



Planning

**MAJOR PROJECT ASSESSMENT:
*The Australian Hearing Hub, University
Avenue, Macquarie University
(MP 10_0032)***



Director-General's
Environmental Assessment Report
Section 75I of the
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

December 2010

ABBREVIATIONS

CIV	Capital Investment Value
Department	Department of Planning
DGRs	Director-General's Requirements
Director-General	Director-General of the Department of Planning
EA	Environmental Assessment
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
MD SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005
Minister	Minister for Planning
PAC	Planning Assessment Commission
Part 3A	Part 3A of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
PEA	Preliminary Environmental Assessment
PFM	Planning Focus Meeting
PPR	Preferred Project Report
Proponent	Macquarie University
RtS	Response to Submissions

Cover Photograph: Photomontage – view of the eastern elevation
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an assessment of a Project Application seeking approval for the construction, fit-out and operation of the Australian Hearing Hub pursuant to Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The site is located at the junction of University Avenue and Macquarie Drive and known as 21 University Avenue, Macquarie University, Ryde.

The Project Application seeks approval for the construction and fit-out of a six storey building to accommodate the operations of the University and various research and commercial entities (including a wind tunnel and anechoic chamber, nano fabrication area, laboratories, academic/research spaces, offices, library, lecture theatre, café and storage areas), site preparation works (including excavation and road alignment), landscaping and signage.

The Capital Investment Value (CIV) of the proposal is approximately \$108 million and the proposal would support more than 100 operational and 100 construction jobs.

On 11 September 2009, the Macquarie University site was included as a State Significant Site in Schedule 3 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005* (MD SEPP). The site is zoned B4 Mixed Use and the proposed development is permissible in this zone.

On 10 March 2010, the Director, Government Land and Social Projects, as delegate of the Minister, formed an opinion that the project is a major project under clause 19 of Schedule 1 to the MD SEPP, as it is a development for the purpose of teaching or research with a CIV of more than \$15 million. The Minister is the approval authority.

The proposal was exhibited from 28 July 2010 until 27 August 2010. The Department received submissions from the City of Ryde Council, the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), NSW Transport and Sydney Water. One submission was received from the public supporting the proposal. Key issues included: consistency with the Concept Plan, traffic and parking, and social impacts.

The Department has assessed the merits of the proposal and has found the key issues associated with the project include consistency with the Concept Plan, built form, transport and traffic impacts, and development contributions. The Department is satisfied that the impacts of the proposed development have been addressed via the Environmental Assessment, Preferred Project Report and Statement of Commitments, and can be adequately managed through the recommended conditions.

The Department considers the site to be suitable for the proposed development and that the application is in the public interest and is consistent with the objects of the EP&A Act (including ecologically sustainable development), the State Plan, Sydney Metropolitan Plan and Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy. Consequently, the Department recommends that Project Application for The Australian Hearing Hub be approved, subject to conditions.

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1. BACKGROUND

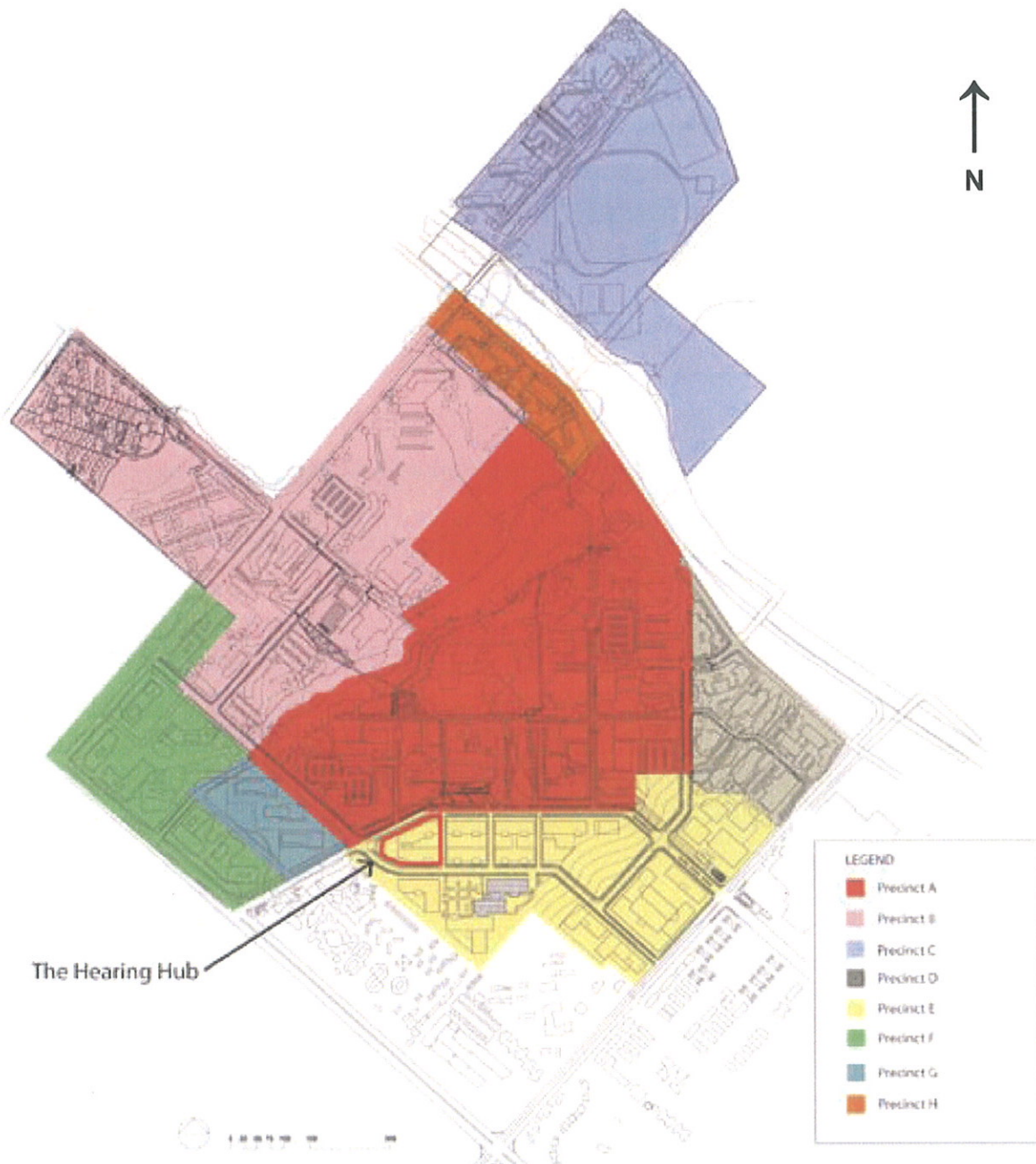
Macquarie University (the Proponent) proposes to construct, fit-out and operate the Australian Hearing Hub, at 21 University Avenue, Macquarie University, Ryde. Macquarie University is located 17 kilometres to the north-west of the Sydney CBD at the western end of the Macquarie Park corridor between the M2 motorway and Epping Road (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Macquarie University Location



1.1 Site Location and Description

The site is located within Macquarie University and is known as 21 University Avenue (Part Lot 191 DP 1157041), located at the junction of University Avenue and Macquarie Drive (see Figure 2). The site is owned by Macquarie University.

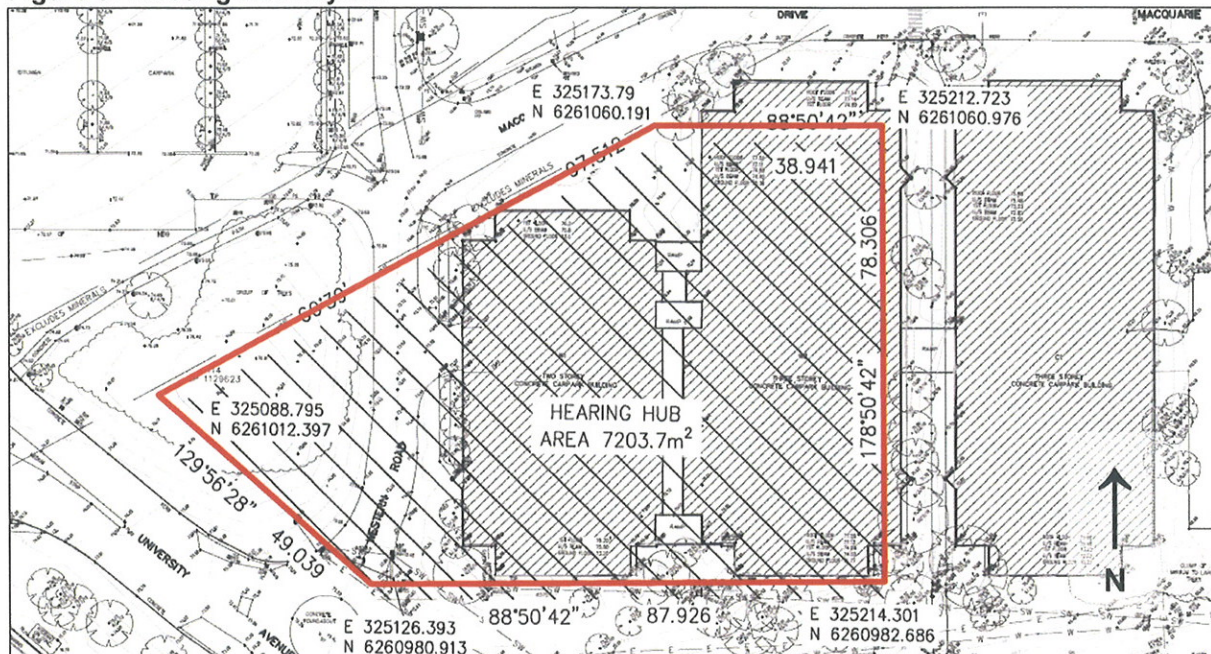
Figure 2: Site Location

Macquarie University is strategically located at the western end of the Macquarie Park corridor, which forms part of Sydney's Global Economic Corridor. Macquarie University is identified as a key knowledge asset in the Macquarie Park Specialised Centre.

The Hearing Hub development site (refer to Figure 2) is located on the western edge of Precinct E Station South within the Concept Plan, and is identified as a commercial/research precinct. The site is located immediately to the south of the academic core in Precinct A. The site is located at a gateway into the University Campus. The development site is currently occupied by multi-storey car parks - providing 955 car parking spaces (see Figure 3). The Proponent has indicated that the demolition of these would be undertaken as development without consent under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007. The demolition of the

car parks has not commenced. The development site was inspected by Departmental officers on 24 August 2010.

Figure 3: Existing Site Layout



1.2 Surrounding Development

Immediately to the north of the site is the new University Library (currently under construction), to the east are multi storey car parking facilities, to the south-east is the new Cochlear building (currently under construction), to the south is gumnut cottage childcare centre, an aged care facility to the south-west and to the west is at-grade car parking.

2. PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 Project Description

The Project Application (as exhibited in the EA and as amended by the PPR) seeks approval to develop the Australian Hearing Hub that would provide academic and commercial facilities for research, training, teaching and learning in hearing, hearing-related speech, language, and reading disorders. Project Approval is sought for:

- the construction and fitout of a six storey building for educational purposes with ancillary commercial and retail uses;
- two basement levels of car parking;
- site preparation works including excavation and road alignment; and
- landscaping and signage.

The project layout is shown in Figure 4. The key components of the project are listed in Table 1.

Figure 4: Project Layout

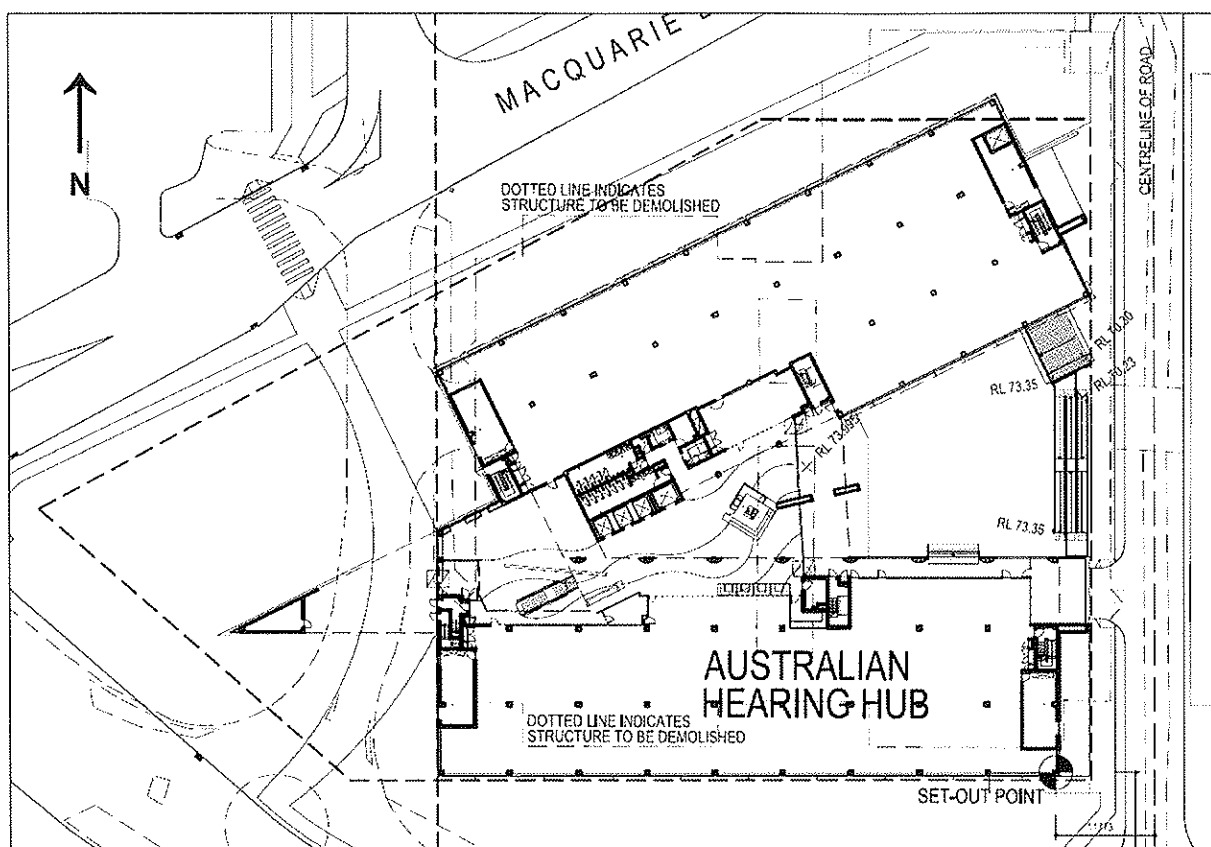


Table 1: Key Project Components

Aspect	Description	
Height	Approximately 29.5 metres	
Site Area	7,203.7m ²	
GFA	Approximately 23,182m ²	
Levels	Basement Level 2	182 car parking spaces; 16 motorcycle spaces; wind tunnel and anechoic chamber; nano fabrication area; rainwater detention tank; plant room and storage
	Basement Level 1	151 car parking spaces (including 8 disabled); 160 bicycle spaces; toilets and change rooms; anechoic chamber; garbage, recycling and delivery area; electrical kiosks and storage space
	Ground Floor	reception area, laboratory, academic/research and office space; café, play area and toilets and shower
	Level 1	laboratory, academic/research and office space; lecture theatre; toilets and shower
	Level 2	laboratory, academic/research and office space; lecture theatre, break-out space, toilets and shower
	Level 3	laboratory, academic/research and office space, recreation space; external deck, toilets and shower
	Level 4	laboratory, academic/research and office space; library; toilets and shower
	Level 5	laboratory, academic/research and office space; Board and meeting rooms; toilets and shower
	Roof	Plant room and two satellite dishes
Total Car parking	333 spaces inclusive of: • 54 visitor car spaces; and • 8 accessible spaces.	

Aspect	Description
CIV	\$108,401,000
Building Capacity	1,000 people
Jobs	Approximately 100 operational and 100 construction

2.3 Project Need and Justification

The Department considers that the proposed construction of the Australian Hearing Hub would provide public benefits to the wider community through the research and learning into hearing and hearing related conditions, generation of additional jobs and additional tertiary education places. The proposed development would further expand the research and teaching functions of the University which is identified as a key knowledge asset in the region. It would provide links with industry given the co-location with the Cochlear development immediately to the south-east. The proposal would also foster the relocation of the multi-storey car parking located in the central corridor of the Campus to the perimeters as envisaged in the Concept Plan, which promotes increased activity and activation in the main corridor.

The NSW State Plan seeks to achieve improved urban environments and deliver attractive and sustainable development through reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and development in close proximity to existing centres, services and transport. The proposal would achieve the State Plan objectives by assisting in the expansion of Macquarie University, which would capitalise on new transport infrastructure provided by the Epping to Chatswood Rail Link.

The Macquarie Park Specialised Centre forms part of the Global Economic Corridor in the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036. The proposed development would support the expansion of the University and would satisfy the objectives of the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036 by facilitating development around research hubs; building Sydney's knowledge infrastructure and clustering it with businesses; supporting educational and commercial uses at Macquarie University; and providing fair access to jobs, services and educational opportunities. The growth of Macquarie University would further support the intention to extend Sydney's Global Economic Corridor to Parramatta from Macquarie Park.

The site falls within the area covered by the Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy. The aims of the Subregional Strategy that this project specifically meets are to: strengthen the Global Economic Corridor from North Sydney to Macquarie Park, reinforce the region's knowledge assets and encourage the use of public transport. The proposal is also consistent with the need to generate additional employment opportunities and supporting targets for the region. The proposal is also consistent with the following key directions and actions for the subregion:

- protect and strengthen Macquarie Park commercial area;
- expansion of Macquarie University through the 'Major Projects' process;
- encourage greater use of public transport with the opening of the Epping to Chatswood Rail Link;
- undertake integrated land use planning; and
- support the implementation of the new network of Strategic Bus Corridors.

3. STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1 Major Project

The proposal is a major project under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) because it is development for the purpose of medical research under clause 19 of Schedule 1 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005* (MD SEPP). Therefore the Minister for Planning is the approval authority.

On 25 January 2010, the Minister for Planning delegated responsibility for the determination of project applications under Part 3A of the EP&A Act to the Director General where:

- there are fewer than 25 submissions in the nature of objections in respect of the project application; and
- the project is not a critical infrastructure project under section 75C of the EP&A Act.

3.2 Permissibility

The site is zoned B4 Mixed Use under the MD SEPP and the proposed development is permissible in this zone.

3.3 Environmental Planning Instruments

Under Sections 75I(2)(d) and 75I(2)(e) of the EP&A Act, the Director-General's report for a project is required to include a copy of, or reference to, the provisions of any State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) that substantially governs the carrying out of the project, and the provisions of any environmental planning instruments (EPI) that would (except for the application of Part 3A) substantially govern the carrying out of the project and that have been taken into consideration in the assessment of the project.

The Department's consideration of relevant SEPPs and EPIs is provided in Appendix D and include:

- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005;*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007; and*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land.*

3.4 Objects of the EP&A Act

Decisions made under the EP&A Act must have regard to the objects of the EP&A Act, as set out in Section 5 of the EP&A Act. The relevant objects are:

(a) to encourage:

- (i) *the proper management, development and conservation of natural and artificial resources, including agricultural land, natural areas, forests, minerals, water, cities, towns and villages for the purpose of promoting the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment,*
- (ii) *the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land,*
- (iii) *the protection, provision and co-ordination of communication and utility services,*
- (iv) *the provision of land for public purposes,*
- (v) *the provision and co-ordination of community services and facilities, and*

- (vi) *the protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats, and*
- (vii) *ecologically sustainable development, and*
- (viii) *the provision and maintenance of affordable housing, and*
- (b) *to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State, and*
- (c) *to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.*

The Department has fully considered the objects of the EP&A Act, including the encouragement of ESD, and considers that the application is consistent with the relevant objects. The assessment of the application in relation to these relevant objects is provided in Section 3.5 and Section 5 of this report.

3.5 Ecologically Sustainable Development

The EP&A Act adopts the definition of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) found in the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*. Section 6(2) of that Act states that ESD requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes and that ESD can be achieved through the implementation of:

- (a) *the precautionary principle,*
- (b) *inter-generational equity,*
- (c) *conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity,*
- (d) *improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms.*

The proposal is located within an urban footprint on a previously developed and disturbed site and would not result in loss of any threatened or vulnerable species, populations, communities or significant habitats. The site will not be impacted by changes in sea level rising resulting from climate change. The Proponent has incorporated ecologically sustainable design initiatives in this proposal and aims to achieve a 5 star rating under the Green Star sustainability tool, including the following elements in the design and construction process:

- high efficiency electrical design with infrastructure provisions for future connection to a roof-mounted PV system;
- high efficiency VAV system suitable for a multi-tenanted layout;
- water efficient hydraulic design, including 200kL rainwater tank to capture rainwater from the roof to supply irrigation and toilet flushing;
- reduction in the embodied energy impacts due to incorporation of recycled products and industrial waste products;
- stormwater treated or filtered and flow managed;
- preparation of an Environmental Management Plan; and
- recycling of 80% of demolition and construction waste.

The Department supports a 5 star green star rating and has recommended that the initiatives in the ESD report be implemented in the construction and operation of the proposal. On the basis of this assessment, the Department is satisfied that the proposal encourages ESD, in accordance with the objects of the EP&A Act.

3.6 Statement of Compliance

In accordance with section 75I of the EP&A Act, the Department is satisfied that the Director-General's environmental assessment requirements have been complied with.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS

4.1 Exhibition

Under section 75H(3) of the EP&A Act, the Director-General is required to make the environmental assessment (EA) of an application publicly available for at least 30 days. After accepting the EA, the Department publicly exhibited it from 28 July 2010 until 27 August 2010 (30 days) on the Department's website, at the Department of Planning's Information Centre and City of Ryde Council. The Department also advertised the public exhibition in the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph on 28 July 2010 and notified residents and relevant State and local government authorities in writing.

The Department received five submissions during the exhibition of the EA – four submissions from public authorities and one submission from the general public.

A summary of the issues raised in submissions is provided below and the Department's consideration of the issues is located in Section 5 of this report.

4.2 Public Authority Submissions

Four submissions were received from public authorities. None of the authorities objected to the proposal, however, all authorities either raised issues or provided recommended conditions. A summary of the issues and recommended conditions is discussed below.

4.2.1 City of Ryde Council

Council does not object to the proposal, however, provides the following comments and conditions for consideration:

- the levying of section 94 contributions / agreed works in kind as conditioned in the Concept Plan approval requires resolution;
- consideration should be given to providing "public domain" and "street" areas in accordance with the *Macquarie Park Public Domain Technical Manual*;
- concerned that the application is not accompanied by a Social Impact Statement that addresses the needs of future users of the building and how it will link to other community facilities within Macquarie Park and the City of Ryde;
- the number of proposed additional childcare spaces will be unlikely to cater for the needs of the additional staff/students/workers using the campus;
- Council's Macquarie Park Pedestrian Movement Study should inform the location of pedestrian linkages between Precinct E and the Herring Road precinct of Macquarie Park;
- the impact of the proposals for Herring Road and the M2 motorway widening on the movement through *University Drive* and *Macquarie Drive* on the University Campus;
- the proposal meets many of the urban design and public domain outcomes of the Macquarie Park DCP, with appropriate massing and height, however greater articulation of the façade is recommended and further development in aspects

- such as human scale and public amenity and an increase in the ground floor ceiling height to 4.5m; and
- the project exceeds the DCP green star rating.

4.2.2 Sydney Regional Development Advisory Committee (SRDAC)

SRDAC does not object to the proposal, however, provides the following comments and conditions for consideration:

- the hearing hub application can be determined prior to the finalisation of the detailed micro simulation traffic modelling as required under the Concept Plan approval;
- the suggested changes for the new priority controlled intersection should be referred to Ryde City Council for comment;
- the loss of parking at the existing car parks W1, W2 and C1 is to be offset by the construction of the temporary car park near Culloden Road, with sections of the temporary car park to be constructed prior to demolition of the existing car parks;
- additional measures to be included in the Workplace Travel Plan;
- the Hearing Hub development (1 space per 68m²) exceeds the car parking control for Precinct E (1 space per 80m²). The Department of Planning needs to be satisfied with the level of parking;
- a Demolition / Construction Management plan is required to be submitted to Council and the RTA for approval prior to the issue of a construction certificate;
- layout of car parking area to be in accordance with Australian Standards;
- any proposed structures / landscaping is not to obstruct any vehicle / pedestrian sight lines; and
- all works/signposting to be carried out at no cost to the RTA.

4.2.3 Transport NSW

Transport NSW does not object to the proposal, however, provides the following comments and conditions for consideration:

- measures to promote sustainable means of transport to be included;
- detail the provision of facilities to increase the non car mode share for travel to the 40% specified in condition B2(1) of the Concept Plan approval MP 06_0016; and
- the Proponent should take into consideration the objectives and initiatives of the Metropolitan Transport Plan.

4.2.4 Sydney Water

Sydney Water does not object to the proposal, however, provides the following comments and conditions for consideration:

- the drinking water main available for connection is the 300mm main on the east side of Balaclava Road;
- a wastewater extension is required to service the proposed development, and is to be designed and constructed by the Proponent connecting the site to the 300mm main known as the Balaclava Road carrier;
- the wastewater infrastructure must be sized and configured according to the Sewerage Code of Australia and all internal wastewater services are to connect to the new extended wastewater main;
- all customers discharging trade waste into Sydney Water's wastewater systems must have written permission from Sydney Water, who will either issue a trade waste permit or enter into a trade waste agreement;

- Sydney Water will further assess the impact of individual developments when the Proponent applies for a Section 73 certificate; and
- the Proponent must fund any adjustments needed to Sydney Water infrastructure.

4.3 Public Submissions

One submission was received from the public indicating interest in providing the signage proposed as part of the project.

The Department has considered the issues raised in submissions in its assessment of the project, as discussed in Section 5 of this report.

4.4 Proponent's Response to Submissions

The Proponent submitted a Preferred Project Report (PPR) which responded to issues raised in submissions by public authorities and the public (Appendix B). The PPR incorporated amendments to the proposal including:

- additional fit-out details provided;
- removal of road infrastructure works from the project as they are being undertaken under the Infrastructure SEPP;
- reduction in car parking from 339 to 333 car spaces;
- provision of two satellite dishes;
- relocation of electricity infrastructure;
- amendments to commitments regarding potable water; and
- reconfiguration of landscaping.

5. ASSESSMENT

The Department considers the key environmental issues for the project to be:

- consistency with the Concept Plan;
- built form;
- transport and car parking; and
- development contributions.

5.1 Consistency with the Concept Plan

The proposal is generally consistent with the Concept Plan, including the use, the proposed height and scale of the building (as discussed in Section 5.2). The proposal is also consistent with the Design Excellence and Urban Design Guidelines for Precinct E and the Landscape Management Plan for Precinct E that have been endorsed by the Department.

There are elements of the Concept Plan approval that have not been addressed within the current proposal, however, these can be largely addressed prior to the occupation of the building, and are discussed in Table 2. The proposal also does not comply with the car parking rate for floor space in Precinct E at 1 space per 80m² of GFA. However, variations to the car parking rates can be considered if the maximum car parking permissible for Precincts E and F of 5,000 can be met when the Precincts are developed in full (discussed in further detail in Section 5.3).

Table 2: Inconsistencies with the Concept Plan

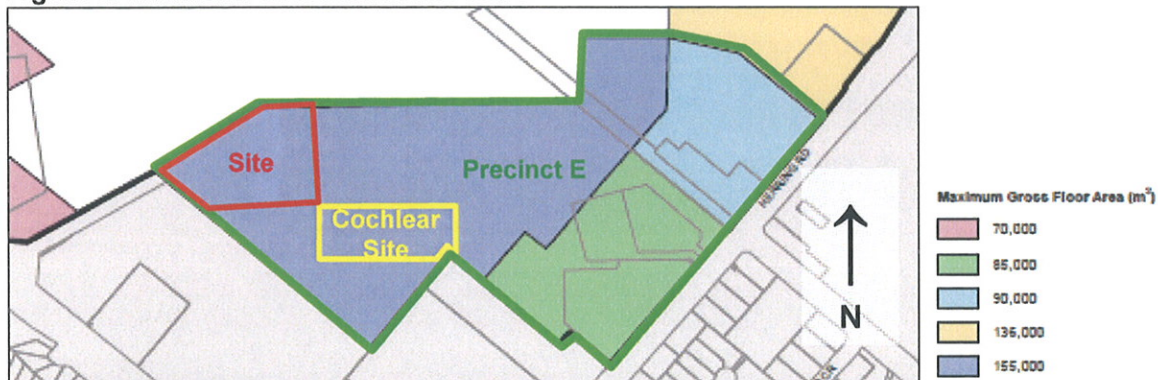
Concept Plan Approval	EA and PPR Response	Department Comment	Recommendation Condition
Greater setbacks along Balaclava Road and Waterloo Road	Waterloo Road amendments adopted in Precinct E documentation and Balaclava Road amendments to be provided at future stages	As the setbacks will be determined by the micro-simulation modelling, the Department considers that appropriately detailed setbacks can be provided later	The Department has recommended that the Proponent demonstrate that any setbacks required have been incorporated into amendments to the Concept Plan prior to occupation of the building as required in the Concept Plan approval
A detailed micro-simulation transport model of the University internal road network and surrounding "area of influence"	This has not been finalised	The RTA has requested that this proposal be considered independently of the modelling. The Department considers that this modelling should be finalised prior to occupation of this building to verify the scope of works (if any) that may be required for this proposal	The Department has recommended that the modelling be completed prior to occupation of this building
An agreement with the RTA for road and intersection works and an indicative timing and staging plan	This proposal does not generate the level of additional traffic that would require any of the road intersection upgrades to be undertaken at this stage	The Department considers that the agreements with the RTA and staging plans should be finalised in conjunction with the traffic modelling	The Department has recommended the Proponent demonstrate that an agreement with the RTA has been finalised for road and intersection works prior to occupation of the building
A Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA)	A Memorandum of Understanding between the Proponent and Council included a draft contributions schedule. The final contributions schedule is to form part of the VPA that is required as part of the Concept Plan approval. The VPA is currently being negotiated between Council and the Proponent.	Whilst Council identified it as an issue in the submission they had also previously indicated to the Proponent that this issue could be resolved prior to occupation of this proposal, being the first application submitted after the Concept Plan approval	The Department has recommended the Proponent demonstrate that the VPA has been executed and pay contributions in accordance with the VPA prior to occupation of the building
Aboriginal Archaeology Strategy for the Precinct	As there is limited likelihood of aboriginal heritage being discovered on the site, a site-specific strategy was prepared for this proposal	The Department accepts that the proposal is not expected to have impacts on aboriginal heritage values, as the site does not have any items of Aboriginal significance and is disturbed with fill and previous development of the site	To ensure consistency with the Concept Plan, the Department has recommended that the Aboriginal Archaeology Strategy for Precinct E be submitted prior to occupation of this building
A hazardous material audit and Phase 2 intrusive contamination assessment for the Precinct	A Hazmat Report and Targeted Phase 2 Contamination Report were prepared for the site	The Department considers that these studies can be undertaken for individual projects and not on a Precinct wide basis. Precinct wide remediation works or hazardous material removal (if necessary) cannot be undertaken for the entire Precinct, given the ongoing function of the site as a University and the staging of development over 25 years	No further requirements
Child care strategy	This has not been finalised	The Department considers that there would be no increase in demand until the building was operational. Any works required would need to be addressed in the final VPA	The Department has recommended the Proponent submit the Strategy prior to occupation of the building

5.2 Built Form

5.2.1 Bulk and Scale

The proposed building meets the built form development standards in the MD SEPP. At a height of 29.5 metres it complies with the MD SEPP controls which prescribe a maximum 36 metres. The part of Precinct E that the site is located in is limited to a maximum 155,000m² in the MD SEPP (see Figure 5). The proposal complies with this standard as the proposal consists of 23,182m² of GFA which in conjunction with the Cochlear development comprising 24,343m² of GFA (the only other approval for the same part of Precinct E) would equal a maximum of 47,525m² of GFA, which is well below the 155,000m² permissible.

Figure 5: Maximum GFA Plan in MD SEPP



The site is identified as a Macquarie University Entry Precinct and Statement Entry Area in the Concept Plan, which therefore allows the proposed building to have a large floor plate that occupies a significant portion of the site. The mass of the building is, however, reduced by the separation between the two wings of approximately 9 metres at the centre of the site and widening to approximately 29 metres at the eastern edge. The design of the building reflects the distinctive shape of the site and provides visual interest to the building (see Figure 6). The building is setback 13.5 metres to 20 metres along University Avenue and Macquarie Drive, with the two wings of the building providing a more defined and straight edge along University Avenue and Macquarie Drive.

Figure 6: Photomontage of Eastern Elevation of Proposal



The Department considers the bulk and massing on the site appropriate as the height and scale of the building is comparable with other buildings on the Campus, including the new Library Building and Cochlear building being constructed to the north and south-east of the site, respectively (see Figures 7 and 8). Council considers that the building is contributing to a more defined urban environment and the evolving character of the area. The Department considers the proposal is appropriate in the local and broader context and provides an iconic and distinctive building at a gateway location.

Figure 7: Library Building Located to the North of the Site (Currently under Construction)



Figure 8: Cochlear Building Located to the South-East of the Site (Currently under Construction)



5.2.2 Design Excellence and Urban Design Guidelines for Precinct E

The design of the built form for the site is guided by the Concept Plan for the Macquarie University Campus and the Design Excellence and Urban Design Guidelines for Precinct E (the Guidelines) which has been endorsed by the Department. The Guidelines provide further design parameters and guidance for

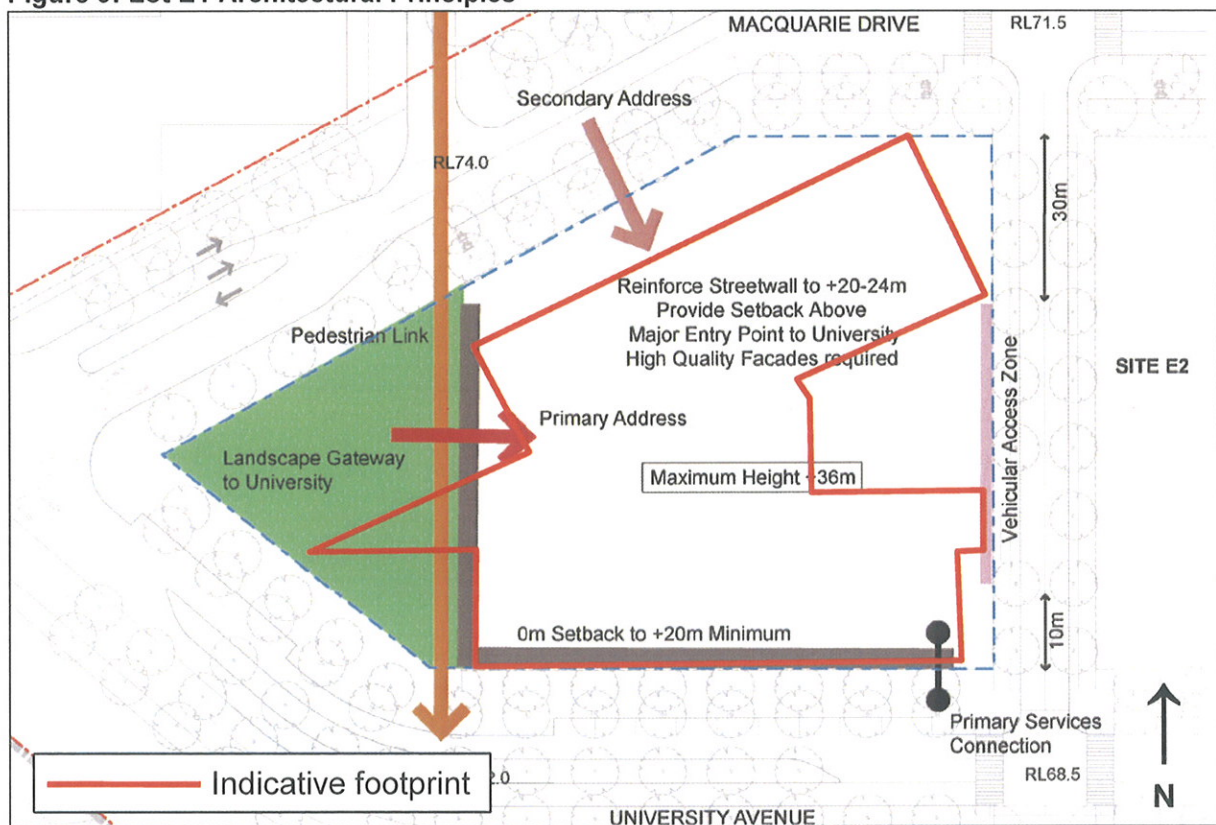
future development on the Campus. The proposal would replace a multi-storey car park with a modern commercial and educational building.

The proposed site is identified as Site E1 and the proposal is consistent with the 24,000m² of GFA attributed to Site E1 in the Guidelines and is also generally consistent with the built form controls in the Guidelines (see Figure 9). Site E1 is subject to street wall definition requirements which stipulate:

- a zero metre setback from the site boundaries, which have been designed to provide a 30 metre road reservation corridor; and
- a minimum height of 20 metres on the western and University Avenue frontages.

As the building extends into the gateway landscape element, the western edge does not provide a straight edge as prescribed in the Guidelines. However, Council and the Department consider the design of the building would provide a satisfactory outcome by providing a dramatic corner in the streetscape and a distinctive design feature at the primary address.

Figure 9: Lot E1 Architectural Principles



The proposal provides relatively large, unbroken and solid elevations to the north and south. Council considered that the horizontal articulation along the length of the façade was appropriate, however, recommended stronger articulation of the façade. The Department considers the horizontal banding along all the facades breaks up the mass and provides an appropriate level of articulation to ensure visual interest and to minimise the massing of the building. The protruding element on the western edge of the building also provides interest in the western façade and relief to the expansive facades.

The proposal provides a landscaped setting for passive recreation generally in accordance with the Guidelines. Whilst the building protrudes into the area

designated for the gateway landscaped element, the Department notes that the loss of open space is minimal as the building is setback directly to the north where the building protrudes into the open space area (see Figure 9). The Department considers the minor intrusion to be acceptable, as the pedestrian and view corridor is maintained by an approximately 15 metre wide cavity provided on the ground and first floor. The Department considers the design of the building is appropriate for the gateway site.

5.2.3 Activation

The main entry point to the building is located between the two wings of the building and at the centre of the site, which is setback from the main roads. Whilst an entrance from the main road is usually considered more appropriate, the Department notes that the site is irregular in shape, which has dictated an irregular design of the building. This aims to provide uniform and straight edges parallel to the roads to ensure pedestrian circulation and movement is co-ordinated and clear. The result of this arrangement is a large separation between the two wings. The Department therefore considers the location of the entry appropriate as it would promote activity and activates a potentially quiet and under utilised space. The location of the entry at the junction of the two wings also allows a centralised core area to be utilised by both wings.

5.2.4 Overshadowing

The proposal would have minimal overshadowing impacts as it is not located in proximity to any other residential buildings. The overshadowing from the building would mainly fall onto the surrounding roads and associated public domain. Minimal overshadowing would fall on to the southern parts of the open space areas to the west of the building during the morning and partial overshadowing in the afternoon of the at-grade car park associated with the Cochlear development which will be converted into open space in the future. The closest building is the aged care facility to the south which would receive minimal overshadowing early in the morning at 9am during the winter solstice.

5.3 Transport and Car Parking

5.3.1 Traffic Generation

The proposed development forms part of the redevelopment of the Macquarie University Campus, as approved under the Concept Plan. Given the substantial increase in GFA and anticipated traffic generation, a number of local road and intersection works were foreshadowed in the Concept Plan. These upgrades form part of the Concept Plan approval with the timing of provision of these works being subject to agreements with the RTA and the Proponent, and further micro-simulation modelling required as part of the Concept Plan approval.

The Proponent has provided a traffic assessment in the EA that concludes that 228 vehicle trips would be generated by this proposal during peak periods. The traffic assessment concluded that the proposal would have minimal impact on the performance of the intersections of Epping Road / Balaclava Road and Waterloo Road / Herring Road, provided upgrade works required for Waterloo Road / Herring Road intersection as part of the Cochlear development (MP 08_0032) are undertaken. Therefore, no upgrades would be required as a result of this development.

Council raised issues with the assumptions made regarding traffic generation, the data used in the modelling and also recommended works are undertaken at the Epping Road (east) right-turn lane and/or the proposed upgrade of the Balaclava Road / Epping Road intersection. The RTA has previously informed the Department that Stage 1 works to improve the Epping Road / Balaclava Road intersection will be undertaken by the RTA. The RTA raised no specific issue regarding the traffic generated by this proposal, however, did find that the traffic generation was greater than that identified by the Proponent but less than that identified by Council.

The Department notes that the Epping Road / Balaclava Road and Waterloo Road / Herring Road intersections are already operating with significant delays and poor levels of service in the morning and evening peak periods. However, the Epping Road / Balaclava Road intersection will be upgraded by the RTA and Waterloo Road / Herring Road by the developers of the Cochlear project, located immediately to the south of the proposal, to mitigate impacts of the Cochlear development.

The RTA was supportive of allowing this project to proceed to determination and construction while the broader traffic and transport issues are considered in the micro-simulation modelling. As the traffic impacts and mitigation measures need to be further analysed in the micro-simulation modelling for the broader University, the Department considers that the traffic impacts are acceptable, subject to finalisation of the micro-simulation model to determine the localised impacts and agreement on responsibilities and timing of upgrade works prior to occupation of the building. Therefore, the Department has recommended a condition that requires the modelling be completed prior to occupation of the building, to ensure consistency with the Concept Plan, and to verify what, if any, additional upgrades or works are required for this development and the timing of the works.

5.3.2 Car Parking

The Proponent proposes to provide 333 car parking spaces in this development at a rate of 1 car space per 70m². This exceeds the rate prescribed in the MD SEPP and Concept Plan approval, which stipulates a maximum rate of 1 car parking space per 80m². However, the Concept Plan allows for greater provision of spaces provided the total maximum of 5,000 car spaces is not exceeded for Precinct E and F upon completion of the Concept Plan and the Proponent demonstrating that compliance will be achieved. This proposal and the Cochlear proposal results in a total 861 car parking spaces developed for the Precinct, which does not exceed the maximum 5,000 car parking spaces permitted for Precinct E and F.

The maximum car parking rate in the MD SEPP is not applicable where the Director-General issues a certificate under clause 14 of Part 21 of Schedule 3 of the MD SEPP. The certificate must indicate that the Director-General is satisfied that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of the case, and there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify exempting the development from that development standard. In deciding whether to issue a certificate, the Director General must consider:

- a) whether contravention of the development standard raises any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning, and
- b) the public benefit of maintaining the development standard, and
- c) any other matters required to be taken into consideration by the Director-General.

The Department recommends that compliance with this development standard not be required for this development for the following reasons:

- the variations of the development standard would not raise any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning, as the development standard limiting the overall car parking spaces in the Precinct still applies and the development complies with this standard;
- the proposed rate is still below that prescribed for commercial development within the City of Ryde under their planning policies;
- the Proponent has also committed to providing a work place travel plan and the Department has recommended that the work place travel plan be consistent with the 40% public and active transport mode share committed to in the Concept Plan, which exceeds the State Plan target;
- the proposal is considered appropriate for the site and would provide a public benefit through supporting medical research;
- there would be minimal public benefit in maintaining the development standard, as the changes in public transport mode share would require time and adjustments to travel practices. The cars that would not be accommodated in the proposed car park would utilise the local streets; and
- the visitor spaces could be adapted into visitor spaces for the Precinct, which could be reflected in the Operational Management Plan that the Department has requested.

Accordingly, a Director General's certificate has been prepared for the site so that the maximum car parking rate is waived in this instance.

The Department has recommended conditions requiring that the proposed car parking only be used by occupants of the building, visitors of the building or development within the Precinct. The development of an Operational Car Parking Management Plan is also recommended to ensure that the use of the stacked car parking spaces is managed appropriately.

5.3.3 Public Transport

The site is supported by a range of public transport options including buses with 25 routes operating within and around the University. This provides links to major centres including Sydney CBD, Parramatta, Chatswood and Blacktown. A total of approximately 800 bus services operate on weekdays and 400 per day on weekends. The site is also supported by the recently opened Epping to Chatswood Rail Link and new Macquarie University Railway Station, located approximately 600 metres from the site.

The Department considers the site is highly accessible and appropriate to support the redevelopment. Adequate measures to promote sustainable means of transport have also been included in the proposal including 159 bicycle spaces. Further details regarding work place travel plans would be required prior to occupation of the building. The Department has recommended conditions to this effect.

5.4 Development Contributions

As part of the approval of the Concept Plan, an indicative contributions schedule/framework formed part of the Concept Plan Preferred Project Report. The contributions schedule was developed to inform a future Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) between Macquarie University and Council. This framework for the VPA is based on an earlier Memorandum of Understanding and Council's Section 94

Development Contribution Plan 2007. Whilst Macquarie University is committed to entering into a VPA in the Concept Plan, the Concept Plan approval required the VPA be finalised with the first application for new floor space. The Proponent and Council are still negotiating the VPA and it has not been finalised at this time.

The Department considers that, provided the VPA is executed prior to occupation of this building and contributions and/or works in kind are paid or commenced prior to occupation of the building, the proposal would address the additional demand by contributing to the development of additional local services and infrastructure. The Department considers that, provided these arrangements are finalised prior to occupation of this building (being the first application for new floor space), it would still be consistent with the requirements of the Concept Plan. A recommended condition has therefore been included, that requires the Proponent to demonstrate that the VPA has been executed prior to occupation of the building, and that the relevant contributions have been paid and/or any works in kind agreed to and commenced.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The Department has reviewed the environmental assessment and duly considered advice from public authorities as well as issues raised in public submissions in accordance with Section 75I(2) of the EP&A Act. All the relevant environmental issues associated with the proposal have been extensively assessed.

The Australian Hearing Hub Project, including construction, fit-out and operation of facility, would be a significant element in the ongoing redevelopment of Macquarie University Campus. The development is consistent with the strategic objectives for the area, being consistent with the Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036, the draft Inner North Subregional Strategy and the Major Development SEPP and would complement and expand the knowledge assets in the Macquarie Corridor.

The Proponent has adequately addressed the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements and satisfactorily mitigated the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposal. The recommended conditions, including demonstrating that the micro-simulation model for the University and Voluntary Planning Agreement have been finalised and executed prior to occupation of the building, implementation of the measures detailed in the Proponent's EA and appendices, PPR and appendices, and Statement of Commitments seek to maintain the amenity of the local area, and adequately mitigate the environmental impacts of the proposal.

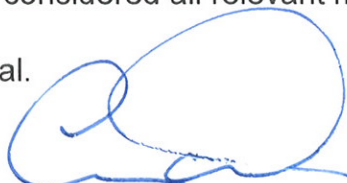
The Department considers the site to be suitable for the proposed development and that the application is in the public interest. Consequently, the Department recommends that Project Application be approved, subject to conditions.

It is recommended that the Director-General, as delegate for the Minister for Planning:

- a) **Consider** the findings and recommendations of this report;
- b) **Approve** the Project Application (MP 10_0032), subject to conditions, under Section 75J(1) of the EP&A Act, having considered all relevant matters in accordance with (a) above; and
- c) **Sign** the attached Instrument of Approval.



A/Director
Government Land and Social Projects



14.12.10

Executive Director
Major Projects Assessment



Deputy Director-General
Development Assessment & Systems Performance

16/12/10

APPENDIX A ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

See the Department's website at
http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=3812.

APPENDIX B PROPONENT'S RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

See the Department's website at
http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=3812.

APPENDIX D CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005

On 22 December 2005, the then Minister for Planning declared that the Macquarie University site as a potential State Significant Site. On 11 September 2009, the site was included as a State Significant Site in the Schedule 3 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005* (MD SEPP).

The site is zoned B4 Mixed Use pursuant to Part 21, Schedule 3 of the MD SEPP. The proposal which would be defined as an educational establishment, health services facility and office premises, which are all permissible with development consent in the B4 zone. The MD SEPP also prescribes a maximum height of 36 metres (see Figure 1), maximum gross floor area (GFA) of 155,000m² for the area in which the project is located, and car parking rate of 1 space per 80m².

Figure 1: Maximum Height Plan in MD SEPP

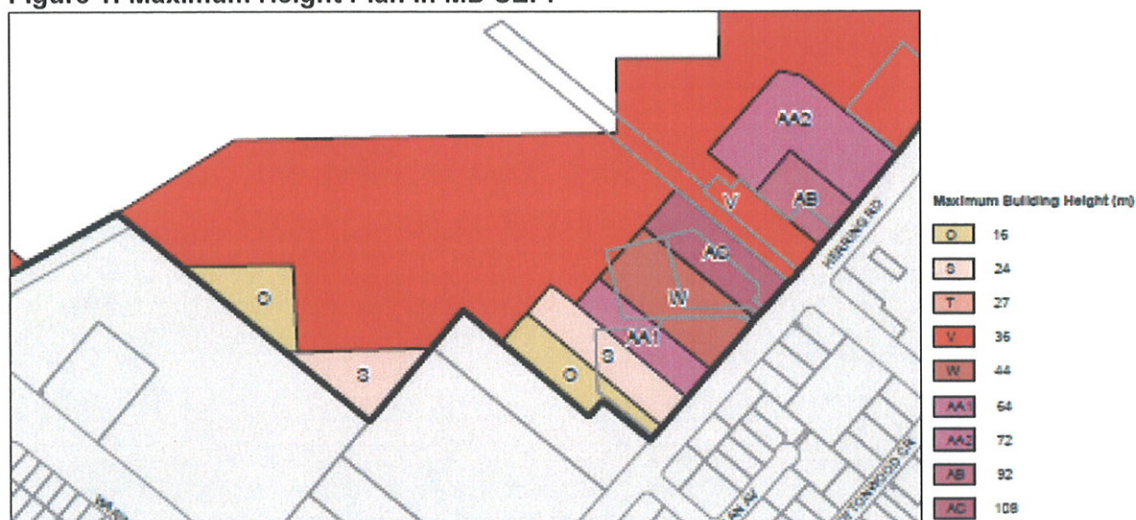
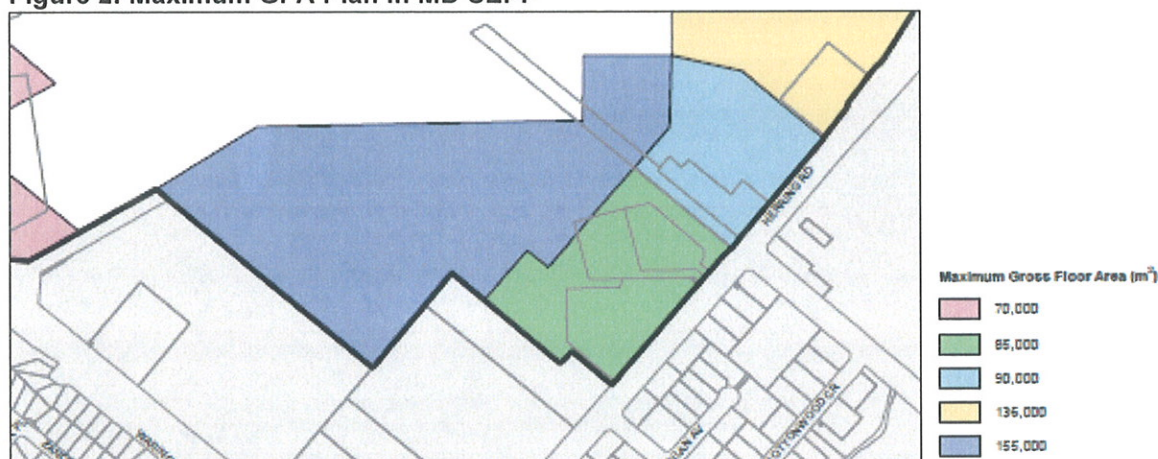


Figure 2: Maximum GFA Plan in MD SEPP



On 4 April 2006, the then Minister for Planning formed the opinion pursuant to Clause 6 of the MD SEPP, that the Concept Plan is a Major Project under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), having satisfied himself that the proposal was of a kind described in Schedule 1 of Clause 20 of that policy.

On 13 August 2009, the then Minister for Planning approved the Concept Plan application and under section 75P(1)(b) of the EP&A Act determined that approval to carry out the project or any part of the project is to be subject to the provisions of Part 4 of the EP&A Act, except where it meets the criteria in Schedule 1 of the MD SEPP.

On 10 March 2010, the Director, Government Land and Social Projects, as delegate of the Minister, formed an opinion that the project is a major project under clause 19 of Schedule 1 to the MD SEPP, as it is a development for the purpose of medical research with a Capital Investment Value of more than \$15 million. The Minister is the approval authority.

The proposal complies with the height and maximum GFA development standards, however, does not comply with the car parking standard. The Department has recommended a Director General Certificate be issued for to waive the requirement to comply with the development standard in this instance for the reasons outlined in Section 5.2 of the report.

2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

The objectives of the Infrastructure SEPP are to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure by improving regulatory certainty through consistent planning management for infrastructure and providing greater flexibility in the location of infrastructure and service facilities throughout the State.

Schedule 3 of the SEPP lists traffic generating development that is required to be referred to the RTA. The application was referred to the RTA on 22 July 2010. Comments have since been provided. Recommendations have been considered and where relevant have been included as recommended conditions of approval to ensure that the impacts of the construction and ongoing operation of the development are appropriately mitigated.

3 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land

SEPP 55 promotes the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.

A Report on Targeted Phase 2 Contamination Assessment (Phase 2 Contamination Assessment) was undertaken to investigate soil contamination conditions at the site. The Phase 2 Contamination Assessment identified that the fill material on site was contaminated; however, as the fill material would be removed for the construction of the building, the site would be suitable for the proposed use.

The above requirements form part of the Proponent's Statement of Commitments and the recommended conditions of approval.

APPENDIX E RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL
