



09 August 2018

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Via email –  
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**COFFS HARBOUR HOSPITAL EXPANSION, 345 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, COFFS  
HARBOUR (SSD 8981)**

Dear David,

On 2 July 2018, the Department of Planning and Environment requested the Government Architect NSW (GANSW) provide an independent design review of application SSD 8981 for the Coffs Harbour Hospital Expansion. In conducting the review, GANSW has considered the EIS submitted by Geolink on 18 June 2018 and its appendices. A design review also took place on 1 August 2018 attended by Health Infrastructure, MSJ Architects and an independent hospital design expert.

The proposed Coffs Harbour Hospital Expansion responds to increasing demand for local health services as a result of an aging population and growing indigenous and refugee communities. The proposed development comprises:

- a new three storey clinical services building with new main entry
- new roadworks, carparking and associated landscaping
- refurbishment of the existing 'Main Building A'.

Overall, we support the proposed building as an attractive, responsive and efficient addition to the existing hospital. The proposal is based on good, clearly presented design principles. The following comments are offered:

**Site strategies and public domain**

The proposed building is well sited for visibility, accessibility and potential civic generosity. It has direct vehicular access from the Pacific Highway and internal roads and parking have a logical arrangement. While most visitors are likely to arrive at the hospital via car or bus, pedestrian access from the Pacific Highway should be welcoming and navigable with crossings provided.

The main entry forecourt provides northern landscaped areas with seating and is supported. Opportunities to provide a larger garden with a paved 'shared zone' connection back to the hospital should be investigated. The area of hardstand at the centre of the forecourt indicated for bus parking / turning would be better used as a garden for hospital users and should be explored. While the landscaped café courtyard is supported, the existing carpark to the east of the café could be partially reclaimed as additional landscaping to offer further places for people to sit.

**Main entry and wayfinding**

The shaded colonnade is likely to offer pleasant access to the public entry, located at the eastern end of the proposed building. This entry, which is set back and angled east, may not be clearly visible to people arriving from the Pacific Highway and options for better delineation should be explored. It is also recommended that the colonnade extend around the building to the west to allow covered access to the existing Emergency Department and improve the pedestrian amenity to this façade.

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It is understood that the area indicated at the western end of the ground floor is for future Emergency Department expansion. The way in which this space is articulated and used prior to expansion should be made clear. The staff travel corridor may isolate the front of house area from the future Emergency Department. We recommend the ground floor planning strategy be reviewed to verify wayfinding is intuitive and space is generously provided.

### **Built form and articulation.**

The form and articulation of the proposed building façade is generally supported for its simple expression and provision of solar shading to windows. The central part of the plant room level façade presents as an unbroken expanse of cladding and could be better articulated to integrate with the overall façade composition. The western stair core might also be better expressed, particularly by picking up the horizontal datum line formed by the undercroft.

### **Internal amenity**

Further to the practical requirements of clinical healthcare, the interior design should allow for a comfortable, relaxed visitor experience while supporting patient recovery. Detailed strategies to achieve high levels of internal amenity for patients, staff and visitors should be provided. Consideration should be given to the height of windows, especially in the café, and the use of skylights as opportunities to see the sky.

### **ESD Strategy**

Sustainability should be a fundamental aspect of every new public building. An ESD strategy should identify and commit to ESD targets via the adoption of a ratings system such as Green Star. Solar power generation, solar water heating, external solar shading and rainwater systems should be incorporated in the proposal.

### **Public art, cultural heritage and community consultation**

The proposed expansion should support the specific needs and reflect the cultural heritage of the diverse community which includes large indigenous and refugee populations. Consultation and engagement is crucial to identify specific cultural needs and to verify the proposal is welcoming, accommodating and supportive. While the early development of a public art strategy is commended, public art should be developed with community to celebrate cultural heritage, and be integral to the architecture and landscape design.

I trust that this information is helpful and look forward to seeing this project as it progresses. Please contact Emma Kirkman if you have any queries in regards to this letter.

Sincerely,



Olivia Hyde  
Director of Design Excellence