

Department of Planning and Environment

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Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment – Modification 1

State Significant Development Modification Assessment Report (SSD-9838218-Mod-1)

September 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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Preface

This assessment report provides a record of the Department of Planning and Environment's (the Department) assessment and evaluation of Modification 1 of the State significant development (SSD) application for the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment located at 1 Noorebar Avenue, Griffith, lodged by Health Infrastructure (on behalf of Health Administration Corporation). The report includes:

- an assessment of the modification against government policy and statutory requirements, including mandatory considerations
- a demonstration of how matters raised by the community and other stakeholders have been considered
- an explanation of any changes made to the modification during the assessment process
- an assessment of the likely environmental, social and economic impacts of the modification
- an evaluation which weighs up the likely impacts and benefits of the modification, having regard to the proposed mitigations, offsets, community views and expert advice; and provides a view on whether the impacts are on balance, acceptable
- a recommendation to the decision-maker, along with the reasons for the recommendation, to assist them in making an informed decision about whether the consent should be modified and any conditions that should be imposed.

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1 Introduction

1.1 The proposal

On 14 October 2021, Health Administration Corporation (the Applicant) was granted consent for the construction and operation of a three and four storey Clinical Services Building (CSB) at Griffith Base Hospital (GBH).

The Applicant proposes to modify the consent to amend the design of the building including plant services and façade articulation and detail, removal of a Eucalyptus tree and the construction of a concrete hardstand at the Animoo Avenue entrance for use by fire brigade trucks.

The updated project description and mitigation measures provided in the Applicant’s Section 4.55(1A) Modification Report are the subject of this report and will form part of the consent if the modification is approved.

1.2 Project location

Griffith is a major regional city in the Riverina area of New South Wales, located approximately 360km north-west of Canberra and 180km north-west of Wagga Wagga.

The site is legally described as Lot 2 in Deposited Plan 1043580 and is located 700m north of Banna Avenue, the main street of Griffith, in a largely suburban residential context (see **Figure 1**).



Figure 1 | Project site (outlined in red) (Base source: Nearmap)

1.3 Related projects and works

1.3.1 Approval history

On 14 October 2021, consent was granted by the Director, Social and Infrastructure Assessments under delegation from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, for the GBH Redevelopment (SSD-9838218). The development consent permits the construction and operation of a three and four storey CSB including inpatient, surgical, ambulatory care and critical care services and the provision of a clinical link to the SVPCH and the Non-Clinical Services (NCS) Building. The site works include demolition of existing buildings, new internal access roads and carpark areas, tree removal, remediation, landscaping, stormwater drainage, utility works and signage.

This is the first application to modify the approved development.

2 Proposed modification

2.1 Modification overview

The modification application seeks consent for the following key modifications:

- amendments to the design of the building, including plant services areas, façade articulation and façade detail and fenestration.
- the removal of a *Eucalyptus* tree (tree 170), which was impacted by a storm in October 2022.
- construction of a concrete hardstand adjacent to the existing fire booster at the Animoo Avenue entrance (to the north-west of the site) for use by fire brigade trucks.

A detailed list of the proposed modifications is outlined in **Table 2** below. The modifications are shown and numbered in **Figures 3 to 6**.

Table 1 | Key aspects of the modification

Modification No.	Proposed modification	Applicants' rationale
1	Revised roof pitch over Lifts 1 and 2	To allow for insulation to be installed over the lift and to allow water drainage off the roof.
2	Adjusted roof height and pitch, increasing maximum plant height by 89cm over lifts 3 and 4.	To allow for insulation to be installed over lift, drainage of water off roof and weather protection of lift 4 door at roof level.
3	Rooftop plant rooms area, shape, cladding profile and size amended, and rooftop plant reduced from RL160.19 to RL 159.46.	To simplify the design of the rooftop plant room areas and improve efficiencies, resulting in a reduction in height of 73cm. Roof pitch adjusted to improve water drainage.
4	Doors added to rooftop plant rooms to the south west wing.	The allow safe access for maintenance staff.
5	Stair finish changed from metal sheeting to concrete and roof design modified above stairs 1, 2, 3, and 4.	To simplify the material palette and allow greater height clearance within the stairs.
6	One large window divided into three windows in the Emergency Department (ED) waiting area.	To accommodate wall mounted audio-visual equipment for the improved amenity of occupants.
7	Glass reinforced concrete (GRC) replaced with compressed fibre cement (CFC) plank and material size modified.	Shipping of glass reinforced concrete from Sweden would have stalled the project. Therefore, CFC plank is proposed in the same shade. This will enhance the quality of the façade articulation.
8	Three windows added to the southern elevation of the main hospital building.	To provide more natural light and improved amenity.
9	Minor change to the paint colour of external concrete walls.	The revised shade of colour is closer to the existing colour palette of the hospital.
10	Ventilation louvres added to roof top plant.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design development.
11	Finish changed from metal cladding to concrete.	To add further façade articulation.

Modification No.	Proposed modification	Applicants' rationale
12	Louvre added to plant room.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design development.
13	Louvre size reduced.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design development.
14	Compressed fibre cement cladding added in lieu of metal cladding.	To add further façade articulation.
15	Rainwater head size increased throughout the top level of the building.	A hydraulic engineering requirement due to further design development.
16	Louvre extent reduced.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design development.
17	Window added to Renal Department.	Improved amenity for chair-based occupants positioned along wall.
18	Extent of glazing increased with provision of colour back spandrel on the ground floor of the northern elevation.	To be consistent with the adjacent fenestration.
19	Ventilation louvre added to the northern elevation.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
20	Retaining wall height increased from 600mm to 2100mm from pavement level and extent increased.	Due to design finalisation of civil strategy requiring water to drain away from the building. Batters have been proposed to minimise wall height.
21	Access door and ventilation louvre locations amended.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
22	Glazing extent adjusted and door added to the western elevation.	Due to location of mechanical plant room and relocation of egress door.
23	Window removed and louvre added to the western elevation.	Louvre added due to a mechanical engineering requirement due to design development. Window no longer required in this space.
24	Rainwater head added to western elevation.	A hydraulic engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
25	Window removed from the western elevation.	Due to internal TV placement.
26	Plant room shape changed from curvilinear to orthogonal on the roof.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
27	Louvre relocated	As a result of Modification 26.
28	Screen height and materiality change on the eastern elevation roof area.	Screen height increased to prevent climbing and screen materiality changed from glass to perforated steel to provide privacy.
29	Door added to eastern elevation.	Due to redesign of space within ED and a requirement for fire egress to be provided.
30	Three windows removed from the ED.	The windows are no longer required in these areas.
31	Construction of a 14m x 6m concrete hardstand adjacent to the existing fire booster at the Animoo Avenue entrance (to the northwest of the site) for use by fire brigade trucks.	Required in order to comply with the National Construction Code.
32	Stair pressurisation enclosures added to roof area.	A mechanical requirement to enclose roof top stair pressurisation fans.

Modification No.	Proposed modification	Applicants' rationale
33	Extension of the compressed fibre cement to the stairs on the ground floor of the northern elevation.	To match the surrounding façade treatment.
34	Ventilation louvres removed.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
35	Ventilation louvres added.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
36	Louvre panel removed and aluminium cladding put in its place.	A mechanical engineering requirement due to further design finalisation.
37	Altered wall cladding colour on the southern elevation	Dark coloured cladding altered to light colour cladding to improve amenity of paediatric and inpatient terrace areas and to read as an extension of the internal wall finish.
38	Pedestrian ramps added to access SVPCH and NCS building	The pedestrian ramps are required for accessible entry/egress
39	Rainwater heads removed and replaced with overflow spigots	During the detailed design, it has been confirmed that the approved rainwater heads have become redundant and are proposed to be replaced with discrete overflow spigots. This will enhance the overall appearance of the tapered façade.
40	Solar panel arrangement updated on the main hospital roof	To maintain separation between the mechanical exhaust and access paths on the roof.
41	Mechanical exhaust flue added to east elevation	An exhaust flue is required for the mechanical ventilation system. The exhaust flue will be finished in a dark Colorbond colour (taken from the existing building colour palette).

3 Statutory context

3.1 Scope of modification and assessment pathway

Details of the legal pathway under which modification is sought and are provided in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 | Permissibility and assessment pathway

Consideration	Description
Scope of modification	<p>The Department has reviewed the scope of the modification and considers that it can be characterised as a modification involving minimal environmental impact as the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would not significantly increase the environmental impacts of the development as approved. • is substantially the same development as originally approved. • would not involve any disturbance outside the already approved disturbance areas for the project. <p>The Department is satisfied the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act and does not constitute a new development application. Accordingly, the Department considers that the application should be assessed and determined under section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act rather than requiring a new development application to be lodged.</p>
Consent Authority	<p>The Minister continues to be the consent authority under section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act and has the capacity to modify the consent of the project.</p>
Decision-maker	<p>Under the Minister’s Instrument of Delegation – Development Assessment Functions to DPE Staff dated 9 March 2022, the Team Leader, Social Infrastructure, may determine the application as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has not made an objection. • a political donation statement has not been made. • no public submissions objecting to the proposal were received.

3.2 Mandatory matters for consideration

The Department conducted a comprehensive assessment of the project against the mandatory matters for consideration as part of the original assessment of SSD-9838218.

The Department considers this modification application does not result in significant changes that would alter the mandatory matters for consideration under section 4.5 of the EP&A Act and conclusions made as part of the original assessment.

The Department has considered the findings and recommendations in the Department’s Assessment report for SSD-9838218, including the key reasons for granting consent outlined in the

Notice of Decision. The Department is satisfied that the key reasons for granting of consent continue to be applicable to the development, as modified.

3.2.1 Biodiversity development assessment report

Section 7.17(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) requires all SSD modifications to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) unless the authority or person determining the application is satisfied that the modification will not increase the impact on biodiversity values (as identified in the BC Act and in the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017).

The Department is satisfied that the modification will not increase the impact on biodiversity values and consequently a BDAR is not required to accompany the modification application.

4 Engagement

4.1 Department's engagement

In accordance with the EP&A Regulation the Department made the modification application publicly available on the Department's website on 24 August 2023 and forwarded the application to Council and Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) for comment.

4.1.1 Summary of advice received from government agencies

The Department received advice from FRNSW on the modification report, who raised no concerns regarding the proposed modifications including the provision of a concrete hardstand for use by firefighting trucks. FRNSW advised that safe, efficient, and effective access must be provided in accordance with *Fire safety guideline - Access for fire brigade vehicles and firefighters* (FRNSW, 2019).

4.1.2 Summary of Council submission

Council supported the modification application, subject to the submission of Section 68 applications where necessary for sewer, water or stormwater works connecting to Council infrastructure, and Section 138 applications for any works in the road reserve. Council also provided written consent for the concrete hardstand proposed on Council-owned land at the Animoo Avenue entrance.

4.2 Request for further information

The location of the proposed concrete hardstand would be at the location of three approved replacement trees under the original SSD, however the modification application did not confirm whether these trees would be replaced elsewhere on the site. To ensure that these three trees are replanted elsewhere in the vicinity of the hardstand, on 12 September 2023 the Department requested amended Landscape Plans identifying a new location for these trees.

On 25 September 2023, the Applicant provided the following additional information:

- amended Landscape Plans prepared by Site Image Landscape Architects dated 21 September 2023.
- a revised Modification Report addressing potential impacts to the approved landscape scheme within the proposed hardstand and updated proposed conditions of consent.

5 Assessment

5.1 Built form and urban design

A Design Statement prepared by DJRD has been submitted with the application.

The site is not subject to maximum building height or Floor Space Ratio (FSR) development standards under Griffith Local Environmental Plan (GLEP) 2014.

The approved CSB is three and four storeys in height with two wings that run north-south connected by an interlinking east-west corridor. The Department’s assessment of the original SSD-9838218 calculated the height of the approved hospital building to be 18.4m to the parapet and 22.59m to the rooftop plant room at the western wing.

The approved CSB has a gross floor area (GFA) of 15,934sqm. The modification application does not propose to alter the GFA of the approved development.

The application seeks to increase the height of the approved building by 890mm over Lifts 3 and 4 (RL 159.766). As shown in **Figure 3** below, the highest point of the building has shifted from the rooftop plant room (shown as Item 3) to the lift overrun above Lifts 3 and 4 (Item 2).



Figure 3 | Approved and proposed southern elevations (Source: Architectural Plans)

The lift overrun, which has an approximate area of 55sqm and is located approximately 100m from the nearest residential properties and adjoining streets, is proposed to be finished in a dark recessive colour. The Department considers the proposed building height increase above Lifts 3 and 4 to be minor and indistinguishable compared to the approved CSB. The proposed building height is

considered consistent with the intended bulk and scale of the approved building and no concerns are raised by the Department in this regard.

In addition to the proposed building height modifications, the application also seeks building design amendments, including to plant services areas, façade articulation and façade detail and fenestration. **Section 2.1** of this report includes a detailed description of the proposed design modifications. **Figures 3 to 6** demonstrate the proposed changes to the building façade.

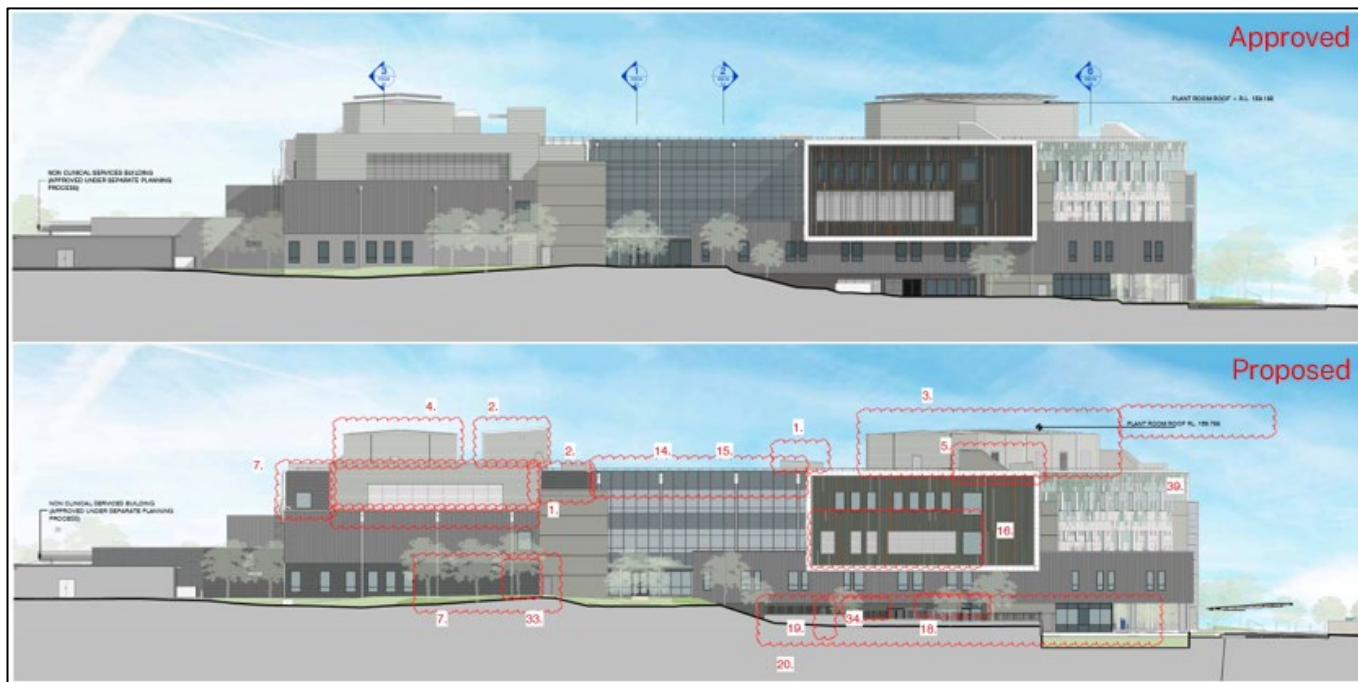


Figure 4 | Approved and proposed northern elevations (Source: Architectural Plans)



Figure 5 | Approved and proposed eastern elevations (Source: Architectural Plans)



Figure 6 | Approved and proposed western elevations (Source: Architectural Plans)

The proposed façade modifications include but are not limited to revisions to the colour and material of external wall cladding, alterations to and the addition of ventilation louvres, stair finish amendments and window and door design modifications.

The Department has assessed the proposed change in façade cladding material, from GRC to CFC, to be generally consistent with the originally approved materiality whilst maintaining the quality of the approved façade articulation. The Applicant’s Design Statement argues that the proposed material amendments are better aligned to the design objectives outlined within the Design Statement submitted as part of the approved EIS, which emphasised durability and maintenance, buildability, and cost effectiveness. The Department agrees in this regard.

The Department also agrees that the proposed colour palette would reinforce the appearance of a ‘strong’ base to the building in contrast to the ‘light’ glazing and louvres above, while the louvre panel and window adjustments would not adversely affect the level of façade articulation and massing. The Design Statement puts forward that the proposal is in keeping with the design quality and built form objectives of the approved development.

The Department is satisfied that the proposed modifications are consistent with the original design intent and preserve the approved built form, urban design and design quality. In summary, the proposed design modifications would have a neutral impact on the overall architectural and aesthetic quality of the approved development.

5.2 Other issues

The Department’s consideration of other issues is summarised in **Table 11** below.

Table 3 | Assessment of other issues

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
<p>Tree removal</p>	<p>The application is supported by Arboricultural Advice prepared by CPS.</p> <p>The application seeks the removal of Tree No. 170 (<i>Eucalyptus</i>). The Applicant’s assessment determined that it was of a semi-mature age class, generally of a minor nature and featured a ‘Short’ Safe Useful Life Expectancy (SULE) due to being in fair-poor health and condition.</p> <p>The site was impacted by a major storm event in October 2022 which resulted in Tree No. 170 losing many branches. An AQF Level 3 Arborist was engaged to remove fallen/torn branches in accordance with AS4373 - <i>Pruning of amenity trees</i>. The AQF Level 3 Arborist made an on-site determination that the tree was no-longer viable and should be removed. This tree was subsequently removed by the contractor.</p> <p>As this tree was required to be retained under Condition C23(c) of the development consent, this modification seeks to reflect the removal of the damaged three.</p> <p>The Department raises no concerns to the proposed modification of Condition C23(c).</p>	<p>Condition C23(c) is to be modified to reflect the completed removal of damaged Tree No. 170.</p>
<p>Landscaping</p>	<p>The application proposes the construction of a 14m x 6m concrete hardstand adjacent to the existing fire booster at the Animoo Avenue entrance for use by fire brigade trucks.</p> <p>The Department notes that the proposed hardstand would be at the location of three approved replacement trees under the original SSD, as indicated on the approved Landscape Plan prepared by Site Image Landscape Architects (Dwg No. 0017, Issue L). To address this issue, the Applicant submitted amended Landscape Plans indicating revised replacement tree locations adjacent to the proposed hardstand, providing for a minimum of 86</p>	<p>Existing Condition B31 of the Development Consent requires the Applicant to prepare a detailed Landscape Plan prior to the commencement of landscaping works, which is to include the planting of 86 additional trees. This condition would be modified to reference the amended Landscape Plans.</p>

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
	additional trees on-site as conditioned in the original consent.	
Building Code of Australia (BCA)	<p>The application is supported by a Building Code of Australia (BCA) report prepared by Blackett Maguire and Goldsmith (BMG).</p> <p>BMG’s assessment includes a desktop assessment of the deemed-to-satisfy provisions of the <i>BCA 2019 (Amendment 1)</i>, the <i>Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010</i>. The BCA Report also reviews the modifications against the 100% Design Development BCA Report R10, dated 21 December 2022.</p> <p>In summary, the BCA Report has confirmed that the proposed modifications can comply with Conditions of Consent A17 and A18, which require compliance with the <i>National Construction Code</i> and <i>BCA</i>. The BCA Report also confirms that any necessary design amendments required for BCA compliance can be addressed during the preparation of the detailed documentation for the Crown Certificate without significant changes to the approved development.</p> <p>The Department concurs with the findings of the BCA Report and is satisfied that the proposal is in accordance with the existing SSD conditions and the abovementioned BCA and Australian Standard requirements.</p>	No conditions of consent required to be modified, deleted or added.
Noise and vibration	<p>The application is accompanied by an Acoustic Statement prepared by E-LAB Consulting to assess the acoustic impacts of the proposed modifications. The statement assessed that the façade and rooftop plantroom amendments would have a negligible (less than 0.5dB) impact on noise emissions, and concludes that the CSB as proposed would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to comply with the noise criteria outlined in the approved in the Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) and Construction Noise and Vibration Management Sub-Plan (CNVMSP). • comply with the existing acoustic conditions of consent. 	No conditions are required to be modified, deleted or added.

Issue	Findings and conclusions	Recommended conditions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not impact the findings or recommendations included in the approved NIA and CNVMSP. <p>The Department agrees with the findings of the Acoustic Statement, which concludes that the proposed modifications do not warrant any acoustic changes to the approved design.</p>	

6 Evaluation

The Department's assessment has considered the relevant matters and objects of the EP&A Act, including the principles of ecologically sustainable development, advice from government agencies, Council, and strategic government policies and plans. While the proposal would result in a minor increase to the height of the CSB building and the slight reduction of landscape coverage; considerations including traffic, parking, access, noise and vibration, bulk and scale and urban design would not be affected by the proposal.

The Department considers that the application is consistent with the objects of the EP&A Act and continues to be consistent with the strategic directions of the State.

The development as modified would be substantially the same as that originally approved and would deliver a significant public benefit through the provision of improved and expanded health facilities. The Department concludes the impacts of the proposed modification are acceptable. Consequently, the Department considers the development is in the public interest and the modification application should be approved.

7 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Team Leader, Social Infrastructure, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report.
- **determines** that the application SSD-9838218-Mod-1 falls within the scope of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act.
- **accepts and adopts** the findings and recommendations in this report as the reasons for making the decision to approve the modification.
- **forms the opinion** under section 7.17(2)(c) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* that a biodiversity assessment report is not required to be submitted with this application as the modification will not increase the impact on biodiversity values of the site.
- **agrees** with the key reasons for approval listed in the notice of decision.
- **modifies the consent** for the Griffith Base Hospital Redevelopment (SSD-9838218), subject to the conditions in the attached instrument of modification.
- **signs** the attached instrument of modification (Appendix B).

Recommended by:



Thomas Dales
Senior Planning Officer
Social Infrastructure

8 Determination

The recommendation is **adopted** by:



28 September 2023

Nathan Stringer
A/Team Leader
Social Infrastructure

as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
Council	Griffith City Council
Department	Department of Planning and Environment
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ESD	Ecologically sustainable development
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
LGA	Local government area
Minister	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
NCC	National Construction Code
SSD	State significant development

Appendices

Appendix A – List of referenced documents

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-1-minor-design-changes-1>

Appendix B – Recommended instrument of Modification

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-1-minor-design-changes-1>

Appendix C – Consolidated Consent

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-1-minor-design-changes-1>