

South Sea Islander dry stone walls

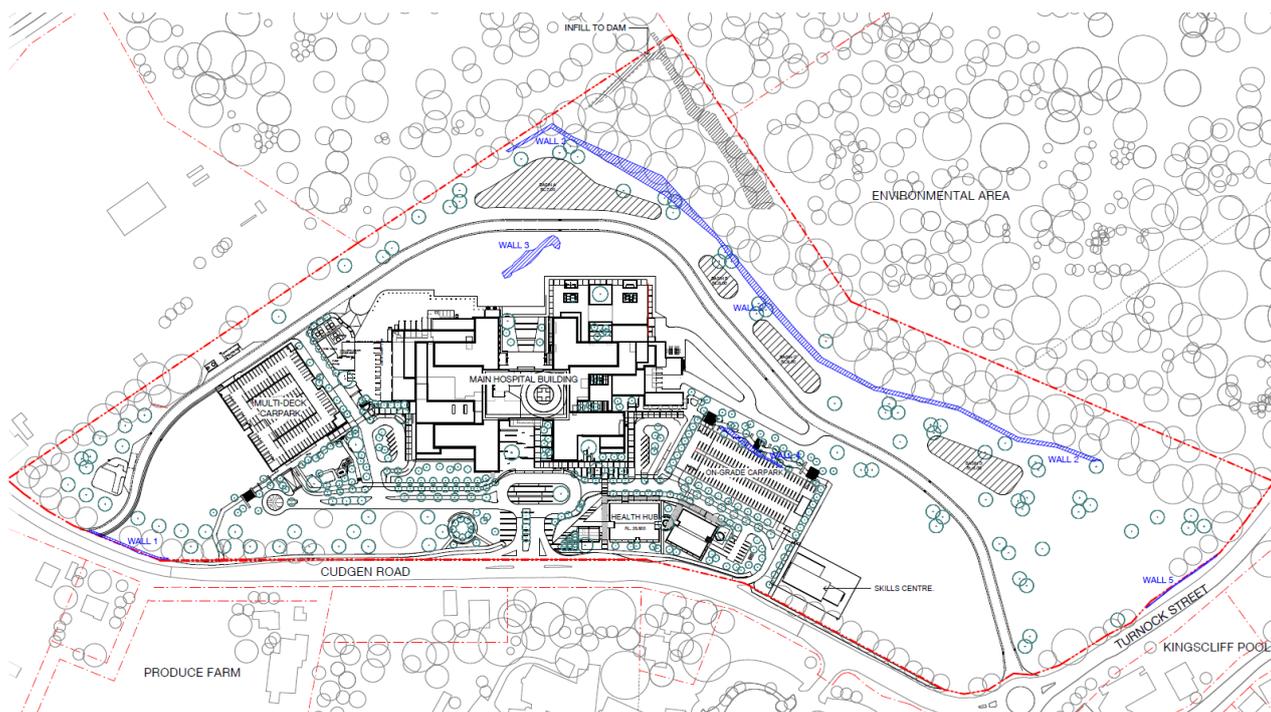
Tweed Valley Hospital site

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 length 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 Conditions of the Stage 1 SSD Consent.

Figure 1: Map showing the location of the five dry stone walls on the hospital site



Minimising the impact on the dry stone walls

In June 2019, Development Consent was granted for the Stage 1 SSD by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces for the Concept Proposal and Stage 1 early and enabling works for the new Tweed Valley Hospital. The approved Concept Proposal impacts less than 20 per cent of the 750+ metres of dry stone walls on the hospital site.

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 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. This expertise and independent review has informed the Concept Proposal, Stage 1 works and Stage 2 SSD application that seeks consent for the detailed design and commissioning of the hospital buildings.



Wall 1

Wall 1 is a 64 metre long dry stone wall, located on the south-western corner of the site fronting Cudgen Road, and will be partially affected. The condition of Wall 1 varies throughout its length, with some sections in poor condition. 30 metres at the western end of the wall is partially collapsed.

Approximately 10 metres of the wall, in the location where it is already partially collapsed, will be removed to create a safe access road into the site for ambulances and other emergency service vehicles, delivery vehicles for hospital supplies and staff vehicles.

It is not possible to retain this part of Wall 1. The removal of this small section of Wall 1 is necessary to comply with road design standards and requirements to ensure the safety of all road users and those accessing the site. The project team is consulting with the local South Sea Islander community to ensure the long-term preservation of the remainder of Wall 1. This includes exploring opportunities to mark the location of the removed section in the road and footpath construction, subject to road safety requirements.

Wall 2

Wall 2 is the longest stretch of dry stone wall located adjacent to the environmental area at the rear of the site.

Wall 2 will be retained and preserved in its current location and will not be impacted by hospital construction or operation. The project team is consulting with the local South Sea Islander community to explore opportunities for how the community might get involved in its preservation and potential restoration.

Wall 3

Wall 3 is located on a steep sloping section of the site. It is positioned in an inaccessible location between the rear of the main hospital building and the service road to the north of the site which provides access for ambulance, staff and service vehicles.

The approved design alters the steepness and elevation of the natural ground level to provide a stable slope for safety and maintainability. It also ensures that the service road to the north of the site is constructed with gradients suitable for ambulances.

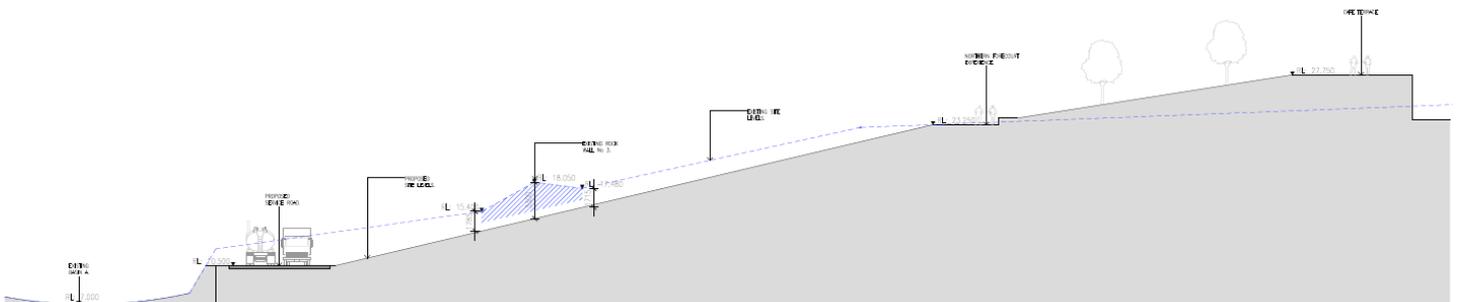
Wall 3 is positioned well above the approved design levels, ranging between 3 to 5 metres higher in some parts, as per Figure 2. It would be unsafe to retain the wall in its current location, as the slope of the site will be in excess of design limits which would create stability risks.

Further, the development consent only authorises the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Options to preserve Wall 3 such as building a new retaining wall have been investigated. However the need to safely undertake ground maintenance to mitigate bushfire risks and the unstable nature of the existing ground conditions and wall mean this is not possible.

Therefore, within the approved Concept Proposal, it is not possible to retain Wall 3 without creating unacceptable stability and safety risks.

Figure 2: Wall 3 section, showing the location of the wall in relation to the final ground levels.



Wall 5

Wall 5 is 63 metres long and is located on the site boundary on Turnock Street.

Wall 5 will be retained and preserved in its current location and will not be impacted by hospital construction or operation. The project team is working with the local South Sea Islander community to ensure the long-term preservation of the wall.

What will happen with the removed walls?

Consistent with Conditions of Consent for the Stage 1 SSD, five consultation workshops have been held with the local South Sea Islander community to explore opportunities for reinterpretation of the impacted sections of wall. A diverse range of views have been expressed by the community which include on-site and off-site reinterpretation of the walls, as well as an on-going request from a section of the community that there should be no impact on any of the walls.

The project's heritage consultant, and other expert consultants such as landscape architects, will continue to consult with the local South Sea Islander community to develop the detailed design of the on-site concept proposals, and off-site options, for reinterpretation of the removed walls.

The on-site concept proposals include:

- Presenting the local history and South Sea Islander culture that the dry stone walls represent through various media as part of the Hospital's Arts and Culture strategy
- Reinterpreting a section of wall as part of a historical walk with supporting information and incorporating the stones in a series of walls as part of the landscaping for the new Hospital.

A summary of the on-site concept proposals is provided in the factsheet located at <http://www.tweedvalleyhospital.health.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/community-consultation/Australian-South-Sea-Islander-consultation>

When and how are the walls being removed?

There is an urgent clinical need to complete the new Tweed Valley Hospital to meet the growing health needs of the Tweed-Byron region.

The project is at a critical stage, with construction works to prepare the site for the Hospital buildings now approved and progressing, and the second SSD application for the detailed design and operation of the Hospital buildings due to be lodged in the coming weeks. Any delay to these critical activities will have a significant impact on the project.

Consistent with the SSD Consent, Health Infrastructure (through its expert consultants) has demonstrated that it is not possible to retain Walls 1 (in part), 3 and 4. Consequently, in order to maintain progress on preparing the site for the Hospital buildings and deliver the Hospital as soon as possible to meet the urgent health needs of the Tweed-Byron community, these walls will be removed in September 2019. Ground Penetrating Radar testing has been completed in the vicinity of the impacted walls and the construction methodology updated accordingly.

The construction methodology (as updated) for the removal and on-site storage of the impacted walls has been developed by the early works contractor, Lendlease Building, in conjunction with the heritage consultant for the project. This methodology (as updated) is included within the early works documentation, available online at www.tweedvalleyhospital.health.nsw.gov.au/delivery/early-works/early-works-documents.

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.

