

Consultation with the local farming community

Preliminary consultation report OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019

The Tweed Valley Hospital project team is committed to working with the community to support the continuation of farming in the region. The project team is a member of the Tweed Valley Productive Land Use Working Group, a cross-government initiative which focuses on the local challenges associated with productive farming, and considers initiatives to increase productive and sustainable land use in the region.

Responding to requests from local farmers received during a recent Tweed Valley Productive Land Use consultation workshop, the Tweed Valley Hospital Project Team held an information session on Monday 4 November 2019 to present the Stage 2 State Significant Development (SSD) application and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the new Hospital. In attendance were local farmers and representatives of the Hospital's Community Reference Panel.

The following information was shared and discussed:

- Scope of the Stage 2 SSD application covering the main hospital building, multi-deck car park, supporting healthcare buildings and incremental expansion to meet future demand, including the current and future site master plan
- Key design principles and architectural drawings covering facade, interiors and landscape design, floor plans and building layout, visual impact, environmental sustainability, wayfinding, vehicle and pedestrian access and heritage
- Agricultural Offset Plan and the range of measures to minimise the impact of the Hospital development on local farming, as well as key cross-government initiatives to stimulate productive land use in the region
- External road infrastructure upgrades and main site access, internal roads and car parking
- Forecast employment during construction, through to opening and operational phase
- Timing and next steps for the hospital development.



Image 1: The Tweed Valley Hospital project team share information and answer questions regarding the Stage 2 SSD application and the Environmental Impact Statement for the Hospital development

Stage 2 State Significant Development (SSD) application

The Stage 2 SSD application for the new Tweed Valley Hospital was lodged with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 27 September 2019 and seeks approval for the detailed design, construction and commissioning of the Hospital buildings. The application was placed on public exhibition on 10 October to 8 November 2019.

What is the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

The EIS is a comprehensive technical document that provides information on the Hospital's potential environmental impacts and assesses how they can be appropriately mitigated.



Areas of interest and discussion

The information session on 4 November provided opportunity for participants to ask questions about the Stage 2 SSD application, the EIS and the planning application process and timings. Here are the key areas of interest and discussion:

Design

Local farmers and community members asked about the Hospital design, the number of levels and the multi-deck car park. Six levels of the hospital will be visible from the main entrance on Cudgen Road plus rooftop plant and helipad, with a further two levels built into the slope of the site.

The multi-deck car park will have up to 10 levels, which with the slope of the site means it will stand about half the height of the main Hospital building when viewed from Cudgen Road.



Image 2. Main hospital building from Health Hub



Image 3. Emergency department main entrance

Parking

Some participants asked about the number of car parks, dedicated staff parking, tariffs and whether there was enough capacity to accommodate all parking on-site, now and into the future. Information regarding demand studies and benchmarking with other hospitals was shared.

The group was informed that the Stage 2 SSD application seeks approval for over 1500 on-site car parking spaces, including multi-deck, at-grade, mobility spaces and short-term parking facilities. Provision of end-of-trip facilities, cycle ways and access and charging stations for mobility scooters was also discussed.

The group was informed that there has been no final NSW Government decision on parking fees and various options are explained in the Stage 2 SSD application, from free parking to paid parking arrangements in line with Lismore Base Hospital.

It was important for everyone to hear that under the NSW Health Hospital Car Parking Fees Policy, there is provision for concession rates to be offered to patients receiving ongoing cancer treatment, carers of long-term patients, cardiac rehabilitation and exercise class attendees, and outpatients requiring daily dressings. There are also provisions for patients and carers experiencing financial hardship.

Hospital Car Parking Fees Policy

Car Parking - Concessional Fees and Eligibility: http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_008.pdf



Image 4. Multi-deck car park, internal road access



Areas of interest and discussion

Agricultural Offset Plan

Questions regarding road and traffic changes, improvements to intersections, and concerns regarding the movement of local farm vehicles were answered with reference to key sections of the Stage 2 SSD application. This led to further discussion of the Agricultural Offset Plan, which addresses how the project will seek to offset any adverse impacts on the State Significant Farmland (SSF) of the Cudgen Plateau.

The plan includes a range of measures which will mitigate the impact on farming activities and allow the Hospital and farming activities to co-exist. Mitigations include setbacks and vegetation buffer zones to enable farming activities to continue on neighbouring properties, the appropriate location of terraces and outdoor spaces for patients and air intakes for air conditioning systems, the use of water and water filtration systems, reuse of top soil, measures implemented to accommodate significant rain activity and the use of native planting in the landscape plan.

Options to establish a community garden and therapy gardens were also discussed, with some participants expressing concern that the community garden may compete with and negatively impact current farm shops and commercial activity in the area. Opportunities for local food procurement strategies for the Hospital, to be considered in consultation with the Northern NSW Local Health District, were presented.



Image 6. Main hospital building from Cudgen Road

Image 5: Tweed Valley Hospital Project Team share information and answer questions regarding the Stage 2 SSD application and the EIS for the Hospital development.



Future expansion of services and master planning

The provision of key services and equipment on opening and into the future was discussed, with the project team walking participants through the current and future master plans for the hospital and the site, as well as the floor-by-floor layouts, including key expansion areas.

In response to questions about expansion and use of agricultural adjoining properties, the project team reiterated that the size of the site allows for future expansion and redevelopment for both the Hospital and other complementary health-related services to be contained on the site, without the need for additional land.

Images 7 and 8 provide overview of current site master plan and future site master plan for the Tweed Valley Hospital site at 771 Cudgen Road, Cudgen.

Consultation will continue

The Tweed Valley Productive Land Use Working Group, will continue a program of consultation, working with the community to support the continuation of farming in the region. Focused on stimulating productive and long-term land use in the Tweed and surrounding region, the Working Group encourages all interested parties to be part of the consultation program.

The Tweed Valley Productive Land Use Working Group, headed by Department of Premier and Cabinet, involves NSW Health Infrastructure, Tweed Shire Council, TAFE NSW, Department of Primary Industries, Training Services NSW, Northern NSW Local Health District and Local Land Services.



Image 7. Site master plan



Image 8. Future site master plan

The Tweed Valley Hospital Development

The NSW Government's \$582 million investment will deliver a brand new, regional referral hospital along with interim upgrades, which will help meet the urgent clinical needs of the local communities in the Tweed and Byron Local Government Areas.

Keep in touch

The project team looks forward to ongoing consultation and collaboration with the whole community on all aspects of the Tweed Valley Hospital project. The community is encouraged to provide comment and feedback to: tweedvalleyhospital@health.nsw.gov.au or 1800 992 632

