

Planning and Assessment

IRF20/1437

Gateway determination report

LGA	The Hills Shire
PPA	The Hills Shire Council
NAME	2 Green Road, Castle Hill Rezoning (50 jobs)
NUMBER	PP_2020_THILL_001_00
LEP TO BE AMENDED	The Hills Local Environment Plan 2019
ADDRESS	2 Green Road, Castle Hill
DESCRIPTION	Lot 102 DP 1130271
RECEIVED	1 April 2020
FILE NO.	IRF20/1437
POLITICAL	There are no donations or gifts to disclose and a political
DONATIONS	donation disclosure is not required.
LOBBYIST CODE OF	There have been no meetings or communications with
CONDUCT	registered lobbyists with respect to this proposal.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Description of planning proposal

The planning proposal **(Attachment AA)** seeks to amend development standards within *The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP)* 2019 applicable to the subject site, 2 Green Road, Castle Hill, to facilitate the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre (172 Showground Road, Castle Hill) for care and storage facilities for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences collections. The planning proposal seeks the following amendments:

- Rezone part R2 Low Density Residential on 2 Green Road to SP2 Infrastructure (Information and Education Facilities); and
- Increase the maximum building height for part of 2 Green Road from 10m to 15m.

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) currently encompasses the Powerhouse in Ultimo, Sydney Observatory in The Rocks and the Museum Discovery Centre (MDC) in Castle Hill.

As part of the relocation of the Powerhouse from Ultimo to Parramatta, the expansion of the MDC in Castle Hill is required to support the operations of the Powerhouse in Parramatta. The MDC would be expanded to include a purpose-built facility for the care and storage of MAAS's collections. The expansion would need to be operation prior to the development of the Powerhouse Museum at Parramatta in

2023. This investment would reduce the need for collection treatment and storage in Parramatta.

Concept plans identify the development with a building height of 14.35m, accommodation 9,800m² of gross floor area and provide approximately 50 jobs. The planning proposal seeks to rezone approximately 6,990m² of land of the subject site.

The proposal would assist with optimising the use of existing public land (being the TAFE site and the adjoining Museum Discovery Centre) through the co-location and intensification of services.

There are no floor space ratio or maximum building height development standards that currently apply to the MDC site under *The Hills LEP 2019*. The proposed land use zone, SP2 Infrastructure, is consistent with the existing land use zone on the MDC site.

1.2 Site description

The subject site, 2 Green Road, Castle Hill (Lot 102 DP 1130271), is located on the corner of Showground Road and Green Road (Figure 1, site identified in red). The site is regular in shape with an area of approximately 3.8ha. The area subject to land use and height amendments is 6,990m².



Figure 1 Site Map (Source: Attachment AC)

The subject site contains a TAFE campus, car park, dam in the north-eastern corner and scattered vegetation with a concentration on the western boundary adjoining the MDC. The TAFE campus caters for approximately 400 students. Vehicle access

points to the site are located on Green Road and Showground Road. A longstanding agreement between TAFE and the MDC permits vehicle access to the MDC from the Green Road access point of the TAFE site. Sunderland Avenue to the north abuts the site's northern boundary but does not provide access.

The existing buildings on the MDC site are large warehouse style structures that have a building height ranging from 7.5m on the western end of the site, to 11.6m, 13m, 14.5m and 17m. The tallest building is in the centre of the site (Building G – as shown in Figure 2). The proposed expansion on 2 Green Road would be in a similar position but would extend further north towards the residential area.

The subject site is owned by the Minister Administering the Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1990, the NSW Government authority responsible for managing TAFE colleges. The Museum Discovery Centre is owned by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

The planning proposal seeks to amend development standards to facilitate a new building immediately adjoining the MDC's eastern property boundary (identified as Building J in Figure 1 and shown in Figure 2). The building would require the removal of approximately 337 trees and existing car park supporting the TAFE.



Figure 2 Proposed Site Plan (Source: Attachment AC)

1.3 Existing planning controls

The Hills LEP 2019 contains the following development standards for the subject site:

- Part R2 Low Density Residential and part zoned as SP2 Infrastructure (Classified Road)
- Maximum Height of Building of 10m

- Minimum Lot Size of 450m²
- Identified as an 'Urban Release Area'

The subject site is not mapped in the LEP with a maximum floor space ratio.

The subject site is in the vicinity of a local heritage item - General I28 being Windsor Road from Baulkham Hills to Box Hill listed in Schedule 5 Environmental Heritage of the LEP.

It is noted in the Planning Proposal (Attachment AA) that when Council converted the land use zones under the Baulkham Hills LEP 2005 to the Standard Instrument LEP, Council was required to zone smaller education facilities and schools the adjoining land use zone being R2 Low Density Residential. This site was previously zoned Special Uses 5(c).

1.4 Surrounding area

The subject site is surrounded by established low density residential areas to the north and east. Detached dwellings directly abut the northern property boundary for both the subject site and the MDC site. A public park also abuts the two sites' northern boundaries.

To the south and south east is the Castle Hill industrial area containing a mix of warehouses, industrial units and bulky goods retail premises. A context map is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3 Site Context Map (Source: Attachment AC)

The subject site has access to the Sydney arterial motorway road network through easy access to Windsor Road and Showground Road. The site has access to two metro stations, Showground Road metro station to the east and Norwest metro station to the west.

1.5 Summary of recommendation

The planning proposal has merit and should proceed subject to conditions as it would enable the expansion of the existing Museum Discovery Centre to support the Powerhouse in Parramatta.

The proposal is consistent with the strategic framework and would support the cultural infrastructure and jobs growth within The Hills Shire.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Objectives or intended outcomes

The objective of the planning proposal is to facilitate the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre (172 Showground Road, Castle Hill) on 2 Green Road, Castle Hill, for a purpose-built facility for the care and storage of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences collections.

This expansion is required to support the operations of the Powerhouse in Parramatta and must be operational prior to construction of the Parramatta Powerhouse in 2023.

The objectives of the proposal are clear and do not require amendment.

2.2 Explanation of provisions

The proposed outcomes would be achieved by the following amendments to *The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019*:

- Rezone part of the subject site from R2 Low Density Residential to SP2 Infrastructure (Information and Education Facilities); and
- Amend the maximum height of building from 10m to 15m over part of the subject site.

The SP2 Infrastructure (Classified Road) land use zone fronting Showground Road would not be altered.

2.3 Mapping

The planning proposal includes amendments to the following maps supporting *The Hills LEP 2019* instrument:

- Land Zoning (LZN_016) 7420_COM_LZN_016_020_20181112
- Height of Buildings (HOB_016) 7420_COM_HOB_016_020_20190416

The existing and proposed LEP maps are shown below in Figures 4 and 5. The maps submitted are sufficient for community consultation.



Figure 4 Existing (left) and Proposed (right) Land Zoning Map (Source: Attachment AA)



Figure 5 Existing (left) and Proposed (right) Height of Building Map (Source: Attachment AA)

3. NEED FOR THE PLANNING PROPOSAL

The planning proposal is not the result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement, strategic study or report.

The proponent initiated the planning proposal on behalf of Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the owners of the adjoining Museum Discovery Centre, with the consent of the TAFE site. The planning proposal responds to the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum from Ultimo to Parramatta and to cater for existing and future growth of MAAS' collection.

The planning proposal is considered to be the most appropriate way to achieve the intended outcomes for the site. The existing Land Use Zoning, being predominantly R2 Low Density Residential, does not appropriately reflect the intended use of the site for a regional cultural facility.

Rezoning a portion of the subject land to SP2 Infrastructure (Information and Education Facilities) would facilitate the necessary expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre to assist with the MAAS' collection treatment and storage.

4. STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

4.1 District

Central City District Plan

The Central City District Plan was released in March 2018. The planning proposal identifies the following planning priorities are relevant:

• C3: 'Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs'

The proposal would support the growth and development of Western Sydney's arts and cultural sector, specifically the relocation of the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta. The expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre plays an integral role to support the Powerhouse Museum's operations in Parramatta. The planning proposal is consistent with this Planning Priority.

• C4: 'Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities'

The Museum Discovery Centre is identified as one of the District's arts/ cultural facilities and cultural experiences. This planning proposal would assist in supporting the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre for the storage and treatment of MAAS collections. The planning proposal is consistent with this Planning Priority.

• C9: 'Delivering integrated land use and transport planning and a 30-minute city'.

The planning proposal has the potential to create new jobs for residents of The Hills Shire and is accessible by public transport. The planning proposal is consistent with this Planning Priority.

The planning proposal draws attention to two additional planning priorities:

- C15 'Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes'; and
- C16 'Increasing urban tree canopy cover and delivering Green Grid connections'

The planning proposal recommends these priorities should be addressed if the planning proposal proceeds through Gateway and may require further investigation and consultation with Environment, Energy and Science in order to respond adequately. This has been discussed in Section 5 of this report.

4.3 Local

The Hills Future Community Strategic Plan

The Hills *Future Community Strategic Plan* articulates Council's and the community's shared vision, values, aspirations and priorities with reference to other local government plans, information and resourcing capabilities.

The proposal would support the growing population by providing jobs and services within the local area. The planning proposal is consistent with the Community Strategic Plan.

The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement

Council's *Local Strategic Planning Statement: Hills Future 2036* (LSPS) outlines the Shire's 20-year vision for land use planning, population, housing, economic growth and environmental management. The subject site is identified within the Norwest Strategic Centre structure plan for infrastructure purposes (Figure 6).



Figure 6 Norwest Strategic Centre structure plan (Source: Attachment AA)

The LSPS does not identify specific objectives in relation to the Museum Discovery Centre or TAFE, it recognises the contribution that cultural infrastructure makes to the quality of life of residents.

The supporting Productivity and Centres Strategy also identifies the need to continue to create employment opportunities, particularly knowledge-based jobs. The proposed development would provide local job opportunities with the expansion expected to result in an additional 50 jobs on site.

The planning proposal is consistent with Council's LSPS.

Local Planning Panel

The planning proposal was considered by The Hills Local Planning Panel on 20 February 2020 (Attachment AD). The Panel recommended that the planning proposal is suitable to be forwarded to the Department for Gateway Determination.

Should a Gateway Determination be issued, the proponent should be required to submit the following additional information, prior to public exhibition of the proposal:

- Evidence of TAFE's 'in-principle' agreement (via a letter or similar) to:
 - The proposed relocation of tree planting with consideration afforded to implications for any future growth of the TAFE facility;
 - Relocation of car parking spaces within the TAFE site;

- Formalisation of existing access arrangements by creation of an easement to allow vehicular access between the Museum Discovery Centre and TAFE to ensure certainty about a legal right of access; and
- Continued arrangements to accommodate "overflow" parking associated with Museum Discovery Centre weekend events.
- Clarification with respect to the intended arrangements for any tree replanting proposed off-site including negotiation with Council to identify possible suitable planting locations.
- Visual Impact Analysis, indicative landscape plan and photomontages showing views of the proposed development outcome viewed from the lowdensity residential areas along Sunderland Avenue, Sunderland Avenue Reserve to the north and from within the TAFE campus.
- The provision of this information would enable better communication and interpretation of the potential appearance of the proposed development by residents and the TAFE community.

The Department agrees with the recommendations and the Gateway has been conditioned accordingly.

4.4 Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions

Direction 2.6 Remediation of Contaminated Land

This Direction seeks to ensure planning proposal authorities consider contamination and remediation of certain lands as set out in this Direction.

The planning proposal is supported by a Stage 1 'Preliminary Site Investigation' report and a Stage 2 'Detailed Site Investigation' report **(Attachment AC)**.

The preliminary site investigation identified an area of potential environmental concern within the proposed development footprint leading to the Stage 2 detailed site investigation. The report notes the presence of some contaminants within soil samples; however, it was identified that the contaminants are located within land that would either be excavated and removed or covered by concrete.

The Stage 2 report concluded that the identified contaminants are unlikely to result in any unacceptable:

- Direct contact human health exposure,
- Inhalation/vapour intrusion human health exposure, or
- Ecological contamination risk.

Therefore, the report ultimately recommends that the site is suitable for the proposed development.

Direction 3.1 Residential Zones

This Direction seeks to encourage a variety and choice of housing types to provide for existing and future housing needs, to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, and ensure that new housing has appropriate access to infrastructure and services, and to minimise the impact of residential development on the environment and resource lands. The Direction applies when a planning proposal would affect land within an existing or proposed residential zone (including the alteration of any existing residential zone boundary). A planning proposal must not contain provisions which would reduce the permissible residential density of the land.

The subject site is currently zoned R2 Low Density Residential under LEP 2019 and as such, the planning proposal is inconsistent with this direction. The following justification is provided to support the inconsistency:

- The subject site is occupied by TAFE NSW, there are no residential dwellings located on the site. As such, this planning proposal would not result in a reduction of residential density on the site.
- The site was previously zoned Special Uses 5(c) under the Baulkham Hills LEP 2005 but was zoned R2 Low Density Residential when the LEP was converted into the Standard Instrument. Smaller education facilities were required to be zoned the land use consistent with the adjoining lands.

In addition, The Hills LSPS identifies the subject site as 'Infrastructure' Museum and TAFE.

Considering the above, the inconsistency is considered minor and justifiable.

Direction 3.4 Integrating Land Use and Transport

This Direction seeks to facilitate the integration of land uses and transport through measures including improving access to jobs by walking, cycling and public transport, supporting the operation of public transport and reducing trips generated by a development.

The proposal would contribute to local employment opportunities making more jobs accessible to local residents via walking, cycling and public transport. The proposal seeks to rely on existing parking within the Museum and TAFE sites which would reduce private vehicle trips and encourage the use of nearby public transport options including the Metro, On Demand and other local bus services.

The planning proposal is consistent with this Direction.

Direction 6.1 Approval and Referral Requirements

This Direction seeks to ensure that LEP provisions encourage the efficient and appropriate assessment of development. It recommends avoiding including provisions that unnecessarily require approval or concurrence from other authorities.

The proposal does not include any referral or concurrence requirements and is therefore consistent with this Direction.

4.5 State environmental planning policies (SEPPs)

State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011

The State and Regional Development SEPP is largely administrative; identifying and outlining procedural requirements for various types of State and Regional Development. Under the SEPP, 'information and education facilities' can be considered state significant development where the development has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million.

It is considered that the proposal does not undermine the aims or operation of this SEPP.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017

This SEPP seeks to facilitate the effective delivery of educational establishments and early education and care facilities across the State. The SEPP outlines permissibility of various forms of development on education land including schools and TAFE sites.

This SEPP is not strictly relevant to the planning proposal however should be addressed as the proposal seeks to rezone land owned by TAFE to support the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre. The proposal is considered appropriate given the educational nature of the facility, the long-standing relationship between the Museum Discovery Centre and the TAFE, and the proposal does not seek to undermine the operation of this SEPP.

The planning proposal recommends a Gateway Determination condition requires evidence is provided demonstrating TAFE's in principle agreement to any future developments by the Museum Discovery Centre on TAFE's land.

5. SITE-SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT

5.1 Social and Economic

The planning proposal states the proposal would have a positive economic and social effect as it would provide additional local employment opportunities and support the operation of one of The Shire's arts and cultural facilities.

5.2 Environmental

Tree removal

The proposal is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment Tree Survey. It states that 337 trees are to be removed to support the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre. Figure 7 identifies the different groups of trees assessed in the report. It is noted that the land subject to this rezoning does not include 'Stand C', however it is associated with the implications of the proposal.



Figure 7 Stands A, B and C and Car Park trees to be impacted by the proposal (Source: Arboricultural Impact Assessment Tree Survey Attachment AA)

'Stand A' plantation trees include 27 *Melaleuca styphelioides* (Prickly Leaved Paperbark – remnants of a MAAS plantation), 2 *Melia azedarach* (White Cedar) and 1 *Eucalyptus punctata* (Grey Gum). The stand of trees is considered to have low to medium environmental significance.

'Stand B' consists of 227 Corymbia maculata (Spotted Gum) also established by MAAS fifty years ago for oil production. Stand B trees being a dedicated plantation do not have a shrub and near -continuous ground cover layer characteristic of CPW. The trees are planted (from stock sources unknown) not remnant tree species.

'Stand C' would require the removal of 40 *Corymbia maculata* (Spotted Gum) plantation trees to facilitate a new on site car parking. The report states these trees have poor to average condition. The proponent asserts the proposed tree removals do not exceed the threshold for removal of native vegetation under the Biodiversity Offset Scheme. It is noted that Council's planning proposal states the proposed tree removal would exceed the threshold for clearing of native vegetation and subsequently trigger the Biodiversity Offset Scheme. This Gateway has been conditioned for consultation with Environment, Energy and Science Group.

The development would also require the removal of trees in the 'car park' area. These trees would need to be replaced as part of site landscaping works.

Replenishment plantings are unlikely to offset the percentage of lost mature canopy however landscape amenity can be restored with plantings of locally indigenous

trees. The report also identifies trees that are considered to have high to medium environmental and/or landscape significance and can be safety retained as part of the proposal.

MAAS has committed to a replacement ratio of 2:1 for trees that are removed both on and off the site as outlined in the Tree Retention and Removal plan (Attachment **AD**). A plan was provided identifying the trees to be removed and possible investigation areas for replacement planting (Figure 7).

The proponent states the planning mechanism to ensure replanting occurs on the TAFE site would be through a development application with TAFE land owner's consent.



Figure 8 Indicative Planting Locations (Source: Attachment AA)

Council's planning proposal states the replanting strategy is considered reasonable subject to written 'in-principle' agreement from the TAFE and further clarification by the Proponent with respect to intended arrangements for any tree replanting proposed off-site. The proponent would also be required to further consider the implications of the proposed replanting and its potential to inhibit future growth of the TAFE facility.

The above also form part of the resolution of Council should a Gateway Determination be issued. The Department supports this approach and the Gateway has been conditioned accordingly.

The proposed replanting strategy is considered reasonable subject to written 'inprinciple' agreement from the TAFE and further clarification by the Proponent with respect to intended arrangements for any tree replanting proposed off-site. The Proponent would also be required to further consider the implications of the proposed replanting and its potential to inhibit future growth of the TAFE facility.

<u>Heritage</u>

The site is not identified as a heritage item. Council's planning proposal provides a commentary in relation to the area of trees to be removed. The tees to be removed were planted in the late 1940's as a research experiment relating to essential oils/eucalyptus oil. While the plantation is not considered to have heritage value, the Proponent would consider the re-use of timber from the removed trees as part of a future interpretative display and conducting of archival recording before the trees are removed.

Built Form and Amenity

The Proponent's planning proposal was submitted with concept designs of the new building. The Council's planning proposal states the proposal would facilitate an acceptable built form and amenity outcome with the height relatively consistent with the existing development.

The Local Planning Panel (Attachment AD) and the planning proposal (Attachment AA) recommended if the planning proposal was to proceed, Council would require the submission of a visual impact analysis, indicative landscape plan and photomontages to be able to understand the view of the development outcome when viewed from the low density residential areas along Sunderland Avenue, Sunderland Avenue Reserve to the north and from within the TAFE campus.

The Department agrees with this recommendation, the Gateway was been conditioned accordingly.

<u>Traffic</u>

A Traffic and Car Parking Impact Statement was submitted with the planning proposal **(Attachment AC)**. The report concludes that the proposal would have minimal impact on the surrounding roads and intersections.

The Museum Discovery Centre can be accessed by Windsor Road (main access point), Showground Road and Green Road (via the TAFE site).

In relation to the SP2 Infrastructure (Classified Road) land use zone fronting Showground Road on the subject site, the planning proposal does not seek to amend this land use zone.

The planning proposal recommends that if the planning proposal is to proceed, consultation is undertaken with Transport for NSW. The Department agrees, the Gateway has been conditioned accordingly.

Parking

The Traffic and Car Parking Impact Statement states the following:

- Car parking spaces on the TAFE site occupied by the building have been relocated to another area of the TAFE site to ensure a net zero change in car parking spaces for the TAFE (would be subject to a future development application)
- Based on the number of average daily visitors to the Museum Discovery Centre, the Centre requires 63 spaces inclusive of the parking requirements for Building J. Currently there are 54 spaces. An additional 9 spaces would meet the average daily demand.

• It is anticipated that the introduction of the Sydney Metro and implementation of a Green Travel Plan would reduce the demand on car parking spaces.

No further assessment at the planning proposal stage is required, this is a matter for consideration during the development application process.

5.3 Infrastructure

The proposal seeks to expand an existing cultural infrastructure facility to include additional storage and collection preparation areas, with some ancillary office uses. Future development would be levied in accordance with Council's 7.12 Contributions Plan (1% of cost of development) as part of any future development consent.

It is not anticipated that the proposal would result in any increased demand for passive open space, playing fields or community facilities.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Community

A community consultation period of 28 days is considered appropriate.

6.2 Agencies

Referral to the following agencies is recommended:

- Environment, Energy and Science
- Transport for NSW
- NSW Schools Infrastructure
- Endeavor Energy

7. TIME FRAME

Council has proposed 7 months to complete the LEP amendment. The Department considers this an appropriate timeframe for the required consultations and finalisation of the LEP.

8. LOCAL PLAN-MAKING AUTHORITY

Council has requested to be the local plan-making authority. It is considered that Council should be authorised to be the local plan-making authority due to the local nature of the proposal.

9. CONCLUSION

The planning proposal has merit and should proceed subject to conditions as it would enable the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre to accommodate for the storage and treatment of MAAS' collections to support the operations of the Parramatta Powerhouse.

The proposal supports an estimated 50 new jobs and provides mutually beneficial land use to the TAFE site and the Museum Discovery Centre.

10. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the delegate of the Secretary:

1. agree that any inconsistencies with section 9.1 Direction 3.1 Residential Zones are minor or justified.

It is recommended that the delegate of the Minister determine that the planning proposal should proceed subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The planning proposal is to be amended prior to exhibition to address the following:
 - (a) Planning Priority C15 'Protecting and enhancing bushland, biodiversity and scenic and cultural landscapes';
 - (b) Planning Priority C16 'Increasing urban tree canopy cover and delivering Green Grid connections';
 - (c) Visual Impact Analysis, indicative landscape plan and photomontages showing views of the proposed development outcome viewed from the low density residential areas along Sunderland Avenue, Sunderland Avenue Reserve to the north and from within the TAFE campus.
 - (d) Evidence of TAFE's 'in-principle' agreement (via a letter or similar) to:
 - i. Future development on TAFE's land for the expansion of the Museum Discovery Centre;
 - ii. The proposed relocation of tree planting with consideration afforded to implications for any future growth of the TAFE facility;
 - iii. Relocation of car parking spaces within the TAFE site;
 - iv. Formalisation of existing access arrangements by creation of an easement to allow vehicular access between the Museum Discovery Centre and TAFE to ensure certainty about a legal right of access; and
 - v. Continued arrangements to accommodate "overflow" parking associated with Museum Discovery Centre weekend events.
 - (e) Clarification with respect to the intended arrangements for any tree replanting proposed off-site including negotiation with Council to identify possible suitable planting locations.
- 2. The planning proposal should be made available for community consultation for a minimum of 28 days.
- 3. Consultation is required with the following public authorities:
 - Environment, Energy and Science
 - Transport for NSW
 - Department of Education
 - Endeavor energy
- 4. The time frame for completing the LEP is to be 7 months from the date of the Gateway determination.

5. Given the nature of the planning proposal, Council should be the local planmaking authority.

30 April 2020 Gina Metcalfe Acting Director, Central (Western) Central River and Western Parkland City

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