



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING AND URBAN RENEWAL

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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds.

Submission Number: 06 - J. Tyrrell

Date Authorised for Publication: 26 February 2020

Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the planning for SPIRE, the Canberra Hospital campus and surrounds.

The proposed site for SPIRE fronting Palmer Street, Garran, is inappropriate. It is too close to residences and Garran Primary School and will cause difficulties for members of the public trying to access Emergency services.

I understand that one reason for the choice of site was to reduce the necessity of moving the helipad in the interim but sometimes cost cutting leads to more costs in the long run.

The Canberra Hospital Campus will become increasingly more crowded and harder to move around. Now is the time to develop an overall plan for future needs. With an expanding population in the ACT and surrounding NSW there will be even more patient presentations at the Emergency Department and also increasing attendance in all areas of the hospital.

Across Yamba Drive are playing fields and the old Woden High School/CIT site. Some innovative thinking could make use of these sites to increase the surface area of the Hospital campus and allow for future expansion to be planned for and implemented as needed.

Of necessity there have been many changes to the campus of the renamed Canberra Hospital over the years. These have been made without the oversight of a precinct plan. I first came to live in Canberra in 1983. I lived in Building 6 of the Woden Valley Hospital and worked in the Radiotherapy Department. There was a large surface area car park just outside our department at the Southern end of Building 3. This is now covered by Building 19/Cancer Centre, the multistorey car park and the Adult Mental Health Unit.

My youngest son has a complicated medical condition which requires many visits to the hospital so I am well aware of some of the exceptional services provided throughout the hospital and also of some of the shortcomings of the layout.

When a trip to the Emergency Department is needed I am grateful that I have such a wide knowledge of the hospital, its layout and services. For others when these trips are needed many people presenting are in a heightened state so easy access is important. Negotiating tricky suburban streets to find the SPIRE building at the proposed site adds another level of anxiety to already stressed people. I have also arrived at the Emergency Department accompanying my late mother in an ambulance. Those arrivals via Yamba Drive were straight forward.

There are two better options for the SPIRE site:-

-One is to redevelop building 3 as proposed in 2009.

-The other is to build the new tower adjacent to the current Emergency Unit where the helipad and staff car park are currently located.

The siting near the corner of Yamba Drive/Kitchener St would see the helipad raised to the roof level of a multistorey building so could reduce the sound of the helicopter landing/leaving for the residents nearby. This reduction in helicopter noise would also occur with a centrally sited/building 3 tower.

Across Yamba Drive to the west are the Phillip District Playing Fields and Enclosed Oval and also the site of the old Woden Valley High School/ Woden CIT. With the buildings on the CIT site to be demolished an enlarged precinct plan for the hospital and surrounds should include these blocks.

The playing fields and enclosed oval could be relocated to the CIT site and the current playing fields site included in the hospital precinct. This would allow for a bridge across Yamba Drive for undercover and easy access to the rest of the hospital campus. The covered bridge/corridor link between the National Capital Private Hospital and The Canberra Hospital is well used and enables easy access for staff, patients and visitors between the hospitals.

The CIT site is removed from the hospital site by a number of residential streets and buildings whereas the playing fields and oval have no such obstacle between the area and the hospital. Walking from hospital buildings sited on the current playing fields would be no further than walking from Building 19 to Building 10, a walk I frequently undertake to collect consumables and treatment product for my son.

Including levels of underground parking beneath a new building on the western side of Yamba Drive will also improve the amenity of the whole precinct. Canterbury Hospital in Sydney's west has several levels of underground parking which enables easy access for patients, visitors and staff in an area of dense population and crowded roads and enables maximum use of the site for the hospital.

When planning for future use or expansion of the hospital developing a precinct wide plan would include the proposed expansion of the Women's and Children's Hospital. Ease of access to Building 10, Pathology, for outpatient pathology collection and also to the Transfusion laboratory is important, especially those of us who require regular visits for blood/pathology tests and to collect blood product treatments from the Transfusion Laboratory.

Building SPIRE in the proposed site near Palmer Street will make access to hospital services much harder for many, not just those accessing the Emergency Department.

No further planning for this necessary building should proceed before a wider precinct plan, looking further into the future and allowing for redundancies to be built into the site, is developed so that future expansion, access and parking causes minimal disruption and maximum benefit.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Inquiry into Planning for the Surgical Procedures, Interventional Radiology and Emergency Centre (SPIRE) and the Canberra Hospital campus and immediate surrounds.

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