

27 April 2022

FAO: NSW Department of Planning and Environment

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville Redevelopment  
23-27 Lytton Street, Wentworthville NSW 2145**

I have been informed by the project manager and design team for the above mentioned redevelopment that the NSW Department of Planning and Environment are requesting that the floor height of level one in stage two be lowered to bring the overall building height down.

I am unsure of the reasoning for this decision, but if this change to the plans were to occur, it would significantly negatively impact our ability to adequately cater to the mental health needs of the community. The current redevelopment has been designed to allow two units to connect together and increase, or decrease, in size by the locking of compartmented areas. To enable two connected units to open and close doors to allow for decreasing and increasing sizes of units, based on specific clinical demand. The existing unit in stage one -where stage two is proposed to connect- already has demand that exceeds the size of the unit.

It is not appropriate, nor safe, for the cohorts of patients at the hospital to mix, for example young adolescents mixing with over 18s, or young vulnerable eating disorder patients with drug and alcohol patients. As you no doubt are aware, during these 2 years of pandemic, mental health needs have drastically increased. Recent research, covering 2020, led by university of Queensland, has shown a 26% increase in anxiety and depression rates since 2019. We have not as yet measured the impacts of 2021. MH needs of our young people have dramatically increased, following lockdowns especially. We, as a MH service, are trying to meet those needs as best, and as fast as we can.

We cannot operate a flexible and clinically responsive service if we have to reduce the amount of beds from the original plan. If we lose the height we have to lose landscaping. In urban designed MH units the lack of garden and outdoor space is detrimental to positive MH and recovery. Car parking availability allows us to attract people to work on our units, losing this space is not great either.

The current design allows us to be flexible with the needs of our patient cohorts and our clinical team strongly believes that this proposal will ensure that we can meet the needs of the community in a safe and innovative way, with flexibility of clinical space being paramount. As well as a design that is both functional and clinically effective, with our patients feeling good about their exterior space as well.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Mark Cross. Consultant Psychiatrist. MBChB, MRCPsych, FRANZCP  
Medical superintendent, Ramsay Clinic Wentworthville**