

South Sea Islander community consultation

Information sheet

The Tweed Valley Hospital project team is committed to ensuring current and future generations have access to, and are able to appreciate, the local history and how important the dry stone walls are to the South Sea Islander community.

Five dry stone walls on the site were identified as part of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Stage 1 State Significant Development (SSD) application, which was placed on extended public exhibition in November 2018. These walls are believed to have been built circa 1900 by South Sea Islanders, when the site was part of a large sugar plantation.

Over 80 per cent of the 750+ metres of walls can be retained in their current location. However, Walls 1 (in part), 3 and 4 are positioned within the construction footprint of the hospital development, and it is not possible to retain them. These sections of wall have been catalogued for archival recording purposes and will be removed by the end of September 2019. This is consistent with the Conditions of the Stage 1 SSD Consent.

Consultation program

The project team has engaged in a number of consultation activities with the local South Sea Islander community throughout July and August 2019 to explore opportunities for the reinterpretation of the impacted walls.

During these sessions, the project team shared with the community members the campus master plan and the hospital design and talked through the reasons why the 20 per cent of impacted walls need to be removed. The remaining 80 per cent of the 750+ metres of walls on the site will be retained.

The consultation also provided the opportunity for the project team and its consultants to listen to the local history of the South Sea Islander community, their connection to the walls and how the impacted walls might be appropriately reinterpreted. A series of concept options were developed and presented to the community based on the feedback received. The on-site concepts, included a historical walk and incorporating stones from the removed walls as prominent landscape features.

A summary of these options is provided in the Factsheet located at www.tweedvalleyhospital.health.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/community-consultation/Australian-South-Sea-Islander-consultation. Off-site reinterpretation options were also discussed.

The project's heritage consultant, and other expert consultants such as landscape architects, will continue to engage with the local South Sea Islander community to collaborate on the reinterpretation of the walls removed as part of the Stage 1 early and enabling works for the new Hospital. The consultation will continue to explore opportunities for the community to get involved in the restoration and ongoing preservation of the over 80 per cent of walls on the site that are not impacted by the approved Stage 1 works.

Table 1 (overleaf) provides a summary of the program of consultation.

Expert input and independent review

Planning a major hospital is a complex process to ensure that it delivers compliant and contemporary health services while meeting the growing health needs of the community, now and into the future. The project's consulting team are experts in the planning and delivery of major hospitals. The design for the Tweed Valley Hospital has been developed through over 300 design workshops with clinicians and operational staff, and has been subject to extensive independent review by internal and external bodies, such as the State Design Review Panel.

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.



Table 1. South Sea Islander community consultation summary

| Date | Stakeholder | Consultation | Overview | Project team actions |
|-----------|--|---|--|--|
| 26-Jun-19 | Tweed Shire Council (TSC) | Review of archival recording | Confirmed that the materials met the Stage 1 SSD conditions Sch 2, B14 and Sch 3, A13. | TSC Heritage Advisor to be consulted and further consultation with the community to be undertaken. |
| 5-Jul-19 | Attended by 24 Tweed South Sea Islander community members and TSC representatives | Site tour to view Walls 1, 3 and 4. Workshop outlined the reasons for requiring removal and opportunities for relocation and reinterpretation | Community shared information about the history, construction and local significance of the walls. | Further workshops to be held to clarify the master planning and engineering reasons why Walls 1 (in part), 3 and 4 required removal. |
| 6-Jul-19 | Attended by 33 Tweed South Sea Islander community members and TSC representatives | | | Project team to propose reinterpretation concepts based on histories and feedback shared. |
| 8-Aug-19 | Attended by 25 Tweed South Sea Islander community members and TSC representatives | On-site consultation workshop | <p>Project team provided further information on why the impacted walls required removal.</p> <p>Project team presented and sought initial feedback on the interpretation plan and the onsite concept options including the historical walk and incorporating stones from the removed walls as prominent landscape features.</p> | <p>Investigate undertaking Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) testing in the vicinity of the impacted walls to test for human remains.</p> <p>Share information presented to gather feedback from the community regarding reinterpretation options.</p> |
| 23-Aug-19 | Tweed-Byron Community | Website content | <p>This is available for community feedback. http://www.tweedvalleyhospital.health.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/community-consultation/Australian-South-Sea-Islander-consultation</p> | Point-in-time community update to provide insight into the consultation program and the concepts under consideration. |
| 29-Aug-19 | Attended by 14 Tweed South Sea Islander community members. TSC representative was unable to attend | Workshop | <p>Project team responded to queries raised at 8-Aug-workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPR • Further information explaining why Walls 3 and 4 need to be removed (masterplan, safety, engineering, sustainability and accessibility). | <p>Commission GPR survey.</p> <p>Investigate keeping Wall 4 in-situ through burying underneath the earthworks. [refer Note 1.]</p> |
| 31-Aug-19 | Attended by 24 Tweed South Sea Islander community members and TSC representative | Workshop | <p>Project team responded to queries raised at 8-Aug-workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPR • Further information explaining why Walls 3 and 4 need to be removed (masterplan, safety, engineering, sustainability and accessibility). <p>A technical response as to why burying Wall 4 was not possible was also provided.</p> <p>Project team confirmed with the community that the walls will be removed and options around reinterpretation were discussed and will be progressed.</p> | <p>Investigate option for relocation of impacted walls to Chinderah Cemetery. Smaller working group to be held to develop this approach.</p> <p>Develop and publish Factsheets on the community consultation and why the impacted sections of wall required removal.</p> |

Note 1. This suggestion was subsequently extended to include a proposal (submitted by members of the South Sea Islander community) to construct a significant foundation, retaining and bridging structure over Wall 4. This was assessed by the project team and relevant consultants and confirmed as not possible to implement in the particular circumstances.

