

8 April 2011

Mr Sam Haddad
Director-General
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Haddad,

Request for Director-General's Environmental Assessment Requirements - Wagga Wagga Hospital Redevelopment

On 19th January 2011 the Minister declared the redevelopment of Wagga Wagga Hospital a project to which Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) applies and subsequently issued Director-General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs) for a Concept Plan. In accordance with Section 75F of the (EP&A Act 1979) we now request that DGRs for a Project Application for the Stage 1 works at Wagga Wagga Hospital be provided. The purpose of this letter is to provide a Preliminary Environmental Assessment for the proposed Project Application that:

- outlines the proposed development;
- briefly reviews relevant environmental planning instruments;
- reviews relevant planning controls; and
- identifies the key issues that will need to be addressed in the Project Application

Background

Wagga Wagga Base Hospital (WWBH) is a major Rural Referral hospital, located in southern central New South Wales within the Greater Southern Area Health Service (GSAHS) catchment. This catchment is expected to align with the area to be serviced by the Murrumbidgee Local Health Network (LHN).

WWBH is one the largest and busiest Rural Referral Hospitals in NSW providing approximately 24,000 admissions, 73,000 bed-days, 700-750 births and 7,000 operations each year with an average National CWT of 21,400 separations. WWBH currently offers a broad range of medical and surgical specialties as well as maternity and paediatric services, critical care, mental health and aged care and rehabilitation services. It is the hub for medical and surgical subspecialties in the catchment. The WWBH medical and clinical teams provide outreach services to several District and Community Acute Hospitals and Multipurpose Services (MPS) and enact a regional role in relation to Ambulatory and Community Health Services which includes support for renal patients dialysing at home, mental health, drug and alcohol, sexual assault, and consultancy support for chronic and complex disease management.

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Planning processes for the WWBH redevelopment have recognised the importance of developing and strengthening strategic partnerships with other services, local GPs and education institutions. The service configuration and priorities for this project have been developed in consideration of service gaps identified in consultations with local clinicians and other stakeholders, including private and public agencies and confirmed through research in relation to comparative health indicators.

The redevelopment of WWBH represents a strategic capital investment in the health infrastructure of the GSAHS, the soon-to-be-constituted Murrumbidgee Local Health Network and NSW Health. The overall objective is to provide a contemporary healthcare facility suited to the current and future needs of the catchment population. Importantly, this proposal strongly aligns with Commonwealth, NSW Government, NSW Health and GSAHS strategic objectives for the provision of improved health services to regional, rural and remote communities. Improved service integration and strengthened referral networks will provide significantly more accessible services and improved health outcomes to many thousands of residents across rural communities within the WWBH catchment.

The Site

The Hospital site is located approximately 1km from the CBD with good access via bus or taxis adjacent to the railway station. Walking time from the CBD is approximately 20-25 minutes. The main vehicular access from the CBD is via Edward Street.

The site has an area of approximately 4.2 hectares on the main campus. The topography of the site is predominantly flat with a fall towards the Edward and Docker Streets corner of around 3.6 metres. There are scattered trees and grassed areas on site.

The property is legally described as DP 659184.

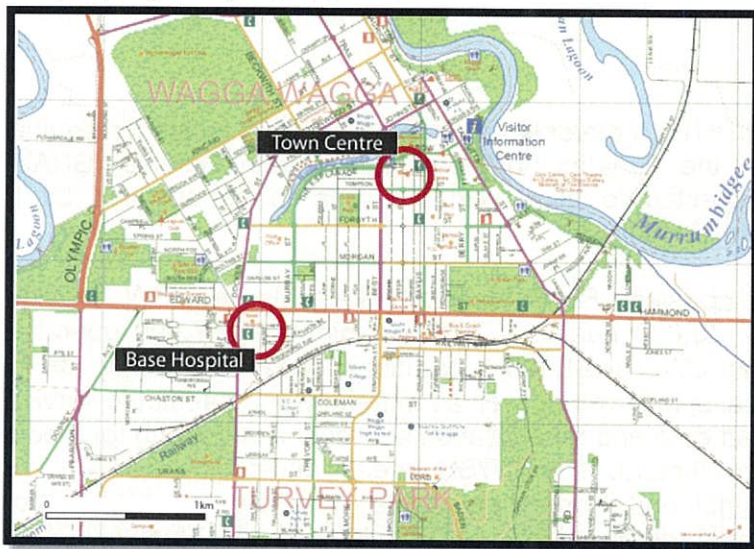


Figure 1 Locality Map

The Wagga Wagga Base Hospital is part of an existing health facility precinct which includes private health facilities, Calvary Hospital and Specialist Practices and Clinics. Almost all of the Specialist Practices and Clinics are housed in Docker Street and Sturt Highway/Edwards Street whilst Calvary Hospital is set south west of Docker Street.

The precinct is loosely bordered by Sturt Highway/Edwards Street to the north, Murray Street to the east, Brooking and Meurant Avenues to the south and Emblen Street to the west. Almost all of the Specialist Practices and Clinics are housed in Docker Street and Sturt Highway/Edwards Street.

The WWBH site itself is bordered by Sturt Highway/Edwards Street to the north, Lewis Drive to the east, Rawson Lane to the south and Docker Street to the west. The main public vehicular access route to car parking and the Main Hospital and Emergency Department is directly off Sturt Highway/Edwards Street down Lewis Drive. Public also have vehicular access to the existing Hydrotherapy facility directly off Docker Street but parking is limited and shared with the UNSW Rural Clinical School.

Public access can be gained around the back of the site via Rawson Lane to the Dental Unit, Community Health and the ARBC Donor Centre and down Yathong Street & Lewis Drive to the Renal Unit and Yathong Lodge. Vehicular access for staff is the same as for public down Lewis Drive to the main car park and in addition a staff car park can be accessed via Yathong Street. Service Vehicles enter the site down Lewis Drive, Yathong Street and Rawson Lane.

Existing Buildings

There are many diverse buildings on the site which have numerous extensions. The spaces within these buildings do not easily allow the development of integrated service delivery models.



Figure 2 Existing Hospital

The Project Application

Part 3A Project Approval is being sought for Stages 1a, 1b and 2a of the Masterplan. These stages are shown indicatively in the diagrams below:

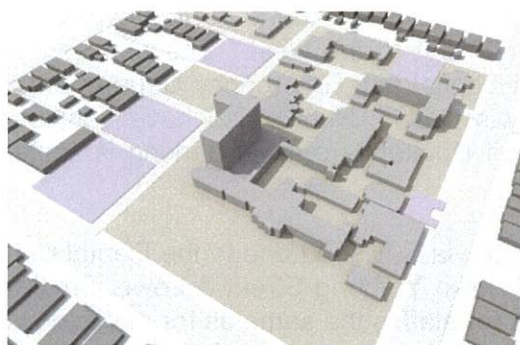


Figure 3 Existing Hospital

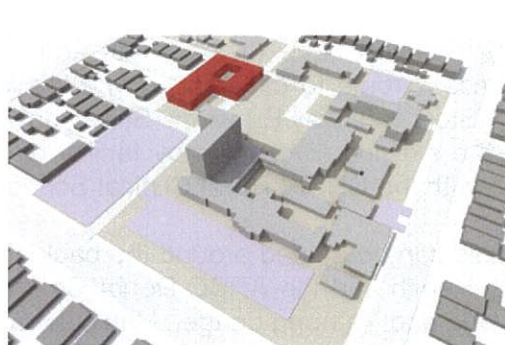


Figure 4 Stage 1A (in red)

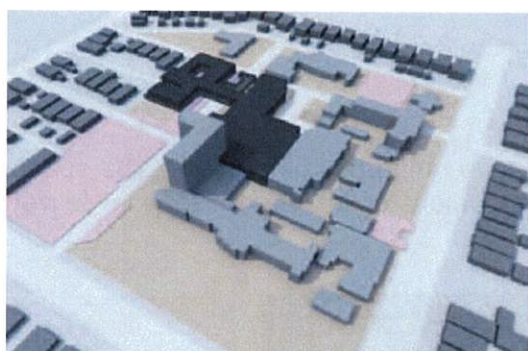


Figure 5 Stage 1A and 1B

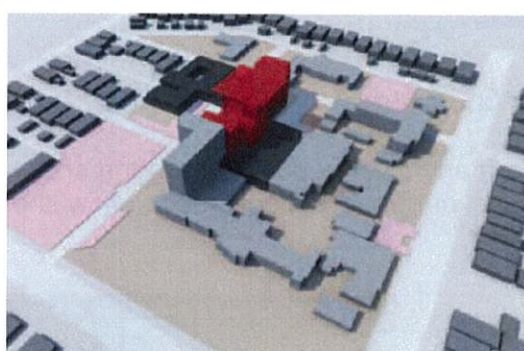


Figure 6 Stage 2A

The Stage 1 project consists:

- Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit
- Non-Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit
- New Emergency Department
- Expansion of Procedures Centre
- Sterilising Services Unit

The Stage 2a project will consist of the following units:

- Women's Health and New-Born Care Unit
- Medical Inpatient Unit (incl Stroke)
- Medical/Surgical Inpatient Unit
- Orthopaedic / Surgical Inpatient Unit

The construction of Stage 1a in an area currently occupied by hospital car parking and residential buildings will allow the demolition of the existing mental health facility which is not able to accommodate the future capacity. The demolition of the mental health building allows for the construction of the new Emergency Department and Procedures Centre.

Planning approval for Stage 2a (i.e. 4 levels of In-patient Units and helipad) is also sought concurrently with the Stage 1 as Stage 1b and Stage 2a will be housed in the one building and the design of 2a will impact on the design of Stage 1b.

The CIV for Stages 1a, 1b and 2a is \$173.7million.

A separate "early works" package is being considered under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 and does not form part of this approval. These early works include:

- Temporary car parking;
- Demolition of existing residences;
- Changes to roads to accommodate a land swap;
- Water, sewer and gas upgrades and
- Medical gas modifications.

These works will allow the Stage 1A, 1B and 2A works to progress without delay subject to approval.

Planning Issues

State Environmental Planning Policies

The following table identifies the State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) that apply to the land or type of development that is subject to this proposal, and the proposals compliance with those Policies.

SEPP #	Name	Applies	Compliant
1	Development standards	✓	✓
4	Development without consent		
6	Number of storeys in building		
14	Coastal wetlands		
21	Caravan parks		
22	Shops and commercial premises		
26	Littoral rainforests		
30	Intensive agriculture		
33	Hazardous and offensive development	NK*	
36	Manufactured home estates		
44	Koala habitat protection		
45	Permissibility of mining		
50	Canal estate Development		
55	Remediation of land	✓	✓
62	Sustainable aquaculture		
64	Advertising and signage		
65	Design quality of residential flat development		
71	Coastal protection		
	Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability		
	Major Development 2005	✓	Refer below
	Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries 2007		
	Temporary Structures and Places of Public Entertainment 2007		
	Infrastructure 2007		
	Rural Lands 2008		
	Exempt & Complying Development Codes 2008		
	Affordable Rental Housing 2009		

* Not Known at this stage

Local Environmental Plan

The site is zoned SP2 Infrastructure (Hospital) under Wagga Wagga Local Environmental Plan 2010 (WWLEP). The objectives of this zone are to:

- provide for infrastructure and related uses; and
- prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.

Apart from Roads, which do not require consent, development for the purposes listed on the Land Zoning Map and any development ordinarily incidental or ancillary to that use requires consent. All other development is prohibited.

On that basis the use of the site as a hospital is **permissible**.

Other issues:

Flooding

A Flood Impact Assessment has been conducted for the site which found that the site is likely to flood on in the situation that the Murrumbidgee River overtops the Main City Levee which is constructed to stop the 1:100 year flood event. All buildings will be designed to take into account the potential of flood with critical services designed to be located at the high point of the site.

Contamination

Laboratory tests of soil samples have confirmed a generally alkaline pH soil which suggests the soil will not be aggressive on steel structures. However the soil was also found to contain high levels of sulphate which is mild to moderately aggressive to concrete. There is no evidence of salinity or groundwater contamination.

Helipad

The Hospital currently uses the Duke of Kent Oval to the north west of the site for helicopter services. Flight paths are currently from south east to north west travelling over the hospital and within sight distance of residences. Transfer is then provided by ambulance. The Concept Plan will seek to provide a potential location for a helipad on top of the hospital building to reduce patient transfer times and noise and visual impacts for residents.

Application of Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Schedule 1 of the Major Projects SEPP sets out those classes of development that qualify as major projects. Specifically, Group 7 'Health and public service facilities', Part 18 'Hospitals' notes the following:

(1) Development that has a capital investment value of more than \$15 million for the purpose of providing professional health care services to people admitted as inpatients (whether or not out-patients are also cared for or treated there), including ancillary facilities for:

- (a) day surgery, day procedures or health consulting rooms, or*
- (b) accommodation for nurses or other health care workers, or*
- (c) accommodation for persons receiving health care or for their visitors, or*
- (d) shops or refreshment rooms, or*
- (e) transport of patients, including helipads and ambulance facilities, or*
- (f) educational purposes, or*
- (g) research purposes, whether or not they are used only by hospital staff or health care workers and whether or not any such use is a commercial use, or*
- (h) any other health-related use.*

(2) For the purposes of this clause, professional health care services include preventative or convalescent care, diagnosis, medical or surgical treatment, psychiatric care or care for people with disabilities, care or counselling services provided by health care professionals.

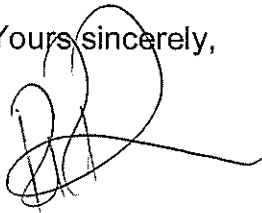
The proposed Stage 1 and 2A works for the Wagga Wagga Hospital Redevelopment are consistent with the above non-discretionary criteria with regards to the services they will deliver. The Project Application has a CIV of approximately \$173.7 million and therefore meets the SEPP criteria as a major project.

Request for Director Generals Requirements

Health Infrastructure requests that the Department of Planning issue the Director General Requirements (DGRs) to facilitate the preparation of the Environmental Assessment under section 75H of the EP&A Act 1979 for this Project Application.

If you require any additional information please contact Jeremy Oakes on 0435 868 912 or Leoné McEntee on 9661 8019. We would be happy to meet with your Department to discuss the proposal at any time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R Rust', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Rust
Chief Executive

