



**Heritage Council**  
  
of New South Wales

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Mr Michael Woodland  
Director  
Director State Significant Sites  
Department of Planning  
39 Bridge Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Shivesh Singh, Metro. Projects  
**By email: shivesh.singh@planning.nsw.gov.au**

Dear Mr Woodland

**MP10\_0160 Part 3A Major Project:**

**REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SCOTTISH HOSPITAL SITE,  
2 COOPER STREET (FACING BROWN & STEPHEN ST.S), PADDINGTON, WOOLLAHRA**

I am responding to the publicly exhibited proposal regarding proposed redevelopment of this site. The Branch had difficulties consistently accessing information on this proposal on the Department's website and with the Christmas/New Year shut down.

It is noted that Director-General's Requirements were issued on 6 May 2010. The Branch has reviewed the Environmental Assessment, Conservation Management Plan and Statement of Heritage Impact and has the following comments to make for the Department's consideration.

The Heritage Council has received representations requesting protection of the site under the Heritage Act but has decided not to recommend its listing on the State Heritage Register. Although it is not on the State Heritage Register it has been identified as being of State significance with portions identified as having archaeological potential.

The Branch generally supports the adaptive reuse of the original house / hospital building facing Cooper Street for nine independent living apartments. The Branch generally supports the proposed light, glazed link between that building and the proposed new eastern building (to emphasise the separateness of the buildings and give the historic building space and presence within the new complex. The Branch supports the proposed intention to conserve and to a degree reinstate some of the garden terraces for which this property was famous in its heyday.

What is lacking is any significant degree of reinstatement versus the exigencies of the proposed scheme, adjacent ground-level access, privacy and security fencing and screening. Correspondingly lacking is sufficient 'opening up' of the site's core 'arrival plaza' such that views to the garden terraces and original villa (apartments) are opened up and may be understood and appreciated better.

The Branch has liaised with the proponent's heritage consultant about reviewing the 2002 CMP, in particular the local level of significance the site was ranked at and the comparative assessment of such gentry estates outside Woollahra local government area, e.g. across Sydney, to reassess whether this is



of regional or state heritage significance for rarity or representativeness. Almost all other such gentry estates in Paddington (e.g. Juniper Hall) have lost their lands and gardens altogether.

The previous CMP said (under 'Statement of Significance'):

*The villa ...is significant as one of the few remaining 'gentry mansions' in Paddington associated with Governor Bourke's 'gentry settlement' of the 1830s. Unlike the other such (sic) estates, it remains generally intact within the original landscape setting'...it is the oldest, continuously-functioning private hospital still operating in its original building. This reflects the fabric of the development of the hospital as a living institution;...The Terraces contains the only substantial area of vegetation in the vicinity (and previous paragraph about the composition/range of that vegetation);...of the ten or so early 'gentry grants' only two remain, The Terraces and Engehurst, but while The Terraces villa still exists on its two-acre site, only small segments of the Engehurst villa remain. The only other villa of this early period, but not of the 'gentry grants', is Juniper Hall, built...in 1824 and now sitting on perhaps half its original area.*

This doesn't cast the net wider than Bourke's 1830s grants in Paddington/Woolahra LGA.

Revision of the 2002 CMP was a condition of the previous 2001 approval (which has since lapsed). The 2002 CMP only dealt with the main historic building on the site – not with the site in its own right.

Other eastern suburbs properties like *Montefiore* and *Lulworth/St.Luke's Hospital* (which the revised CMP does compare the Scottish Hospital site to) have filled their grounds with hospital/nursing home developments (like this one). Many such estates took on institutional uses that 'kept them alive for decades, in some cases a century. What appears lacking is a serious assessment of their significance, how many examples are left, how intact these are and whether they warrant conservation, rather than infill and erosion of the garden components that remain today.

The CMP does not appear to seriously assess or rank the significance of the remaining open space/grounds of 2 acres of relatively intact 19<sup>th</sup> century gentry grounds – (of once 10 acres), compared to the situation viz all other remaining gentry estates in the Woolahra area or eastern suburbs.

The Branch considers the overall maximum height (at tree canopy level) is too high for this locality and this site. The maximum heights seem to be above the tree canopy level and both new building wings are taller than either ridge or wall heights of the historic house/hospital building. These new heights will result in unduly adverse visual impacts, reduced light levels to areas of its significant garden which in turn will limit what can grow below, and the general health and vigour of remaining significant plants. The Branch recommends adding a condition requiring that heights be reduced by at least one level on both new buildings.

If the project is to be approved, the Branch recommends adding conditions requiring (that):

- new balconies of top floor apartments do not protrude onto the existing house's roof;
- all trees ranked as 'worthy' of retention (cf significant and requiring retention), once these specimens die, that they will not be replaced, so that further areas of the former terraced garden can be reinstated in future;
- new balcony or privacy walls between new apartments and beside patient rooms be lower than 900mm high to avoid the need for balustrading. If balustrading cannot be avoided, another condition should require that it be as visually light in construction, matt in texture finish and dark in colour to reduce its visual impact;
- tapering down in height and maximum 'lightness' of structure of all privacy screens between apartments in the original hospital building as the screens go away from the outside wall of the



apartments towards the terraced garden, so that views from the garden up to the apartment building are not overly impeded or dominated by these screens;

- the Dementia Patients' Terrace's area be reduced to take up less than 40% of the area of the existing central garden and terraces. The Terrace should be redesigned in layout to be further east by at least 5m to retain and reinstate more original garden. This will also provide a better outlook and more light into the terrace and building behind it;
- the two screens required for privacy for Dementia Patients be the minimum height required to do the job (given where people outside the screens may be), be as light in construction and visual effect as possible, avoiding excessive framing, light colours and shiny materials to reduce their visual impact on the central terraced garden beyond, and on views from above, below and sideways within this central garden space;
- the central courtyard plaza be wider so that both new buildings are set back a minimum of 5m further each direction (east and west), to open up the courtyard and connections between the house above and the terraced garden and lower garden below. This may circumvent the need to shift the garden path on the eastern side of the terraces noted in Table 9, p104 of Urbis' Environmental Assessment;
- removal of the 'colonnade' structure lining the courtyard / plaza to reduce the visual and physical bulk of both new buildings and their footprint viz the courtyard;
- the proposed 'porte cochere/ pergola / glazed link structure' between the arrival court and both new building wings be modified to be as simple in structure and as light in visual effect and materials as is possible to still perform the function of wet weather shelter. Otherwise this structure could potentially block most views from the terraced garden to the arrival court and lower garden and vice versa, and thus any appreciation of the estate's former layout and entity;
- the maximum use of glass and minimal supporting columns, beams etc for this porte cochere/ glazed link structure. Any support structures should be dark in colour and matt in texture/finish to reduce their visual impact and obtrusiveness in blocking views and connections between the house above, terraced gardens and the lower garden and arrival court;
- the arrival court / plaza be as minimal in paved area and dimension as it needs to be to accommodate the required vehicles. Given the stated low frequency and rate of use, this should be 'shared space' with no separation required for vehicles and pedestrians;
- new native planting in the north of the site have a maximum height limit of 1.5m and be limited to small shrub, grass and perennial species – i.e. no trees, in order to keep views and visual connections between the lower garden, arrival court and terraces;
- any replacement perimeter fencing be designed to be sympathetic to the era of design of the house/ original hospital building. If modern fences are required in parts of the boundary these should be simple in design, dark in colour and as 'light' in effect as possible;
- remnant garden terraces should be regarded as of 'exceptional' heritage significance and recommends adding a condition requiring the proponent to specify exactly how the garden terraces will be protected from damage from site works, uncovered, conserved, repaired and reconstructed to better interpret the former terraced garden to future users, residents and visitors.



- retention and where necessary repair and restoration of the path-cum-stairway down the central spine of the site's terraces and where exposed, restoration of a portion of the original stone terraces abutting that pathway at right angles;
- on the upper part of the slope, return of the terraced area to the levels originally laid out so that any retaining walls still present (after excavation) have physical relevance to the levels they were intended to support and define (this is quite different to the treatment recommended in Table 9, p.104 of Urbis' Environmental Assessment – record and destroy);
- any new sections of retaining walls needing to be built to supplement excavated remaining old sections could be built from a 'modern' and neutral material to avoid mistaking these for original;
- where the depth of fill on top of, or poor condition of original terrace walls makes their restoration unfeasible (e.g. on the lower slopes), then old fabric should be left buried and new terrace retaining walls built in much the same locations as the originals (based on 1880s plans). These should be offset slightly from each old wall so that new footings don't impact relics below;
- new terraces should generally be built in the pattern of the old, but not necessarily exactly where the originals are or may be. It should be clear that new terraces are new, but represent or indicate the way the slopes were treated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century;
- a selection of strategically placed signage panels should be provided or integrated into nearby buildings or structures to describe to residents and visitors the history of the site, the terraces and once-famous garden and why the contemporary response has been adopted;
- appropriate tree protection measures (e.g. Table 10, p.105 of Urbis' Environmental Assessment) be put in place before commencement of site works, to protect the root zone of all significant and 'worthy' trees during construction works, store site materials away from these zones, protect lower branches and canopies, appropriate monitoring of construction impacts on the trees' health, follow up after completion of construction for an adequate period of time to ensure trees improve in health and condition, etc;
- specification of how the terraces should be treated in the event of any future development on the site (e.g. extension of balconies/Dementia Terrace, etc).

The Branch notes that the site has significant potential for archaeological resources, significant excavation is proposed to install underground car parking and basement excavation will remove all remains of the lower terraced garden (one of its most significant items). The Branch questions whether a condition requiring redesign of the layout and form of the basement car parking might actually avoid removing all of the lower terraced garden, or a substantial part of it. If this is possible a condition should require it, given the exceptional level of significance of this terracing.

Should this project be staged in approval and any future stage not be subject to Part 3A, the Heritage Act will apply to that or those stages with regard to the site's archaeological potential resources and any excavation work. Appropriate applications under sections 139-146 of the Heritage Act 1977 will be required for excavation permits seeking appropriate approvals.

The Branch recommends inclusion of advice or a condition noting this and that excavation in areas of known or potential archaeological resources may require appropriately qualified and experienced people doing archaeological monitoring, appropriate worker training and work site practices of 'stop work if you find relics and reporting these to the Heritage Branch for advice on the next steps required'.



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If you have any questions regarding the above matter please contact Stuart Read at the Heritage Branch on (02) 9873 8554.

Yours sincerely

14/01/2010

**Vincent Sicari**

Manager

Conservation Team

Heritage Branch

Department of Planning

January 2011