Vision for St Vincent’s Hospital Research Precinct approved

The NSW Government has approved a new concept plan for the St Vincent’s research precinct which includes a new eight-storey building for medical research purposes in Darlinghurst in Sydney’s east.

The final use of the new research building fronting West Street will be determined as part of a future project application for the site, before construction can begin.

The Department of Planning’s Deputy Director-General Richard Pearson said development of a medical research precinct in this location is in line with the Government’s Metropolitan Strategy, which identifies the site as part of a hub of health-related facilities in Darlinghurst.

“This building has the potential to become a valuable addition to the precinct, which is already home to the renowned Garvan Institute of Medical Research, the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute and the Kinghorn Cancer Centre,” Mr Pearson said.

“Following concerns raised by the Department, the proponent reduced the height of the building envelope by four metres during the assessment process, which is consistent with the height of the existing buildings in the precinct.”

Other changes made to the concept plan as part of the approval include:

- Introducing setbacks of up to 12.5 metres on the upper levels of the building to Liverpool Street and 10 metres to West Street, providing a better transition between the project and the adjacent residential areas;
- Reducing the maximum gross floor area of the building from 8,000 sq/m to 6,000 sq/m, reflecting the reduction in the project’s scale; and
- Reducing the proposed number of car parking spaces by around 30 to encourage maximum use of public transport and ensure consistency with the council’s development control plan for car parking.

The changes to the building envelope will allow a landscaped zone to be established along West Street, softening the transition between the precinct and the adjoining residential areas including 431 Liverpool Street and the Barcom Avenue Conservation area and Darlinghurst Primary School.

Independent reviews of the traffic and access issues were commissioned by the Department, which concluded that West Street is an appropriate point of access to the new development and that the traffic generated will have negligible impact on the local road network.

In proceeding with the project, the proponent will have to:

- Effectively implement an Operational Traffic Management Plan to manage traffic flow to, from and around the site; and
• Consider the retention of the façade of the heritage building at 429 Liverpool Street and its integration into the project.

Further detailed applications will now have to be lodged for the building prior to any construction commencing on-site.

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