

# **SOUTHERN CROSS HOSPITAL**

## **PROPOSED NEW BUILDING**

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**Application for Resource Consent**

**URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT / ADDENDUM**

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**Prepared for the Southern Cross Hospital Ltd**

**Updated 15 November 2018**

# ADDENDUM REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

This addendum to the original urban design report (30 April 2018) assesses the changes to the design of the proposed building in response to the issues raised in the Council's Urban Design Assessment and following subsequent discussions with and further feedback from the Council's urban design advisor.

The conclusion of the Council's Urban Design Assessment (dated 26 September 2018) states that:

*"In many respects the proposed design improves on the existing situation. It creates a more attractive and legible entrance, removes the dominance of parking at the front of the site and modernises the appearance of a somewhat dated facility.*

*Overall though, the design is not entirely successful in responding to the context. The main areas of urban design concern are:*

- *Overwhelming horizontality and lack of modulation of the eastern facade*
- *Visual dominance of the northern end of the building, particularly when viewed from the north*
- *Unsatisfactory street edge conditions at the northern end of the building with heavy reliance on a notoriously challenging mitigation measure (i.e. green wall) to improve conditions in this area".*

## DESIGN RESPONSE

The above issues are interrelated and focus primarily on the northern/taller half of the building (to the north of the entrance area).

To address the issues, the Applicant's Architects have reviewed and amended the initial design. The proposed amendments are illustrated on the attached drawings (refer Architectural Drawings dated 15/11/2018).

The proposed amendments include:

- changes to the design of the eastern and northern elevations;
- slight reduction of the length of the building's footprint; and
- significant reduction of the bulk of the roof top plant which, in turn, will reduce the visual impact of the total building bulk in views from the elevated properties on the opposite side of the street.

### ***Issue 1: Overwhelming horizontality and lack of modulation of the eastern facade***

This issue has been addressed by articulating the eastern facade into a series of vertical modules. The modules have been differentiated through off-sets and negative detail and the use of alternative materials, including:

- recessed/ narrower facade modules, expressed with metal 'fins' (aluminium vertical louvre system) that run across the height of the northern part of the building facade; and
- wider modules, treated in glass panels and with a varying degree of opacity that have been articulated by the proposed pattern of windows.

The proposed approach:

- provides an expressed 3D facade modulation which breaks down the perceived length of the street facade,
- creates a building with a 'broken' parapet/silhouette line in views from the street; and
- integrates the top level (consultancy rooms) with the carparking structure below and assists to 'ground' the building.

The revised facade articulation, together with the enhanced entrance creates a building facade which, compared to the initial design, more clearly reflects the scale/frontage width of surrounding residential buildings. Note that the existing trees, which are to be retained, will further enhance/accenuate the vertical rhythm introduced by the amended facade design.

It is noted, that for reasons independent of the Council's urban design feedback, the length of the building's eastern frontage has been slightly reduced. This will further moderate the impact of the building's street frontage in views from the street.

***Issue 2: Visual dominance of the northern end of the building, particularly when viewed from the north***

The above issue has been addressed by:

- the design of the amended eastern facade, which will break down/moderate the impact of bulk (as discussed above); and
- introducing a low solid wall at the base of the carpark and installing perforated metal screens (behind the intended 'green wall') to enclose the parking structure along its eastern and northern sides. The combination of these elements creates 'horizontal bands' which will articulate and 'sub-divide' the northern end of the building (below its top level) and, as a result, moderate the perception of height around its northern end.

Further to this:

- the proposed perforated metal screen within the central portion of the northern elevation (the area above the carpark entrance) will not be supplemented by a 'green wall' as planting in that location will be difficult to establish as it cannot be grown from the ground. The screens on either side of the central portion of the carpark will be covered by the 'green wall' planting. This helps to visually 'sub-divide' the northern side of the carpark structure into three implied vertical modules that work well in relation to the centrally located balcony at the top level; and
- the amended design introduces timber cladding to the balcony 'ceiling' which adds further detail to the northern elevation.

***Issue 3: Unsatisfactory street edge conditions at the northern end of the building with heavy reliance on a notoriously challenging mitigation measure (i.e. green wall) to improve conditions in this area.***

As mentioned earlier, the above issue partly overlaps with the other two issues. Therefore, the response to the first two issues also addresses aspects of the 'street edge conditions at the northern end of the building'.

The elements that help to address the issue include:

- the vertical articulation provided by recessed 'fin' modules which also provide partial screening to the carpark; and
- the proposed solid base to the carparking structure and the proposed perforated metal screens behind the 'green wall' installed behind the recessed 'fin' modules. Together these elements will reduce the visual impact of the carpark structure as well as sub-divide its northern and eastern sides. In combination with the other design changes, this will improve the outcome of the initial design.

Regarding the 'green wall' (discussed in the Landscape Architect's Statement) it is important to reiterate that: (a) the 'green wall' has been intended to work in tandem with the retained trees and its design will be co-ordinated with the design of the perforated metal screens; and (b) it is the existing trees, with their increasing height/bulk as they grow and mature, which would act as the main mitigation measure to reduce the visual impact of the building and assist its integration to the streetscape.

Some changes have been made to the alignment of the pedestrian pathway along the northern edge of the building to provide a larger area for planting along the northern end edge of the carpark. This has allowed for two additional trees to be planted on either side of the carpark entrance while improving the legibility of the pathway to the new entrance lobby of the existing hospital.

Based on the above assessment, it is considered that the amended design addresses appropriately the issues raised by the Council's urban design advisor.

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