

Submission - Staged Redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital - Tony Wilson - 27 October 2019

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1. Summary

This submission examines the various re-submitted reports for the Staged Redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital.

The submission examines the negative impact this development will have on parking and traffic in the area. It brings to your attention the grave risks for accidents from children trying to access the schools in the area. Finally, the submission argues that the planned Respite Care will destroy the heritage value of the landscape, taking away a part of our local history.

The submission will point at the various inadequacies of the reports, asking for better planning around alleviating traffic and parking issues.

This submission argues that the area cannot accommodate such a development, as we are already suffering from the shortcomings of the existing arrangement. Doubling up the size of the current development sounds incomprehensible to local residents. The Applicant should reconsider the scale of the development, and plan to re-develop the site to a hospital of the current size, but with parking and traffic management options that will correct the mistakes of the past.

The objections in this submission need to be considered at this concept stage of the development. Issues like traffic flow, parking and proximity to schools do not demand just mitigation actions to be planned at a later stage. These are issues engraved into this locality and addressing them will have an impact on the whole concept of the proposal.

Regards,

Tony Wilson

2. Inadequate Parking

The current hospital has 78 beds and 150 parking spots, which have not been adequate. St Vincents Road has been used to accommodate the remaining parking needs, creating major traffic on this small local road.

HammondCare's own parking assessment notes the minimum public transport available in the area. It does not account for visitors driving on the weekends to visit their relatives. The only two bus routes passing in front of the hospital (261 & 265) have just 19 services during Saturdays (compared with 42 during weekdays) and ZERO during Sundays. This means that the only avenue for relatives to visit the hospital during Sundays is by car. In addition, the senior living units will create the need for permanent parking and those cars will be on site 24/7. There is simply not enough parking available in the proposal to accommodate the senior living permanent parking needs and the volume of weekend visitors parking. The small residential streets will end up becoming the hospital's parking lot.

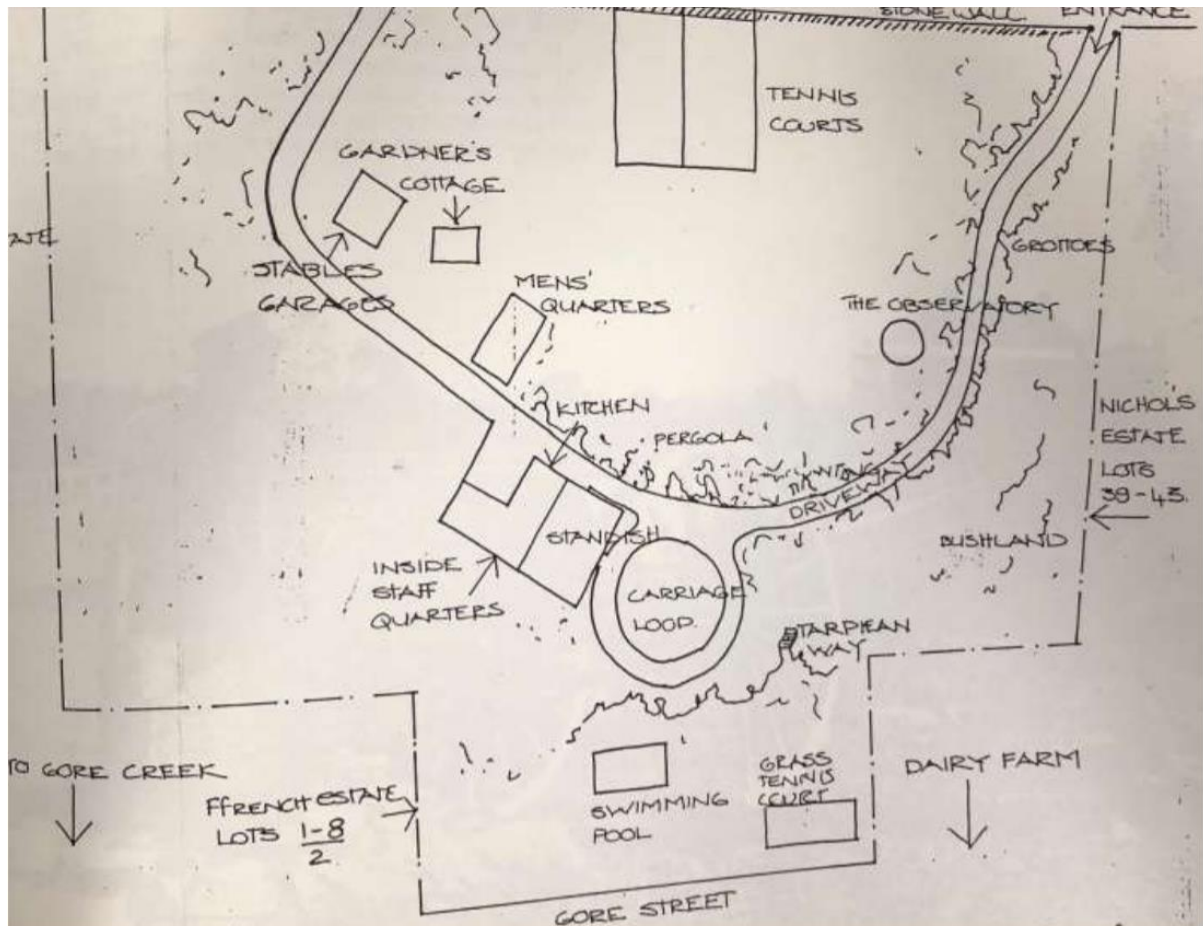
On these grounds, we are against the proposal, as it does not accommodate for the parking needs it will generate.

3. Heritage

The proposal includes the building of a Respite Care unit at Lot 4, DP 584287. That area is a Heritage Listing area in the State Heritage Register. The heritage item is not just the house in the middle of that lot, but the whole landscape. The reason why it is significant is that Lot 4 is all that is left in the area, as an example of European settlement, including the use of the gardens and driveways, fenced paddock and pools.

The heritage reports focus on the house and the views FROM the house. Those views are only enjoyed by hospital staff, as the house is not open to public. The heritage views are for the whole landscape, as it is enjoyed by the local residents. It is the whole Lot 4 with the heritage restrictions, not just the house. Pallister house is not visible from St Vincents Road, but the landscape area is.

The reason why Lot 4 is a Heritage listed area is because it includes the most historical architectural features of the property. That is Palister House, the main path to River Road and the gardens. The area that currently is not heritage listed and is occupied by the hospital used to have the stables, gardener's and other workers' living quarters. The Proposed Respite Care is right at the entry path to Palister House, occupying half the landscape that currently is included in Lot 4.



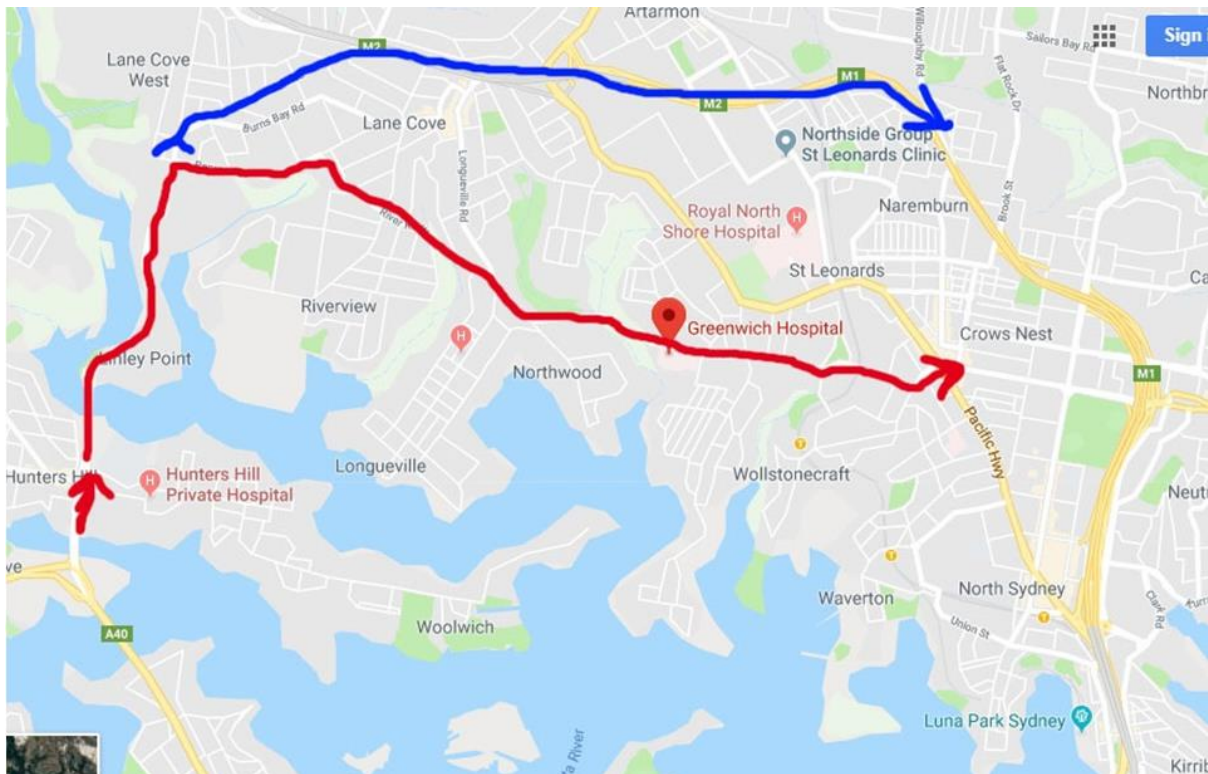
Allowing the development of those villas within this heritage listed landscape will steal from future generations the ability to experience the landscape of that significant period in Australia's history. With such a huge planned development of the hospital, there is plenty of space for the Respite Care to be included in the land outside the Heritage area

On these grounds, we are against the proposal, as the Respite Care will destroy the heritage value of Lot 4.

4. Traffic

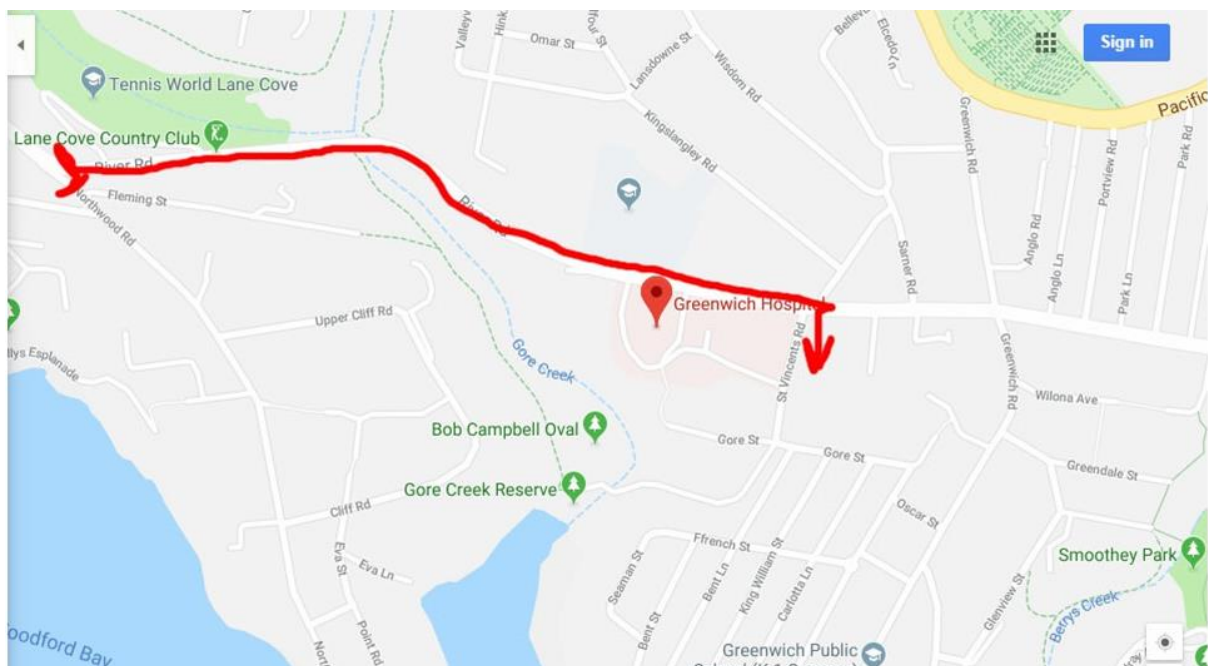
The traffic report is grossly inadequate for the development and the area. It refuses to calculate the traffic patterns generated by drivers' behaviour to avoid traffic deadlocks in the area. The report concedes that "This rational behaviour of drivers optimizing their travel times is not reflected in the model as SIDRA is a micro-analytic tool". The traffic issues in the area are largely generated because of drivers' behaviour.

River Road is a 50km residential road, where a school operates next to it. However, the road network at the north shore of Sydney is funnelling a vast number of cars to this small residential road. The reason is that River Road is the first and quickest access drivers have entering the North Shore from Gladesville Bridge heading to North Sydney or Neutral Bay (see red line below).



The other available option is to use Epping Road (see blue line above), which is not a preferred one as Epping Road experiences even worse traffic since the creation of the Lane Cove Tunnel. At peak times, drivers will use River Road, even if it has large traffic volumes, as other alternatives are even worse for them.

St Vincents Road also experiences heavier traffic volumes than normal. This is because of the one kilometre stretch of road at River Road in front of the hospital where there are no left or right turns (see red line below).



St Vincents Road is the first exit of River Road to the Greenwich peninsula. East bound drivers will turn right at St Vincents Road, to avoid the traffic deadlock at the top of the hill at Greenwich Road. Those are the drivers to Greenwich peninsula, including parents driving their children to Greenwich School (K-1 Campus), private school buses picking up children from Greenwich and staff accessing the hospital from the side access road.

See this video (<https://1drv.ms/v/s!ApFfH4x6m3-5gSDUw5xGCwhkb8J6>) to appreciate how this small residential road becomes a traffic hazard. The video was shot in front of the access road to the hospital. Cars have to wait behind parked cars for the oncoming traffic to clear and local residents have to be extra careful when they exit their driveways, as parked cars block the view to the oncoming traffic.

The intersection of St Vincents and River Road generates additional traffic hazards. One of the two east bound lanes is blocked with cars turning right into St Vincent Road, as they have to wait for the oncoming traffic to clear. The cars waiting to turn are piling up and after five or more cars are stopped, the tail reaches the top of the hill, which becomes a traffic hazard when cars find suddenly that lane blocked with no early visual warning, due to the crest.



This is exactly the reason why the traffic report suggests blocking the right turn to the Emergency hospital entry for east bound traffic. However, this will just push even more traffic to St Vincents Road. It will not help the traffic on River Road at all, as more cars will be turn right at St Vincents Road and the waiting line to turn right will grow even more.

All these issues are current. The traffic deadlock and hazards at St Vincents Road are current. The application has no suggestions to address the current traffic issues and on top, suggests that doubling the traffic will create no additional hazards.

A proper traffic report would include comparison traffic volumes to similar residential roads in the area that are not affected by this preferred drivers' route. That would have brought up that River Road and St Vincents Road are not typical residential roads, but main traffic arteries in the area, serviced by basically a one lane access lane.

In addition, HammondCare can produce comparison reports on the traffic effects of their building by providing traffic volume surveys before and after construction on other buildings they manage, like in Hammondville, NSW.

On these grounds, we are against the proposal, as the locality that the hospital is built upon has special traffic needs that cannot accommodate a development as the proposed one is.

5. Greenwich Public School

The hospital is opposite to Greenwich Public School. The limited parking in the area makes it very hard for parents to access the school. The intersection at St Vincents Road makes it impossible to drive through River Road to the other side of St Vincent Road and access the school from the side streets.

In addition, children coming from Greenwich peninsula have only one crossing to reach the school: the main traffic lights at the hospital. Increasing the volume of traffic to double will mean that children will have to navigate daily through all the extra traffic, both pedestrian and cars accessing the hospital car parks.

On these grounds, we are against the proposal, as there has been no accommodation for the safety of the children attending the school opposite to the hospital.

6. Bushfire Hazard - Landscaping

HammondCare has shown no interest in up keeping and preserving the landscape of Lot 4. The only maintenance they perform is by clipping small patches of grass with ride on mower. The area has accumulated bushfire fuel, with bark, leaf litter and cut-off logs creating a hazardous blanket.

While this was raised at the initial submission, no attempt was made to address current issues. The whole area occupied by the Hospital is adjacent to a reserve. If HammondCare shows no interest in maintaining their current area, no voluminous report will ensure that they will start doing this sometime in the future. I invite the readers of this submission to have a look at the following photos of the current unmaintained landscape and consider how much they would entrust HammondCare with the safety of their children, if their bedrooms were neighbouring this area.



On these grounds, we are against the proposal, as HammondCare is not currently a Bushfire sensitive organisation and they have not displayed in their proposal that they intent to become one.