



Planning & Environment

MODIFICATION REQUEST:

***GPT West Keira Retail/Commercial/Residential
Redevelopment - Market Street, Wollongong***

MP 06_0209 – Modification 7

***Amendment to external façade on Market Street in the
West Keira building***



Secretary's
Environmental Assessment Report
Section 75W of the
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

May 2014

Cover Photograph: Artist illustration of the GPT West Keira redevelopment (Source: Architectural Design report to modification 4 by Rice Daubney, 2012).

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*NSW Government
Department of Planning & Environment*

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1. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to assess a modification application to the approved Project Application for the GPT West Keira retail, commercial and residential redevelopment pursuant to Section 75W of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). The application seeks approval for modification to an external façade of the development.

1.1 Site Description

The subject site comprises of two large landholdings in the Wollongong CBD known as the West Keira and Wollongong Central sites (refer to **Figure 1** below).



Figure 1: Project Location

West Keira

The West Keira Development occupies an area of 11,055m² and comprised a mixture of commercial and retail uses. The site was predominantly surrounded by commercial and retail development. However the western boundary immediately adjoins a residential development on the corner of Crown Lane and Regent Street as shown in **Figure 2** below.

Wollongong Central

The Wollongong Central site covers an area of 12,740m² and has frontages to Crown Street, Keira Street, Church Street and Market Street. Existing developments on the site included a shopping mall, a commercial office complex and an above ground car park with capacity for 610 car spaces.

Surrounding land uses are predominantly retail and commercial in nature. A number of heritage listed buildings lie within close proximity to the site including Illawarra Hotel, the former Mutual Assurance Building, the Regent Theatre and the shops along Crown Street.

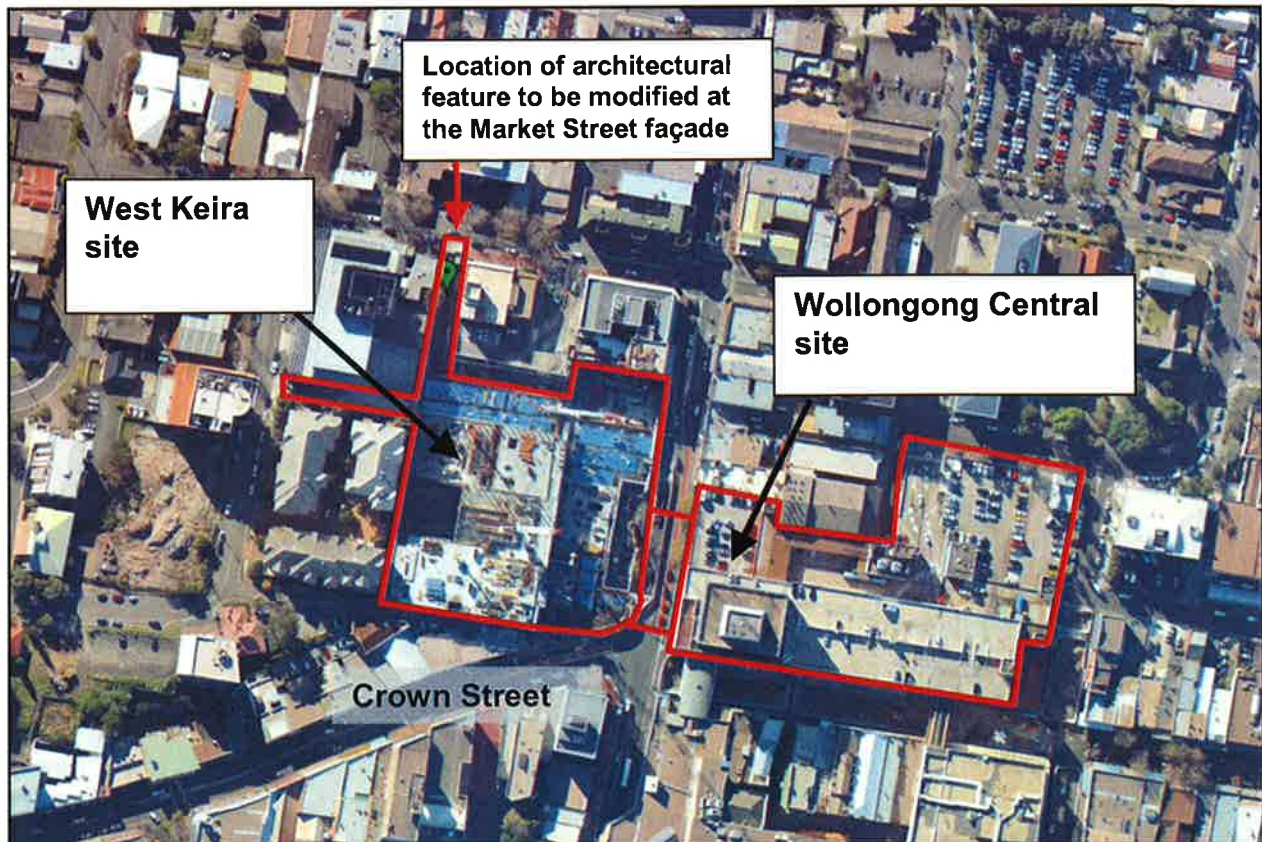


Figure 2: Site Location

1.2 Previous Approvals

On 28 April 2008, the then Minister for Planning approved a Concept Plan (MP 06_0335) and Project Application (MP 06_0209) for the redevelopment of the Wollongong Central shopping centre.

The Concept Plan (MP 06_0335) approved the redevelopment of the Wollongong Central shopping centre and the construction of a 4 storey shopping centre on the West Keira site, with 2 basement levels, an 18 storey residential tower and a 10 storey commercial tower above the West Keira retail podium.

The Project Approval (MP 06_0209) granted approval for the redevelopment and expansion of the Wollongong Central and construction of the West Keira shopping centre. The project approval has been modified on six previous occasions. The project approval as amended allows for the following development:

- demolition of all existing structures on the West Keira site;
- construction of a new six-level retail centre comprising a single level basement car park, three levels of retail (including one at lower ground level), and two levels of above-ground parking on the West Keira site;
- internal alterations and remix of existing retail activities within Wollongong Central Shopping Centre;
- construction of a new eight-screen cinema complex at the corner of Market Street and Church Street;
- extension of the retail façade out to the Crown Street Mall alignment (1.5 metres);
- a total of 75,206m² of GFA;
- the use of the land for retail, commercial residential, cinema (place of public entertainment), food premises (such as restaurants and cafes) and car parking;
- the erection of internal walls and the erection of signage;

- associated road works, public domain, landscape works and service augmentation / connection;
- support structures on the West Keira site for the erection of two future towers (subject to separate approval);
- construction of a pedestrian tunnel and a pedestrian bridge across Keira Street and the creation of associated stratum lots to link Wollongong Central with the West Keira site; and
- closure to the southern end of Richardson Street.

2. PROPOSED MODIFICATION

The proposal seeks to amend the external façade design of the customer vehicle car park entrance to the West Keira Shopping Centre site at 71 Market Street. The amendments have occurred due to the proponent undertaking further detailed design development to ensure consistency is maintained to the built form and material finishes throughout the West Keira and Wollongong central retail development.

Further details of the proposed modification are provided in **Appendix A**.

3. STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1 Continuing Operation of Part 3A to Modify Approvals

In accordance with Clause 3 of Schedule 6A to the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (the Act) Section 75W of the Act as in force immediately before its repeal on 1 October 2011, and as modified by Schedule 6A, continues to apply to transitional Part 3A projects.

Consequently, this report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part 3A and associated regulations, and the Department of Planning & Environment (the department) may approve or disapprove to the carrying out of the project under Section 75W of the Act.

3.2 Modification of the Minister's Approval

The modification application has been lodged with the Department pursuant to Section 75W of the Act. Section 75W provides for the modification of a Minister's approval including 'revoking or varying a condition of the approval or imposing an additional condition of the approval'.

The Minister's approval for a modification is not required if the project as modified will be consistent with the existing approval. In this instance, the proposal seeks to modify aspects of the project approval, which require further assessment and therefore approval is required.

3.3 Environmental Assessment Requirements

Section 75W(3) of the EP&A Act provides that the Department may notify the proponent of environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed modification that the proponent must comply with before the matter will be considered by the Minister.

No additional environmental assessment requirements were issued with respect to the proposed modification, as sufficient information has been provided to the agency in order to consider the application.

3.4 Delegated Authority

On 14 September 2011, the then Minister for Planning delegated his functions to senior staff within the Department to determine Section 75W modification requests where:

- the relevant local council has not made an objection;
- a political donation disclosure statement has not been made; and
- there are less than 10 public submissions in the nature of objections to the proposal.

Wollongong City Council have not objected to the proposed modification, no public submissions were received, and a political donation disclosure statement has not been made now or at the time of the original application. Accordingly, the application may to be determined by the Director of Industry, Key Sites & Social Projects under delegation.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS

In accordance with Section 75X of the EP&A Act and Clause 8G of the EP&A Regulation, the department is required to make the modification request publicly available. The modification request was made available on the department's website. Due to the minor nature of the proposal, the modification request was not exhibited by any other means.

The request for modification was referred to Wollongong City Council for comment who raised no objections to the proposed façade changes.

5. ASSESSMENT

The proposal seeks to modify the height and design of the architectural feature enveloping the vehicular entrance at the Market Street façade as outlined in **Figure 3**.

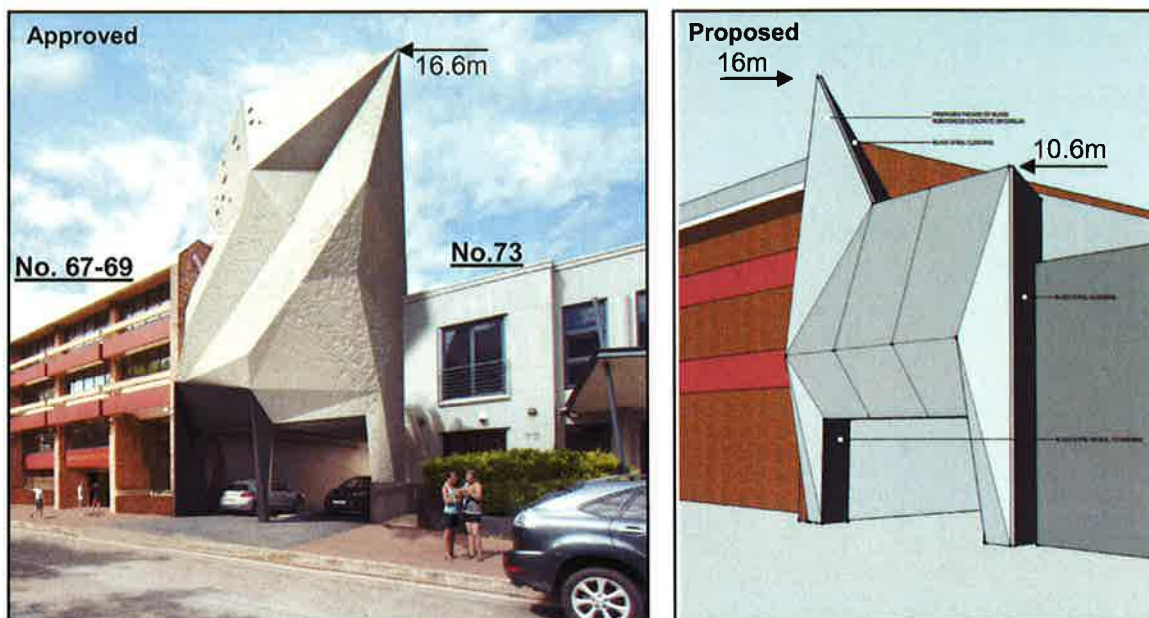


Figure 3: Perspective North-West view of approved and proposed Market Street façade

The department has considered the height and design of this element in its assessment.

Height

The approved height of the Market Street façade is 16.6 metres. In its previous assessment, the department noted that the structure would exceed the height of the adjoining buildings at Nos. 67-69 and 73 Market Street however was significantly below the LEP height control of 32 metres.

The proposal seeks to reduce the height of the Market Street façade to approximately 10.6 metres, with a single projecting element (16 metres) adjoining the higher building to the east (No.67-69).

The department supports the overall change in height as it will:

- be more consistent in scale to the neighbouring buildings on Market Street, specifically No. 73; and
- remains below the LEP height control (32 metres).

Design

The approved façade structure was designed to reference the West Keira Shopping Centre frontages at Keira and Crown Streets (refer to **Figure 4**). The department has previously recognised this as a positive impact that will assist with customer recognition and connection to the West Keira shopping centre, that is physically separate to the Market Street entrance.

The proposed façade design is more simple in form than that was approved. The proponent notes the material palette remains similar to the other facades and is offset by the articulated steel entrance at street level. The original intent of the structure remains to act as a screen and conceal the upper level storage area, above the vehicle ramp.

The department supports the proposed design as it:

- remains consistent with the existing approval in terms of its, function, modern design and streetscape appearance from Market Street;
- maintains a visually appealing structure to both pedestrians and motorists on Market Street, assisting with pedestrian safety along Market Street; and
- provides a simpler form which is more compatible with neighbouring buildings, while still retaining the design reference to the Market Street façade.

6. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

The department has assessed the merits of the proposal and is satisfied that the proposed modification will simplify the design and built form of the Market Street façade. The reduced height and simplified built form will provide an improved relationship with neighbouring properties. Wollongong City Council raised no objection to the proposed façade changes, and no public submissions were received.

The department considers that the modification will result in the same or fewer environmental impacts as the approved development.

It is therefore recommended, that the Acting Director of Industry, Key Sites and Social Projects as delegate for the Minister for Planning:

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

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Endorsed by:



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Approved by:


16/5/14

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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=6402

APPENDIX B SUBMISSIONS

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APPENDIX C RECOMMENDED INSTRUMENT OF APPROVAL
