

## 8.0 justification for the proposal

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### 8.1 Meeting Project Objectives

The main objective of the proposed development is to allow Healthscope Limited to increase the capacity of the Newcastle Private Hospital for the benefit of the local and wider community and with minimal impact on the immediate and surrounding natural and built environment.

### 8.2 Ecological Sustainability

Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) has emerged as the primary objective of environmental protection in NSW. ESD is defined under the Local Government Act 1993 as requiring the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes. Sustainability encompasses a range of considerations under the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

A building on a developed part of a hospital site is generally consistent with sustainable patterns of land use. The development overall is within an existing urban footprint. The building will provide significant social benefits through the provision of health care services without adverse environmental or economic effects.

No particular environmental threats have been identified as arising from the proposed hospital development. Where issues have arisen, adequate management and mitigation measures are proposed. The potential effects of the development are such that the likelihood of environmental harm is very low. No unacceptable risks of development or environmental harm have been identified.

The proposal is subject to a rigorous and public environmental assessment process, which ensures that issues and risks to the environment are appreciated and understood. Consultation with the community and public authorities has commenced and will continue as part of the assessment process.

The proposed development is in keeping with the principles and practice of ecologically sustainable development. Specific matters under the principles of ecologically sustainable development are addressed below.

#### 8.2.1 Integration

The development proposal integrates environmental social and economic considerations. The development proposed is consistent with applicable planning policies. The proposal provides for urban infrastructure development without significant environmental risk. The proposal achieves the balance generally sought by planning policy.

#### 8.2.2 Precautionary Principle

A risk adverse approach to development is promoted by the precautionary principle.

### ***Threats***

There are no particular environmental threats arising from the proposed developments as adequate management and mitigation measures can be implemented. The development area is not flood prone and has adequate setbacks to the local bushfire hazards. Mine subsidence will be adequately investigated prior to construction commencing.

### ***Risk***

The likely effects of development are such that the likelihood of environmental harm is very low. The effects of the development can be adequately managed with standard mitigation measures and processes. The risk of loss of biodiversity or ecological integrity is very low.

### ***Unacceptable risks***

No unacceptable risks of development have been identified. Bushfire risks have been addressed via the application of asset protection zones.

### ***Proportionality***

The management measures proposed as part of the development are in proportion to the likely risk and potential effects.

#### ***8.2.3 Inter-generational Equity***

The development does not involve a potential loss of opportunity or resources for future generations. Improved and increased health services are an investment in the future.

#### ***8.2.4 Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecological Integrity***

The proposal will not result in a loss of biodiversity. Ecological integrity will be protected through appropriate stormwater controls. The location of the development within an urban footprint is consistent with minimising ecological effects.

#### ***8.2.5 Improved Valuation, Pricing and Incentive Mechanisms***

The developer will pay for the establishment of infrastructure and for appropriate environmental management measures on the development areas of the site. Longer term management costs will be borne by the operators of the hospital consistent with the polluter pays principle.

#### ***8.2.6 Environmental Assessment***

The proposal will be subject to a rigorous and public environmental assessment process under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. This includes assessment of matters under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. The EA process under Part 3A ensures that a broad range of issues are considered and weighed appropriately for the development.

### **8.2.7 Public Consultation**

Consultation with the community and public authorities has commenced and will continue as part of the assessment process. The consultation process provides for input from a diverse range of individuals, interest groups and statutory authorities consistent with the social aspects of sustainability.

### **8.2.8 Conclusion**

The proposed hospital is in keeping with the principles and practice of ecologically sustainable development.

## **8.3 Meeting Environmental Performance Requirements**

The site is ideally suited to the proposed development as it is not an area of particular environmental vulnerability, nor does it have special social or economic value for any other land use. As such, with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the environmental performance requirements of the development during and post construction will be easily met. A monitoring program will be implemented to ensure the performance of construction of the facility, and contingency plans with appropriate responses and corrective actions will form part of the site Environmental / Construction Management Plan.

## **8.4 Safeguarding Public Health**

It is considered that the proposed facility will have a negligible impact on public health due to:

- The adequate separation distance of the building from the nearest residential areas and schools;
- The nature of the intervening land uses and their role as a buffer; and
- The incorporation of a range of strict controls on emissions to water and the acoustic environment.

Any unforeseen public health impact will be addressed and managed by a contingency plan within the site Environmental Management Plan.