



***MODIFICATION REQUEST:
Westmead Millennium Institute at the
Westmead Health Campus
(MP10_0050 MOD 2)***

- Modification to the access arrangements, detailed design, construction work hours, ESD initiatives and travel demand requirements for the Westmead Millennium Institute.

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

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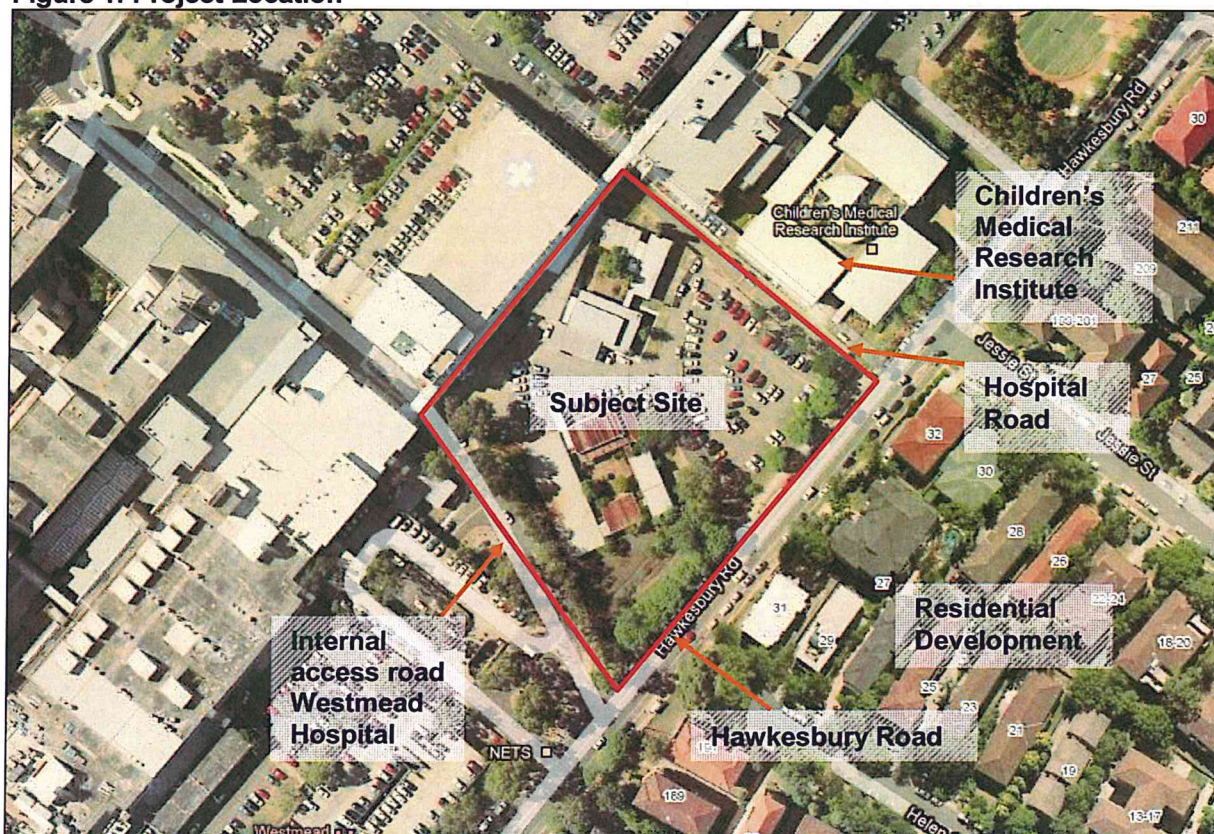
1. BACKGROUND

The Westmead Millennium Institute (WMI) is one of the largest medical research institutes in Australia, accommodated in the Westmead Hospital.

On 30 January 2011, the Deputy Director General, as delegate of the then Minister for Planning, approved project application MP10_0050 involving the construction of an eight storey medical research facility for the WMI, including landscaping and a 50 space car park at Westmead Health Campus, Westmead. Refer to the project location at **Figure 1**.

A subsequent modification application, lodged with the department seeking an extension to the construction hours, was withdrawn on the 12 March 2012 (MOD 1). Since the original approval was granted, construction has commenced and the development is expected to be completed in 2014.

Figure 1: Project Location



2. PROPOSED MODIFICATION

2.1 Modification Description

This report is an assessment of a modification application (MP10_0050 MOD 2) lodged by the *Westmead Millennium Institute For Medical Research* seeking to amend the Project Approval in response to changes to the design and other administrative and operational requirements. The modification application proposes the following amendments:

- redirection of the vehicular access to the car park at the rear of the site from the internal service road along the south-western boundary to Hospital Road on the north-eastern boundary adjacent to the Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI);
- reconfiguration of the main entry ramp at Hawkesbury Road to address the difference in level between the footpath and the entry;

- construction of a pedestrian bridge link at the upper ground level on the northern side of the building over the car park to the existing skywalk at the rear of the site;
- changes to the façade materials as follows:

Elevation	Proposed Change
North	• The translucent façade panels will replace solid façade panels; • The extent of vertical louvres and glazing will be reduced; and • The vertical louvres and glazing in the setback area will be replaced with a concrete wall.
East	• A section of glazing at eastern and western end will be replaced with concrete.
West	• The glazed façade at the upper ground level adjoining the café will be moved to the west.
South	• Translucent façade panels will be replaced with glazed and solid façade panels with vertical louvres; • The glazing adjacent to the main entry will be replaced with a concrete wall; and • The extent of vertical louvers at northern end of the façade will be increased to screen the escape stair.

- increased hours of work during construction by 30 minutes in the morning and afternoon for weekdays and by 1 hour on a Saturday afternoon as follows:

Approved	Proposed
Monday to Friday – 7:30am to 5:30pm Saturday – 7:30am to 3:00pm	Monday to Friday – 7:00am to 6:00pm Saturday – 7:30am to 4:00pm

- changes to the ESD initiatives by removing the mandatory requirement for the development to achieve a 4 star green energy design rating.

The modification request also seeks to modify the Statement of Commitments to reflect the above changes in relation to the ESD initiatives and the timing for the implementation of a Transport Demand Management Plan.

3 MODIFICATION OF THE MINISTER'S APPROVAL

In accordance with clause 3 of Schedule 6A of the EP&A Act, section 75W of the Act as in force immediately before its repeal on 1 October 2011 and as modified by Schedule 6A, continues to apply to transitional Part 3A projects.

Section 75W(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act) provides that a proponent may request the Minister to modify the Minister's approval of a project. The Minister's approval of a modification is not required if the approval of the project as modified would be consistent with the original approval. As the proposal involves modifications to the design of the approved built form and amendments to the instrument of approval, the modification will require the Minister's approval.

4. CONSULTATION

In accordance with section 75X of the EP&A act and clause 8G of the EP&A Regulation, the modification request was made available on the department's website. Due to the minor nature of the proposed modification, the modification request was not exhibited by any other means. No public submissions were received on the modification request. The request was referred to Parramatta City Council, who at the time of writing this report had not provided a submission. The request was also referred to Western Sydney Local Health District who indicated support for the proposed modification.

5. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The Minister has delegated his functions to determine Part 3A modification applications to the department where:

- the relevant local council has not made an objection, and
- a political disclosure statement has been made, but only in respect of a previous related application, and
- there are less than 10 submissions in the nature of objections.

No submissions were received from the public regarding the proposed modification, and council has not made an objection to the proposed modification. There has been no political disclosure statement made for this application or for any previous related applications

Accordingly, the modification application may be determined by the Director, Industry, Social Projects and Key Sites under delegation.

6. ASSESSMENT

The key issues associated with the proposed modifications are assessed as follows:

6.1 Access Arrangements

Vehicular

The approved vehicular access to the car park for WMI staff and visitors will involve ingress via the Westmead Hospital car park internal access road to the southwest, and egress via Hospital Road to the northeast adjacent to the CMRI. This arrangement requires entry through two boom gates and the Westmead Hospital controlled car park unrelated to WMI. On departing the car park, WMI staff and visitors would have access to the controlled Children's Hospital car park. It is now proposed to create a combined ingress/egress via Hospital Road to avoid the need for staff and visitors to the WMI to enter an adjacent controlled car park.

To accommodate the combined ingress/egress from Hospital Road, the existing boom gate on Hospital Road will be relocated further north to avoid the adjacent controlled Children's Hospital car park. The proponent's traffic consultant has advised there is sufficient space beyond the car park entry to relocate the boom gate without impacting access to other buildings or car parks to the north. The proposed location of the relocated boom gate will be closer to intersection points along Hospital Road, however, in view of the low vehicle speeds there is not likely to be any adverse impact. It is recommended that appropriate signage be installed to ensure vehicles queuing at the relocated boom gate remain clear of any intersections to maintain vehicle safety.

The proponent's traffic consultant also reviewed the proposed changes to determine whether there would be any adverse traffic impacts. The proposed access arrangement will result in approximately 32 additional vehicles accessing the car park along Hospital Road during the morning peak period. The proponent's traffic consultant has advised that this is unlikely to have an adverse impact on vehicles accessing the Children's Hospital car park to the north. The volume of traffic leaving the car park via Hospital Road will not change as the egress arrangement remains as approved. The department considers the proponent's assessment of the traffic impacts to be reasonable. The department also considers the proposed changes will result in a more efficient vehicular access arrangement for WMI staff and visitors.

The proposed changes to the approved vehicular access arrangements are therefore acceptable.

Pedestrian

The configuration of the approved entry ramp from Hawkesbury Road will need to be changed to address the significant difference in level between the footpath and the main entry. A number of solutions have been considered including: extending a ramp across the footpath which would exceed council's gradient requirements; and retaining the existing arrangement by lowering the entire building, which would have significant implications for the overall design and layout of the building.

The preferred solution involves extending a ramp (1 in 40 gradient) in a north-south direction along the south-eastern corner of the building with an adjacent set of steps connected between the footpath and the main entrance level. The department notes this will involve removal of a planter box in front of the building. The department does not consider this will have any significant adverse impact on the appearance of the building as the main planter box on the western side of the entry will be retained to soften the visual impact along the street edge.

The department considers the proposed access arrangement to be acceptable.

Since the project approval was granted, the opportunities for elevated pedestrian bridges to the neighbouring CMRI building to the northeast are no longer available due to internal changes in the layout and configuration of the future CMRI building. These connections have now been deleted from the eastern elevation of the modified plans submitted with this application. However, the proposed modification also seeks to construct a bridge link at the northern elevation on the upper ground level, extending over the car park to the existing skywalk at the rear of the site. Given its location at the rear of the building, the proposed bridge link will not be readily visible from Hawkesbury Road and will have no significant visual impact from the public domain.

The department supports the integration of facilities across the campus and considers the proposed bridge link acceptable.

6.2 Detailed Design Changes

The proposed changes to the façade are in response to the evolution of the detailed design of the building and the functional requirements of the internal spaces. The department considers the changes in material will not undermine the original modern design and the building will continue to complement the existing and future character of medical research and hospital buildings surrounding the site. The proposed extension to the window line along the western elevation at the upper ground level will provide a more useable café protected from the elements.

The department considers the proposed changes to the design to be acceptable.

6.3 Construction Work Hours

The modification seeks to extend the hours of construction for an additional 30 minutes in the morning and afternoon on weekdays, and for one hour on Saturday afternoon. The department notes there has been a complaint by a nearby resident, prior to the modification application being lodged, who raised concerns with construction works being undertaken outside the approved hours and noise impacts to the surrounding area. The proponent

justifies the proposed extension to work hours on the basis they are consistent with standard construction industry working hours and that the site is located in a 24 hour precinct.

The department notes that the extended hours sought are consistent with other project approvals granted by the department for medical facilities in the Sydney metropolitan area, including the nearby CMRI development. It is also noted that condition D6 of the approval contains standard noise conditions to protect the amenity of nearby residences.

The department considers the proposed modification will allow the operation of the research facility to commence at an earlier date which will provide a significant community benefit. The department has assessed the application on its merits and the proposed modification is considered reasonable and is not likely to significantly adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding area.

6.4 ESD Initiatives

The Project Approval is subject to ESD conditions which require the development to achieve a minimum 4 star green star rating. The proponent has stated that the mandating of a 4 star green star rating is unreasonable and onerous, especially from a financial feasibility perspective. The proponent has therefore requested the wording of the ESD conditions be modified so that a green star rating is now 'targeted' as opposed to being mandated. The department notes that the proposed research facility will contain highly specialised laboratories, which do not satisfy the minimum requirements under the Building Code of Australia, making it difficult to achieve the 4 star green star rating.

The proponent has provided an ESD report with the modification application which outlines the ESD initiatives that will be adopted in the design and construction of the building. The department notes that the ESD initiatives are based broadly on sustainability credits with the green star rating system administered by the Green Building Council of Australia. The department considers the ESD initiatives will be generally consistent with best practice ESD initiatives

The department agrees there are significant functional and financial constraints associated with adapting such a specialised building to achieve a green star rating. The department therefore considers the proposed removal of the mandatory requirement for a minimum 4 star green star rating is therefore acceptable.

6.5 Travel Demand Management Plan

The Transport and Access Report, submitted with the original application, recommended the preparation of a travel demand management plan for the development, which was identified in the proponent's Statement of Commitments (SOC), prior to commencement of works. The proponent has now requested the travel demand management plan be provided prior to occupation of the building. The department agrees with the proponent that the plan will assist in managing the transport demands generated by the operation of the development and will evolve over the life of the project. The department accepts that the plan can be issued prior to the occupation of the building.

7. CONCLUSION

The department considers the proposed access arrangements for vehicles and pedestrians will improve the efficiency and functioning of the building for staff and visitors. Also, the changes to the external façade materials are generally minor and will not detract from the original design integrity of the approved building. The proposed extension to the construction work hours will allow the operation of the research facility to commence at an earlier date which will provide a significant community benefit.

The department has considered all the proposed amendments to the approved project and considers the changes to be satisfactory and recommends that the modification application be approved.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The department's recommends that the Acting Director, Industry, Social Projects and Key Sites:

- a) **consider** the findings and recommendations of this report;
- b) **approve** the modifications, subject to conditions, under section 75W of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*, and;
- c) **sign** the attached instrument of modification approval (**Appendix B**).

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APPENDIX A MODIFICATION REQUEST

Provided on disc or see the Department's website at:

http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6041

APPENDIX B RECOMMENDED MODIFYING INSTRUMENT
