

I have no objection to health services being provided at this location and am pleased that the State Government has had the foresight to acquire the land on this site for social infrastructure purposes. However, I do have concerns about some aspects of the proposal.

It is a real disappointment that the building is located on such a small footprint fronting Pittwater Road with so little provision for landscaped open space. The rear garden on the former residential lot will become part of the footprint of the multi-storey car park.

The Brookvale Health Services building is no substitute for the Manly Hospital site with its landscape surrounds. With the many health services to be provided at the Brookvale site, the relationship between health and aesthetics is worth considering. The Brookvale site is very convenient, but the surrounds of busy roads and buildings and the absence of landscape open space is not particularly conducive to healing and health.

Consultation

In the EIS the consultation page indicates that there has been no community consultation until the advertisement of the development proposal. Issues in this submission could have been dealt with more effectively during the planning and design phase.

Height of building

There was an expectation that the Health Department was to acquire the vacant site and the buildings to the north and east. If this had occurred sufficient floor space would have been provided for Health Services without the need to exceed the height limit of 11m.

The taller building with a maximum height of 22m is more intimidating from a pedestrian perspective. Compliance with the existing height limit is more appropriate within the surrounding context, particularly as the building occupies a prominent location. The only reason for exceeding the height limit is that the land acquired for the purpose is too limited to accommodate the wide range of services that are to be provided.

The height of the proposed building (22m) is twice that of the height limit in this location i.e. 11m. The central mass along the western edge of the site along Pittwater Road dominates the surrounding public space. The taller building encroaches and narrows the visual space around the intersection.

Local interchange

A particular concern is that the limited land acquired for the facility means that there is no available land set aside for the purpose of a shuttle / local bus service / interchange on the eastern side of this major intersection. Such a facility would reduce dependence on cars, provide safe public transport at night, and provide a connecting local service for those who do not have the option of using the 'park and ride' facility. The amount of space required for this service is far less than required for 250 commuter car parking spaces.

The corner site has 1) a very high pedestrian activity and 2) is located adjacent to a major transport node and interchange for local and regional public transport services.

For a Health Centre this major project may benefit from giving a higher priority to the pedestrian environment that surrounds the building.

Setback

A wide set-back is required from the kerb to allow for seating at the bus stop, queuing for buses and a clear pedestrian passage along the footpath. The setback required is at least equivalent to the bus stop area opposite on the western side of Pittwater Road, adjacent to Warringah Mall.

Existing space for seating and pedestrian passage is inadequate. Currently there is insufficient seating available for the passengers that use the bus stops and no clear passage for pedestrians if there are queues at the bus stops.

Adherence to the 6.5m setback from Pittwater Road would allow more space for pedestrian passage and seating, which could be located further back from the road.

Pedestrian access

In William Street, vehicle access to the drop off area and the multi-storey car park will conflict with pedestrian use of the foot path on the northern side of William Street.

The volume of cars entering and leaving the building is likely to create a hazard for pedestrians. Pedestrian crossings may be required to provide safe pedestrian passage across the driveways. At the same time, a continual stream of pedestrians would slow down vehicle movement and cause a queue of traffic waiting to traverse the crossing(s).

Is a grade separation possible in this location to separate cars and pedestrians?

The lane east of the building is an enclosed space and not conducive to pedestrian use. Impacts from vehicles in surrounding streets and driveways would include air pollution, noise, safety, poor urban amenity.

Urban amenity

The site is a very good location for a Health Centre in terms of convenience to public transport. However, it is disappointing that the Health Centre building has been confined to a narrow block alongside Pittwater Road. Much of the acquired space at the rear, north east of the health centre, is allocated to the multi-storey car park.

The surrounding environment is unfortunately dominated by car usage, with roads, driveways and a multi-storey car park.

Minimal landscaped open space has been provided to soften the urban landscape and provide landscaped outdoor space (away from Pittwater Road) to complement the use of the building.

William Street

William Street is currently used as a turning circle, at its western end, and a drop off and pick up area, on the northern kerb, in close proximity to the bus stop and Warringah Mall. It is important that continued use of William Street for convenient access for drop off purposes is accommodated.

The Transport and Accessibility Assessment states: *“A drop off area for clients and ambulances from William Street will be provided under the building structure.”*
“Consideration could be given to implement a drop off area along the southern kerbline in William Street to accommodate a kiss and ride facility for BRT. This could be implemented with “No Parking” restriction during peak hours (7am-9am and 4pm-6.30pm Monday to Friday). Further consultation would be required with Council, should this be a requirement for TfNSW.”

As a regular user of the bus services and facilities at Warringah Mall, I have no doubt that a drop off area should continue to be provided at the western end of William Street. Proximity to the bus services is sufficient reason in itself to provide a drop off area. Parking for drop-off and pick-up should be provided at all times, not merely during peak hours, as cars are often parked for some distance on both sides of William Street.

Clients to the health centre will have a drop off and pick up area, as well as a turning circle, under the building structure. However, a kerb-side drop off area is also required for other purposes e.g. easy access to the bus stop. If the drop-off area is on the southern kerbside, pedestrians would have to wait at the traffic lights in William Street to get to the bus stop. This is not particularly safe if people are in a hurry to catch a bus.

If the drop off point is provided on the northern kerbsie then the entry / exit driveways that cross the footpath on the northern kerb will conflict with pedestrian safety. Safe passage is required for pedestrians, preferably avoiding the need to cross vehicular exit and entry driveways.

Park and ride

A Park and Ride facility in Warringah Mall would be more convenient for residents living to the west of Pittwater Road and avoid the unnecessary influx of vehicles through industrial and residential areas to the east.

Complementary uses

I am pleased that a cafe for clients and staff will be provided at ground level.

Complementary uses and services, such as a cafe, adjacent to the bus stop is a very good idea.