



Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project

Concept design release
Community and stakeholder engagement summary
November 2024



Project background

The NSW, Victorian and Australian governments have committed \$558 million to the Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project, one of the largest regional health projects currently underway in NSW and Victoria.

The new Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project will provide enhanced and expanded healthcare services in contemporary facilities to support Albury, Wodonga and Border communities now and into the future.

The project will support the region’s growing population, provide contemporary models of care and better connectivity across the Albury Campus.

When finished, the project will:


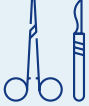












- deliver a mix of new and refurbished facilities
- consolidate complex care on one site, improving safety for patients, reducing the duplication of

services and the need for urgent travel between the Wodonga and Albury campuses

- retain existing high value health assets, including the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre and the recently completed \$36 million Emergency Department expansion
- attract additional skilled and specialised medical, nursing, allied health and support staff
- enable further growth in sub-acute, day surgical and ambulatory care at Wodonga Hospital Campus by relocating existing inpatient maternity, birthing, neonatal care and day medical services to Albury Campus
- create a regional health hub with the investment of health services already on site and the additional 7-storey Clinical Services Building.

Project scope

The transformation of the Albury Campus is expected to include:

 <p>New 7-storey Clinical Services Building</p>	 <p>New central sterile supply department adjacent to theatres</p>
 <p>More than 80 additional beds for medical and surgical inpatients across 3 new inpatient units with 60% single rooms and remainder in double rooms</p>	 <p>Expanded ambulatory care, cardiac diagnostics and allied health therapies</p>
 <p>Enhanced Intensive Care Unit</p>	 <p>New hospital main entrance and public drop-off zone from Keene Street</p>
 <p>Enhanced maternity and birthing services, including a special care nursery</p>	 <p>Aboriginal Family Lounge and Multi-faith Centre and retail opportunities</p>
 <p>32-bed mental health inpatient unit to replace and expand the existing Nolan House current 24-bed service</p>	 <p>Additional at-grade and multi-storey car parking</p>
 <p>Surgical and operating theatres including a hybrid theatre plus procedure room</p>	 <p>Reburbishment works to existing services</p>
 <p>New Cardiac Catheter Lab</p>	 <p>New Northeast building</p>

Concept design development

Building a hospital involves three key phases – planning, design and delivery. The concept design release is part of the design phase.

The concept design for the new Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project was publicly released in August 2024. It provided a first look at the state-of-the-art health facilities at the Albury Campus.

The concept design shows the size and scale of the new hospital infrastructure, as well as the relationships between the clinical functions, services, buildings and other facilities to be delivered as part of the project.

The concept design builds on master planning undertaken in 2023.

The master plan provided a comprehensive framework for the hospital redevelopment, which included construction of a new purpose-built, multi-storey Clinical Services Building as well as upgrades to existing facilities to support the expansion of the hospital.

The design for the new facility has been shaped by valuable feedback from key stakeholders including staff and clinicians from Albury Wodonga Health, NSW and Victoria government agencies, the local Aboriginal community, a dedicated Project Community Advisory Group and the Border communities.

The concept design introduced three new buildings on the Albury Campus:

- The 7-storey Clinical Services Building
- The 2-storey Northeast Building
- The multi-storey carpark.



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: OUTDOOR SPACE



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: CLINICAL SERVICES BUILDING, SOUTHERN CORNER

How we communicated the concept design release

The concept design was publicly released on 21 August 2024, encouraging the community to view the latest designs on the project website and attend in-person or online information sessions. The public release included the following project documentation:

- Project update newsletter
- Concept design images
- Project concept design report
- Project FAQs

Consultation was promoted through a local communications campaign designed to reach a broad range of staff, stakeholders and the community. Communications and advertising directed people to the project website and invited people to attend consultation activities, complete the online survey and/or submit feedback via email and telephone.

Communications and advertising activities included:

- NSW and Victorian government official media announcement
- Print, television and radio media coverage
- Local newspaper advertising
- Neighbour letterbox information drops
- Information pack sent to 16 local councils
- Direct communications to staff, local stakeholder groups, organisations and agencies
- Posters
- Albury Wodonga Health Facebook and Instagram
- E-newsletters
- A survey available online and in-person.



Who we engaged with



Albury Wodonga Health staff



Clinicians



Patients and hospital visitors



Hospital volunteers



Local Aboriginal community representatives



NSW and Victorian local councils



NSW and Victorian government agencies



Project Community Advisory Group



Elected representatives



Interest groups



Residents



Community groups



General public

Consultation with councils

As part of the release of the concept design, the project team briefed Albury City Council and Wodonga Council.

Community information packs were provided to the 16 NSW and Victorian councils within the Albury Wodonga Health catchment area, shortly after the release of the concept design. These packs included FAQs, social media information to assist with cross-promotion of consultation activities, a link to the online survey and general project information.

Stakeholder briefings

Briefings were held with a range of stakeholder and interest groups as part of the concept design release. This included key clinician and senior medical staff council groups, AWH Board, onsite stakeholders, local Aboriginal representatives, local health advocacy groups and NSW government agencies.

The briefings provided stakeholders with an opportunity to meet with the project team, receive information on the concept design and project delivery process, ask questions and share feedback.

Albury Wodonga Health staff information sessions

Staff information sessions were held at both Albury Wodonga Health hospital sites and online:

Wednesday 21 August 2024

- All staff
- Clinical Directors
- Nurse Unit Managers
- Senior Medical Group

Thursday 22 August 2024

- Wodonga Hospital Campus

Friday 23 August 2024

- Albury Hospital Campus

Community drop-in information sessions

Seven community drop-in information sessions were held across Albury, Wodonga and Border towns and two were online.

Wednesday 28 August 2024

- online

Saturday 31 August 2024

- Albury Wodonga Markets

Thursday 29 August 2024

- Beechworth Bakery
- online
- Albury West End Plaza

Thursday 5 September 2024

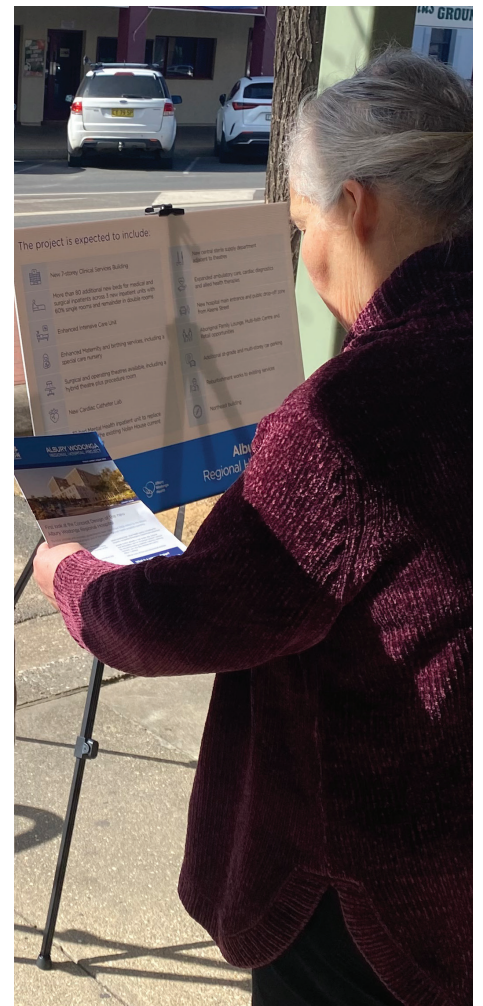
- Holbrook Returned Services Club

Friday 30 August 2024

- Corowa Woolworths
- Wodonga White Box Shops

Friday 6 September 2024

- Tallangatta IGA



Results of engagement

395	152	372	2970	11	50
Staff Online and in-person	Survey responses	Community members Online and in-person	Website views	Stakeholder group meetings	Registrations to receive regular project updates

Summary of feedback and community sentiment

Overall, the engagement period reflected optimism about the project's potential benefits, balanced with the recognition of the high interest in more information around service delivery, staff recruitment and parking.

The concept design release provided staff, stakeholders, and the broader community with an opportunity to share their views on the project and raise any concerns. The diverse feedback received is summarised below.

Project support

There was a wide range of valuable feedback for the project, including:

- General enthusiasm, with comments like “It looks really good” and “This is great.”
- Recognition of the project as a much-needed improvement for the region, reflected by comments like “This investment will be good for the area” and “It should have been built years ago.”
- Support for consolidating complex care on a single site, noting it as an efficient use of staffing, funding, and patient flow management.
- Positive reactions to the expanded mental health facilities and private access for critical care.
- Strong support for planned green areas and courtyards.
- Support to use the the current site for redevelopment due to established services and the potential for the project to start sooner.

Project concerns and queries

The project team also heard queries and concerns from the community including:

- Parking availability and management during construction in addition to support for accessible and undercover parking options.
- Concerns around staffing and recruitment to support increased capacity, as well as questions about project funding.
- Comments such as “Will there be enough beds?” and “How is this project funded?” reflected a desire around more detail.
- Queries and comments received about the project's location on the Albury Campus.
- Requests for more information about specific project elements, including bed numbers, future of the hydrotherapy pool and the future plans for a helipad on site.
- Both staff and community sought reassurances about the operation of services and site functions during and after construction.



Survey

The survey focused on the upcoming schematic design phase; specifically seeking input on how to enhance the hospital experience for both visitors and patients inside and outside the facility.

30% were aged 31-45 years

49% were from Albury

67% said Albury Hospital was their closest hospital

54% want the facade to be in keeping with the natural landscape



The top three results to survey questions are listed below.

When arriving at the hospital, the most important things are:

1. Lighting and other measures to ensure everyone feels safe at any time of the day or night
2. Simple signage (e.g. colour coded, use of symbols)
3. Sheltered drop/off pick up

The following would make patients and visitors feel comfortable, welcome and reduce the stress of a visit to a hospital:

1. A person at the entry to direct me to where I need to go (conciierge)
2. Access to my own devices (eg good wifi, places to charge, quiet spaces)
3. A choice of food and retail services

As a patient these are the top three things that would improve the experience in patient areas:

1. Comfortable seating for visitors
2. Access to gardens, courtyards or other green spaces so I can get some fresh air and relax
3. Lounge area on each floor so larger family groups can gather without disturbing other patients

Social Impact Assessment questions

Some survey questions were developed specifically for the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) to gain insights into the local community and assess potential positive and negative impacts of the project. The findings from these questions will be presented in the SIA report, which will be publicly accessible during the planning exhibition period. The project team will communicate to staff, community and stakeholders when the statutory planning documents are on public exhibition.

Common questions and responses

Questions	Our response
Will there be more parking?	<p>Yes, the project includes a new multi-storey carpark on site and a new ground-level carpark to be built following the move of the Mental Health Inpatient unit at Nolan House into the new Clinical Services Building. The new carparks and redesigned spaces will increase the number of available parking spots on site and improve access for staff, patients and visitors.</p> <p>The final number of parking spaces will be determined during the design phase to meet the projected needs of the hospital community.</p>
How is this project funded?	<p>The project is a joint initiative of the NSW and Victorian governments, with NSW and Victoria each committing \$225 million to the project. This is in addition to the \$108 million already committed by the NSW and Australian governments, bringing the total project investment to \$558 million.</p>
Will there be more beds?	<p>Yes. The new regional hospital project will deliver an increase of beds to provide a significant expansion and enhancement of clinical and non-clinical services.</p> <p>There will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 80 additional beds for medical and surgical inpatients across 3 new inpatient units with 60% single rooms and remainder in double rooms. • New and enhanced Intensive Care Unit (ICU) • Enhanced maternity and birthing services, including a special care nursery • 32-bed mental health inpatient unit to replace and expand the existing Nolan House current 24-bed service • Expanded ambulatory care, cardiac diagnostics and allied health therapies • Refurbishment of the current ICU space and existing theatres will provide additional points of care for the Emergency Department and a new six-bed Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Unit. <p>The final scope, including numbers, will be finalised through the planning and design process.</p>
What will happen with Wodonga Hospital?	<p>The transformation of the Albury Campus will consolidate complex care on one site, improving safety for patients, reducing the duplication of services and the need for urgent travel between the Wodonga and Albury campuses. This paves the way for the Wodonga Campus to transform into a non-emergency care hub for the community.</p> <p>When the Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital project is complete, the Wodonga Campus will offer a range of non-emergency services to the region, including day procedures, dialysis, subacute care such as rehabilitation, treatment for patients with chronic medical conditions, outpatient appointments and consultations, and allied health including physiotherapy and social work.</p>
Will the hospital be built on a greenfield site?	<p>No. The project is funded as a major new hospital redevelopment on the existing Albury Campus and there are no plans to consider another site.</p>



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION: PATIENT DROP-OFF

Questions	Our response
<p>Will the existing inpatient units remain?</p>	<p>Yes, the existing inpatient units will remain. In addition, with the construction of the new Clinical Services Building, there will be over 80 new beds spread across three new medical and surgical inpatient units. The project also includes new maternity and mental health inpatient units, further expanding the capacity and services at the Albury Campus.</p>
<p>Why is the mental health unit located on the top floor?</p>	<p>It is not uncommon for mental health inpatient units to be located in multi-storey clinical services buildings as part of hospital developments. The sixth floor will be a dedicated inpatient mental health floor. It will provide a safe and private unit which will allow for discreet, non-public transfers of consumers and also provide rapid response to other clinical areas in emergencies. An upper floor allows access to a private and risk-assessed outdoor area unlike a ground floor unit which can be overlooked by adjacent buildings. There will be courtyards to the west, north and east, offering views of the district.</p>
<p>Will there be a helipad?</p>	<p>No. Through consultation, clinical services have been prioritised to meet the immediate and growing needs of the community and ensure works can commence sooner. Patients requiring more urgent complex care will continue to be safely and effectively managed from the nearby Albury Airport.</p> <p>The hospital campus is being planned to enable provision for a helipad to be delivered in potential future stages, and suitable locations have been considered as part of planning for the project.</p>
<p>When will the new multi-storey carpark be available?</p>	<p>The timing of the construction of the new carparks will be confirmed as planning progresses.</p>
<p>How will construction affect hospital services?</p>	<p>Albury Hospital will remain open and continue to provide services during construction. A well-planned and staged construction approach will minimise any interruptions and impacts to hospital services. There will be changes to access arrangements at the site. Any changes will be communicated with staff, patients, visitors and the community well in advance. Patient, visitor, staff and emergency access will always be maintained.</p> <p>The building contractor is required to minimise the effects of dust, noise and disruption to existing services.</p> <p>This includes taking reasonable preventative measures to impacts on adjoining properties.</p>

These questions and more can be found on the [FAQ section of the project web page](#).

How will we use the feedback

Feedback received during the concept design release engagement included both comments that fell within the scope of the project consultation and others that were outside its scope.

Within scope:

- Aspirations for the project
- Schematic design aspects covered in the survey
- Community sentiment toward the project
- Concerns and potential impacts relating to the project
- Feedback on key elements of the concept design, including planning and design.

Outside of scope:

- Allocated project budget
- Site location and funding for future expansion stages
- Future plans for the Wodonga Hospital Campus including Wodonga Entity Service Planning and the closing of the Emergency Department at Wodonga
- Albury Wodonga Health organisational, clinical and operational matters.

Next steps

The project team spoke with over 800 people over four weeks from across the Border region.

We want to thank everyone who provided valuable feedback either in person or via the community survey.

The responses provided will feed into the next stage of the project, schematic design, and how we improve the hospital experience for visitors and patients outside and inside the new facility.

Ongoing consultation with a broad range of

stakeholders and the community is essential to the hospital planning, design and delivery process and will continue throughout the remainder of the project. The project team is committed to ensuring health service staff, stakeholders and the community have accurate and timely project information. The project website will be updated regularly, and information will also be shared via project newsletters and direct correspondence.

If you have any further questions or wish to sign up for regular updates, please email hi-albury@health.nsw.gov.au.



Join the mailing list, provide feedback or contact the project team at:

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