

14th August 21012

Design Statement Wagga Wagga Mental Health section 75W

Introduction

The fundamental functional arrangement and footprint of the Wagga Wagga Mental Health Building has not altered significantly from the recently approved design.

Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Redevelopment has been planned to enable staged development of the whole site in a number of distinct phases. Wagga Wagga Health Services Phase 1 is the Mental Health Unit comprising Acute mental health on the ground floor level, 22 acute beds and 8 high dependency beds, with 20 sub-acute beds located on level 1. External areas are provided on both ground and first floor levels, as programmed in the approved scheme.

The modification of form and slight adjustment to siting, that forms a basis for this application, is a result of:

- 1 Accommodation of additional functional areas to provide an operational facility that is compliant with the Health Facilities Guidelines, the Building Code of Australia and acknowledges the modified functional brief.
- 2 A building that has greater contextual reference in materiality and massing composition
- 3 Rationalisation of the plant requirements aligning with a precinct wide strategy. Temporary plant is to be accommodated until the commissioning of later phases.(refer to separate services statement)
- 4 Further detailed survey required adjustment of the amended building to align with the revised southern boundary.

The revised architectural form provides rationalisation of the massing but the building remains a predominantly two storey structure with the plant level housed within a combined skillion roof extending from first to second floor. The contemporary form utilises, similar to the approved design, simple brickwork and panelling, in a response to the duality of the context, the existing residential urban form to the east and the hospital precinct to the North and West.

The proposal predominantly remains within the parameters of the approved design with only minor changes to the building footprint.

Alteration to functional requirements

The alteration to the approved form was orchestrated by a change in brief. Additional accommodation is needed to meet the functional requirements in line with the Health Facility Guidelines, in turn this generated a number of code compliance issues, i.e. fire stair locations, that causes further amendments to the form.

The addition area that has been housed within the new form has generated a partial second storey to the south western wing and a small single storey gym activity room in the eastern courtyard. The gym/activity room sits below the four meter courtyard wall and has no impact on the neighbouring properties.

The second storey addition to the western wing has no additional overshadowing impact externally to the building and is adjacent to the second stage hospital development. The increased in building mass and height to the western wing does not extend to Yathong street boundary, having a setback of approximately 10m from the southern boundary minimising the impact on the neighbouring properties.

The south eastern courtyard wall alignment is altered removing the splay, increasing the internal courtyard and maintaining the building alignment along the eastern boundary. Accommodating the gym adjacent to this courtyard wall and altered brief requirements for the courtyard triggered this realignment. The proposed courtyard is now two differently proportioned external spaces that have new distinct functional requirements. The smaller courtyard associated with the Gym activity room allows observation from the internal staff station. The southern larger courtyard containing the volley ball court does not disrupt more sedentary activities in the smaller courtyard. The Volley ball court requires a more rectilinear space causing the courtyard wall realignment.

Adjustments to the street levels, as a response to resolution of overland flow measures, has resulted in minor change to fire stair form. The fire stair on the corner of Yabtree and New Lewis Drive has rotated and contains additional risers. This amendment allows compliance with the BCA without protruding North and increasing the impact on Yabtree Street.

The accommodation of temporary plant is located on a roof slab at the end of Lewis Drive on the western side of the building. Impact is minimised on the neighbouring residential properties as this plant is far removed and will be relocated once further phases of the whole precinct are completed.

Environmental Context and Materiality

The Mental Health building is a new insertion into the hospital precinct. Simultaneously the building has to maintain its own identity, yet respond sympathetically to the predominantly residential environment to the east and south.

To achieve this contextual sensitivity the design is formulated with a perimeter face brick retaining wall that bounds the internal landscaped courtyards and engages with the building where it aligns with the boundary. A coloured paneling system forms the upper floor material and inner facades of the courtyards. The colour palette is generated from images of the Australian rural landscape, specifically the rusty red from a corrugated rural shed and the greens and greys from the bark of a gum tree.

The site presents a public face on the northern side adjacent to Yabtree Street, and institutional faces on the West and Southern edges. The Proposal recognises the civic nature of the building, while bringing down its scale at points to relate to its context.

In contrast, the interior architecture is soft and interconnected, engaging with the users and landscape. A familiar "Home" environment is created by modulating courtyard facades and presenting "the garden", expressing growth and regeneration.

The civic face or north façade utilizes the red palette that also relates to the surrounding face brick residential dwellings. The internal facades utilize the cool pallet of greens and greys adhering to the premise of a calming soothing environment.



Contextual referenses



Yabtree Street



Yabtree
Street

Entry





Courtyard

The proposed design presents a simplified façade to Yabtree in relation to the approved design. The singular protruding bay above the entry, albeit increased in height from the approved design, provides clarity in form and intuitively signifies entry. This increase in height is embedded within the hospital precinct and is not adjacent to the residential urban form. These design amendments bring clarity to the form and engage with the context.

The eastern façade generally retains the approved form. The major shift is the extent of face brick. This façade which adjoins the residential development is now predominantly face brick work. The courtyard walls, where on the approved design were rendered, are now face brickwork. The height remains four meters as functionally this is required.

Amendment to siting

Further survey information has highlighted an anomaly with the approved design southern boundary alignment. This application rectifies this by effectively altering the building location 900mm to the north. There is no proposed adjustment in an East West direction. The alignment of the northern parking has not altered to Yabtree Street.

The images above convey the relationship of the proposed building in the Yabtree street context. The amended siting has not negatively impacted on the streetscape and although over the entry there is an increase in wall height this is adjacent to the main hospital not the residential development. The increase in wall height over the entry comes from a change in roof form housing the plant room in a single roof falling to Yabtree Street. The rationalisation of plant room equipment makes this roof form a simpler response than retaining the approved roof form and amending to accommodate the revised plant arrangement.

Conclusion

In summary the amendments to the design are;

- 1 Minor amendments to the building footprint
- 2 Simplification of roof form
- 3 Modification to façade massing significantly to the North and west.
- 4 Rationalisation of material pallet
- 5 Adjustment of siting to align with revised southern boundary

The amended form reflects the change in brief along with refinement of contextual response.

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