

Smoking ceremony: cleansing and healing

The discovery of Aboriginal stone artefacts earlier this year, and their salvage as part of the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment, was the focus of a Wiradjuri Smoking Ceremony held in late November 2020.

Wiradjuri Elder Robert Monaghan gave the Welcome to Country and Elder Uncle James Williams Senior conducted a smoking ceremony on the site. He invited guests to walk through the smoke of burning gum and emu leaves collected locally to heal and celebrate ancestors. Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council Chair Desma Newman spoke about the cultural significance of the artefacts and archaeologist Jillian Comber explained the archaeological find and process.

Three participants from the Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council participated in the artefact salvage, a truly unique opportunity. While 130 Year 5 & 6 students from neighbouring St Patrick's Primary School visited the site during the salvage to learn about the artefacts. A video about the artefact discovery, cultural significance and salvage is available here: <https://youtu.be/GmT5jEN83PQ>



Stone artefact discovery

In May 2020, 271 Aboriginal stone artefacts measuring 14mm to 28 mm, were located on the Hospital site during archaeological investigations undertaken during the Redevelopment planning process.

The artefacts were mostly found in gravel which is believed to have been brought to the health campus for landscaping. Artefacts found at a separate location to the gravel appear to be evidence of an Aboriginal campsite which could be several 1000 years old.

The long term management of the artefacts will be in accordance with the Care Agreement developed by Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council and Heritage NSW to ensure safekeeping.

Find out more about the artefacts: mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/GBHRedev

Construction commences on final stage of early and enabling works

The next stage of the \$250M Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment started in late 2020. The works being undertaken include construction of a new non-clinical services building, a temporary paediatric unit, construction of a temporary carpark and demolition of redundant buildings.

The completion of these early and enabling works will ensure the continued operation of the health service while the new hospital is being built. The construction contract was awarded to Hutchinson Builders in September 2020, after which detailed design finalisation was completed and procurement of subcontractors took place.

The early and enabling works are forecast for completion in early 2022 ahead of main works commencing.

In addition to the commencement of early and enabling works; the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment is moving forward with the continued development of the design for the new clinical services building.

The community is advised that there will be no disruption to health services during these works, but there may be changes to building and site access in some parts of the hospital grounds and to observe signage when visiting the campus.



Pictured (above) at the smoking ceremony held prior to the start of early and enabling works are representatives from the Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council, Murrumbidgee Local Health District, Health Infrastructure and Hutchinson Builders

The final early and enabling works includes:

- construction of a new non-clinical services building housing the support services that will support the operation of the new main clinical building
- temporary relocation of the Paediatric Unit in preparation for the establishment of the main works construction zone
- construction of a temporary carpark
- demolition of redundant buildings within the main works construction zone.

Watch a short video explaining the early and enabling works here: mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/GBHRedev

For more information: www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/GBHRedev

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