



IPC APPROVES CHANGES TO WAHROONGA ESTATE CONCEPT PLAN

13 January 2021

The state's Independent Planning Commission has signed off on revised plans for a major residential development in Sydney's north.

The Proponent, Capital Bluestone Pty Ltd (Capital Corporation Wahroonga), sought to modify its original concept approval for the redevelopment of Wahroonga Estate, located on a 62.4-hectare site on Fox Valley Road and the Comenarra Parkway at Wahroonga.

Under the proposed changes, the number of apartment buildings within Precinct B would be reduced from five to four; however, building heights would be raised and footprints enlarged to accommodate an unchanged maximum 200 residential dwellings. There would also be changes to internal roadways and car parking rates.

The Department of Planning, Industry & Environment finalised its whole-of-government assessment of the modification application in September 2019. It came to the Commission for determination because the Department received more than 25 public objections to the proposal.

Commissioners John Hann (Panel Chair) and Wendy Lewin* were appointed to consider the application. They met with the Proponent, Department and Ku-ring-gai Council and inspected the site and surrounding area.

The Panel also hosted a public meeting in November 2019 to listen to the community's views. The key issues of concern raised at that meeting and in written submissions to the Commission included bushfire risk, impacts of the development on the adjacent Wahroonga Adventist School, built form, and car parking.

In December 2019, the Commission sent the modification application back to the Department for further assessment after the Proponent sought to amend a proposed condition to allow for the redefinition of 'conservation land', resulting in a change to the permitted location of asset protection zones (APZ) for the site. The Department provided the Commission an addendum report outlining its consideration of the proposed change to APZ requirements in October 2020.

Following very detailed consideration, the Commission has today (Wednesday 13 January 2021) determined to approve the modification application, subject to conditions.

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In its Statement of Reasons for Decision, the Commission concluded the modification application is “generally consistent with the [Ecologically Sustainable Development] principles and the objects of the [Environmental Planning & Assessment Act], and is in the public interest”.

The Commission found that the proposed changes to asset protection zones – reducing the APZ for residential buildings from 60m to 56m, while maintaining the 100m APZ for the school – are acceptable, subject to future assessment requirements. It noted that the Department’s recommendation to offset the APZ located in land zoned for environmental conservation with an equivalent area in the residential zone was also appropriate.

The Commission also stated it’s satisfied that the revised building envelopes and building heights are acceptable.

“The Commission finds that on balance, the proposed built form is acceptable and would not result in significant amenity impacts to the Wahroonga Adventist School compared to the approved building envelopes... (and) also agrees with the Department’s finding that the deletion of Building D would deliver a net benefit to the School,” it added.

Those benefits include increased school grounds, better connectivity between the main school area and existing playgrounds and improving the outlook and solar access to the north-eastern edge of the school.

The Commission has imposed the Department’s recommended conditions, which are designed to:

- prevent, minimise and/or offset adverse environmental impacts
- set standards and performance measures for acceptable environmental performance
- require regular monitoring and reporting, and
- provide for the on-going environmental management of the development.

The Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2019/10/wahroonga-estate-concept-plan-mp07_0166-mod-8

** Commissioner Russell Miller AM was also originally appointed to the Panel to determine this modification application; however, his term on the Commission expired whilst the modification was back with the Department undergoing further assessment. Thus Commissioners Hann and Lewin finalised this matter.*

Disclaimer

This media statement has been prepared by the Commission’s media unit for general information only. It does not form part of the Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision, and should not be read as part of, or as a substitute for, that Statement of Reasons for Decision.