NSW GOVERNMENT | Planning & Environment

MODIFICATION REQUEST:
Wollongong Hospital Redevelopment
Crown Street, Wollongong
MP 10_0213 MOD 3

Modifications to the internal layout and façade treatment of the multi-level car park and associated landscaping

Secretary's
Environmental Assessment Report
Section 75W of the
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

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1. BACKGROUND

On 8 June 2012, the then Deputy Director-General, Development Assessment and Systems Performance, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, approved the major project for the Wollongong Hospital Redevelopment, Crown Street, Wollongong.

The project location is shown in **Figure 1**.

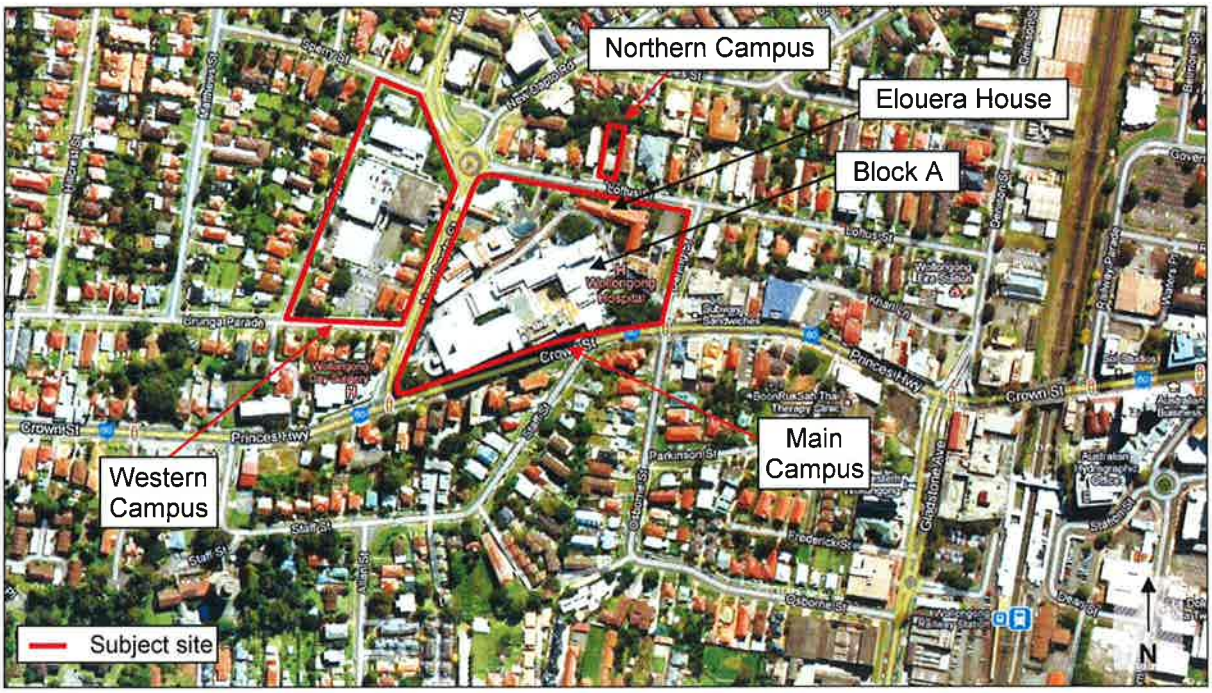

Figure 1: Project location

The major project approval (MP 10_0213) for the Wollongong Hospital Redevelopment consists of the following works on the main campus:

- construction of a six storey building to accommodate the Illawarra Elective Surgical Services (IESS) and Ambulatory Care Unit (ACU), including seven new operating theatres, 66 beds, 62 new treatment bays and 20 new consultation/examination rooms;
- construction of a part two part four storey addition to Block A to accommodate an expansion of the emergency unit and provision of an additional 10 treatment bays;
- demolition, including the removal of the 1941 western portion of Elouera House and modifications to ameliorate those demolition works;
- refurbishment works to the existing Block A clinical building, including provision of a new combined main entry;
- additions to the loading dock zone;
- provision of a new vehicle drop off zone on New Dapto Road;
- landscape and public domain works;
- part pedestrianisation of the existing internal Hospital Road;
- excavation works for basement;
- utility works including new water main connections, relocation of gas meter and new substations;
- removal of 21 trees; and
- sustainable transport, operational and waste procedures.

On 26 November 2013, the A/Director, Industry, Key Sites and Social Projects, under delegation from the then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, approved MP 10_0213 MOD 1 to modify the development to include the construction of a car park on the western campus comprising:

- additional demolition works, tree removal and removal of at-grade car parking;
- bulk excavation;
- construction of a six level car park with 754 car spaces and connections to the existing hospital car park;
- alterations to the façade of the existing car park;
- landscaping works associated with the car park; and
- associated signage.

Figure 2 shows the location of the new car park.

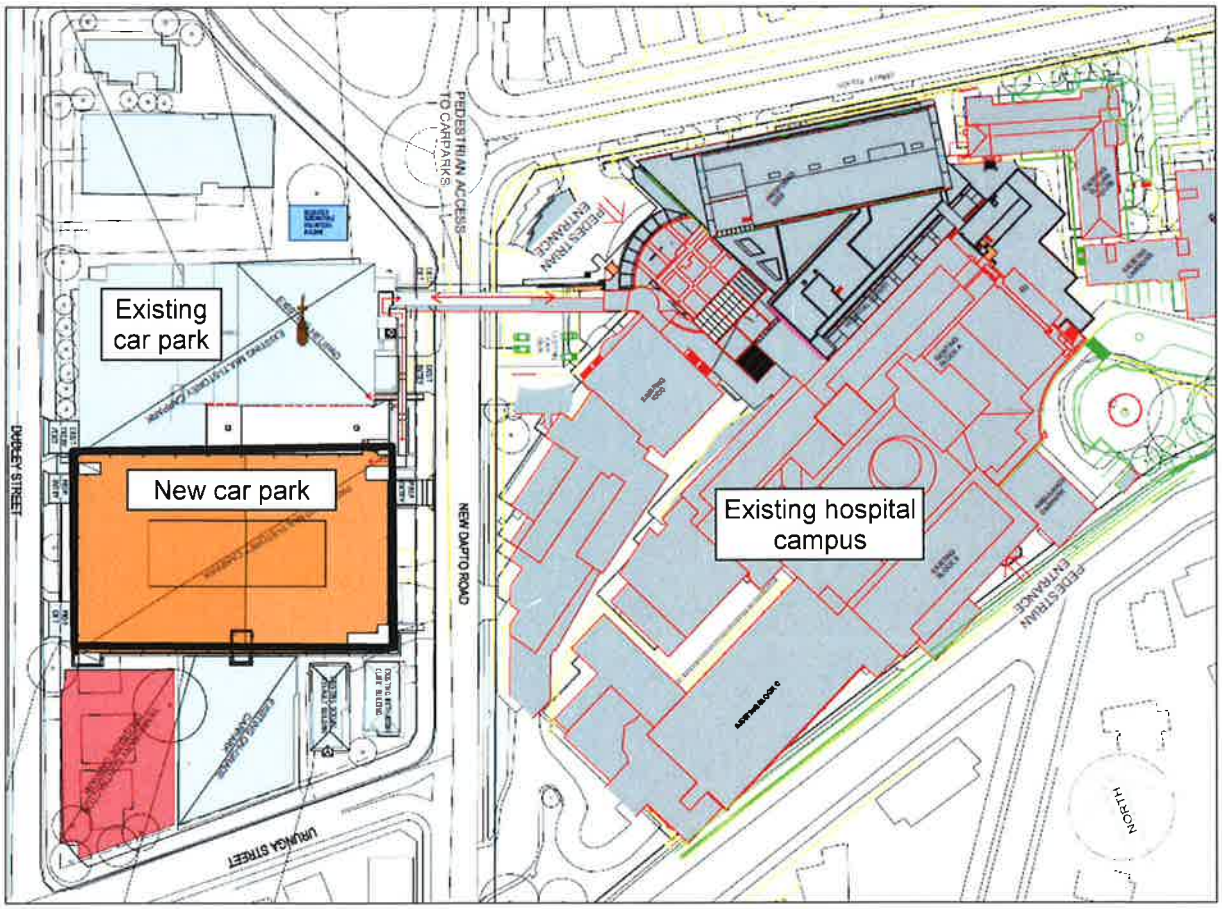

Figure 2: Approved car park location

On 14 December 2013, the A/Director, Industry, Key Sites and Social Projects, under delegation from the then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, approved MP 10_0213 MOD 2 to further modify the development as follows:

- modify the design of the façade of the IESS/ACU building by introducing a maximum RL 73.15;
- clarify the height of the IESS/ACU building;
- reduce the number of bicycle spaces from 100 to 30;
- vary the condition regarding the type of bicycle storage space required;
- addition of a roof top plant room; and
- changes to internal campus street lighting.

The hospital buildings and car park are currently under construction.

2. PROPOSED MODIFICATION

The proposed amendments to the project the subject of this modification (MOD 3) include:

- modifications to the facade treatment of the car park;
- changes to the internal layout of Level 5 comprising reduction in the vehicular queuing length within the car park and provision of an additional 17 car spaces;
- changes to the internal layout of Levels 1, 2 and 6 to provide an additional 17 car spaces; and
- minor modification to the arrangement of landscape treatments along New Dapto Road due to minor modifications to pedestrian ramp along this frontage.

The proponent is seeking the changes to the queue lengths on Level 5 as the lengths originally proposed are no longer required following further analysis of the anticipated queuing (as detailed later in this report). The proponent is seeking approval to changes to the layout of Levels 1, 2 and 6 to provide a more efficient design. As a consequence, an additional 34 parking spaces can be provided in the car park.

The proposed changes to the façade treatment are sought to reduce project and ongoing maintenance costs.

3. STATUTORY CONTEXT

3.1 Modification of the Minister's Approval

In accordance with clause 3 of Schedule 6A of the EP&A Act, section 75W of the Act as in force immediately before its repeal on 1 October 2011 and as modified by Schedule 6A, continues to apply to transitional Part 3A projects. Approved projects are transitional Part 3A projects.

Section 75W(2) of the EP&A Act provides that a proponent may request the Minister to modify the Minister's approval of a project. The Minister's approval of a modification is not required if the approval of the project as modified would be consistent with the original approval. As the proposed modification seeks to modify the façade treatment of the multi-level car park structure and reduce vehicle queuing lengths, the modifications will require the Minister's approval.

3.2 Delegated Authority

Under the Minister's Delegation dated 10 November 2014, the Director, Infrastructure, can determine the modification application as: Wollongong City Council has not objected to the proposed modifications; a political disclosure statement has not been made in relation to the application; and no public submissions were received objecting to the proposed changes.

4. CONSULTATION AND SUBMISSIONS

In accordance with section 75X of the EP&A Act and clause 8G of the EP&A Regulation, the modification request was made available on the Department's website. Due to the minor nature of the proposed modification, the modification request was not exhibited by any other means. No public submissions were received on the modification request.

The application was referred to Wollongong Council and Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). RMS and Council raised no objections to the modifications.

5. ASSESSMENT

The Department has reviewed the modification request and accompanying documents and considers the key issues for the proposed modification to be traffic impacts and built form.

5.1 Traffic Impacts

The main vehicle entry to the new car park is from New Dapto Road on Level 5. The main entry is controlled by boom gate access and supported by two lanes, which extend the length of the car park, to allow vehicle queuing of up to 33 vehicles at the New Dapto Road entry (see **Figure 3** for approved Level 5 layout).

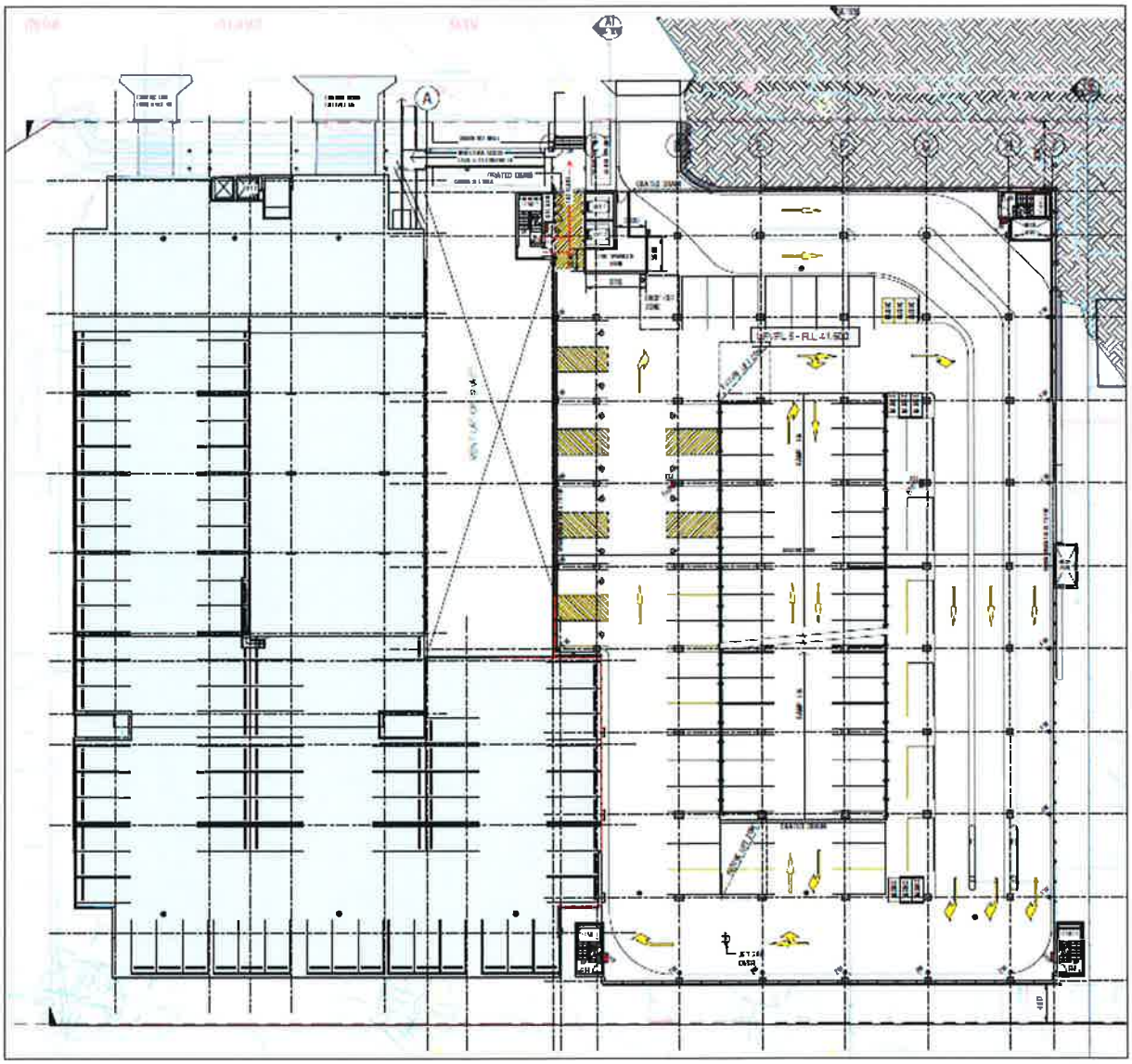

Figure 3: Approved Level 5 layout

The proposed modification seeks to reduce the length of the lanes and reduce queuing space to 20 vehicles at the New Dapto Road entry. The reduced capacity for queuing at the boom gates has the potential to result in traffic impacts along New Dapto Road as vehicles could spill out onto New Dapto Road and impede traffic if adequate queuing space is not provided within the car park (see **Figure 4** for proposed amended Level 5 layout).

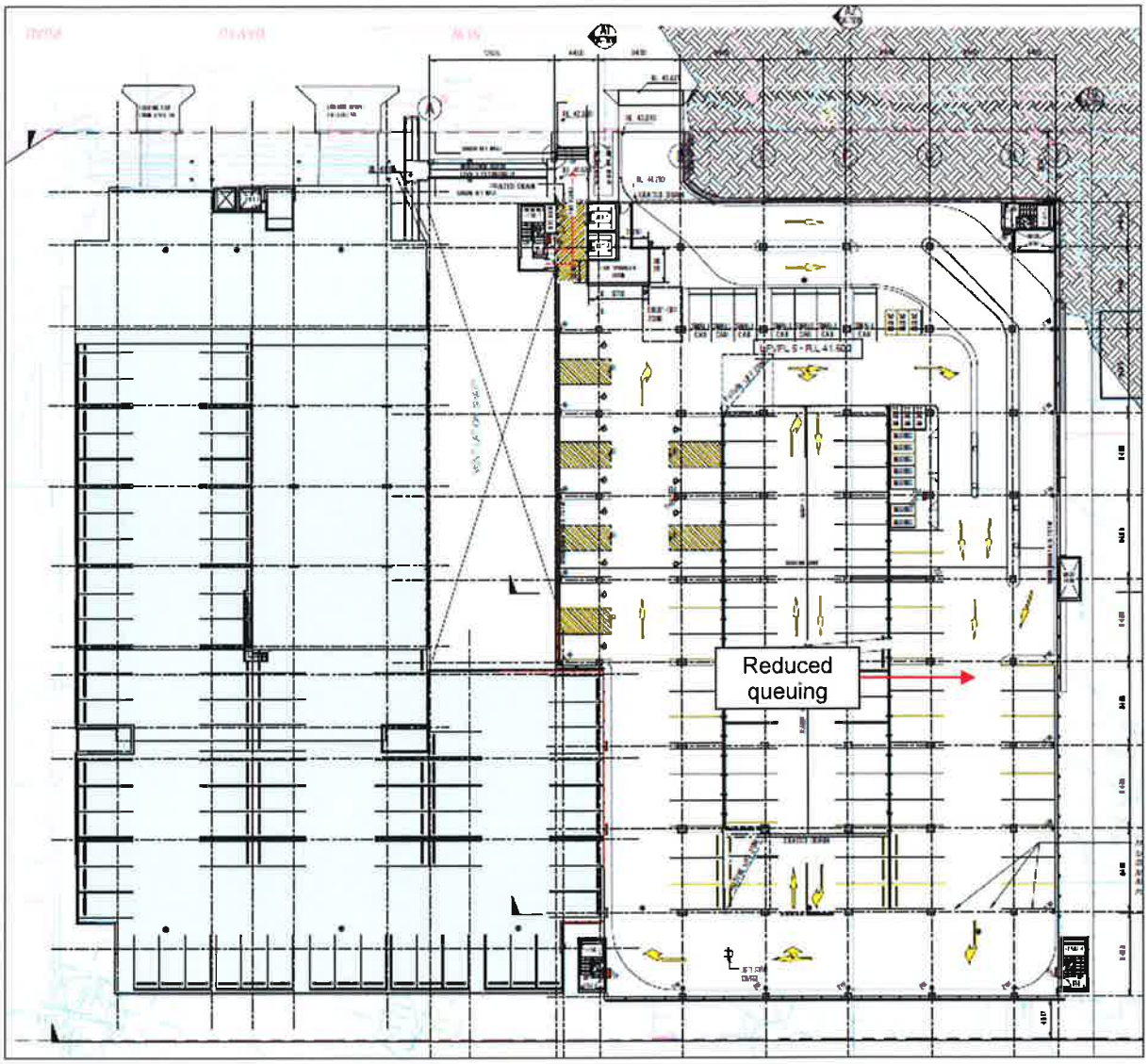

Figure 4: Proposed Level 5 layout

The Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by Cardno in support of the original modification application for the car park adopted the minimum queue lengths recommended in the Australian Standards, which is to be utilised in the absence of specific guidance regarding anticipated queuing. The current modification request is accompanied by a *'Wollongong Hospital Queuing Study – Traffic and Transport Technical Note'* (Queuing Study), also prepared by Cardno, which has undertaken an analysis of the likely queuing resulting from the potential peak vehicle entry levels and boom gate capacity.

The Queuing Study adopts the same assumptions used in the Traffic Impact Assessment regarding distribution of vehicles entering by New Dapto Road (75 per cent) and Dudley Street (25 per cent), as well as methodology used to determine peak traffic flows for the car park (740 vehicles per hour based on the new car park having 754 spaces). Therefore, there would be 555 vehicles entering the car park in the peak period via the New Dapto Road entrance.

The lane capacity for the access controlled car park would be between 600 vehicles per lane per hour (free flow) to 250 vehicles per lane per hour if manually controlled. As the boom gate access would be controlled by card reader (for staff) and automatic ticket issue (for patients and visitors), the capacity would be between 300 and 400 vehicles per lane per hour. The lane capacity was further refined based on anticipated ratio of staff to visitors (73 per cent / 27 per cent) and resulted in a capacity of 373 vehicles per lane per hour.

The Queuing Study concludes that based on the approach volumes and lane capacity a total queue length of 120 metres (20 vehicles) is required for two lanes to support the 95th percentile queue length (i.e. the length of queue that has a probability of five percent or less of being exceeded during the peak access period). The proposed modification seeks to amend the plans accordingly to reduce queuing space on Level 5 (New Dapto Road access controlled entrance) to a total of 20 vehicles for the two lanes. The assessment is based on free flow of traffic after the boom gates, which could potentially be impeded by use of the car spaces immediately after the boom gates and the lane merges. The Queuing Study does identify various operational management measures that could be implemented should this scenario eventuate, including time restrictions on the car spaces, physical barriers during peak periods or allocation of the spaces to non-peak travelling staff or visitors. These could be implemented post construction if issues were to arise. Furthermore, if automatic number plate recognition technology is installed, the queuing space required for the New Dapto Road entrance would reduce to eight vehicles. Consequently, the proponent seeks to revise the layout of Level 5 to reduce the queue lengths and subsequently provide additional car spaces to further reduce demand on on-street car parking.

The proponent contends that the additional car spaces would not generate any additional traffic beyond what was originally assessed and considered acceptable as part of the hospital redevelopment. In this regard, the parking is not supporting new land uses but existing demand associated with the operation of the hospital, with users already utilising on-street car parking in the surrounding streets.

The proponent has also proposed changes to Levels 1, 2 and 6 to provide an additional 17 car spaces through more efficient layouts. The proponent has provided further technical advice regarding the traffic and transport impacts and notes that the car park is not the trip generator and the redistribution of traffic to the car park from the additional vehicles would be negligible. Whilst the increased car parking capacity would increase the required queue lengths to 22 vehicles, the technical advice concludes that it would not impact through traffic as any queuing would occur within the deceleration lane on New Dapto Road and would only occur a maximum five percent of the time during the peak period.

The proposed modifications are acceptable to the Department as the proponent has demonstrated that the queue lengths would generally be adequate for queues up to the 95th percentile queue length and RMS raised no objections to the methodology used to calculate the probable queue lengths or assumptions regarding peak traffic flow calculations. The Department also accepts that, as the additional car spaces are supporting existing car parking demand associated with the hospital, this traffic already exists on the road network and whilst it would be diverted to the car park, it would have comparable impacts on traffic efficiency. The Department has recommended a condition requiring monitoring of the car park queues during peak periods and a requirement to revise the car parking management plan if queuing issues arise.

5.2 Built Form

The proposed modifications to the treatment of the approved car park façade include:

- replacing the timber vertical planks with charcoal aluminium posts;
- wrapping the aluminium batten facade around the stairwell building fronting onto New Dapto Road rather than spanning between the existing and new buildings with the battens;
- changing the retaining wall material from gabion (New Dapto Road frontage), stone face (Urunga Parade frontage) and gabion and stone face (Dudley Street frontage) to split faced block work;
- provision of a fire rated block wall on the southern facade adjacent to the Methadone Clinic and replacement of the timber vertical planks with aluminium mesh adjacent to the Sexual Assault Service building on the southern elevation; and
- changing the mechanical vent shaft finish on Urunga Parade from metal cladding to painted render block work wall.

The Department considers the amended façade treatment would continue to improve the appearance of the existing car park and assist in the visual integration of the two car parks. The aluminium battens will continue to provide visual interest and screen the car park. The removal of the planks along the southern elevation will not be significant given these planks would have been largely screened by the existing Methadone Clinic and Sexual Assault Buildings. The aluminium battens would provide a darker finish and utilise materials more consistent with the aluminium treatments provided along the remaining facades. The changes would also assist in reducing the visual prominence of the car park structure, whilst the retention of the orange colouring on the vertical steel supports and signage walls will continue to break up the façades. The use of split faced block work consistently along all frontages is considered acceptable as it would not significantly alter the appearance and would continue to provide a solid base for the more transparent façade treatment above.

The modifications to the design of the façade would not adversely alter the visual appearance of the car park and is therefore acceptable to the Department.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Department has reviewed the modification request and considered advice from public authorities. All the relevant environmental issues associated with the proposed modifications have been extensively assessed.

The revised layout of Level 5 will support additional parking and further alleviate current demand on on-street car parking. The reduced queue lengths are acceptable as they would not impact traffic flow on New Dapto Road and monitoring will be required and additional measures adopted if issues arise. The proposed changes to the treatment of the façade do not detrimentally alter the appearance or design of the car park and therefore would have minimal environmental impact.

The Department considers the site to be suitable for the proposed modified development and that the modification to the proposal is in the public interest as it would continue to address the car parking demand generated by the hospital campus. Consequently, the Department recommends that the modification application be approved.

It is recommended that the Director:

- **note** the information provided in this report;
- **approve** the modification request, subject to amending the conditions of approval; and
- **sign** the attached modifying instrument (**Appendix B**).

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APPENDIX A MODIFICATION REQUEST

See the Department's website at
http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6657

APPENDIX B RECOMMENDED MODIFYING INSTRUMENT