

1<sup>st</sup> May 2012

Chris Wilson  
Executive Director Major Projects Assessment  
Department of Planning & Infrastructure  
23 -33 Bridge Street  
Sydney, NSW. 2000

Attention: Simon Truong

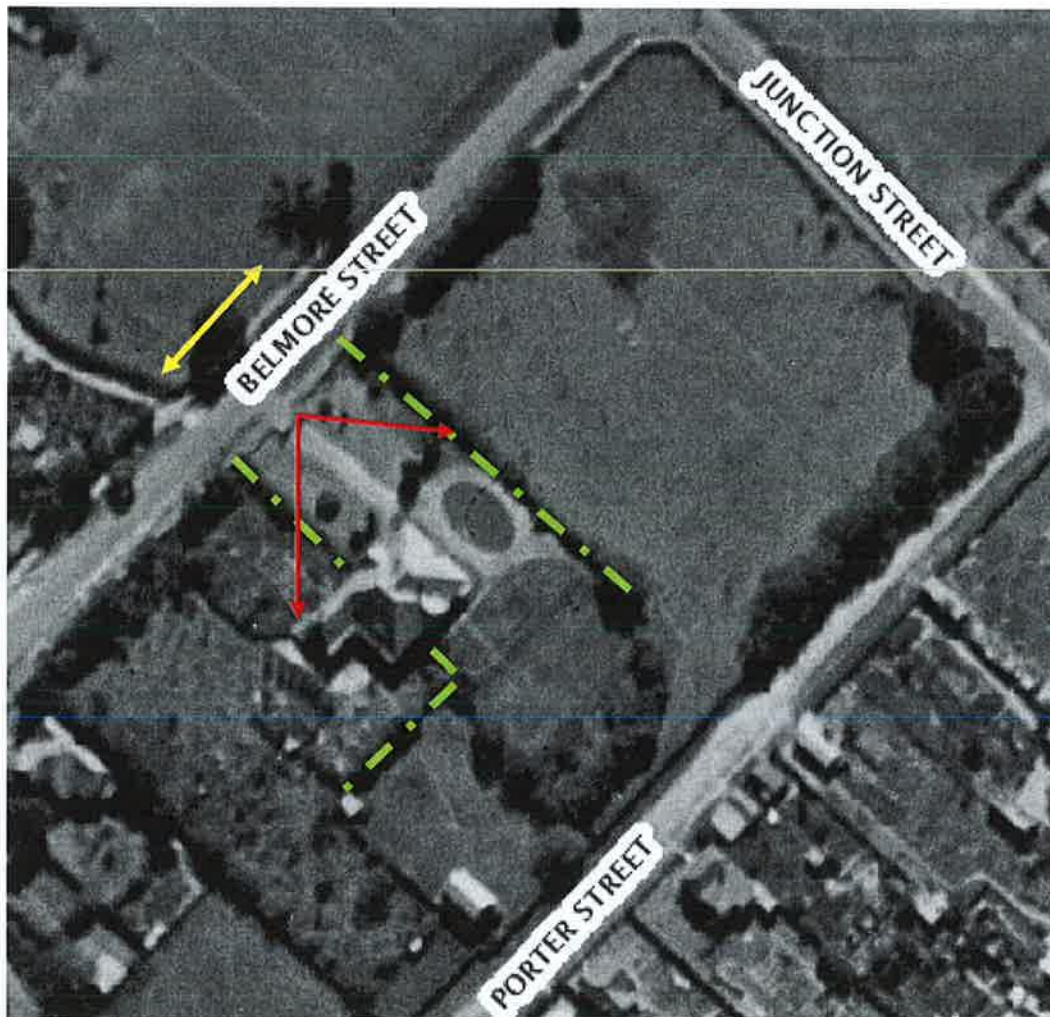
Dear Sir,

**Re: ACHIEVE AUSTRALIA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
74-76 BELMORE STREET, RYDE**

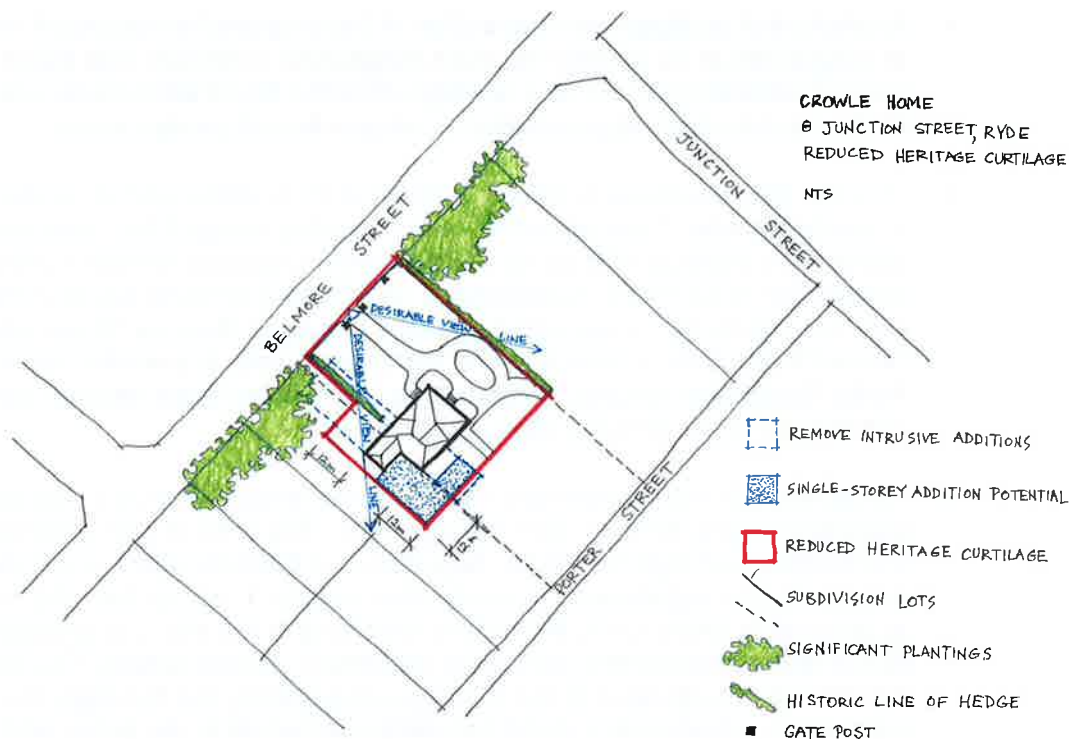
This submission has been made in response to potential heritage issues associated with the future residential development of The Achieve Australia site at 74 Belmore Street, Ryde raised in the following correspondence:

- i) Department of Planning and Infrastructure letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011
  - ii) City of Ryde Council letter dated 22 September 2011
  - iii) NSW Heritage Branch letter dated 5 October 2011
- 'Tellagara' is an item of Local heritage significance in a Local Government LEP which in the terms of the Council heritage listing, *"has been compromised by institutional use"*. The building has limited heritage significance and would not warrant a higher level of listing that would require it to be referred to the NSW Heritage Branch under the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act for any future approvals. I note that Ryde Council in their correspondence indicates that subject to minor changes to the concept plan that it could be supported.
  - As part of the preliminary studies undertaken for the potential development of this site, a Curtilage Assessment was undertaken and finalized after an initial on-site consultation with Ryde Council's Heritage and Planning staff.
  - The Curtilage Assessment was carried out in accordance with the Guidelines of the NSW Heritage Office. The constraints on the setting of the retained house were evaluated in qualitative and quantitative terms. This process included historic research into the development of the site and evaluation of existing view lines and surviving mature landscape elements which defined the setting of the heritage building. Removal of the existing additions to the house were also evaluated and documented in the report.
  - The findings of the assessment were presented to Council staff and a copy of this assessment was given to the Council as part of the consultation leading up to the preparation of the final Concept Plan for Redevelopment.
  - A copy of the Final Curtilage Assessment was included in the submission to the Department of Planning.

- Views to 'Tellagara' House from Belmore Street are strongly defined by mature trees along the street boundary, while the primary view is from the existing gateway and along the length of the existing palisade fence. The area behind the line of an original hedge defining the current property boundary and which is proposed to be re-established consisted of service areas and did not form part of the garden setting of the house originally. (green broken line) The land to the north-east formerly a paddock, was also originally defined by a hedge along the current property boundary line and did not form part of the significant setting of the house. (green broken line) These elements are clearly defined on the 1943 aerial photograph contained in the Curtilage Assessment.



*1943 Aerial view of the site showing the original definition of the formal gardens by hedging (green dashed lines), the extent of the public presentation of the site to Belmore Street (yellow arrow) and the view cone from the entry gates (red arrows). These elements and the significant garden setting have been used to define a reduced curtilage for the public presentation of the house.*



*Drawing submitted to Ryde Council following on-site meeting with Council staff showing the proposed reduced curtilage and the available public view cone from Bellmore Road to Tellagara.*

- The envelopes determined for Blocks A and B on the Bellmore Road frontage were determined from an assessment of these constraints and represent a maximum envelope that would constrain future development in a transitional form extending from the existing scale to higher development as it moved away from the visual context of the heritage item.
- The proposed curtilage has been devised to maintain clear views of the principal areas of the building with adjoining areas of transition affecting only secondary parts of the heritage item and its historic setting where current visibility is restricted by existing additions or by existing mature landscaping which is to be retained.
- The Statement of Heritage Impact noted that views and vistas from the Bellmore Street gates to the property have been curtailed by Block A's minor encroachment into the desirable view lines recommended in the Reduced Heritage Curtilage area. Resolution of this issue was considered capable of appropriate management at detailed development stage. I have however considered the comments of the Department and Council and in this regard Block A has now been reduced at its northern end to maintain the full view to the house and in my opinion this removes any concerns in relation to setting and public visibility to the heritage item.
- In addition the northern portion of the envelope for Block A has incorporated transitional stepping which is in accordance with development controls for large scale residential development in the vicinity of Local heritage items in other Local Government Areas such as Ku ring gai.

- A substantial curtilage with separation of the proposed envelopes from new development of a minimum of 12 metres has been suggested. I consider that this is an appropriate level of separation for a Local heritage item and that it will provide a substantial setting for the house which approximates its original formal garden areas.
- The curtilage exposure to Belmore Street is 32.5metres and coincides with the existing property boundary lines shown above defined by hedge lines. (see aerial photograph above) Any development contained within the proposed revised building envelopes and conforming to SEPP 65 requirements and Council controls would increase the available view corridor to the house and its garden setting to Belmore Street which meets the Council's concerns in their letter to The Department. In a similar vein the views from Porter Street and Junction Street will be appreciably larger when a conforming design is considered rather than the basic envelope controls.
- I disagree with the assessment made by the Heritage Branch in regard to the extent of a proposed setting for the Local heritage item. The area of land proposed to be retained in the reduced curtilage for the heritage item is 2,840sqm which is substantial for a single house of Local significance in a suburban setting. In my opinion the curtilage proposed appropriately responds to the historic elements of the site and provides for substantial public appreciation of the item within its historic garden setting. The areas of further substantial enlargement of the curtilage proposed by the Heritage Branch would not in my opinion provide any substantial additional benefit to the public and would not reflect the historic boundaries and garden features of the site. In reality the transitions proposed by the Branch will be largely achieved by development constraints arising from compliance with SEPP 65 and Council controls for residential development without any necessity to alter the considered building envelopes which allow for some degree of flexibility in design.

All of these matters were carefully considered with the Council staff and as the proposed envelopes do not constitute a final building form, rather a maximum development control envelope, it is not considered necessary to reduce them further, except at the northern extent of the two storey building envelope of Block A to provide an improved view of 'Tellagara' House from Bellmore Street.

Additional drawings provided with this response prepared by NBRS+P in March 2012 show how a building complying with SEPP65 principles could be designed within the envelope proposed also indicate that substantially more separation can eventually result from implementation of the Master Plan controls.

In regard to potential local archaeology, a baseline assessment would be made if necessary if development were to proceed. It is considered that there is unlikely to be any significant archaeology in the areas outside the reduced curtilage as much of this area has previously been redeveloped.

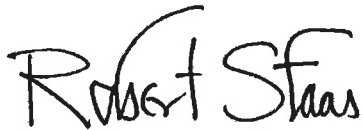
In regard to the future use of 'Tellagara' House if a development were to proceed on the site, the house would be used as a common facility available to all users of the site incorporating, Library, Function Room and Management Office while the proposed attached Block F would contain a Gymnasium and attached indoor swimming pool.

An appropriate measure in the future before the adaptation was undertaken would be the preparation of a Conservation Management Strategy and plans for the conservation of the surviving fabric of the building and restoration of missing elements based on archival records of the place.

The preparation of a Conservation Management Strategy or a Baseline Archaeological Assessment at the present time is not however warranted and would only result from any future development approvals as a condition of approval. A Statement of Commitment could address these matters if necessary.

I trust this adequately addresses the issues raised in your correspondence to your satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,  
NBRS+PARTNERS

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Staas". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

ROBERT STAAS  
Director / Heritage Consultant

