

12 December 2012

Ms Pilar Aberasturi
Senior Planner
NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure
23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Pilar,

Proposed Modification (Mod 3) to MP 09_0051 Charles Perkins Centre (previously Centre for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease), Sydney University

1 Introduction

This letter forms the Environmental Assessment (EA) that accompanies a request to modify MP 09_0051 pursuant to Section 75W of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979 (the Act) on behalf of the proponent, the University of Sydney, and their nominated representative Brookfield Multiplex.

This proposed modification (Mod 3) seeks approval for the conversion of the existing construction access road to the Charles Perkins Centre (CPC) to a permanent road that will service the CPC. On the advice of the Project Heritage Consultant, various mitigation measures and improvements have also been incorporated within the proposal, they include:

- The inclusion of additional high canopy trees adjacent to the vehicular entry point to the CPC building
- The inclusion of low scale planting along the western side of the access road, and
- The provision of an asphalt coat finish to the existing concrete construction road

Further details of the proposal are included in Section 6 of this letter and illustrated on the proposed plans within **Appendix A** and within the photo montage within **Appendix E**.

The proposal has also been endorsed by the University of Sydney and the adjoining St Johns College.

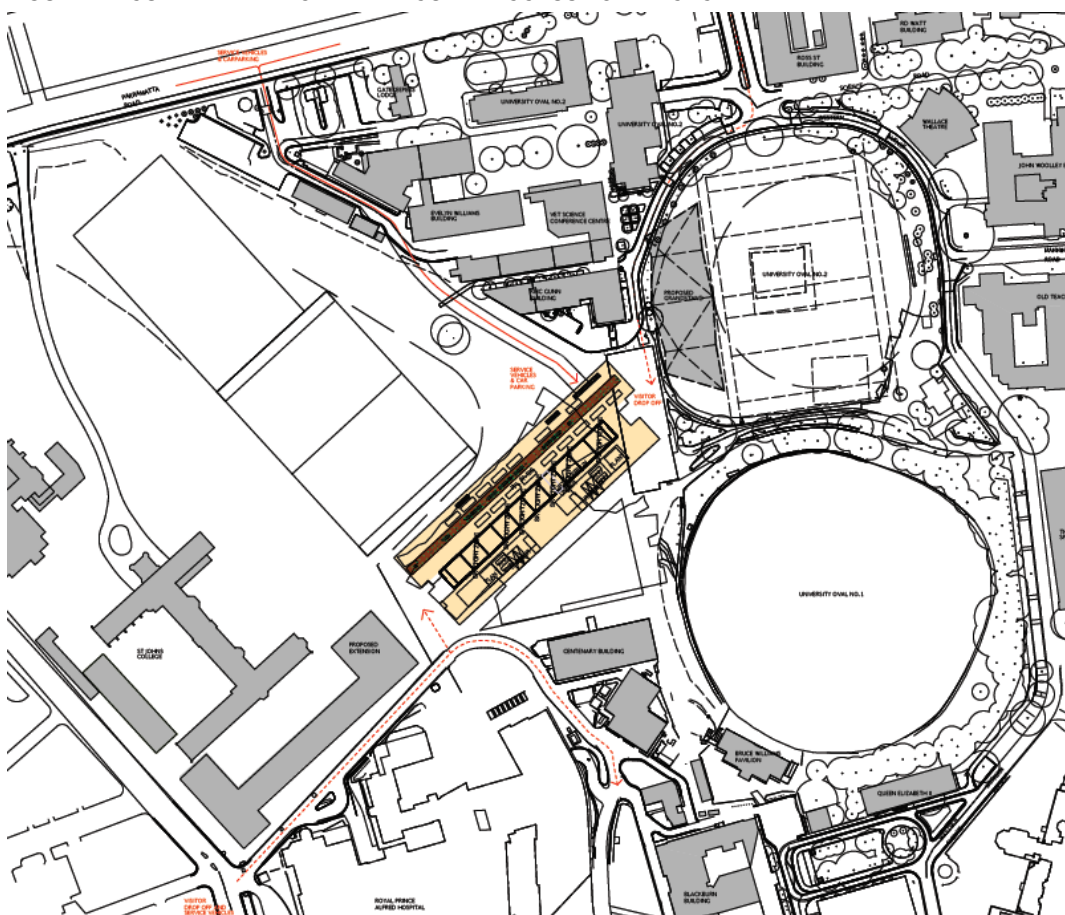
2 Background

MP 09_0051 was approved on the 29 June 2010 by the Minister for Planning for the construction and operation of the Centre for Obesity, Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease, now renamed as the Charles Perkins Centre (CPC). Since the approval, MP 09_0051 has been modified under Section 75W provisions on two occasions. These modifications broadly included:

- Mod 1 approved on 13 October 2011
 - Reduction in height.
 - Amendment to building footprint, floor area and internal layout.

- Reduction in car parking, modification to vehicular access points.
- Deletion of a pedestrian bridge link to the Centenary Institute.
- Mod 2 approved on 23 March 2012 involving changes to the building footprint, external design and shape of the building.
 - The modified building footprint altered the orientation of the building and improved views from the college to the north-east compared to that originally approved.
 - The modification essentially focussed on the design of the building. The building's linkages and connectivity to the University surrounds was intended to be explored following the University's review of the overall Campus.
 - The current modified approval provides vehicular access to the CPC from Parramatta Road via the existing Orphans School Creek Lane as illustrated in Figure 1 below. As part of the University's review of the Campus, the potential to improve access and linkages to the building was identified, which is subject to the proposed Mod 3.

FIGURE 1 – CURRENT APPROVED VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE CPC



The CPC is now under construction and accordingly all built form issues associated with the building-together with all matters relating to traffic generation, access points (and related external impacts) and also on-site parking matters, have been previously considered and approved by the Department. It is also worth noting that sections of the construction road alignment have also been previously approved by the Department as part of the permanent access way- being the entrance section off Parramatta Road to its junction with Orphans School Creek Lane approximately (30m within the site), and also a section approaching the building's basement.

Considering all of the above, this Section 75W modification application (i.e Mod 3) essentially deals with converting part of the approved construction road (the mid-section) to allow for permanent access purposes.

The proponent and their project team representatives met with City of Sydney officers on 29 November 2012 to discuss proposed Mod 3. The outcomes of the meeting confirmed that the Planning and Heritage Officers were agreeable to the scheme and were satisfied with the intended inputs that now accompany this application.

3 The Site and Context of the Proposal

The CPC is located in the north-west portion of the Sydney University Campus and is identified to be on Lot 1 DP 1124852 and Lot 1001 1159799. In particular, the CPC is located east of heritage listed St Johns College and Sancta Sophia residential college.

In conjunction with FJMT Architects and Sydney University, an analysis of the CPC site and its linkages and connectivity to adjacent precincts was undertaken to inform appropriate routes and the detailed design of links carrying vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Importantly, route selection and design was required to:

- a. comply with current relevant standards
- b. be safe, obvious and able to be surveilled
- c. celebrate the approach and sense of arrival at a significant building
- d. contribute to the broader campus network

Pedestrian links to and from the CPC are provided at various points. An existing condition of MP09_0051 (Condition B15) requires the submission and approval of a detailed landscape plan to formalise such links that were considered as part of the original approval- and this will be provided in due course in satisfaction of that condition.

However, following the analysis, one such link that is intended to accommodate vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists that requires modification to the original approval is the road access via Orphans School Creek Lane.

4 The Need for the Proposed Modification

In relation to (a) above, a specific review was conducted by TRAFFIX (Traffic and Transport Consultants) in relation to the adequacy of the existing approved road alignment given the anticipated traffic volumes of the approved development and the existing role and function of Orphans School Creek Lane. Their review is included at **Appendix B**, however identified the approved route is unsuitable in accommodating future increases in traffic, pedestrian and cyclist volumes due to:

- Orphans School Creek Lane has a carriageway of generally 5.0m wide which does not meet the minimum 5.5m width carriageway for two way traffic under the AS2890.1 – 2002.

As such, the width would not satisfactorily accommodate increased traffic volumes and uninterrupted two way traffic flow.

- The width of the carriageway will not safely support the use of this route by cyclists and pedestrians.
- The Lane currently accommodates for loading dock facilities directly off the carriageway. The increase in traffic on a narrow carriageway will significantly impact on the safe and efficient servicing activities of adjacent buildings.
- The Lane currently includes an area that has an unsatisfactory sight distance, adjacent to the corner of the Evelyn Williams Building. This will be exacerbated by the increased traffic levels, pedestrian and cyclist use.

The following photos show parts of the existing approved road link and assist in illustrating the differences in this route to service the proposal.

FIGURE 2 – PHOTOGRAPHS OF ORPHANS SCHOOL CREEK LANE



PICTURE 1 – LOOKING NORTH-WEST ALONG ORPHANS SCHOOL CREEK LANE SHOWING THE NARROW CARRIAGE WAY AND EXISTING LOADING DOCKS



PICTURE 2 – LOOKING SOUTH-EAST ALONG ORPHANS SCHOOL CREEK ROAD NOTING THE NARROW PATHS



PICTURE 3 – LOOKING SOUTH-EAST ALONG ORPHANS SCHOOL CREEK LANE



PICTURE 4 – LOOKING SOUTH-EAST ALONG ORPHANS SCHOOL CREEK LANE AND SHOWING THE BLIND CORNER

5 Broader Precinct Analysis supporting the Modification

Further to the broader precinct analysis instigated by the University, some key analysis diagrams that informed the thinking on this issue are provided in **Appendix C**. In summary, the analysis identifies that:

- The CPC building occupies a strategic position within University grounds, with various linkages and connections from surrounding precincts and localities terminating at the CPC precinct.
- The CPC is surrounded by several distinct precincts such as:
 - Colleges Precinct to the north-west which accommodates the St Johns College and its associated heritage curtilage, including the oval and the Sancta Sophia College. This precinct includes a distinct band of landscaping that borders the Veterinary Precinct that contributes to the views from St Johns College (but is not part of the heritage significance of the St Johns building or grounds).
 - Veterinary Precinct to the north-east that includes smaller and near derelict buildings that are planned for future renewal under strategic University plans.
 - Ovals precinct to the east which includes distinct bands of perimeter landscaping.
 - Royal Prince Alfred Hospital to the south.
- Each of these precincts is distinct in role and urban form but provide vital pedestrian, cyclist, vehicular or visual connections to and with the CPC site and to broader areas.
- The defined heritage curtilage associated with St Johns excludes the defined band of established landscaping bordering the Veterinary Precinct.
- There is opportunity to augment the existing established landscape pattern on the edge of the Colleges Precinct.
- The various entrances to the CPC are located on the southern side of the building coinciding with the main plaza area, and hence specific detailing and programming will be important in this area.
- While pedestrians will enter the CPC from its southern side, vehicles will approach the building from its Parramatta Road frontage (from the north) and pedestrians arriving by bus (or on foot) from along the Parramatta Road corridor will primarily access the site via the Veterinary Precinct (under the current approval).
- The existing approved access route from Parramatta Road (via Orphans School Creek Lane) provides poor legibility and provides no real sense of arrival to this important building.
- Pedestrians accessing the site from north (including the Parramatta Road corridor) will be required to share the roadway through the Veterinary Precinct and walk amongst a number of closely grouped buildings that, by virtue of their design and function, do not provide activation or passive surveillance.

The analysis has assisted the University in identifying improvements and enhancements to strengthen these linkages and connections to the CPC as well as provide other broader Campus benefits. These enhancements include:

- Improvement to the road access arrangement to the CPC from Parramatta Road by adopting the construction road as the permanent route to the CPC. This improvement has safety benefits for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists; involves a more appropriate approach to celebrate the significance of the CPC building; and provides the opportunity for future redevelopment of the Veterinary Precinct unencumbered by the vehicular access road into a major facility. This improvement forms the basis of Mod 3.
- Future hard and soft landscape detail at other key junctions and approaches associated with the CPC. This detail will be included in the future landscape plan to be submitted to Council under Condition B15.

6 Proposed Modifications

The modifications included within this application incorporate the following and are identified on the plans within **Appendix A** and on Figure 3 below. A photo montage is also included at **Appendix E** when viewing the proposal from St Johns Collage.

- Retention of the existing construction access road for the purpose of providing future permanent access to the CPC building. The unconstructed section of the approved access alignment would not be constructed and would be extinguished.
- Minor civil works to the existing construction access including the provision of necessary drainage involving a natural swale to the eastern edge of the roadway or a pipe and pit arrangement.
- Provision of high canopy trees adjacent to the vehicular entry point to the CPC building and low scale planting along the western edge of the access road, it being noted the specific selection of plant and tree species will form part of the required landscape plan (that is required to be submitted to Council under Condition B15 of the project approval).
- Incorporation of a pedestrian path on the western side of the proposed accessway linking Parramatta Road, the CPC building and John Hopkins Drive; and
- Provision of a one-way eastbound access link from the access way (near the entrance to the CPC) to Regimental Drive allowing the re-circulation of vehicles to the broader Campus road network that may have inadvertently entered the wrong access point on the campus.

We note the above modifications have been supported by the University of Sydney and the adjoining St Johns College.

FIGURE 3 – PROPOSED VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE CPC



The proposal provides significant improvements to road and pedestrian safety associated with the CPC, broader Campus users, as well as the existing function and role of those facilities having service access to Orphans School Creek Lane. Further details of these matters are discussed in **Appendix B**.

It is also confirmed the proposed conversion of the existing construction road for permanent access (as well as the associated drainage works) will not involve the removal of any trees on site. Rather, it involves retaining several established trees that would otherwise have been required to be removed to make way for the extension from Orphans School Creek Lane to the building's car park.

In addition, and at the advice of the Project's Heritage Consultant, the proposed modification involves the provision of additional landscaping including high canopy trees adjacent to the vehicular entry point to the CPC and low scale planting along the western side of the access road.

7 Statutory Context

As part of the repeal of Part 3A of the EP&A Act, Schedule 6A of the EP&A Act was created to allow the application of the repealed Part 3A provisions to certain projects that were approved or undetermined under Part 3A. These projects are known as "Transitional Part 3A projects" and approved major projects may be modified under the previous Section 75W modification framework.

Major Project No. 09_0051 was approved on the 29 June 2010 by the Minister for Planning and is a transitional Part 3A project.

This submission seeks under the previous Part 3A provisions, notably Section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, to request the Minister modify approval for the project.

The following environmental assessment addresses the relevant matters raised in the Director General's Requirements (DGRs) dated 5 November 2009 for the project application.

8 Environmental Assessment

The following environmental assessment addresses the relevant matters raised in the DGRs for the project application.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The proposed modifications are minor in the context of the overall approval and do not impact on the approved development's consistency with the NSW government strategic directions.

The proposed urban design improvements and location of the vehicular access route will contribute towards achieving the strategic directions outlined in the Draft Masterplan 2020.

STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

The proposed modification does not result in any changes to the proposal's compliance with relevant environmental planning instruments. In particular:

- There is no change in consistency with provisions under South Sydney LEP 1998 and the Draft Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2011.
- The proposed modification (inclusive of the landscaped elements) will maintain and improve an appropriate curtilage and view corridor relationship between St Johns College and the broader University Precinct. A Heritage Assessment is included with this modification application and is discussed further below.

HERITAGE IMPACTS

The proposed Mod 3 has been reviewed in terms of heritage impacts by Urbis and the report is attached under **Appendix D**.

In particular, the assessment related to the potential impacts to the heritage significance of St Johns College and the University of Sydney, having regard to existing view corridors from the College. In summary, the assessment concludes that the conversion of the construction access road to a permanent access road is acceptable. The key findings of the reviews included recommendations are:

- The road does not impact on the view corridor between the College and the Gate House on Parramatta Road.
- It is recommended that several high canopy trees be planting in the area between the established band of mature trees to the north-east of the College grounds and between the building itself where there appears to be 'a gap'. This would provide an enhanced 'green buffer' of the view corridor when looking towards the University from St Johns College and would also have the benefits of enhancing the setting of the College.
- Include low scale planting on the western side of the road, which serves to soften the appearance of the road structure when viewed from the College, but also importantly retains the depth perception of open space when viewed from the College to the established band of trees flanking

the Veterinary Precinct. These principles are in line with the provisions of the St Johns College Conservation Management Plan (as amended in 2010).

- Incorporation of a darker surface to the road to be more appropriate to the setting of the College and the University, such as a dark finish to the concrete or asphalt layer over the existing concrete finish.

9 Required Amendments to Conditions of the Project Approval

To facilitate the proposed Mod 3, the Project Approval will not require amendment to any conditions or statements of commitments, except for the amendment to *Condition A2. Development in Accordance with Plans and Documents* to reflect the revised plans and reference to the additional specialist documentation associated with this Section 75W application.

AMENDMENT TO CONDITION A2 APPROVED PLANS AND DOCUMENTATION

The wording of Condition A2 will require reference to the modified plan; this Section 75W EA Report letter and the accompanying reports. As such it is proposed to:

- Replace the reference to LA 9400 Rev 6 Public Domain Plan dated 23.11.11 in the table with LA-9401-DA Rev 05 Landscape Plan Access Road S75W Planning Modification dated 4.12.12.
- Include reference of this letter by Urbis dated 10 December 2012 and the Heritage Assessment by Urbis dated 29 November 2012 in the table.

10 Conclusion

This proposed modification is acceptable and should be approved for the following reasons:

- It has been based on considered analysis of the immediate CPC site and the broader campus, and consequently provides broader benefits – particularly increased feasibility, permeability and connection.
- The currently approved access road is non-compliant, unsafe to vehicles, pedestrians and cycles; and is incongruous to the existing loading area along Orphans School Creek Lane.
- No adverse heritage impacts are associated with the proposal and it is consistent with the St Johns CMP (as amended in 2010).
- The proposal provides the opportunity to introduce additional landscaping near the road and building to enhance views from St Johns College.
- The road is existing and consequently no environmental impacts arise from its development.

Yours sincerely,



Audrey Chee
Senior Consultant