

RE: A modification application for the Redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital (Concept) - SSD-8699-Mod-1 EXH-48712711

INTRODUCTION

We write regarding this development as the owners of a property adjoining the boundary of Hammondcares' Greenwich Hospital.

We are concerned regarding the works proposed in this application's documents due to their impacts on our property and the Gore Creek Reserve.

Therefore, we object to this proposal. We believe that the following issues unfairly disadvantage our property and will damage the Gore Creek,

- **ISSUE 1: Inequitable effects on neighbours of the development only now revealed in these documents.**
- **ISSUE 2: Apparent omissions from the documents of aspects of the required scope of work.**

We have covered these issues below.

ISSUE 1: NEWLY REVEALED INEQUITABLE EFFECTS ON THE NEIGHBOURS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Extreme overlooking and loss of privacy /an inequitable sharing of the amenity of this location.

Note: The majority of our property sits some 8.5 metres below Greenwich Hospital's current carpark.

In order to better understand the Hospital's sparsely dimensioned architectural drawings, we have used an experienced person to draw up a scaled CAD model using the current and past development drawings for topography and building form. This model allows us to interpret more accurately what is being proposed in the documents. We have attached images from that CAD model which show the extreme overlooking and loss of privacy caused for our home by the Hospital's plans.

The general observation to make is that, including the modifications of the Seniors Living blocks, the scale and mass of the built forms still bear no reasonable, visual relationship with the R2 Zone housing and E2 Zone bushland which surround them.

The specific observation we can also make from this model is that our house, garden and pool area will now be massively overlooked. This despite a verbal reassurance in a teleconference with the Hospital that 'screens and walls' would mitigate the problem of overlooking.

Taking note of the newly proposed siting of *the Southern Seniors Living* block, we now find that overlooking will occur from,

- **44 apartments.** Overlooking from windows and balconies will be possible from the southern aspect of *the Northern Seniors Living* block, the western aspect of the *Northern Seniors Living* block, the southern aspect of the *Southern Seniors Living* block and the western aspect of the *Southern Seniors Living* block.
- **The Rooftop Garden** – a newly revealed aspect of the building designed for the benefit of users of the *Southern Seniors Living* block.
- **The Sky Terrace** – a newly revealed aspect of the building designed for the benefit of users of the *Southern Seniors Living* block.
- **The Sky Lounge** – a newly revealed aspect of the building designed for the benefit of users of the *Southern Seniors Living* block.
- **The western aspect of the Hospital Building.**
- **The Podium.**
- **The western access road.**
- **Overlooking from the proposed use of the embankment next to our house and above our pool area, as part of planned educational and recreational walking paths,**

‘There is an opportunity in this precinct to highlight the native flora and fauna and gully habitat through an interpretation walk and exploration of bush tucker as a connection to Country.’ Landscape EIS Report and Plans.

Additionally, the vastly increased ambient light levels at night from all these residences and recreation areas are only now made apparent in the latest documents.

This extreme overlooking of our property comes off the back of a completely different history.

That history of our property was related to us by the previous owners with whom we met regularly for many years. They built the house in the early sixties, before Greenwich Hospital extended the carpark by dumping landfill to form the embankment on their western boundary. Before that was done, the escarpment between Greenwich Hospital and our home was densely wooded, with sandstone caves facing our house. Privacy from Greenwich Hospital was afforded by the vegetation on top of the escarpment and by trees at the base of the escarpment.

When Greenwich Hospital extended its carpark towards the boundary, covering the escarpment and the trees to the boundary with an earthen bank, the Hospital agreed with the previous owners of our house to plant a green buffer of vegetation; this was to provide screening on the bank’s slope, and thus protect the privacy of what is now our home.

That screening was in place when we purchased the house in 1999, and this evolving green buffer has effectively screened Greenwich Hospital from us, and us from Greenwich Hospital since that time. This bushland buffer zone has recently been cleared and the new modification documents now confirm our previously raised but unanswered concerns that there will be no screening vegetation planted due to the APZ required for the *Southern Seniors Living* block.

The Hospital's earlier Concept Proposal included a landscaping specification that, *'Riparian Embankment and Road Verge; planting will establish a plant community generally consistent with the Coastal Sandstone Gallery Rainforest, and with the Coastal Sandstone Foreshores Forest'*. The planting on the embankment was also designated as *'screening'*.

Indeed, the current Landscape EIS Report and Plans, p57 include a zone between the APZ and our boundary as being slated for 'FULL RESTORATION'. This would afford the Hospital opportunity to reinstate planted screening to mitigate some of the overlooking for our property. These trees would go some way to reducing the vastly increased ambient light levels at night.

REQUEST: Hammondcare derives great value for the development by overlooking our property in order to access the south-western views and breezes for its apartments and recreation areas while causing us great loss of privacy and amenity. We therefore ask that, in fairness, Hammondcare be required to,

- a) **Plan and plant the APZ with a setout of trees and shrubs which maximises screening while conforming to the requirements of the APZ.**
- b) **Plant screening of MATURE/ADVANCED trees to the area between the APZ and the boundary with our property.**
- c) **Work with us to create visual screening solutions to mitigate the extreme loss of privacy, particularly for our north and east facing rooms and the pool area of our home. We also ask that the cost to implement these solutions, including solutions on our own property, be met by Hammondcare. We believe that it is only fair that Hammondcare cover these relatively miniscule costs in order to return some privacy and amenity to our property.**

ISSUE 2: APPARENT OMISSIONS FROM THE DOCUMENTS OF ASPECTS OF THE SCOPE OF WORK REQUIRED WHICH AFFECT US AS NEIGHBOURING PROPERTY OWNERS

A. Structural stability of the embankment on the Hospital's western boundary.

As part of the documentation of the current application, *Jeffrey and Katauskas'* 19 February 2010 geotechnical assessment reports that evidence of soil 'creep' was present in the embankment and that it was 'expected to occur' in future. Soil creep is a gradual landslide of the embankment and as it collapses, it spreads out towards our bounding properties.

If left unarrested by an engineered solution, as well as our property, the Hospital's own infrastructure, the Sydney Water sewer main and the Council's piped creek may all eventually be structurally affected.

Jeffrey and Katauskas' 10 May 2022 Additional Geotechnical Investigation categorizes the embankment as 'marginally stable' and describes some solutions to stabilize the embankment.

REQUEST: We ask that the Hospital fully stabilize the embankment in order to protect the neighbouring properties.

B. Stormwater runoff

The creek which runs down from the Pacific Highway, through Greenwich Public School and under River Road is then piped to continue under the Hospital buildings and driveway then under the embankment adjacent to our property.

That creek is the watercourse to which all the properties upstream in the catchment continue to exercise their right of access to direct their piped and overland stormwater. However, with the piping of the creek under the Hospital the properties neighbouring the Hospital lost that right of access to the watercourse.

Without that access and due to the encroaching creep of the embankment, runoff water from the Hospital embankment and neighbouring properties had been crossing onto our property for several years and caused the erosion of our property into the Gore Creek.

In a good faith effort to prevent this and after a consultation with owners of two of the neighbouring properties, the Hospital this year brought forward part of its stormwater control plan. It has extended a dish drain to collect runoff along the bottom of the embankment at our boundary. Unfortunately the extended dish drain was not connected to the piped creek on the Hospital property and has consolidated the blocking of the access rights of neighbouring properties to the piped creek. In addition, the dish drain not being connected to the existing piped creek has resulted in all the collected water exiting the dish drain and still entering our property. This water flow has washed several cubic meters of soil and stone from our land into Gore Creek since completion of the dish drain earlier this year.

The Hospital has stated at site meetings that it is unwilling to do further work on the western embankment as it is concerned that owners of properties over the valley will complain that development work is being started early. This leaves us with the ongoing loss of our land and the Hospital's refusal to recognize and rectify or compensate us for that loss.

REQUEST: We ask that the Hospital be required to engineer the solution for return the right of all the neighbouring properties to access the watercourse on the Hospital's property. We also ask that the Hospital be required and permitted to urgently implement complete the works on the boundary to prevent its collected water from continuing to damage our property.

C. Flood event control and existing pipe capacity

The Van der Meer Stormwater Management Report states that, *'the main objective is to make sure the proposed method of drainage is not impacting on the downstream properties.'*

We are owners of a downstream property and we are being impacted by erosion NOW due to the Hospital's current method of drainage.

We are very concerned that the 750mm pipe appears to be seen as the solution for the proposed extra hard-surface runoff and flood events. We have witnessed that **this pipe is already at FULL CAPACITY TO ITS OBVERT during high rainfall events.**

We have seen the pipe at the headwall jetting water out three-four metres in less than maximum rainfall. We have also observed the Hospital roadway and carpark being overwhelmed by inflows in high rainfall events resulting in the overland flow of stormwater down the western embankment and onto our property.

Given the extra loads proposed in these plans we cannot see how this pipe will cope with the added load and how our property will not be impacted further without a greater mitigation than appears in the plans now.

In addition, there does not appear to be any planned path for flood events on the western area of the site except noting the floodwater currently flows down the driveway. We could find no designed way for that water to be handled to the boundary of the property. At that point, we are THE *downstream property* and we do not think it fair that our property continues to be the informal drain for those events.

This is particularly so as access to the natural watercourse to handle these flood events has been cut off from us by the Hospital by its piping of the creek.

REQUEST: We ask that there be a requirement on Hammondcare that if, at any time it becomes apparent that the system is inadequate, Hammondcare will quickly implement an engineered design in order to meet its own stated objective of not impacting downstream properties.

D. Construction period and minimization of its impact on neighbours

The Construction Management Plan sets out almost seven years of demolition, excavation and construction.

REQUEST: In order to mitigate the enormous strain this protracted program will place on us as neighbours we would ask the following be required of the applicant,

- i. That mature trees are planted in the area between the APZ and our shared boundary now in order to kick-start the visual screening of our properties from the construction site and go some way towards cutting back the noise and dust.**
- ii. That the quieter and less vibratory methods are used to excavate the site in order to minimize the transmission of noise and vibration. This will also reduce the opportunity for dangerous silica-containing sandstone dust to become airborne.**
- iii. That adequate dust control measures are instituted and used assiduously.**
- iv. That a responsible person be nominated and available for us to call upon if any problems arise during construction which affect us and that that person be available for contact during and outside work hours.**

We see these requests as fair, reasonable and presenting relatively minor costs given the price we are being asked to pay so that a development significant to the entire state may be created on our doorstep.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this development.

ATTACHMENTS: CAD drawings