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ABORIGINAL ARTEFACTS UNCOVERED AT GRIFFITH BASE HOSPITAL PRESENTED TO LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Thousands of culturally significant Aboriginal stone artefacts discovered at the site of the \$250 million Griffith Base Hospital redevelopment have been presented to Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council at a ceremony today.

Murrumbidgee Local Health District Chief Executive Jill Ludford said the artefacts were uncovered in 2020 during archaeological investigations as part of planning for hospital redevelopment.

“Today’s ceremony is a special and unique opportunity to recognise Griffith’s rich Aboriginal cultural history, and hand over these significant items to the Local Aboriginal Land Council for management and safe keeping,” Ms Ludford said.

“The discovery gave us a very special opportunity to work with the Local Aboriginal Land Council to embrace the significance of the area,” Ms Ludford said.

Board member of Griffith Local Aboriginal Land Council, Desma Newman, said the archaeological find is significant for the local community.

An initial archaeological exploration located 271 stone artefacts in May 2020, and a subsequent operation in November 2020 led to the discovery of over 3,000 artefacts.

Health Infrastructure Executive Director, Amanda Bock said the artefacts were mostly found in gravels believed to have been brought to the health campus for landscaping uses in previous years.

The hospital redevelopment, due for completion in 2025, will deliver Griffith and the surrounding community enhanced health services and state of the art facilities.

Along with Griffith Base Hospital, the NSW Government has invested in major health infrastructure projects in the Murrumbidgee Local Health District including :

- \$431 million redevelopment of Wagga Wagga Base Hospital;
- \$30 million multi-storey car park at the Wagga Wagga hospital site;
- \$50 million Tumut Hospital redevelopment; and
- New Tumut Ambulance Station, as part of the \$232 million Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration program

In late 2021, the NSW Government committed \$80 million to redevelop Temora Hospital, \$25 million to redevelop Finley Hospital and \$15 million for staff accommodation for the District.

The NSW Government has committed a record \$10.8 billion investment towards building and upgrading the state’s health infrastructure over the four years to 2024-25.

Of the 46 NSW hospital redevelopments or upgrades underway or commenced in 2021-22, nearly two-thirds are located in rural and regional parts of NSW.

News and updates on the progress of the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment are available on the project’s website <https://www.mlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/GBHRedev>