

Infrastructure

North West Hospitals Masterplan Community Consultation and Feedback Summary

Introduction

This report summarises the engagement activities undertaken as part of the development of the North West Hospitals Masterplan (the Masterplan).

Engagement was undertaken in two Phases.

- Phase one: between Friday, 18 November 2022 and Friday, 2 December 2022.
- Phase two: between Monday, 1 May 2023 and Sunday, 21 May 2023.

Project Background

The Tasmanian Government committed \$500,000 for the development of a masterplan for the North West Hospitals.

The Masterplan provides a long-term vision to guide future capital development at the North West Regional Hospital (NWRH), the Mersey Community Hospital (MCH) and the Parkside Precinct.

The masterplan has been designed to make the best use of land and buildings and to maximise development opportunities on the sites to support safe, high-quality healthcare now and into the future.

The masterplan demonstrates how Government capital commitments for the North West hospitals will be delivered, including the new mental health services precinct for the North West Regional Hospital and the Mersey Community Hospital capital upgrades.

The masterplan provides the framework to address projected demand for clinical services as well as issues identified with current infrastructure in the short, medium, and longer-term.

The Masterplan has been prepared in parallel with, and informed by, the separate Long-Term Plan for Health Care in Tasmania 2040.

Project Benefits

The masterplan provides a roadmap for staged redevelopments of the hospitals and local facilities to meet the long-term service and infrastructure needs of the North-West community.

It optimises the usage of existing assets and ensure that the best use of those assets is being achieved into the future to meet identified service needs.

The masterplan identifies and addresses key issues faced by the health facilities, including but not limited to ageing infrastructure, vehicle and pedestrian access, internal circulation, operational efficiencies, safety, adaptability, sustainability and whole of life considerations.

It also identifies opportunities to optimise the use of land on which each of the facilities are located, including potential divestment or land development.

Engagement Objectives

The objectives of engagement on this project were to:

- raise awareness among key stakeholders and the community about the North West Hospitals Masterplan and what opportunities they have to contribute to its development
- raise community awareness and enhance community confidence in the planning and delivery of health infrastructure while clearly articulating the difference between infrastructure planning and clinical service planning
- take relevant information from stakeholders and the community to improve the Masterplan
- provide high quality information to the reference group and decision-makers to support informed decision-making and guide development of the Masterplan
- provide feedback to stakeholders about how their input contributed to Masterplan.

The engagement process involved five key distinct stages.

- Targeted discussions and site investigations.
- Options workshops / public engagement before Draft Masterplan (Phase one).
- Draft masterplan release.
- Public engagement on Draft Masterplan (Phase two).
- Release of the Masterplan.

As noted above, key stakeholder and community input and feedback was sought at two critical phases during the development of the Masterplan.

Phase One

Phase one was designed to introduce participants to the project, understand people's views, and receive feedback on current opportunities and challenges on the sites.


Objectives included:

- Involving diverse stakeholder groups and the community in shaping the key directions for the sites.
- Understanding key opportunities and challenges within the areas in and around the sites.
- Outlining the process for preparing the Draft Masterplan and Final Masterplan for the sites.

Phase Two

Phase two was designed to test the Draft Masterplan with the community and key stakeholders and assist the masterplanning team to refine the Masterplan.

Data gathered from the phase one engagement led our approach to developing themes and questions for phase two engagement.



This was done to test the response within the Draft Masterplan to community and stakeholder concerns and queries raised during that initial phase. There were still opportunities within phase two engagement for the community and stakeholders to provide general feedback for other areas of interest and concern.

Objectives included:

- Asking stakeholders and the community to provide feedback and insights on the Draft Masterplan.
- Finding opportunities to improve the Masterplan with information gathered through the phase two engagement process.
- Outlining the process for preparing the Final Masterplan for the sites.

Community consultation summary

A range of communication and engagement methods were adopted to ensure accessibility and input from a wide stakeholder group.

Communication methods

Email invitations issued to key external stakeholders to provide:

- project information and description of the engagement process
- an invitation to visit the engagement website to learn more and have their say
- an invitation to open home events
- contact details and how to seek further information from the project team.

Letterbox drop delivered to properties in an approximate 500 metre radius of each of the three sites to provide:

- project information and description of the engagement process
- an invitation to visit the engagement website to learn more and have their say
- an invitation to open home events
- contact details and how to seek further information from the project team.

Newspaper advertising in *The Advocate* newspaper which provided readers with:

- project information and description of the engagement process
- details of the engagement website to learn more and have their say
- dates and details of open home events
- contact details and how to seek further information from the project team.

Social media was used to geographically target advertising to users in the North West and West coast regions of Tasmania, to provide:

- project information and description of the engagement process
- details of the engagement website to learn more and have their say
- dates and details of open home events.

Engagement methods

One-on-one stakeholder meetings with external stakeholders were conducted to:

- meet with the Masterplan team
- gain project information and a description of the engagement process
- give the project team a chance to understand their challenges and opportunities for the sites
- give other general feedback on the project.

Open home events held at the Burnie Bowls Club (Phase one and two), Meercroft Pavillion, Devonport (Phase one only) and the Latrobe Memorial Hall (Phase two only). The open home events provided opportunities for the community to:

- meet with the Masterplan team
- gain project information and description of the engagement process
- give other general feedback on the project.

A **website portal**, engagement.health.tas.gov.au, was the main 'call to action' for the advertising campaign and as a result provided the most diverse data from the community. Information about the Masterplan project and opportunities to provide feedback was also included on the 'Priority Projects' page of the Department's website.

An **email address and phone number** were provided on all collaterals.

As per the Tasmanian Government's policy around receiving **public submissions** for consultations, this project accepted written submissions as part of the response.

Feedback summary

Given the variety of engagement methods, which included face-to-face and online meetings, open home events and online tools, there was a very wide range of community and stakeholder feedback and qualitative information that had both breadth and depth.

Phase one


Key themes raised during phase one engagement are:

Theme	Proportion of feedback
Parking at the NWRH	28%
Location of services	22%
Direct resident matters	11%
Opportunities for environmental and greenspace improvements	10%
Travelling to the sites and public transport	9%
Parking, generally	7%
Condition of buildings	6%
Greenfield site	3%
Demolition of Parkside Building	3%

Phase two

Key themes raised during phase two engagement are:

Theme	Proportion of feedback
Enjoyment of local residents, particularly at the NWRH	20%
Opportunities for environmental / greenspace improvements	17%
Parking at the NWRH	17%
Travelling to sites, and access to public transport	13%
Condition of buildings	13%
Locations of services	8%
Divestment of Parkside	6%
Parking at the MCH	3%
Staffing	4%



Several responses were considered out of scope of the masterplanning process. Out of scope comments and questions were passed onto the relevant area in the Department of Health for follow up. Most out-of-scope comments related to the separate strategic service planning project that was run in parallel to this process.

Response to feedback received

Phase one

The first round of public consultation commenced in November 2022 to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Masterplan.

The below table summarises the most common themes together with how they were addressed as part of the Draft Masterplan that was released in April 2023.

Key theme	Finding	Response
Travelling to the sites and access to public transport	The frequency of public transport was highlighted as an issue, particularly if consumers, carers, or staff need to travel longer distances to get to the hospital sites.	While the Masterplan cannot dictate changes to public transport infrastructure, it identifies the need for better access to the site and movement through the site. Providing staff and patients with end-of-trip facilities as well as dedicated entrances for certain services improves the access to the facilities.
Parking at the North West Regional Hospital	It has been recognised that there are parking issues at the site, particularly for consumers with mobility constraints, including access to parking, parking location and proximity to destination.	Parking has been identified as a key issue, even before engagement commenced. Planning within the Masterplan includes substantial allocation to car parking across the site. Further, the 'precincts' identified within the Masterplan provide those visiting with 'destination' parking options in addition to general spaces that will be provided across the site.
Access to new / expanded clinical services	The clinical services delivered within the region is of strong interest to the community.	Services to be delivered in each region is determined by service planning, taking into consideration the resources and workforce requirements. Masterplanning responds to service planning.

Key theme	Finding	Response
Condition of buildings	General comments around the condition of the buildings, the Mersey Community Hospital, and the Parkside Precinct	Condition assessments have led to the decision to refurbish, rebuild, or relocate services at each of the sites. The Masterplan will see substantial improvement to building condition and service consolidation as development occurs over time.
Opportunities for greenspace improvements	Environmental and greenspace improvements were seen by some to improve the consumer care experience.	The inclusion of urban design and landscape as part of the Masterplan is a key decision. There are benefits to consumers, carers, and staff when greenspaces and outdoor spaces can be provided. The Masterplan sets out a clear vision to connect the facilities to greenspace for that benefit.
Views and enjoyment	Residents identified concern with development blocking views or impacting their enjoyment of their property.	At the North West Regional Hospital, the Masterplan considers the view lines of adjacent residential development. The Masterplan incorporates a buffer from any development onsite, and facilities are planned such that they minimise impacts on views.

Phase two

The second round of public consultation commenced after the release of the Draft Masterplan in April 2023, and provided stakeholders with an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft document.

The below table summarises the most common themes together with how they were addressed in the final Masterplan.

Key theme	Finding	Response
Availability of parking over the life of the masterplan	Whilst the improved parking across the masterplan was well received, there was some concern that construction of new buildings may impact on the availability of parking at the site.	Staging has been adjusted to include additional provision of temporary parking in the early stages of the masterplan. More remote parking may be allocated to construction vehicle parking to ensure parking closest to the hospital is maintained for those who need it most.
Amenity from weather when moving between identified precincts	Pedestrians traversing the site may be exposed to inclement weather.	Covered linkways have been added to connect key buildings together across the NWRH site, including from the new Administration and Learning Hub to the Medical In-Patient Unit and again to the Outpatients Clinic. The main linkway between the North and the South will remain an enclosed space.
Ensuring separation of the operational aspects of the site from surrounding use	Adjacent residents raised the proximity of the development to the surrounding residential setting.	Wider buffer zones have been provided at both sites, but particularly at the NWRH, where the existing car park on Uplands Place will be formalised and a landscape buffer included to ensure separation from the street. The Accommodation precinct has been moved to also allow the establishment of a landscape buffer.
Functional relationships and layouts	Comments were raised regarding the functional 'stacking' and adjacencies for some clinical facilities, most significantly the Maternity and Theatres at the NWRH.	At the NWRH, the Maternity In-Patient Unit has been swapped to now be on ground floor so that it is adjacent to the Theatre Complex. It is noted that there are some trade-offs with this change that will need to be explored in more detail when planning for this new building commences.

Key theme	Finding	Response
Accommodating travelling staff, carers, consumers, and visitors at the site	<p>An opportunity to improve the patient and user experience at the hospital entrance was raised, particularly for those patients and carers travelling long distances to the hospital.</p> <p>For patients and carers travelling long distances to the hospital, the retention of suitable accommodation was seen to be important.</p>	<p>At the NWRH, a new transit lounge has been added adjacent to the front entrance for travelling staff, carers, consumers, and visitors to utilise if they are waiting for an appointment or for transport from the site.</p> <p>Accommodation has been enhanced on both sites to provide an option for those carers and consumers who would otherwise be unable to access the services at these hospitals.</p>
Safety improvements at the Emergency Department	<p>An opportunity was raised to prioritise improvements to the Emergency Department (ED) at the NWRH.</p>	<p>At the NWRH, works to improve the ambulance bay has been brought forward in the staging. This will separate vehicular and pedestrian movements at the ED, facilitating improvements to and reconfiguration of the ED triage and reception area.</p>
Ensuring expansion of service delivery also allows for expansion of support services	<p>Whilst accounted for in the Draft Masterplan, spatial provisioning for Allied Health, imaging, and pharmacy services was not clear.</p> <p>Whilst accounted for in the Draft Masterplan, spatial provisioning for back of house services at both sites was not clear.</p>	<p>Provision for the delivery of Allied Health has been made at both sites in spatial planning allocations.</p> <p>At the NWRH, outpatients will move to a dedicated precinct on site allowing for an expansion of the Allied Health service.</p> <p>At the MCH a dedicated Allied Health hub will be created.</p> <p>The relocation of outpatients also allows for expansion of back of house services within that zone.</p>
When different stages of the masterplan will be delivered	<p>Some stakeholders requested more information around timing/duration for each stage of the Masterplan.</p>	<p>A more detailed implementation plan has been included in the Masterplan including the expected timing of stages across the 20-year period for the sites.</p>

Key theme	Finding	Response
Single hospital vs two campuses	Some stakeholders made the case for a single hospital while others supported the continued operation of the current two campus model.	The Tasmanian Government is committed to maintaining both the Mersey Community Hospital, and the North West Regional Hospital.
Clinical services	The clinical services delivered within the region continued to be of strong interest to the community and key stakeholders.	Services to be delivered in each region are determined by service planning, taking into consideration the resources and workforce requirements. Masterplanning responds to this service planning. Where specific questions and comments were raised, they have been passed onto the Health Planning Unit for consideration.
Expanding capacity for outpatient care at the NWRH	Feedback was provided that expanding the outpatient capacity would benefit consumers.	A separate outpatients precinct at the NWRH has now been included (as opposed to it being an option in the Draft Masterplan).

Conclusion and next steps

We thank key stakeholders, the community and staff who engaged with the masterplanning team and provided their feedback and comments during both engagement periods on the Masterplan.

Through the engagement period, feedback was received that directly shaped the development of the Masterplan. In phase one of the engagement, feedback was used to help shape the Draft Masterplan before its release.

Once the Draft Masterplan was released, feedback received during phase two of the engagement helped to shape the final Masterplan. The final version of the Masterplan has now been released.


The Masterplan delivers the following for the North West Regional Hospital.

- A new purpose-built Mental Health Precinct to support contemporary, best practice models of care that will enable the provision of safe and therapeutic, recovery-oriented care.
- Additional car parking, including under crofts of new buildings, to substantially increase car parking across the site.
- A new Women's and Children's Precinct to enable the transfer of maternity services to the hospital.
- An expanded and modernised hospital to address service and infrastructure needs, including an expansion of acute medical inpatient capacity.
- A staff administration and learning hub.
- A focus on landscaping and circulation on the site to improve the consumer care experience.

The Masterplan provides the following for the Mersey Community Hospital.

- An expanded and modernised hospital to address service and infrastructure needs, including an expansion of sub-acute care capacity.
- Staff and administration learning hubs.
- A focus on landscaping and circulation on the site to improve the consumer care experience.
- Refurbishment of existing spaces, including the hospital core and the existing administration building, where additional capacity will be provided.

The Masterplan includes a high-level staging plan that identifies the order and sequence for delivering the upgrades over the next 20 years while ensuring the hospitals can continue to deliver clinical services with minimal impact.



Before construction, each project will go through a rigorous planning process and will be informed by:

- refinements to clinical service planning and models of care to tell us what the future service need is, based on demographic projections and research on contemporary models of service delivery
- stakeholder input and advice to understand the needs and experiences of those that receive and provide care
- site investigations to understand the options for development, and any constraints or critical issues specific to the site that may impact on construction
- assessment of the likely impacts of construction on service delivery, patients, staff, and visitors
- the Australasian Health Facility Guidelines and other industry standards to ensure that we deliver health facilities that meet current best practice standards.

The masterplanning process is not the end of engagement with the community and stakeholders.

As proposed projects progress, the Department will re-engage with key stakeholders and the community as part of the planning, design, and delivery processes as appropriate to each project.

We look forward to engaging with you further as the vision create a long term, regional approach to delivering health infrastructure for communities in the North West is delivered.



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