
**Report to the Director General on an application for a Site Compatibility Certificate
State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007**

SITE:

Queen Mary Building, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown.
Lot 81 DP 794283, Lot 1 in DP 84936 and Lots 532 and 533 in DP 752049

APPLICANT:

NSW Health – Health Infrastructure

PROPOSAL:

The proposal is for internal and minor external alterations and additions to the Queen Mary Building including:

- Conversion to residential apartments containing 755 bedrooms;
- Stripping of the building back to its basic structure;
- Addition of floor area to the south side of the building;
- Addition of terraces/balconies to northern face;
- Provision of internal stairs between levels; and
- Conversion of basement level to parking.

There will be one lounge area per 13 rooms, bicycle storage of one space per three rooms, 33 car spaces, communal kitchens, laundries and bathrooms, 1500 square metres of commercial floor space, 275 square metres of retail floor space and 1655sqm of storage space.

LGA:

City of Sydney

PERMISSIBILITY STATEMENT

Site Context

The Queen Mary Building is a 13 storey structure located on a block of land with an area of 6,220 square metres. The building has been vacant since 2005 due to fire compliance issues. The site is currently zoned Zone No. 5 Special Uses – Hospital under South Sydney Local Environmental Plan 1998. Under the Draft Sydney City Council LEP the site is proposed to be zoned SP2 – Health Services Facility.

The site is surrounded by:

- A multi storey parking station to the south;
- Residential development along Church Street to the west;
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and the University of Sydney to the east; and
- Other hospital buildings; school of nursing, child care centre and Endocrine research centre to the north. Parramatta Road, which is a major strategic bus corridor, is also to the north of the subject site.

The subject site is located within approximately 600 metres of King Street North village centre, within approximately one kilometre of the Newtown town centre and within approximately two

kilometres of Broadway town centre. King Street North village centre contains a number of restaurants and specialty shops. Newtown railway station is located within the Newtown town centre and Broadway town centre contains Broadway shopping centre.

Under the current zoning, Zone No. 5 – Special Uses, development for the purposes of the particular land use indicated by red lettering on the map (hospital in this case), or land uses which are ancillary or incidental to that land use, development that may be carried out (with or without consent) on adjoining or adjacent land in the same or a different zone is permissible on the subject site. An adjacent zoning is Residential 2(b), however it is unclear whether this zoning will allow the proposed development to be permissible on the subject site. To ensure permissibility, the applicant has submitted a site compatibility certificate application for the site.

Cultural Heritage

The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Group is an item of State significant heritage in Council's existing LEP, as well as in the current draft comprehensive LEP for the Sydney local government area (draft SLEP). The Queen Mary Building is listed on the NSW s170 Register as having moderate historical, aesthetic and social heritage significance as a health facility.

The former Heritage Branch advised that it was required to review the proposal. The responsibility for items listed on the s170 Register is that of the individual Government agency. The applicant is NSW Health. In addition, there are relatively minor changes being proposed to the external fabric of the building.

Strategic Justification

The proposed use of the site as student accommodation is consistent with the objectives and directions of both the *Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036* (Metropolitan Plan) and the draft *Sydney City Subregional Strategy* (Subregional Strategy) on the basis that:

1. The proposed development will contribute to the housing target for the Sydney City subregion of 61,000 new dwellings between 2006 and 2036, as set out in the Metropolitan Plan;
2. The subject site is within walking distance of King Street village centre and in close proximity to Newtown and Broadway town centres and if a site compatibility certificate is issued to allow residential accommodation, will support action B1.3 of the Metropolitan Plan; and
3. Under the Subregional Strategy, the subject site is located within the Sydney Education and Health Precinct. The future role of the precinct is to be promoted as a world class education and health facilities with opportunities for renewal. By providing student accommodation, it is likely that the site will contribute to this role.

CLAUSE 19(6)

The Director General must not issue a certificate unless the Director General:

- (a) has taken into account any comments received from the council within 14 days after the application for the certificate was made; and
- (b) is of the opinion that the development concerned is:
 - (i) compatible with the surrounding land uses having regard to the matters set out in clause 19(6)(b); and
 - (ii) not likely to have an adverse effect on the environment and does not cause any unacceptable environmental risks to the land.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

The Director General must take into account any comments from the relevant council received within 14 days after the application for the site compatibility certificate was made (clause 19(6)(a)).

A letter was sent to City of Sydney Council on 24 March 2011 advising it of the SCC application and requesting comments. Council responded on 4 April 2011 and has made the following comments:

- The proposed development for student housing, with office and retail uses at lower levels would likely be assessed as a mixed use development comprising a 'boarding house' and 'commercial premises';
- Under the current zoning provisions of *South Sydney LEP 1998* a 'boarding house' is currently permissible, but not 'commercial premises'. The draft City Plan on exhibition has comparable zones on and around the site;
- As 'boarding houses' are permissible on the site it appears that a site compatibility certificate is only needed for the use as 'commercial premises';
- The council supports, in principle, the issuing of a site compatibility certificate, conditional on a full assessment through a subsequent development application;
- The Department should be satisfied the 'business premises or retail facilities ... cater for patients, staff or visitors' of the health services facility under the provisions of clause 57(2)(b) of the Infrastructure SEPP 2007.

COMPATIBILITY WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES

The Director General must not issue a certificate unless he is of the opinion that the development concerned is compatible with the surrounding land uses having regard to the following matters (clause 19(6)(b)):

1. The existing uses and approved uses of land in the vicinity of the development (clause 19(6)(b)(i))

The applicant advises that the building has been vacant since 2005 having been previously used as a nurses home. The surrounding land uses are predominantly hospital based, including the School of Nursing and Cyclotron building. Residential land uses are located immediately opposite the building on the western side of Church Street. Recently approved uses in the vicinity of the proposed development include the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse Project.

2. The impact that the development (including its bulk and scale) is likely to have on the existing uses, approved uses and uses that, in the opinion of the Director General are likely to be the preferred future uses of that land (clause 19(6)(b)(ii))

The proposal is mostly an internal reconfiguration of an existing building, which was previously used as a nurses home for up to 770 residents. Externally there will be minimal changes to the building and site. As the building already exists, the bulk, scale and other physical characteristics of the proposal will have no additional impact on the surrounding existing land uses. The applicant considers that the only other future use could be hospital related. However, there are no identified hospital related requirements for the site.

The preferred use of the land will maximise the building's location close to public transport, amenities, recreation opportunities and Sydney City. The report accompanying the application indicates that the proposal will have minimal adverse impact.

3. The services and infrastructure that are or will be available to meet the demands arising from the development (clause 19(6)(b)(iii))

As mentioned the site is located in close proximity to existing education and health facilities, transport networks and shops and other services in nearby village and town centres.

The accompanying report indicates that there are adequate services and infrastructure available to cope with the demand arising from the proposal. Any required upgrades to supply that may be required have been identified as minor.

EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Director General must not issue a certificate unless he is of the opinion that the development concerned is not likely to have an adverse effect on the environment and does not cause any unacceptable environmental risks to the land (clause 19(6)(c)).

In this regard, there are no known environmental risks associated with the alterations and additions to the Queen Mary Building since the development will mainly be of an internal nature. It is proposed that the refurbishment will encompass measures to improve the environmental outcomes of the development compared with its existing status. The reuse of the existing building will not have an impact on the surrounding environment and will not pose an environmental risk to the land.


RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Director General:


- **considers** any comments received from Sydney City Council within 14 days after the application for the certificate was made as set out in the report (**Tag B**); and
- **forms the opinion** that the development concerned is compatible with the surrounding land uses having had regard to the matters specified in clause 19(6)(b); and
- **forms the opinion** that the development concerned is not likely to have an adverse effect on the environment and does not cause any unacceptable environmental risks to the land; and
- **determines** the application for a site compatibility certificate by issuing a certificate (**Tag C**) for Lot 81 DP 794283, Lot 1 in DP 84936 and Lots 532 and 533 in DP 752049, Queen Mary Building, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown.
- **signs** the letters to the applicant and Council advising of this determination (**Tags D and E**).

 20/4/11

Regional Director
Sydney Region East

 27.4.11

Executive Director
Planning Operations

 2/5/11

Deputy Director General
Plan Making and Urban Renewal

 2/5/2011

Director General