

7 March 2025

Health Infrastructure
c/o Sujata Gupte
Senior Project Manager
Johnstaff
Level 5/9 13 Castlereagh Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sujata,

Project update letter: Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital Project

Project number: 39499

This is a courtesy letter regarding an update to the Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital Project. Biosis Pty Ltd (Biosis) was commissioned by Johnstaff on behalf of Health Infrastructure (the client) to undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Report (ACHA) and a Historical Archaeological Assessment for the Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project (the project) in 2024.

These reports noted that this project was to be assessed as a State Significant Development (SSD) application under Part 4.7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). In November 2024 the NSW Government announced planning approval reforms to the delivery of new and upgraded health facilities, allowing the NSW Ministry of Health to streamline approvals for essential infrastructure works. The Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project will now be assessed as a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) under Part 5 of the EP&A Act.

Furthermore, since issuing the final reports the proposed works have been altered, with the addition of the Northeast building (REF 1 Works):

Northeast Building – REF 1 Works

The Northeast Building is part of the broader Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital Redevelopment Project. Creating approximately 2,700 square metres of space, this facility will meet essential hospital needs by providing interim space for Allied Health, Pharmacy, and the medical workforce. This arrangement will allow for the continuity of operations, while enabling the demolition of existing structures, to make way for the new Clinical Services Building (which is under a separate application). The Northeast building is designed to offer safe, flexible, and adaptable spaces that will continue to serve healthcare services even after its initial use as decant space is complete, presenting long term value for the development.

This new building is being constructed in the north-east corner of the study area overlying the existing car park. The addition of this new building does not require further assessment as it is unlikely to uncover any Aboriginal finds, due to the existing disturbance of the carpark and the overall assessment of low archaeological potential for the study area.

Biosis would like to confirm that this change in approval pathway and the alteration in the proposed works does not change the results of the reports; and the conclusions and recommendations have not changed and remain the same.

A draft report was issued to Johnstaff on behalf of Health Infrastructure on 22 May 2024 and to the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) on 26 June 2024. After the mandatory 28-day review period for the RAPs, the final reports were issued to the client on 16 August 2024.

On 20 January 2025, Biosis received correspondence from Johnstaff on behalf of Health Infrastructure that the planning pathway has changed, and therefore required a project update to be sent to RAPs and a request for this letter to be issued. At the time of this correspondence the project consultation had lapsed at the end of December 2024. Confirmation to proceed with works was received on 4 February 2025, placing the project update at seven months since the last correspondence.

A project update was sent to RAPs on 7 February 2025, noting that project is still ongoing, and that the planning pathway had changed from SSD to REF. A copy of this correspondence is included in Appendix A. Biosis notes that while consultation has lapsed, every effort was taken to send the update as early as possible.

Biosis has also contacted Heritage NSW, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Heritage NSW) to confirm that this project update at seven months to the RAPs is acceptable (pers. comm. 12/02/2025). Heritage NSW took into consideration the Christmas and New Years holiday period as well as communication delays with the proponent and found it acceptable that consultation should not need to restart (pers. comm. 19/02/2025). All future consultation must take place within a six-month period, Biosis notes that an update must be provided to RAPs before 7 August 2025, to remain current with consultation.

If you had any questions regarding this letter or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact the Project Manager, Nathan Windram on 0429 019 163 or via email at nwindram@biosis.com.au.

Yours sincerely



Luci Kumar Sharma
Graduate Heritage Consultant

Appendix A. Consultation update

[39499] Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital Project - update

From Luci Kumar Sharma <lkumarsharma@biosis.com.au>

Date Fri 2025-02-07 3:18 PM

Cc Nathan Windram <NWindram@biosis.com.au>

Bcc **THIS HAS BEEN INTENTIONAALY BLANKED OUT**

To whom it may concern,

You are receiving this email as you are listed as a Registered Aboriginal Party for the Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital Project.

This is just a courtesy email to let you know that the project is still on going and to notify you that the planning pathway has changed from a State Significant Development (SSD) to a Review of Environment Factors (REF). As such the project will now be assessed under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). This change in planning pathways does not negate the original findings of the assessment and our conclusions and recommendations still stand.

If you have any questions regarding this change, please, don't hesitate to reach out.

Kind Regards,