



12 November 2007

Our ref: RJC:JQ/07143A

Department of Planning
23 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Mr Michael File, Director Strategic Assessment

Dear Michael,

**re: Proposed hospital, No. 35 Water Street and No. 64 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga:
Request for confirmation as Major Project and for the Director-General's
Environmental Assessment Requirements**

We write on behalf of our client Murlan Consulting Pty Ltd ("the Proponent") in relation to their intention to lodge a Part 3A project application with the Minister of Planning. The project application will seek approval for the construction of a hospital on land comprising No. 35 Water Street and No. 64 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga, catering for the aged, infirm and/or disabled.

1. Purpose of this letter

This letter seeks the Minister's opinion, pursuant to Clause 6 of *State Environmental Policy (Major Projects) 2005* ("the SEPP") that the proposed hospital, with a capital investment value of \$56 million, is development described in Schedule 1 of the SEPP, and is therefore a project to which Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ("the Act") applies.

If the Minister is of the opinion that the development is a project to which Part 3A applies, the Proponent also requests the Director-General to issue environmental assessment requirements pursuant to Section 75F of the Act. To assist the Director-General in the preparation of the Director-General's environmental assessment requirements, we enclose a Preliminary Assessment Report which provides details of the major project.

2. Major Projects – SEPP Framework

Clause 6(1) of the SEPP specifies that:-

“Development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is development of a kind:

(a) that is described in Schedule 1 or 2...

is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies.”

Schedule 1 of the SEPP is entitled “Part 3A projects – classes of development”. Group 7 of Schedule 1 is entitled “Health and Public Service Facilities”. Category 18 in Group 7 is “Hospitals” and is in the following terms:-

“18 Hospitals

(1) Development that has a capital investment value of more than \$15 million for the purpose of providing professional health care services to people admitted as in-patients (whether or not out-patients are also cared for or treated there), including ancillary facilities for:

- (a) day surgery, day procedures or health consulting rooms, or*
- (b) accommodation for nurses or other health care workers, or*
- (c) accommodation for persons receiving health care or for their visitors, or*
- (d) shops or refreshment rooms, or*
- (e) transport of patients, including helipads and ambulance facilities, or*
- (f) educational purposes, or*
- (g) research purposes, whether or not they are used only by hospital staff or health care workers and whether or not any such use is a commercial use, or*
- (h) any other health-related use.*

(2) For the purposes of this clause, professional health care services include preventative or convalescent care, diagnosis, medical or surgical treatment, psychiatric care or care for people with disabilities, care or counselling services provided by health care professionals.”

The proposed hospital has a capital investment value of more than \$15 million (ie. \$56 million). The hospital will provide professional health care services to people admitted as in-patients. It will cater for the aged, infirm and/or disabled. All patients will be dependent on the provision of professional health care services, nursing and accommodation and require nursing assistance for bathing, dressing and feeding and taking of medication. It will comprise 130 to 160 rooms in three interconnecting buildings. All rooms will be for individual occupation with areas of between 25m² and 45m². Dementia-secure specific wards will be provided. A very high level of extra care services will be provided including occupational therapy and physiotherapy.

Rippon Grange, which is an identified heritage item, will be renovated to its former grand state and will incorporate a café (which will be open to the public to enable the restored

Rippon Grange to be more widely appreciated) and communal facilities for occupants and their visitors.

The former nurses' accommodation block on No. 64 Billyard Avenue will be extended and re-used as Nurses' accommodation.

3. Land to which this project application will relate

The land to which the project application relates is known as No. 35 Water Street and No. 64 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga and comprises Lot 1 in DP 375262 (No. 35 Water Street), Lot 1 in DP 726091 (No. 64 Billyard Avenue) and Lot 2 in DP 375262, Wahroonga. The location, boundaries, and landscape character of the land are identified on the Figures accompanying this Preliminary Assessment Report.

The subject site has frontages to Water Street, Young Street and Billyard Avenue of 124.625m, 135.13m and 23.65m, respectively and extends along the length of Young Street between Water Street and Billyard Avenue. The site has an area of approximately 22,932m² and falls between 15m and 24m across the site to the south-eastern corner.

That part of the site known as No. 35 Water Street (actually No's 35 - 45 Water Street) is heritage listed under Schedule 7 of the Ku-ring-gai Planning Scheme Ordinance ("KPSO") and contains a Federation Queen Anne house (Rippon Grange) and its associated garden structures and features, a grove of Eucalypts and various former hospital additions.

"Rippon Grange" was designed by the architectural firm Sulman and Power and probably by Mr John Sulman and was completed in around 1898 with additions in 1905 by Joseland and Gilling, architects. "Rippon Grange" is the main building and was originally constructed as a two-storey dwelling house with ancillary structures. In about 1952, the land was donated to the State government for use as a hospital, firstly to provide respite child care for polio sufferers and infectious diseases. Further, mostly intrusive additions to "Rippon Grange" were made by the hospital administration at that time. Following cessation of the hospital use, the property was sold by the State government in 2005 to the Proponent.

The site contains remnant Blue Gum High Forest (a critically endangered ecological community) covering approximately 6,350m² of the subject site. This area forms a reverse "L" shape along the boundary to Young Street to the east and along the majority of the southern boundary of the site. The remaining vegetation on the subject site consists of landscaped gardens with a variety of exotic and native species.

4. Development to which the project application will relate

The project involves restoration and adaptive re-use (for hospital purposes) of the heritage-significant buildings on the site (ie. Rippon Grange and former stables), restoration of heritage-significant landscape elements (including a croquet lawn), construction of three new inter-linked hospital buildings, and separate nurses' accommodation, all with minimal impact on the Blue Gum High Forest which exists on the eastern and southern parts of the site. The development is described in detail in the attached Preliminary Assessment Report. A preliminary site plan is provided in Attachment 1.

The capital investment of the project is approximately \$56 million.

5. Permissibility

The site has two zonings under the KPSO. The primary development lot, being No. 35 Water Street, is rectangular in shape and is zoned 5(a) Special Uses (Hospital). No.64 Billyard Avenue, located on the corner of Billyard and Young Streets, is zoned 2(c) Residential.

Within both the 5(a) Special Uses (Hospital) and the 2(c) Residential zones, hospitals are permissible with consent. "Hospital" is defined by the KPSO to mean:-

"a building used or intended for use as a hospital, sanatorium, health centre or dispensary, nursing home or home for aged, infirm, incurable or convalescent persons, whether public or private, and includes a shop or dispensary used in conjunction therewith, but does not include an institution."

The proposed hospital is consistent with this definition. Accordingly, the proposed hospital is a permissible form of development on the land to which the project application will apply.

There are no development controls specifically applying to hospitals in the existing KPSO.

6. Conclusion

The Proponent seeks the Minister's opinion that the project described herein is development of a kind that is described in Schedule 1 of the SEPP, and is therefore a major project to which Part 3A of the Act applies.

If it is determined that the development is of a kind that is a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies, the Director-General is requested to issue environmental assessment requirements. To assist the Director-General in the preparation of the environmental assessment requirements, we enclose a Preliminary Assessment Report which provides further details of the project. The Preliminary Assessment Report is accompanied by a completed project application form, a preliminary fee for \$1,000.00, and a CD containing the project application documentation.

If any further details or clarification is required, please contact either the undersigned on (02) 9211-4099 or the Proponent's representative, Ben MacGibbon on (02) 9552 1400.

Yours sincerely
BBC Consulting Planners



Robert Chambers
Director

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ATTACHMENT 1

Preliminary site plan