

COUNCIL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Panel Reference	PPSSNH – 552
DA Number	LDA2024/0231
LGA	City of Ryde
Proposed Development	Construction of a new purpose-built facility for Macquarie University Central Animal Facility (inclusive of a new Zebrafish Facility) and associated landscaping.
Street Address	Lot 2000 in DP 1305792 - 192 Balaclava Road, Macquarie Park
Applicant/Owner	Owner: Macquarie University Applicant: Macquarie University
Date of DA lodgement	12 November 2024
Total number of Submissions	None
Recommendation	Approval
Regional Development Criteria (Schedule 6 of the SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021)	Crown development with an estimated development cost (EDC) over \$5 million. The development has an EDC of \$33,324,348.
List of all relevant s4.15(1)(a) matters	• <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> • <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022</i> • <i>Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014</i> • <i>City of Ryde Development Control Plan 2014</i>
List all documents submitted with this report for the Panel's consideration	• Attachment 1: Proposed Architectural Plans • Attachment 2: Proposed Landscape Plans • Attachment 3: Architectural Design Report • Attachment 4: Landscape Design Statement • Attachment 5: Operational Management Plan • Attachment 6: Recommended Conditions of Consent
Clause 4.6 requests	None
Summary of key submissions	None
Report prepared by	Mahbub Alam, Senior Town Planner
Report date	XX April 2025

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report considers a development application under Section 4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act) on land at 192 Balaclava Road, Macquarie Park, which is legally described as Lot 2000 in DP 1305792.

Clause 294(a) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) provides that a development carried out by a public authority (other than a Council) is a Crown Development. The proposed development is lodged on behalf of an Australian University (Macquarie University is recognised as an Australian University under Schedule 1 of the *Higher Education Act 2001*). In this regard, the proposed development is a Crown Development.

Sydney North Planning Panel is the consent authority as the estimated development cost exceeds \$5 million for a Crown development.

This development application (LDA2024/0231) was lodged on 12 November 2024 and seeks consent for the construction of a new purpose-built facility for Macquarie University Central Animal Facility (inclusive of a new Zebrafish Facility) and associated landscaping.

The site is zoned MU1 Mixed Use under the Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014 (RLEP 2014). The proposed development is defined as an “*educational establishment*” and the proposal is permissible with consent in the zone. It is noted that a laboratory associated with an existing university is also permissible by virtue of section 3.46(2) of State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.

The key issues identified and addressed in the assessment of this proposal are as follows:

- Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan
- Proposed ventilation system
- Site Contamination Investigation Report
- Waste storage room and hazardous waste room
- Comments from the Urban Design Review Panel
- A detailed breakdown of the associated Gross Floor Area under the Concept Plan
- Detailed information of the relocation of existing structures

The applicant was advised of these issues and was requested to submit additional information and amended plans. Council subsequently received additional information and amended plans, which adequately address the issues raised.

The proposal was notified in accordance with the Council’s Community Participation Plan from 18 November 2024 until 4 December 2024, no submissions have been received in response to the public exhibition of the proposal.

Under the special provisions for crown developments (Section 4.6 of the Act), Council cannot impose conditions of consent without the Minister’s or applicant’s agreement. The applicant has had the opportunity to review the recommended conditions and agrees with the conditions.

Having regard to the matters for consideration under Section 4.15 of the Act, it is recommended Development Application No. LDA2024/0231 be approved, subject to conditions.

2. THE SITE AND LOCALITY

The site

The overall site accommodates Macquarie University and is legally described as Lot 2000 in DP 1305792 at 192 Balaclava Road, Macquarie Park. As shown in the Figures below, the area the subject of the proposed works ('the site') currently accommodates a demountable building and two storage containers. The site is located at the corner of Science Road and Research Park Drive, and forms part of a collection of smaller buildings within the University's Science and Medicine Precinct. The primary street frontage (to Science Road) is dominated by a stand of mature eucalyptus trees.



Figure 1 Site context map

Source: Nearmap, Ethos Urban



Figure 2 Aerial photo of the development site

Source: Nearmap, Ethos Urban



Existing demountable to be relocated



View looking towards the site from the adjacent carpark to the site's west

Figure 3 Photos of existing buildings

Source: BLP

The Locality

The site is surrounded by various Macquarie University infrastructure and built elements associated with different functions of the University. The site is located within the eastern portion of the University campus, approximately 400m walk from the Macquarie University Metro Station located in the southern portion of the campus. Uses surrounding the campus include residential, aged care, retail and residential uses. Within the campus, the site is north of the Mechanical Engineering and Technical Services building (also referred to as Building 3), east of Carpark E5, south of the existing Central Animal Facility and west of the Department

of Science and Engineering (also referred to as Building 13). The site's southern boundary has a partial frontage to Science Road (private road).

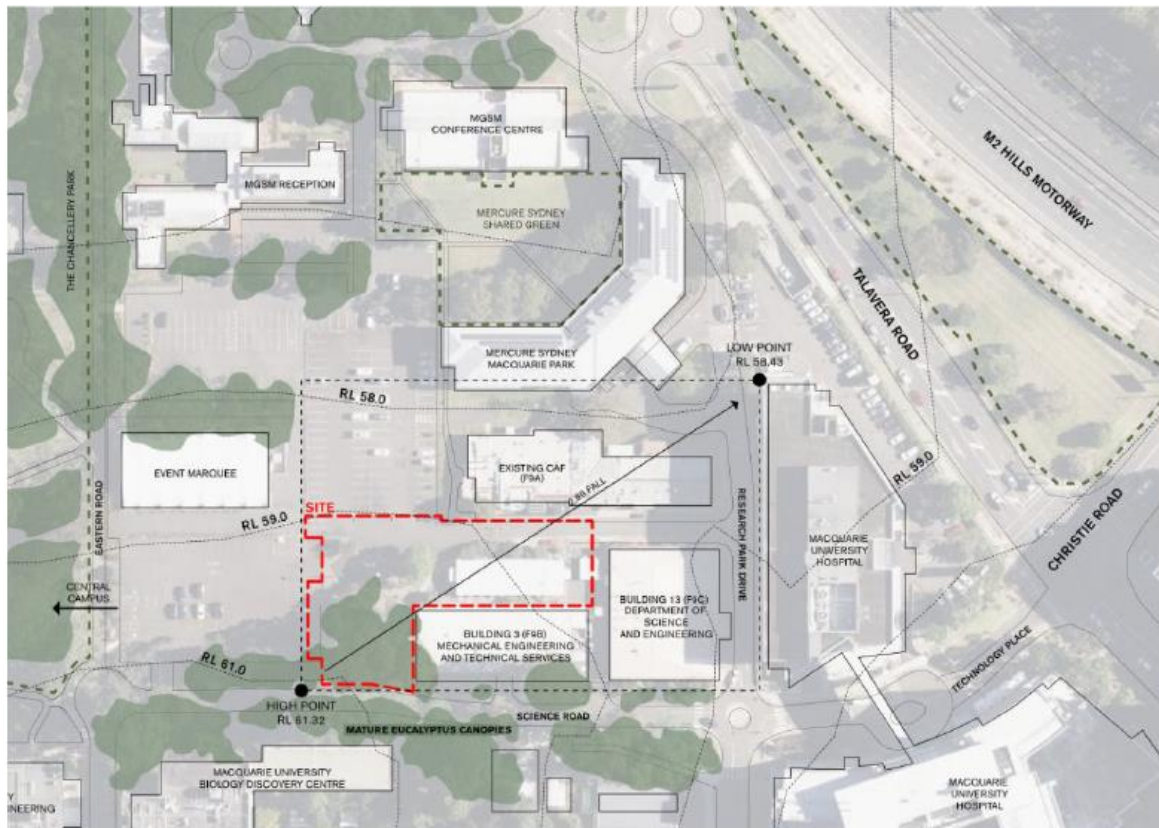


Figure 4 Surrounding buildings within the University

Source: BLP

3. PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the construction of a new purpose-built facility for Macquarie University Central Animal Facility (inclusive of a new Zebrafish Facility) and associated landscaping as shown in the Figures below.

The proposal involves:

- Site preparation works including tree removal, earthworks and the relocation of existing demountable and storage containers located on the site;
- Construction and use of a three-storey building with a gross floor area of 2,581m² for the purposes of a biomedical research facility;
- Services upgrades; and
- Associated landscaping, tree replacement, and public domain works.
- The building will be used for the purpose of biomedical research on rodents and Zebrafish. Each level of the development will include the following uses:

Element	Proposed Development
Ground Level	• Office and Office Support Areas • Change Room • Rat Holding • Mice Holding • Cage Wash and Cage Prep • Feed / Bedding Store • Mice Procedure Room • Micro-Injection / Transgenic Mice Room • Dirty Quarantine Suite • Support Rooms – Consumables Store, Waste, Gas Bottles, Hazardous Materials
Level 1	• Mice Laboratories • Rat Laboratories • Equipment Stores • Quarantine Suite
Level 2	• Fish Holding Room, Washroom and Pump Room • Injection Room • Screening Room • Confocal Room • Behaviour Rooms • Store and Equipment Room • Fish Quarantine Area • Building plant including switch room, steam generator and zebrafish plant
Gross Floor Area (GFA)	2,581m ² comprising entirely of academic and research (non-commercial) GFA.
Building Height (max)	Three storeys plus an allowance for plant equipment. The maximum height of buildings is RL 75.331 (14.53m). An additional allowance of 1.56m has been provided to accommodate rooftop plant equipment. The maximum building height inclusive of the additional rooftop plant allowance is RL 76.887 (16.09m).
Setback to Science Road	The development does not directly front Science Road (private road). However a 3m setback to the Mechanical Engineering and Technical Services building (Building 3 F9B), is provided.
Car Spaces	None proposed. The proposal will not result in any changes to parking arrangements nor the number of parking spaces on the campus. There will be no increase in students or staff on the campus and so the proposal will not create any additional parking demand.
Student and Staff Numbers	The building will be shared by approximately 100 academic staff and High Degree Research (HDR) students, with the maximum building occupancy at any one time being no more than 50 people. Notwithstanding, the proposed development will not result in an increase in student or staff numbers on the campus, as the students and staff will be from the existing Central Animal Facility and Zebrafish Facility that are to be relocated to the new development upon its completion.

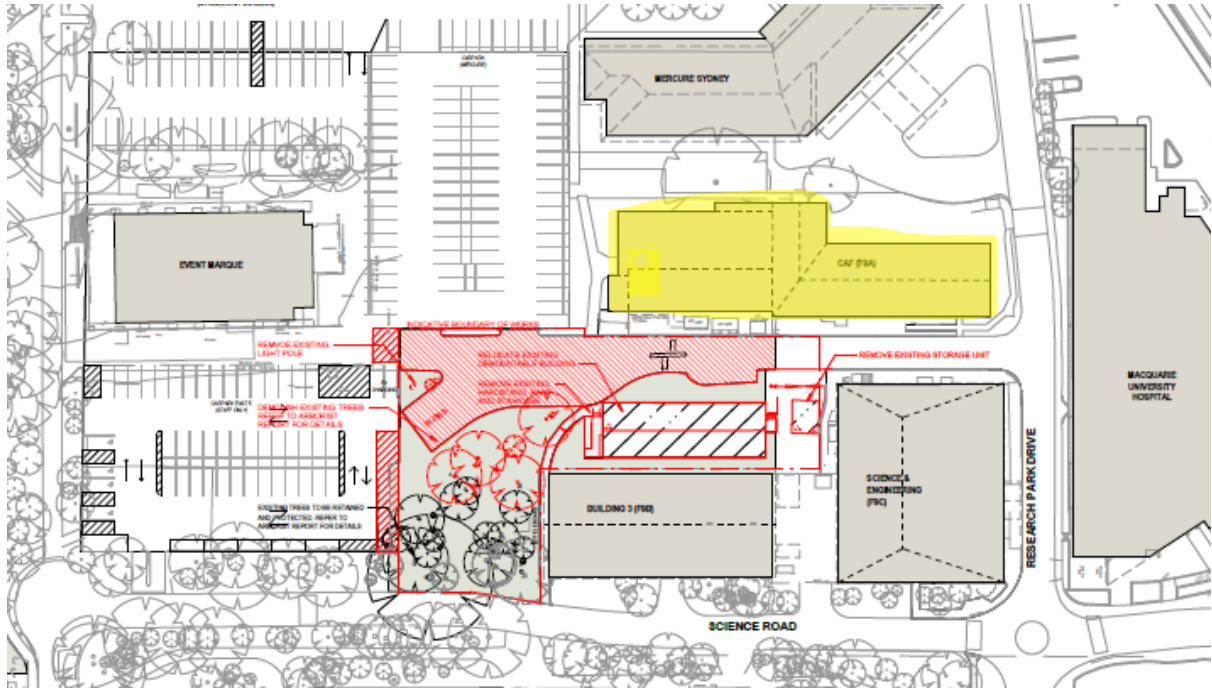


Figure 5: Existing Site context (existing location of CAF is highlighted yellow)



Figure 6: Proposed Site Plan / Landscape Design



Figure 7 – Photomontage of the proposed development from adjacent carpark to the west

Further, it is noted that no demolition works have been proposed under this development application. If required, any demolition works will be dealt separately.

4. **BACKGROUND**

Site History

Applicant has provided the following site history:

Biomedical research at Macquarie University is currently supported by two animal facilities - the Central Animal Facility and the Zebrafish Facility:

- *The existing Central Animal Facility is a rodent research facility located at 15 Research Park Drive adjacent to the site. The building is 20 years old and was subject to a refurbishment in 2012 and extension in 2019. The building has reached its capacity as a rodent research facility and can no longer support the research activities it is required to accommodate at present, nor future growth.*
- *The existing Zebrafish Facility was constructed in 2010 and is part of a larger research facility within the Macquarie University Private Hospital. It is also currently at capacity and in need of redevelopment.*

Application History

The development application was lodged on 12 November 2024. A chronology of the development application since lodgement is outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 1: Chronology of the DA

Date	Event
18 November 2024	Exhibition of the application
12 December 2024	Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) meeting was undertaken.
20 December 2024	Request for Information from Council to applicant.
03 February 2025	Amended Plans and relevant reports were received.
5 February 2025	SNPP Panel briefing was held.

5. REFERRALS

The application was referred to the following stakeholders and their comments have formed part of the assessment:

Internal Referral Body	Comments Received
Traffic Engineering	No objection, subject to conditions.
Waste Management	No objection, subject to conditions.
Public Domain	No objection, subject to conditions.
Development Engineering	No objection, subject to condition.
Environmental Management	No objection, subject to condition.
Landscape Architect	No objection, subject to condition.

6. APPLICABLE PLANNING CONTROLS

The following legislation, policies and controls are of relevance to the development:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022*
- *Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014*
- *City of Ryde Development Control Plan 2014*

7. PLANNING ASSESSMENT OF STATUTORY PROVISIONS

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (The Act) - Section 4.15 Evaluation

In determining a development application, a consent authority is to take into consideration such of the following matters as are of relevance to the development:

(a) The provisions of:

- Any environmental planning instrument**

State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021

The proposal is categorised as a 'Crown Development over \$5 million' under Schedule 6 of the above planning instrument and as such the proposal is required to be determined by the Sydney North Planning Panel in accordance with Section 4.33 of the Act.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021

Chapter 2 Vegetation in non-rural areas

The objective of the SEPP is to protect the biodiversity values of trees and other vegetation and to preserve the amenity of the area through the preservation of trees and other vegetation.

The submitted Biodiversity Assessment prepared by Lesryk Environmental has concluded the following:

- *No threatened flora species were identified during the investigation. It is noted that the area in which the proposed works will be undertaken is highly disturbed and consists of predominantly hardstand surfaces (i.e. concrete roads, a car park, pavements and buildings). Broadly, the vegetation present within, and close to, the limits of the proposed works is dominated by maintained gardens, semi-mature planted trees, isolated remnant plants, maintained exotic lawns and mulched garden beds.*
- *No threatened fauna species were identified during the investigation. No significant habitat features important for native threatened fauna are present (i.e. intact remnant woodland, rock outcropping, caves/cave substitutes, etc.) within, or close to, the area surveyed.*
- *No Threatened Ecological Communities listed under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) were recorded within, or in close proximity to, the proposed MQU - Central Animal Facility redevelopment site.*
- *During the course of the field survey, no significant ecological constraints to the undertaking of the proposal were recorded.*
- *The work would not erect any barriers to the movement patterns of those native species recorded or expected to occupy this portion of the Ryde Local Government Area, nor would they result in the fragmentation or isolation of any habitat areas or vegetation communities. Post-work, native species and plant propagules would still be able to disperse through and occupy the proposed work area.*
- *With adherence to those recommendations provided in this report (below), no ecological constraints to the proposal proceeding as planned were identified or considered likely to occur.*

The recommendations of the Biodiversity Assessment include:

- *The redevelopment of the site should include the removal and treatment of Asparagus Fern. This weed should be removed prior to the works commencing and deposited in a Council approved waste facility.*
- *As part of the ongoing maintenance of the Macquarie University grounds, the occurrences of introduced weeds including Kikuyu and Buffalo grasses must be controlled to result in their suppression.*

- Any native shrubs identified within the proposed works that can be safely removed from site and translocated locally without damage is encouraged.
- Landscaping works post-development should include a number of native species.

The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Truth About Trees Pty Ltd has concluded with the following key points:

- Based upon the existing 50% drawings and underground services coordination six (6) trees will require removal due to being subject to unsustainable encroachments of 40-100% with no practical options to mitigate the impacts upon the trees- 1,2,3,4,7,26.
- Three (3) trees are recommended for removal due to having poor health and major excavation damage within their SRZs from an earlier project- 5,6,25.
- Two (2) trees are recommended for removal due to having poor health and structure- 13 & 14.
- Fifteen (15) trees are suitable for further retention and must be protected in accordance with AS4970-2009.
- The current design imposes major encroachments upon eight (8) trees which are desired for retention. The impacts of these encroachments will be mitigated by the use of sensitive construction methodologies such as under boring and vacuum excavation as described in section 8.1.

7.2 TREE LOCATION MAPPING



Figure 5 – Showing tree Locations and TPZs & SRZs

Figure 8: Showing Tree Location

Comment:

The submitted Biodiversity Assessment prepared by Lesryk Environmental and Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Truth About Trees Pty was referred to Council's Landscape Architect for their review and comment. The proposal is considered satisfactory by Council's Landscape Architect, subject to conditions.

Chapter 6 Water Catchments

This Plan applies to the whole of the Ryde Local Government Area as the LGS is within the Sydney Harbour Catchment. Division 2 of Part 6.2 of this SEPP identifies controls on development in respect of water quality and quantity, aquatic ecology, flooding, recreation and public access and total catchment management.

Given the nature of the project and the location of the site, there are no specific controls that directly apply to this proposal.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

Chapter 3, Part 3.5 of the SEPP is applicable as this chapter relates to universities and outlines specific development controls. In accordance with Section 3.46, the proposed development is permitted with consent as the proposed development is for the purposes of an existing university and will be used for the physical, social, cultural or intellectual development or welfare of the community.

The proposal does not trigger consideration of Chapter 2, Division 15, Subdivision 2 (relating to development in or adjacent to rail corridors and interim rail corridors), and Section 3.58 (relating to traffic generating development).

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

Chapter 3 Hazardous and offensive development

The proposal does not trigger Part 3 *Potentially hazardous or potentially offensive development* of Chapter 3 of this SEPP, as confirmed in the submitted State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) assessment prepared by Riskcon Engineering which concludes the following:

- *A review of the quantities of Dangerous Goods (DGs) proposed to be stored at the facility and the associated vehicle movements was conducted and compared to the threshold quantities outlined in "Applying SEPP 33" (Ref. [1]). The result of this analysis indicates the threshold quantities for the DGs to be stored and transported are not exceeded; hence, Chapter 3 of the SEPP does not apply to the project.*
- *As the facility is not classified as potentially hazardous, it is not necessary to prepare a Preliminary Hazard Analysis for the facility as Chapter 3 of the SEPP does not apply.*

Chapter 4 Remediation of land

The object of this Chapter is to provide for a Statewide planning approach to the remediation of contaminated land. In accordance with Clause 4.6(1), a consent authority must consider if the land is contaminated; if it is contaminated, is it suitable for the proposed use; and if it is not suitable, can it be remediated to be made suitable for the proposed use.

The submitted Preliminary Site Investigation (PIS) prepared by Douglas Partners concludes that there is relatively low risk of soil contamination, and the site can be made suitable for the proposed development subject to implementation of a number of recommendations.

Council's Environmental Health Officer queried the PSI's lack of data and identification of PVC pipes and concrete rubble found at one borehole location which can be an indicator of asbestos contamination.

In response, the applicant submitted a further explanatory letter prepared by Douglas Partners dated 30 January 2025 with further justification that the sampling program was limited by the existing building and bitumen covered road and parking areas. Douglas Partners concludes from their assessment of the site that no significant contamination was found. Douglas Partners' recommendation is to complete a detailed site investigation post removal of the demountable and hardstand at the site.

In accordance with Clause 4.6(1), Council's Environmental Health Officer supports the proposal and continued use of the site as an educational establishment subject to conditions, including implementation of the recommendations of the Douglas Partners reports.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022

Chapter 3 *Standards for non-residential development* of this SEPP is applicable for the proposed development as the EDC is over \$5 million.

The submitted Environmentally Sustainable Design Statement for Sustainable Buildings SEPP 2022, prepared by Steensen Varming has recommended the following:

- *Review of the strategies to determine achievability and further coordination with design teams for strategy development as design develops during subsequent stages.*
- *Teams to carry out or finalise calculations, modelling or analysis required to support strategies targeted.*
- *Coordination with Quantity Surveyors to ensure any cost impact from required strategies is included within the cost plan and within the procurement requirements.*
- *Final set of strategies to be agreed by the design team and stakeholders to confirm the required performance standards will be met.*

In accordance with clause 3.2(1), consideration has been given to whether the development is designed to enable the following:

- (a) the minimisation of waste from associated demolition and construction, including by the choice and reuse of building materials,
- (b) a reduction in peak demand for electricity, including through the use of energy efficient technology,
- (c) a reduction in the reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical heating and cooling through passive design,
- (d) the generation and storage of renewable energy,
- (e) the metering and monitoring of energy consumption,
- (f) the minimisation of the consumption of potable water.

In accordance with clause 3.2(2), the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated that the embodied emissions attributable to the development have been quantified.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

Although the proposal is not a residential apartment development, the relatively universal design principles of Chapter 4 of the Housing SEPP are considered an appropriate framework.

The application was referred to Council's Urban Design Review Panel for their review and comment. The UDRP and applicant have made the following comments:

Comments of UDRP	Applicant's comments
<u>Context and Neighbourhood Character</u> The Panel remains aware that there is an approved Macquarie University Concept Plan, Campus-wide Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines that guide development proposals within the campus. The Panel understands that the University is currently reviewing this master plan and the Health and Research precinct in particular. This DA is sited in a manner that is inconsistent with the current master plan. As the University's master plan sets the framework for the delivery of a cohesive and amenable campus, the Panel considers it critical that the Concept Plan and Guidelines be formally amended to reflect this proposal (and other recent proposals that the Panel is aware of). Amending the master plan will require some adjustment of planned pedestrian and service links to accommodate the current DA proposal. The proposed building footprint is located across a secondary pedestrian pathway that traverses north-south. Material has been provided to indicate how pedestrian links would be rearranged to the west of the subject site and to demonstrate how a future 'shared way' (of some significance) might run east-west along the northern site boundary. Although this material begins to demonstrate that the University master plan is capable of adaptation around the current DA, a thorough amendment is required. This material provided indicates that the subject DA will - over time - attain greater visual prominence as a built element that effectively terminates an existing north-south link. Similarly, as surrounding buildings are demolished, particularly to the north, the visual prominence of the subject DA will increase. In the interim, the proposed building is tightly sited between existing single-storey buildings to the north, south and east. It is understood that these adjacent buildings may be removed in the mid- to longer-term. In the meantime, the DA is 'squeezed' into its context presenting safety	We acknowledge the Panel's comments regarding the approved Macquarie University Concept Plan, Campus-wide Design Excellence Strategy, and Urban Design Guidelines that guide development proposals within the campus. We understand the importance of ensuring cohesion between current proposals and the master plan. Master Plan and Adaptation The University is currently reviewing their internal master plan to reflect the University's move towards a science and research-focussed university. While the siting of the proposed development varies from the master plan, this will form part of an update to the guidelines ahead of the University's comprehensive review. The proposal has been carefully designed to accommodate future adjustments to the pedestrian and service linkages identified in the current Concept Plan. The proposed building footprint intersects a secondary pedestrian pathway, which has been addressed by the updated architectural plans that demonstrates how these pedestrian links will be rearranged west of the site and integrated into the broader campus framework. Furthermore, the east-west shared service way along the northern boundary will be retained in line with Macquarie University Design Guidelines. This information is also outlined within the Architectural Report Sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5. Visual Prominence and Design Considerations We note the Panel's observation regarding the increasing visual prominence of the proposed building over time, particularly as surrounding buildings are demolished. This has been addressed in the design process, with the following considerations: • The western façade, main entry, and north-west corner will remain the most visually prominent elements of the façade within this area of the campus built environment. These façade zones have received significant design attention, ensuring a high-quality architectural outcome that contributes positively to the campus identity and public realm. The key design elements include: - Perforated metal veil

and security concerns, particularly to the south. This is discussed further below with regard to safety.	- shopfront and curtain wall glazing to the ground plane and feature corner internal staircase - Main Entry canopy. • The southern and eastern façades will be obscured by future buildings proposed in the master plan, which will reduce their long-term visual prominence. It is therefore considered that the proposal is consistent with the envisaged bulk and scale of the master plan. • The majority of the northern façade will similarly be obstructed by a future building located across the service laneway in the neighbouring future allotment A04 as per the Macquarie University Design Guidelines. Additional future landscaping has also been considered in the master plan to balance the built form, provide screening and positively contribute to the visual impact of the structure at the ground plane. Safety and Security The placement of the proposed building reflects the existing site constraints and acknowledges its proximity to adjacent single-story buildings to the north, south, and east. These adjacent buildings are anticipated to be removed in the mid- to long-term. In the interim, safety and security measures including security gates will be incorporated into the proposed design to address the Panel's concerns. This is further detailed in the landscape response section below.
<u>Built Form and Scale</u> The DA proposal has generally developed positively since the first review. It provides a simple and elegant built form and a comfortable scale, noting the relative tightness along the southern boundary. The building is generally well-proportioned, and the simplicity of this form is complemented by facade treatments that are richly detailed and modelled. The Panel restates its earlier concern for the one interruption to this strong, simple form. The 'cut-out' in the northwest corner of the building, created to accommodate the loading dock, dilutes the purity of the building form and also risks exposing the building's less resolved service areas to a future 'shared way' when the existing CAF building (to the north) is removed. This arrangement would be better resolved if the loading area enjoyed greater enclosure, possibly extending the northern facade to complete the pure rectangular form.	We appreciate the Panel's acknowledgment of the positive development of the DA proposal since the initial review. Building form and loading dock The built form has been updated to reflect the original comments from the UDRP Panel. In response, the unenclosed Roof Plant and the Roof was re-designed and configured into two simplified massing forms to maintain the purity and clarity of the original design, whilst removing any cutout or interruption that may be perceived within the built form. In summary, the building is now divided into two distinct, forms: 1. The main CAF research building, which retains its rectangular massing, serving as the primary architectural expression of the facility. 2. The secondary form adjacent, housing the plant and service functions, which complements the main structure. This smaller square volume ensures these functional elements are visually and operationally distinct

The primary pedestrian entry to the building is clearly identifiable from Science Road, and the retention of existing trees in this forecourt is supported. The building plan and entry sequence implies a future northern entry (which may also reinforce north-south links proposed in the master plan). Understanding the secure nature of the facility, the Panel encourages greater architectural presence, and a 'signal of entry' which might be implied on the northern facade. It is important to safeguard the potential to provide a future northern entry to the building as the campus continues to evolve. Given the uncertainty of amendments required to the master plan, it remains somewhat unclear how the building should define the immediate public domain – and the Panel remains concerned for the proposed public domain interface with the carparks to the north and west, as well as for the narrow separation to the south.	while minimising their impact on the overall form. The design team therefore considers this revised approach addresses the UDRP feedback regarding the dilution of the building form as a result of the service areas including the loading dock and plant area. The Panel's original comments were also addressed within the Architectural Design Report - please refer to the sections below: 2.4 Proposed Macquarie University Design Guidelines 3.8 Building Access and Circulation 3.11 Potential Future Scenario 4.6 Photomontage Building Access The biosecurity status of the research animals and the research undertaken within the CAF necessitates restricted access. Consequently, the CAF is not accessible to the general public. Building Entry The internal functionality; operational and security requirements of the facility necessitate a single controlled point of entry. The proposed southern entry has been designed with these key considerations in mind, which include: • Security and Access Control: Due to the operational management requirements of the facility, a second entry point is not feasible. Controlled access to the building ensures the safety and security of the occupants and the sensitive functions housed within. • Signal of Entry: The southern façade provides a clear architectural signal of entry from Science Road through the landscaped forecourt in front. From the northern approach the feature veil facade, and canopy, which wraps the south-west entry corner, are architectural elements that provide a clear signal of entry. The design team believes these key elements are sufficient to provide an architectural presence, which signals a clear journey to the building's main entry from all approaches. The design team is also confident that the revised approach to the building's form, entry, and integration within the broader campus context successfully addresses the Panel's comments while meeting the functional and security requirements of the facility.
<u>Density</u>	

The proposal is well within the maximum amount of GFA allowed under the existing concept plan and is well below the maximum height. The density in the context of the overall campus is considered acceptable.	Noted
<u>Sustainability</u> Sustainability was not specifically discussed in the context of the meeting. The Panel encourages the adoption of ambitious sustainability targets for the project, and these should be included in further documentation supporting the DA.	The application addresses the relevant provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 and is consistent with Clause 6.6 Environmental Sustainability in Ryde LEP 2014 as detailed in the ESD Statement included within the lodgement package. The ESD Statement includes the sustainability targets that the design team and the Macquarie University Sustainability team have agreed upon for the proposal. Additionally, the project aligns with the Macquarie University Sustainability Strategy 2024 – 2030 which includes the key ambitious sustainability target requiring the proposal to divert at least 90% of construction and demolition waste from landfill, which represents a 10% increase from the SEPP requirements.
<u>Landscape</u> The building is generally located on the site of an existing paved parking area and existing demountable building. The DA proposes the retention of existing trees along Science Road to create the primary building address and associated landscape forecourt, which is supported. The Panel suggests that it may be premature to provide access paths along the northern and western boundaries until greater certainty exists regarding the amended master plan. Consequently, it may be more appropriate to refine the current landscape proposals to the north and west not anticipating pedestrian thoroughfare. Similarly, the Panel suggests that it may provide a stronger sense of safety and security to design out casual pedestrian movement along the southern boundary in the narrow separation to the neighbouring building.	We appreciate the Panel's feedback regarding the building's landscape design and access pathways. Western and Northern Boundaries The proposed pathways along the western and northern boundaries are integral to the operational requirements of the building. These pathways serve two primary purposes: • Maintenance Access: The pathways provide essential access for cleaning and servicing the building façades from ground level. We have reviewed the sizes of all external pathways and ensured their presence does not dominate the landscape, whilst retaining maintenance functionality. • Safety and Separation: The pathways contribute to the separation of vehicle and pedestrian movements around the building. This separation reduces potential clashes and enhances safety at ground level, especially near the adjacent carparks. The landscape design along the western and northern boundaries includes buffer zones to create a soft interface with the surrounding carparks. These buffers enhance the visual quality of the area while maintaining flexibility. The design allows for future reconfiguration to align with the final master plan requirements, ensuring adaptability as the campus evolves.

	The proposed depth of the landscape buffer zone along the western edge of the building has been modified upon receipt of the UDRP feedback (received 19/09/24). The modification was included in the LDA2024/0231 by specifically extending the depth of the landscape buffer to provide a safe distance to the adjacent car park, whilst providing zones for deep soil planting and tree planting. Southern Boundary and Safety Concerns The design team has carefully considered the Panel's concerns regarding the narrow southern boundary. In response, the following amendments have been made: • Access Control: The proposed design has been amended to include two secure gates on either side of the passageway that will be integrated into the landscape design and provide secure access for staff or maintenance personnel only. • Casual Movement and Safety: By incorporating gates, the design effectively prevents casual pedestrian movement along the southern boundary, addressing concealment and safety risks. • Emergency Egress: The passageway retains functionality as a safe egress route from the building during emergencies. The amended design ensures compliance with BCA requirements while mitigating security concerns. • CCTV: there will be new CCTV cameras installed as part of the project in this location to be monitored, managed and maintained by the University. Future Flexibility The proposed landscape design along the northern and western boundaries has been developed with flexibility in mind. While these areas currently support maintenance and safety needs, the landscape design can be reconfigured in the future to accommodate changes resulting from the updated master plan. This approach ensures that the building remains integrated with the campus's long-term vision without compromising immediate functionality. We are confident that these revisions address the Panel's concerns and provide a thoughtful response to the evolving campus context.
<u>Amenity</u> The Panel understands that the proposal has a low population density and internal spaces are required to be controlled for security, climate and lighting.	Noted

Most internal areas have natural daylight excluded. The circulation spaces, common amenities and areas where daylight is available are provided with controlled daylight, which is supported, subject to comments made below under Aesthetics regarding the integration of vision glazing within facade panels.	
<u>Safety</u> As noted previously, the proximity of the proposed building to other existing buildings creates narrow, foreboding and poorly defined spaces capable of concealment and creating security issues. The Panel suggests designing out casual pedestrian access to these spaces generally, and to the southern pathway in particular. Required egress pathways may need alternative treatments to balance safe egress with safety and security.	This comment has been addressed above. Please refer to the response within the 'Landscape' section.
<u>Aesthetics</u> The Panel thanks the design team for the developed description of the design intent, including annotated large scale 3D views and elevations of each primary facade type. The proposed external appearance is generally supported, noting the positive resolution of composition, proportion, materials and details. Perforated screens over glazing are intended to balance climate control and privacy while providing transparency with resolved detailing and depth to an otherwise simple form. The Panel encourages further refinement of the perforated 'veil' element that addresses the west and part north and south elevations. Understanding the need to provide maintenance access between the glass-line and the perforated panels, the Panel feels the architectural composition would be stronger if the outer face of the 'veil' was co-planar with the remainder of the northern and southern facades. The Panel supports the proposed material palette and colours which help the building integrate with the natural landscape. The developed facade detailing is supported and should be further refined through design development to ensure the design intent is	We appreciate the Panel's support for the proposed external appearance, material palette, and developed façade detailing. Perforated Veil Design The design team acknowledges the Panel's suggestion to make the veil co-planar with the northern and southern facades. However, maintaining the current design approach, where the veil floats off the façade, is critical to achieving multiple design objectives: • Articulation and Visual Interest: The veil introduces subtle articulation to the otherwise simple rectangular form, adding depth and texture to the building's appearance without disrupting the overall purity of the design. • Maintenance Access: The current placement of the veil allows for essential maintenance access between the glazing and the veil, ensuring practical and safe upkeep of the façade. • Internal Space Efficiency: Shifting the façade line inwards to align the veil co-planar with the northern and southern facades would compromise the efficiently planned internal spaces. This would result in a significant loss of functionality to the internal layouts that would adversely affect the building's usability, efficiency and performance.

carried through to construction. The design team is encouraged to resolve issues such as: - The size and proportion of various panel elements - The integration of glazing into panellised components - The scale of panel perforations - Vertical and horizontal panel jointing generally - Mitred corner panel junctions - Capping trims.	Building Form: The glass line behind the veil remains co-planar with the simplified rectangular form of the building. This position of the glass line ensures the architectural language is preserved while allowing the veil to act as complementary, layered element.
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Given the above, the applicant has satisfactorily addressed UDRP comments through amended plans and adequate justification.

Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014 (RLEP)

The following is an assessment of the proposed development against the applicable provisions of Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2014 (RLEP).

Clause 2.3 - Zone Objectives and Land Use Table

The site is zoned MU1 Mixed Use. The proposed development is defined as an “**educational establishment**” which is permissible with consent in this zone. The below provides an excerpt of the relevant definitions:

educational establishment means a building or place used for education (including teaching), being—

(a) a school, or

(b) a tertiary institution, including a university or a TAFE establishment, that provides formal education and is constituted by or under an Act.

It is noted that a laboratory associated with an existing university is also permissible by virtue of section 3.46(2) *Universities—development permitted with consent* of SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.

The objectives of the MU1 Mixed Use Zone are as follows:

- *To encourage a diversity of business, retail, office and light industrial land uses that generate employment opportunities.*
- *To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.*
- *To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings.*
- *To ensure employment and educational activities within the Macquarie University campus are integrated with other businesses and activities.*
- *To promote strong links between Macquarie University and research institutions and businesses in the Macquarie Park corridor.*

The development provided improved facilities for biomedical research which fosters employment and educational activities within the Macquarie University Campus in a manner which is integrated with other businesses and activities. The facility maintains and enhances

with other research institutions and businesses within the Macquarie Park Corridor. The proposal is a compatible land use that complements the educational activities within the University and satisfies the relevant objectives within the MU1 Mixed Use zone.

Clause 4.3 – Height of buildings

The site is not subject to a height requirement. Accordingly, height is not a consideration under the RLEP 2014.

Clause 4.4 – Floor Space Ratio

The site is not subject to a floor space ratio requirement. Accordingly, floor space ratio is not a consideration under the RLEP 2014.

Clause 5.10 – Heritage Conservation

The Objectives of Clause 5.10 are as follows:

- (a) *to conserve the environmental heritage of Ryde,*
- (b) *to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*
- (c) *to conserve archaeological sites,*
- (d) *to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.*

The site contains Local Heritage item No. 10 referred to as ‘Macquarie University (ruins)’ in Schedule 5 of the RLEP 2014.

The ruins are located approximately 400m from the proposed building as shown in the Figure below.

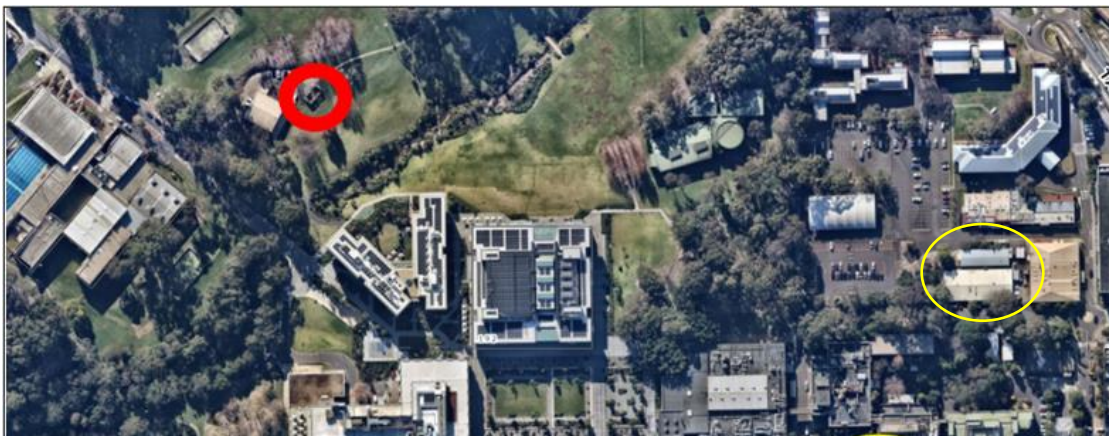


Figure 9 : Location of the new building (circled in yellow) and heritage listed ruins (circled in red).

Due to the distance between the proposed building and the heritage listed ruins, and the visual separation between the two sites, it is considered that there is no heritage impact arising from the proposed works.

The proposal is considered to satisfy the objectives of Clause 5.10 by conserving the significance of the heritage item, including associated fabric, settings and views. The proposal does not result in any significant adverse impacts upon the environmental heritage of Ryde.

Clause 6.2 – Earthworks

The proposed excavation is not considered to result in any adverse detrimental impacts upon environmental functions and processed or neighbouring uses.

The redevelopment of the site involves appropriate levels of cut and fill which does not adversely impact the amenity of adjoining properties and is considered to be consistent with the provisions of Clause 6.2(3).

Clause 6.4 – Stormwater management

The objective of this clause is to minimise the impacts of urban stormwater on land to which this clause applies and on adjoining properties, native bushland and receiving waters. The proposal has been considered satisfactory by Council's Senior Development Engineer subject to conditions of consent.

Clause 6.6 – Environmental Sustainability

The objective of this clause is to ensure that this development (being land in a mixed use zone) embraces principles of quality urban design and is consistent with principles of best practice environmentally sensitive design.

This clause states that consent must not be granted to development on land in a mixed use zone exceeding 1,500m² in GFA unless the consent authority is satisfied that development has had regard to a number of prescribed environmental outcomes. This includes water demand reduction, energy demand reduction, indoor environmental quality, reduction in new material consumption, emission reduction, transport initiatives and land use and ecology.

This DA is accompanied by an Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Statement for Sustainable Buildings SEPP 2022 prepared by Steensen Varming Consulting. Based on the detail provided in the statement, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development satisfies the requirements of this clause.

(ii) Any proposed instrument (Draft LEP, Planning Proposal)

Nil

(iii) Any development control plan

Ryde Development Control Plan 2014 (RDCP)

The following sections of the Ryde DCP 2014 are of relevance:

- Part 4.5 – Macquarie Park Corridor;
- Part 7.2 – Waste Minimisation and Management;
- Part 9.2 – Access for People with Disabilities; and
- Part 9.3 – Parking Controls.

Part 4.5 – Macquarie Park Corridor

This part of the DCP provides a framework to guide future developments in the Macquarie Park Corridor. The document specifies built form controls for all development within the Corridor and sets in place urban design guidelines to achieve the vision for Macquarie Park. The Macquarie Park Corridor vision is:

“Macquarie Park will mature into a premium location for globally competitive businesses with strong links to the university and research institutions and an enhanced sense of identity.

The Corridor will be characterised by a high-quality, well designed, safe and liveable environment that reflects the natural setting, with three accessible and vibrant railway station areas providing focal points.

Residential and business areas will be better integrated, and an improved lifestyle will be forged for all those who live, work and study in the area.”

It is noted Section 1.3 states this part does not apply to the North Ryde Station Priority Precinct and the Macquarie University lands. Nevertheless, the development is consistent with this vision and no additional matters are raised in this part of the DCP.

Part 7.2 – Waste Minimisation and Management

The Operational Waste Management Plan prepared by EcCell Environmental Management states that the waste storage room and a designated hazardous waste room will be provided on the ground floor. This is consistent with the Architectural Plans. Waste management is consistent with the requirements of the DCP and the construction and operation waste storage area is addressed by conditions.

The proposal has been reviewed by Council's Environmental Health Officer and is considered acceptable subject to conditions.

Part 9.2 – Access for people with disabilities

The accompanying Access Review Report is prepared by MGAC and confirms that accessibility requirements, building access, common area access and sanitary facilities can be readily achieved. The proposal demonstrates the requirements of the DCP are met and this is conditioned accordingly.

Part 9.3 – Parking Controls

The development does not provide any additional parking apart from a single loading bay which has been designed to accommodate a Heavy Rigid Vehicle (HRV).

The applicant has confirmed that the proposal will not result in any changes to parking arrangements nor the number of parking spaces on the campus. There will be no increase in students or staff on the campus.

The applicant has also confirmed that the building will be shared by approximately 100 academic staff and High Degree Research (HDR) students, with the maximum building occupancy at any one time being no more than 50 people. Notwithstanding, the proposed development will not result in an increase in student or staff numbers on the campus, as the students and staff will be from the existing Central Animal Facility and Zebrafish Facility that are to be relocated to the new development upon its completion.

Council's Development Engineer reviewed the proposal and no objection is raised, subject to conditions.

Macquarie University Concept Plan, Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines and Masterplan

On 13 August 2009, the Minister approved Concept Plan MP06_0016 for Macquarie University. The approved concept plan sets the planning regime and development framework for the campus. A campus wide Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines was required to be prepared and submitted to the Department as part of the Concept Plan. A Section 75W to modify the Concept Plan was submitted in 2017 to the Department of Planning and Environment (MP06_0016 Mod 1), which was approved on 9 November 2018. The proposed Macquarie University Central Animal Facility is consistent with the Concept Plan approval.

In accordance with Condition B4 of the Concept Plan approval, the Section 75W modification was accompanied by an updated version of the Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines (the Guidelines). The Guidelines are managed by the University, and Condition B4 of the Concept Plan Approval establishes a process for amending the Guidelines, when required.

The Macquarie University Campus Masterplan 2014 was prepared by the University to guide future development at the campus. The Masterplan is now 10 years old and no longer aligns with the future direction of the University. It is noted that the proposed development is not consistent with the current Masterplan. However, this inconsistency does not impact the proposal's compliance with the Concept Plan Approval, as required by Section 4.24(2) *Status of concept development applications and consents* of the Act. It is noted that the applicant has confirmed that the University is at the beginning of the Masterplan review process to reflect the University's move towards a science and research-focussed university. The applicant has also confirmed that the proposed development will be consistent with the updated Masterplan.

The area in which the proposed works will occur ('the site') is located within Precinct A, as defined by the Macquarie University Concept Plan 2009 and the Guidelines (as modified). The proposed development is identified as Lot A03 in Precinct A.

Variations to the subject Lot A03 Controls

Figure 20 below shows the current controls for Lot A03.

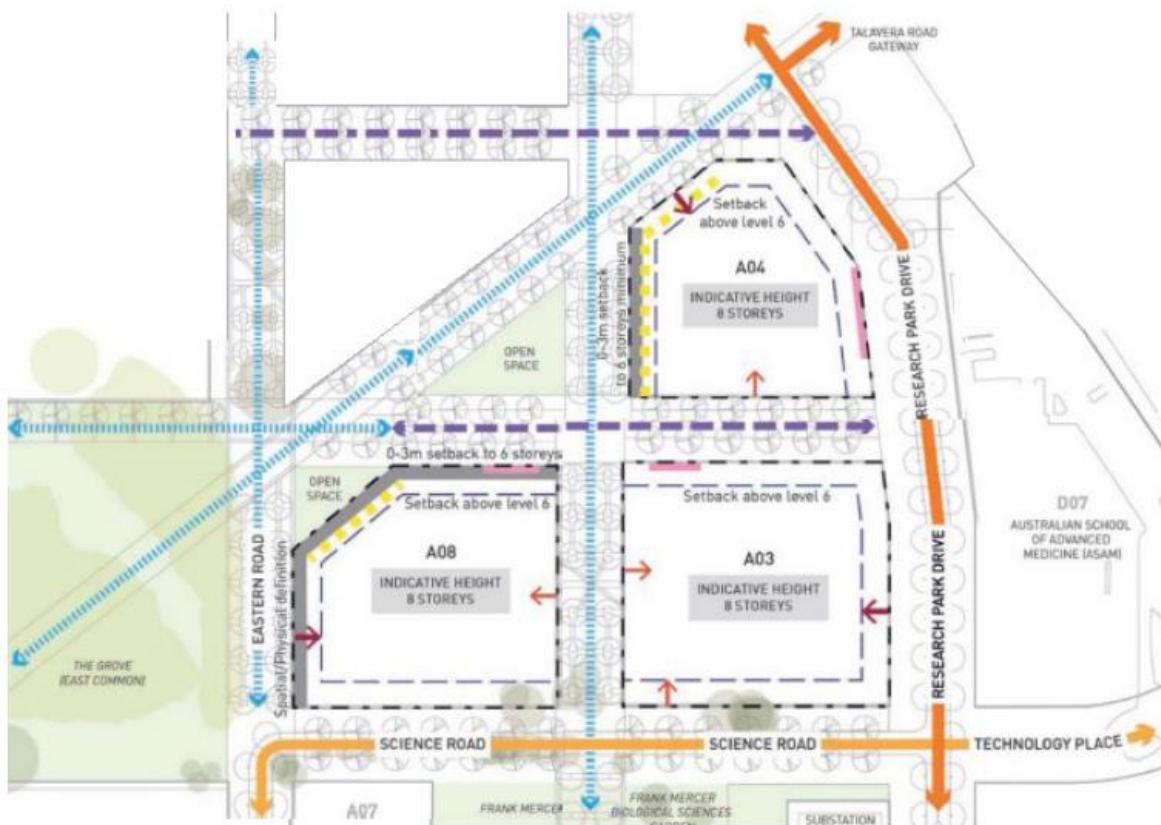


Figure 20 Lot A03 control diagram

Source: Macquarie University Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines

The proposed development is not consistent with the current lot controls. However, the applicant has confirmed that the existing guidelines will be amended in accordance with proposed development. **Figure 21 below** shows the existing site context overlaid with the current lot control boundaries contained in the Guidelines, and **Figure 22 below** shows the proposed amendments to the Guidelines.

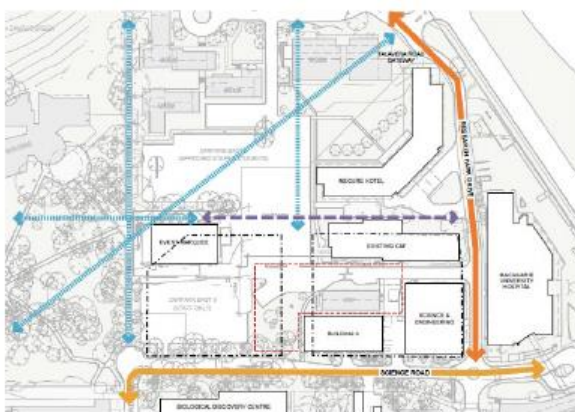


Figure 21 Site context with existing lot boundaries

Source: Macquarie University Design Excellence Strategy and Urban Design Guidelines

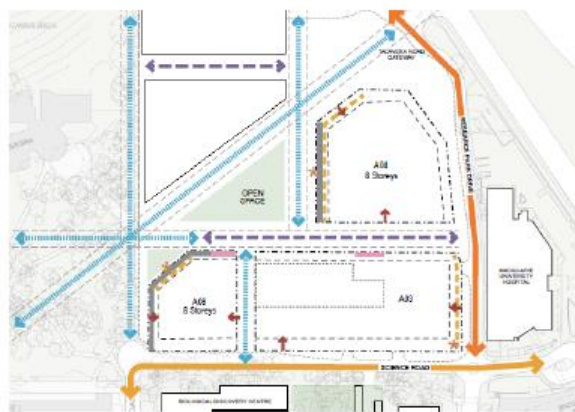


Figure 22 Proposed lot controls

Source: BLP

The applicant has provided the following justification to support this minor lot controls variation:

- The proposed location of the Central Animal Facility has resulted from the need to retain existing buildings in the short-medium term, and the potential construction of a new research building/precinct at the corner of Science Road and Research Park Drive. As a result, the north-south connection along the western frontage of Lot A03 has been moved to the left to respond to the siting of the proposed Central Animal Facility. Despite this, the original intent of a connection between the open green space to the north and Science Road is still achieved.
- Once the surrounding buildings in Lot A03 have been demolished, an integrated development can be built in the future. This future development would then achieve a prominent corner identity, ground floor activation and a street address off Research Park Drive, with separate services access from the northern shared way, in-line with the original intent of the Guidelines and lot controls.
- As shown at **Figure 22** above, the revised lot controls continue to maintain all primary and secondary roads, key pedestrian and services access ways, as well as maintaining existing significant trees and the landscaped character of the campus. The amendments to the Guidelines generally comprise minor adjustments to the lot sizes and relocating the north-south pedestrian routes to the west of the site to allow for development to occur in keeping with the original intent of the Guidelines.
- It should also be noted that Macquarie University is intending on redeveloping the Mechanical Engineering and Technical Services building currently located south of the site into a future research centre. It is likely the built form will be higher than that of the proposed building. The building footprint of this new proposed building is shown indicatively in **Figure 24** below. The potential future scenario also includes a temporary green space in the location of the existing Central Animal Facility (which is to be demolished), with the area to be redeveloped when needed by the University.



Figure 24 Indicative future scenario of the surrounding area

Source: BLP

Given the above justification, the minor variation of the subject lot control is supported as the revised lot controls continue to maintain all primary and secondary roads, key pedestrian and services access ways, as well as maintaining existing significant trees and the landscaped character of the campus. It is also noted that the proposed development will be consistent with the updated Masterplan accordingly.

Gross Floor Area Control (GFA)

The Macquarie University Concept Plan identifies a maximum academic and commercial GFA for the campus. This DA is accompanied by a detailed breakdown of the associated GFA which shows that the proposed 2,581m² GFA will comprise entirely of academic and research (non-commercial) GFA. The University benefits from substantial GFA yet to be utilised (residual GFA for academic purposes is 101,303m²).

(iiiia) Any Planning Agreement

City of Ryde Council has a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with the Macquarie University. However, in accordance with Clause 4 of the VPA, Monetary contributions are not payable on Category 3 uses, which included academic (non-commercial) uses. The proposed Central Animal Facility is comprised entirely of academic and non-commercial research uses. Therefore, no contributions are payable for the proposed development.

(iv) The Regulations

Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation)

The proposal is generally consistent with the Regulation. Standard conditions are recommended relating to compliance with Building Code of Australia and relevant Australian Standards.

(b) *The likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality*

The assessment demonstrates that the proposal will not have any significant adverse impacts upon any adjoining properties or the environment in general due to the nature of the development. All relevant issues regarding environmental impacts of the development are discussed elsewhere in this report. The development is considered satisfactory in terms of environmental impacts.

(c) *The suitability of the site for the development*

The site is zoned MU1 Mixed Use and is currently part of the University campus. The proposed Central Animal Facility is located within the University's Science and Medicine Precinct and is well-connected to the broader University campus, Macquarie Park Corridor and surrounds.

It is noted that the proposed development is not consistent with the current Masterplan. However, this inconsistency does not impact the proposal's compliance with the Concept Plan Approval, as required by Section 4.24(2) *Status of concept development applications and consents* of the Act. It is also noted that the applicant has confirmed that the University is at the beginning of the Masterplan review process to reflect the University's move towards a science and research-focussed university. The applicant has also confirmed that the proposed development will be consistent with the updated Masterplan.

The assessment demonstrates the overall proposal will not result in any significant adverse impacts upon adjoining properties or the streetscape.

Therefore, the proposal is an appropriate development, and this has been demonstrated in this report. The continued use of the site for educational purposes is suitable for this form of development.

(d) Any submissions made in accordance with this Act or the regulations

The application was notified and advertised in accordance with Part 2.1 of *Ryde Community Participation Plan* between 18 November 2024 and 04 December 2025. During the notification period, no submissions were received to the proposal.

(e) The public interest

The public interest is best served by the consistent application of the requirements of relevant Environmental Planning Instruments by Council ensuring that any adverse impacts on the surrounding area and the environment is minimised.

The proposed development will provide for a new facility which replaces outdated research facilities that are no longer fit for use. The proposal has been assessed against the relevant planning instruments and the overall development is considered to be acceptable as it delivers a suitable built form outcome.

On this basis, the proposal is not considered to raise any issues that would be contrary to the public interest.

8. CONCLUSION

After consideration of the development against section 4.15 of the Act and the relevant statutory and policy provisions, it is recommended that the application be approved for the following reasons:

- The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the MU1 Mixed Use zone.
- The proposal is consistent with the statutory provisions set out in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- The proposal is considered to be low impact to adjoining properties and surrounding environment.
- The continued academic use of the site is suitable, and the proposal is not contrary to the public interest.
- As the development is a Crown development, the applicant has agreed to the attached conditions of consent.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Sydney North Planning Panel grant consent to development application LDA2024/0231 for the construction of a new purpose-built facility for Macquarie University Central Animal Facility (inclusive of a new Zebrafish Facility) and associated landscaping at the Macquarie University at 192 Balaclava Road, Macquarie Park subject to the conditions of consent in **Attachment 6** of this report.

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