



# Woodside Health and Aged Care: Precinct Regeneration

Engagement Report: Summary

**Creating  
Communities**

# Report Details

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Project summary

Located in the leafy suburb of East Fremantle, 18 Dalgety Street is the site of the former Woodside Maternity Hospital.

The proposed project will see the former homestead and maternity hospital repurposed into a world-class health and aged care precinct, whilst revitalising the ground floor of Woodside House for community use and amenity.

The project is a joint venture between aged care provider Hall & Prior and the Fire and Emergency Services Superannuation Fund.

The significant redevelopment will be a high-quality centre for healing and wellness, with high and low care accommodation options for up to 150 residents. The facility will also include specialist palliative care, dementia care, disability care (for people of various ages) and a range of allied health services.

The Woodside heritage homestead will be refurbished to its former glory with the ambition of opening the building to allow use by both residents and the broader community, including open space access, community uses, and hospitality uses.

## 1.2 Site history and overview

Woodside House was developed in 1902 by William Dalgety Moore on his rural estate on the outskirts of Fremantle. The estate was the Moore family home until 1923.

The house and remaining land were sold in 1924 and for the following 23 years, the house served as a private hospital. During this time, further land was sold off until the site reached its current size and configuration.

In 1951 the Department of Health purchased the site for conversion into a public maternity hospital. Woodside House remained as the administrative core of Woodside Hospital and purpose-built extensions were constructed to the east and south. It remained a maternity hospital until 2006. During its lifetime as a maternity hospital, an estimated 50,000 children were born at Woodside.

Following the closure of Woodside Hospital, the facility used as Health Department offices until 2014. It was sold to Hall & Prior in 2017.

The site today is almost exactly one hectare (10,016m<sup>2</sup>), with Woodside House in the centre.

## 1.3 Project objectives

The projects objectives are as follows:

- To refurbish Woodside House to its former glory, with upper floors for serviced suites and the ground floor open to residents and the broader community
- To create one of Australia's top 10 aged care centres, with high care, low care and palliative care accommodation options, and beds available to those with low financial means

- To create facilities open for use by the community, potentially including public open space, a hospitality space, and a library
- To provide an investment of \$100 million in the local economy, generating 300 jobs during construction and 150 jobs ongoing to operate the facility
- To provide a training hub for the aged care sector
- To make tribute to the maternity wards and rich history of the site, as well as the provision of public art
- To create a community care hub for the local area, with a wellness centre, consultation rooms, health studios and hydrotherapy pool
- To retain or transplant as many significant trees on site as possible
- To explore opportunities for partnerships with local stakeholders



**FIGURE 1. PROPOSED RETENTION OF WOODSIDE HOUSE, AND DEMOLITION OF LATER HOSPITAL-RELATED ADDITIONS.**

## 1.4 Role of Creating Communities

Hall & Prior has contracted Creating Communities to manage the community engagement process for the proposed revitalisation. The objectives specific to the communications and engagement elements of this project include:

- To proactively present the project background, designs and plans for the Woodside Health and Aged Care Precinct Regeneration, prior to the submission of a Development Application
- To seek feedback from community members and other stakeholders on the project
- To form positive relationships with neighbours, stakeholders and other community members that will form a foundation for Hall & Prior being an important member of the community throughout the long-term operation of Woodside

- To generate excitement about the future Woodside Health and Aged Care Precinct

## **1.5 How this Report will be used**

This Report is intended to present Hall & Prior and the planning and design consultants with feedback that may inform any updates to the proposal, including design and planning elements, potential future community uses and service delivery.

This is the Summary Version of the Final Engagement Report, with the overview of findings only. A full Engagement Report is available on request to the Town of East Fremantle, with detailed findings of all engagement initiatives.



## 2. Methodology

Between January and November 2020, over 16 key stakeholder organisations and 146 community members have been engaged and shared feedback with the Hall & Prior project team. Communications materials have been distributed to over 3,900 dwellings, via multiple methods, including flyers to all residences within the Town of East Fremantle.

### 2.1 Engagement initiatives

The following engagement initiatives were conducted to seek feedback from community members and other stakeholders:

#### Phase 1: feedback to inform design concepts

The engagement initiatives described below were conducted to inform the concept designs for the Woodside Health and Aged Care Precinct.

The key engagement elements included:

- **14 meetings** with the Town of East Fremantle, State Design Review Panel and Heritage Council of Western Australia.
- **Six (6) meetings with other stakeholders**, including heads of Government Departments; Local Members of Parliament; the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce; and Autism Association of WA (a near neighbour)
- **15 one-on-one meetings with residential neighbours** in close proximity to the site
- **One (1) focus group session with local businesses and community organisations**, attended by a total of seven (7) representatives
- **Two (2) focus group sessions with the general community**, attended by a total of 44 local residents
- **A drop-in session at the Town of East Fremantle's open day**, attended by over 70 people, with approximately 41 asking questions or providing comments

**NOTE:** In the findings of this report (Section 3), the feedback for Phase 1 (one on one meetings and focus groups) is presented according to counts of responses (not count of respondents), as it was important to understand the most commonly raised comments and recommendations to inform the design development.

#### Phase 2: feedback on design concepts

- **Drop-in Open Day sessions** were conducted following development of the concept designs, to seek feedback on the concepts. Three (3) drop-in sessions at the community open day at the Woodside House, attended by 85 community members, with approximately 46 asking questions or providing comments related to the Woodside Health and Aged Care precinct regeneration

- **Town of East Fremantle Tour** – Elected members and senior officers were taken on a tour of Woodside and shown the proposed designs. Attendees were then taken by bus to Hall and Prior’s Karingal Green to show the standard of accommodation that a new facility provides and the level of care that will be provided at Woodside

NOTE: In the findings of this report (Section 3), the feedback for Phase 2 is presented according to counts of respondents (not count of responses), as it was important to understand the number of respondents that provided supportive comments, concerns and suggestions, and that the counts were not confounded by individual respondents who provided multiple comments on the same topic.

## 2.2 Communications materials

These engagement initiatives were promoted and supported by the communications materials listed below.

### Promotional materials

- 13 emails/letters of invitation to key stakeholders to attend one-on-one meetings
- 20 letters of invitation to immediate neighbours to attend one-on-one meetings
- 20 emails of invitation to local businesses and community organisations stakeholders to attend the stakeholder focus group
- Approximately 3,900 flyers to all letterboxes within the Town of East Fremantle, and the most proximate area of Palmyra, to attend one of the community focus groups
- A newspaper ad in the Fremantle Herald, Melville Herald and Cockburn Herald between 18 July and 31 July, with an accompanying editorial from 25 July and 31 July advertising the community focus groups
- A social media post shared on the Hall & Prior and Town of East Fremantle Facebook pages on Friday 24 August, advertising the community focus groups
- Approximately 3,900 flyers to all letterboxes within the Town of East Fremantle, and the most proximate area of Palmyra, to attend the community open day
- An email to all community members who attended a previous meeting or focus group, or registered their interest on the website (approximately 90 individuals in total) inviting them to attend the community open day
- A newspaper ad in the Fremantle Herald between 31 October and 13 November, advertising the community open day
- A social media post shared on the Hall & Prior and Town of East Fremantle Facebook pages throughout October and November, advertising the community open day
- A banner displayed on the site from 26 October to 14 November, to advertise the open day



### 2.2.1 Information materials

- A frequently asked questions (FAQ) and information document, available online (see below), distributed to immediate neighbours, and available in hard copy at the focus groups
- A project website at <https://woodsideagedcare.com.au/> with background information, a link to the FAQ booklet and blog update

### 3. Overview of findings

This section provides a summary of the most common themes of stakeholder and community responses evident across all engagement initiatives.

Key stakeholder meetings, neighbour meetings, focus groups and Town of East Fremantle Open House were conducted for Phase 1. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of comments that relate to this particular theme, across these engagement initiatives. Because focus groups activities were conducted in groups, and because participants were able to make multiple comments related to the same theme, these are **counts of comments, rather than counts of respondents**.

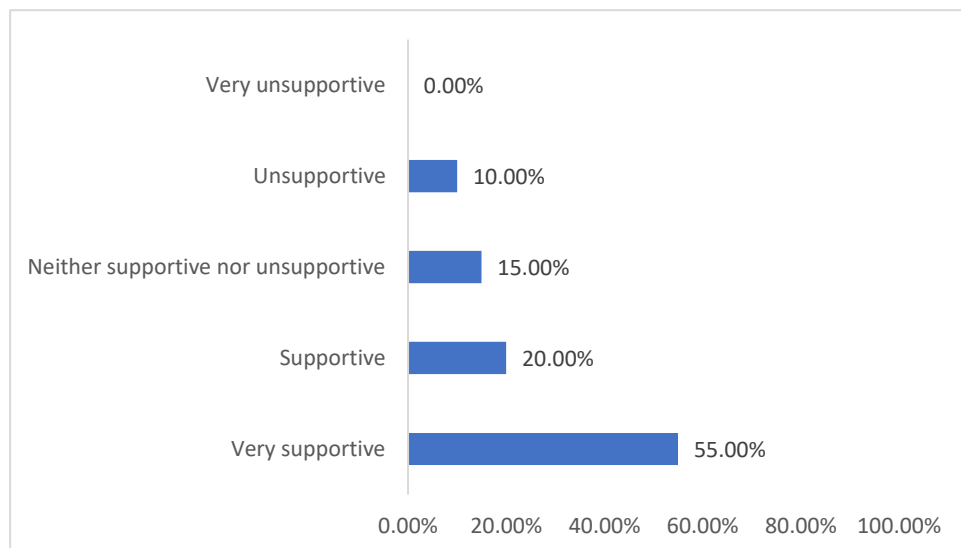
For the Community Open Day, numbers in brackets indicate the count of respondents, followed by the comments they made, categorised by strengths; concerns; and opportunities.

Note that for Phase 1, there were far more supportive comments (119) than concerns (74). The results of the question “How supportive are you of the proposed plans and designs for the site?” from the community open day also indicate overwhelming support for the proposal (see Section 3.1 below).

#### 3.1 Overall support for the projects

Participants who completed a feedback form were asked: “How supportive are you of the proposed plans and designs for the site?” The graph below shows the percentage of responses (out of a total of 20 responses) who indicated each level of support.

Overall, 75% of responses are either very supportive (55%) or supportive (20%) of the proposal. The remaining 25% are “neither supportive or unsupportive” or unsupportive. No responses were very unsupportive of the proposal.



## 3.2 Phase 1 Engagement (Meetings and Focus Groups)

*NOTE: Numbers in brackets relate to number of total comments that related to this theme.*

### 3.2.1 Most common themes of positive comments

- Design and built form, including general support for the design; use of curves and large setbacks; and comfort with height and bulk (42)
- Providing for community uses and interaction, including opening the ground floor of Woodside House; opportunities for interaction in the hospitality spaces, open spaces; and potential for community activities and partnership with local stakeholder organisations (24)
- Using the site for aged care, including the range of services offered; the quality of care; and acknowledging the need for more local aged care services (24)
- Heritage treatment, including retention of Woodside House; the complimentary design of the new building; and the re-use of materials (20)
- Landscaping and open space, including retention of trees; mix of public and secure spaces; and amount of open space retained (19)

### 3.2.2 Most common themes of concerns

- Built form, including potential of overlooking and overshadowing of neighbours; and the visual impact of the building bulk (26)
- Traffic and parking, including the potential for visitors to park illegally on Dalgety and Fortescue Streets; safety of pedestrians, including children walking to school; and the general increase in local traffic (19) *(although note that there were also 14 comments stating that traffic and parking were not major concerns; or support for underground parking)*
- Impacts during construction, including noise; dust; and contractor parking (10)

### 3.2.3 Most common themes of opportunities for improvement

- Suggestion about community use, including a café; ability for local groups to book spaces; a library; opportunities for intergenerational interaction; community gardens; and volunteer opportunities (33)
- Opportunities related to access, including preventing on-street parking for visitors and contractors; ensuring all residents have access to outdoor areas; and managing public access to the site (21)
- Opportunities related to heritage, including acknowledgement of Indigenous heritage; opportunities to use engagement to canvas historical stories; and ideas for restoration of Woodside House (19)

### 3.3 Phase 2: (Open Day)

*NOTE: Numbers in brackets indicate the number of respondents who made comments related to this theme.*

#### 3.3.1 Most common themes of positive comments

- Providing for community uses and interaction, including opening the ground floor of Woodside House and opportunities for interaction in the hospitality spaces, open spaces (12)
- Heritage treatment, including retention of Woodside House (12)
- Landscaping and open space, including retention of trees and amount of open space retained (10)

#### 3.3.2 Most common themes of concerns

- Built form, including potential of overlooking and overshadowing of neighbours and the height (15)
- Traffic and parking, including the safety of pedestrians, including children walking to school and the general increase in local traffic (15)
- Impacts on landscaping, including removal of mature trees (10)

#### 3.3.3 Most common themes of opportunities for improvement

- Suggestion about community use, including opportunities for intergenerational interaction (5)

### 3.4 Historical and personal stories

Engagement with people with links to the old Woodside Maternity Hospital uncovered a strong thread of connection to the place. These may be people who started their lives at Woodside or gave birth there, or others who worked there or lived in the immediate neighbourhood and witnessed the comings and goings of a busy maternity hospital.

These stories were shared at various stages of the engagement process, but especially so at the open day in November 2020 where people were eager to share their personal experiences.

Examples include:

- A woman who was born in Woodside Hospital in December 1953, and believed she was one of the first babies born there. She lived in Allen Street, one street away from the hospital, as a child then moved to Dalgety Street, even closer to Woodside, where she lived for 45 years.
- Many stories from people who were born there from the 1950s onwards, and mothers who gave birth there in much more recent times. Many of them also lived in the East Fremantle area, highlighting the importance of the hospital to the local community.

- Twins, men in now in their 50s, who were born at Woodside. It was a Sunday night when they were born and they told how their mother could recall the time because of the sound of the 7pm bells from a nearby church.
- Others who lived on Dalgety Street as children told how Woodside was an integral part of the community and provided a caring and thorough service to new mothers.
- One woman's story showed how Woodside has resonance across generations. She told that her grandparents built their marital home in Dalgety Street and as children, she and her siblings loved to count the cars going past the home when hospital visiting hours ended. They were born at Woodside themselves and their grandmother was able to walk up to the hospital to visit. The woman also had two sons of her own at Woodside and advised that at the time it was common to have an extended post-natal stay when new mothers were taught about feeding, bathing and exercise before they took their new babies home (of up to two weeks)
- One person reported living nearby for about 40 years and told how on the Dalgety Street side, the hospital grounds were always open to the public. Children played football and cricket there and learned to ride their bikes in the carpark. Expectant mothers were often sent for a walk down the street and would sit and rest on the front wall outside their home.
- There were also stories of an annual Easter fete at Woodside which attracted hundreds of local people.
- Many told of friends and relatives who worked at Woodside, as nurses and in the kitchen, highlighting the importance of the facility as a place of employment for the community, as well as a place of healing and care.