

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – APRIL 2021

## New Banksia Mental Health Unit

The Banksia Mental Health Unit has been recognised as a priority project in the NSW Government’s \$700 million Statewide Mental Health Infrastructure Program.

This is the state’s biggest ever mental health infrastructure reform program, delivering more and better co-designed facilities for people with mental health needs, their families, carers and staff.

### What’s included in the project?

The project will deliver a new Banksia Mental Health Unit physically connected to the Tamworth Hospital.

The new unit will support integrated service delivery and recovery-oriented care, enabling better opportunities for patients’ transition back to the community.

Containing 33 beds, the new Banksia Mental Health Unit will include an additional eight beds supporting services for older persons. The new unit will also be designed to be flexible, and provide short stay accommodation for children, adolescents and those experiencing vulnerability.

### Where is the project up to and what’s next?

Building a new health facility involves three key phases; *Planning, Design and Delivery*.

**The new Banksia Mental Health Unit project is in the design phase.** To view the How to Build a Hospital video on YouTube, [please click here](#).

In 2020, Master Planning identified a preferred location for the new Banksia Mental Health Unit on the Tamworth Hospital campus. With the location confirmed, the project team commenced designing the new facility, and released a Concept Design in April 2021.

People with lived experience of mental illness, are front and centre in co-designing the new Banksia Mental Health Unit.

The design phase of the project is expected to be completed in late 2021, with construction commencing in 2022.



## The clinical services

### What is a Clinical Services Plan and why is it so important?

The first stage in the development of a new health facility is clinical services planning. The Banksia Mental Health Unit Plan was prepared by Hunter New England Local Health District and helped to determine the requirements for the new mental health facility, the range of services provided, and how these services would be provided.

## **How was the Clinical Services Planning for Banksia developed?**

Clinical Services Planning for the New England region of Hunter New England Local Health District, including the Banksia Mental Health Unit, started in 2018 and involved extensive consultation with more than 350 staff, consumers and community members. This informed the direction of mental health services across the New England region, and led to the decision to build a new 33 bed mental health unit at Tamworth Hospital rather than upgrade the existing unit with existing 25 beds.

## **What services and facilities will be available at the new Banksia Mental Health Unit?**

All the existing services will be provided by the new mental health unit which will be a modern and contemporary facility physically connected to the Tamworth Hospital Emergency Department. Services include:

- rehabilitation psychiatry,
- drug and alcohol counselling,
- older persons services and
- Aboriginal mental health services.

## **Will there be an increase in beds?**

Yes, the new mental health unit will include an additional eight beds, catered to the needs of older people. There will be 33 beds included in the new Banksia Mental Health Unit, designed flexibly to also cater to the needs of young and vulnerable people requiring short-stay accommodation.

## **Will the new unit have a dedicated Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit?**

No, it will not be a dedicated Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit. There will be provision for short-stay accommodation for children and adolescents, however longer term, specialist care will continue to be provided by the Nexus Unit at John Hunter Hospital.

## **Will there be 24 hour access to the unit?**

Yes, the unit will continue to operate 24 hours per day.

## **What will happen to the current facilities?**

The existing Banksia Unit will be retained and repurposed for another use.

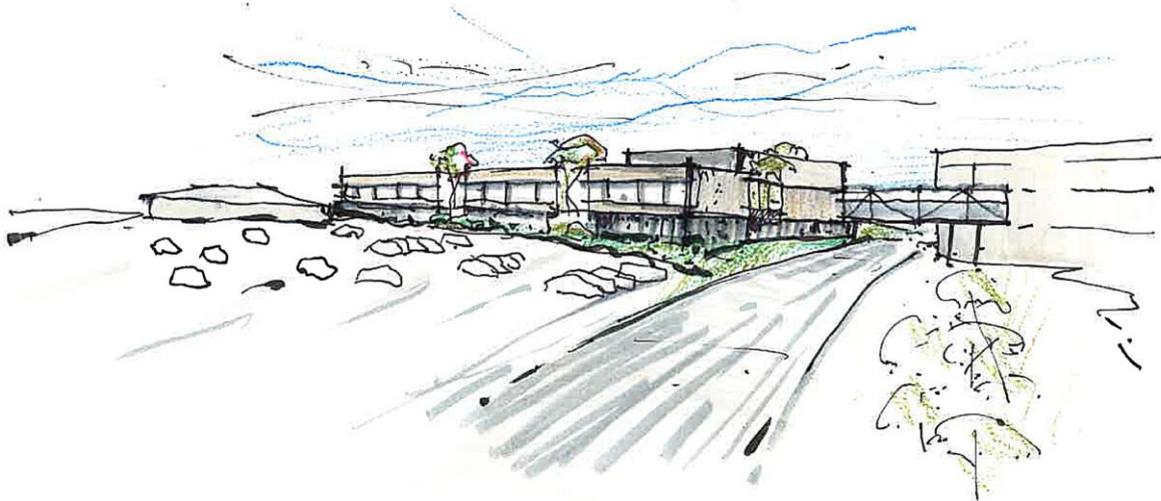
## The design

### How has the design of the new unit been developed?

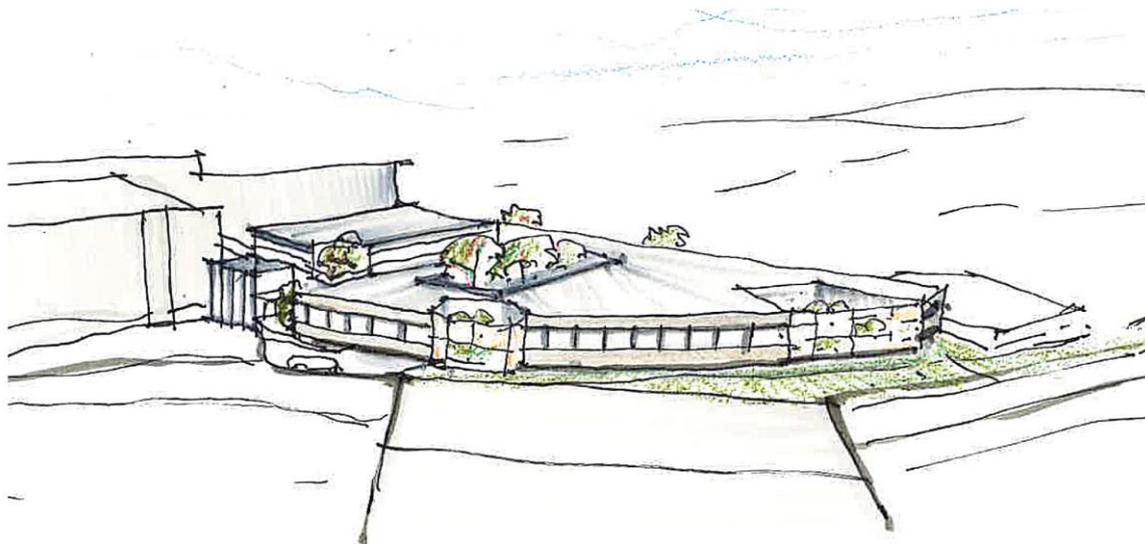
The preliminary design for the new mental health unit has been developed by the project team, architect and the co-design team. This includes staff, carers and consumers with an existing connection to the Banksia service. The images below show the Concept Design 3D view and floor plan.

**Images:** Concept Design for the new Banksia Mental Health Unit

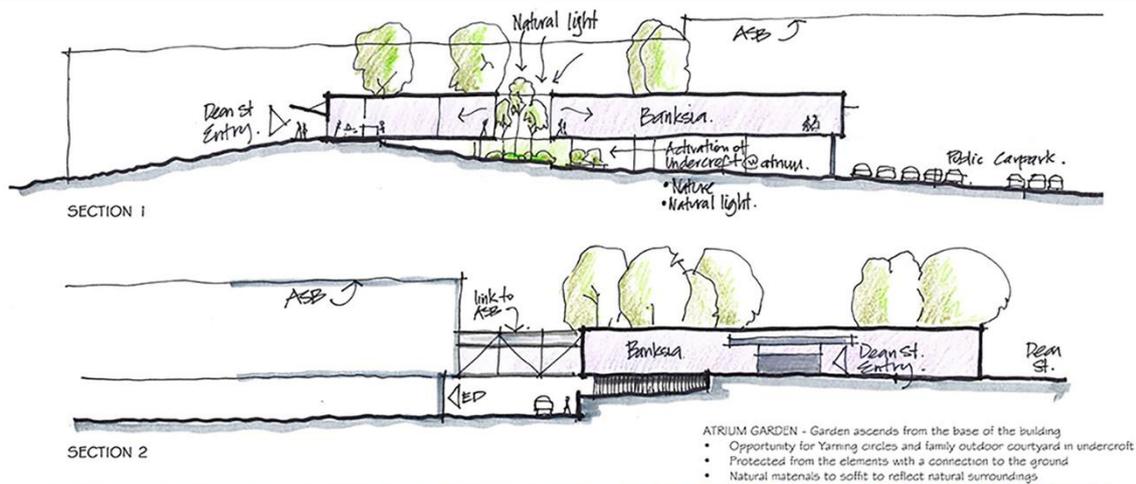
***SOUTH WEST VIEW***



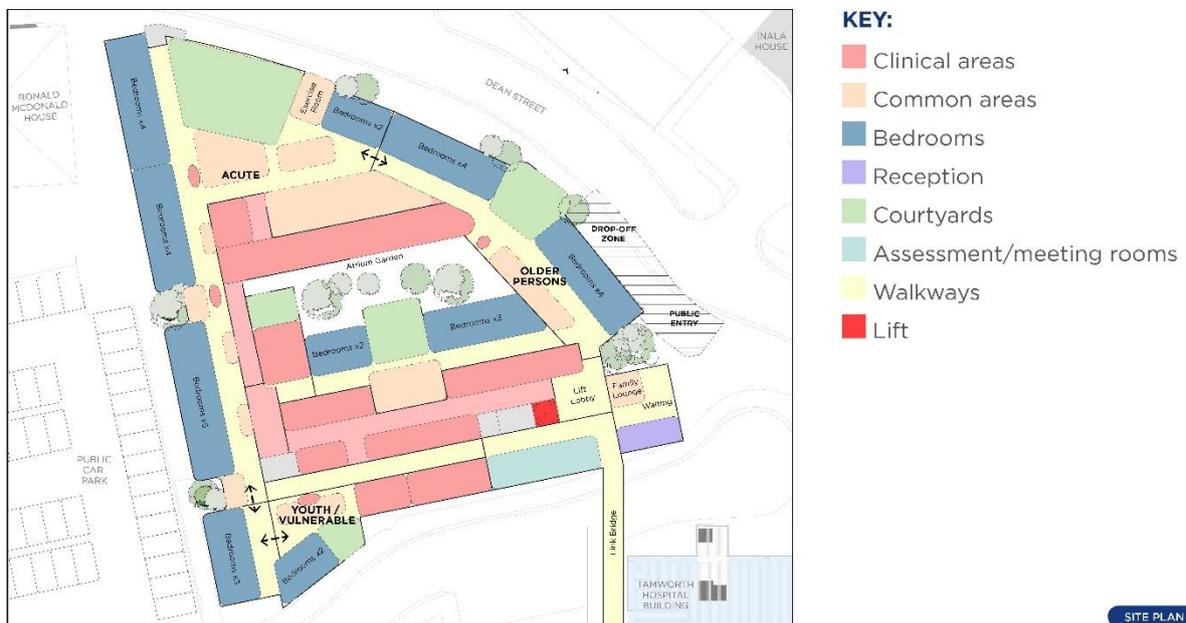
***NORTH EAST AERIAL VIEW***



## CONCEPT



## FLOORPLAN



### What is included in the preliminary design?

The preliminary design, which is also known as the Concept Design, lays out the site plan for the new mental health unit. The new unit will contain 33 beds, various clinical and support areas, as well as common areas including activity and recreation spaces, an exercise room, and multiple courtyards including a sunken atrium in the centre. The new unit will be physically connected to Tamworth Hospital via a linkway.

### **What is the next step in the design process?**

The project team will consult with the community during April and May 2021 on the preliminary design. The key themes and recommendations received will be considered in the next design step, which is known as the Schematic Design. The final design stage is known as Detailed Design and this is where the individual items within each room, such as light fittings, cabinetry, etc are determined.

### **Will the new unit have onsite parking?**

A drop-off zone will be available immediately adjacent to the new unit's entry off Dean Street. Car parking will be provided via the Tamworth Hospital's existing car park which is located on the western side of the new unit.

## **Community consultation**

### **Will consultation take place during the design phase?**

Yes. People with lived experience of mental illness are front and centre in co-designing the new Banksia Unit. The project team consulted with key staff, carers and consumers with an existing connection to the services to develop the strategy and framework for co-design. The strategy ensures the views of stakeholders are well represented, and consultation is undertaken in a safe, culturally appropriate way.

The project team will be visiting communities in the New England and North West during April 2021 to showcase the design and seek feedback.

An online survey is also available:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FH2Y6YH>

### **How can I stay informed about the project?**

Visit our web page: <https://bit.ly/3wKlGnt> (Health Infrastructure website)

Or you can email us at [HI-BanksiaUnit@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:HI-BanksiaUnit@health.nsw.gov.au) to be included on our email distribution list for our project updates.

### **Contact Us**

If you have a question please let us know, you can email:

[HI-BanksiaUnit@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:HI-BanksiaUnit@health.nsw.gov.au)