

1 March 2007

The Hon Frank Sartor
Minister for Planning
Level 34 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

**RE: PART 3A CONCEPT PLAN, UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UTS)
KURING-GAI CAMPUS, LINDFIELD**

We refer to a previous letter dated 1 February 2006, in which the Department advised CRI Australia that the Minister had agreed to consider the UTS site as potentially State Significant and be included within Schedule 3 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005.

We were also advised that the Minister in making his decision noted that a concept plan for the redevelopment of the site is to be lodged in the future to support the proposal.

As you are aware, UTS has already prepared a significant body of assessment documentation in a draft State Significant Study. However, due to the complexity of the project and range of issues affecting the site UTS is of the view that it would be beneficial to lodge a Concept Plan together with a State Significant Study for the SEPP amendment for the site so that they can be concurrently placed on public exhibition and be subsequently assessed by the Department. Depending upon the final option chosen for the Concept Plan there could be potential for an element of prohibited use. Accordingly we seek that approval be granted for concurrent consideration of the 2 applications under Section 72 (i) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. In this way the Concept Plan can inform the SEPP Application and vice versa and will enable the community to accurately interpret the type of development envisaged by the SEPP.

This suggestion was raised with you at the meeting between UTS and yourself on 18 December 2006 and we now seek your confirmation that the project is a Major Project subject to Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and formally authorises the submission of a Concept Plan application together with a State Significant Study for the inclusion of the Site within Schedule 3 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005.

In support of this we believe that the proposal also meets the criteria of Group 5 Residential, Commercial or Retail Projects under Schedule 1 of the Major Projects SEPP as, in developing a Concept Plan, UTS will consider a range of outcomes across the site that might incorporate:

- Residential uses in a range of housing types and densities potentially in the order of 20 dwellings/hectare and possibly up to 22 dwellings/hectare depending on the preferred scenario;
- Retention of the existing buildings to provide for possible educational and ancillary uses; or
- A mix of residential uses while retaining the existing educational buildings

The justification for this view is threefold. Firstly the Minister has already agreed to consider nominating the site as "State Significant" under Schedule 3 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 which is a clear indicator of the potential significance of the site. Secondly, given the size of the site, any of the above development scenarios, including a low density development, would exceed a capital investment value of \$50 million (excluding land value and Section 94 contributions). Thirdly, in support of our view that the project is a construction project of State Significance we highlight the following circumstances and background information:

- Demand for places within the Nursing program at the Kuring-gai Campus has been steadily declining relative to the City Campus and as a consequence the future strength of the UTS program may be at risk.
- In Teacher Education (which is only provided at Kuring-gai), the State Government has been encouraging UTS to shift its load away from exclusively primary teacher training towards secondary teacher training especially in Maths and Science which have major staff shortages. Maths and Science, including Science laboratories, are only located at the City Campus.

- This is further supported by the current development of a new science facility at the City Campus which would be complemented if the loads from Kuring-gai were consolidated in the City.
- In both the cases of Nursing and Teacher Education, UTS is at serious risk of not being able to meet the State Government's needs in the medium term without investing in these two educational areas at the City Campus.
- The continuing duplication of services and arrangements at multiple campuses also places UTS at a further disadvantage in the Higher Education Sector.

We believe that the meeting of the State Government's needs in terms of Nursing and Teacher Education to ensure the supply of competent professional graduates is an issue of State importance and that the delivery of this major Construction project will facilitate improved public service delivery outcomes in the areas of Health and Education. Accordingly, based on the draft guideline Criteria for Construction Projects under the Major Projects SEPP we believe that the most relevant of these criteria is (d) whereby the project will complement and enhance government infrastructure services and facilitate improved public services and facilitate improved public service delivery outcomes.

More detail about the project is outlined in the attached Project Synopsis which outlines key design principles and articulates the potential form of the project.

Should you have any queries in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Tracey Wadsworth from CRI.

Yours sincerely

Peter J. Wills, AC
Chairman
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cc Mr Jason Perica
 Department of Planning

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