

RNSH

Modification to Project Approval
– Building 19 (Former Mortuary)

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MP08_00172

Section 75W Modification

Prepared for Infrashore | February 2010



InfraShore

urbis

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1 INTRODUCTION

This planning report accompanies a request made under Section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 with respect to a proposed modification to Major Project Approval MP08_0172 'Royal North Shore Hospital Project Approval' and related conditions attached to Concept Plan Approval MP06_0051.

The proposed modifications relate specifically to the demolition of Building 19, (the former Mortuary), to be replaced with landscaping and at-grade car parking.

The site plan below indicates the location of Building 19 on the eastern portion of the campus close to Herbert Street.

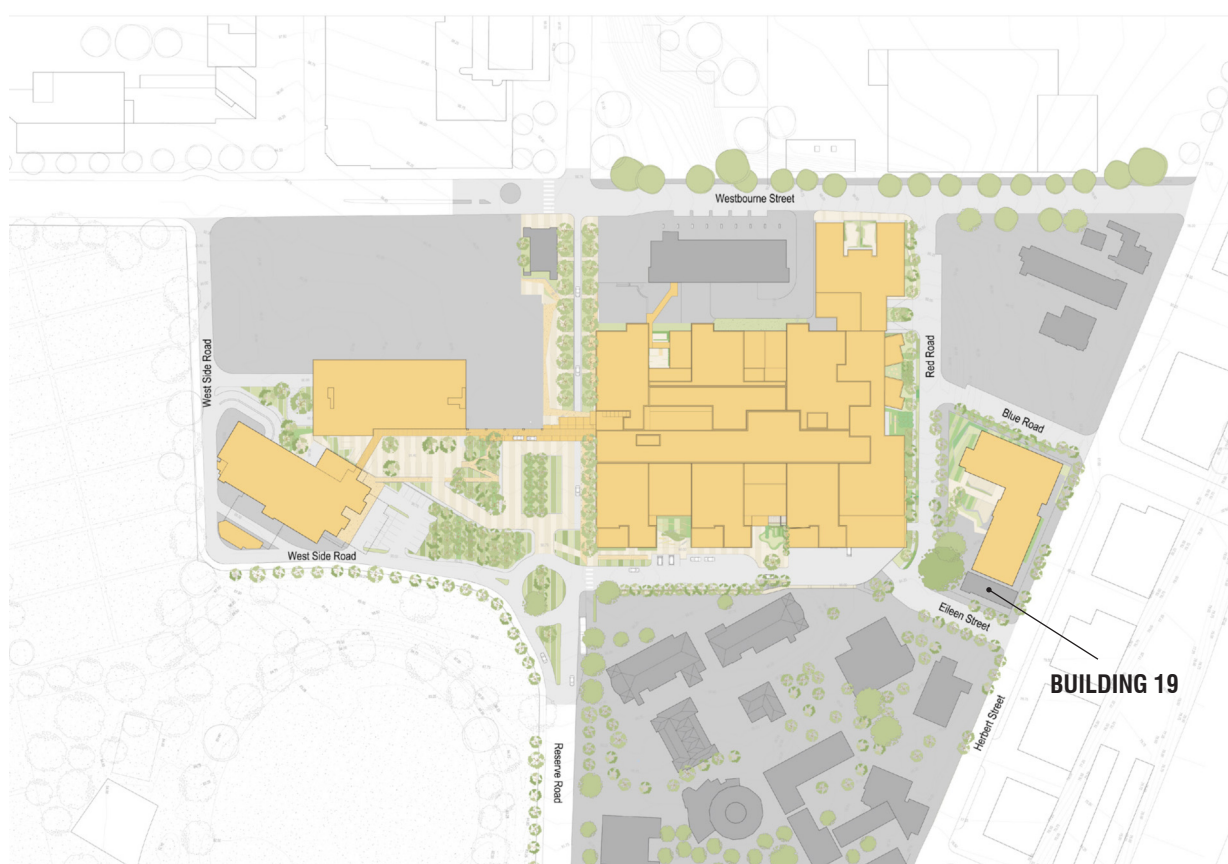


Figure 1: Site location plan

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Royal North Shore Hospital Concept Plan (MP06_0051) was approved on 13 April 2007. Building 19 (Mortuary) was included in a condition (C2) listing items considered at the time to be of moderate heritage significance or above, and as such the demolition of this building was excluded from the Concept Plan stage of the approval.

Condition 2.2 makes allowances for circumstances where such buildings are not to be retained, and requires that consideration be given to the adaptive re-use and integration of such buildings into the overall redevelopment of the site.

Condition C2 of the Concept Approval currently states:

"C2 Significant Heritage Buildings

C2.1 The demolition of the following items identified within the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) as having moderate or higher heritage significance within Precincts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 shall not form part of this stage of the approval:

- a) Building 3 (Chapel)*
- b) Building 7 (Diabetic Unit)*
- c) Building 9 (Lanceley Cottage)*
- d) Building 10 (Block 3)**
- e) Building 19 (Mortuary)***
- f) Building 29 (Pavilion Wing)*
- g) Building 30 (Pavilion Wing)*
- h) Building 31 (RMO Quarters)*
- i) Building 32 (Ansto-Body Protein)*
- j) Building 33 (Orthotics)*
- k) Chimney Stack, Building 21**

[emphasis added]

** indicates those not currently proposed to be retained under RNSH concept plan*

C2.2 Every effort should be made to retain the subject items as long as possible and demonstrate why they cannot be retained and integrated into the subsequent redevelopment proposal. Further details shall be submitted to the Director, together with design documentation, in order to demonstrate the need to demolish these items. Should approval be granted to demolish these items, archival recording must take place in accordance with NSW Heritage Office Guidelines."

Project Application MP08_0172 'Acute Hospital and Community Health Facility' was approved on 17 June 2009. This application included the partial demolition of Building 19 but the retention of the part comprising the former Mortuary which was previously identified as having moderate heritage significance. Further, the Project Approval includes the following related Statements of Commitment:

"The use of the former Mortuary Building ... will be recognised in the site-wide Heritage Interpretation Plan.

A Conservation Works Schedule, and Ongoing Maintenance Schedule, shall be prepared for the former Mortuary to accompany any future application to adaptively re-use the building.

A preliminary Site Interpretation Strategy shall be prepared with respect to buildings 10 & 19, to inform the overall campus-wide strategy."

It should be noted that at the time of the preparation of the Project Application (MP08 _ 0172) that the applicant had not fully considered the feasibility of the adaptive re-use and integration of the building into the campus redevelopment and therefore the Project Application sought simply to retain the building.

However, subsequent to the approval of MP08_0172 and further detailed heritage assessment and investigations as outlined in the aforementioned condition, it has become apparent that the building may not be satisfactorily re-used, particularly in a manner that would allow for its integration into the campus redevelopment. As discussed further, the building is not considered to be of a level of heritage significance that would warrant its retention.

The subject request made under s.75W of the Act is therefore to remove the requirement to retain the building and to use this opportunity to make further improvements to the campus in terms of landscaping and car parking.

2 PROPOSAL

To modify MP06_0051 Concept Plan Approval and MP08_0172 Project Approval to facilitate:

- the demolition of Building 19, (the former mortuary building);
- landscaping;
- public seating;
- construction of at-grade car park for 8 vehicles in approximate footprint of Building 19; and,
- associated kerb, guttering, stormwater drainage works and street lighting.

Refer to **Appendix A** for a copy of the revised demolition plan and reduced copies of plans showing the proposed works.

To facilitate these amendments to the approved scheme, modifications will be required to both the Concept Approval (MP06_0051) and to the Project Approval (MP08_0172). These proposed modifications are as follows:

MP06 0051 Concept Plan Approval

(Amend C2.1)

C2 Significant Heritage Buildings

C2.1 The demolition of the following items identified within the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) as having moderate or higher heritage significance within Precincts 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 shall not form part of this stage of the approval:

- a) Building 3 (Chapel)
- b) Building 7 (Diabetic Unit)
- c) Building 9 (Lanceley Cottage)
- d) Building 10 (Block 3)*
- ~~e) Building 19 (Mortuary)*~~
- f) Building 29 (Pavilion Wing)
- g) Building 30 (Pavilion Wing)
- h) Building 31 (RMO Quarters)
- i) Building 32 (Ansto-Body Protein)
- j) Building 33 (Orthotics)
- k) Chimney Stack, Building 21*

MP08 0172 Project Approval

(Amend A1)

MP08_0172 Schedule 2 Part A – Administrative Conditions

A1 – Development Description

Project Approval is granted for the following works:

- Staged demolition of Buildings 1,2,10 and 19 (~~part~~), within the development site;
- New Acute Hospital building;
- ...

(Amend A2)

A2 Development in Accordance with Plans and Documentation

The development shall be in accordance with the following plans, documentation and recommendations made therein:

Royal North Shore Hospital and Community Health Facility Environmental Assessment...2009;

and as amended by:

...(including addendum dated 20 May 2009) and as amended by modification of Project Approval pursuant to s.75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, issued on (insert date), to facilitate the demolition of Building 19 and permit other works related to landscaping and car parking.

(Insert B5)

B5 Archival Recording

Prior to the demolition of Building 19 an Archival Photographic Recording, in accordance with NSW Heritage Office guidelines, shall be prepared. Copies of the document shall be issued to the NSW Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning and NSW Health.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Under Section 75W of the Act, the Minister may provide environmental assessment requirements to be addressed by the proponent prior to any application under this Part being determined.

It is proposed that for the purposes of this assessment, the Director General's Requirements issued for the original Project Application that are relevant to the current proposal be reconsidered.

In this respect, the following relevant environmental assessment criteria have been adopted:

- Relationship with Concept Plan and Project Approval;
- Heritage;
- Demolition
- Car Parking Provision and Design;
- Streetscape and Landscaping Design.

3.2 ASSESSMENT

3.2.1 Concept Plan and Project Approval

Condition C2 of the Concept Plan Approval excludes the demolition of the former Mortuary component Building from the approval pending the submission of additional information to demonstrate why it cannot be retained or integrated into the redevelopment proposal.

It is considered that this application provides the necessary information to justify the demolition of this building. As discussed below with respect to the heritage assessment, the building is considered to be unsuitable for adaptive reuse due to its limited accessibility, proximity to traffic on Eileen Street, as well as asbestos-related health and safety issues.

The Preferred Project Application included the following Statement of Commitments relevant to Building 19:

"The use of the former Mortuary Building and Building 10 will be recognised in the site-wide Heritage Interpretation Plan.

A Conservation Works Schedule, and On-going Maintenance Schedule, shall be prepared for the former Mortuary to accompany any future application to adaptively re-use the building.

A preliminary Site Interpretation Strategy shall be prepared with respect to buildings 10 & 19, to inform the overall campus-wide strategy."

Options for the adaptive reuse of Building 19 have been considered, however the building has been assessed to be unsuitable for this purpose due to accessibility, health and safety issues. As such, the Commitment regarding future adaptive re-use applications for the building is not applicable. The proposed modifications are consistent with the remaining Commitments, as they can be achieved in spite of the building's demolition.

3.2.2 Heritage

A Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared in support of this application by Graham Brooks and Associates dated July 2009 (**Appendix B**).

“Options for the retention, and adaptive reuse of the former Mortuary building in conjunction with the new Acute Hospital and Community Health Facility, have been explored. The building is not considered suitable for this purpose as the on-grade levels do not permit easy access for mobility restricted patients, or members of the public, and there are concerns for pedestrian safety associated with the use of this building, located in close proximity to Eileen Street which is being reopened to vehicular traffic from Herbert Street.

It is now considered necessary to demolish this building as it has been found to contain large amounts of asbestos. The presence of this building, containing hazardous material, in such close proximity to the new hospital and health facility is of concern to NSW Health”.

This report concludes:

- *Options for the retention, and adaptive reuse of the former Mortuary building, in conjunction with the new Acute Hospital and Community Health Facility, have been explored. The building is not considered suitable for this purpose due to safety issues associated with its location and built fabric.*
- *The former Mortuary component of Building 19 has been assessed in earlier reports as being of Moderate heritage significance. It has been vacant since these reports were prepared and has suffered from a lack of maintenance which has impacted on its integrity and diminished its significance.*
- *The building is in a poor state of repair and has been subject to extensive internal alteration since its initial construction.*
- *The adverse heritage impact of the proposed demolition of the former Mortuary component of Building 19 will be mitigated by the preparation of a Preliminary Interpretation Strategy (already completed) and an Archival Photographic Recording of the building.*
- *In the context of serving the public interest with the provision of improved Hospital facilities the demolition of the former Mortuary component of Building 19 is considered to be acceptable from a heritage perspective.*

The HIS supports the proposed demolition of Building 19, subject to an archival photographic recording of the building and its context being carried out prior to demolition. Condition B5 is proposed in this respect and is consistent with Condition C2.2 of the Concept Plan Approval.

3.2.3 Demolition

The demolition of Building 19 will be carried out in accordance with SC 22 of the Project Approval:

“The demolition work shall comply with the provisions of Australian Standard AS2601: 2001 The Demolition of Structures. The work plans required by AS2601: 2001 shall be accompanied by a written statement from a suitably qualified person that the proposals contained in the work plan comply with the safety requirements of the Standard.”

The safe removal of asbestos material is addressed under AS2601:2001.

3.2.4 Streetscape and Landscaping

Further to heritage considerations, the removal of Building 19 raises other planning and design issues such as the visual impact of any vacant space or potential replacement development may have on the Herbert Street and, approved but yet to be constructed, Eileen Street streetscapes – Herbert Street being the principal pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare of the two.



Figure 2: Landscaping Plan

As shown in the extract of the proposed landscaping plan above, it is proposed to contribute to the overall functioning of the hospital development by the provision of further car parking. Due to the presence of passive open space in the vicinity of Building 19, in and around the “Heritage Precinct”, it was felt that adequate open space has been provided in this area and that the land may be more pro-actively used.

The proposed works will allow for the retention of a mature fig tree and the provision of further street trees, public seating and substantive setbacks. The proposed landscaped setback of approximately 5.5m to Herbert Street and the moderately elevated level of the car park will result in a satisfactory streetscape relationship. The proposed planting (25L pot size), once mature, will be above eye level when viewed from the street and will mitigate any potential adverse visual impacts of parking in this location.

3.2.5 Car Park Design

The proposal involves the construction of supplementary at-grade car parking in the location of the Building 19 footprint. This will provide 8 additional car parking spaces for staff, facilitating access to pool cars which are used to serve patients in the local community. The location of the parking will benefit not only the staff, in terms of time and safety, but also the clients who are visited by minimising the travel distance for staff to access their vehicles.

The proposed addition of eight car spaces to the hospital redevelopment is consistent with the approved Project Approval. The Traffic Report accompanying the Preferred Project Report for MP08_0172 identified an overall demand for some 2545 -2620 parking bays across the campus. The approved Project aims at producing around 2550 spaces which is at the bottom end of the range. The addition of eight spaces will leave the overall parking available on the site within the anticipated demand range.

As indicated in the accompanying plans, an extract of which is provided below, the car park will have separate entry and exits controlled by boom gates and will be accessed off Eileen Street. This will further minimise any potential visual and streetscape impacts on Herbert Street.

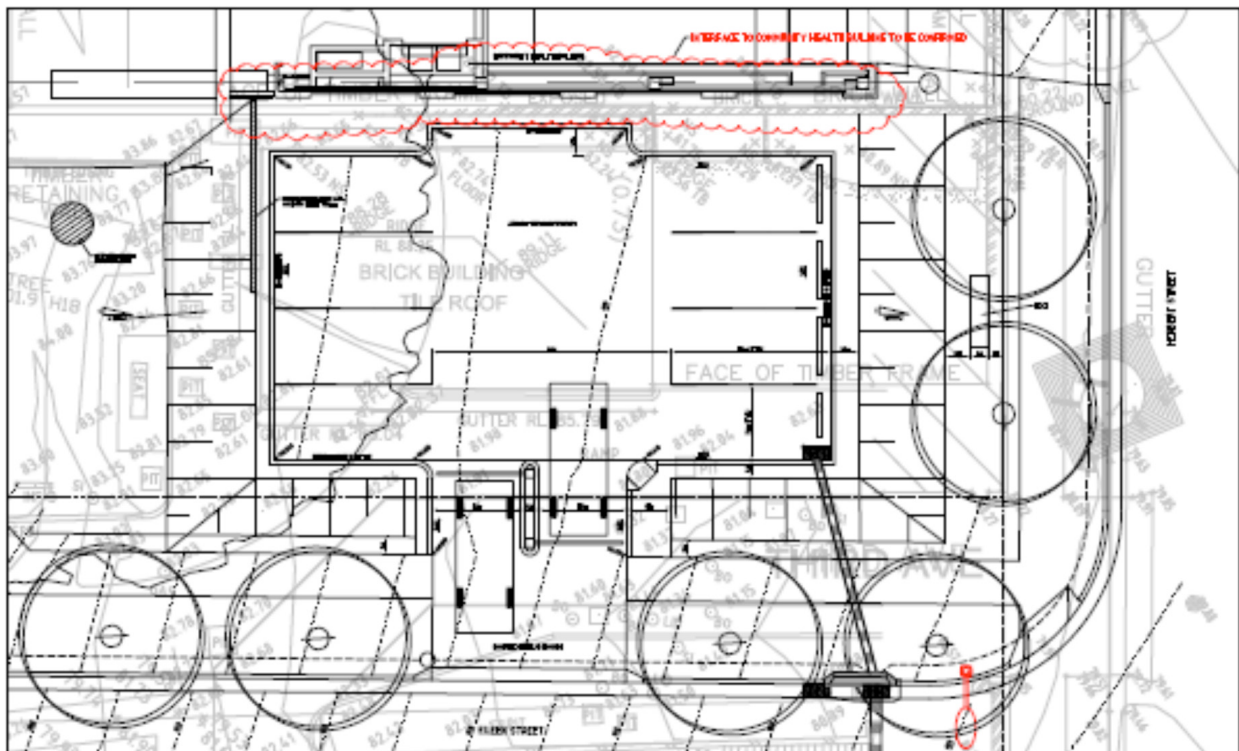


Figure 3: Car park and stormwater drainage design

The slope of the car park will guide any stormwater runoff to a proposed drain at the south east corner of the car park which will be connected to Council's stormwater system. The proposed car parking has been designed in accordance with AS2890 Parking Facilities Part 1: Off-Street Car Parking.

4 CONCLUSION

The proposed modifications arise from further detailed considerations as to how, if at all, the former mortuary building (Building 19) may be retained, adaptively re-used and integrated into the redevelopment of the hospital campus.

As outlined in the Graham Brooks Assessment, aside from the owners not being able to identify an appropriate use for the building which would benefit the campus redevelopment, the building is considered to have less than moderate heritage significance. It was previously assessed as “moderate” but has since become more dilapidated over time since the last assessment. Furthermore, the building has been identified as containing significant amounts of asbestos and may be subject to access constraints with respect to mobility and with regard to potential user and vehicle conflicts with the approval of Eileen Street – a new road to the immediate south of the building.

Except of course with respect to the removal of Building 19, the modified design continues to comply with the relevant provisions of the unamended Concept Approval and is generally consistent with the current Project Approval. No significant adverse environmental impacts are expected as a result of the modified design.

The proposal is considered to be consistent with the related objects of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, in so far as the retention of the building, particularly it being of less than moderate heritage significance, would not promote the co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land and that the proposed works will contribute to the hospital redevelopment.

It is therefore recommended that approval be granted to the proposed revisions.

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