

Response to questions from the Independent Planning Commission in relation to Redevelopment of Greenwich Hospital (SSD-8699)

The Independent Planning Commission (the Commission) sought further clarification on matters raised during the Department's presentation on 1 October 2020 and in correspondence dated 28 October and 30 October 2020. The Department's response is provided below:

1. *Council's DCP requires a two-to-one replacement ratio for trees that are cut down*

Department Response:

The Department notes that clause 11 of the SRD SEPP stipulates DCPs do not apply to State significant development.

Notwithstanding, the Department has considered this request. The Department notes that Council's current DCP requires a tree planting ratio of 1:1. While Council is considering introducing a tree planting ratio of 2:1, to increase canopy cover to address climate change and the district plan, it would not be appropriate for the site as it is identified as bushfire prone land and landscaping on site is required to be managed accordingly. The existing use on the site is categorised as Special Fire Protection Purposes (SFPP) development in Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006 (PBP). SFPP development needs to include workable and defensible space around the development, to assist firefighting and/or evacuate occupants or other vulnerable members of the community with restricted mobility due to age, disability or other incapacity.

The Applicant's Bushfire Hazard Assessment Report and the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) recommended that the site be managed as an inner protection area (IPA), except the bushland to the south-west and land within the heritage curtilage. PBP requires that an IPA must have a tree canopy cover of less than 15 per cent and should be setback from the development by two metres. While the eastern lot does not have to be managed as an IPA, it is heavily vegetated and additional planting has the potential to crowd the site and restrict trees from reaching maturity.

The Environment, Energy and Science Group (EESG) of the Department recommended a planting ratio of greater than 1:1. The proposal seeks to remove 86 trees (comprising 55 trees within the development footprint and 31 structurally compromised, dead or exempt specimen trees) and plant 60 trees. The Department has recommended a condition requiring a minimum 86 trees be planted. This would offset the trees being directly removed for the development as well as trees that are no longer viable on the site. This is the minimum requirement, and further trees could be provided as part of the detailed design where landscaping and bushfire risks can be assessed in detail, including any evacuation requirements.

2. Landscaping requirements

Department Response:

Further to discussions with the Commission, the Department provides further changes to recommended Condition B6 in Part B of Schedule 2 (as shown **bold** below) in relation to landscaping requirements for future applications:

Landscaping

All future development applications for new built form must include:

- (a) detailed landscape plans identifying the vegetation to be removed or relocated, and the location of replacement and additional landscaping. The plans must:
 - (i) be generally in accordance with the Landscape Concept Proposal submitted with the RtS;
 - (ii) demonstrate that replacement tree planting of a minimum 1:1 is provided for all trees to be removed as part of the application;
 - (iii) include sufficient planting to create a landscaped area buffer zone around “Pallister” and screen the new buildings from “Pallister”;
 - (iv) provide specific details on how the parking areas and the landscaped setting of the area surrounding “Pallister” would respect and reintroduce the historical landscaped setting and character of “Pallister”;
 - (v) include additional planting in the front setback to the northern seniors living building envelope;
 - (vi) include relevant details of the species to be planted (preferably species of local provenance), pot size of plantings (**including larger pot sizes to support quicker maturity to restore the canopy cover for the site**), growth area and the landscape treatments, including any pavement and seating areas;
 - (vii) **consider opportunities for additional tree planting where this can be managed in relationship to bushfire risks; and**
 - (viii) consider opportunities for the inclusion of green roofs above new buildings.
- (b) an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, including detailed root mapping, which demonstrates that the proposed works would not be detrimental to the long term health of the existing trees retained on-site, along River Road and adjoining properties.

3. Government Architect NSW and the NSW State Design Review Panel

- Confirm that the requirement to engage with Government Architect NSW is imposed through Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the detailed application stage.
- Confirm whether Design Review could be a requirement imposed by SEARs for the detailed application stage (as allowed for by the NSW State Design Review Panel (SDRP) Terms of Reference) or whether it would be for the discretion of Government Architect NSW.
- Advise whether a condition of consent (applied to the concept application) requiring the Applicant to present detailed designs for Design Review would be appropriate or necessary to ensure design excellence.

Department Response:

- The Department would generally include a requirement in the SEARs that consultation with the Government Architect NSW (through the SDRP process) be undertaken prior to lodgement of the application/EIS for a development of the proposed nature.
- The requirement for Design Review would generally be at the discretion of Government Architect NSW but is guided by the relevant assessment team.
- A condition is not recommended, as there are no specific design excellence provisions in the LEP. Notwithstanding, given the site contains a State listed heritage item and sensitive riparian bushland, the Department would recommend Design Review at preparation of the SEARs stage, subject to Government Architect NSW endorsement.

4. *Government Architect NSW and the NSW State Design Review Panel*

- Confirm whether Condition A5 is considered necessary to make the proposal acceptable? If so, could the Department please explain what impacts Condition A5 seeks to control, and why those impacts are not adequately addressed by Condition A4?

Department Response:

- Building envelopes are greater than the achievable gross floor area (GFA), to allow for building components that do not count as floor space but contribute to building design and articulation (such as balconies, lifts, stairs and open circulation space).
- The seniors living building envelopes have a total floor area of 20,245sqm (excluding basement areas) and the area of the floors above the heights prescribed by Condition A4 equates to 3,128sqm, which is 15.5 per cent of the floor area.

The Applicant advised that the achievable GFA of the proposed envelopes is 13,000sqm. The corresponding reduction in GFA from the loss of floor area required by Condition A4 would be 2,009sqm, resulting in a maximum achievable GFA of 10,991sqm.

If the GFA of the proposed building envelopes is an accurate representation of what the building envelope could provide, it would be reasonable to include a limit on GFA to accurately recognise the reduced size of the envelope, and ensure that the design of future buildings does not reduce the zone provided for articulation and fill the envelope at the expense of design due to the reduction in height.

Accordingly, the Department considers Condition A5 is necessary to ensure that the design of future buildings is not compromised, and the area required for articulation of the buildings is retained.

Recommended:



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Approved:



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