

Preferred Project Report

166 - 174 Hawkesbury Road, Westmead
Westmead Millennium Institute and
Westmead Research Hub

Submitted to
Department of Planning
On Behalf of Health Infrastructure

December 2010 ■ 09434

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1.0 Introduction

An Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) for a Project Application for a medical research facility at Westmead (known as the Westmead Millennium Institute and Westmead Research Hub) was publicly exhibited for a period of four weeks between 22 September 2010 and 22 October 2010.

In total five (5) submissions were received in response to the public exhibition of the Project Application. The Department of Planning has also prepared a letter, dated 1 November 2010, setting out additional information or clarification required prior to final assessment of the project.

Submissions were received from:

- Parramatta City Council;
- Transport NSW;
- Roads and Traffic Authority (Sydney Regional Development Advisory Committee);
- Sydney Water; and
- Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI);

The proponent, Health Infrastructure, and its specialist consultant team have reviewed and considered the Department's comments, State agency submissions, Council's submission and CMRI's submission and, in accordance with clause 75H(6) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), has responded to the issues raised.

Appendix A provides a response to all the issues raised during the public exhibition period. Additional shadow diagrams, as requested by the Department, have been prepared by BVN Architects (included at **Appendix B**).

This Preferred Project Report sets out the proponent's response to the issues raised, provides further justification for the project, and confirms the final Statement of Commitments for which development approval is now sought.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) dated September 2010 and forms part of the Project Application.

2.0 Key issues and Proponent's Response

The following section provides a detailed response to the key issues raised by The Department of Planning following a detailed review of the EAR.

Appendix A provides detailed responses to all the issues raised during the public exhibition period.

2.1 Overshadowing

Issue

The Environmental Assessment details a level of overshadowing impacts on the existing residential flat buildings to the southeast of the proposed development. Additional shadow diagrams are requested detailing hourly overshadowing from the proposal.

Proponent's Response

The EAR addresses Solar Access and Overshadowing at Section 5.4. As requested, additional hourly shadow diagrams have been prepared by BVN Architecture (refer to **Appendix B**).

Both perspective and plan view diagrams have been prepared illustrating hourly overshadowing caused by the proposed development. **Table 1** below provides a summary of the resulting hourly overshadowing impacts caused by the proposed development. Importantly, and in accordance with SEPP 65, all surrounding residential apartments will receive a minimum of at least 3 hours of direct sunlight between the hours of 9am and 3pm in mid winter. All residential apartments (including front balconies) at 195 Hawkesbury Road for example will receive direct access to sunlight at 9am, 10am, and 11am, with only minor overshadowing to one balcony occurring at midday.

No changes are proposed to the Project Application in relation to this issue.

Table 1 - Summary of additional overshadowing impacts during winter solstice

| Apartment Block | Level of overshadowing | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| | 9am | 10am | 11am | Noon | 1pm | 2pm | 3pm |
| 31 Helen Street | - | - | - | × | - | - | - |
| 195 Hawkesbury Road | - | - | - | ~ | × | × | × |
| 32 Jessie Street | - | - | - | - | - | - | × |

- no additional overshadowing impacts

× some overshadowing impacts

~ minor overshadowing to one balcony

2.2 Height, Bulk and Scale

Issue

Consideration should be given to setting back the upper levels of the development, to better complement the existing streetscape and scale of the approved CMRI.

Proponent's Response

The EAR details at length the proposal's acceptability from a design perspective at Section 5.2. No changes are proposed to the Project Application in relation to this issue.

The Project Application proposes a built form that responds to the:

- context of the site, both existing and future;
- existing and planned development in the locality;
- special research needs and requirements of Westmead Millennium Institute (WMI) and Westmead Research Hub (WRH);
- need to provide a facility that can accommodate existing WMI staff and floor space requirements;
- existing air transport services provided at Westmead Hospital;
- vision of Westmead to be a world leader in health and medical research;
- co-location and synergistic benefits presented through the site's location within a medical research hub and more broadly the Westmead Health Campus;
- site's strategic location within an existing and growing medical precinct; and
- close proximity to public transport.

As noted within the Department's letter, there are no statutory height or density planning controls that apply to the site. In the context of the site's social infrastructure setting, this provides essential flexibility for development. The significance of this should not be lost and any resulting scale and form of the development should be well formulated.

In the absence of height, floor space ratio, and setback controls, the project team has devised a scheme which carefully considers the site's opportunities and constraints, resulting in what is considered to be a balanced form of development.

Further justification to support the proposed height, bulk and scale is provided below.

Context – scale and bulk

The subject site is located first and foremost within a 'specialised centre' (i.e. Westmead), one of only three recognised within the draft West Central Subregional Plan. Specialised centres are expected to perform vital economic and employment roles which generate metropolitan-wide benefits. Westmead for example currently employs over 13,000 people, and is expected to increase substantially, with an employment capacity target of 20,000 jobs by 2031. One of the key assets of the Westmead 'specialised centre' is the Westmead Health Campus (within which the site is located).

The ability to facilitate the substantial new development envisaged in Westmead (employment and residential) will need to be achieved through increased building heights and densities. In this regard, a building of the size being proposed is considered to be consistent with the site's subregional context and expectations to deliver new employment opportunities.

Higher density housing is supported within the Westmead Specialised Centre by State Government planning policy, responding to key planning objectives (i.e. ensuring housing is located closer to services, public transport nodes, and jobs). There is already a prevalence of medium and high density residential dwellings in Westmead (refer to **Figure 1**), and this is expected to increase into the future through regeneration of older building stock, such as that adjacent to the site. In this regard, the character (built form) of the area is likely to change through increased densities not only for the Westmead Health Campus but also the adjacent residential area.

The height, bulk, and scale of the proposal is considered to be consistent with future expectations of buildings to be established within this important regionally significant medical, health, and knowledge centre.



Figure 1 – 181 Hawkesbury Road, 9 storey residential flat building

Streetscape

As outlined within the *Westmead Health Campus Future Direction Paper* released by NSW Health in March 2006 and other master planning exercises undertaken at Westmead Health Campus, Hawkesbury Road has been identified as one of the key potential expansion zones, providing opportunities to expand health care and related private sector involvement within a number of commercial development sites. Building heights being considered along Hawkesbury Road within these direction papers and master plans range from four (4) storeys to nine (9) storeys.

The recently approved enlarged CMRI building and the proposed WMI building represent the first significant development proposals within the Hawkesbury Road 'expansion zone'.

Land along Hawkesbury Road within the Westmead Heath Campus provides an ideal location for future medically aligned development, especially due to:

- Its currently underutilised state (i.e. the land is mainly used for at grade and open multi-deck car parking) = ;
- Its poor relationship and integration with the rest of the Westmead Health Campus;
- The opportunities to revitalise and provide a new 'front' to Westmead Health Campus;
- Its physical removal from residential areas; and
- Adjacent residential areas consisting of a mix of high and medium development.

As evidenced above, the Hawkesbury Road streetscape is undergoing considerable change. It is this future setting that the proposed development seeks to respond to. The photomontage images prepared in support of the Project Application illustrate the future appearance of the streetscape along this section of Hawkesbury Road (refer to **Figure 2** and **3** below). In viewing these images, regard needs to also be had to the form of future development planned along the full length of Hawkesbury Road.

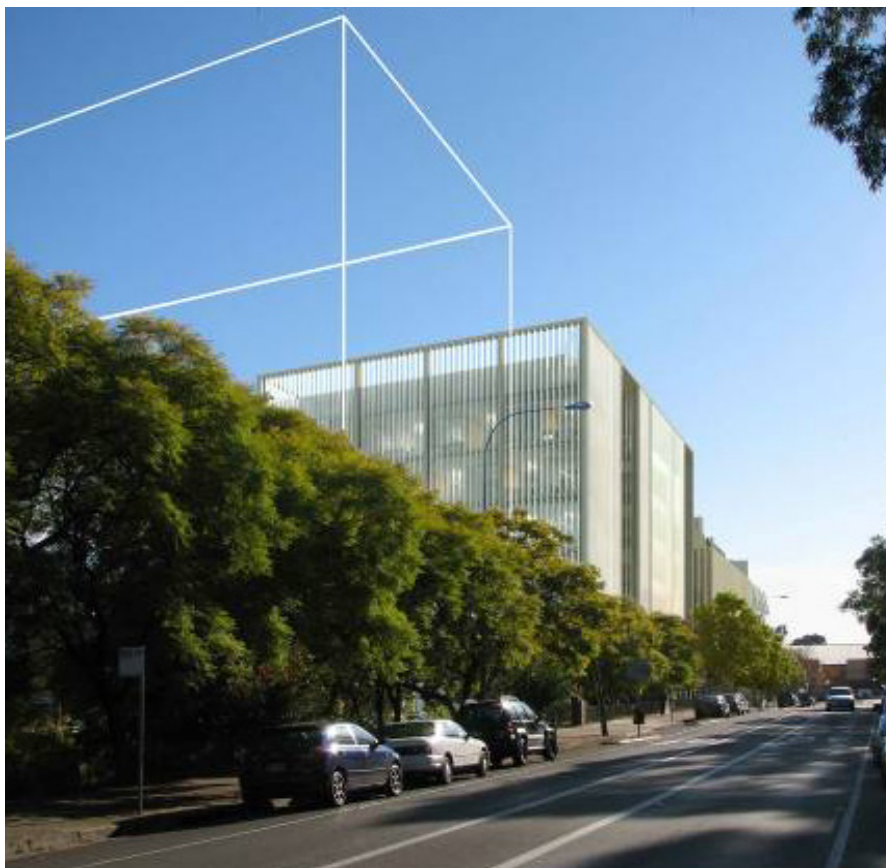


Figure 2 – Photomontage Hawkesbury Road east

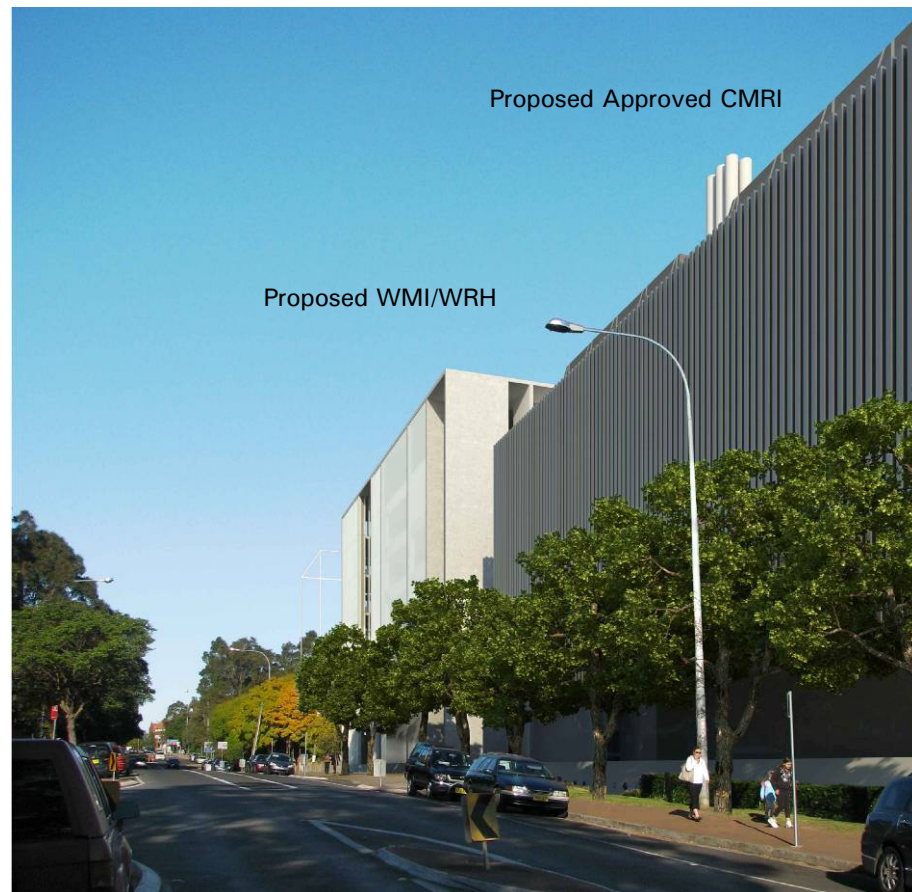


Figure 3 – Photomontage Hawkesbury Road west

Noting that the site does not have any statutory built form controls, the achievement of a uniform height identical to that of the approved CMRI building may not be the most appropriate planning outcome. Variety in building heights, lengths, designs etc is considered to be a good urban design outcome, avoiding a potentially homogenous streetscape. Providing some differentiation between the two research facilities (CMRI and WMI) through building heights will also assist with building identity within the street and Westmead Health Campus more broadly. Further, being a new build, the proposed WMI building does not have the same staging issues or constraints that CMRI had as part of its redevelopment proposal. If the CMRI development had not sought to retain and build upon the existing building it is likely that the form and scale of the development would be different to what was approved.

The proposed WMI building will be just over one storey (or approximately 6m) higher than the approved CMRI (refer to **Figure 4** below). Whilst likely to be readable within the street, this difference in height is not considered to adversely impact upon the visual quality of the existing/future street or the experience of pedestrians walking along Hawkesbury Road. As illustrated within the photomontage images above, this section of Hawkesbury Road will be framed by large buildings that share a close relationship with the street and which will be clearly identifiable as medical and research related buildings (supporting the precept of 'seeing the science'). This built form character, as noted above, is likely to be ultimately carried through along Hawkesbury Road as part of the planned redevelopment of Westmead Health Campus. In this context, the height difference between the proposed WMI building and the approved CMRI building is considered to be insignificant, and does not adversely affect the desired built form character or streetscape.

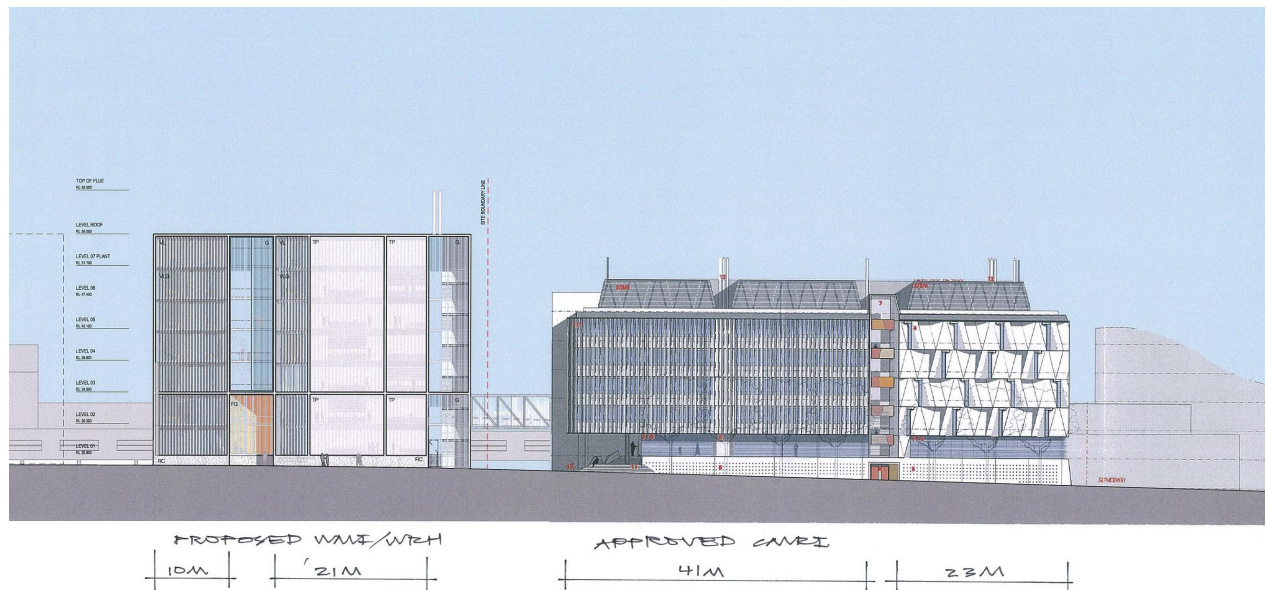


Figure 4 – Hawkesbury Road Elevation

Further, whilst higher than the approved CMRI building, the building is still responsive to the surrounding residential area, ensuring that it will not unacceptably overbear residential dwellings or harm amenity. Residential amenity will be protected through:

- ensuring residents continue to receive an acceptable level of sunlight throughout the year;
- not creating unacceptable overlooking;
- not creating an undue sense of enclosure; and
- not creating adverse wind or reflectivity conditions.

The vegetation planting along Hawkesbury Road also assists with minimising the visual impact of the development, specifically retained planting and replacement planting along the site's street frontage will assist with softening the bulk and scale of the development and ensuring the green streetscape continues along and through the site.

Important also from a contextual perspective and when considering the suitability of the proposal within the streetscape, the subject building forms part of a broader group of large medical and research related buildings located within the grounds of the Westmead Health Campus. In addition, there are also residential buildings located along Hawkesbury Road that are comparable in height to the proposed development (e.g. 181 Hawkesbury Road, a 9-storey residential flat building). The proposal seeks to provide a built form that integrates with and responds to existing buildings within Westmead Health Campus and more broadly within the surrounding residential area.

Special research needs of a medical research facility

The complexity of today's medical research procedures and necessary research equipment has a substantial influence on the design and size of modern medical research facilities (especially ones which aim to be at the vanguard of medical research and health outcomes).

The building has been designed to provide for the most efficient arrangement of laboratories in relation to both servicing and travel between lab areas. The arrangement relies on the vertical stacking of lab areas allowing all services risers to be consolidated in a single spine at the north-eastern edge of the building. The vertical stacking also provides for connections between all lab areas via the goods lifts located in the services spine. Importantly, this arrangement provides for a simple and clear connection between the upper lab areas and the core hub platforms located at the lower floors. The vertical stacking of the lab areas has been a significant factor in influencing the height of the building.

The nature of the medical research facility also requires a substantial area to be provided for central plant (including chillers, generators, cooling towers, air-handling units and sprinkler tanks). Preliminary investigations in this regard reveal that the minimum area required for plant is equivalent to a typical floor-plate of the building. This therefore limits potential opportunities to recess the plant room level (i.e. Level 07). The incorporation of plant within the main fabric of the building also assists with enhancing the appearance of the building, as there is no need for separate screening of plant at roof level (which can often result in an unsightly feature).

The proposal responds in part to the significant growth in staff that has occurred at WMI, which has created enormous strains on research space within Westmead Hospital, leading to overcrowding and dislocation of research groups into multiple locations. Accordingly, a building of the size being proposed is required in order to accommodate existing staff and student levels, cater for future growth, as well as provide new state of the art medical research facilities that support the vision of the Westmead Research Hub (which WMI is a key component of) to be a world leader in health and medical research.

Any reduction in the size of the proposed building will result in inefficiencies for research work and lead to a potentially dysfunctional building. The floor plates used also provide economies of scale and achieve ideal ratios between dry and wet labs.

Overall, the proposed medical research facility has been carefully designed in order to provide a facility that enables world class medical research to be undertaken and accommodates all necessary research equipment and associated services.

Protection of air transport services

The height and bulk of the proposed building has been heavily influenced by the need to protect existing helicopter flight-paths related to the adjacent NETS helipad.

This constraint has forced the proposal to concentrate its height and bulk to the north-east corner of the site.

Summary

The height, bulk, and scale the proposed medical research facility is considered acceptable for the following reasons:

- Buildings (existing and future) in the locality are a mixture of medium and high density, for which the proposed development will be comparable.
- The form of development is consistent with State Government strategic planning objectives to increase employment and housing at Westmead, which will primarily occur through increased density and increased height of development (making efficient use of land).
- The site is located within a medical research hub, within the grounds of the Westmead Health Campus. The built form proposed reflects this special relationship and required synergies.
- The proposed building makes efficient use of the land, capitalising on a large and strategic site within the Westmead Heath Campus that is underutilised and removed from nearby residential dwellings.
- The proposed massing and positioning of the building enables helicopter services to continue without adversely affecting operations.
- The proposed building height and density of development is appropriate given the site's accessibility to public transport.
- The building provides modern medical research facilities in one consolidated location, providing accommodation for existing medical research that occurs in numerous locations spread across the Westmead Health Campus.
- The proposal supports the goals and objectives of WMI to be a world leader in medical research, thereby helping to attract greater investment to the campus as a whole.
- The viability of the new medical research facility relies on a critical mass of functions and design requirements, which cannot be accommodated in a smaller building.
- The height of the building is influenced by the need to accommodate the special laboratory equipment and services associated with the operation of a medical research facility.
- The arrangement of mass and height across the site, together with the highly articulated facade, ensure no adverse impact on adjacent residential dwellings in terms of views, solar access and overshadowing.
- The resulting built form provides a positive urban design outcome and will further stimulate the quality of medical research facilities in the locality.

Overall, the development is of a scale appropriate to its relationship and function as part of a cluster of very important, world class medical research facilities, anchored by the Westmead Hospital and Westmead Children's Hospital.

2.3 Car Parking

Issue

Clarification sought in relation to the proposed use of the at-grade car parking spaces that will remain following their relocation to the south of the WMI building.

Proponent's Response

As noted within the EAR, the subject site currently accommodates approximately 100 at-grade car parking spaces spread across the site. The majority of these spaces are used by hospital staff, with only a small number used by staff working within the Chesalon and Marion Villa buildings on site.

As part of a separate application, approximately 86 of the existing at-grade parking spaces will be re-configured and relocated to a consolidated area to the south of the proposed WMI building. These parking spaces will not be used by WMI staff or visitors, and will continue to be used exclusively by existing hospital staff. The parking spaces have accordingly not been considered in the calculation of parking spaces for the proposed development.

In total there will be 147 car parking spaces available for WMI staff, this includes 97 parking spaces available within the broader grounds of the Hospital and 50 dedicated parking spaces on site.

Any displacement of the reconfigured car parking spaces on site caused by future development will need to be appropriately considered and addressed as part of future and separate applications.

3.0 Final Statement of Commitments

In accordance with Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, the following are the commitments made by the proponent to manage and minimise potential impacts arising from the proposal. These commitments replace the draft commitments included with the EAR. Revisions made to commitments aim to address issues raised during the public exhibition period.

3.1 General Works

Notwithstanding any other commitment (condition of consent), the consent for the Project Application permits separate construction certificates and occupation certificates to be issued for the development approved by the consent in stages, provided that all commitments (conditions of consent) relevant to the development incorporated within each stage have been complied with prior to the release of the construction certificate or occupation certificate for that stage.

3.2 Construction Management

The following plans will be implemented during the construction phase. The following documents will be prepared prior to the commencement of works:

- Construction traffic management plan
- Construction waste management plan
- Construction noise and vibration management control plan
- Erosion and sedimentation control plan

3.3 Ecologically Sustainable Development

- The measures and initiatives outlined within the ESD Report prepared by Arup (July 2010) will be investigated.
- The development will comply with the Engineering Services and Sustainable Development Guidelines Technical Series TS11 (Version 2.0 December 2007).
- The development will achieve a minimum 4 Star Green Star Design Education v1 rating.

3.4 Transport Demand Management

A travel demand management plan, as outlined within the Transport and Access Report prepared by Scape (August 2010), will be prepared and implemented prior to the commencement of works.

3.5 Contamination

- All fill and soil excavated during the development will be assessed and classified in accordance with the NSW DECC3 Waste Classification Guideline (DECC, 2008) prior to/for off-site disposal purposes at an appropriately licensed landfill.
- An Unexpected Finds protocol will be implemented to provide protocols and appropriate mechanisms for the identification and management of asbestos containing materials should they be encountered during the excavation works for the development.

3.6 Acid Sulphate Soils

An Acid Sulphate Soils Management Plan will be prepared and implemented during the construction phase.

3.7 Tree Protection

The recommendations of the Tree Report prepared by The Ents Tree Consultancy (August 2010) will be implemented, including:

- The incorporation of appropriate measures during construction to protect those trees to be retained as part of the development.
- Regular site inspections by a qualified Arborist during the construction phase to ensure the appropriate tree protection measures and recognised horticultural practices are being utilised.

Existing trees within the Hawkesbury Road reserve will be retained or where required to be removed will be replaced with suitable equivalent species.

3.8 Wind Amelioration

Appropriate treatments will be implemented and wind tunnel studies undertaken as outlined in the Pedestrian Wind Environment Statement prepared by Windtech (August 2010).

3.9 Air Services Transport

- Continued consultation and dialogue with NETS will be undertaken as part of the detailed design stage of the development.
- Wind tunnel and turbulence tests will be undertaken, with any recommendations from these studies to be incorporated into the detailed design of the development.
- A risk assessment of the proposed development will be undertaken.
- Potential impacts from medical equipment on helicopter navigation equipment will be investigated, with any recommended mitigation measures to be incorporated within the detailed design.
- Appropriate measures in accordance with best practice will be adopted during the construction stage to minimise and mitigate impacts caused during construction of the proposed development on the operation of helicopters.

3.10 Geotechnical

The recommendations outlined within the Geotechnical Interpretive Report prepared by AECOM (February 2010), will be implemented, including:

- Carrying out a dilapidation survey prior to commencement of excavation or any other construction activities which could be a source of unacceptable levels of vibration.
- Preparing a vibration management plan.
- Installing vibration monitor systems (where required).
- Managing seepage during excavation through a collection system, in the base of the excavation.
- Adopting suitable retention systems during construction, including either bored soldier pile walls or a dowell and shotcrete system.

- Positioning pad and strip footings on class V shale or better.
- Dewatering and cleaning the base of foundations and placing a binding layer as a matter of urgency, where appropriate/required by a Structural Engineer.
- Having an experienced geotechnical engineer inspect the base of foundations prior to the binding layer being placed to confirm the founding material meets or exceeds the design assumptions.

3.11 Reflectivity

All glazing on the facade will have a maximum normal specular reflectivity of visible light of 20 percent.

3.12 Operational Noise

The operation of the development will comply with the project noise criteria identified within the Acoustic Report prepared by Arup (July 2010).

3.13 BCA and Accessibility

BCA

Development will be compliant with the BCA 2010 and in accordance with the recommendations outlined within the BCA Report prepared by Blackett Maguire + Goldsmith (August 2010).

Accessibility

Development will comply with the recommendations of the Access Review, prepared by Access Australia (September 2010).

Fire Safety

Constructing of the building will be in accordance with the BCA, and where required to developing alternative solutions which comply with the relevant performance requirements of the BCA 2010.

Energy Efficiency

Development will at a minimum comply with Part J of the BCA 2010.

3.14 Aboriginal Heritage

In the event that any historical or Aboriginal relics are uncovered during excavations, all excavation and disturbance to the area will stop immediately and the Department of Environment and Climate Change will be informed in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

3.15 Hazards and Dangerous Goods

- Facilities for the storage, handling and use of dangerous goods and hazardous substances will be designed and constructed in accordance with all relevant legislative requirements.
- A qualified radiation specialist will be engaged as part of the detailed design stage to provide input into the shielding requirements for diagnostic and irradiation equipment to be present and used.
- The development will comply with the recommendations of the Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances Review, prepared by Safety Engineering & Technical Services Pty Ltd (September 2010).

3.16 Waste

- The Operational Waste Management Plan, as outlined within the Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances Review, prepared by Safety Engineering & Technical Services Pty Ltd (September 2010), will be adopted and implemented.
- A qualified radiation specialist will be engaged as part of the detailed design stage to provide input into the safe storage, handling, and design requirements for any radioactive waste to be generated as part of operations of the medical research facility.

3.17 Utilities

Liaison will continue and necessary approvals obtained from all relevant service providers in regard to the provision of utility services to the site.

3.18 Consultation

This Project Application commits to ongoing public consultation throughout the process as considered relevant and that builds upon the findings and recommendations of the Project Application and supporting appendices.

A Stakeholder Consultation Strategy will be prepared and implemented throughout the detailed design and construction stage.

Consultation with Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) will continue to occur as part of the detailed design stage, with a focus on investigating possible improvements to the relationship between CMRI and WMI.

3.19 Art

An Arts Plan will be prepared by a suitably qualified arts expert and incorporated into the design of the development.

In preparing the Arts Plan, the arts expert will consult with the established arts committee at Westmead Hospital and the local community.

3.20 Traffic and Parking

- The layout of the proposed car parking areas associated with the subject development will be in accordance with AS 2890.1 – 2004 and AS 2890.2 – 2002 for heavy vehicle usage.
- The swept path of the longest vehicle entering and exiting the site, as well as manoeuvrability through the site, will be in accordance with AUSTROADS.
- All vehicles will enter and leave the site in a forward direction.
- All vehicles will be wholly contained on site before being required to stop.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan detailing construction vehicle routes, number of trucks, hours of operation, access arrangements and traffic control will be submitted to the Department/Council prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate.
- All works/regulatory signposting associated with the proposed development will be at no cost to the RTA.

- 50 off-street parking spaces will be provided, permanently marked on the pavement and used accordingly. The dimensions for parking spaces and aisle width will be in accordance with AS 2890.1-2004 (minimum of 2.4m wide x 5.4m long clear of columns plus 300mm clearance adjacent walls & 6.2m aisle width minimum).
- 25 bicycle spaces for staff & visitors will be provided including change rooms with toilets, shower facilities & lockers.
- Vehicle access points to the carpark that can be accessed from Hawkesbury Road, Westmead will be provided accordingly. Entry to the site & carpark will be provided via the service road to the south (for WMI vehicles only) and exit to the north on to Hospital Road.
- Traffic into & out of the carpark will be a one-way traffic movement (from southern end to northern end) and will be marked on the pavement with directional arrows.
- The existing vehicle access point located centrally along the site's Hawkesbury Road frontage will be removed upon construction of the development site.
- Driveway and ramp gradients will comply with Clause 2.5, Clause 2.6 and Clause 3.3 of AS2890.1-2004.
- Traffic facilities to be installed, such as; wheel stops, bollards, kerbs, signposting, pavement markings, lighting and speed humps, will comply with AS2890.1-2004.
- A Road Occupancy Permit will be obtained from Council for occupation of any part of footpath or road at or above (including construction and/or restoration of footpath and/or kerb or gutter) during construction of the development. An application for a Road Occupancy Permit will be submitted through Council's Traffic & Transport Services, prior to carrying out construction/restoration works.

4.0 Conclusion

During the month long public exhibition of the Project Application for the proposed medical research facility at Westmead, five (5) submissions were received. Of these five, four were received from Council/agencies, with one submission received from an adjoining medical research institute. No submissions were received from any surrounding residents.

Having given due consideration to all submissions received and the Department of Planning's letter, no changes are proposed to the Project Application.

The project results in significant economic and social impacts including:

- the creation of construction and operational job (up to 400);
- injection of \$124.2 million into the local economy;
- strengthening the role of Westmead as a specialised centre and employment hub of the region;
- providing new, state of the art medical research facilities;
- supporting continued employment opportunities in an area well connected to public transport; and
- supporting the vision of the Westmead Research Hub to be a world leader in health and medical research.

In light of the site's context within a strategically important employment and medical/health precinct, given existing and planned development at Westmead to accommodate substantial future growth, the protection of residential amenity, and providing for the continued operation of air transport services, the height, bulk, and scale of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

We trust that the information included within the preceding sections and attached sufficiently responds to the issues raised within the submissions to enable the Project Application to be approved.