

7 November 2017

File No: SSD 7974
Our Ref: R/2016/33/A

Karen Harragon
Director – Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments,
Department of Planning and Environment,
320 Pitt Street,
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Attention: Megan Fu
Email: megan.fu@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Megan

SSD 7974 – University of Sydney – Health Precinct Stage 1

I refer to your letter dated 9 October 2017 seeking Council's input on the above subject SSD application.

It is understood that the proposal is seeking consent for the redevelopment of the 'Health Precinct – Stage 1' for the purposes of an educational establishment building that will co-locate the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery (FNM) and the Central Clinical School (CCS) on the Camperdown Campus, including the following:

- Excavation of lower ground floor level to a depth of approximately 2m and associated earthworks;
- Construction of an 8 storey building to accommodate offices, teaching, research, and clinical spaces;
- Support and back of house spaces;
- Roof plant;
- 30 car parking spaces and 157 bicycle parking racks;
- End of Trip facilities; and
- Removal of 24 trees for partial replacement and landscaping.

The City has reviewed the information and provides the following comments:

Section 94 Contributions

During the preparation of the City of Sydney Development Contributions Plan 2015, the University wrote to the City and requested that the Plan be amended to exempt University developments from the requirements to pay contributions, or to significantly reduce contributions required from the University. The City considered the submission and the CEO of the City of Sydney met with the University's representatives to discuss. In conclusion, the City requires an appropriate contribution and has not agreed to an exemption. The adopted 2015 Plan does not exclude University developments from a contribution (refer Section 1.3 of Plan).

The proposal seeks to permanently relocate students and staff from three existing campus', including one from outside the Local Government Area, to be amalgamated within the proposed new building. This would result in an increased demand of local services and infrastructure due to the net population increase. It is both necessary and reasonable to impose Section 94 contributions, and **if a condition requiring the payment of contributions is not proposed to be imposed as required by the plan, the City objects to the approval.**

Landscaping and Trees

It is noted that condition B8 of the approved CIP requires detailed landscape plans to be submitted including details of the species to be used in the various landscape areas, and other soft and hard landscape treatments, including any pavement areas and modular and sculptural seating. Although Appendix X submitted with the application includes detailed concept information, it is considered that a significant amount of design development is required before these plans could be described as 'detailed landscape plans'.

Adequate, viable tree replacement is a critical aspect of this application, particularly given the wholesale loss of existing large mature trees with a moderate retention value. These existing trees make a significant contribution to the overall canopy cover on campus, and also to local habitat linkages. The indicative sections (particularly 'Lower Wakil Sections A & B') illustrate insufficient soil depth and volume to support the large species proposed. Mounding to achieve a minimum depth at the trunk is an unacceptable approach for planting of this scale on podium, and the minimum substrate depth (800-1000mm) must be achieved for the majority of all planters. The planter edge detail should be revised to accommodate this.

The proposal indicates that only three trees are to be retained. In order to ensure these trees remain viable, it is recommended that the proposal adopts all of the recommendations stated within the plans, Arborist's Report and the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, including tree protection specifications.

The landscape concept diagrams highlight several areas on both levels that are designed for social interaction. However, the design of the raised planter/seating edges in these spaces is generally linear, and will only support interaction of small groups of 2-3 people. The spaces, in particular the Lower Wakil Garden, appear to have been designed more as a thoroughfare than a social space. It is recommended that the planters be redesigned to incorporate a more detailed, articulated edge that facilitates interaction for groups of people, particularly in the Upper Wakil Garden where space is more generous.

It is our understanding that during the pre-lodgement meeting, the concept of highlighting the former creek line in the landscape was described as part of the Wingara Mura strategy. This concept has been significantly compromised, and now consists of a 'Water Skim' (shallow, transient water feature) on the upper level, and a very small cascading water wall on the lower level. The two are connected by discontinued sections of 'Wingara Mura Paving'- details of which are unclear. Given the importance of the Wingara Mura strategy in the university campus improvements, this concept should be strengthened to form a genuine, visible interpretation of culture and landscape heritage rather than a tokenistic addition of common landscape elements.

Although this application only deals in detail with Stage 1 of the Health Precinct, it does present a masterplan for the precinct as a whole. The precinct interfaces with

Gadigal Lane, directly adjacent to St Andrew's College. Although currently in poor condition, this lane has the potential to form a strong pedestrian connection from the main campus to St Andrews, the Health Precinct and RPA hospital. The masterplan does little to improve the condition of the lane, nor does it adequately ensure overlooking, activation and adequate passive surveillance of the lane. This must be addressed: if not in this current submission then in the submission for the relevant phase.

Flood levels

The Civil Design report submitted with the application indicates that the subject development is located at a trapped low point at the southern edge of the site within the University of Sydney campus. The area is flood affected in both 1% AEP and PMF events. The submitted Civil Design report has recommended a building finished floor level at RL 23m AHD at the south east corner of the site based on 1% AEP level however, the 1% AEP or PMF levels around the other areas of the subject development have not been considered. A more comprehensive flood assessment should be completed in order to determine the flooding behaviour around the subject development site including the basement.

Environmentally Sustainable Design

The proposal demonstrates a strong commitment to environmentally sustainable design, which aligns well with the City of Sydney's 2030 Plan and our stated environmental performance targets for the local government area. Any approval should make reference to the Umow Lai Sustainability Statement for the University of Sydney Health Precinct – Stage 1 and the application of the University of Sydney's Sustainability Framework to ensure Environmental Sustainable Design Commitments are delivered in full at construction and building commissioning stages.

Section 4.7.2 of the ESD report refers to timber selection for use on the project. The City advises that in order to minimise off-site biodiversity impacts, a clear commitment to all hardwood timbers (including timber indicated in landscape plans), being FSC-certified and preferably Australia-sourced is important. If approved, an appropriate condition of consent should be imposed specifying certified timber.

Heritage Interpretation

It is recommended that the Heritage Interpretation Strategy, prepared by URBIS and dated 31 August 2017, is integrated into the detailed design of the staged development of the precinct in consultation with the heritage consultant, project architects, landscape architect, and other relevant consultants.

Detailed design and development of the interpretation media, including specific locations and content, is to be prepared with input from the applicant's heritage consultant in accordance with the Heritage Interpretation Strategy and is to be submitted with, and completed at each stage of development of the Health Precinct.

Oval-edge activation

The podium facade at the northern elevation of the building is relatively inactive, with one entry and one fire exit. Given the length of the building, and that it addresses the university oval along this frontage, there appears to be a lost opportunity to activate this edge at ground level and provide a direct relationship between the breakout/common areas, gym uses and the outdoors.

Colours, materials and finishes

Insufficient detail is provided in relation to the proposed colours, materials and finishes for the development. For example, the 'Exterior Finishes' sheet shows "WT-

A1/2 (Upper Boxes)” with material 3 annotated as “*L shaped folded fins fixed to slab edges*”. This is a design description and fails to clarify the proposed material the fins will be constructed from as well as the actual colour for which approval is sought. This lack of specific detail is typical of most of the materials including the glazing, type of “composite material” and the “horizontal fins” and “external tile panels”. A detailed schedule of materials, colours and finishes should correspond to coloured elevations so it is clear where the details specified are to be located on the building.

Transport

The applicant is encouraged to demonstrate a greater commitment to a modal shift away from car use to more sustainable transport options in a manner which aligns with the targets and objectives set out in Sustainable Sydney 2030. On that basis, it is preferable that less or no car parking is provided by the development.

The Transport and Accessibility Assessment report makes reference to compliance with the Sustainable Transport And Mobility Plan (STAMP), which is a broader travel demand management document developed by the University. However, the proposal is required to comply with Section 3.11 of Sydney Development Control Plan 2012. Based on the maximum number of students and staff to be accommodated by the new building, the 69 staff bicycle spaces proposed are acceptable however, the proposed 88 student bicycle parking spaces significantly underestimates the cycling demands of the site. At a minimum, 1 space per 10 students is required, which equates to 264 spaces. In addition, the proposed End of Trip Facilities appear to fall short of DCP requirements with respect to provision of personal lockers. It is recommended that staff and student bicycle parking facilities are required to meet the latest Australian Standards.

The Department are encouraged to request submission of a Green Travel Plan that includes a Transport Access Guide that is required to be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis following implementation.

Information not provided

The application does not include any details relating to building signage though it is noted that the northern elevation shows a roof level sign. In addition, the application does not adequately address how public art will be incorporated into the building design and surrounding precinct. If approved, it is recommended that conditions of consent are imposed specifically requiring a signage strategy and public art strategy for the Health Precinct to be submitted to the Department for approval.

Should you wish to speak with a Council officer about the above, please contact Maria O'Donnell, Specialist Planner, on 9265 9834 or at modonnell@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely,



Graham Jahn AM
Director

City Planning | Development | Transport