



NSW GOVERNMENT

Department of Planning

Strategic Sites and Urban Renewals, Strategic Assessment

Planning Assessment Report

Application to Modify the Minister's Approval for the construction of Auburn Hospital

Major Project 06-0129 MOD 1

1 BACKGROUND

The Minister for Planning approved a project application for the redevelopment of Auburn Hospital on 26 January 2007 subject to conditions. The approval provided for the staged demolition of all buildings over the entire site and construction of a new 184-bed, five (5) storey hospital with a GFA of 23,000m² and on site car parking for 273 vehicles. The new Hospital will be constructed to the south of the existing main hospital building to facilitate staging and minimise disruption to clinical services during construction of the new facility.

On 13 April 2007, the Minister also approved a concept plan for the redevelopment of the entire site (including the Arthur Stone site opposite). The Concept Plan granted approval for a new private hospital and residential development on surplus land.

Following project approval for the hospital, NSW Health invited tenders for alternative designs to enhance and improve the overall design of the approved facility. In that process Multiplex were awarded the project with the design subject of this modification.

On 9 August 2007, the proponent submitted a Modification application under 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act) seeking approval for the modified design. On 23 August 2007, the proponent submitted a revised application deleting a large communications tower from the proposal.

In summary, the modification seeks approval to redesign the hospital building, its layout, access and car parking arrangements. The revised hospital design still provides for 184 beds. The proposed modifications are discussed further in Section 3 of this report.

The revised **proposal is permissible** within the Residential 2(b) zone and it satisfies all relevant provisions of the Auburn LEP 2000 and accompanying DCPs, where they apply to the development of a hospital. The revised proposal is not inconsistent with the objectives of the Residential 2(b) zone.

The Modification was notified to Council and residents who may be effected by the proposal and no submissions were received.

The key driving force behind the redevelopment is the provision of adequate health care services and facilities to meet the large and growing population of western Sydney. On Balance it is considered that the revised proposal is appropriate and the Department recommends that the revised proposal be approved subject to conditions.

2 THE SITE

The Auburn Hospital site is bounded by Hevington Road, Water Street, Hargrave Road and Norval Street. The Hospital is in close proximity to the Parramatta CBD (5km) and is approximately one kilometre south of Auburn town centre. The area surrounding the site is dominated by residential development comprising 1-2 storey single dwellings and 2-3 storey residential flat buildings. The main Hospital site has an area of 1.765 ha.

The site is illustrated in **Figure 1 and 2** below:

Figure 1 – Auburn Hospital Location

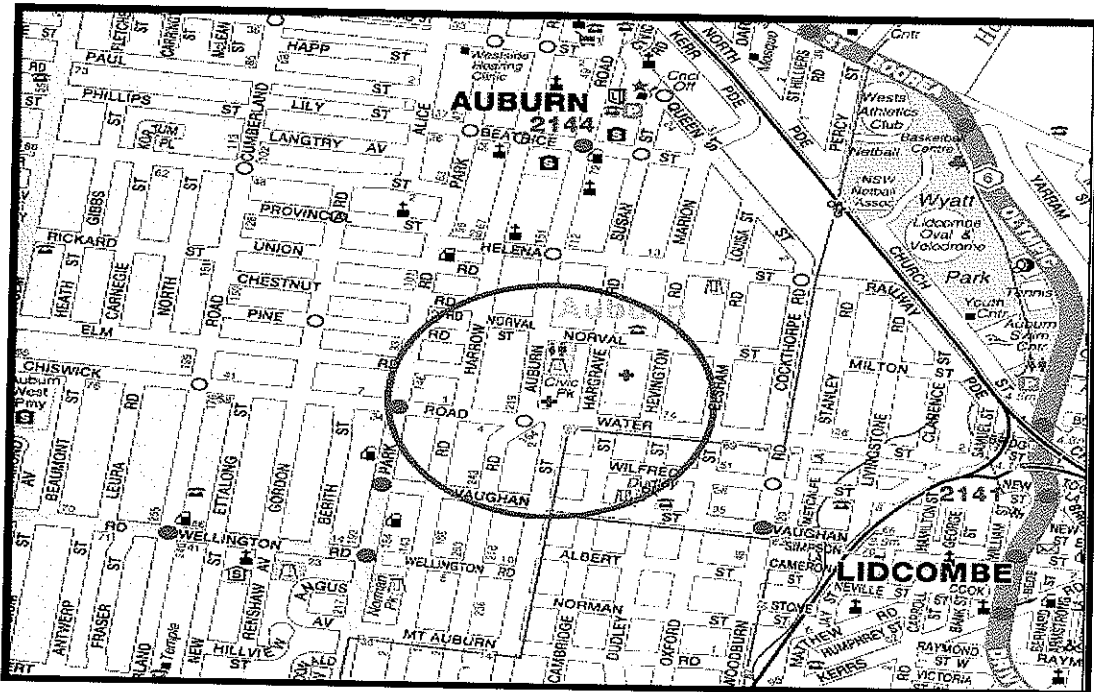


Figure 2 - Local Area Context



3 THE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

The proposed modifications include;

- Redesign of the hospital building including the façade, external treatments and building layout;
- A reduced building height;
- A revised car park layout;
- Increased car parking from 272 to 299 spaces (including the Arthur stone site);
- Construction of a bulk oxygen storage facility;
- Revised entry and exit points; and
- A minor increase in GFA from approximately 23,000sq.m to 24,578sq.m.

The modified building will still provide 184 beds and will still perform the same operations and achieve the same objectives as the original approved proposal. A comparison of the approved facility and the amended facility can be seen below in **Figures 2 and 3**. A computer generated photomontage of the revised design can be seen overleaf.

The layout of the approved facility and the modified proposal can be seen in **Figures 4 and 5**.

Figure 2 - Approved Hospital

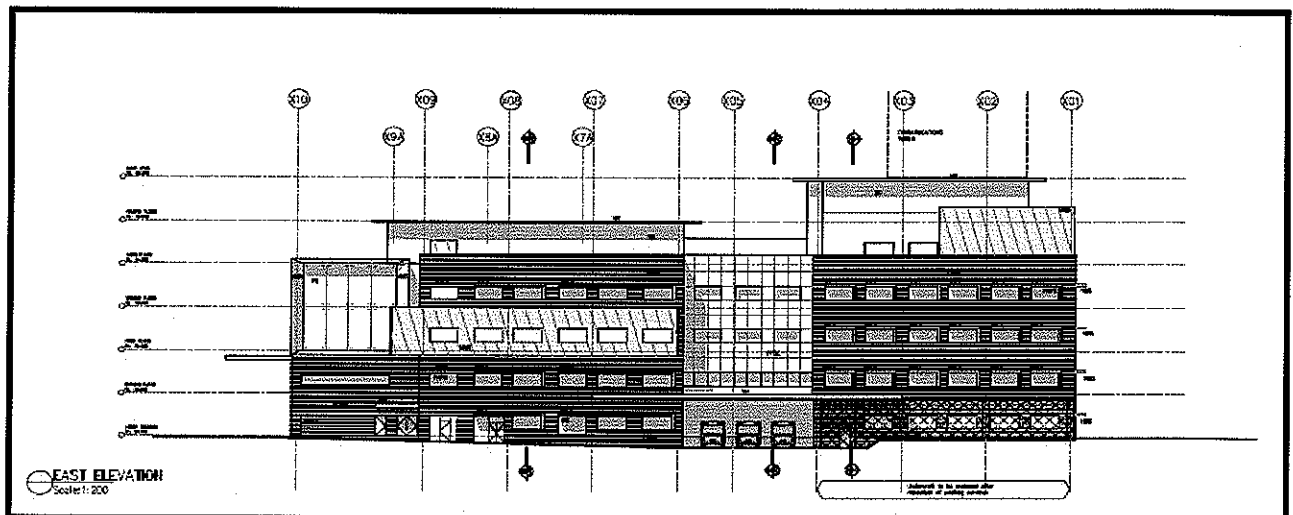


Figure 3 - Modified Hospital

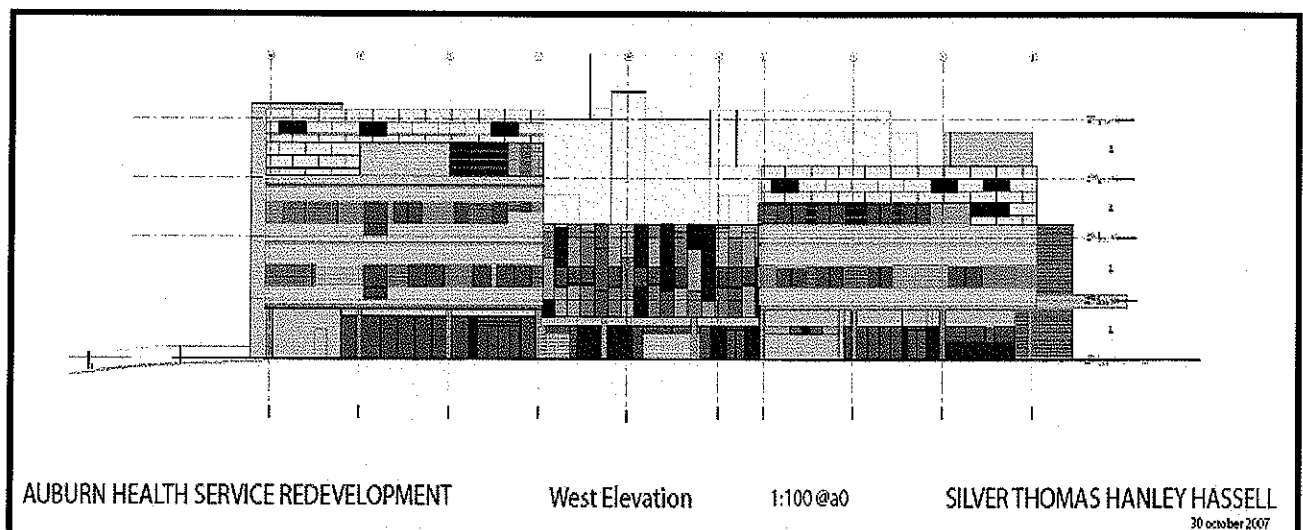


Figure 4 – Approved Layout

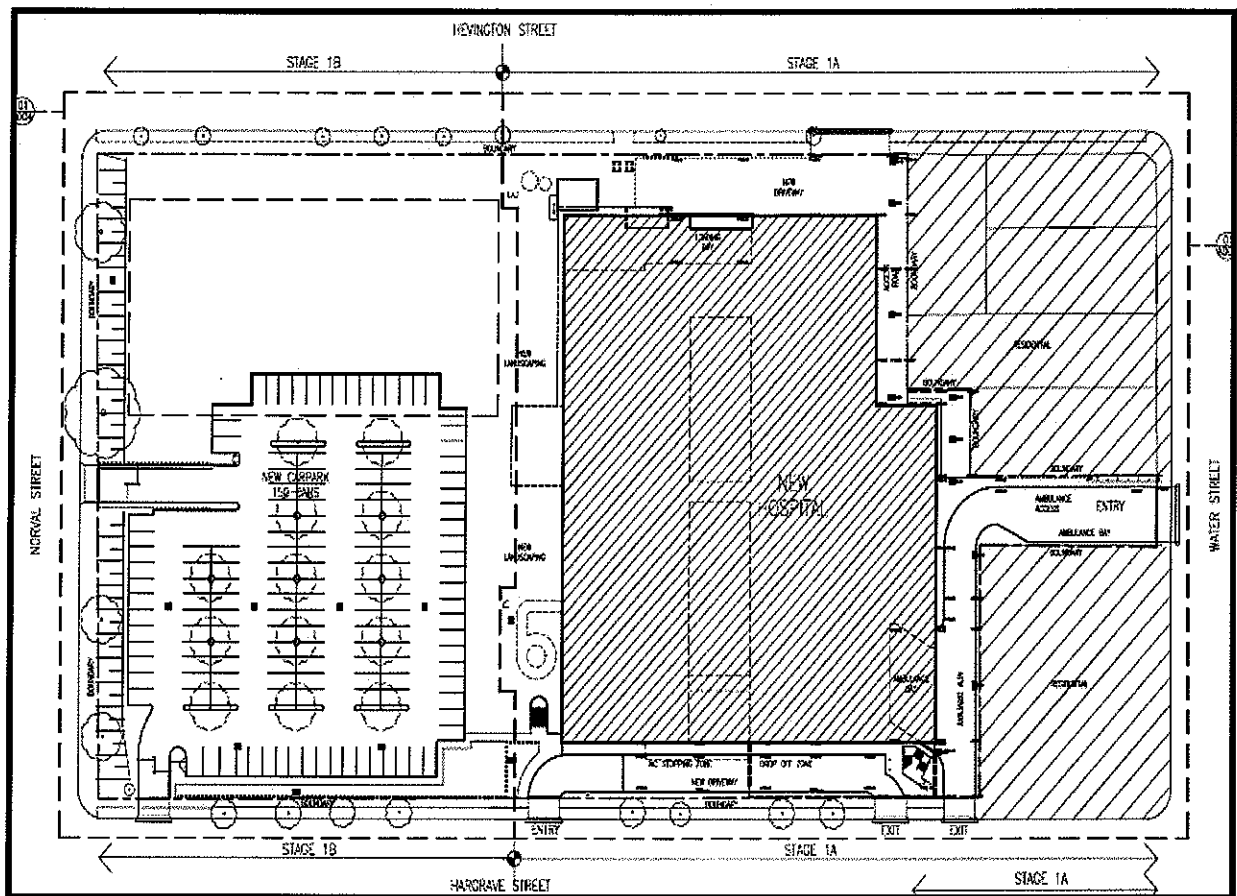
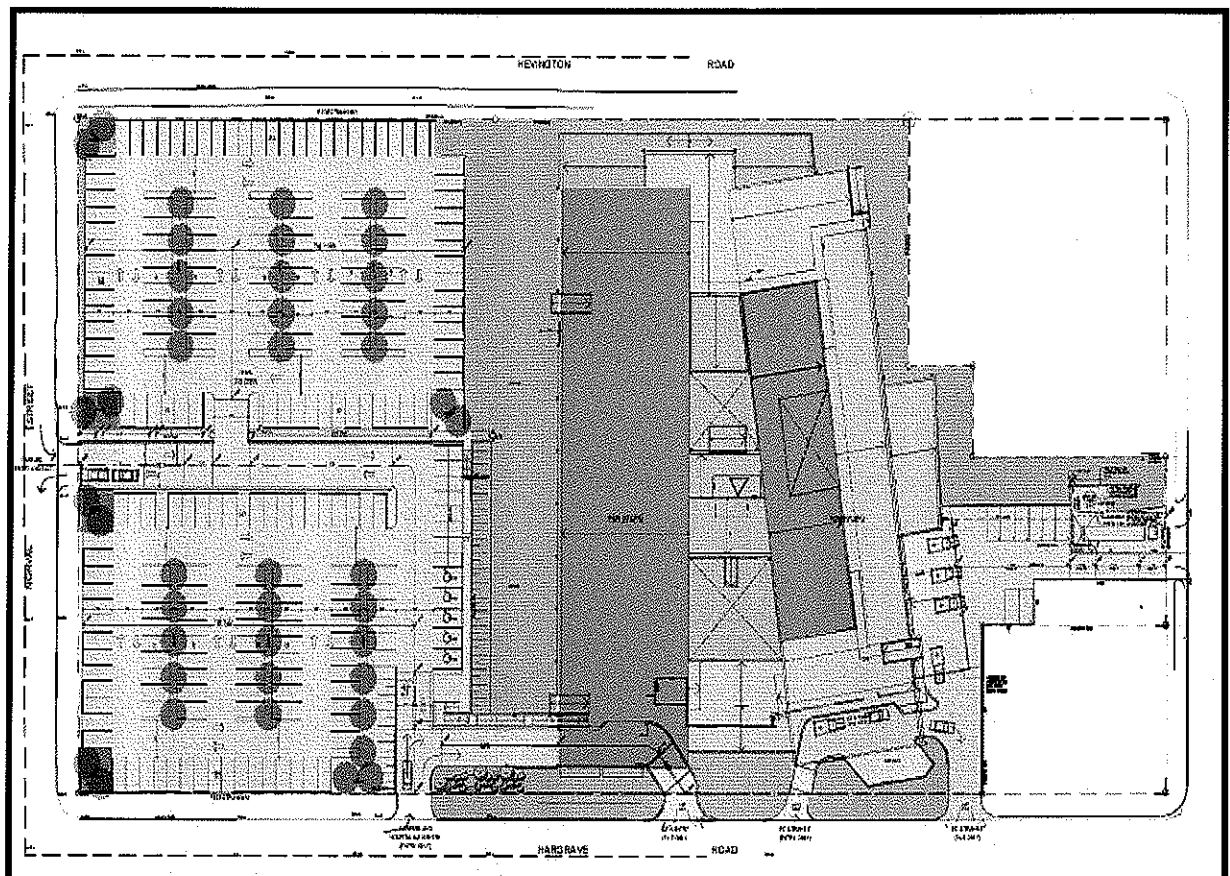


Figure 5 - Modified Layout



4 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Section 75W(2) of the Act provides that a proponent may request the Minister to modify his approval of a project. The Minister's approval is not required if the project as modified will be consistent with the original approval.

The proposed modifications (as listed above) seek to change the terms of the Minister's determination through amendments to the approved plans. Accordingly, the modification will require the Minister's approval.

Section 75W(3) of the Act provides the Director-General with scope to issue environmental assessment requirements (DGRs) that must be addressed before the consideration by the Minister. DGRs have not been issued for the modification due to the like nature of the modified proposal. It is considered that the impacts arising from the proposed modification are similar and in some instances improved from the original proposal.

Section 75W(4) of the Act gives the Minister the authority to modify the approval (with or without conditions) or disapprove the modification. Following consideration of the proposed modification (see below), the Department recommends the modification be approved with conditions, acknowledging approval of the revised plans.

5 CONSULTATION

Pursuant to Section 75X (2)(f) of the Act the Director-General is required to make publicly available requests for modifications of approvals given by the Minister. In accordance with Clause 8G of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, the request for the modification was placed on the Department's website.

Modifications are not required to be publicly exhibited, however it was considered that Council and two neighbouring properties which may be affected by the proposal, in particular the proposed changes to the Water Street entrance, should be notified of the Modification.

The modification was notified for a period of 15 days from Friday 31 August to Friday 14 September. Auburn Council made no comment on the proposal and no public submissions were received.

6 CONSIDERATION

Built Form

The main aspect of the Modification relates to the redesign of the Auburn Hospital building. The objective of the redesign is to increase the environmental performance and functionality of the facility. A comparison of the approved building against the modified building can be seen in the overlay in **Figure 6** and **7** below. The outline of the approved building is illustrated in red.

Figure 6 West Elevation – Overlay

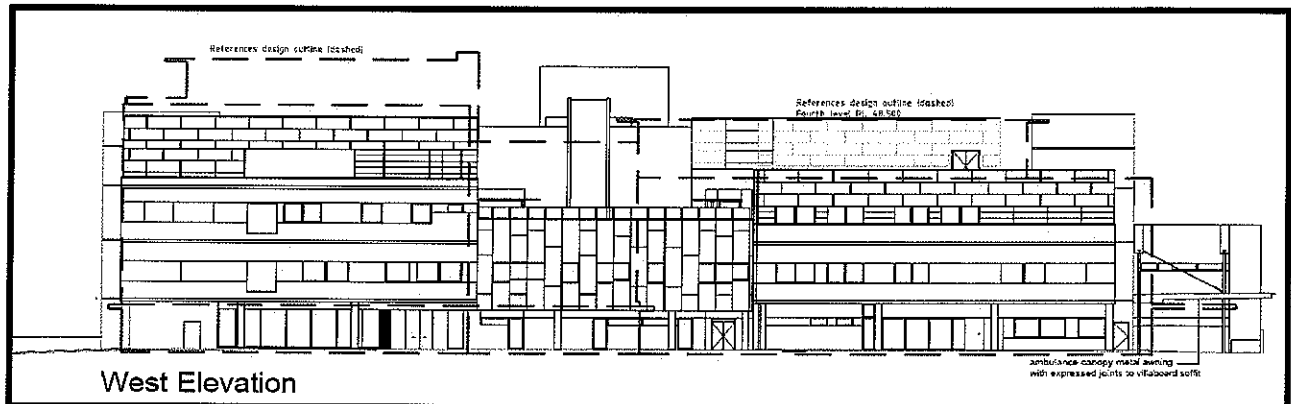
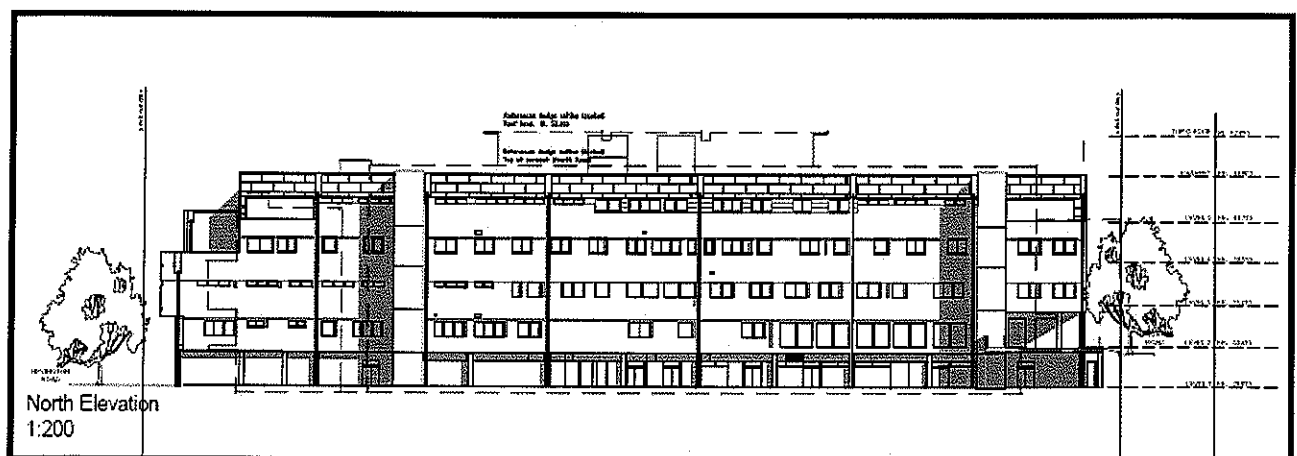


Figure 7 North Elevation – Overlay



The main aspects of the redesign and their impacts are discussed in further detail below;

Urban Design

The revised hospital has a contemporary design which uses a combination of finishes including masonry brick, coloured panelling and glazing. The building has a flat roof and vertical and horizontal articulation through the use of different building materials, colours and varying projections. The aim of the design solution is to reduce the institutional feel of the facility.

The design of this building does not replicate the predominant built forms in the immediate locality. However, it is considered that the revised design is acceptable given the site constraints and service orientated purpose of the building. Furthermore, it is considered that the adopted design solution will reduce the institutional feel of the facility and will provide a better streetscape outcome than the existing hospital buildings and structures it replaces. On this basis the revised design is considered to be acceptable.

Colours and Finishes

The modified submission has provided full details of the proposed materials and colours to be used. It is considered that whilst the proposed materials and colours are contemporary, they are acceptable given that the majority of the masonry brick is of earthy tones in keeping with the current

streetscape. The stronger colours and tones proposed (reds and yellows) will break up the facade and add visual interest to the building (refer to photomontage). On this basis it is considered that the proposed materials and colours are acceptable.

Condition B1 imposed on the original consent, which required details of the materials and colours to be submitted to and approved by the Department will be deleted as this condition has been satisfied by the details submitted for the modification.

Height

As illustrated in Figure 6 and 7 the revised design reduces the height, of the hospital from RL 53.00 at the highest point to RL 48.600 (at the main parapet). This represents 4.4m reduction in height from the original design. The reduced height will improve the visual amenity of the hospital when viewed from the street and create a better visual fit within an area which is dominated by lower scale residential development. The reduced height will also improve solar access to neighbouring properties.

On this basis it is considered that the revised design will result in a better outcome than the approved design.

Setback

The setbacks from neighbouring residential properties facing Water Street have been increased from 6m-8m to 5m-13m. The setbacks facing Hargrave Road have also been setback a further 2m to 6m compared with the approved design. The setbacks facing Hevington Road at levels 2 and 3 have however been extended approximately 3m towards the boundary. Council raised concern, during exhibition of the initial application, that this setback was inadequate and would not support sufficient landscaping to screen the proposed hospital.

It is considered that the revised setbacks facing Hevington Road will not detract from the streetscape. This site has been developed for the purpose of a hospital for some time and the revised hospital will display far less height, bulk and scale than the existing hospital and various structures it replaces. Furthermore there are no established setbacks within this block and the landscape plans submitted for this proposal illustrate sufficient landscaping for this setback which will further soften the visual impact of the building when viewed from the street.

With regards to physical impacts, the Hevington Road setback will not increase overshadowing or overlooking of neighbouring properties as this setback faces the road rather than adjoining properties. Furthermore, whilst the Hevington Road setback has been extended towards the boundary, the reconfiguration of the overall building has allowed increased setbacks to be provided to all other boundaries. This has resulted in improved solar access and privacy to the neighbouring residential properties in Water Street. The properties facing Water Street will now receive greater solar access at all times of the day measured at the winter solstice. One property facing Hevington Road will however experience partially increased overshadowing at 9am but improved solar access at all other times.

On this basis it is considered that the revised setbacks are adequate and will not have an adverse impact on the streetscape or the amenity of surrounding area and are therefore considered to be acceptable in this instance.

GFA

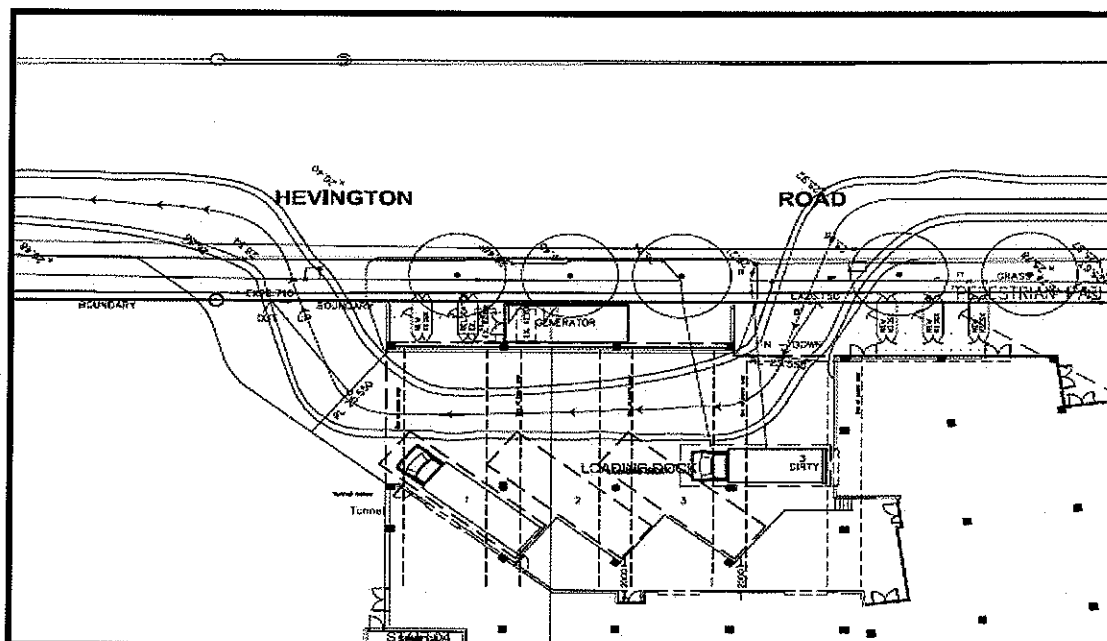
A minor increase in GFA from the approved design is also proposed. The original design had a GFA of approximately 23,000sq.m while the revised design has a total GFA of 24,578sq.m. This represents a total increase of 1,578sq.m or 7%. This is a minor increase in GFA which is still consistent with the concept plan approved for this site which provides for a maximum of 26,500sq.m. This minor increase in GFA has not led to any additional impacts visual or otherwise. The proposed GFA is therefore considered to be reasonable in this instance.

On balance it is considered that the modified design solution is acceptable particularly as the reduced height, and increased setbacks, to neighbouring properties will improve the environmental performance of the building in terms of visual amenity, solar access and privacy.

The Hevington Road loading dock has been modified to include a separate entry and exit point. The original loading dock had a shared entry and exit, with limited manoeuvring area on site. The original loading dock also required a section of road (opposite side of Hevington Road) to be marked 'no parking' to ensure that trucks had sufficient manoeuvring area to leave the site. The original loading dock can be seen below in **Figure 8**.

[illegible]

Figure 9 – Revised Loading Dock



As a result of this modification, condition B10 requiring no parking signs to be erected on the opposite side of Hevington Road will be deleted from the determination.

Water Street Entry

The approved Water Street entry originally included an ambulance entry, associated car parking and landscaping. The revised Water Street entry now also includes a loading dock, a bulk oxygen tank and a vaporizer.

In order to protect residential amenity and to ensure all safety concerns have been addressed with the provision of a bulk oxygen tank, the proponent has designed the storage facility to satisfy BCA requirements and Australian Standards. The facility will be encased in a masonry structure and perimeter landscaping will provide a buffer between the facility and the neighbouring residential properties. The proponent has also submitted a statement confirming that the noise associated with the operation of the facility will comply with all relevant EPA requirements when measured at all surrounding receivers.

In relation to the associated loading dock, vehicular movements to and from the site will increase, however it is considered that the impacts associated with the loading dock will not be unacceptable. The masonry enclosure surrounding the bulk oxygen storage facility and loading dock together with the proposed perimeter landscaping will ameliorate impacts associated with the loading dock on neighbouring properties. On this basis the proposed loading dock and bulk oxygen storage facility is considered to be acceptable.

The two neighbouring properties adjoining the Water Street entry were notified of the proposal in writing, however no submissions were received.

Car Parking

The approved car park provided for 150 onsite car parking spaces on the main hospital site, whilst the modified proposal now seeks approval for 250 onsite car parking spaces. The provision of additional perimeter landscaping surrounding the car park has however resulted in the loss of 17 spaces. The total number of on site car parking spaces now proposed is 233. The old and the new car parking layout is illustrated in **Figure 10** and **11**.

Car parking for the proposed development was calculated using a ratio of 1.34 car parking spaces per bed. This figure was calculated by comparing the car parking demand for the existing hospital to the number of existing beds.

Applying the above ratio to the new hospital, 247 car parking spaces are required. The revised proposal will provide 233 spaces on the main hospital site along with an additional 66 temporary spaces on the Arthur Stone site adjacent. This will result in a total of 299 spaces car parking spaces which satisfies the car parking demand for the proposal.

It should also be noted that the proponent's traffic report submitted for the original application indicated that 100 onsite car parking spaces are available surrounding the Auburn Hospital. This together with the onsite car parking provision will provide adequate car parking for the facility. On this basis it is considered that the modified proposal is acceptable.

As a result of this modification condition B12 requiring 273 car parking spaces will be modified to account for the 299 car parking spaces now proposed.

Landscaping

Concern was raised regarding the lack of perimeter landscaping provided around the main car parking area in the revised proposal. As a result, the proponent has introduced a landscaping margin of 2.5m to the East and Western boundaries and a 3m wide landscaping margin to the Northern boundary. Small deciduous trees will be planted within the Western margin while medium to large shrubs set within ground cover will be introduced within the North and Eastern boundaries. Tall Cumberland Plain trees will be planted within the corner elements of the two car parking areas and also within the grounds of the car park. The revised landscaping scheme is illustrated in **Figure 11**.

It is considered that the additional perimeter landscaping provided around the car park will soften the visual impact of the built form and contribute to the positive image and contextual fit of the

development thus providing an adequate landscaping solution.

It should be noted that further changes to the landscaping will occur at future stages of the development approved under the concept plan for this site. However, it is considered that the proposed landscaping plan is adequate for this stage of the development.

As a result of the additional landscaping details submitted, condition B13 requiring further information regarding the Water Street entrance landscaping will be deleted. It is considered that sufficient landscaping to the Water Street entrance has been provided under the modified landscaping plan. This condition will however be replaced with condition B11 requiring further details of the species to be planted in the perimeter landscaping surrounding the main car park.

ESD

In summary, the proposed modification will provide additional energy efficiency measures by reducing glazing to western facing elevation and by the incorporation of sun shading devices to reduce solar heat gain and improve the efficiency of the mechanical ventilation. Furthermore, the proposed central courtyards will provide additional natural lighting which will reduce the demand on artificial lighting. The proponent has provided a full list of the ESD measures to be incorporated into the revised design in their submission.

The additional ESD measures will result in a substantial improvement in energy consumption. The revised facility will now use 33% less energy consumption per square metre annually from the benchmark design. It is therefore considered that on this basis the modified building will result in a better ESD outcome.

Concept Plan

A concept plan was approved for the site by the Minister on 13 April 2007. The concept plan determined the use of the site, the height, GFA and setbacks (which include encroachment areas to Hevington and Hardgrave Roads). The proposal as modified has been assessed against the controls contained within the concept plan and it is considered that the modified design is consistent with the concept plan approval.

Figure 10 - Approved Car Parking Layout

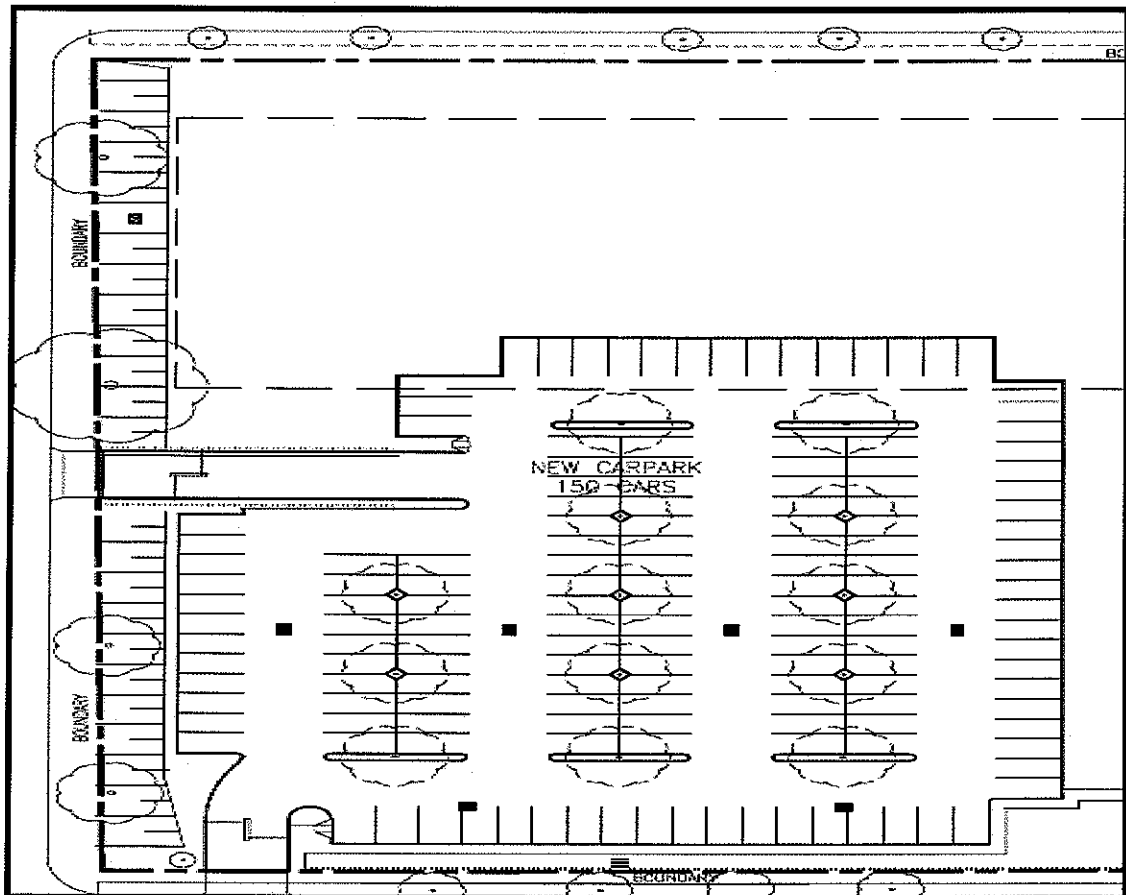
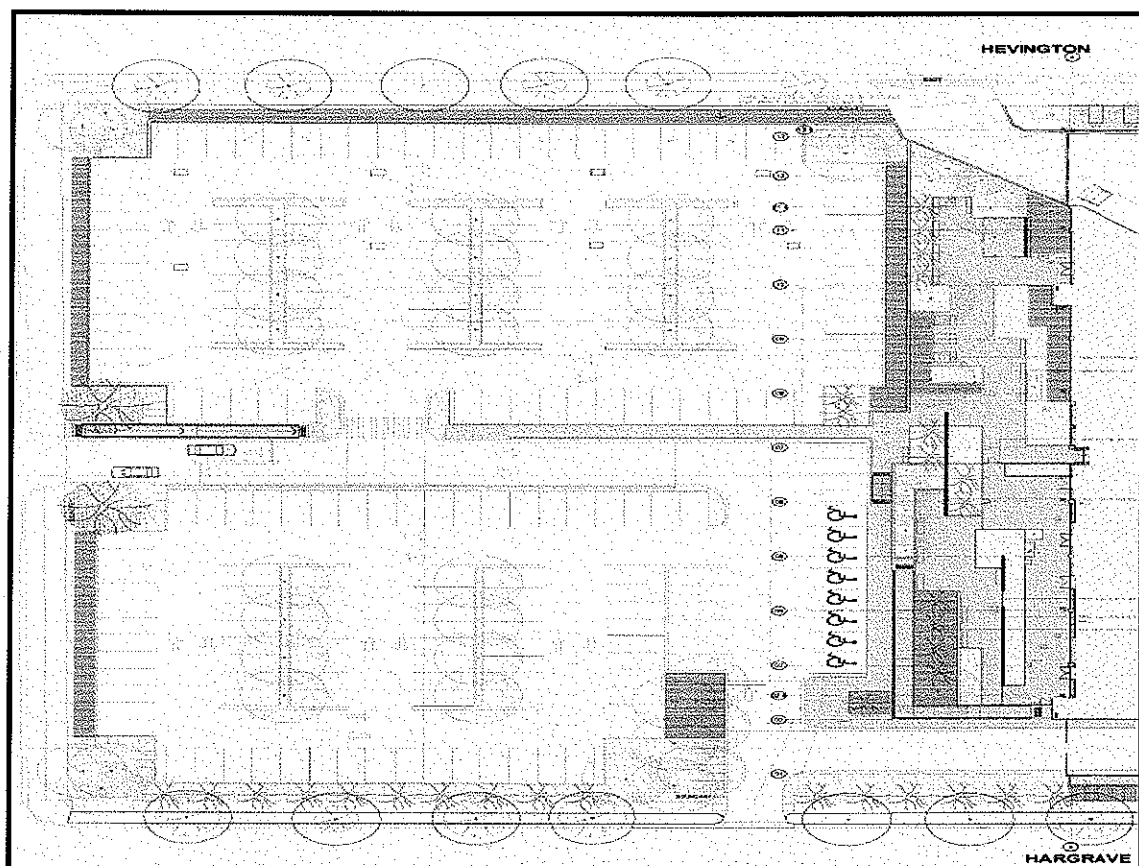


Figure 11 - Modified Car Parking Layout



7 CONCLUSION

The proposed modification is considered to be acceptable as it will improve both the functionality and environmental performance of the facility. The redesign will result in the following benefits;

- The height bulk and scale of the proposed building will be reduced;
- Surrounding properties will receive greater solar access and privacy;
- The revised loading dock will improve serviceability and reduce the possibility of traffic conflict;
- The revised entry points will improve accessibility for emergency vehicles, patients and visitors;
- The additional onsite car parking spaces will provide more than adequate onsite car parking for the proposal;
- The revised internal configuration will improve the functionality of the hospital and will providing greater natural light and outlook reducing the institutional feel of the facility,
- The revised landscaping plan will provide a natural buffer between the proposed development and the surrounding area and contribute to the visual absorption of the proposed development on the site;
- The modified design will improving energy efficiency; and
- The proposal is consistent with the concept plan approved for the site.

It is considered that the proposal, as modified, still achieves the same objectives as the originally approved Major Project (06_0129) and does not alter the overall nature, need or justification of the approved project or concept plan. On this basis it is considered appropriate to recommend approval for the proposed modifications.

8 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Minister, under Section 75W (Modification of Minister's Approval) of Part 3A of the Act, approve the modifications as detailed in this report and in doing so sign the attached Modification Approval identifying the revised plans (**Tag B**).

Approved:

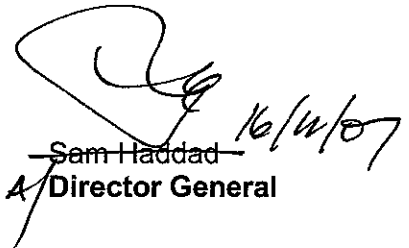


Michael File
Director
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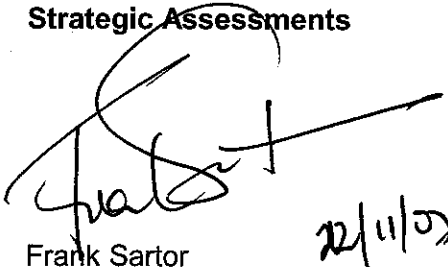
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