NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Our ref: OUT26/4673

Lawrence Huang
Planning Group
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Email: lawrence.a.huang@dpie.nsw.gov.au

22 April 2026

Subject: Mixed Use Development at 15-21 Cottonwood Crescent, Macquarie Park (SSD-94006708)
Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Lawrence Huang,

I refer to your request for advice sent on 20 March 2026 to the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Water Group about the above matter.

NSW DCCEEW Water Group has reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement and makes recommendations in regard to:

- Reviewing the groundwater inflow calculations and impact assessment.
- Adopting a tanked basement design to mitigate risk of ongoing groundwater impacts and dewatering requirements.
- Preparation of a dewatering management plan.
- Water licensing requirements

Please see Attachment A for details.

Should you have any further queries in relation to this submission please do not hesitate to contact the DCCEEW Water Assessments team at water.assessments@dcceew.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Rob Brownbill,
Manager, Water Assessments, Planning & Knowledge Division
NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Attachment A

Detailed advice to DPHI Planning & Assessment regarding the Mixed Use Development at 15-21 Cottonwood Crescent, Macquarie Park - SSD-94006708 – EIS

1.0 Groundwater inflow and impact assessment

1.1 Recommendation – pre approval

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) requests the proponent to:

- Review the groundwater inflow assessment. This is to improve the confidence in the calculations of groundwater take and the assessment against the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy.
- Adopt a tanked basement design.

Explanation

The predicted groundwater inflows in the Groundwater Impact Assessment (Appendix L) of 1.2 ML/yr for the steady state and 11.6 ML/yr for a sensitivity case are considered low when the proposed basement excavation is up to 14 m below the groundwater level. The significant depth of excavation below the groundwater level suggests the likelihood of higher groundwater inflows and associated potential drawdown impacts and dewatering management requirements. A review of the groundwater inflow assessment, including the conceptual model, hydraulic parameters and modelling calculations is recommended. Should this result in amended inflow predictions, a revision of the assessment against the minimal impact considerations of the NSW AIP is also required

The proposed drained basement at significant depth below the groundwater level represents an ongoing risk to the water source from continual dewatering and to the development should groundwater inflows vary. To mitigate this risk it is recommended a tanked basement design be adopted.

2.0 Water take and licensing

2.1 Recommendation – post approval

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) requests the proponent to obtain a water access licence (WAL) to account for the maximum predicted water take for construction and operation activities unless an exemption applies under the *Water Management (General) Regulation 2025*.

Explanation

The Hydrogeological Report (Appendix V) includes a seepage analysis which has predicted groundwater inflows during construction and the operation period with a drained basement design. Under the *Water Management Act 2000*, if groundwater is intercepted a WAL must be obtained prior to any water take occurring unless an exemption under the *Water Management (General) Regulation 2025* applies. An exemption may be available for water take during

construction activities in coastal water sources under Clause 6 of Schedule 4 of the WM Reg, or where the groundwater take during construction or operation is less than or equal to 3ML per water year (cl 19, sch 4 of WM Reg). To claim either of these exemptions certain requirements must be met, such as

- the person claiming the exemption keeps a record of the water taken under the exemption and provides this to the Minister within 28 days of the end of the water year; and
- the records are kept for 5 years.

For the operation period, there is no current Water Access Licence exemption outlined for the project. As such, the proponent will be required to obtain a WAL with sufficient entitlement and ensure this nominates a relevant extraction point via completing the necessary dealing application with WaterNSW. Further information on these requirements and other information on licensing and approvals and exemptions, including a form to report and record water taken can be found at:

https://www.water.dcceew.nsw.gov.au/our-work/licensing-and-approvals and https://www.water.dcceew.nsw.gov.au/our-work/licensing-and-approvals/dewatering

3.0 Dewatering Management

3.1 Recommendation - post approval

DPHI requests the proponent to prepare a Dewatering Management Plan prior to commencement of construction.

Explanation

The Groundwater Impact Assessment provided an assessment of impacts to groundwater due to construction of the project and found no Category 2 impacts under the NSW Aquifer Interference Policy. NSW DCCEEW Water Group notes that groundwater inflow volumes are likely to exceed 3 ML per year. Therefore, a Dewatering Management Plan (DMP) must be prepared.

The DMP should consider the Guidelines for Groundwater Documentation for SSD/SSI Projects (2022) and the Minimum Requirements for Building Site Groundwater Investigations and Reporting (2022) to ensure the documentation required is fit for purpose. These documents are available at:

- https://publications.water.nsw.gov.au/watergroupjspui/bitstream/100/792/1/Minimum_requirements_for_building_site_groundwater_investigations_and_reporting.pdf
- https://water.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/507611/Guidelines-for-Groundwater-Documentation-for-SSD-SSI-Projects.pdf

End Attachment A