



PROPOSED HOSPITAL NIELD AVENUE, GREENWICH PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Prepared for
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This Preliminary Assessment Report accompanies a project application lodged pursuant to Section 75E of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ("the Act") for the development of land located at Nos. 1-8 Nield Avenue, Greenwich ("the site") for the purposes of a hospital. A description of the major project is provided in Section 4.

The Minister for Planning has been separately requested to confirm that the proposed hospital is a major project for the purposes of State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 ("the Major Projects SEPP") and Part 3A of the Act. If it is determined that the development is of a kind that is described in Schedule 1 of the Major Projects SEPP, and is therefore a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies, this Preliminary Assessment Report is intended to assist the Director-General in the preparation of the Director-General Environmental Assessment Requirements ("DGEARs").

1.2 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this Preliminary Assessment Report is to assist the Minister in forming an opinion that the proposal is a major project for the purposes of the Major Projects SEPP and to provide an informed basis for the DGEARs.

The Preliminary Assessment Report includes:-

- a site description and analysis;
- an overview of the major project;
- a preliminary assessment of the major project; and
- the legislative framework applying to the major project.

The Preliminary Assessment Report is accompanied by:-

- a project brochure prepared by Murlan Consulting (see Appendix 1);
- a completed application form; and
- the required initial fee, as advised by the Department of Planning, being \$1,000.00.

A checklist against the matters required to be addressed in the Guidelines for Major Projects is provided at Section 1.5.

1.3 Summary of Project

The Project Application seeks the Minister's approval for the redevelopment of land located at Nos. 1-8 Nield Avenue, Greenwich ("the site") for the purposes of a hospital. The proposal

includes the demolition of all of the existing structures on the site (which includes part of a public road and laneway owned by Lane Cove Council) and the construction of a “U” shaped hospital building comprising 145 rooms over 6 levels and 72 parking spaces. The proposed occupants of the hospital will be generally aged between 75 to 100 years and will be dependent on the provision of nursing assistance for bathing, dressing, feeding and, in most cases, for the taking of medication, and for whom occupational therapy and physiotherapy will also be available. Wards for younger, permanently disabled patrons will also be provided. Parking will be provided for visitors and staff. None of the patients will drive. Ancillary uses to be provided in the hospital include a café, theatre and chapel.

1.4 Capital Investment Value and application of Part 3A

Through the operation of the Major Projects SEPP, it is apparent that the Minister will be the consent authority for the project in that:-

- the project is for a hospital pursuant to the definition contained in Group 7, Category 18 of the Major Projects SEPP (refer Section 5.3.1 of this PAR); and
- the Capital Investment Value of the project, as defined in the Major Projects SEPP, is approximately \$53 million.

Nevertheless, confirmation has been sought from the Minister, that the proposal is a major project, thereby authorising the submission of a Project Application under Section 75E of the Act.

1.5 Application Checklist

A draft Department of Planning Guideline, “Steps in the Assessment and Approval of Major Projects under Part 3A”, dated 14 September 2005, lists the matters to be addressed in a Project Application. The following table sets out the matters and notes where or how each requirement is addressed:-

Table 1: Matters required to be addressed

Requirement	Where addressed
(a) A written and graphical description of the project and any ancillary components, including relevant preliminary plans	Section 4, and Appendix 1
(b) The location(s) and a map identifying the site(s)/ alignment / corridor	Section 2 and all Figures
(c) The capital investment value and other relevant information in relation to parameters set out in the Major Project SEPP or any relevant order relevant for determining whether Part 3A applies	Section 1.4; Section 5.3.1

Requirement	Where addressed
to the project	
(d) The planning provisions applying to the site and whether the project is permitted under the prevailing EPIs, DCPs, policies etc, and if the project is inconsistent with such instruments/plans/policies	Section 5
(e) The views of the other agencies, local council and/or the community if known	Section 3
(f) List any other approvals required in particular if a licence from the Department of Environment and conservation under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act is required	Section 5.1.2
(g) If relevant, justification as to why the project should be considered to be a Major Project under Part 3A, taking into consideration the relevant criteria	Section 4.2
(h) A preliminary assessment to identify the likely environmental issues	Section 6
(i) A completed application form	A completed application form is provided under separate cover.
(j) The prescribed application fee	The application fee for lodgement of this Preliminary Assessment Report is \$1,000.00. The balance of the total fee will be submitted with the Environmental Assessment Report.
(k) The number of copies of application documents requested by the Department, including documents in electronic format	10 copies of the Preliminary Assessment Report are provided. An electronic copy of the Preliminary Assessment Report is provided on CD.
(l) Any other matters required by the Director-General, following consultation with the Department	If and when identified, these will be addressed.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location, Description and Ownership

The land to which the project application relates comprises Nos. 1-8 Nield Avenue, Greenwich, along with part of the Nield Avenue road reserve and a pathway to the north of the site that leads to Morven Gardens. Nield Avenue is a short cul-de-sac.

The site is located to the west of the Pacific Highway, opposite land occupied by the Sydney Institute of TAFE and the Royal North Shore Hospital (see Figure 1). The site is located approximately 6km from the Sydney CBD and 0.8km from St Leonards railway station.

As illustrated on Figure 2, the site incorporates the following:-

- Lot 1, DP 26707 (No. 1);
- Lot 2, DP 26707 (No. 2);
- Lot 3, DP 26707 (No. 3);
- Lot 41, DP 555753 (No. 4A);
- Lot 42, DP 555753 (No. 4B);
- Lot 5, DP 26707 (No. 5);
- Lot 6, DP 26707 (No. 6);
- Lot 7, DP 26707 (No. 7);
- Lot 1, DP 535088 (No. 7a);
- Lot 8, DP 397302 (No. 8); and
- Part of the Nield Avenue road reserve and a pedestrian pathway leading to Morven Gardens.

The site is irregular in shape and has an area of approximately 7,570m². Of this, 985m² comprises public road reserves. Another 128m² comprises a public pathway. Both of these areas are to be acquired from Lane Cove Council.

The site is accessed from Nield Avenue which falls relatively steeply from its intersection with the Pacific Highway to the end of the cul-de-sac. The intersection with the Pacific Highway provides for left-in, left-out turns only.

The properties which comprise the site contain a variety of one, two or three-storey dwellings with associated car parking, driveways and garages, all accessed from Nield Avenue. The ages of the buildings vary, as does their condition, with some requiring significant

maintenance. No heritage items are located on the site and the site is not within a conservation area.

The landscape character of the site is a mix of exotic and non-endemic native small trees, palms and shrubs dominated by several large endemic trees. There are approximately 126 trees on the site.

The site is part-owned by Waterbrook @ Greenwich Pty Ltd and part-owned by Lane Cove Council.

2.2 Surrounding Area

To the east of the site and with dual frontages to Nield Avenue and the Pacific Highway are two part 3 and part 4-storey residential flat buildings above car parking (ie. the buildings are up to 5 levels). No's 206-210 Nield Avenue stands on the northern side of Nield Avenue, whilst No. 200 stands on the southern side of Nield Avenue. These two buildings, along with others along the western side of the Pacific Highway, are zoned Residential 2(c), the objective of which, inter alia, "is to retain the existing high level of residential development".

South-east of No. 200 Pacific Highway is No. 198 – a part 2, part 3-storey residential flat building. Beyond No. 198 is the Greenwich Inn, a part 3, part 4-storey structure and beyond that, at the corner of the Pacific Highway and Bellevue Avenue, is the Accor Urban Hotel which rises to 5 storeys.

Opposite Nield Avenue, beyond the Pacific Highway, is:-

- TAFE NSW Northern Sydney Institute, North Sydney College, which stands on the northern side of Westbourne Street; and
- Gore Hill Cemetery which stands on the southern side of Westbourne Street.

Further to the east is Royal North Shore Hospital and North Shore Private Hospital. The site is located within the St Leonards specialised health and education 1km radius, as defined in the Inner North Subregion draft subregional strategy issued by the NSW Department of Planning (as shown on Figure 5b).

To the south-east of the site and to the west of the Accor Urban Hotel are two part 2 and part 3-storey residential flat buildings fronting Bellevue Avenue (No's 7-15). To the south are dwelling houses. To the south-west and as shown on Figure 2, there are seven separate battleaxe lots created out of one large battleaxe site, the driveway access to which runs between No's 7-15 Bellevue Avenue and No. 19 Bellevue Avenue.

To the north of the site is a public pathway known as Morven Gardens, beyond which and with frontage to the Pacific Highway, is a large parcel of land (zoned Residential 2(c)), standing upon which are two 3-storey residential flat buildings above ground level parking.

To the north-west beyond Morven Gardens is "Waterbrook @ Greenwich", which is approaching completion. It is a self-care seniors living retirement village on a site of 13,100m² which, on completion, will comprise 79 apartments and a wide range of high-quality communal facilities. As part of the approved development, the footpath along Morven Gardens has been upgraded to accommodate disabled access and a sub-regional bicycle route. It was approved in October 2006 and will be completed in January 2008.

The site is located within 800 metres of the shopping centre of St Leonards which lies to the south-east. This centre provides a wide array of retail, commercial, public transport and personal services including medical and dental facilities. St Leonards railway station is located approximately 0.8km to the east of the site.

3. VIEWS OF AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY, IF KNOWN

The Proponent lodged a DA relating to the subject land with Lane Cove Council in February 2007 for a residential care facility pursuant to the relevant requirements of SEPP (Seniors Living) 2004 ("the previous DA"). As part and parcel of the previous DA, the Proponent proposed to acquire land from Lane Cove Council (ie. the western part of Nield Avenue and the pathway through to Morven Gardens). Numerous discussions took place between representatives of the Proponent and of Lane Cove Council in relation to the previous DA.

The previous DA was, in part, reliant on a SEPP No. 1 objection or, alternatively, a rezoning of the subject site from Residential 2(b1) to Residential B4, such reliance being related to development standards applying to FSR and height. However, although Lane Cove Council has been in the process of preparing a comprehensive LEP (which will have the effect of the above-described rezoning), the draft LEP is yet to be exhibited. Reflecting the delay with the draft LEP, the Proponent withdrew the DA in August 2007.

Subsequently, the Proponent has refined the specifics of the project and it now clearly falls within the definition of a hospital in the Major Projects SEPP. During the last two months, the Proponent has discussed the revised project with representatives of Lane Cove Council. They have expressed general support both for the project and for it being assessed pursuant to the Part 3A regime. We are instructed that Council representatives would welcome a meeting with the Department of Planning during the preliminary assessment period of the project application.

An agreement is being finalised between the Proponent and Lane Cove Council as to the closure of the western section of Nield Avenue and the transfer of ownership of the closed road (and of the public pathway leading through to Morven Gardens) to interests associated with the Proponent.

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The project comprises a hospital consisting of 145 rooms within a “U” shaped 6 storey building of up to 6 storeys which will accommodate frail, infirm, or disabled patients who require nursing assistance. It aims to set a new benchmark for this type of facility, the demand for which is acknowledged by the NSW State Government, the Federal Government and leading demographers. Due to the extended lifespan of the Australian population, demand for quality facilities of this type will increase dramatically after 2010, placing the public health system and government funding under increasing pressure. In this regard, the project is a response to increasing expectations for quality facilities and extra services, not only from occupants and their families, but also to attract nurses and carers from other employment sectors.

The project involves demolition of the existing buildings on the site, removal of the road with that part of the road reserve which forms part of the site, removal of various items of vegetation, preparatory excavation and bulk earthworks, and construction and operation of a hospital which can be described as follows:-

- The hospital will comprise 145 rooms located over 6 levels with defined wards/wings in a “U” shape configuration;
- Rooms will have areas of between 25 and 45m² (with a disabled ensuite to each room) for individual patients;
- Patients will generally be aged between 75 to 100 years and will be frail or infirm. There will be at least two ‘dementia secure’ specific wards. Most of the other wards will be for aged patients requiring high care and low care. There will also be two under-55 years permanently disabled wards – the predominant make up of these under-55 years wards will comprise of occupants with MS, Downs Syndrome, acquired brain injuries and the like;
- All patients will be dependent on the provision of nursing and accommodation for people disabled by age (or disability) and clearly requiring nursing assistance for bathing, dressing and feeding, and in most cases for the taking of medication, and for whom occupational therapy and physiotherapy will be available;
- Each ward will have a nurse station, linen, utility services and the like. There will be a central dining area and living/quiet area to each ward;
- There will be registered nurses in the hospital at a ratio of 1 nurse to 25 occupants. There is likely to be 1 carer per 6 occupants (1 to 20 at night);
- The 72 parking spaces provided on site (in three basement levels) are for visitors and staff as no patients will drive;

- There will be a central kitchen, laundry room and undercover ambulance/undertaker vehicle space;
- There will be a “wellness centre” for occupational therapy and physiotherapy and a café, theatre and chapel;
- It is proposed to provide respite, post-operative/convalescence care to aged persons in the community;
- Areas of accessible common open space will be provided; and
- Features of the landscaping will include a dementia courtyard, densely vegetated buffers to common boundaries, lawn areas and reflective ponds.

At least 50 Federal aged-care bed licences will be allocated to the facility.

An explanatory project brochure is provided in Appendix 1. It contains indicative photomontages of the proposed hospital.

Calculations of gross floor area, floor space ratio, and building height will be provided as part of the Environmental Assessment Report to be submitted in response to the DGEARs. A model of the project is available for inspection by the Department of Planning if required.

The massing and envelope of the new building will be setback and articulated/modulated so as to limit overshadowing of neighbouring properties to the south and south-west. Window and balcony locations will be positioned and adequately/appropriately screened to protect the privacy of adjoining properties, and limit overlooking. Landscape buffers will be provided around the perimeter of the site.

5. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

5.1 Relevant Acts

5.1.1 Part 3A Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

On 1 August 2005, a new Part 3A was introduced in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 ("the Act"). Part 3A and its accompanying Regulations and Guidelines contains a new assessment and determination framework for Major Projects.

As noted above, the Minister is requested to express his opinion that the development to which this application relates is a major project for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act.

5.1.2 Approvals Under Other Acts

Consent under Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993 will be required as the project affects a public road.

5.2 Regional Environmental Plans

5.2.1 Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005

Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 "Sydney Harbour Catchment SREP") was gazetted on 28 September 2005 and replaced Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 22 - Parramatta River and Sydney Regional Plan No. 23 - Sydney and Middle Harbours. The site falls within the map area shown edged heavy black and hence is affected by Sydney Harbour Catchment SREP (2005).

The site is not located within the Foreshores and Waterways area, nor is it identified as a strategic foreshore site. The site is not a heritage item, nor is it within a wetlands protection area as shown on the maps which accompany the Sydney Harbour Catchment SREP (2005).

The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the natural, scenic, environmental, cultural or heritage qualities of Sydney Harbour. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be consistent with the aims of the SREP (Sydney Harbour Catchment 2005).

5.3 State Environmental Planning Policies

5.3.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 was gazetted in May 2005 and aims to identify development of economic, social or environmental significance to the State or regions of the State, so as to provide a consistent and comprehensive assessment and decision-making process for that development. The Minister for Planning is the consent authority for development of the type, value or in a location, generally as identified in the

SEPP, and Part 3A of the Act applies to the development, referred to as “projects” or “major projects”.

Subsection 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. “Hospitals” are included in Schedule 1 as development of a kind that is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies. Category 18, Group 7 in Schedule 1 states as follows:-

“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 is consistent with this definition. It has a capital investment value of \$53 million.

5.3.2 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 11 (Traffic Generating Developments)

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 11 (Traffic Generating Developments) ("SEPP 11") establishes the Roads and Traffic Authority as the traffic management authority to be consulted in relation to development proposals, and ensures it is given the opportunity to make a representation on a development application before the local council decides whether to approve a proposal. Schedules 1 and 2 of SEPP 11 identify forms of development which are required to be subject to varying levels of consultation.

Schedule 2 of SEPP 11 triggers the requirement for the proposal to be forwarded to the Roads and Traffic Authority Schedule 2. It includes development described as:-

"(o) the erection of a building for the purposes of a hospital with accommodation for 100 or more beds or the enlargement or extension of a building for the purposes of a hospital where that enlargement or extension provides accommodation for 100 or more beds"

The proposal consists of a hospital with 145 rooms and will therefore contain more than 100 beds.

Development of this type on land that has direct vehicular or pedestrian access to an arterial road or a road connecting with an arterial road, if the access is within 90 metres of the alignment of the arterial road, has to be referred to the RTA.

5.3.3 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 (Remediation of Land)

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 (Remediation of Land) ("SEPP 55") aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment by specifying certain considerations to be had in determining development applications in general, by requiring that remediation work meets certain standards.

The subject site has historically been used for residential purposes only. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the land is not contaminated.

5.3.4 Draft State Environmental Planning Policy No. 66 – Integration of Land Use and Transport

Draft State Environmental Planning Policy No. 66 – Integration of Land Use and Transport (draft SEPP 66) applies to the proposed development as the Draft SEPP applies to all development. Draft SEPP 66 seeks to approach development through the integration of land use development with the provision of adequate transport services. Consent authorities and applicants are encouraged to consider the pedestrian, cyclist, public transport and private vehicle accessibility to developments as part of the development investigation process.

The subject development is well positioned to comply with the aims and objectives of Draft SEPP 66, considering its proximity to Royal North Shore Hospital, St Leonards, and public transport services including regular bus service routes along the Pacific Highway.

5.4 Local Planning Instruments and Policies

5.4.1 Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 1987

The site is located within the 2(b1) zone under Lane Cove Local Environmental Plan 1987 ("the existing LEP"). The proposed development is permissible under the provisions of the existing LEP, pursuant to which hospitals are permitted within the 2(b1) zone with consent. The LEP adopts the majority of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Model Provisions 1980 ("the Model Provisions"), including the definition of "hospital". Hospital is defined in the Model Provisions as follows:-

"hospital means a building or place (other than an institution) used for the purpose of providing professional health care services (such as preventative or convalescent care, diagnosis, medical or surgical treatment, care for people with developmental disabilities, psychiatric care or counselling and services provided by health care professionals) to people admitted as in-patients (whether or not out-patients are also cared for or treated there), and includes:

- (a) ancillary facilities for the accommodation of nurses or other health care workers, ancillary shops or refreshment rooms and ancillary accommodation for persons receiving health care or for their visitors, and*
- (b) facilities situated in the building or at the place and used for educational or 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."*

The proposal is consistent with this definition. There are no development controls specifically applying to hospitals in the existing LEP. Accordingly, there is no height limit, FSR restriction, landscape requirement or the like in the existing LEP with which the proposal, if submitted as a development application pursuant to Part 4 of the Act would need to comply. There are, however, objectives identified for the Residential 2(b1) zone. These objectives are as follows:-

- "(a) to provide for townhouses or villa home development which will maintain the existing street character; and*
- (b) to provide for residential development which will be sympathetic to the neighbourhood in relation to setbacks, building mass and style, views, dwelling colour, landscaping, and the provision of off-street car parking and with minimum overshadowing of neighbouring development, and*

- (c) *to ensure other forms of buildings permitted are of a lesser scale than the townhouse development, and*
- (d) *to encourage the erection of buildings that are designed in response to the characteristics of the site and locality."*

The wording of objective (c) is in effect inconsistent with the range of permissible land uses in the 2(b1) zone and is confusing: particularly with reference to "the townhouse development". Clearly, permissible uses such as educational establishments, places of public worship and hospitals do not usually, if ever, have a lesser scale than a townhouse.

With regard to that part of the site within the Nield Avenue road reserve, the road is not zoned. The existing LEP adopts Clause 14 of the Model Provisions pursuant to which, development on public roads is permitted with development consent. Clause 14 provides as follows:-

- "(1) A person shall not carry out development on a public road shown uncoloured on the map or part of such road lawfully closed without the consent of the consent authority.*
- (2) The consent authority shall only grant its consent under subclause (1) for a purpose which may be carried out either with or without the consent of the consent authority on land adjoining that road."*

As a hospital is permissible on land adjoining the road reserve, a hospital is also permissible within the road reserve.

5.4.2 Draft Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan

A new comprehensive LEP ("the proposed LEP") is currently being prepared by Lane Cove Council in line with the standard LEP framework introduced by the Department of Planning to standardise the State's local planning system. It is yet to be publicly exhibited. The zoning of the land under the proposed LEP will be "R4 High Density Residential", within which hospitals will be permitted. (Please note that the maps illustrating this zoning are not yet publicly available.) The proposal falls within the definition of hospital in the proposed LEP as it is essentially the same definition as that contained in the Major Projects SEPP. The definition is as follows:-

***"hospital** means a building or place used for the purpose of providing professional health care services (such as preventative or convalescent care, diagnosis, medical or surgical treatment, psychiatric care or care for people with disabilities, or counselling services provided by health care professionals) to people admitted as in-patients (whether or not out-patients are also cared for or treated there), and includes ancillary facilities for (or that consist of) any of the following:*

- (a) day surgery, day procedures or health consulting rooms,*

- (b) *accommodation for nurses or other health care workers,*
- (c) *accommodation for persons receiving health care or for their visitors,*
- (d) *shops or refreshment rooms,*
- (e) *transport of patients, including helipads, ambulance facilities and car parking,*
- (f) *educational purposes or any other health-related use,*
- (g) *research purposes (whether or not it is carried out by hospital staff or health care workers or for commercial purposes),*
- (h) *chapels,*
- (i) *hospices,*
- (j) *mortuaries.”*

The proposed hospital is thus permissible within the existing 2(b1) zone under the existing LEP and within the proposed R4 zone under the proposed LEP.

6. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

6.1 Overview

Draft Part 3A Guidelines indicate that, as part of the project application, the proponent should undertake a preliminary environmental assessment based on the Preliminary Assessment Guidelines (gazetted by the Minister) and submit this information with the project application. There have been no Preliminary Assessment Guidelines gazetted by the Minister to date. The most relevant Guidelines are those included in the Draft Part 3A Guidelines, dated 24 July 2005 and subsequent guidelines and fact sheets issued by the Department of Planning in August 2005.

The purpose of the preliminary environmental assessment is to identify potential environmental issues associated with the construction and operation of the project. The likely key environmental issues are identified below.

6.2 Land Use Compatibility

The proposed development is permissible on the site under the existing zoning (ie. Residential 2b1) and will be permissible under the proposed zoning (ie. Residential R4 High Density Residential). The compatibility of a hospital with residential development is therefore recognised in both the existing and proposed zones applying to/to apply to the subject land. Nevertheless, the operational aspects of the proposed hospital will be examined in detail in the Environmental Assessment Report and any necessary mitigative measures will be identified and included in a Statement of Commitments.

6.3 Height

The proposed built form will be consistent with existing multi-unit residential developments fronting the Pacific Highway to the north, east and south-east and with the adjacent "Waterbrook at Greenwich", to the north-west. The proposal will, however, be of a greater bulk, scale, and height when compared to the single dwellings to the south and west. Potential adverse impacts from this height differential will be mitigated through setbacks, modelling of the built form, landscaping and building articulation and detailing.

The subject land occupies the interface between the low-rise development to the west and the multi-level structures fronting the Pacific Highway. However, reference to the aerial photo at Figure 3 also reveals the position of the site relative to the two residential flat buildings to the south (No's 7-15 Bellevue Avenue), whilst reference to Figure 4 shows the position of the site relative to the former Special Uses 5(a) zoned children's home now occupied by the almost completed "Waterbrook @ Greenwich". It is thus only in the west and south (but not south-east), that single dwellings predominate.

The proximity of the site to the Pacific Highway, to a wide range of facilities and services and to adjoining residential flat buildings is reflected in the future zoning of the land (identified by Lane Cove Council) as “R4 High Density Residential”. This zoning will introduce a change of scale of the type envisaged by the proposed hospital. The height of the proposed hospital therefore has to be considered in the context of both the physical setting of the site and the intended zoning.

6.4 Amenity Impacts on Neighbours

Potential amenity impacts on neighbours include:-

- overshadowing;
- overlooking;
- noise;
- obstruction of outlook; and
- traffic generation (although only in relation to the neighbours in the two adjoining residential flat buildings facing the Pacific Highway, being No’s 206-210 Pacific Highway to the north of Nield Avenue and No. 200 to the south).

These will be addressed in detail in the Environmental Assessment Report.

6.5 Traffic and Parking

On-site parking will be limited to visitors and staff only. Vehicular access is only available via Nield Avenue. There will thus be no flow of traffic through other residential streets.

Operational impacts of the project on the performance of the intersection of Nield Avenue and the Pacific Highway will be examined in the Environmental Assessment Report.

Details of a proposed “public way easement” over the eastern part of the subject site, to facilitate turning movements by public vehicles in the truncated Nield Avenue, will be submitted with the Environmental Assessment Report. This has been the subject of negotiation and agreement in principle with Lane Cove Council, as part of the intended purchase by the Proponent of Council-owned land.

6.6 Stormwater

Stormwater concept plans will be submitted as part of the Environmental Assessment Report. An existing stormwater easement traversing the site will be varied by the project.

6.7 ESD

A wide range of ESD initiatives will be incorporated into the project. Details will be submitted with the Environmental Assessment Report.

6.8 Landscaping

The proposal has a “U” shape configuration where the open end of the “U” faces towards the low-density residential precinct to the west. As shown on the landscape plan in Appendix 1, the space between the northern and southern wings of the hospital will be comprehensively landscaped. This will have the effect of breaking down the scale of the development when viewed from areas to the west. However, the scale of the development will, in any event, be largely screened from view by the comprehensive boundary planting (both retained and new trees) not only along the western boundary (where the landscaped strip is widest), but also along the northern and southern boundaries of the site.

Full details of all existing trees on the site and their respective significance, and of the proposed landscape works will be provided with the Environmental Assessment Report.

7. CONCLUSION

Nield Avenue is a short cul-de-sac off the western side of the Pacific Highway. It passes between two residential flat buildings facing the Highway (which do not form part of the site) to give access to 10 residential properties, all of which are included in the site to which the project application relates. No other properties are accessed from Nield Avenue except for the two residential flat buildings facing the Highway.

The site is zoned Residential 2(b1), whilst the two neighbouring residential flat buildings facing the Highway are zoned Residential 2(c), the highest density residential zone in the Lane Cove LGA. The site's proximity to the Pacific Highway and to multi-level residential buildings renders it appropriate for more intensive uses than the existing low-rise residential buildings which presently characterise the site. This attribute of the site has been recognised by Lane Cove Council which proposes to rezone the land to "R4 High Density Residential".

The project comprises the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the construction of a 4 to 6-storey hospital. Hospitals are permitted within the 2(b1) zone under the existing LEP and will be permissible in the R4 High Density Residential zone under the proposed LEP. The proposal supports the intent behind the Inner North Subregion draft Subregional Strategy issued by NSW Department of Planning for the development of the area around Royal North Shore Hospital, close to St Leonards, as a specialised health and education precinct.

A hospital of the type proposed will meet a well-established need within the wider region, in a readily accessible location, close to a wide array of facilities and services in a high-quality building in a landscaped setting. It will be of the highest standard.

Key issues will be addressed in detail in the Environmental Assessment Report that will be prepared following the release of the DGEARs. The Environmental Assessment Report will be accompanied by a draft Statement of Commitments outlining environmental management, mitigation and monitoring measures.



FIGURES



APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

Project Brochure