Planning for a new hospital in Bundaberg

PROJECT UPDATE #1 | OCTOBER 2020

We’re developing a detailed business case that will investigate the delivery of a new, state-of-the-art public hospital on a greenfield site, west of Kay McDuff Drive and adjacent to the Ring Road, in Bundaberg.

Project benefits

- Future-proofing our public healthcare system to meet the needs of the Wide Bay regional communities
- New and expanded specialist services, delivered closer to home
- Contemporary healthcare models that better meet the changing and growing needs of our communities
- A more sustainable and tranquil environment that is culturally appropriate and promotes health and wellbeing
- Advanced technology that provides a seamless patient journey through the health system
- Help to attract and retain talented health professionals and provide more education, training and research opportunities
- A boost to the local economy through the provision of jobs

Project background

Bundaberg Hospital has operated from its current site since 1914, and while it has served the region well since this time, it is close to capacity and opportunities to expand healthcare services are limited.

Our region’s population is both growing and ageing, meaning more people with more complex health conditions will be relying on our health system. The hospital’s infrastructure is also ageing and does not support the delivery of contemporary models of care. Furthermore, the hospital site is affected by flooding.

In time, these pressures will place significant strain on our critical services so it is imperative that we plan early to strengthen our public healthcare system, to ensure it can adequately accommodate the changing and growing healthcare needs of our local communities.

In November 2017, the Queensland Government invested $3 million toward a preliminary business case to investigate a new or refurbished hospital. Completed in April 2019, it recommended that a new hospital on a new site would best meet the future health needs of the region.

A further $6.7 million was allocated in June 2019 to develop a detailed business case. It involves expanding on earlier work, identifying a preferred site for a new hospital, and providing a greater level of analysis to help the state government make informed decisions about the hospital's future design, staging and funding.

Building Queensland is leading the preparation of the detailed business case in partnership with Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service (WBHHS) and Queensland Health.

The detailed business case is expected to be presented to the Queensland Government in 2021 for consideration.
Our current challenges and case for change

The projected growth in population and ageing demographic of our Bundaberg, North Burnett, Fraser Coast and broader Wide Bay regional communities, including the Discovery Coast, mean that the current Bundaberg Hospital facilities will be unable to cope with future health service demands.

- Rapidly ageing population
- High rates of smoking, alcohol consumption and obesity
- Ageing health service infrastructure and technology
- Ageing health workforce
- High rates of mental health problems
- High rates of hospital admissions for chronic diseases
- High levels of socio-economic disadvantage
- High rates of unemployment

The existing hospital’s ageing infrastructure has inefficient layouts for the delivery of contemporary models of care

Planning a new hospital

Planning for a new hospital is an incredibly complex and detailed process. Health service planning specialists and architects are currently:

- examining the full scope of services to be provided and considering the appropriate contemporary healthcare models that will support these services
- reviewing briefs for each hospital unit/department, which set out important planning, operational and design considerations and requirements.

Over 100 staff, consumer and community representatives have been involved in a series of “user group” sessions to inform this body of work.

What we’ve heard so far

- A modern facility that is safe and secure for workers, patients and their visitors, with comfortable traversing distances
- Open layouts for staff to observe patients, work and provide support across the unit
- Access to natural light and the integration of indoor/outdoor green spaces
- A dedicated place that is peaceful, open and calm and allows people to connect to country
- Education, training and research to be closely integrated to the health service
- Advanced technology and appropriate storage for medical equipment
Site features

- On higher ground which is accessible during flooding
- Close to several key roads, providing opportunities for multiple access points
- A large, relatively flat site to develop a health and education precinct over time and allow for expansion when needed
- A natural environment that is peaceful, open and calm, promoting healing and recovery
- Suitable for helicopter access and close to the airport and new Aeromedical Base
- Close to the emergency services complex on Wyllie Street and education providers
- Well located for North Burnett and Fraser Coast patients, carers and families travelling to access services

Land near airport selected as preferred site

Selecting the right site for a new hospital in Bundaberg is vital to building the future of healthcare and servicing the health needs of our regional communities now and into the future.

In July 2020, Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk announced 60 hectares of state-owned land that sits to the west of Kay McDuff Drive and adjacent to the Ring Road, about 5km south of the central business district, as the location of the preferred site for a new hospital. The site fulfils a wide range of criteria that would enable it to accommodate one of the most important developments in Bundaberg’s history.

The site was identified through a comprehensive process, which considered more than 40 sites across the region, including more than 20 put forward through a publicly advertised expression of interest.

Having a site more than 60 hectares in size provides us with the flexibility needed to accommodate future growth and expansion, and the opportunity to develop a health and education precinct over time.

Continuing engagement

Ongoing engagement with clinicians, healthcare specialists, consumers and the regional community is vital to the success of this project, and we’re committed to continuing these conversations.

We’ve established a local Stakeholder Reference Group, which consists of key stakeholders that represent a range of viewpoints.

The workshops will facilitate stakeholder input into the business case development and analysis to ensure best long-term outcomes for the community.

Feedback on the hospital project from the broader community is also welcomed by using one of the communication methods found overleaf.
What we’re doing next

The project team will continue discussions with relevant stakeholders about internal and external road upgrades and connections, emergency service access, utilities infrastructure, public transport and other supporting infrastructure.

Several streams of activity will continue to run in parallel to inform the detailed business case.

**Master planning:**

Master planning will examine the size of the hospital, clinical functional relationships and requirements and how they can be supported with different types of infrastructure. It will consider how people will access the facility and what supporting infrastructure is needed.

The master plan will also consider future economic development opportunities such as the potential integration of other health, education, training and retail facilities within the precinct.

**Workforce planning:**

Comprehensive workforce planning will be undertaken to ensure the new hospital has the right numbers of people, with the right skills and experience, at the right time.

**Potential staging:**

The business case will investigate options to stage construction to enable some services to be brought online earlier, along with decommissioning/repurposing of the existing site.

---

**Project timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April 2019</th>
<th>June 2019</th>
<th>July 2020</th>
<th>2020-21</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>Future stages*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Preliminary business case prepared recommending a new hospital on a new site | Detailed business case funding announced to continue planning | Premier announces preferred site for a new hospital | • Master planning  
• Workforce planning  
• Future of the existing site and staging | • Concept and schematic design  
• Submit detailed business case for government decision | • Funding decision  
• Detailed design  
• Planning and development approvals  
• Construction  
• Operation  
* Timing to be confirmed

---

Get involved

We’re committed to keeping you informed as we progress further through the detailed business case for a new hospital in Bundaberg.

In an effort to provide you with as much information as possible, we’ve developed a series of frequently asked questions on our website relating to each project stage so far.

We also encourage you to register your interest to receive future project updates or provide any feedback you may have on the project via one of the following communication methods.

Connect with us online

**Website**  

**Email**  
WBHHS-NewHospital@health.qld.gov.au

**Facebook**  
www.facebook.com/widebayhealth

**Phone or write to us by post**

**Phone**  
(07) 4303 8540

**Write to**  
‘A new hospital in Bundaberg’ project team  
Bundaberg Hospital  
PO Box 34  
Bundaberg  
Qld  
4670

---

Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service

BUILDING QUEENSLAND

Queensland Government