

James Richter
Project Construction Manager
ADCO Constructions Pty Ltd
Level 2, 7 – 9 West Street
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060

2 August, 2013

Dear James,

**Re: Royal Rehabilitation Centre, Sydney –
Issue with retention of Tree 43.**



**TREE MANAGEMENT
CONSULTING ARBORICULTURISTS
HORTICULTURISTS
LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS**

As discussed with you recently in May this year, there is some confusion as to whether a large *Eucalyptus saligna* [Sydney Blue Gum] ("the tree") located near the southeast corner of the grounds of the Royal Rehabilitation Centre ("the site") is to be retained or removed. The tree is identified as Tree 43 in a report prepared by Urban Forestry Australia in October 2007 ("the 2007 report").

I prepared the 2007 report for Peloton Development Management. The report was a health and condition audit of the existing trees and was intended only as a preliminary guide to assist planning for future site development. In the 2007 report the identified trees were accorded a 'Condition Rating' of between 0 – 5, with 0 representing a dead tree, and 5 representing a specimen with exceptional health and condition. The report did not specifically recommend individual trees to be removed or retained as, at the time of writing, there were no plans, drawings or schemes provided to me for review and comment.

The 2007 report did identify the tree as a significant specimen due to its size, visual amenity and contribution to the landscape character of the site, although it was accorded a relatively low condition rating of 2.

In early December 2007 I received some preliminary plans via email for site development, prepared by Bates Smart. However, I was not commissioned to review those plans and assess the potential impacts of site development on trees that might have been proposed for retention.

I did note however, that the tree was not retained on a Bates Smart plan (Site Plan December 2007) and the parking spaces and buildings would require its removal in any event. The civil plans by Meinhardt, emailed to me today 2, August 2013, which are stamped Section 75W modification documents, also shows the same building, parking spaces and new Road 3 (copies attached).

I visited the site on 29 July, 2013 to inspect the tree in light of the issues arising with its retention or removal. Some recent civil works, such as road grading and consolidation, kerbing and guttering have already been undertaken well inside the tree's estimated 12m *Tree Protection Zone* ("TPZ") radius.

A large scaffold branch of approximately 200 – 300mm diameter has been ripped from the trunk on the tree's north side.

Other impacts within the tree's TPZ, such as root loss, soil disturbance and some stockpiling, are substantial. The cumulative impact of these disturbances is already manifesting itself in the tree canopy. The tree is showing typical signs of decline, that is the upper crown is dull and there is obvious dieback of the small branch tips. I expect this decline to continue.

Whilst the tree has been afforded some protection by fencing, the area within the fenced section is entirely too small and inadequate for protecting the roots of a tree of this size and age. It is not a species that will respond well to the cumulative impacts of the site development. As it declines, the likelihood of major limb drop will increase.

Conclusions

The tree was clearly not intended for retention in the original development plans. Otherwise, the structures would have been redesigned to accommodate it.

The tree has recently undergone substantial root loss, mechanical damage and is beginning to decline. Even if the tree begins to show some signs of recovery, which is doubtful, it will not be a safe amenity tree for retention in these high-use surroundings.

Recommendations

I cannot support the retention of the tree as adverse conditions have seriously affected its long-term useful life expectancy. There is nothing to be gained from attempting a major re-design of the proposal to give the tree space as the damage cannot be reversed and remediation of the tree's growing conditions will not repair that damage.

Subsequently, I recommend the tree is removed so that the development of the site can continue.

Yours faithfully,

Catriona Mackenzie




Consulting arboriculturist, horticulturist and landscape designer.

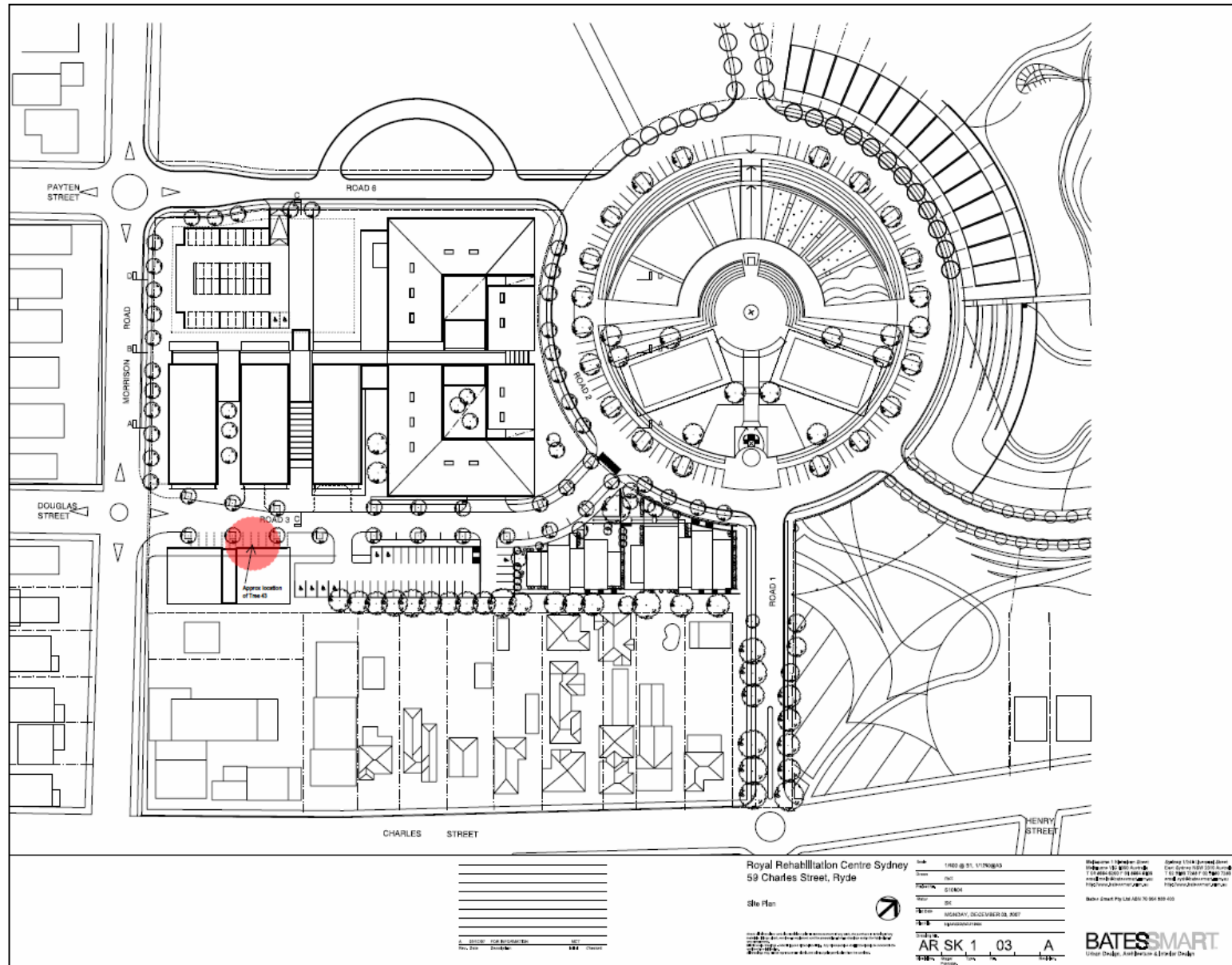
Certificate of Horticulture *Honours*

Diploma of Horticulture (Arboriculture) *Distinction*

Associate Diploma of Applied Science (Landscape) *Distinction*

Member of the International Society of Arboriculture

Founding Member of the Institute of Australian Consulting Arboriculturists



Note:
TREE IS NOT SHOWN TO BE
RETAINED ON PLAN
Red circle and arrow identifies
approximate location of tree.

Copy of Site Plan
AR SK 1 03 A dated 03 December 2007
by Bates Smart.
Marked up by C. Mackenzie. This copy not to scale

Copy of Site Plan
IE 03 D,
s75W modification
approved 17
November 2010
Marked up by C.
Mackenzie. This copy not to
scale