

Royal Park Protection Group



*Preservation
through vigilance*

Royal Park Protection Group Inc

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14 March 2023

Cr Rohan Leppart
City of Melbourne
City of Melbourne
PO Box 1603
Melbourne 3001

Dear Rohan,

Re Royal Children's Hospital Redevelopment – Helipad in Park

PURPOSE

The purpose of this letter is to put on record the “broken promise” of the Victorian Governments’ Project team developing the Royal Children’s Hospital that the helipad in the park was to be removed as part of the development – which has not occurred.

DISCUSSION

You will recall that we did a site visit to this area in 2017 and you responded 25 August 2018 stating that Hospital do not want to lose the helipad in case they are unable to use the roof landing and that the Council do not want to push the issue for the sake of maintaining good relations. Cost of removal was estimated at \$25000.

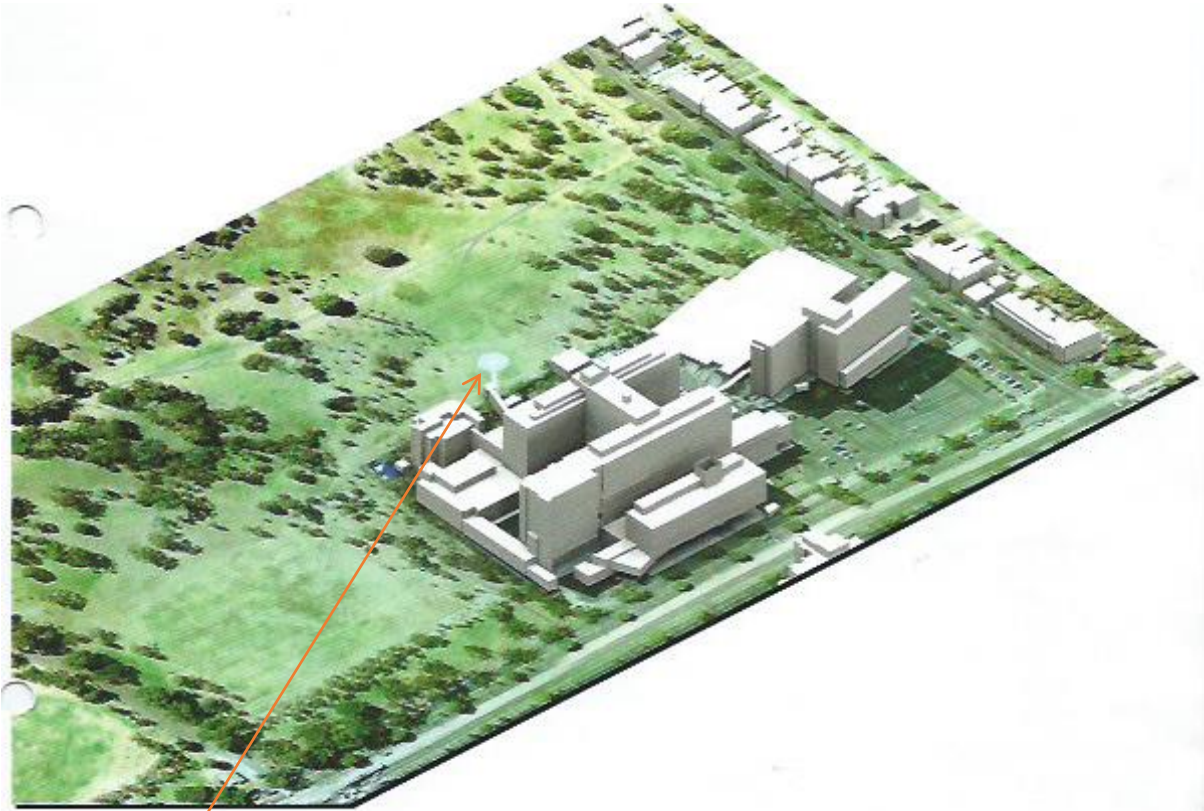
We understand that “things change” but there was a lot of pressure on the proponents to ensure no loss of parkland and yet this is what has occurred.

The main issue with the helipad being there is that it prohibits any further planting in this area which would allow screening of the hospital from the park.

HISTORY

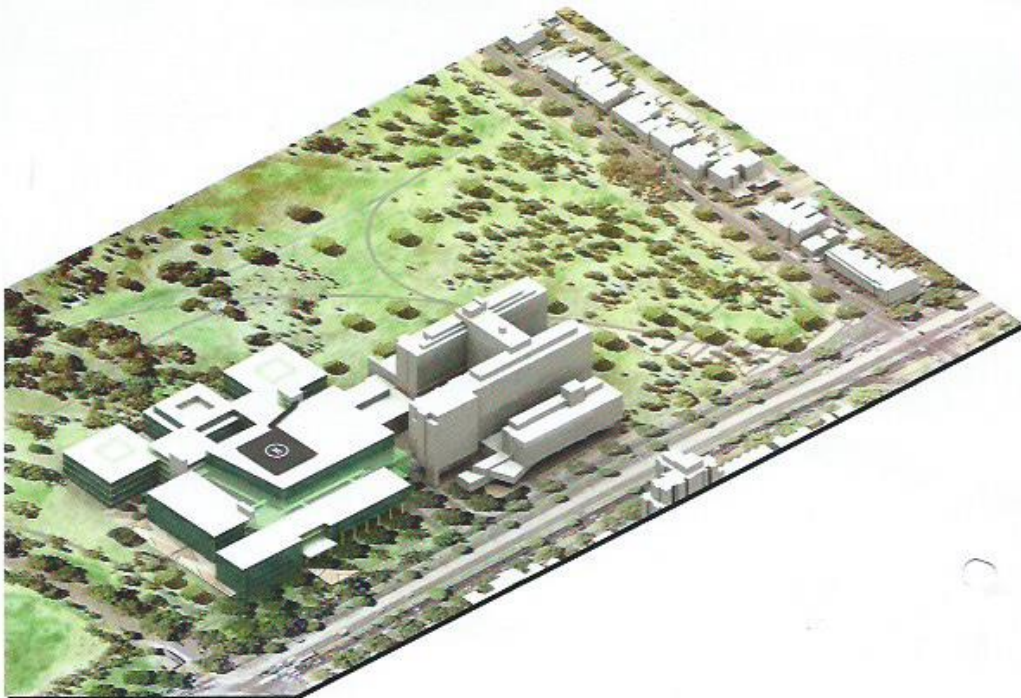
The helipad which is located in the park and which through the consultation process was stated as to be removed. It was also shown thus on the diagrams provided. (See September 2005 brochures of the before and after snapshots below).

EXISTING SITE



Helipad here

OPTION – WEST INTEGRATED



What would it look like?

- The hospital would sit in a different location in Royal Park compared with its current corner location.
- There would be no net loss of parkland.
- Following completion of construction, the existing South-East building and carparks would be demolished and 2.3 hectares of land at the corner of Flemington Road and Gatehouse Street would be reinstated as parkland.
- The new building would be four to five levels high (ground floor plus three to four levels), plus two levels of plant room.
- The helipad would be moved from Royal Park to the roof of the new building.
- The adjacent H-block would remain with 11 floors (ground floor plus ten levels) plus plant rooms on top. The H building would be refurbished.
- The site area of the new and existing buildings would be the same as the existing site area.
- A three-level carpark with 2,000 spaces would be built underneath the new building. The carpark entrance and exit would be off Flemington Road.
- The ambulance and emergency access would be from Flemington Road.
- There would be no access from Gatehouse Street.
- Loading dock access would be off Flemington Road.

During construction phase

- This option involves construction of the new building to the west of the existing site.
- Upon completion, staff and services would relocate to the new building, currently programmed for early 2010.
- Refurbishment of existing facilities in the H-building would commence after patients, staff and services have moved to the new clinical block. This is expected to be completed in mid 2011.
- As refurbishment of the H-building takes place, some staff would be temporarily relocated.
- The South-East building and eastern carparks would then be demolished and corner of Gatehouse Street and Flemington Road would be reinstated as parkland.

what is on it?

*These are conceptual images only.
They do not reflect the architectural design, look or feel of the buildings.*

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Victoria Department of Human Services

After initial community consultations SOCOM produced a report June 2005 that stated that "...general consensus that the helipad should be removed from the park...".

At a Community meeting 12 July 2005 attended by Minister Bronwyn Pike, Tony Lobofski (Project Manager), SOCOM representative and others it was also stated that it was "agreed" that the helipad would be moved to the top of the new buildings.

The pictorial images shown above were produced and distributed in September 2005 and these showed the removal of the helipad in the proposed development.

A newsletter in September 2010 states that

“The Royal Children’s Hospital (Land) act states that:

- the new hospital site must be less than 4.1 hectares, which is the size of the existing site.
- the site of the old hospital, other than any retained buildings, will be returned to Royal Park following demolition activities.”

“The total size referred to above includes all of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 developments. There are no plans for any construction works requiring additional parkland beyond 4.1 hectares as detailed in The Royal Children’s Hospital (Land) Act. This includes shops, hotel and everything else associated with the development”.

SUMMARY

The bottom line of this consultation process is that the helipad should have been removed or further areas given back to the park as compensation.

This does not give the community a lot of confidence that the plans agreed to during a consultation will actually be implemented!

This is of particular concern as the Royal Park Masterplan is currently under revision and due for release in 2024. The community must have confidence in the process in producing this document and that the data it relies on is sound.

If you would like to discuss this matter further please contact me.

Regards



Paul Leitinger
Convenor – Royal Park Protection Group