

# SOUTHERN CROSS HOSPITAL PROPOSED NEW BUILDING

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Application for Resource Consent

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT (REVISED JULY 2019)

Prepared for the Southern Cross Hospitals Ltd

July 2019

## 1 BACKGROUND

In November 2018 Southern Cross Hospitals applied for a resource consent for a new building at its Hanson Street hospital. The application was publicly notified. I prepared an urban design assessment, and an Addendum report, which formed part of the November 2018 application.

On March 2019 the Council released its Section 42A Report as a first step in preparing for the hearing of the application. The Section 42A Report recommended that consent not be granted partly on urban design grounds, including effects relating to context and character.

Following a review of the Section 42A Report, the Applicant chose to review the proposal rather than proceed to a hearing. I have assisted the project architect, Warren & Mahoney, to develop the revised proposal which is now submitted for resource consent.

The urban design assessment subject to this report relates to the revised proposal as shown on the architectural set of plans dated 19/07/2019. It is an update of my April 2018 report and effectively replaces Section 4 "Assessment of Design outcomes" and Section 5 "Visual Catchment and Viewing Audiences" of that report.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

The proposal involves the construction of a new building at the existing Southern Cross Hospital at 90-114 Hanson Street to provide new consulting rooms with carparking below. The development site is located within the Southern Inner Residential Area (Newtown sub-area).

This report forms part of the AEE accompanying the Resource Consent Application and assesses the urban design outcomes of the revised proposal against the relevant District Plan provisions. It also includes a townscape/visual impact assessment. The assessment is based on site visits and a review of the architectural plans, the Architectural Statement, the landscape plans and Landscape Design Statement. It also takes into account the urban design issues raised in the Council Section 42A Report and subsequent meeting with the Council urban design and planning advisors.

## 3 THE PROPOSAL

The revised proposal (the proposal) involves the construction of a new three-storey hospital-related building. The new building will be located along the eastern frontage of the existing Southern Cross Hospital site (90-114 Hanson Street) over the existing surface carpark. The upper level of the building accommodates consulting rooms, the lower levels provide carparking space. Due to the sloping topography, the southern end of the carpark remains below street level. The building has its long frontage facing Hanson Street and a centrally located pedestrian entrance.

The new building connects to the entrance of the existing hospital through a new integrated pedestrian entrance off Hanson Street, but is otherwise separated from the existing hospital.

Vehicle entries to the carpark are in similar locations as the existing entries. The proposal includes landscape design work around the new building to help its integration to the site and surrounding streetscape.

Further description of the proposal is provided in the Architectural Statement. The proposed landscape work is discussed in the Landscape Design Statement and illustrated on the associated Landscape Plans.

## 4 THE SITE & CONTEXT

The development site - the development site is part of the wider hospital campus and occupies the area of the existing surface carpark fronting Hanson Street. The site has a sloping topography rising from north to south.



Development site and its context

Currently the wider hospital site is accessed from both Hanson Street and Hall Street. The access off Hanson Street - the primary access to the site - connects to the hospital and associated carparking areas extending along the Hanson Street frontage. A secondary hospital staff carpark, located at the south/west end of the site, is accessed off Hall Street.

The existing hospital has a low horizontal bulk with broken down roof form and unremarkable external appearance and little architectural detail. The existing hospital is setback from the street frontage and occupies the majority of the site to the south/west of the existing carpark. Due to the sloping topography, its southern end is below the level of the adjacent footpath. Landscaped areas with established trees are found along the Hanson Street frontage and at the south/east corner of the site.

Currently, the street frontage is defined by existing trees, but otherwise dominated by the surface carpark that sits slightly below the street level. Existing street edge planting and the setback position of the building tend to downplay its streetscape presence. Currently, the building is undergoing renovations and repair work.



Hanson Street - views to the existing hospital from the north (left) and south (right)

**Context** - the development site is located towards the northern end of Hanson Street approximately 250m to the south of the John Street intersection. The context to the north, north/east and west of the site is mixed. Immediately to the east and south the site is surrounded by the Newtown residential area. Further to east, south/east and north/east are the commercial areas focused around Adelaide Road and Riddiford Street, and including the Wellington Hospital complex that is an important regional destination.

The block immediately to the north of the site accommodates a number of multi-storey residential buildings, including the Capital City Lodge (comprised of a four-storey and a two-storey block) and the Council-owned Hanson Court Flats, including a large scale five-storey horizontal block facing Hanson Street further to the north and a cluster of tall blocks to the north/west.



Capitol City Lodge and Hanson Court Flats



Hanson Street context to the northeast of the site



Hanson Street - existing residential development to the east and south of the development site



The National Dance and Drama Centre and the Wellington Indoor Sports Centre - buildings with large footprints - and adjacent artificial surface sports field are located on the elevated sites sitting above the development site to the north and north/west.

To the east the site is surrounded by existing residential development comprised primarily of older one and two-storey dwellings. Due to the sloping topography, many of the buildings located immediately to the east, on the opposite/east side of the street, sit on elevated terraces, some with in-built garages.

Immediately to the south of the development site, facing Hanson Street, there is a grouping of single- storey cottages of similar age and style, built close to the street edge. These are separated from the existing hospital building site by a relatively large area of existing planting located at the south/east corner of the development site.

**Visibility** - the site has a long street frontage and is visible from along Hanson Street and surrounding properties and from the elevated areas to the west. Overall, the location of the site and surrounding topography limits visibility to primarily close-up and medium-range views (viewing distance 0-500m). A detailed assessment of the visibility of the proposal and its visual impact on the townscape and on the relevant visual audiences is included Section 5 of this report.

## 5 ASSESSMENT OF DESIGN OUTCOMES

### 5.1 ASSESSMENT REFERENCE POINTS

The relevant District Plan provisions for the urban design assessment of the proposal include:

- (a) District Plan Rules 5.4.1 and 5.4.4.A - there are no specific provisions/criteria in the District Plan (under the relevant Rules 5.4.1 and 5.4.4.A) to guide the urban design assessment of non-residential buildings in established residential areas. However, some guidance on matters that Council will have regard to are included in the explanation to Policy 4.2.7.3 which states that:

*“... Because non-residential activities can impact adversely on the amenity of Residential Areas, control over these has been maintained in the District Plan. The Council aims to ensure that any non-residential activity is of a scale and character that is in keeping with its surroundings as this is important to protect residential amenities”.*

The two key matters for assessment are:

- building scale and character - the scale and character of non-residential buildings and their relationship to the surrounding context; and
  - visual impact - the focus for the urban design assessment is primarily on visual impact on public views. However, the assessment provides some comments on visibility and visual effects on private views.
- (b) Residential Design Guide (including Appendix 4) - technically, the proposal being located within the Southern Inner Residential Areas/Newtown, is subject to the Residential Design Guide (Design Guide) and associated Appendix 4 applicable to the Newtown Sub-area. However, the primary focus of the Design Guide is on achieving high quality new multi-unit residential development with no specific guidance on non-residential buildings within the Newtown residential area.

The proposal is for a hospital-related building on a site that has been long associated with hospital activity (but not specifically acknowledged in the District Plan as a site for hospital uses). In this regard, the Design Guide, given its focus on good quality multi-unit development, has limited application, except that some of the objectives/guidelines with regard to ‘site planning’ and ‘character’ could be helpful if interpreted in the context of a hospital-related building within a setting of mixed character.

With this thought in mind, it is noted that the Design Guide for the nearby Wellington Hospital suggests that it may be most appropriate for hospital buildings ‘to maintain the character resulting from design requirements for medical facilities’ and that ‘this character should be developed in new buildings in a way that responds to but does not replicate the appearance of their setting’. This provides an insight into Council’s view on design and appearance of hospital buildings relative to their context.

With the above in mind, the assessment focuses on the extent to which the proposal, as a medical-related building, achieves good quality urban design that is responsive to its immediate context and diverse townscape setting, rather than strictly follow the provisions of any specific Design Guide.<sup>1</sup>

The assessment matters include:

- Site layout and massing (bulk/scale)
- Building form and design
- Street frontages/edge treatment
- Signage
- Landscaping & CPTED
- Visual impact

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<sup>1</sup> It is noted that similar approach was followed by the Council when assessing the recent Application for the Wakefield Hospital Redevelopment.

The key objectives/principles for the assessment of the proposal in relation to the above matters include:

- the site planning and design of the building recognise the slightly different contextual conditions around the development site and respond to those accordingly;
- the design response is focused on achieving an appropriate scale relationship to surrounding residential properties and reducing the potential visual impact of the building on those properties and on the townscape;
- the building is coherently designed and exhibits design integrity. Building form, materials and detail express the building function, address any specific functional requirements, while achieving a good quality contemporary design that integrates well into the existing townscape character; and
- potential visual effects are addressed through both architectural as well as landscape design means.

## 5.2 ASSESSMENT

The main changes between the revised proposal (July 2019) and the previous proposal (November 2018) include:

- **changes to the siting and massing of the upper levels of the building to reduce its visual bulk** - the building has been moved to the south to align with the southern edge of the existing carpark. In that way a substantial part of the proposed carparking will remain below street level. This, in turn will reduce its impact on the streetscape, while also moderating the impact of building height as seen from the street. It will also reduce the encroachment of the building through the 9m height plane that applies to residential development; and
- **changes to the façade articulation and its detailed design treatment** to improve the relationship of the proposal to the streetscape. This includes the design treatment of both the main building as well as the carparking structure below. The facades have been given a stronger and more expressive articulation into distinctive modules. The architectural treatment of the individual modules, in terms of form, materials and design detail, has been revised to improve the building's relationship to the residential scale and character of its immediate context to the south and east.

The above changes have been made in direct response to the key urban design issues raised in the Council's 42A Report, which considered that the proposal did not fit in well with the scale and character of its residential context. In my view, the proposed changes address adequately those issues as discussed in the assessment below.

**Site layout and massing (overall bulk/scale)** - the proposed building is aligned with and built close to the street boundary of the site with its frontage setback being similar to that of the existing dwellings to the south.

The siting of the building relative to the street edge will largely retain the existing row of Totara trees. Two of those trees, as well as the existing palm trees, will be removed to allow for vehicle access and the relocated sub-station. However, the proposed landscape work, which includes new trees and other new planting, will provide an integrated landscape treatment along the street edge of the new building, as well as around its northern and southern ends.

The frontage width of the proposal is smaller than that of the existing hospital and not too dissimilar to some of the buildings to the north of the development site. The upper levels of the building are aligned with the southern edge of the existing carpark and setback approximately 8m from the northern edge of the proposed lower level carpark structure.

This approach to the massing of the building is appropriate as it utilises the topography of the site with a large part of the carparking levels remaining below street level. This, in turn, reduces the impact of height and visual bulk, while also reducing the direct impact of the proposed carparking on the streetscape.

At the same time, the lower carparking structure at the northern end, which extends forward from the upper levels, will act as a transitional volume that provides a step in height from north to south. This moderates the perception of height in views from the north and assists the integration of the new building to the streetscape. This also reduces the encroachment of the building's northern end through the 9m height plane to approximately 1.8m (compared to the 2.9m encroachment of the November 2018 proposal). To reduce the building bulk, the northern end of the upper level carpark has been left uncovered.

The proposed siting will retain the existing landscaped area to the south of the existing carpark and will enhance it through the proposed integrated landscape treatment of the site. In that way it will continue to act as a generous green buffer providing a soft transition between the new building and the adjacent properties to the south (116-124 Hanson Street).

The proposed building bulk is largely driven by functional requirements and the areas required for carparking and consulting rooms. Overall, the siting of the new building is logical in the context of the existing hospital layout.

In relation to the scale of its context, the proposed massing appropriately positions the taller/large part of the building at the northern end adjacent to the existing larger/taller buildings to the north, while its southern/lower part responds to the lower scale of the residential buildings to the south. The carparking entry points are largely kept in a similar location to the current ones.

**Building form and design** - to assist the scale relationship of the proposal to the streetscape, its main street facade has been sub-divided vertically into a series of smaller components/façade modules. These include six projecting modules differentiated three-dimensionally and by some variation in their form and design detail. The frontage width of the modules is approximately 5m. The module above the entrance is slightly wider and projects further from the building edge. It is also treated differently in terms of materials.

The frontage width of the individual modules references the general pattern of building frontage width in the residential area which typically varies between 6 and 11m. The facade modules along the northern part of the building have been expressed slightly differently from those at the southern end to create visual interest and to acknowledge the different contextual conditions around the development site. For example, the two modules at the southern end are enhanced by angled façade screens with a form that makes abstract reference to the sloping roofs in the surrounding residential area, while the remaining façade modules have simple geometric form.

The projecting modules are expressed with steel frames with pre-finished aluminium panels and glazing. Some of the modules incorporate screening with horizontal louvers and terracotta battens. The carparking levels are enclosed by pre-cast textured concrete walls with slotted openings.

The design of the two side elevations adopt the same approach to that applied to the main street façade. This creates a unified building image in views from the street. The west/back elevation is less detailed given its low visibility.

Overall, the proposed façade composition and its detailed design provide an effective façade articulation expressed three-dimensionally, as well as at the level of design detail and materials. The subdivision of the façades into distinctive components is an effective way to reduce the perceived length of the building frontage, create a broken roofline and reduce the visual bulk of the proposal, while aiding its integration to the scale of its residential context.

This is further supported by the proposed palette of materials and design detail which together provide an appropriate level of visual interest through texture, colour and shadow lines.

The proposed landscape work around the building edges and the retention of the majority of the existing Totara trees will provide a soft foreground along the tallest part of the building at the northern end, which will further help the relationship of the adjacent streetscape.

**Edge treatment** - the street edge is partly enclosed by the textured pre-cast concrete wall associated with parking levels and partly open to allow for pedestrian and vehicle access. The street edge at the northern end and around the north/east corner is softened by the row of the existing Totara trees and additional

planting. The continuity of planting is interrupted by the required vehicle access associated with the drop-off/pick-up area.

The 'activation' of the building frontage has been limited by the required area for carparking with the proposed street entrance generating a certain level of activity. The pedestrian entrance goes through the carpark mid-way between the drop-off/pick-up vehicle lanes - a location guided by the entrance to the existing hospital and the location of existing vehicle entries. To integrate the new entrance to the street and improve its amenity, the area around it incorporates paving, screening architectural features and sculptural elements, some planting and seating. The design of the entrance way also incorporates a higher timber cladding and lighting.

At street level, the entrance is expressed architecturally through the projecting facade module above which has been differentiated in terms of its detailed design to enhance the legibility of the main entry point.

**Signage** - the proposal includes two free-standing vertical signs installed close to the street edge (within the boundaries of the Hospital site) around the two pedestrian entrances access. The type of those signs and their general location are very similar to the existing signs.

**Landscaping & CPTED** - the proposal incorporates well considered landscape work as illustrated on the Landscape Plans and further explained in the Landscape Design Statement. The proposed landscape work has appropriately aimed at integrating the building into the site and the adjacent streetscape and reducing the visual effects of the carparking levels.

The enhancements made to the existing landscaped area at the south/eastern end of the hospital site will improve the amenity of the street, while maintaining the existing green buffer between the new building and the residential properties to the south.

The areas around the drop off/pick up area and the pedestrian entrance will be illuminated at night. Those areas and the carpark will be overlooked by the dwellings on the opposite of the street which supports the informal surveillance of those areas.

## 6 VISUAL CATCHMENT & VIEWING AUDIENCES

**Visibility** - the proposed building is located close to the Hanson Street boundary of the site and, unlike the existing hospital, it will have a strong streetscape presence. To understand the visual impact of the proposal on the local and wider townscape character, a townscape/visual impact assessment has been undertaken. The need for such an assessment was also recommended by the Council's urban design advisor at the meeting.

Visual impact is closely related to the level of visibility of a building and its context and the way it will be experienced by the relevant visual audiences. Visibility is assessed by identifying the visual catchment - i.e. the locations from where the proposal will be seen. The visual catchment determines the area that will be subject to visual effects.

The broad visual catchment of the proposal was determined by studying aerial/contour maps and undertaking site visits. The topography of the wider context around the development site limits its visual catchment primarily to viewpoints located roughly 300m away from the new building in northern, southern, western and eastern directions (see attached map, next page). Due to existing natural and built elements the proposal will not be seen from every location within the visual catchment.

To understand typical viewing directions, distances and determine the visual effects, a number of photographs were taken during site visits from different viewpoints within the visual catchment. From those photographs five viewpoints were selected that are considered representative of the directions and distances that would be most often experienced by the relevant viewing audiences.

Photomontages showing the new building in context from the representative viewpoints were prepared by the Applicant to illustrate the visibility of the proposal, its relationship to the surrounding townscape and its potential impact on the respective audiences (refer to Drawings RC10.001 - RC 10.008) for viewpoint location and 'before' and 'after' views).



Visual catchment

**Overview/visual experience and type of visual audiences** - depending on the viewing distance and direction the building will be experienced in several different ways including:

- (a) public/transient views from north and south - the building will be experienced most often in short-to- medium range views (0-300m) from the north and south by pedestrians and motorists moving along Hanson Street and/or by patients arriving at the hospital (see photos below).



Views of the building experienced by those users will be transient with different parts of the building seen in sequence for short periods of time. Due to the undulating topography the building will be more prominent in views from the north where it will appear as a three-storey structure. Conversely, when seen from the south it will read as one-two storey building with the lower level of the carpark

remaining below street level. Its impact will be further downplayed by the planting at its southern end.

The respective audiences will experience the building mainly in perspective views which will reduce the perception of building length with close-up views from the street focusing the attention on the architectural detail. Hanson Street is relatively narrow and does not provide viewing locations far enough from the building edge to allow a frontal view in which the building will appear in full elevation. The impact in such views is represented by Views 1, 2 and 4 discussed below/refer to RC10.001- 004 and RC10.007-008).

- (b) public/transient views from the west - the rear of the building (mainly its top part) will be experienced in short-to-medium range views by users of the elevated public open spaces and adjacent streets and the Indoor Sport Centre carpark to the west (see photos below).



The views experienced by these users will be transient with the views of the building changing with movement and experienced for short periods of time. The elevated position of these viewpoints will downplay the visibility of the building and it will not be prominent in views from the west. Rather, only the building top will be seen as an element of a wider and diverse in character townscape setting.

- (c) private/static views from the east - the front of the building will be seen in static views (as part of the surrounding area) from residential properties immediately to the east on the opposite side of Hanson Street. Ten properties will have a direct visual relationship to the new building - nos. 115 to 131 (see map below). Some of the properties, like those opposite the southern end of the building, are elevated above street. Views of the building from the properties opposite the northern part of the proposal will be focused mainly on the lower levels of the building behind the existing Totara trees.



The elevated properties (nos. 123 - 131) sit above street level, although no. 123 is not elevated significantly above the adjacent footpath level. The impact of the proposal on the elevated properties is represented by View 4 (refer to RC10-005-006).



113-127.Hanson Street (no 113 in the foreground)



121-129 Hanson Street (no 129 behind the planning)



125-127 Hanson Street



129-131 Hanson Street (no 129 behind the planting)

**Representative views** - as discussed earlier, views of the proposal were prepared from selected viewpoints considered to be representative of the types of visual impact experienced by the relevant audiences.

**VIEW 1/from the north** (viewpoint location: eastern footpath vicinity of 105 Hanson Street; viewing distance approximately 50m; refer RC10.001-002) - in views from the north the focus of attention will be on the north/east corner of the building. The northern/short elevation of the building will be seen almost in elevation with the long/street facade seen at an oblique angle. The building will be seen in relation to the existing taller four-storey flats at 88 Hanson Street in the foreground.

In terms of the overall visual experience of the northern section of Hanson Street, the proposal will continue the pattern of buildings with long street frontages defining the northern section of Hanson Street (e.g. City Lodge and Hanson Court Flats/nos. 80-82 on the western side of the street and the Countdown Supermarket on the eastern side).

In View 1 the façade composition is appreciated with the proposed modulation of the front facade breaking down the length of the building and emphasising the scale of the individual façade modules. The modelling of the north façade into three modules with the corner module being treated differently, helps to reduce the visual bulk of the proposal and enhance the building corner. The lower carparking structure, which is largely screened by the existing trees and the entrance sign, provides a height transition between the street and the upper levels. This aids the relationship of the building to its street environment.



View 1

VIEW 2/from the south (viewpoint location: eastern footpath, vicinity of no. 131-133 Hanson Street/approximate viewing distance 30m; refer RC10.003-004). This view is focused on the southern end of the building which will read as a lower one-storey structure at its southern end. The existing mature trees within the adjacent landscaped area obscure the south/east corner of the building. The proposed facade articulation and its detailed design treatment, together with the projecting module above the entrance will help to moderate the perceived length of the building frontage and add a sense of scale.

The angled frames of the southern-most modules create a varied roof line and enhance the vertical scale of the façade. The lower parking level will remain largely below street level. The pedestrian entrance and some of the associated timber screens will be seen in the view along with the projecting module above the entrance, signalling the entry point.



View 2

The proposed building bulk, as seen in this view, will project largely against existing buildings in the background of the view.

Compared to the existing situation, the proposed view shows a building that replaces the existing green edge. However, the new view will be of a well-articulated street façade with vertical rhythm and façade modulation that reflects the scale of its residential context.

VIEW 3/from the south (viewpoint location: eastern side of Hanson Street/ elevated property at no. 127 Hanson Street/ viewing distance approximately 20m; refer RC10.005-006). This view illustrates the visibility of the proposal from the elevated properties directly opposite. The mature planting in the front yards of some of the properties will reduce the visibility of the proposal.

The focus of the view is on the entrance to the building emphasising the open street edge. Due to the elevated location of the viewpoint more of the building top will be revealed and the view of the carpark will be widened compared to views from street level (e.g. View 2). The entrance façade module, the architectural elements and paving around the entrance and the proposed landscape work, as previously discussed, will add to the amenity around the pedestrian entrance.

In View 3, the length of the new building will be appreciated. The proposed facade treatment, as already discussed will help to moderate its impact.

The building top and lift overrun will be visible from some elevated viewpoints. The setback position and proposed cladding of the lift overrun helps to reduce its impact. In terms of height and visual impact of the building top, a comparison between the 'before' and 'after' views shows that the proposal will not obscure the green backdrop of the escarpment to the west much further than the existing building does, and the new building will project largely against the existing hospital.



View 3

While the new building frontage will be more prominent than the existing building, the new view will be of a new contemporary building with street façade that provides visual interest and design detail.

VIEW 4/from the south (viewpoint location: vicinity of north/east corner of Hanson Street/Hall Street intersection; viewing distance 65m; refer RC10.007-008). The building will be seen at an oblique angle with its southern end obscured by the existing trees within the adjacent landscaped area. This will reduce its visual impact.

The proposal will be seen against the backdrop of the larger buildings of Hanson Court Flats to the north with the open space area to the south being retained, with enhanced planting as described in the Landscape Statement and Landscape Plans. The projecting entrance module breaks down the building frontage and reduces the perception of building length with the street edge planting at the northern end providing a soft/green transition between the building and the street.



View 4

Retaining the landscaped open space at the south/east corner of the hospital site will maintain the existing relationship to the adjacent cottages.

VIEW 5/from the west: (viewing location: eastern edge of Hutchinson Road; viewing distance approximately 210m, refer A10.009-010. Note that this view has not been updated and shows the November 2018 proposal. However, it is indicative of the visual effects of the revised proposal which moves the building volume slightly to the south). The steeply rising topography to the west reduces the visibility of the proposed building in views from the elevated areas to the west. View 5 shows that only the top parts of the proposed building will be seen at the mid-ground in front of the existing hospital building as part of the wider townscape setting featuring the large volumes of the Wellington Hospital buildings at the background.



View 5

**Summary Visual Impact** - the visual effects of the proposal are localised within a relatively small area around the development site, allowing close-up and medium-range views from viewpoints up to 300m away.

The proposal will change the existing streetscape by introducing a new taller building which sits closer to the street edge compared to the existing building. The building, while taller and more prominent than the existing hospital, will replace the view of an open carpark along the street edge and an existing older building of no special design quality with a view of a new architecturally-designed building with a well-articulated street façade with vertical rhythm and design treatment that provides visual interest and reflects the scale of its residential context.

Visual effects arising from the proposal will be greatest for the residential properties directly opposite the development site.

Visual effects experienced by motorists, pedestrians and patients arriving at the hospital will be much lower as the proposed changes to the current situation will be experienced in transient views for short periods of time.

Based on the visual impact assessment, it is considered that the visual effects of the proposed building have been mitigated to an acceptable level for all visual audiences, as well as in relation to the existing townscape character. This has been achieved through the proposed architectural treatment in combination with retaining the majority of the existing Totara trees and planting new trees.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The proposal is for a hospital-related building on a site that has been long associated with hospital activity. The development site has a residential zoning located close to the commercial areas of Adelaide Road and Riddiford Street. The context of the site is mixed, including the typical residential character of the existing Newtown residential area to the east and south of the development site and some larger-scale residential and non-residential buildings to the north and west.

The site planning, massing and design of the proposal have been guided by key District Plan requirements and constrained by the existing hospital layout in terms of available land for extension and location of vehicle and pedestrian entrances.

While the form and layout of the new building has been influenced by functional requirements (re number of carparking and floor area needed for the consulting rooms), its design acknowledges the contextual differences around the development site and the scale and character of its residential neighbours.

Overall, I consider that the outcome is acceptable and can be supported on urban design grounds.

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