

## **Proposed Greenwich Hospital Redevelopment**

I would like to state clearly that this submission is by way of objection to the Concept Proposal for redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital.

The areas of concern to me relate to:

- Visual and amenity impacts
- Noise potential
- Intensity of development
- Local traffic impacts

### In summary:

The aims of the proposed development are sound and laudable. Its proposed execution is not.

The buildings are too high. They are out of scale with and insensitive to the local area and will severely impact on the visual environment and residential amenity.

The proposal as it stands will particularly impact on our property, our residential amenity and the enjoyment of our home.

A scaling back or removal of the 'non-core' elements of the proposal could allow the ability to redesign the development, to reduce heights and bulk of buildings, and to scale a facility more in keeping with the environment and amenity of the locality.

### **Visual and Amenity Impact**

My wife and I reside at 1 Seaman Street, Greenwich, immediately adjacent to the Gore Creek Reserve. On two sides of our house (north and west) we enjoy a predominantly bushland setting. We overlook the Gore Creek reserve (Bob Campbell Oval) to the west; to the north the outlook is mostly bush, with some filtered glimpses of other houses. Our setting is quite unique, a full bushland setting in an urban environment.

Our living areas are designed to maximize our enjoyment of the bushland aspect and we enjoy complete privacy.

From our house we can see the rooflines of Pallister House and the Main Hospital Building – these are, however, filtered views through trees and the buildings are set below the existing tree line. Apart from some filtered lights at night, we are not visually affected by the current Greenwich Hospital.

Should the proposed redevelopment occur in its current form, we will be significantly adversely impacted.

The south-west 'seniors living' tower, would be located approximately on the site of the current Main Hospital Building. This proposed building's height, being some 30 metres, would be almost 10 metres higher than the current roofline (current ridgeline RL 56.3; proposed height RL 65). The building would sit higher than the tree line and dominate our north-west aspect. Proposed tree removal would only compound this dominance.

The proposed Hospital tower, which is also some 30 metres tall, is unfortunately located on the highest part of the site, only emphasizing its height. This height would be almost 20 metres higher than the ridgeline of the tiled roof of Pallister House (current ridgeline RL 60.65; proposed height RL 80). Although set to the north of Pallister, this building would be far taller than the current tree line and will be visually dominant.

Figure 39 of the EIS is a photo taken in our vicinity, however, it understates the potential visual impact on our property. The EIS states (p 75) that no formal assessment from dwellings was undertaken as it was 'not considered necessary at this point of the process'. The EIS also states (p 76) that 'no dwellings...will have significant adverse changes' and that views for residents will be 'not significantly different to that pre-development'.

From our perspective these statements could not be more wrong. The conclusions of the EIS relating to visual impact being not significant are misleading, erroneous and glib.

Our visual aspect and privacy are fundamental to our residential amenity and enjoyment. If the issues of visual impact are not properly considered at this stage, then we would have no further opportunity to meaningfully address these matters through changes to the fundamental design and layout of the proposal.

The visual dominance of the seniors living and hospital towers will affect our privacy, which is currently almost complete. If we can see them, they can see us.

Our bushland aspect would be ruined. The proposed buildings would be overbearing and would dominate our view, fundamentally destroying the design rationale of our living areas, and hence our current enjoyment and amenity of our home.

We will also be significantly affected by lights at night from both buildings. As hospitals are 24 hour operations, there will be no relief from the visual intrusion; dominant buildings by day, lights all night.

We would welcome inspection of our property, as part of the assessment process, in order to verify the potential for visual and amenity impact and to ensure this matter is fully and properly addressed and assessed at this stage.

In my submission, the proposed development is just too high. It is out of context with the neighbourhood and will be completely destructive to our amenity and the amenity of the locality.

### **Noise potential**

We note that some acoustic tests were undertaken on the margins of the site and certain recommendations made concerning noise attenuation measures.

It should be noted that the Gore Creek Reserve valley has a peculiar acoustic environment. The valley echoes and amplifies sound, most particularly at night.

We are concerned that the redevelopment may increase the potential for noise disturbance. We are often disturbed by the noise of the emptying of garbage bins at the hospital, and at night the drone of air conditioning units is at times quite disturbing.

We submit that the acoustic environment of the Gore Creek valley warrants greater attention and assessment.

### **Intensity of Development**

The impacts of the proposed development, particularly the visual and amenity impacts referred to earlier, may be due to an undue concentration of development on the site. Should the development aspirations of the proposal be scaled back, there would be the opportunity to reduce the heights of the buildings by spreading necessary elements of the development across the site.

Residential aged care and seniors living housing are outside the definitions of 'hospitals, medical centres and health research facilities'; these elements of the proposal may be regarded as 'discretionary' or 'non-core' to the main purpose of a hospital. Normally, were it not for the over-riding provisions of the State Significant Development scheme, such elements would not be permissible.

One must question the intensity of such 'non-core' elements, particularly as they give rise to some significant adverse impacts.

The proposed hospital development is to provide 150 hospital beds, yet it is proposed to develop 89 residential apartments and villas. Whilst one can appreciate the sense of having seniors' accommodation as part of or ancillary to the hospital, however, this intensity of non-core elements appears out of proportion. The residential component appears to be the dominant element rather than 'ancillary'

Assuming 2 persons per seniors unit, this would mean accommodation for 178 persons, which is greater than the accommodation to be provided by the hospital.

Little detail has been provided in the EIS as to what constitutes the seniors living apartments – What size? How many bedrooms? Land title or ownership arrangements? Are they to be strataed? Are they to be licenced or rented? Are they to be privately sold? What are residency qualification requirements? These issues, and potentially more, have a bearing on the legitimacy of these 'non-core' elements as being integral to the overall scheme.

One could question whether the development is less a hospital and more a residential apartment scheme.

Should the residential elements of the proposed development be reduced or removed, then greater flexibility would exist to modify the height and bulk of the hospital element, thereby reducing the adverse visual and amenity impacts.

A revision of the project's scope and physical design is absolutely necessary to ensuring a development which can be accepted as part of the local community. The heights must be lowered and the bulk of the buildings reduced.

This revision must be done at this stage, before any concept approval should be contemplated.

### **Local Traffic Impacts**

I have noted the traffic consultant's report and conclusions. However, there are a number of matters which should be properly taken into account.

Firstly, River Road is a busy road. Two lanes eastbound, one lane westbound at the Hospital frontage. River Road is heavily congested in the morning peak eastbound and evening peak westbound. The traffic signals on River Road allow access and egress to the Hospital. However, there is no turning bay for eastbound vehicles to enter the Hospital, which means that vehicles turning right into the Hospital block an eastbound lane, being both a source of congestion and potential accident. Increased traffic to the proposed hospital and residential apartments will only exacerbate congestion.

Secondly, St Vincents Road is an important access point for Greenwich residents living in the area west of Greenwich Road. Overflow parking from the existing Hospital often reduces St Vincents Road to a single lane, inhibiting local traffic flow. Increased parking and traffic movements, arising from the proposed development and its construction, would potentially impact on local traffic flow, affecting residential amenity and convenience.

Current restrictions on the Hospital's access to St Vincents Road (locked gate at night and weekends) reduce traffic movements to and from the Hospital during times of greater amenity sensitivity to residents. Such restrictions should be maintained.

**In summary**, the aims of the proposed development are sound and laudable. Its proposed execution is not.

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A scaling back or removal of the 'non-core' elements of the proposal could allow the ability to redesign the development, to reduce heights and bulk of buildings, and to scale a facility more in keeping with the environment and amenity of the locality.

I offer the opportunity for inspection of our property.

I wish to be informed of progress with further stages of assessment of this proposal.

Peter Staveley

1 Seaman Street, Greenwich