

18 April 2019

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Ms Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Anthony Witherdin (Director Modification Assessments)

Dear Mr Witherdin,

SSD 8596 – MOD 1 – RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION WESTERN BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

We write on behalf of the University of Wollongong regarding SSD 8596 (MOD 1) which relates to design amendments to the Western Building comprising:

- minor amendments to the materiality and expression of the façade;
- amendments to the internal layout to achieve a more open plan layout;
- provision of an additional 87 staff workspaces within the building; and
- increase to the building's occupancy to 235 persons.

The Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) issued correspondence dated the 29 March 2019 requesting further clarification on the proposed occupancy numbers resulting from the modification application. Accordingly, this Response to Request for Further Information has been prepared to address the concerns raised by the Department.

1.0 Background Information

A State Significant Development Application (SSD) was approved on the 24 August 2018. The application sought consent for the:

Construction of a new Arts and Social Sciences building (Western Building) to accommodate improved educational facilities, an additional 54 staff, landscaping, public domain works and learning spaces.

Prior to the approval, the Department submitted a Request for Further Information Letter dated 19 December 2017 which requested further information pertaining to the demand for additional parking. The Applicant and the project team submitted a Response to Submission and Preferred Project Report to the Department on the 22 June 2018 that responded to each of the concerns set out in the Response to Request for Further Information Letter.

The accompanying Traffic and Parking Assessment prepared by TTW noted that the proposal combined with the staff increase would precipitate a demand for an additional 39 spaces. Combined with the proposed removal of the 104 spaces within the P4 Carpark, the proposal was anticipated to create an overall additional demand for 143 vehicle spaces. The demand for parking was proposed to be addressed through a parking strategy developed in conjunction with TAFE NSW.

In respect to staff occupancy, the Traffic and Parking Assessment and Response to Submission and Preferred Project Report noted the following key points:

- A total of 101 existing staff transferred from existing facilities would be accommodated within the Western Building;

- The Western Building would accommodate 190 staff and would therefore contribute an additional 89 staff to the Campus when accounting for the existing 101 staff;
- When applying the peak occupancy rates nominated by the *UOW Annual Space Occupancy Survey*, the proposal would contribute an additional 54 staff to the Campus during the university's peak period.
- The Western Building would not increase student numbers across the campus as they would be transferred from existing facilities.

A modification application was submitted to the Department on the 4 March 2019 for minor internal and external design changes. The modification sought to increase the Western Building's staff occupancy from 149 to 235, resulting in an increase of 86 staff. **However, following a review of the capacity, it is now confirmed that the reference to 149 existing staff was incorrect.** It was noted in the modification that the additional staff would be relocated from existing facilities contained within the university campus. Areas currently housing relocated staff are not suitable for office accommodation and will be repurposed for other uses. Consequently, the proposed staff numbers would not produce an additional demand for parking or alter the findings of the Traffic and Parking Assessment prepared by TTW.

The Department issued a Request for Additional Information dated 29 March 2019 requesting further clarification on the staff occupancy numbers and the locations within the campus existing staff to be accommodated in the Western Building would be relocated from. The request was made for the purpose of determining whether additional campus-wide parking demand would be generated as a result of the modification.

This response has been prepared to address the concerns raised by the Department and clarify the staff occupancy. It confirmed that overall the proposal will introduce an additional 54 staff to the campus. Accordingly, the findings pertaining to the traffic generation and parking demand associated with the proposal which was addressed in the Transport and Accessibility Assessment that accompanied the EIS remain applicable to the subject application.

2.0 Response to Department of Planning & Environment

2.1 The TTW parking assessment submitted with the RTS calculated a parking demand of 39 spaces from the development.

The Traffic and Parking Assessment prepared by TTW submitted alongside the RTS calculated the parking demand of an addition 39 spaces. The parking demand was attribute to the proposed increase in staff numbers, which was anticipated to be 54 additional staff. As noted in the Transport and Accessibility Assessment submitted alongside the EIS, the 54 additional staff relates to the number of staff present during the Western Building's peak occupancy period. The peak occupancy rates used to calculate the additional 54 staff are based on the rates nominated by *UOW's Annual Space Occupancy Survey* results.

The Response to Submissions / Preferred Project submitted alongside the traffic report highlighted that the Western Building would result in an increase of '89 additional staff'. To clarify this number, the additional 89 staff relates to the total quantity of staff that can be accommodated within the building. It is distinct from the maximum staff that will occupy the building during peak periods when traffic generation is the greatest.

As detailed in the Transport and Accessibility Assessment submitted alongside the EIS and above, the total 89 additional staff was used to calculate the 54 additional staff anticipated during peak periods after having applied the peak occupancy rates derived from the Annual Space Occupancy Survey results.

2.2 Concerned is raised that the increase in the proposed staff capacity from the 54 contemplated by the TTW parking assessment to 235 as proposed by the modification will generate additional campus-wide parking demand.

The total increase in staff as a consequence of the modification amounts to 54 staff. As the additional staff are to be transferred from existing facilities within the University Campus, there will be no impact on traffic generation or the demand for parking. A detailed discussion of the occupancy numbers is provided in the following section.

Tables 1 – 3 provide a detailed breakdown of the staff occupancy numbers and include the following categories of staff:

- Academic Staff – relates to academics and lecturers.
- Research / Higher Degree Research (HDR) – includes research staff.
- Professional – includes office staff and reception staff.

Table 1 provides an overview of the staff increases approved under the EIS. It highlights the following key points:

- The Western Building is approved to accommodate 101 existing staff which will be relocated from other campus facilities.
- The Western Building is approved to accommodate 89 additional staff across the Geography and HAS faculties and therefore has capacity to accommodate a total of 190 staff.
- When applying the peak occupancy rates, the maximum of 54 staff will be accommodated within the building during peak times.

Table 1 Increase of total staff and staff during peak periods

Type of Staff	Number of Staff Existing	Number of Staff Proposed	Total Staff Increase	Peak Occupancy	Maximum increase of staff on Campus
Academic	45	68	23	100%	23
Research / HDR ¹	44	106	62	44% ²	27
Professional	12	16	4	100%	4
Total	101	190	89	-	54

Source: Transport and Accessibility Assessment prepared by TTW dated 1 November 2017

¹ HDR stands for Higher Degree Research

² Determined from UOW Annual Space Occupancy Survey

Table 2 details the proposed staff occupancy associated with the modification application. It accounts for the staff numbers approved under the EIS and indicates that:

- The proposed modification will permit the Western Building to accommodate 235 staff, contributing an addition 45 from that already approved.
- Of the total amount of 235, 89 staff will be additional to those accommodated on the campus (inclusive of the 54 additional staff within peak hours). The remaining 146 staff (inclusive of the 101 approved under the EIS and 45 proposed under the modification) relate to existing staff that will be transferred from other campus facilities.
- As staff will be transferred from existing facilities and will not increase beyond the approved 54, the modification will not increase traffic generation or the demand for parking. As such, the conclusions of the original Transport and Accessibility prepared by TTW dated 1 November 2017 remain relevant to the assessment of the modification.
- These additional staff relate to the Health and Society (HAS) Faculty.
- The existing staff will be transferred from campus buildings B41, B15, B22, B41 and B15.

- As the additional 45 staff will be transferred from existing campus facilities and will not contribute to traffic generation, there is no need to apply the peak occupancy rates noted above and in the traffic report.

Table 2 Proposed staff occupancy numbers for the HAS faculty proposed under the modification

Type of Staff	Number Approved Staff	Existing Location of Staff	Additional proposed under the modification	Total additional staff to be transferred from existing campus facilities
Academic	68	B41 and B15	19	87
Research / HDR ¹	106	B41 and B22	23	129
Professional	16	B41 and B15	3	19
Total	190		45	235

2.3 Confirm from which faculty and which existing buildings, staff are proposed to be transferred from to the Western Building.

In accordance with the Department's request, **Table 3** details the existing buildings and the quantity of staff proposed to be transferred from each in accordance with the relevant faculty. It is noted that under the subject application, no change is proposed to the quantity of staff within the Geography and Sustainable Communities Faculty (SGSC). Accordingly, all staff increases relate to the HAS Faculty.

Table 3 Quantity of faculty staff to be transferred from existing buildings

Type	Existing Staff Approved Under EIS	Approved Total Under EIS	Proposed Staff Total (EIS + MOD 1)	Existing Building Location
SGSC Faculty				
Academic	15	18	18	B41
Research / HDR	25	30	30	B41
Professional	5	5	5	B41
Total Geography	45	53	53	-
HAS Faculty				
Academic	30	50	69	B15
Research / HDR	19	76	99	B22
Professional	7	11	14	B15
Total HAS	56	137	182	-
Total HAS + SGSC	101	190	235	-

2.4 Confirm how frequently the additional staff work on campus.

All staff are full-time with the exception of 8 research / HDR students who are contracted on a casual basis.

2.5 Clarify how the vacated buildings will be used following the occupation of the building.

Staff will be transferred from the following existing buildings:

- B41 – Faculty of Sciences, Medicine and Health;
- B15 – Austin Keane Building; and
- B 22 – Education and Clinic Building.

The aforementioned buildings are illustrated **Figure 1**. As shown, they relate to established buildings that are generally big in scale and currently accommodate a large number of students and staff. These buildings will not be rendered redundant following the occupation of the Western Building and many are nearing full capacity. Staff will be relocated from these buildings to facilitate the co-location of the HAS and SGSC faculties into a singular building.

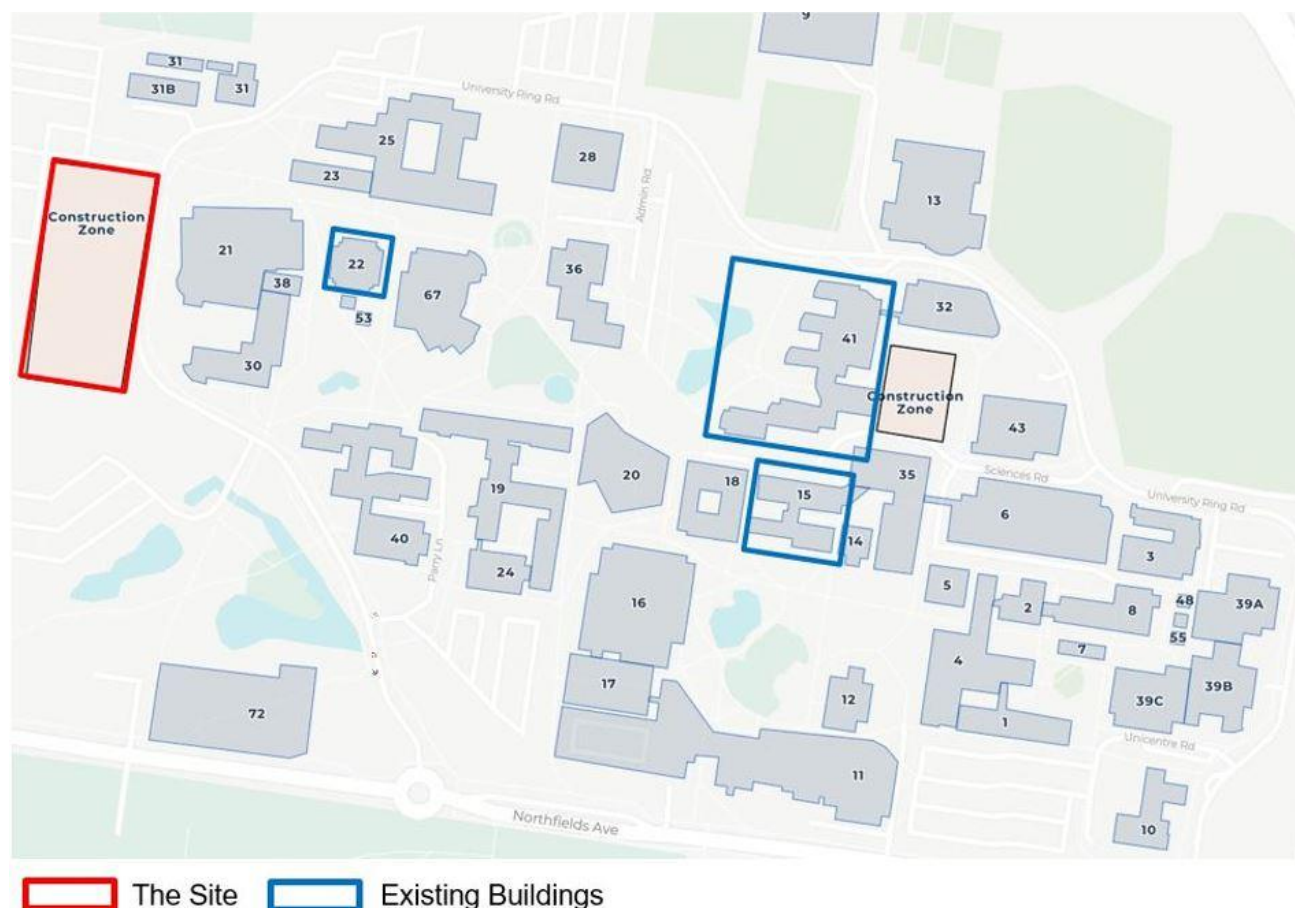


Figure 1 The site and existing buildings staff will be transferred from following the completion of the Western Building

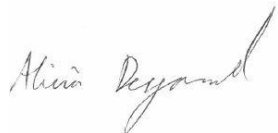
3.0 Conclusion

The proposed modification seeks approval for minor internal and external amendments that will improve the visual appearance of the building and its internal functionality. The internal amendments will also facilitate the achievement of a more open plan layout capable of supporting an increased number of staff. This will allow for the co-location of the existing faculties into a singular building with new improved facilities and will limit the amount of pressure placed on existing campus buildings that are ageing and nearing capacity.

The responses to each of the issues raised by the Department have been addressed and it is considered that the proposed changes do not result in any additional environmental impacts.

In light of the merits and in the absence of significant environmental impacts, we recommend that the proposed modification be supported by the Department. Should you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me on 9956 6962.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alicia Desgrand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alicia" and the last name "Desgrand" clearly distinguishable.

Alicia Desgrand
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