

13<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Mr Sam Haddad  
Director General  
Department of Planning  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Haddad,

**Re: Wagga Wagga Base Hospital  
Request for Director Generals Environmental Assessment  
Requirements – Phase 2 and 3**

In accordance with Clause 3 of Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (EP&A Regulation) and Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP), Health Infrastructure request the issue of Director Generals Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs) for Phase 2 and 3 of the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital redevelopment. The purpose of this letter is to provide a preliminary environmental assessment and other supporting documentation to allow for the DGRs to be issued.

**Background**

Wagga Wagga Base Hospital (WWBH) is a major Rural Referral hospital, located in southern central New South Wales within the Murrumbidgee Local Health Network (MLHN).

WWBH is one the largest and busiest Rural Referral Hospitals in NSW providing approximately 24,000 admissions, 73,000 bed-days, 700-750 births and 7,000 operations each year with an average National CWT of 21,400 separations. WWBH currently offers a broad range of medical and surgical specialties as well as maternity and paediatric services, critical care, mental health and aged care and rehabilitation services. It is the hub for medical and surgical subspecialties in the catchment. The WWBH medical and clinical teams provide outreach services to several District and Community Acute Hospitals and Multipurpose Services (MPS) and enact a regional role in relation to Ambulatory and Community Health Services which includes support for renal patients dialysing at home, mental health, drug and alcohol, sexual assault, and consultancy support for chronic and complex disease management.

Planning processes for the WWBH redevelopment have recognised the importance of developing and strengthening strategic partnerships with other services, local GPs and education institutions. The service configuration and priorities for this project have been developed in consideration of service gaps identified in consultations with local clinicians and other stakeholders, including private and public agencies and confirmed through research in relation to comparative health indicators.

The redevelopment of WWBH represents a strategic capital investment in the health infrastructure of the Murrumbidgee Local Health Network and NSW Health. The overall objective is to provide a contemporary healthcare facility suited to the current and future needs of the catchment population. Importantly, this proposal strongly aligns with Commonwealth, NSW Government, NSW Health and MLHD strategic objectives for the provision of improved health services to regional, rural and remote communities. Improved service integration and strengthened referral networks will provide significantly more accessible services and improved health outcomes to many thousands of residents across rural communities within the WWBH catchment.

Phase 1 of the WWBH redevelopment included:

- The delivery of 4,763sqm GFA of new accommodation for mental health
- New pedestrian routes.
- New pedestrian entry points.
- New car parking facilities.
- New internal roads.
- Integrated landscaping including softening of the street edges.

This project is currently being assessed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure as a Transitional Part 3A Project Application.

## The Project

Director-General's Requirements are now sought for Phases 2 and 3 of the redevelopment. These consist of the following proposed works and will have a GFA of approximately 26,400m<sup>2</sup>.

**Phase 2** substantially replaces the existing acute hospital functions and comprises:

- emergency department
- first stage of imaging suite
- operating theatres
- sterile services
- women's and baby's health
- replacement inpatient units
- helipad
- pharmacy
- loading dock and support services

**Phase 3** completes the redevelopment of the acute hospital and comprises:

- second stage of imaging suite
- critical care facilities (ICU, HDU, cardiac care & stroke)
- angiography and cardiac catheter suite
- renal
- pathology department
- additional inpatient beds
- main entrance and public amenities

These two phases of the redevelopment have a Capital Investment Value of \$167,086,854. Drawings showing the extent of Phases 2 and 3 are attached.

### The locality

The redevelopment will be entirely within the existing WWBH campus which is bounded by Rawson Lane to the south, Docker Street to the west and Edward Street to the north. To the west, the site adjoins existing residential and commercial properties.



Figure 1 - Locality Plan

### The site

The Hospital site is located approximately 1km from the CBD with good access via bus or taxis adjacent to the railway station. Walking time from the CBD is approximately 20-25 minutes. The main vehicular access from the CBD is via Edward Street.

The site has an area of approximately 4.2 hectares on the main campus. The topography of the site is predominantly flat with a fall towards the Edward and Docker Streets corner of around 3.6 metres. There are scattered trees and grassed areas on site. The property is legally described as DP 659184.

The Wagga Wagga Base Hospital is part of an existing health facility precinct which includes private health facilities, Calvary Hospital and Specialist Practices and Clinics. The precinct is loosely bordered by Sturt Highway/Edward Street to the north, Murray Street to the east, Brooking and Meurant Avenues to the south and Emblen Street to the west. Almost all of the Specialist Practices and Clinics are housed in Docker Street and Sturt Highway/Edwards Street whilst Calvary Hospital is set south west of Docker Street.

The WWBH site itself is bordered by Sturt Highway/Edwards Street to the north, residential and commercial properties to the east, Rawson Lane to the south and Docker Street to the west. The main public vehicular access route to car parking and the Main Hospital and Emergency Department is directly off Sturt Highway/Edwards Street down Lewis Drive. Public also have vehicular access to the existing Hydrotherapy facility directly off Docker Street but parking is limited and shared with the UNSW Rural Clinical School.

Public access can be gained around the back of the site via Rawson Lane to the Dental Unit, Community Health and the ARBC Donor Centre and down Yathong Street & Lewis Drive to the Renal Unit and Yathong Lodge. Vehicular access for staff is the same as for public down Lewis Drive to the main car park and in addition a staff car park can be accessed via Yathong Street. Service Vehicles enter the site down Lewis Drive, Yathong Street and Rawson Lane.

### Existing Buildings

There are many diverse, old and ad-hoc buildings on the site which have numerous extensions. Dysfunctional spaces within these buildings do not allow development of integrated service delivery models. These spaces result from the number of different buildings, the poor functionality of existing work areas and the limitations imposed by the configuration of the existing buildings.



Figure 2 Existing Hospital

Inadequacies of the facilities include:

- Inadequate space for ambulatory care services
- Insufficient inpatient beds to meet population growth
- Room sizes are inconsistent with current guidelines
- There is generalised crowding in the emergency and outpatient areas
- Theatres are not well located to promote efficient functional relationships
- Lift services are in need of replacement
- Some buildings have multiple access points without access control systems. This presents a security concern
- Ward configurations are inflexible; there are small numbers of single or double rooms
- There is insufficient storage throughout the facility. This can be an Occupational Health & Safety risk, particularly for services where large pieces of equipment are in regular use
- Lack of meeting and staff training facilities.

## Strategic Planning

### NSW State Plan

The project is consistent with the health priorities contained in *Chapter 4: Health Communities* of the NSW State Plan (2010). These priorities are:

1. *Improve and maintain access to quality healthcare in the face of increasing demand.* The collocation of services will realise operational efficiencies that will be applied to increasing throughputs to address demand without additional recurrent funds being required.
2. *Improved survival rates and quality of life for people with potentially fatal or chronic illness.* Current research demonstrates that early identification and targeted intervention like that provided by multidisciplinary teams result in increased survival rates for many cancers and an empowerment of the patient in the management of their illness and life.
3. *Promote healthy lifestyles.* Prevention through healthy life choices and early detection through screening activities and diagnostic assessments are being integrated with primary care and service provision in the development of cancer services across the SESIAHS.
4. *Reduce preventable hospital admissions.* The service delivery models for the future are largely ambulatory and home-based as opposed to inpatient negating the need for additional inpatient beds even in the face of anticipated increasing demand.

## Planning Issues

### State Environmental Planning Policies

The following table identifies the State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) that apply to the land or type of development that is subject to this proposal, and the proposals compliance with those Policies.

SEPP #	Name	Applies	Compliant
1	Development standards	✓	✓
33	Hazardous and offensive development	NK*	
55	Remediation of land	✓	✓
	Major Development 2005	partly	yes
	Infrastructure 2007	✓	✓
	State and Regional Development 2012	✓	✓

\* Not Known at this stage

### Local Environmental Plan

The site is zoned SP2 Infrastructure (Hospital) under Wagga Wagga Local Environmental Plan 2010 (WWLEP). The objectives of this zone are to:

- provide for infrastructure and related uses; and
- prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.

Apart from Roads, which do not require consent, development for the purposes listed on the Land Zoning Map and any development ordinarily incidental or ancillary to that use requires consent. All other development is prohibited.

On that basis the use of the site as a hospital is **permissible**.

## **Other issues:**

### **Flooding**

A Flood Impact Assessment has been conducted for the site which found that the site may be susceptible to flooding in the situation that the Murrumbidgee River overtops the Main City Levee which is constructed to stop the 1:100 year flood event. All buildings will be designed to take into account the potential risk of flooding.

### **Contamination**

Laboratory tests of soil samples have confirmed a generally alkaline pH soil which suggests the soil will not be aggressive on steel structures. However the soil was also found to contain high levels of sulphate which is mild to moderately aggressive to concrete. There is no evidence of salinity or groundwater contamination.

### **Helipad**

The Hospital currently uses the Duke of Kent Oval to the north west of the site for helicopter services. Flight paths are currently from south east to north west travelling over the hospital and within sight distance of residences. Transfer is then provided by ambulance. This project will locate a helipad on top of the hospital building to reduce patient transfer times, noise and visual impacts for residents.

### **Consultation**

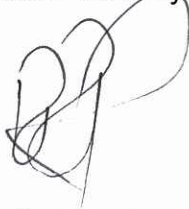
Ongoing and regular meetings are being held with Wagga Wagga Council and the Roads and Maritime Service to keep them informed of the progress of the redevelopment. This has been constructive and will be maintained throughout the hospital redevelopment.

### **Request for Director Generals Requirements**

On the basis that the proposal falls within the criteria identified in Schedule 1 of the State and Regional Development SEPP, Health Infrastructure formally request that the Department of Planning issue the Director General requirements (DGRs) to facilitate the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement to accompany the development application for the proposal.

If you require any additional information please contact Leoné McEntee on 9978 5420 or 0410 432 505. We would be happy to meet with your Department to discuss the proposal at any time.

Yours sincerely



Robert Rust  
**Chief Executive**