



**MODIFICATION REQUEST:
Redevelopment of Parkes Hospital,
Newell Highway, Parkes
(SSD 6107 MOD 1 and MOD 2)**

MOD 1:

- Modification to construction hours

MOD 2:

- Additional tree removal and car parking
- Minor reconfiguration of pathways, car parking areas and layout of the helipad

Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report
Section 96 of the *Environmental Planning and
Assessment Act 1979*

November 2014

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1. BACKGROUND

On 20 July 2014, the Executive Director, Development Assessment Systems and Approvals, under delegation of the Minister for Planning, approved the State significant development (SSD) application for the redevelopment of Parkes Hospital at Newell Highway, Parkes (see **Figure 1** for approved layout).

The approved development comprises:

- site preparation and bulk earthworks;
- construction of a new two storey hospital to support 28 beds, birthing rooms, emergency department, six chemotherapy chairs, three dental chairs, clinical and non-clinical support services;
- construction of a new single storey short-stay staff accommodation building (120 sqm);
- access roads and on-grade car parking (140 spaces);
- helipad;
- landscaping; and
- associated site infrastructure works.

Construction works associated with the SSD approval have commenced.

2. PROPOSED MODIFICATION

The applicant is seeking to modify the development consent as outlined below.

SSD 6107 MOD 1:

- Extend the approved construction hours for Saturdays from between 8.00 am and 1.00 pm to 7.00 am and 5.00 pm.

SSD 6107 MOD 2:

- Reconfigure the layout of car parking areas to provide more spaces in close proximity to the main entrance, including providing an additional seven car parking spaces, resulting in a total of 150 car spaces (see **Figure 2**);
- reconfigure site access for pedestrians and cyclists with a separate pathway to link with the future cycleway to be constructed by Council as part of the adjoining road works to the north for the new Southern Ring Road (see **Figure 2**);
- modify the location of the helipad and provide a more direct and simple pathway to the hospital building (see **Figure 2**); and
- remove five additional trees located within the car parking areas and internal roads and approximately 50 additional cypress trees located within the helicopter flight paths for the helipad (see **Figure 2**).

3. STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1 Modification of the Minister's Approval

The modification application has been lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) under section 96(1A) of the EP&A Act.

Section 96(1A) of the EP&A Act provides that a consent authority may, on application being made by the applicant or any other person entitled to act on a consent granted by the consent authority and subject to and in accordance with the regulations, modify the consent.

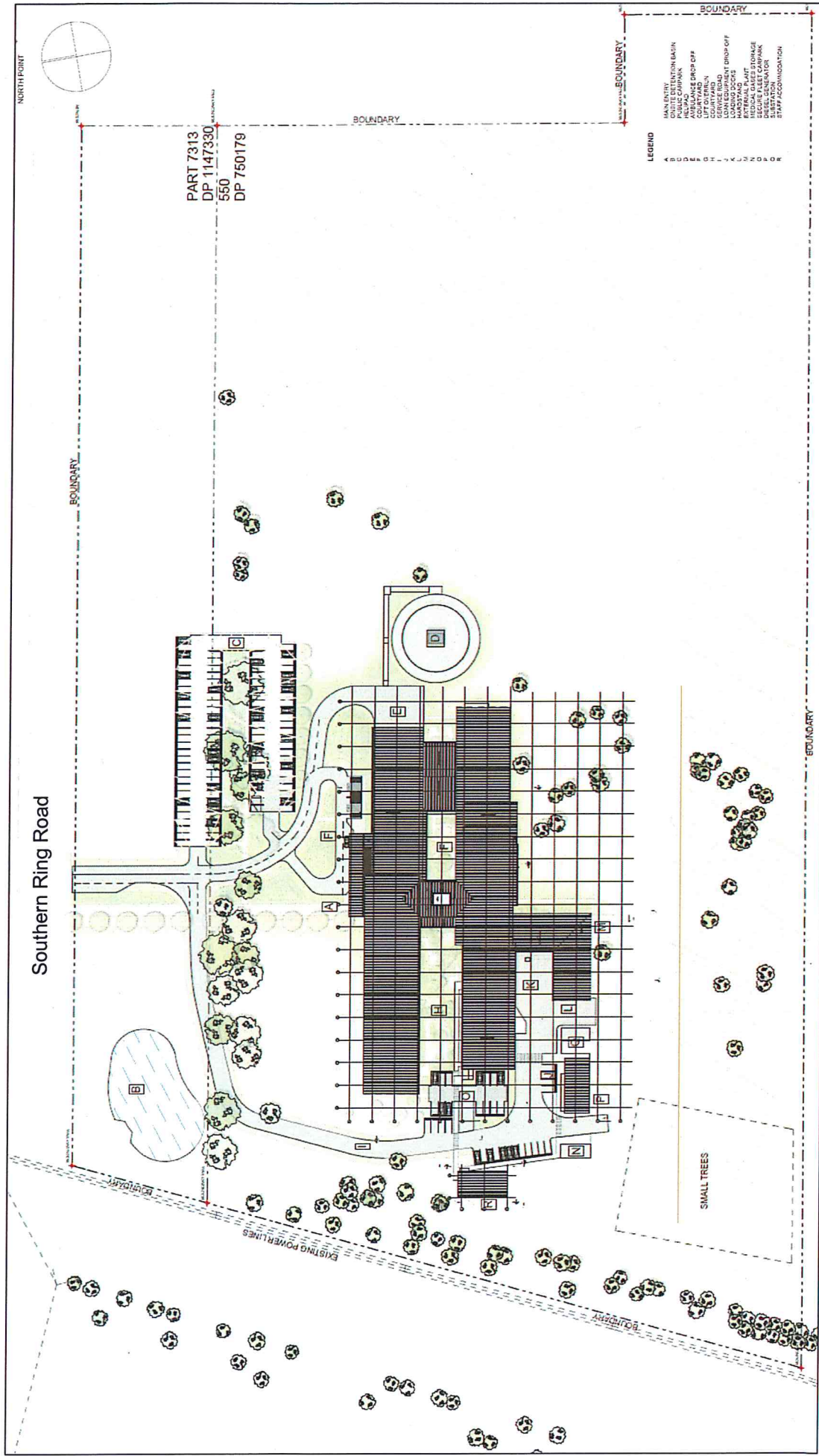


Figure 1: Approved Development Layout

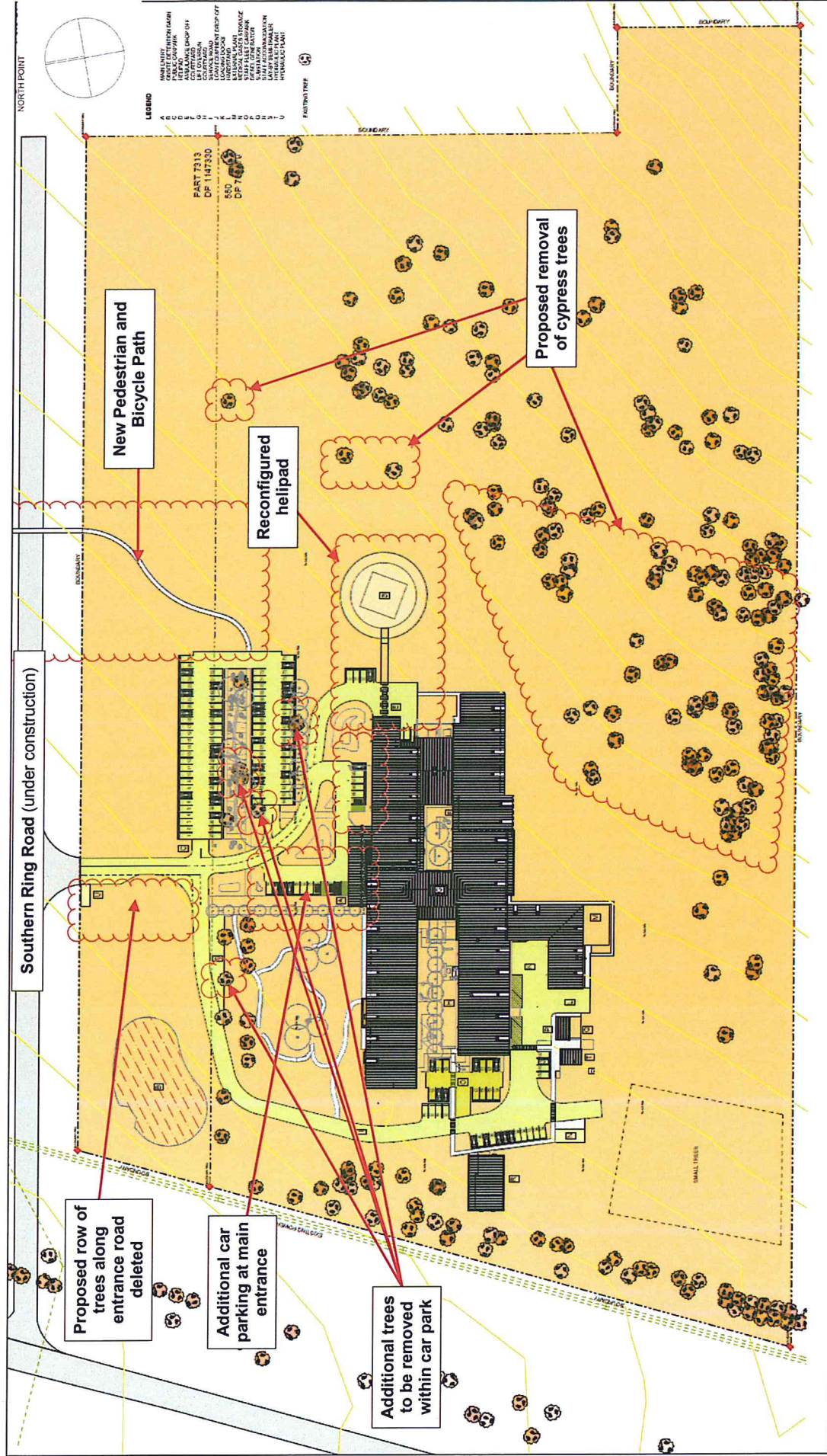


Figure 2: Amended Development Layout

3.2 Environmental Assessment Requirements

Section 96(1A) of the EP&A Act requires the following matters to be assessed in respect of all applications which seek modifications to approvals:

Table 1: Matters to be considered under section 96(1A) of the EP&A Act

Matter	Consideration
Whether the proposed modification is of minimal environmental impact	The proposed modifications seek to extend Saturday construction hours to be consistent with the construction hours approved (by council) for the adjoining road works, which would reduce the overall construction period, and therefore would be of minimal environmental impact. The modifications relating to the proposed additional tree removal, additional car parking, modified pedestrian and bicycle pathway and modified helipad layout would have minimal environmental impact as they are minor and the impacts can be mitigated. Accordingly, the proposed amendments would result in minimal environmental impacts.
Whether the development to which the consent as modified relates is substantially the same development	The proposed modifications do not seek to significantly amend the hospital redevelopment as they only seek to increase construction hours and make minor modifications to the layout which would not alter the approved use of the hospital. The approved development, as proposed to be modified, will remain substantially the same.
Whether notification has occurred and any submissions have been considered	In accordance with the EP&A Act and the EP&A Regulations, the modification request does not need to be notified. The application was made publicly available on the Department's website and referred to Council, who raised no objections to the modifications.
Any relevant provisions of section 79C(1) of the EP&A Act	The relevant provisions of section 79C(1) of the EP&A Act are considered in this section and the assessment section of this report. The modifications would not alter the development's existing compliance with the relevant planning instruments.

3.2 Delegated Authority

Under the Minister's Delegation dated 10 November 2014, the Director, Industry and Key Sites, can determine the modification applications as: Parkes Council has not objected to the proposed modifications; a political disclosure statement has not been made for these applications; and no public submissions were received objecting to the proposed changes.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS

The application was notified in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000. The application was made publicly available on the Department's website.

Parkes Council (Council) was also notified of the proposed modifications and raised no objections.

5. ASSESSMENT

The key assessment issue for the proposed modification applications are the ecological and visual impacts associated with the additional removal of trees. Potential impacts of the extended construction hours and additional car parking are also discussed below.

Tree removal

The applicant seeks to remove approximately 55 additional trees. Five of these trees are located within or along the internal roads and car parking areas (four eucalypts and one pine tree). The applicant has provided an arborist assessment that concludes that there are

defects and deformities present in these trees. The approximately 50 trees proposed to be removed within the flight paths for the helipad are White Cypress Pine trees (cypress trees), which are abundant on the site with over 210 trees surveyed (greater than 20 cm diameter) on the site and an additional 500 smaller cypress trees interspersed with seedlings/stems across the south-eastern portion of the site. The arborist assessment concluded that these trees are not a threatened species and not a species or maturity that would provide significant habitat for any endangered species and therefore can be removed. The applicant has also offered to undertake additional tree planting to mitigate the visual impacts of the tree clearing.

The Department considers that the removal of the trees within the proposed car parking areas and internal roads acceptable as the health of the trees do not warrant retention and the landscaping proposed across the site would offset the trees proposed to be removed. In this regard, the applicant has also submitted additional detailed landscape plans for the site for approval. Therefore, the Department recommends that condition B6 which requires detailed landscape plans be submitted be deleted and that condition A3 be amended to include references to the detailed landscape plans, which are generally consistent with the landscaping concept strategy approved as part of the development, except for the removal of tree planting proposed along the main access road. The removal of the tree planting is considered acceptable as it would improve sight lines for vehicles entering and exiting the site.

The 50 cypress trees proposed to be removed near the helipad are not located within the 50 metre potential wildlife corridor along the eastern boundary. These trees are located to the east of the hospital building and would not be visible from the Newell Highway. The tree removal would have negligible visual impacts from the south and east given the retention of existing vegetation along the eastern boundary and vegetated vacant land adjoining the site to the south. The tree clearing for the helicopter flight paths would be most visible from the new Southern Ring Road, but the visual impact would be mitigated by the landscaped backdrop of the vegetated site to the south.

The Department considers the proposed additional tree removal for the helicopter flight paths acceptable as these trees do not provide any significant ecological value, substantial stands of cypress trees would be retained within the site and the applicant has committed to providing additional tree planting to compensate for the tree clearing. The Department recommends that prior to the occupation of the hospital, the applicant should ensure that additional tree planting is undertaken and commensurate with the number of trees removed (a minimum of 50 trees).

Other matters

The proposed extension of construction works on Saturday from between 8.00 am and 1.00 pm to 7.00 am and 5.00 pm would align Saturday construction hours with construction hours permitted by Council for the adjoining road works. The building works are located centrally on the site and the closest sensitive receivers are over 200 metres away. Therefore, the extended construction hours for Saturdays would result in minimal amenity impact. The Department supports the extended hours as it would result in a shorter overall construction period and reduce the overall impacts from construction works for the development.

In regard to the other minor modifications proposed, the Department notes that:

- the reconfigured car parking areas results in additional car parking closer to the main entrance which would improve accessibility to the entrance;
- the new pedestrian and bicycle path is located away from the main hospital entrance and deceleration lanes to avoid conflict with vehicular traffic; and
- reconfiguration of the helipad layout provides a more direct pathway to the main entrance.

The Department considers that these modifications are minor and would result in overall improved access arrangements for the hospital and would not result in any significant environmental impacts. Accordingly, these modifications are supported.

The Department notes that development consent was issued for 140 car spaces (as detailed in the project description), whilst the approved plans illustrated 143 spaces. The reconfigured car parking areas results in a total of 150 car spaces as shown on the plans. The Department therefore recommends that a condition be included to clarify that the development as amended includes a total of 150 car spaces.

6. CONCLUSION

The Department has reviewed the modification request and consulted with Council. All the relevant environmental issues associated with the modifications have been assessed.

The proposed extended construction hours on Saturday are acceptable as it would allow the overall construction period to be reduced, providing the Government with significant cost and time savings in the delivery of health services. The modifications to the site layout and landscaping are required to ensure safe access for helicopters, improve access for pedestrians and cyclists and would have negligible environmental impacts, subject to additional tree planting to offset the tree removal.

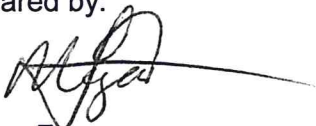
The Department is of the opinion that the modification of the proposal is in the public interest as it would not give rise to adverse built form or environmental impacts. Consequently, the Department recommends that the modification be approved.

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the A/Director, Industry and Key Sites:

- note the information provided in this report;
- approve the modification request; and
- sign the attached modifying instrument (**Appendix B**).

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APPENDIX A MODIFICATION REQUEST

See the Department's website at:

http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6747 and
http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6748.

APPENDIX B RECOMMENDED MODIFYING INSTRUMENT

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