

RECORD OF PRELIMINARY BRIEFING

HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL

BRIEFING DETAILS

BRIEFING DATE / TIME	Tuesday, 30 January 2024
LOCATION	MS Teams Teleconference

BRIEFING MATTERS

PPSHCC-262 – Newcastle – DA2023/01044 – 1/DP1188100 – Educational Establishment – University of Newcastle

PANEL MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE	Alison McCabe (Chair), Tony McNamara, Peta Winney-Baartz
APOLOGIES	Nil
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	John Mackenzie, Roberta Ryan – Employees of University of Newcastle.

OTHER ATTENDEES

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES	Anthony Furniss, Peter Troke, Johannes Johns, Marcel Eggers de Mink, Lachlan Sims, Meeka Prince
COUNCIL ASSESSMENT STAFF:	Iain Watt, Damian Jaeger
DEPARTMENT STAFF	Leanne Harris and Holly McCann

COUNCIL BRIEFING:

- This is before the Panel as it is a Crown DA which exceeds \$5M CIV.
- The proposal involved filling in part of an existing car park (level 2) for a midwifery school.
- The proposal will result in the removal of 141 car parking spaces.
- Applicant attended a pre-DA with Council.
- Presentation of the built form is being considered and application will be going to URDP. However, there are no major issues identified at this stage given location and setting of the building in respect to built form.
- The main issue relates to car parking and Council is concerned that the car parking strategy is not clear.
- Council understands that the University has its own concept/masterplan but this has not been signed off by Council or provided to support this application.
- Application states that there will be no increase in student numbers – replacing the existing midwifery school. This has been noted in SEE but not reflected on the plans.
- Previous DAs have also removed parking, however these haven't proceeded but they have not been surrendered.

Planning Panels Secretariat

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- Council engineers have raised concerns about the approach to traffic and parking investigations (ie haven't considered peak periods of demand). Applicant has based their assessment on 5,600 car parks existing on Campus (80% occupied when the traffic and parking study was conducted).
- Site is bushfire prone but this can be dealt with.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION:

- Overview of the proposal and site context.
- Description of the existing building and pedestrian linkages.
- Rationale and overview of the proposed design with access arrangements and connections between level 2 and level 3.
- Proposed elevations.
- Proposal results in removal of staff / specialised parking which will be accommodated elsewhere across the campus based on submitted traffic and parking analysis.
- The University supports sustainable transport initiatives seeking to reduce reliance on private vehicle use.

PANEL COMMENTS:

- The key issue with this application relates to carparking and the loss of existing carparking.
- The Panel will need to understand in detail the overall car parking strategy and how the removal of car parks is being dealt with within this broader strategy. This will necessitate an understanding of the DA consent history across the site and the provision of information to Council to enable a proper assessment.
- Likewise an understanding of the broader building program will assist in determining impacts associated with the loss of car parking spaces under this DA –together with the range of applications that are currently being assessed and/or have been determined and which ones are proceeding. (eg State significant proposal, complying development etc).
- Whilst the Panel supports alternatives to car parking and sustainable transport options (green travel plan, bikes, electric bikes etc) this needs to be articulated in a clear policy position to be considered as part of the DA.
- The Panel understands that Council will be requesting additional information particularly in relation to the parking utilisation surveys and peak demand times and expects the Applicant to be responsive to such RFIs.