



Lismore Base Hospital  
60 Uralba Street, Lismore

Heritage Assessment & Impact Statement  
Incorporating Aboriginal & Archaeological Assessments

July 2013

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| <b>Note:</b> This document is preliminary unless it is approved by Manager or Director of City Plan Heritage |                         |                          |                                            |                                                                                                                                  |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NSW Health has proposed the redevelopment of the existing Lismore Base Hospital site for the construction of a new five level hospital. The subject of this report is to identify any cultural heritage material that may be disturbed during the proposed redevelopment of the Lismore Base Hospital Site.

This report determines the extent, nature, integrity and significance of the resource and the impact of the excavation on both identified and potential heritage values of the site and, where appropriate, strategies to mitigate that impact. The work fulfils statutory requirements of Lismore LEP 2000 and the Director Generals' Requirements 17, 18 and 19 for the Assessment of Environmental Impact regarding heritage.

The subject site is contained within land first alienated for European occupation in 1846. The first construction of the hospital commenced in 1890, and subsequently the yard was extensively added to up to the present day. Due to the constantly changing nature of health care, the subject site has been consistently developed and redeveloped throughout its history, meaning that most buildings and other features have been demolished as part of the construction processes within the area.

### Aboriginal Heritage

There is unlikely to be sites or places of Aboriginal cultural heritage retained across the proposed development path for the proposed works. It is considered that there is nothing special or significant in any of its historical landscape qualities that would warrant further research in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage matters.

**Recommendation 1:** Although this baseline assessment has not identified the subject allotment and the development area as an area of potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage, once ground clearance commences if something is discovered that could be an Aboriginal object, work must be stopped and City Plan Heritage contacted. City Plan Heritage will notify the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) for advice regarding the finds and the appropriate management options. If human remains are found, work must be stopped, the site secured, and the NSW Police must also be notified in addition to the OEH.

### Historical Archaeology

The history of the Lismore Base Hospital site is firmly linked with health care. There were no previous functions or uses identified in this area and any archaeological remains of the area would relate to former structures. Given the consistent development and redevelopment of

the site and the types of construction, it is unlikely to leave any archaeological imprint that would be intact or that any relics would be uncovered by the proposed works.

**Recommendation 2:** Although this baseline assessment has not identified the subject allotment and the development area as an area of potential for archaeological relics, once ground clearance commences if something is discovered that could be a relic, work must be stopped and City Plan Heritage contacted. City Plan Heritage will notify the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) for advice regarding the finds and the appropriate management options.

#### Built heritage

The findings of this assessment regarding built heritage concludes that the majority of the buildings within the Base Hospital site relate to the later redevelopment stage of the hospital with the earlier buildings being significantly modified and added to. The earliest extant building is the Block P building dating from the 1933. However, it has been modified and added to as such its original layout and configuration is no longer distinguishable. The buildings dating from the late 1950s and 60s adjacent to Block P including Crawford House are of typical hospital buildings of their period with no particular architectural or aesthetic quality. The six Canary Island Palm trees along the Uralba Street frontage are the oldest and largest of the trees growing on the site planted in the 1940s. The trees should be protected and preserved.

#### **Conclusion:**

It is considered by City Plan Heritage that the proposed redevelopment will have negligible and no adverse impact on the assessed heritage significance of the existing hospital buildings, streetscape views, or to Armstrong House, the only heritage item in the vicinity. The increased height of the buildings have been suitably setback and articulated as not to dominate or otherwise negatively impact the streetscape.

The proposed new height of the development, although would make a notable difference to the present day streetscape presentation and character of its immediate streetscapes, considers the visual impact on the general character of the area, including Armstrong House. There will be no additional impact on the identified significant views and vistas of this heritage item.

The redevelopment will allow for the improved health care facilities that would respond to the current needs of its residents and the operational requirements of the NSW Health. The existing buildings within the site have been assessed as being of little heritage value and their demolition will have no detrimental impact to the identified cultural heritage values of Lismore as a whole. The new development provides an economically feasible and operationally efficient health care facility offering a continuum of hospital services to the community.

### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendations have been made to ensure the existing facilities have been appropriately managed and recorded as part of the proposed development:

Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- There is unlikely to be sites or places of Aboriginal cultural heritage retained within the proposed development area. It is considered that there is nothing special or significant in any of its historical landscape qualities that would warrant further research in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage matters.
- Stop Work Provision: Although this baseline assessment has not identified the subject allotment and the development area as an area of potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage, once ground clearance commences if something is discovered that could be an Aboriginal object, work must be stopped and City Plan Heritage contacted. City Plan Heritage will notify the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) for advice regarding the finds and the appropriate management options. If human remains are found, work must be stopped, the site secured, and the NSW Police must also be notified in addition to the OEH. Likewise, although there is low potential to any remnant non-Indigenous heritage to survive, should be taken into consideration when excavation works are carried out within the site. In the case of any finds that could be considered as relics (e.g. brick foundations, old drainage) the works in the immediate area must stop and the heritage consultants are notified for appropriate actions.
- An archival recording of the whole site, in particular areas where the new development will impact upon in general, should be undertaken in accordance with the NSW Heritage Council guidelines for *Photographic Recording of Heritage Items Using Film or Digital Capture* prior to the commencement of any work within the site. The recording should also include streetscapes around the site showing its relationship with Armstrong House and the neighbouring properties.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

City Plan Heritage has been engaged by City Plan Strategy & Development to prepare the following Heritage Assessment for the subject site, including Aboriginal and European Archaeological Assessment. This Report has been prepared to accompany a development proposal for the construction of a Women's Care Unit (WCU) to provide maternity care for women with normal and selected high risk pregnancies and a Level 4 special care nursery (SCN). The WCU will provide a Level 5 Maternity Service and include the following:

- Intrapartum Care (birthing) – 5 labour delivery rooms
- Postnatal Care – 18 maternity beds
- Special Care Nursery (Level 4) – 8 cots

Although several histories have been written regarding the subject site, this is the first report that specifically assesses the cultural heritage of the property. It includes a baseline Aboriginal and Historical archaeological assessments and has drawn on accessible resources and site photography. A preliminary environmental assessment comments on the site state that there are no local or state heritage items within the subject area; however, there is a heritage item in the vicinity known as *Armstrong House* at 86 Uralba Street. The Heritage Council NSW has reviewed this Environmental Assessment and has not been satisfied with the preliminary environmental assessment for a number of reasons, including:

- *The methodology does not comply with heritage assessment standards.*
- *The assessment of potential heritage issues has been restricted to statutory listings.*
- *Existing site features affected by the proposed development have not been identified.*
- *No history of the site has been provided.*
- *The potential heritage significance of existing site features has not been assessed.*
- *No information has been provided on other listings for site features, such as from local council heritage studies, Institute of Architects and National Trust registers*
- *No information has been provided on potential disturbance of archaeological relics.*
- *The extent of proposed new works is unclear in terms of demolition works and the maximum built form proposed*
- *The development's potential impact on existing features and its relationship to the heritage item in the vicinity is unknown as a result.*

It is noted that the original Environmental Assessment does not make reference to the Canary Island Palms identified in the 1986 Lismore Heritage Study, although these are not listed on the Lismore Environment Plan.

An Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) search to be undertaken for the following nominated lots and a 200m curtilage

- Lot 5 of Deposited Plan 17510
  - Lot 6 of Deposited Plan 17510
  - Lot 7 of Deposited Plan 17510
  - Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 820625
  - Lot 267 of Deposited Plan 755718
  - Lot 15 of Deposited Plan 17964
  - Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 350716
  - Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 350717
  - Lot C of Deposited Plan 347500
  - Lot 10 of Deposited Plan 1109862
  - Lot 22 of Deposited Plan 589890
  - Lot 24 of Deposited Plan 17964
  - Lot 25 of Deposited Plan 17964
  - Lot 26 of Deposited Plan 17964
  - Lot 21 of Deposited Plan 589890
  - Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 511444
- An appraisal of the development history of the site
  - An appraisal of the environment, including topography and geology.
  - An appraisal of the types of archaeology and Aboriginal cultural heritage sites likely to be in the area.
  - A summary of any archaeology and Aboriginal cultural heritage sites likely to be in the site and how to manage them.
  - Assessment of built elements of the site.

This Heritage Impact Statement incorporating Aboriginal and Archaeological Baseline Assessments has been prepared in response to the Director General's Requirements 17, 18 and 19 for heritage matters. These requirements have been copied below:

**17. Heritage**

*A statement of significance and an assessment of the impact on the heritage significance of any heritage items and/or conservation areas should be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines in the NSW Heritage Manual.*

**18. Aboriginal Heritage**

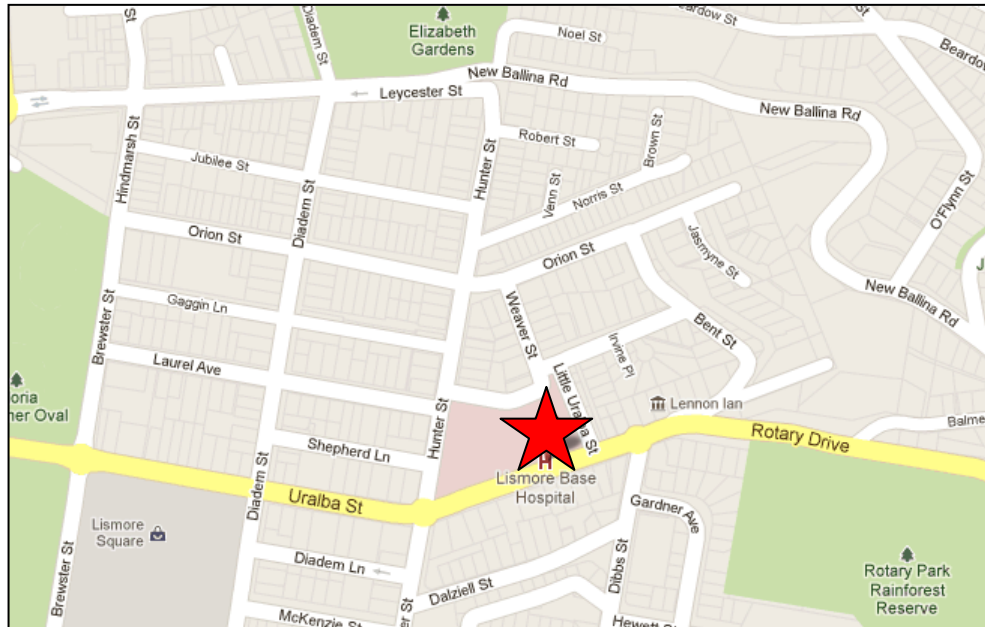
*The EIS shall address aboriginal heritage in accordance with the Draft Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation (DEC 2005) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for proponents 2010.*

**19. Archaeological Impacts**

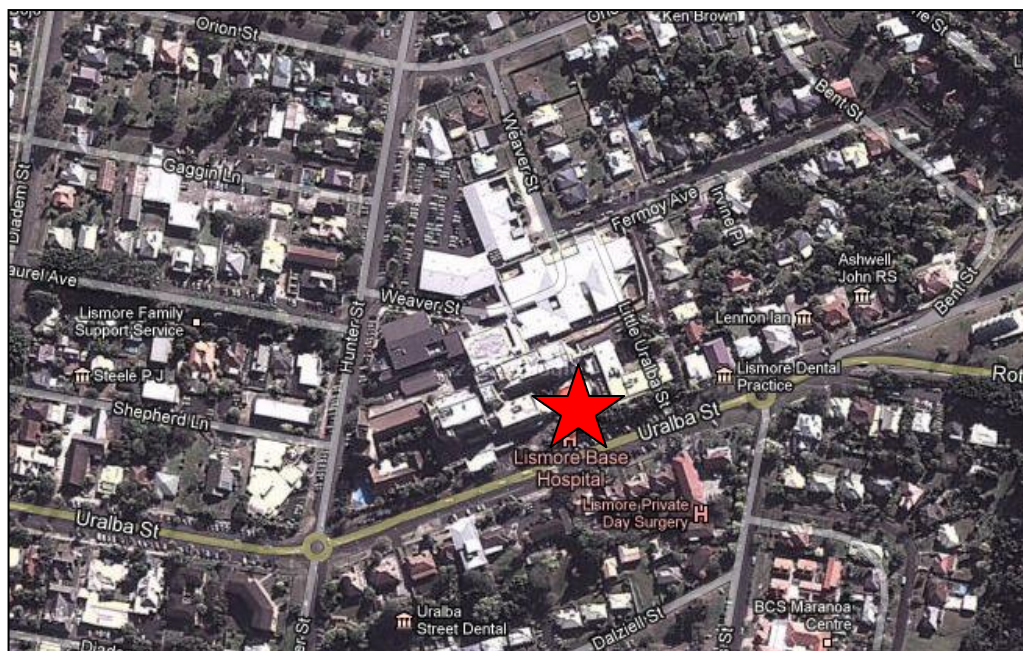
*If relevant, an archaeological study is to be carried out on the site to identify any european and/or aboriginal archaeological impacts associated with the proposal.*

## 1.2 SITE LOCATION

The subject site is located at 60 Uralba Street, Lismore on the northern side of the Street between Hunter Street and Dibbs Street intersections. For a more detailed description of the site and its context, see Site Description and Context.



**Figure 1.1: Map showing location of the subject site (shown by red star)**  
(Source: Google Maps)



**Figure 1.2: Satellite Image showing location of the subject site (shown by red star) and surrounding areas.**  
(Source: Google Maps)

### 1.3 METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office 'Archaeological Assessment Guidelines' and 'Assessing Heritage Significance' guidelines. The philosophy behind this report has been guided by the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter 1999*. The subject proposal has been assessed in relation to the controls and provisions contained in the Lismore Local Environment Plan 2012 and the Lismore Development Control Plan 2012.

Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Office of Environment & Heritage guidelines regarding the assessment and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in New South Wales, and the (*Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales (2010)*, and *Draft Guidelines for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Community Consultation (2005)*), the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* and the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act* (See Section 2.0 Statutory Controls).

This Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment has also included the following components:

- A NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) site search to determine whether or not previously recorded sites are present on the proposal area and to give consideration to the type of sites known to be present within the local area.
- A review of local archaeological reports and other relevant documents in order to provide a contextual framework to the study and heritage management process.
- A site significance assessment, as applicable.

Background research has been conducted to determine if known Aboriginal archaeological sites are located in the vicinity of the development area and to facilitate site prediction on the basis of known regional and local site patterns in order to place the study area within an archaeological research and heritage management context.

The following information sources were accessed for this study:

- NSW Office of Environment and Heritage Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System.
- Relevant reports held by the Lismore City Council.
- Previous reports prepared for the region, see bibliography
- Topographic maps and surveys of the site

In addition, the site has also been researched through primary sources such as demolition photographs, maps, plans, land titles searches, directories and council records. Secondary sources, such as existing reports, have also been reviewed in order to document the historic developmental sequence of the site, and to determine the likely survival of evidence of any previous site uses and structures.

The assessment of significance for the site is used as the basis for policy formulation and recommendations for the site. The overall cultural significance is addressed using the NSW Heritage Assessment criteria. The recommendations of the Report have been made on the basis of documentary evidence and inspections of the existing site conducted on Friday 30 March, 2012 by City Plan Heritage.

#### **1.4 LIMITATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Due to the sensitive nature of the hospital facilities access to all areas were not possible. Given consideration to the limited heritage value of the buildings and the changes made to all internal spaces limited access is not considered to make any impact on the assessment of the existing structures.

The authors wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance Owen Byrnes, Richmond Physical Resources Manager - Northern NSW Local Health District, and the Hospital's archivist and the Lismore Local Librarians.

#### **1.5 AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION**

The following report has been prepared by the Susan Kennedy (Senior Heritage Consultant), Flavia Scardamaglia (Heritage Consultant) and Kerime Danis (Manager) who has also reviewed and endorsed the content of this report. All photographs were taken by Kerime Danis during the site inspection on 7 May 2013 unless otherwise indicated.

#### **1.6 1.6 CONSULTATION**

Consultation with the Heritage Branch of the Office of Environment and Heritage has been made in accordance with the Director General's Requirements copied below:

*During the preparation of the EIS, you must consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups and affected landowners.*

*In particular you must consult with:*

- *Lismore City Council;*
- *Roads and Maritime Services;*
- *Office of Environment and Heritage*
- *Environmental Protection Agency; and*
- *Transport for NSW.*

*The EIS must describe the consultation process and the issues raised, and identify where the design of the development has been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, a short explanation should be provided.*

Consultation was made partially in person and over the phone with the Heritage Officer Claudine Loffi who was the assessing officer for the previous EIS on 30 May 2013. The layout and contents of the current study as well as its findings were explained by Kerime Danis. Ms Loffi has satisfied with the contents of the report and in principle confirmed that the report covers their requirements as noted in the letter dated 15 February 2013.

It is anticipated the Director General will forward this report to the Office of Environment and Heritage for their records. Due to the findings of this study, which are concluded that there is no Aboriginal and Archaeological potential within the site, the Heritage Branch most likely will not make further comments.

## 2.0 STATUTORY CONTROLS

The following section relates to archaeology – both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal within New South Wales. The relevant legislation and clauses are listed below.

### 2.1 FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Commonwealth Acts that may be relevant to a particular site within NSW relate to Aboriginal heritage and include the ***Federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Heritage Protection) Act*** and ***Australian Heritage Commission Act***.

### 2.2 NEW SOUTH WALES LEGISLATION

#### 2.2.1 GENERAL

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements for heritage (pursuant to s115Y of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act* (NSW) 1979). The proposal has been assessed against the *Lismore Local Environment Plan* and *Lismore Development Control Plan 2012*, as well as the criteria established by the *Heritage Act* (NSW) 1977.

#### 2.2.2 ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

In NSW the principle laws which deal with **Aboriginal heritage** are:

- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 under the auspices of the Office of Environment and Heritage
- Heritage Act 1977
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act* provides statutory protection for all Aboriginal objects and places in NSW. Areas are gazetted as Aboriginal places if the Minister is satisfied that there is enough evidence to show the area is, or was, of special significance to Aboriginal culture.

The *Heritage Act* protects the State's natural and cultural heritage. Aboriginal places or objects that are recognized as having high cultural value are listed on the State Heritage Register.

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act* includes provisions for Aboriginal sites and objects. Although the NPW Act gives a high level of protection to known Aboriginal objects, recent court decisions have reinforced that Part 6 gives the Director General (Office of Environment and Heritage) express powers to consent to the damage, destruction or defacement of Aboriginal objects by development activities. The powers in Part 6 are not inconsistent with the objects of the NPW Act. Section 91 of the Act requires that the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the OEHL be informed if Aboriginal cultural material is found during an excavation.

Excavation would then require a permit under section 90 of the Act. If Aboriginal related archaeology is discovered, work is to cease and the OEH will be informed for further instructions.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (EPA&A Act) provides protection by considering impacts on Aboriginal heritage in land use and planning decisions.

The three main areas are:

- Planning instruments allow particular uses for land and specify constraints. Aboriginal heritage is a value which should be assessed when determining land use;
- Section 90 of the EPA&A Act lists impacts which must be considered before development approval is granted. Aboriginal heritage is one of these possible impacts;
- State government agencies act as the determining authority on the environmental impacts of proposed activities and must consider a variety of community and cultural factors, including Aboriginal heritage, in their decisions.<sup>1</sup>

There are three key sections (along with associated regulations, schedules and guidelines) in the EP&A Act, which are relevant to Aboriginal Heritage:

### **EP&A Act - Part III**

Part III governs the preparation of the following three planning instruments:

- State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP's);
- Regional Environmental Plans (REP's); and
- Local Environmental Plans. (LEP's)

These planning instruments cover permissible uses and potential constraints on the land use. When assessing potential uses and constraints during the preparation of a planning instrument, guidelines produced by the Department of Planning New South Wales must be followed. These guidelines specify that Aboriginal sites and places of significance should be assessed as part of the process. Once developed, the planning instruments, such as LEP's, may specify the level of assessment required in relation to environmental assessment or more specifically Aboriginal heritage investigations for development applications.

### **EP&A Act - Part IV**

This section of the legislation governs the decision making process by local government (consent) authorities during a development application. Section 79C, under Part IV, describes types of impact which must be considered before development approval is granted. It states that consideration must be given for the impact of that development on the environment. It is legally understood that this should be taken to include Aboriginal sites and heritage.

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<sup>1</sup> Heritage Branch of the Dept of Planning NSW, Aboriginal Heritage - <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/infoaboriginal.pdf>

Part IV also covers the **integrated development approvals** (IDA) process whereby the approvals of State government agencies are linked to the development consent process. If an Aboriginal site will be impacted by a development, requiring an Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit under s.90 of the NPW Act, then the OEH becomes an approval body.

### **EP&A Act - Part V**

This section of the legislation governs the decision making process by State government (determining) authorities related to activity approval. In the decision making process, under Section 111, it is the State government agencies' duty to consider environmental impacts; and then under Section 112, determine whether the level of impact is sufficient to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

As mentioned in Part IV, 'environmental impacts' under the law should be taken to include Aboriginal sites and places. Furthermore, the Department of Planning New South Wales have developed a set of guidelines for interpretation of Section 112 which requires that Aboriginal heritage is assessed as part of the process.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aboriginalheritage.org/sites/legislation.php>

### **3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 SITE DESCRIPTION**

Lismore Base Hospital (LBH) is the oldest Major Referral Hospital in the Northern NSW LHD. A large proportion of the inpatient wards are in buildings dating from pre-1960, while the more recent 1990's development includes the procedural and diagnostic departments. By today's standards much of Lismore Base Hospital is out-dated and does not facilitate efficient patient care nor does it allow for implementation of contemporary clinical service models required to meet the growth in demand identified in the CSP.

The current LBH campus has developed over a long period, with buildings added to the campus infrastructure from time to time creating a site with a variety of facilities of differing form, structure, and condition. The existing buildings comprise approximately 32,000sqm of clinical and support accommodation within 10 separate buildings over various levels with most higher being 9 levels. The last major upgrade of the acute services buildings occurred in 1990 and involves the construction of the new C block.<sup>3</sup>

Externally the existing buildings include a variety of material finishes including brickwork of varying colours and textures, exposed concrete, terracotta tiles and metal cladding.

The subject site is located at 60 Uralba Street, Lismore and is known as Lismore Base Hospital. The site is comprised of the following Land Title Identifiers:

- Lot 5 of Deposited Plan 17510
- Lot 6 of Deposited Plan 17510
- Lot 7 of Deposited Plan 17510
- Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 820625
- Lot 267 of Deposited Plan 755718
- Lot 15 of Deposited Plan 17964
- Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 350716
- Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 350717
- Lot C of Deposited Plan 347500
- Lot 10 of Deposited Plan 1109862
- Lot 22 of Deposited Plan 589890
- Lot 24 of Deposited Plan 17964
- Lot 25 of Deposited Plan 17964
- Lot 26 of Deposited Plan 17964
- Lot 21 of Deposited Plan 589890
- Lot 1 of Deposited Plan 511444

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<sup>3</sup> Stage 3A design report

The Base Hospital site occupies the entire triangular block and is bounded by Uralba Street (to the south), Hunter Street (to the west), and Orion Street (to the north). Lismore Hospital sits to the east of the town centre and is a major development facility along Uralba Street and Hunter Street with the local residents and established residential dwellings to its north and east.

The site comprises approximately 32,000sqm of clinical and support accommodation within 10 separate buildings over 9 levels. Taller buildings front Uralba Street, which is also the primary entry to the Hospital. The hospital buildings including associated services and accommodation facilities spread beyond the subject triangular main hospital site. The current study is essentially focused on the main base hospital site with only brief descriptive information on the other facilities that are located outside of the main site.



**Figure 3.1: Lismore Base Hospital**

(Image Source: Lismore Base Hospital Stage 3A Redevelopment Scheme Design Report Volume 1)

## 3.2 SITE CONTEXT

The Hospital is located within the valley to the east of the Town Centre on a slight ridgeline to the north of Ballina Road, the primary east-west arterial road through Lismore. The height and location of the Hospital ensures it is a prominent feature from all view points, as well as offering expansive views from the upper levels of the main acute buildings.

The site has a high degree of connectivity to the Town Centre and Ballina Road through the surrounding streets including:

- Uralba Street, which provides an east-west link between the Town Centre and eastern part of Ballina Road,
- Hunter Street, which links the main southern approach to the town centre,
- Orion Street, Weaver Street and Little Uralba Street are smaller residential streets.



**Figure 3.2: Views from the hospital; Uralba Street looking east (left), Hunter Street looking north (right)**

The area surrounding the Hospital is in a period of transition from residential to hospital related uses. As it would be expected the presence of Lismore Base Hospital has been an attractor for allied health uses as well as services directly associated with the Hospital. This has created a larger 'hospital precinct', which includes numerous health related facilities, as well as privately owned properties by staff.

The areas to the north and east of the site are primarily residential and it will be important than any future development near these boundaries are sensitive and respectful to the residential interfaces. For example, these areas generally have setback requirements of 6m for primary frontages and 4m for secondary frontages.

There is only one nearby heritage item known as the Armstrong House located at 81-83 Uralba Street diagonally from the main entrance to the Hospital at the corner of Dibbs Street. The Statement of Significance for the item notes:-

*Large Federation Filigree building, rare locally. Landmark importance on corner site. Prominent in local views on a well trafficked street. Adopts a diagonal plan arrangement common on corner sites elsewhere. Essentially unaltered, following recent removal of unsympathetic additions. Double verandah of special note. Social and historic interest for its original use as a private hospital. Long associated with the base hospital opposite.<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=1950062>



***Figure 3.3: Neighbouring properties with mixed residential and allied health uses (top), and the heritage item 'Armstrong House' viewed from the eastern most end of the Lismore Base Hospital building (bottom). It is obscured by the mature trees of in its garden.***

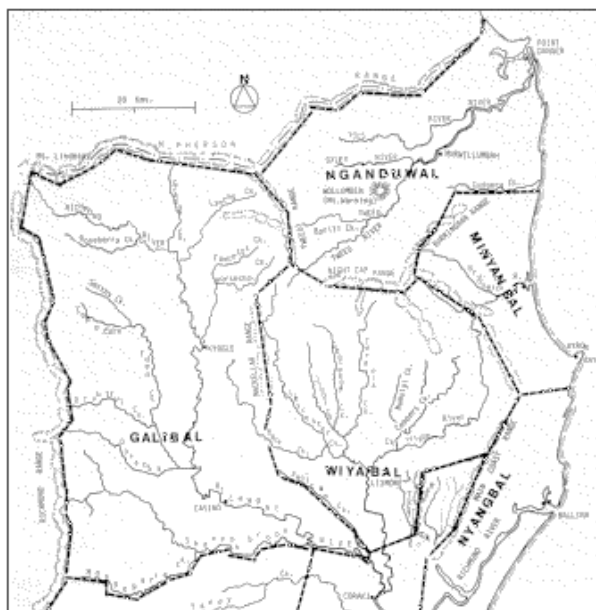
## 4.0 HISTORY

### 4.1 ABORIGINAL OCCUPATION

In prehistoric times the Lismore Area was occupied by peoples belonging to several tribal and linguistic groups. Mapping of the territory of these groups has been undertaken by both Tindale (1974) and Horton (1996), with that of Horton appearing to condense the smaller tribal groups into broader linguistic classifications.

The Lismore area was occupied by the *Arakwal*. To the south and west were the *Badjalang* or *Bundjalung* who occupied a territory of around 2300 square kilometres south of Casino and as far west as Tabulum / Baryugil. It is noted in Tindale's catalogue that Rankin records a strong break in language between this tribe and the *Arakwal*. West again is the *Jukambal* which are seen to occupy the land around Tenterfield, with the *Kambuwal* group further to the west.

The Bundjalung people are known to have had their own travel routes in the region, usually along defined pathways linked by rivers from the coast to the plateau. On occasion they would navigate up to 500 kilometres to the Bunya Mountains to cut the bunya nut cones which flowered every three years. They camped and ate the nuts and held corroborees at night, providing opportunities to trade both goods and culture with neighbouring tribes. Low-gradient ridgelines provide natural topographic access routes inland from the coast and both ethnographic and archaeological evidence testifies to use of such ridgelines by Gumbaingirr (an adjacent tribal language group) transit groups (Collins 1994, 2002). Movement beyond local territories was undertaken by prearrangement with adjoining groups in order to meet widespread social and ceremonial obligations (Chevally 1946; Belshaw 1978). McBryde refers to literature describing the use of stone axes to catch possums and Wyndham (1889: 37) recalls a ceremonial gathering on the western fall of the Tablelands where four tribes were present.



**Figure 4.1: Aboriginal Language Groups around Lismore**  
(Source: Lismore City Council)