by rural and regional communities undergoing profound economic and social change; however, he is also experienced in social impact assessment delivery for state significant infrastructure projects. This experience includes supporting the delivery of previous SIAs prepared by the University of Newcastle team for the John Hunter Hospital Health and Innovation precinct as well as the Manning Base Hospital Redevelopment – Stage 2. Myles is also currently part of the project team for the social impact assessment for the Grafton Base Hospital Redevelopment.

2.4 SIGNED DECLARATION

Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project Social Impact Assessment Report

Report version date	5 December 2024
Confirmation the SIA contains all relevant information as outlined in the <i>Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects November 2021</i>	Yes
Confirmation that the author understands their legal and ethical obligations, and that none of the information in the SIA is false or misleading	Yes
Qualifications, experience, and professional membership	<p>Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Sociology/Anthropology – University of Newcastle • BSc Honours (Class 1) Social Science – University of Newcastle • MA Environmental Education – Macquarie University • BA Recreation (distinction) – Victoria University <p>Professional membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australasian Sociological Association – Convenor Environment and Society Thematic Group • International Sociological Association
Signature	
Name	Dr Jai Cooper
Date	5 December 2024

3 Social Baseline (including social locality for the project)

This section provides an overview of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project proposal, the site and its surrounding context, and the project's social locality. It includes:

- Section 3.1 describes the site in its local and regional context.
- Section 3.2 provides an overview of the planning context of the site.
- Section 3.3 provides a demographic and health overview of the region.
- Section 3.4 provides a summary of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project.
- Section 3.5 provides details of the reasonable social locality for the project.
- Section 3.6 provides a summary of implications for the project.

3.1 THE SITE

The site is located at the Maitland Hospital Campus on Metford Road, Maitland, approximately 6.4km from the Maitland CBD. The project site is located within the development parcel legally described as Lot 73 DP 1256781 and Part Lot 41 DP 1274253 and sits to the east of the recently constructed Maitland Hospital.

While not directly fronting any surrounding roads, the project site would be accessed through the Maitland Hospital campus, via Metford Road. Surrounding land uses largely comprise general residential, commercial and light industrial uses, public recreation (including sports fields), and special activities (East Maitland Cemetery). The site also sits close to environmental conservation land to the north. Victoria Street Station is located around 1.5 kilometres north-west of the Maitland Hospital Campus and can be accessed via a bus service.

The proposed Mental Health Rehabilitation Project site is located at the end of the existing major roadway within the hospital campus, known as Pottery Rd. The site has the potential to connect with the landscape surrounds, through views and access to outdoor areas. The site is constrained by steep berms, a large open bio-retention basin, and a constructed wetland. It is close to the existing hospital, particularly the existing loading dock, and there is opportunity to connect with the surrounding bushland.

3.2 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Located in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales, Maitland lies on the banks of the Hunter River (or Coquun) approximately 30 kilometres north-west of Newcastle. The Maitland area's first inhabitants are the Wonnarua people whose lands border those of the Worimi, Darkinjung, Kamilaroi, Geawegal, Gringai, Awabakal and Wiradjuri. Today, the Wonnarua people are a member of the Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council (Mindaribba LALC) which encompasses an area of more than 2,000 ha and includes parts of the Maitland, Cessnock, Singleton, Dungog and Port Stephens Local Government Areas (LGAs).

European settlement of the Maitland area commenced from 1818 and was pivotal to trade and the growth of the Hunter region. Over time, the township continued to grow steadily and quickly cemented itself as a

vitality important regional centre in the colony, reflected by the number of government services that were established in the area.⁴

The area surrounding the Maitland Hospital Campus belongs to the Commonwealth Electoral Division of Paterson, the State Electoral Division of Maitland, and the Local Government Area of Maitland. There are three main population centres on the eastern side of Maitland which lie in close proximity to the Maitland Hospital Campus. These are the *Australian Statistical Geography Standard* SA2s of East Maitland - Metford, Tenambit - East Maitland, and Thornton - Millers Forest, each with their own economic and population characteristics.

Maitland is one of the fastest growing LGAs in New South Wales with a residential population of 90,226 people living 32,648 households.⁵ This population is projected to grow to 144,536 by 2041, an increase of over 54,000 residents.⁶ Existing transport connectivity challenges across Maitland and the Lower Hunter will have to be overcome to respond to this population growth.

Maitland offers a wide range of regional services and facilities that are utilised by people from across the Hunter region, including the new Maitland Hospital already located on the Maitland Hospital Campus. Re-developed in 2022, Maitland Hospital acts as a new state of the art health facility, with 330 beds, offering surgical, oncology, maternity and emergency services, as well as extensive outpatient services.⁷ At nearby Maitland Private Hospital, a 154 bed facility, further private surgical, mental health and outpatient services are provided.⁸

3.3 THE PLANNING CONTEXT

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project site is zoned RU2 – Rural Landscape under the *Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP)*, with the objectives of this zone being to:

- Encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- Maintain the rural landscape character of the land.
- Provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.
- Provide for a range of non-agricultural uses where infrastructure is adequate to support the uses and conflict between different land uses is minimised.⁹

Figure 6 depicts the land use zoning for the area in the vicinity of the Maitland Hospital campus.¹⁰

⁴ Maitland City Council. 2024. *Historical records and resources*. Available at:

<https://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/council/arts-heritage/historical-records-and-resources>

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2021. *Maitland – 2021 Census Community Profiles*. Available at:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/LGA15050>

⁶ NSW Government. 2022. *NSW Population Projections*. Available at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/populations>

⁷ NSW Government – Health: Hunter New England Local Health District. 2024. Maitland Hospital. Available at:

<https://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/facilities/hospitals/maitland-hospital>

⁸ Maitland Private Hospital. 2024. *Our Hospital*. Available at: <https://maitlandprivatehospital.com.au/about-us/our-hospital>

⁹ NSW Legislation. 2011. *Maitland Local Environmental Plan 2011*. Available at:

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/epi-2011-0681#pt.2>

¹⁰ NSW Government. 2023. *Land Zoning Map Sheet LZN_004D*. Available at:

https://eplanningdlprod.blob.core.windows.net/pdfmaps/5050_COM_LZN_004D_020_20210813.pdf

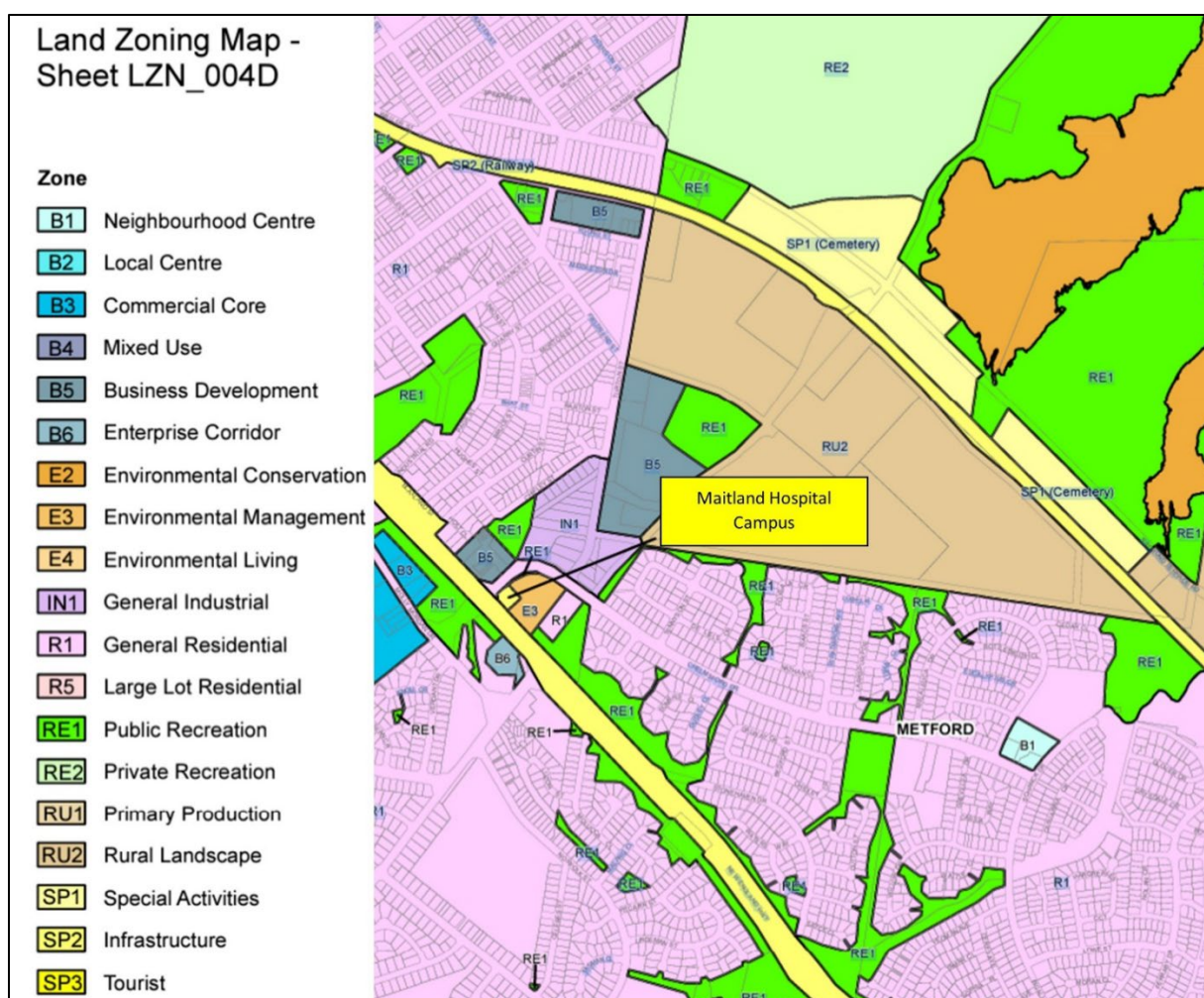


Figure 6: Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project Vicinity Land Use Zones

The Healthcare and Social Assistance industry is the largest provider of jobs in the Maitland area (see section 3.3) and has grown significantly in the five years between 2016 and 2021.¹¹ The *Hunter Regional Plan 2041* identifies East Maitland as an emerging strategic centre for health, with the precinct around the new Maitland Hospital slated to provide modern healthcare facilities, as well as to be a place of innovation and high-quality healthcare for decades to come.¹²

The *Maitland Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+* and *Community Strategic Plan 2022 (Maitland +10 Plan)* both acknowledge East Maitland as a key economic centre and catalyst area for the growth of health-related industries. To ensure that this emerging health precinct, inclusive of the existing Maitland Private Hospital, can provide contemporary healthcare facilities to meet the needs of the growing population well into the future, Maitland City Council is committed to working in collaboration with the NSW Government and key stakeholders to ensure that this precinct is delivered alongside supporting infrastructure.^{13 14}

¹¹ Remplan. 2023. *Maitland Trends/Jobs*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/maitland/economy/trends/jobs?state=GZ5dFv!WeWVCBVY5sd6vDKSJvYJxsJuDSGyqc5SbSarupSzUJJaehD5g>

¹² NSW Government – Planning and Environment. 2022. *Hunter Regional Plan 2041*. Available at: <https://www.hccdc.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/hunter-regional-plan-2041.pdf>

¹³ Maitland City Council. 2020. *Maitland Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040+*. Available at: <https://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/services/planning-development/long-term-planning>

¹⁴ Maitland City Council. 2022. *Community Strategic Plan 2022 (Maitland +10 Plan)*. Available at: <https://www.maitland.nsw.gov.au/services/planning-development/long-term-planning>

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project is funded under the Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program (SWMHIP) – the NSW Government mental health enhancement program responding to the *NSW Mental Health Commission Living well: A Strategic Plan for Mental Health 2014 – 2024*. Overarching NSW Mental Health infrastructure challenges addressed through SWMHIP include specialist service misalignments, inappropriate therapeutic environments, models of service delivery, ageing and isolated facilities and capacity of community based and forensic services.

3.4 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the key social, demographic and health characteristics of the Maitland area, and the intermediate social locality encompassing East Maitland - Metford, Tenambit - East Maitland, and Thornton - Millers Forest. It also provides an overview of the health profile of the Hunter New England Local Health District, as well as the health conditions disproportionately impacting individuals in custody in New South Wales.

Maitland Local Government Area

- Maitland is located within the Commonwealth Electoral Division of Paterson, the State Electoral Division of Maitland, and the Hunter New England Local Health District.
- The city has a residential population of 90,226 living in 32,648 dwellings. This gives Maitland an average household size of 2.7 persons.
- Males account for 48.7% of the population while females account for 51.3%.
- The Maitland LGA comprises a number of significant population centres across an area of 392km², including Maitland, East Maitland, Metford, Thornton, Gillieston Heights, Rutherford, Aberglasslyn, and Lochinvar.
- The population of the Maitland LGA is forecast to grow to 144,536 by 2041, with more than half of this growth to occur across the Thornton - Millers Forest and Maitland - West SA2s.
- Population growth in the area since 2011 has been significant, with an increase of 22,747 residents and an average yearly growth rate of 3.4%
- Persons aged 65+ accounted for 31.8% of this growth, those aged 25-34 accounted for 18.9% and young people aged 5-14 accounted for 14.37%. Overall, these three cohorts contributed to 65% of all population growth in Maitland between 2011 and 2021.
- The median age of Maitland's population is 36 years, making the area's population slightly younger than both the state (39 years) and nation (38 years) as a whole.
- The area's young population is supported by good access to a range of education and employment opportunities at all life stages and levels of qualification, meaning that young people and families in Maitland are less likely to relocate to access education and work.
- 7.5% of Maitland's residents identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, more than double the state and national figures (3.4% and 3.2% respectively), and above the regional figure of 6.6%.
- 6.7% of Maitland's population requires assistance with their day-to-day lives, a higher rate than the state as a whole (5.8%).
- An analysis of household income levels reveals that median total household income is marginally lower in Maitland (\$1,766/week) than across New South Wales as a whole (\$1,829/week). There is little difference between the median total personal incomes of people in Maitland (\$802/week) and New South Wales (\$813/week).

- Maitland is the 77th most disadvantaged LGA in New South Wales (out of 129) with a SEIFA¹⁵ score of 988. However, the minimum SEIFA score for an SA1 in the Maitland area is just 489.
- The largest industries of employment within Maitland are healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, construction, and education and training.

East Maitland – Metford

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project is situated within the East Maitland - Metford SA2. This part of Maitland already provides a range of medical services and facilities, including Maitland Hospital and Maitland Private Hospital, as well as schools (x4 – Hunter Valley Grammar, St Joseph's Primary, Ashtonfield Public and Metford Public), the TAFE NSW – Metford Campus, sporting facilities, shopping facilities and some industrial land.

- At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 17,981 residents living in East Maitland - Metford. Of these, 48.8% were male and 51.2% were female.
- The median age of residents in East Maitland - Metford is 39 years, higher than that of Maitland as a whole.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 6.9% of the population.
- The population of East Maitland - Metford grew by only 761 people in the decade to 2021. This is equal to a 0.4% annual growth rate, considerably lower than that of Maitland as a whole.
- Despite this lack of recent growth, the combined population of the East Maitland - Metford and Tenambit - East Maitland area is forecast to grow by 5,425 people by 2041.
- East Maitland - Metford has a SEIFA score of 978, 10 points below the Maitland LGA as a whole.

Tenambit – East Maitland

To the north of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project site lies the Tenambit - East Maitland SA2. This area includes significant residential, educational (Maitland Grosman High School, East Maitland High School, South Street Special School, Tenambit Primary, and Linuwel School) and recreational (Easts Leisure and Golf Club and Don Macindoe Memorial Flying Field) land uses.

- At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 10,091 residents living in Tenambit - East Maitland. Of these, 47.6% were male and 52.4% were female.
- The median age of residents in Tenambit - East Maitland is 41 years, considerably higher than that of Maitland as a whole.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 7.1% of the population.
- The population of Tenambit - East Maitland grew by 1,503 people in the decade to 2021. This is equal to a 1.8% annual growth rate.
- The combined population of the East Maitland - Metford and Tenambit - East Maitland area is forecast to grow by 5,425 people by 2041. Given recent population growth has been concentrated around Tenambit - East Maitland rather than East Maitland – Metford, it is possible that Tenambit - East Maitland will absorb much of this growth.
- Tenambit - East Maitland has a SEIFA score of 976, 12 points below the Maitland LGA as a whole.

Thornton – Millers Forest

Located to the east of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project site sits the Thornton - Millers Forest SA2. This area is characterised by rapid residential growth and some industrial and agricultural land

¹⁵ Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a product developed by the ABS that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census.

uses. Thornton Public School, Millers Forest Public School and St Bede's Catholic College are located in this SA2, alongside a mix of sporting and recreational facilities.

- At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 15,899 residents living in Thornton - Millers Forest. Of these, 49.2% were male and 50.8% were female.
- The median age of residents in Thornton - Millers Forest is 33 years, three years lower than that of Maitland as a whole.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 6.3% of the population.
- The population of Thornton - Millers Forest grew by 7,175 people in the decade to 2021. This is equal to an 8.2% annual growth rate.
- The population of the Thornton - Millers Forest area is forecast to grow by 19,960 people by 2041.
- Thornton - Millers Forest has a SEIFA score of 1034, 46 points above the Maitland LGA as a whole.

Health Profile

The Hunter New England Local Health District serves a population of close to one million people (920,370), including 52,990 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and close to 170,000 residents born overseas. It covers a total of 25 local government areas, employs 16,033 staff, is supported by 1,600 volunteers, and is the only local health district in New South Wales with a major metropolitan centre, a mix of several large regional centres, and many smaller rural centres and remote communities within its borders. Within its broad footprint, mental health facilities are found at 14 different localities.¹⁶

At the 2021 Census, 11.55% of residents in the Hunter New England Local Health District reported having a mental health condition (including depression or anxiety) when asked whether they had a selection of long term health conditions. This is more than three percentage points higher than the New South Wales figure of 8.01%. Similarly, for the period 2020-2022, 79% of Hunter New England Local Health District participants in the *NSW Population Health Survey* reported excellent, very good or good mental health, two percentage points below the statewide figure (81%).¹⁷ In the 2022/23 financial year, this translated in mental disorders accounting for 1984.3 hospitalisations per 100,000 persons across the Hunter New England Local Health District, higher than the New South Wales figure of 1786.4 hospitalisations per 100,000 persons.¹⁸ This trend also holds for mental health related emergency department visits, while the Hunter New England

¹⁶ NSW Government: Health – Hunter New England Local Health District. 2024. *Facilities*. Available at:

https://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/our_services/mental-health/facilities

¹⁷ HealthStats NSW. 2022. *Excellent, very good and good self-rated mental health*. Available at:

<https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator?name=-men-mhstat-phs&location=LHD&view=Table&measure=prevalence&groups=Period&compare=Period,LHD&filter=LHD,Hunter%20New%20England%20LHD,All%20LHDs&filter=Period,2020-2022,2018-2020,2016-2018>

¹⁸ HealthStats NSW. 2023. *Hospitalisations by category of cause*. Available at:

<https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator?name=-cat-hos&location=LHD&view=Trend&measure=DSTRate&groups=Cause%20of%20hospitalisation,Sex&compare=Cause%20of%20hospitalisation,Sex&filter=LHD,Hunter%20New%20England%20LHD&filter=Cause%20of%20hospitalisation,Total&filter=Sex,Persons>

Local Health District's suicide rate of 14 per 100,000 people is also higher than that of New South Wales (10.5).^{19 20}

Within the New South Wales prison population, health needs are often significant and complex, with the health profile and conditions of people coming into custody replicating the physical health, mental health and social determinants of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society. As the Maitland Mental Health Facility will provide care to Forensic patients, defined by s72 Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act NSW 2020 (MHCIFPA), this is important to consider. In particular, a 2015 Network Patient Health Survey that interviewed a representative sample of both male and female inmates across New South Wales correctional centres found that:

- 65.2% had experienced or witnessed at least one traumatic event.
- 62.9% of participants had previously received a diagnosis of mental illness.
- 49.2% of participants had received some form of psychiatric care prior to incarceration.
- 18% had previously attempted suicide (10 times higher than the community rate).²¹

3.5 THE PROJECT

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project is seeking approval for the construction and operation of a two storey Mental Health Facility. The Project includes the relocation of mental health beds from the Morisset Hospital site to a purpose-built contemporary mental health rehabilitation facility at the new Maitland Hospital campus. It is funded under the Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program (SWMHIP) and will involve:

- Site establishment.
- Site preparation (including earthworks).
- Construction of internal roads and addition of at-grade car parks.
- Construction of a two storey mental health facility.
- Inground building services works and utility adjustments (including service diversions).
- Building foundation works.
- Tree removal.
- Associated landscaping.
- Bioretention basin.

The proposed scope of the facility includes:

¹⁹ HealthStats NSW. 2023. *Mental Health related Emergency Department visits*. Available at: [https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator?name=-men-sui-ed&location=LHD&view=Trend&measure=Measure2&groups=Age%20\(years\),Presentation%20type,Sex&compare=Age%20\(years\),Presentation%20type,Sex&filter=LHD,Hunter%20New%20England%20LHD,All%20LHDs&filter=Presentation%20type,Total%20mental%20health%20presentations&filter=Age%20\(years\),All%20ages&filter=Sex,Persons](https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator?name=-men-sui-ed&location=LHD&view=Trend&measure=Measure2&groups=Age%20(years),Presentation%20type,Sex&compare=Age%20(years),Presentation%20type,Sex&filter=LHD,Hunter%20New%20England%20LHD,All%20LHDs&filter=Presentation%20type,Total%20mental%20health%20presentations&filter=Age%20(years),All%20ages&filter=Sex,Persons)

²⁰ HealthStats NSW. 2023. *Suicide*. Available at: <https://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator?name=-men-suicide-dth&location=LHD&view=Trend&measure=DSTRate&groups=&filter=LHD,Hunter%20New%20England%20LHD,All%20LHDs>

²¹ Inspector of Custodial Services. 2021. *Health services in NSW correctional facilities*. Available at: <https://inspectorcustodial.nsw.gov.au/reports-and-publications/inspection-reports/adult-reports/health-services-in-nsw-correctional-facilities.html>

- A Medium Secure Unit (MSU) - 20 Medium Secure Forensic beds.
- A Low Secure Unit (LSU) - 24 Low Secure Forensic beds.
- A Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit (RRU) - 20 Rehabilitation beds.
- A range of front of house and logistic support services.
- Staff office accommodation.

The purpose of the Forensic Mental Health Units is to provide safe high quality and extended care management to Forensic patients, as defined by s72 Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act NSW 2020 (MHCIFPA), with plans to transition to more independent living. Meanwhile, the purpose of the Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit is to provide safe high quality rehabilitation care within a secure, therapeutic environment, for individuals experiencing persistent symptoms, behavioural issues, and significant challenges in community living.

Figure 7 depicts a visual of the proposed Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project.



Figure 7: Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project (schematic design)

3.6 SOCIAL LOCALITY

At its greatest distance, the social locality for the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project extends to the entire Maitland LGA and beyond to the suburb of Morisset in the Lake Macquarie LGA, the destination from which mental health beds are being re-located (Morisset Psychiatric Hospital), and the broader state of New South Wales where clients will be referred from. This social locality will likely experience some of the social benefits of the development, which are detailed in Section 5 of this report.

The social locality for the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project will, at its intermediate distance, extend to the surrounding population centres of East Maitland - Metford, Tenambit - East Maitland, and Thornton - Millers Forest. Impacts that may be reasonably felt in this area are associated with construction of the site, predominantly in terms of accessibility. This social locality will also likely experience some of the social benefits of the development, which are detailed in Section 5 of this report.

The social locality that may reasonably be subject to the most immediate impacts associated with the construction and development of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project encompasses the

catchment outlined in Figure 8. This immediate social locality includes surrounding residences and businesses, and the predominant impact is likely to be on people's 'way of life'.



Figure 8: Immediate Social Locality of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project

3.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROJECT

The development of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project will result in the construction and operation of a contemporary, purpose-built mental health rehabilitation facility servicing the state of New South Wales.

Healthcare and Social Assistance is already the largest provider of jobs in the Maitland area and is predicted to grow as an industry over coming decades. This growth, and the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project's proposed location, align with strategies identified in the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 which will see the establishment of medical facilities in the vicinity of the new Maitland Hospital campus to form a health precinct.

As a referral facility, the proposed mental health rehabilitation facility will provide mental health rehabilitation services to residents of the local Maitland and Hunter Valley communities and also to the broader NSW population. It is anticipated that, as one element in the development of a health precinct centred around the new Maitland Hospital campus, it will help to generate in-demand jobs for the region during both construction and operation.

4 Stakeholder Engagement for SIA

4.1 ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

The engagement methodology was undertaken with reference to the community engagement objectives and guide in DPIE's Social Impact Assessment Guideline for State Significant Projects. The approach adopted to inform the Social Impact Assessment study is outlined in Table 3. A comprehensive Communications and Engagement Plan was developed and executed by Health Infrastructure including input from the Institute for Regional Futures. A review of the Communications and Engagement plan as well as the detail of engagement completed to date (both internally and externally) was completed as part of this Social Impact Assessment. Further consultation also undertaken by the Institute for Regional Futures.

Table 3: Engagement Methodology

Scoping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement scoped around the social locality boundaries Stakeholder analysis (including identification of key stakeholders and proposed methods of engagement)
Stakeholder meetings and interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual interviews with key agencies, stakeholders, community members and interest groups using predetermined sets of questions that were provided to participants prior to interview Indigenous consultation - Design Jam
Letterbox drop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letterbox drop of one-page promotional flyer to homes and businesses in immediate social locality catchment area inviting participation in community drop-in session at New Maitland Hospital foyer or to complete online survey.
Media / Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media releases from HI and Minister Project website HNELHD Facebook - Concept images and key messages HI LinkedIn - Concept images and key messages
Community survey and website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of project and how to have a say on HNE Health Infrastructure website Short survey of 15 questions including open-ended questions
Staff information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff e-Newsletter Staff Forum Two staff courtesy notices (issued 14 Aug and 21 Aug) to promote information sessions
Project team contact details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email contact details for Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project team to ask questions and provide feedback (on survey and website)
Community drop-in sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project information drop-in sessions held at New Maitland Hospital on 21 August between 10am-12pm and 3pm-5pm. Community feedback from these sessions was collected via the online surveys, with iPads available for community members at the events.

4.2 ENGAGEMENT REACH

Table 4: Engagement Reach

Key stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local MP (Jenny Aitchison) briefing Maitland City Council briefing Local Police briefing Connecting with Country Working Group - Offer of briefing Ongoing design meetings with key members of staff and the project team (Project User Groups for Detailed design) Indigenous consultation - Design Jam report produced by Yerrabingin, April 2024 Meeting - Nurse Manager (Morisset), 30 May 2024. Meeting - Urbis, Turner and Townsend, HNELHD – to discuss CPTED, 6 Aug 2024 Meeting - with Maitland City Council, NSW Police and Urbis - to discuss CPTED, 22 Aug 2024 Meeting - Vice President and Founding Member of 'Transforming Australia's Mental Health Service Systems' (TAMHSS) - consumer perspectives, 12 Sep 2024
Letterbox drop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 350 homes and businesses.
Media / Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media release issued 14 August 2024 by Minister Rose Jackson 2 news articles Project website - 2402 views (14 Aug – 30 Aug 2024) Concept design, News, FAQs 18 Facebook posts with 821 reactions, 443 comments and 11 shares. 2 LinkedIn posts with 8 reposts and 325 reactions. Community newsletter: 96 recipients, 33% opens
Community survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 73 responses Key themes - Parking, staffing, mental health services
Staff E-newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff E-newsletter 236 recipients, 40% opens
Project email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 emails received by HI-maitlandmh@health.nsw.gov.au
Community pop-up session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48 attendees across two sessions, 50/50 staff/community attendees

4.3 ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Future information and consultation opportunities were noted by Health Infrastructure as:

- Ongoing design meetings with key members of staff and the project team (Project User Groups for Schematic Design and Design Development)
- Monthly staff info drop-in sessions at Maitland and Morisset Hospitals (from Sep 2024)
- Close out of co-design sessions with consumers and people with lived experience (Sep 2024)
- Community information session following release of schematic designs (Oct 24 TBC)
- Public exhibition period (28 days) as part of the planning approval process (Nov 2024)

4.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROJECT

Findings from the community and stakeholder engagement provide insight into the types of social impacts that may result from the project, both positive and negative. These have been summarised and addressed in Section 5 of this report.

Below: Project team with staff and community members at the information sessions (21 August 2024)



5 Impact Assessment and Prediction

This section details the potential social impacts that may arise from the proposed Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project. The assessment is informed by an analysis of the previous sections and a scoping of potential impacts using the Department of Planning and Environment's *Social Impact Assessment Guideline*.

The method for the social impact assessment is described in Section 4. Each potential impact is assessed with regard to the level of impact, the likelihood of impact and the significance of impact.

Potential social impacts to arise during construction and operation phases of development have been identified. A social risk matrix approach has been applied to rate impacts having regard for the level of impact, the likelihood of impact and the significance of impact. A summary of identified impacts is provided in the table below.

5.1 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment presented in this report identifies and evaluates changes to existing social conditions due to the project. This includes the assessment of direct and indirect benefits and impacts, as well as consideration of any cumulative impacts. Individual impacts are evaluated in terms of the likelihood of the impact occurring, the characteristics of the impact, and the magnitude of the impact as further described in Tables 5 to 8 extracted from Technical Supplement to the SIA Guidelines.

Likelihood of Impact

The likelihood of a potential social impact is a primary element of considering each social impact and its risk rating. The criteria used to determine the likelihood of any potential impacts are described in Table 5.

Table 5: Likelihood levels of social impacts

Likelihood level	Meaning
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g., has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Source: Department of Planning and Environment SIA Technical Supplement (2023)

Dimensions of Impact Magnitude

The magnitude of a potential social impact is a key consideration to determine a risk rating. In determining the magnitude of a potential impact, there are five key characteristics that must be considered. These are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Dimensions of social impact magnitude

Dimensions		Details needed to enable assessment
Magnitude	Extent	Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g. near neighbours, local, regional, future generations).
	Duration	When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g. over particular project phases) or permanent?
	Intensity or scale	What is the likely scale or degree of change (e.g. mild, moderate, severe)?
	Sensitivity or importance	How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change.
	Levels of concern/interest	How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessment of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

Source: Department of Planning and Environment SIA Technical Supplement (2023)

Levels of Impact Magnitude

Table 7 details categories of scale to assess the overall level of magnitude of social impacts.

Table 7: Defining magnitude levels for social impacts

Magnitude level	Meaning
Transformational	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.
Major	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.
Minor	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonable short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable.
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in locality

Source: Department of Planning and Environment SIA Technical Supplement (2023)

Significance of Impact

The social risk matrix approach that has been applied to rate potential impacts regarding their level of impact, likelihood of impact, and significance of impact is detailed in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Social impact significance matrix

Magnitude level					
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood level	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Transformational
A) Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Very high
B) Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very high
C) Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
D) Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E) Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: Department of Planning and Environment SIA Technical Supplement (2023)

5.2 SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT TABLE

Based on the evidence (key documentation and desktop research) collated for this SIA, alongside findings from the associated community and stakeholder engagement process, the following anticipated social impacts have been identified as resulting from the proposal during the construction and operational phases.

The social impacts to arise from the proposed development will be influenced by the existing situation, the eventual consequences of the proposed development, and measures put in place to mitigate against any negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

As the development is at the concept plan stage, the impact assessment approach has been to identify which impacts would be realised at more detailed design/development application stages and provide mitigation measures to assist with minimising negative impacts and maximising the positive impacts throughout the stages of the development.

A social risk matrix approach has been applied to rate impacts having regard for the level of impact, the likelihood of impact, and the significance of impact. A summary of identified impacts is provided in Table 9 and Table 10.

Table 9: Impact Assessment Framework – Construction stage

Social impact description	Likelihood level	Magnitude	Assessed impact significance	Social impact category	Impacted group(s)
Increased congestion on the surrounding road network and changes to parking availability due to increased construction vehicle movement	Possible	Minor	Medium (negative)	Way of life Accessibility	Neighbouring residents/businesses Staff Patients Visitors Local community
Employment opportunities that arise from construction activity (direct and indirect), positively impacting livelihoods and the local community	Almost certain	High	High (positive)	Way of Life Livelihoods	Local community Wider community
Additional spending in the local economy by workers during the construction stage	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)	Community Livelihoods	Local community Wider community
Construction activity (noise, dust, vibrations, visual impacts)	Likely	Minor	Medium (negative)	Way of life Surroundings	Neighbouring residents/businesses

Social impact description	Likelihood level	Magnitude	Assessed impact significance	Social impact category	Impacted group(s)
from machinery, scaffolding) causing a potential decline in amenity and health.				Health & wellbeing	Staff Patients Visitors
Changes to the natural environment as a result of construction, including flora and fauna	Possible	Minimal	Low (negative)	Way of life Surroundings Health & wellbeing	Neighbouring residents/businesses Staff Patients Visitors
Opportunities for community members and key stakeholders to be involved throughout later stages of the project should the development be approved.	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)	Decision-making systems	Neighbouring residents/businesses Staff Local community Wider community

Table 10: Impact Assessment Framework – Operational stage

Social impact description	Likelihood level	Magnitude	Assessed impact significance	Social impact category	Impacted group(s)
Long-term employment and training opportunities, notably for mental health professionals	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)	Way of Life Community Livelihoods	Local community Wider community
Upgraded amenities to a high quality, safe for staff, patients and the wider public, leading to better mental health outcomes	Likely	Major	High (positive)	Health & wellbeing	Staff Patients Visitors Local community Wider community
Reputational impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Possible	Minor	Medium (negative)	Community Surroundings	Neighbouring residents/businesses Local community Wider community
Lost connection to the natural environment – a characteristic of the former Morriset site that some believe had therapeutic value	Likely	Minimal	Low (negative)	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	Staff Patients Visitors
Parking (on and off-site) and public transport issues	Likely	Minor	Medium (negative)	Way of life Accessibility	Neighbouring residents/businesses Staff Patients Visitors Local community
Policing and security impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Possible	Minor	Medium (negative)	Community Surroundings	Neighbouring residents/businesses Local community Wider community
Impacts on how staff and patients interact with the environment – less freedom than provided at Morriset	Likely	Minor	Medium (negative)	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	Staff Patients Visitors
Closer proximity to amenities (shops, cafes, rail and buses) when compared to Morriset	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)	Accessibility Surroundings	Staff Patients Visitors Local community
Workforce attrition during the transition and early operation of the facility, especially among staff who are reluctant to move to new location in Maitland	Possible	Minimal	Low (negative)	Livelihoods Health & wellbeing	Staff Patients
Reduced capacity to smuggle contraband due to design and location of the facility	Likely	Moderate	High (positive)	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	Staff Patients Visitors

5.3 DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL IMPACT ISSUES

Negative impacts of significance associated with the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project during the construction phase include:

- Noise and visual impacts associated with construction activity.
- Dust from construction activity, leading to a potential decline in air quality.
- Changes to the natural environment as a result of construction.

On-site and off-site parking was also identified as a major impact of significance across both construction and operational phases of the project. This is in addition to concerns raised about increased congestion on the surrounding road network.

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project also presents some significant positive benefits. These include:

- Employment opportunities during both construction and operation.
- Additional spending in the local economy by workers during the construction stage.
- Upgraded amenities for both staff and patients.

The groups likely to benefit the most from these positive impacts are staff, patients and visitors, as well as the local and wider communities.

6 Social Impact Enhancement, Mitigation and Residual Impacts

The following section outlines mitigation measures and strategies to ameliorate or enhance some of the social impacts identified through this assessment. Likely residual impact significance, post mitigation, are noted below.

6.1 SOCIAL IMPACT EVALUATION AND RESPONSE MITIGATION

Tables 11 and 12 summarise key impacts identified during both the construction and operation phases of the project, as well as mitigating measures to reduce their significance.

Table 11: Impact Mitigation/Enhancement – Construction stage

Social impact description (What is affected?)	Social impact category (What kind of impact is it?)	Evaluated (is it likely to occur? How big is the impact?)	Impact Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impact significance (Benefits or effects of the activity)
Increased congestion on the surrounding road network and changes to parking availability due to increased construction vehicle movement	Way of life Accessibility	Medium (possible + minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP). • Parking for construction vehicles to be provided on-site. • Implement recommendations identified in Traffic Management Plan to ensure any delay/disruptions are managed with appropriate measures, and address construction staging and specific site issues including management of parking during construction. 	Low (negative)
Employment opportunities that arise from construction activity (direct and indirect), positively impacting livelihoods and the local community	Way of Life Livelihoods	High (almost certain + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet targets required for construction procurements and delivery as required by the <i>NSW Government Action Plan: A ten-point commitment to the construction sector</i>.²² • Ensure Aboriginal Participation in Construction (APiC), local employment and local industry involvement are incorporated into tender packs for lead contractor. • Engage with local training, job agencies and chambers of commerce to outline opportunities, programs and processes for participation. 	High (positive)

²² NSW Government's Construction Leadership Group (2018). *NSW Government Action Plan: A ten point commitment to the construction sector*. <http://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au/media/1649/10-point-commitment-to-the-construction-industry-final-002.pdf>

Social impact description (What is affected?)	Social impact category (What kind of impact is it?)	Evaluated (is it likely to occur? How big is the impact?)	Impact Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impact significance (Benefits or effects of the activity)
Additional spending in the local economy by workers during the construction stage	Community Livelihoods	High (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage construction workforce to participate in the local economy. 	High (positive)
Construction activity (noise, dust, vibrations, visual impacts from machinery, scaffolding) causing a potential decline in amenity and health	Way of life Surroundings Health & wellbeing	Medium (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of a Construction Management Plan (including noise, dust and vibration management). Undertake dust monitoring on and off site and implement control measures as required. Record all dust and air quality complaints. Limiting noise-generating construction activity to approved site operating hours. Utilising noise and vibration monitoring equipment to ensure activities remain within specified tolerances. Informing potentially affected neighbours about when works will occur. Undertake detailed acoustic assessment during the detailed design phase (incorporating a quantitative assessment in accordance with the NSW Interim Construction Noise Guideline) and implement recommended mitigation measures. 	Low (negative)
Changes to the natural environment as a result of construction, including flora and fauna	Way of life Surroundings Health & wellbeing	Low (possible + minimal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of an Arboriculture Impact Assessment report. Completion of a Preliminary Ecological Assessment report. Implement recommendations from Arboriculture Impact Assessment and Preliminary Ecological Assessment reports. Engagement of landscape architects. Implementation of green placemaking and biodiversity planting to improve the urban biodiversity and contribute to improving micro-climate conditions. 	Low (positive)
Opportunities for community members and key stakeholders to be involved throughout later stages of the project should the development be approved.	Decision-making systems	High (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further stakeholder and community engagement at future stages of the development (information sessions, focus groups, further Indigenous community workshops and collaboration throughout the detailed design and DA stages). Development of functional design briefs completed during the design process with input from appropriate user groups. 	High (positive)

Table 12: Impact Mitigation/Enhancement – Operational stage

Social impact description (What is affected?)	Social impact category (What kind of impact is it?)	Evaluated (is it likely to occur? How big is the impact?)	Impact Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impact significance (Benefits or effects of the activity)
Long-term employment and training opportunities, notably for mental health professionals	Way of Life Community Livelihoods	High (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of contemporary facilities to support best practice models of care. • Provision of a first-class facility to support staff to meet the health needs of the community now, and into the future. • Provision of improved amenities to improve working conditions and job satisfaction for staff. • Operational activity will draw resources from, and thereby generate economic prosperity across the Maitland LGA. 	High (positive)
Upgraded amenities to a high quality, safe for staff, patients and the wider public, leading to better mental health outcomes	Health & wellbeing	High (likely + major)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project in line with current concept design plan. • Provision of contemporary facilities to support best practice models of care. • Provision of a first-class facility for patients, families and carers to meet the health needs of now and into the future. 	High (positive)
Reputational impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Community Surroundings	Medium (possible + minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further stakeholder and community engagement at future stages of the development (information sessions, focus groups, further Indigenous community workshops and collaboration throughout the detailed design and DA stages) to inform and educate the community around forensic mental health. • Formation of a community reference group. 	Low (negative)
Lost connection to the natural environment – a characteristic of the former Morriset site that some believe had therapeutic value	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	Low (likely + minimal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of green placemaking and biodiversity planting to improve the urban biodiversity and contribute to improving micro-climate conditions. • Physical Connection to Country maximised and incorporated into new buildings (for example courtyards, doors to external spaces). • Maximise opportunities to incorporate Indigenous art and culture throughout buildings and external areas to create a welcoming, culturally appropriate space. 	Low (negative)
Parking (on and off-site) and public transport issues	Way of life Accessibility	Medium (likely + minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Traffic Management Plan (TMP). • Implement recommendations identified in Traffic Management Plan to ensure any delay/disruptions are managed with appropriate measures, and address construction staging and specific site issues including management of parking during construction. 	Low (negative)

Social impact description (What is affected?)	Social impact category (What kind of impact is it?)	Evaluated (is it likely to occur? How big is the impact?)	Impact Mitigation/Enhancement Measures	Residual impact significance (Benefits or effects of the activity)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide parking in line with relevant requirements. • Encourage staff and visitors to use public transport where possible. • Encourage staff and visitors to use active transport (walk/cycle etc.) where possible. 	
Policing and security impacts of having a forensic mental health facility in the East Maitland community	Community Surroundings	Medium (possible + minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake monitoring of the impact/s of the facility on local law enforcement. • Ongoing liaison with police and Council for implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Report. 	Low (negative)
Impacts on how staff and patients interact with the environment – less freedom than provided at Morriset	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	Medium (likely + minor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of green placemaking and biodiversity planting to improve the urban biodiversity and contribute to improving micro-climate conditions. • Physical Connection to Country maximised and incorporated into new buildings (for example courtyards, doors to external spaces). 	Low (negative)
Closer proximity to amenities (shops, cafes, rail and buses) when compared to Morriset	Accessibility Surroundings	High (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure public and active transport options are sufficient to facilitate use of nearby amenities. • Encourage staff and visitors to use public transport where possible. • Encourage staff and visitors to use active transport where possible. 	High (positive)
Workforce attrition during the transition and early operation of the facility, especially among staff who are reluctant to move to new location in Maitland	Livelihoods Health & wellbeing	Low (possible + minimal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further stakeholder (staff) engagement at future stages of the development (information sessions, focus groups and collaboration throughout the detailed design and DA stages). • Provision of a new facility to support staff meeting the health needs of the community now, and into the future. • Provision of improved amenities to improve working conditions and job satisfaction for staff. • Engage with local training and job agencies to outline opportunities, programs and processes for local participation. 	Low (negative)
Reduced capacity to smuggle contraband due to design and location of the facility	Health & wellbeing Surroundings	High (likely + moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation project in line with current concept design plan. 	High (positive)

7 Conclusion

This assessment concludes that there are a range of positive and negative social impacts that are likely to be generated through the construction and operation of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project.

These vary in likelihood, magnitude and dimension with several negative impacts occurring in the construction stage. These are relatively short term in duration. The negative impacts identified in this study are minor in comparison to the scale and type of development.

In the short term, the project will have some impacts on the immediate social locality. There will be impacts associated with the construction period, and some impacts on the construction flow surrounding the hospital, as well as impacts on parking during this stage.

Some negative impacts resulting from the project include the loss of environmental amenity following the relocation of services from Morisset Hospital. There is some risk of negative reputational impacts on the community of East Maitland. Positive impacts during operation include improved employment opportunities, service provision and access to amenities such as public transport.

This assessment concludes that perceived or actual negative impacts of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project can be successfully managed with the implementation of mitigation measures.

The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project has the potential to deliver significant overall benefit to the local area and Hunter New England Local Health District more broadly, including upgraded, high quality, and safer forensic mental health amenities; better health outcomes, greater connection to Country, and wellbeing and economic prosperity through long-term employment and talent retention.

With the implementation of the proposed design and relevant mitigation measures, the negative impacts of the Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project can be successfully managed. The Maitland Mental Health Rehabilitation Project will have an overall benefit to the socio-economic environment.



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