



Noosa Private Hospital

We were engaged by Davis Langdon (on behalf of Ramsay Health Care) to coordinate environmental planning approvals for the proposed extension of Noosa Private Hospital, Noosaville.

Statutory Context

Much of the well-vegetated site was protected by the Vegetation Management Act 1999, and the Noosa Planning Scheme designated sections of the proposed expansion area as conservation zone. This was reinforced by the Planning Scheme's Biodiversity Overlay map, which showed a corresponding Environmental Protection Area.

The expansion was to see establishment of several new pavilions accommodating private wards, a surgery and recovery areas; new roads; a 102-space car park; and associated infrastructure. Further clearing was required to establish protective fire trails and bushfire buffers.

Challenges and Solutions

It was apparent that the development proposal put before Council at the early design stage would affect designated environmentally sensitive areas, and that strategy and detail would be required to achieve the applicant's desired outcome. Detailed ecological survey was conducted to determine the site's ecological values, and to assess the validity of the broadly defined conservation designations. The assessment found that, while well-vegetated, much of the Site supported young regrowth of only moderate ecological value. No conservation-significant flora species were located, and the site's plant communities were found to remain widespread and common in both Noosa Shire, and the broader region.

Fauna surveys recorded a range of characteristic urban fringe fauna, but found that the site was unlikely to provide significant habitat for any of the threatened species known from the locality. Further, it was found that the proposed expansion would be unlikely to significantly affect fauna corridors. Our assessment clarified high level environmental mapping at a site-scale, and provided clear direction to the design team on areas of constraint and opportunity. We worked with the design team to develop a master plan that allowed functional expansion of the facility, while conserving the site's most significant ecological features. The expansion was approved by Council, and we took a lead role in coordinating construction-phase environmental management works.

Outcome

The extension has been constructed, and the hospital is operational.

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