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26 May, 2021

Angelina Barin Stephens  
Icon Project Management Pty Ltd  
Level 10, 350 Kent Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
ABarinStephens@iconpm.com.au

Re: FHC East Maitland, 7 Martin Close & 42 Stronach Ave, East Maitland  
S4.55 Application – Statement of Acoustic Effects

Dear Angelina

RWDI has reviewed the proposed modifications which form the basis of the S4.55 submission for the Fresh Hope Care Residential Aged Care Facility, East Maitland.

The proposed modifications are detailed in the architectural documentation prepared by Calder Flower Architects Pty Ltd (Issue for Pre-DA for Section 4.55 Application 5.05.21) and include the following:

- Reconfiguration of Loading Dock alignment to accommodate the building form changes on Ground Floor above Loading Dock.
- Maintenance track realignment adjacent to Riparian corridor and Stronach Avenue.
- Turning Bay amendment for the on-grade parking.
- Family Room removed, and internal planning of Respite Centre reconfigured.
- Reconfiguration of building footprint, due to increase in additional building function and amenity. Additional building function includes staff rooms, Dirty Utilities and bathrooms.
- Facade screening to balcony amended.
- Change to the roof form as a result of building form changes.
- New skylight added.

In addition, there have been changes to setbacks and to the overall building materiality and finishes which are captured on the elevations, on A800 Materials page and are covered in the Statement of Environmental Effects.



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The proposed modifications are not acoustically significant and will not result in any substantial change to the previously assessed operational noise impact.

We trust this information assists with the determination of the S4.55 application. Should any additional details be required, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Hudson', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lee Hudson  
Senior Acoustical Consultant | Associate  
RWDI



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5 July 2021

Angelina Barin Stephens  
Icon Project Management Pty Ltd  
Level 10, 350 Kent Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
abarinstephens@iconpm.com.au

Dear Angelina

Re: FHC East Maitland – RACF S4.55 Aviary  
Statement of Acoustic Considerations

## Introduction

RWDI (formerly Wilkinson Murray) has been engaged by Icon Project Management Pty Ltd, on behalf of the Fresh Hope Care, to consider the acoustic implications associated with the construction of an aviary as part of the modified development application submission for the proposed RACF at East Maitland.

This supporting statement provides an acoustic review of the proposal and a qualitative evaluation of the potential impacts upon the acoustic amenity of nearby residential receivers.

## Proposed Aviary

We understand the construction of an aviary is to form part of the S4.55 submission. The structure will be located in the north western area of the site, in the vicinity of the riparian corridor and approximately 6m from the rear (southern) boundary of the residential property located at 44 Stronach Avenue.

The aviary is intended to house a colony of finches. The Australian Finch belongs to the family of birds known as Estrildidae. They are small, grass seed eating birds whose popularity as captive birds is only exceeded by the budgerigar.

Australian finches are small birds ranging in size from 10-14cm in length from tip of beak to tip of tail, depending on the species.

Finches are colony birds and prefer the company of other finches in an aviary environment. There are 19 different species in total, each with its own unique markings and colourings.



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According to literature review, the Australian species make very little noise, apart from a quiet chittering, although vocalization varies according to the species. Some species are renowned as being particularly quiet whilst others, such as the (male) zebra finch are singers. The adult male zebra finches sing one short (0.5-1.5 s) song fixed for life from relatively few note types, with a narrow range of fundamental frequencies. That the finch is not known as a noisy bird is regularly acknowledged across of a wide number of publications. From observation of the red browed finch, the general chatter between members would be best described as “twittering”. When foraging for seed, they tend to make small “cheeping”-like sounds.

According to the Hunter Valley Finch Club, finches are an active bird and remain active throughout the day. Being so small they have a particularly fast metabolism and are constantly moving. They require a large space to move about and exercise. Depending on the weather conditions and if the time of year is conducive to nesting, they can be observed continually fossicking on the ground for food, and eating seed provided.

Even the loudest finch is said to be quieter than the quietest parrot. With few exceptions, their low noise emissions make them particularly popular for apartment dwelling. However, when finches are breeding, babies in the nest call to their parents to be fed. This can be expected to increase the noise level generated, however, being such a small bird, the level is still fairly insignificant when compared to the vocalization of the birdlife typically encountered throughout Australian neighbourhoods. If they have young they will be very active in the morning and evening (before sunset), finding food for their chicks.

### **Acoustic Review and Conclusion**

Following review of a large number of readily-available publications on the subject of finches, consultation with the Hunter Valley Finch Club and observation of a red browed finch colony in the Royal National Park, we conclude that due to their very small size, finches are a generally quiet bird variety. Depending on species, vocalisations can vary with only some being known as singers.

Vegetated screening is proposed along the northern end of the aviary. The aviary structure will be located approximately 16m from the residence at 44 Stronach Avenue and a 1.8m high sheet metal fence exists along the southern property boundary. Given the low noise nature of finches and the prevailing ambient noise level of the area, which includes the existing bird population and noise generated by road traffic on Stronach Avenue, it is likely that any noise associated with the populated aviary would be largely masked. Existing ambient ( $L_{Aeq}$ ) noise levels of 55dBA during the day and 57dBA during the evening, were measured at the rear of 44 Stronach Avenue. The fundamental frequencies of the male zebra finch song are concentrated in a narrow range of between 500 and 700 Hz (Williams, Cynx & Nottebohm, 1989). Based on the distance between the aviary and the residence, and the shielding provided by the intervening fence,



attenuation in the order of 30dBA can be expected. Noise levels generated by the finch colony are therefore likely to be well below the prevailing ambient levels.

The inclusion of an aviary to accommodate a finch colony is not considered to be acoustically significant. Species can be selected which are documented as being quieter varieties, however, it is unlikely that any of this family of birds is likely to adversely impact upon the existing acoustical amenity of the nearby residents.

We trust this information is of assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any additional details.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Hudson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lee Hudson  
Senior Acoustical Consultant - Associate  
**RWDI**