

Royal North Shore Hospital

Major Project MP06-0051

Application for Modification of Approval
under Section 75W of the Environmental
Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Tree Removal

November 2008

urbis



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Prepared for NSW Health

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Executive Summary

It is proposed to modify the existing consent for site preparatory works to include the removal of certain trees where necessary in undertaking the works required to prepare for the construction of the new hospital and community health facility.

The proposed trees to be retained and removed are illustrated in the plan attached at **Appendix B**.

In assessing the need to remove certain trees, consideration has been made in relation to:

- The significance of each tree. An Arboricultural Assessment (**Appendix D**) and Heritage Tree Study (**Appendix C**) has been prepared in this regard.
- The footprint of buildings and construction works, including early works (see plans at **Appendix B and E**). Importantly, the majority of the trees earmarked for removal are located within the footprint of the already approved concept plan. A plan has been prepared to demonstrate this, see **Appendix F**.
- All trees to be removed will be replaced. A landscape plan will be included with the proposed hospital project application. This plan is included at **Appendix G** for illustrative purposes.

In summary, trees are only to be removed where necessary. Stands of significant trees will remain together with all removed trees being replaced in the context of the construction of the new hospital.

It is recommended that the modification be granted in accordance with the terms outlined in **Section 2** of the report and the recommendations of the attached Arboricultural Assessment be adopted to ensure the protection of significant trees throughout the construction process.

1 Introduction

This application, made under Section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, is made on behalf of NSW Health and Infrashore - a public and private sector partnership created to deliver the redevelopment of the Royal North Shore Hospital (RNSH) site.

On 13 April 2007, the Minister for Planning approved:

- The Concept Plan for the overall redevelopment of the RNSH site; and,
- Project Approval for the demolition of buildings and site preparatory works.

The approved scope of works, (and exclusions), are defined under MP06-0051, a copy of which is attached as **Appendix A**.

The approval has been modified twice to date. The past modifications relate to the timing for the approval of a Transport, Management and Accessibility Plan, and to remove the requirement for further approval to place temporary demountable buildings on the site.

With respect to early works, approval is given to:

- demolish buildings (except those nominated as being of above moderate heritage significance);
- prepare the site (to ground level only); and,
- locate temporary demountable buildings on the site (subject to conditions).

Tree removal does not form part of the approval. (MP06-051, Sch 2, C1.3)

The proponent is ready to proceed with this Critical Infrastructure Project by commencing those early works that are already approved, specifically demolition and site preparatory works.

In order to achieve more efficient site preparatory processes, tree removal would be most appropriately undertaken during demolition and other site preparatory works. However, since tree removal does not form part of the current approval, it is proposed to modify the consent under Section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, to allow such work to be undertaken during the early work phases of the project.

The Project Application for the construction of the hospital and related works is also set to be lodged.

2 Proposed modification

The amendment to the approval will allow for the removal of trees with respect to works related to the core health precinct, to align with the Project Application under preparation for the redevelopment of the same area within the RNSH site. The proposed trees to be removed are depicted in the 'trees to be removed' plan No.DWG-AR-CW-0023 Issue D dated 07.11.08, refer to **Appendix B**.

To allow works related to tree removal to form part of the early works programme, the following modifications to MP06-0051 are proposed:

Existing

C1 Terms of Approval

C1.1 Project approval is given for:

- a) Demolition of buildings on the site (excluding those items identified within the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) as having moderate or higher significance and listed in Condition C2) and preparatory site works to ground level.*

C1.3 Tree removal does not form part of this project approval.

C17.1 All trees on the site directly affected by the works are to be suitably protected by way of tree guards, barriers or other measures as necessary are to be provided to protect root system, trunk and branches, during the works.

Proposed

C1 Terms of Approval

C1.1 Project approval is given for:

- a) Demolition of buildings on the site (excluding those items identified within the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) as having moderate or higher significance and listed in Condition C2) and preparatory site works to ground level, **including the removal of trees as indicated in 'trees to be removed' plan No.DWG-AR-CW-0023 Issue D dated 07.11.08.***

C1.3 DELETE

C17.1 All trees that are not indicated to be removed as per DWG.AR.CW.0023 Issue D dated 07.11.08 are to be suitably protected by way of tree guards, barriers or other measures as necessary are to be provided to protect root system, trunk and branches, during the works.

3 Assessment

3.1 Introduction

Section 75W of the Act provides a mechanism for the Minister to modify an existing approval by either revoking or varying a condition of the approval or by imposing an additional condition of the approval, and/or by changing the terms of any determination made. In the case of this proposed modification it is proposed to modify both the Terms of Approval and conditions imposed on the approval.

Given the lack of specific heads of consideration under this Part, the assessment of this application to modify the project approval is merit based.

In assessing the need to remove trees, the following considerations are relevant:

- The significance of any tree.
- The footprint of buildings and construction works, including early works.
- The replacement of removed trees.

3.2 Tree significance

The application is accompanied by a Tree Heritage Study, prepared by Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects Pty Ltd, dated April 2005 and an Arboricultural Assessment, prepared by Urban Tree Management dated October 2008, refer to **Appendices C and D** respectively.

A Heritage Tree Study identified stands of trees that carry some significance to the site and the streetscape within which they are read. The plan attached to the report called 'heritage – vegetation' dated 11 April 2006 illustrates the location of these significant stands. Consideration of the hospital layout and design has been made relative to these stands and the trees have been retained where possible.

An Arboricultural Assessment has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of all significant trees within the hospital precinct. This report assesses the condition of trees and identifies all trees that require removal due to poor condition, undesirable species or whether they are located in too close a proximity to the proposed building and construction footprint.

A number of trees will be removed, but cognisant of the heritage significance of certain stands, where possible, many will be retained. The Arboricultural Assessment includes a Statement of Commitment that outlines which trees will be retained or removed and the measures to be employed to ensure the protection of significant trees throughout the construction process.

3.3 Building footprint

Plans have been prepared to illustrate the tree locations relative to building footprint of:

- The proposed hospital – **Appendix B**.
- The proposed early works, including temporary car park – see **Appendix E**.
- The already approved concept plan – see **Appendix F**.

Many of the trees proposed to be removed are located within the proposed building footprint or road alignment.

A temporary staff car park is proposed to be located in the north-east corner of the site. This car park is necessary to account for the displacement of car parking currently associated with the hospital which is due for demolition. As illustrated in the staging plans at **Appendix E**, a temporary car park will be constructed as part of the Stage 1 preparatory works in anticipation of the demolition of the car park in

the following stage. It is important to provide this temporary car parking to ensure minimal disruption to the existing operation throughout construction.

Quite separate to the necessity to remove certain trees due to their proximity to proposed works, the removal of most trees has already been accounted for in the existing concept approval. The existing concept plan has been overlaid on the tree removal plan. This demonstrates that the majority of trees had to have been removed due to their location within the approved building envelope.

3.4 Tree replacement

Despite the necessary removal of certain significant trees, all these trees will be replaced in the context of the construction of the new hospital. A landscape plan, attached at **Appendix G** (for illustrative purposes only), will be included with the hospital project application. This landscape includes the comprehensive and coordinated landscaping of the site. Indeed, the final landscaped public domain will be much improved from that existing.

4 Conclusion

The proposed modification would allow certain trees to be removed where necessary in undertaking the works required to prepare for the construction of the new hospital and community health facility.

Consideration has been had in relation to the significance of trees within the curtilage of the construction works and significant trees have been retained where possible.

It is recommended that the modification be granted in accordance with the terms outlined in **Section 2** of the report and the recommendations of the attached Arboricultural Assessment be adopted to ensure the protection of significant trees throughout the construction process.

