



LANDSCAPE DESIGN REPORT

1, 1A Avon, 4, 8 Beechworth Roads, Pymble

Prepared for: JW Neale Pty Ltd (Receivers and Managers Appointed)
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Image Landscape Architects has been commissioned by JW Neale Pty Ltd (Receivers and Managers Appointed) to complete Landscape Architectural services for the proposed development of four residential apartment buildings and associated extensive open space on the combined five subject sites, being 1, 1A Avon, 4, 8 Beechworth Roads, Pymble. This report is provided to describe the landscape design proposals as illustrated on accompanying Landscape and associated consultant drawings submitted as a Section 75W revision to the previous Part 3a development application to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The proposals build upon the earlier analysis for five buildings on the site, with 'Building 2' now removed, and a range of other significant improvements directly in response to the Director General's Requirements (dated 11 February 2009, Y09/283) relating to that development application.

The Landscape documents, as listed below, and this report have been prepared to be read in conjunction with associated Consultant documents including Flora, Bushfire, Stormwater, Heritage, Traffic, Architecture, and Planning. The design proposals have been prepared through consultation with a full consultant team, and with the benefit of numerous site inspections to establish site context and detail, and to review and adjust proposals through the design process.

This landscape design report is provided in support of the landscape design proposals, providing description of proposals, and associated landscape considerations and assessment, including site and context, and description of various landscape treatments including the substantial Conservation Area (described in Anne Clements & Associates 2012); site access and circulation pathways; residential building surrounds and common and private open spaces; relationship with adjoining sites, and boundary treatments; and streetscape and entry treatments.

Site Image Landscape Architects documents referred to by this report include:

MP-000	LANDSCAPE COVER SHEET
MP-001	LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN
MP-002	TREE REMOVAL AND RETENTION PLAN
MP-003	LANDSCAPE ZONES
MP-004	LANDSCAPE DESIGN FEATURES
MP-C100	LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN COLOUR
Landscape Development Application – Building 1	
DA-000	LANDSCAPE COVER SHEET
DA-001	LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN
DA-501	DETAILS
DA-502	DETAILS / SECTION ELEVATION
DA-C100	LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN COLOUR

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSALS

2.1 Location

The site spans a number of sites in Pymble; Nos. 1, 1a, 5 Avon Road, 44, 8 Beechworth Road. The site is within walking distance from Pymble Station and the town centre. Surrounding the site are residential dwellings, Pymble Ladies College, Avondale Golf Course, and the North Shore railway corridor.

2.2 Existing Site

An extensive site survey has been completed by the project team, including site contours and structures, vegetation and trees, soils, climate, hydrology, access roadways and key features on adjoining sites. The Site is an irregular shaped area with its north-eastern boundary adjoining the North Shore Railway line with access from both Avon and Beechworth Roads. The Site is in a gully head between two descending spurs roughly following Beechworth Road and Avon Road.

The site was previously comprised of five adjoining residential blocks all of which have been previously subject to residential development with land clearing, tree and garden planting, and remnant trees of the Blue Gum High Forest retained on the gully and on the slopes in the north-west. At the present time, the site is largely overrun with dense understorey of weeds with several abandoned residential dwellings in varying condition. Extensively overgrown and neglected feature garden walls, the remains of garden pathways and small walls occur mainly in the east of the site. Exotic trees feature principally in upper slope garden areas, with many being aged and in poor condition that are proposed removed, and many identified feature trees are proposed to be retained (refer to Tree Removal and Retention Plan, and to tree identifications and photographs in Anne Clements & Associates report).

2.3 Trees and Vegetation

For location of existing trees please refer to the annotated survey locations on the Landscape Plan. Tree identifications were provided by Anne Clements & Associates with breast height diameters, canopy spread and heights estimated by Higgins Surveyors. This work was completed as part of comprehensive landscape analysis and assessment in preparation for the on-going site landscape improvement and conservation works. The management proposal for the identified Conservation Area and the adjoining Managed Buffer Zone are set out in the report of Anne Clements & Associates.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT AND LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

3.1 Landscape Setting

Landscape site planning establishes broad zoning of the site to create distinct cultural and conservation landscape zones. The principal objective of site planning was to maximize the extent and continuity of the central Conservation Area, to allow long term preservation of Blue Gum High Forest on site. The Conservation Areas provide the principal asset of the site, achieving key environmental outcomes, but also providing an outstanding visual and passive recreational amenity through the limited walkways and outlooks into the area. The height of mature trees and extent of the expanded Conservation zone provides extensive natural environs that reasonably accommodates and ameliorates the visual impact of proposed built form on the edges of the area. New ephemeral and permanent standing water riparian areas along the bottom of the gully will provide focal visual elements that will complement the large scale landscape on the adjoining slopes. A small elevated pedestrian bridge across the middle of the riparian area will provide a subtle visual accent element reinforcing the natural identity and limited human access to the Conservation Area. Across the top boundary against the railway lands, a cross-site link pathway will be created with an elevated boardwalk so that this public amenity is provided with minimal impact on the natural vegetation below. This public access walkway will provide a vista through the tree trunks and regeneration areas towards the lower site open space of the riparian ponds – providing a local feature with strong educational value in terms of revealing the extent of quality of natural regeneration of this important environmental area. Residences on adjoining lands overlooking this conservation open space will benefit from the upgrading of this area, and its long-term protection.

The proposed residential built form is located on the site of existing built form of residences at No 1 and No. 5 Avon Road (proposed Buildings 4 and 1 respectively), and in the area of the previous tennis court (Building 3); and at No. 4 and 8 Beechworth Road (Building 5). The proposed multi-dwelling built form enlarges the scale of building, but is considered sympathetic with the long-term pattern of residential building locations and features on the site, and to be substantially offset by proposed upgraded cultural and natural landscapes on the site. Overall, the development proposals will allow significant enhancement and expansion of conservationally significant onsite ecological community that will dramatically contribute to the landscape amenity of the locality and of neighbouring sites. There are visual impacts arising from proposed built form, but it is considered adjoining sites are suitably physically separated and provided landscape screening and buffer planting. Generally, the quality of cultural landscape setting to immediate surrounds of buildings, and expanded conservation landscape setting are considered to provide a suitable

positive outcome and balance of consideration of neighbouring properties and landscape improvement to the benefit of the locality.

The VMP establishing the principles for conservation, enhancement and management of the Conservation Area and the adjoining managed buffer zone is set out in Anne Clements and Associates report. The landscape masterplan compliments this work through establishing:

- Creation of new ephemeral riparian areas and corridor to the upper part of the gulley landscape, with stabilising stonework and embankment landscape treatments;
- Water quality improvement through filtration of runoff by the riparian landscapes into permanent water bodies, and reticulation of water across a riffle zone level change to provide aeration of the water;
- Fauna habitat, especially for Flying foxes, and flight paths for bats, avifauna and gliders. Flying foxes drink by skimming the water surface of a river or pools then land in a tree to lick their wet fur.
- Pedestrian and vehicular access routes that provide ensure minimal pedestrian access into conservation areas, with elevated walkways across the middle of the site further limiting physical impact on key fragile regeneration areas;
- Limited pedestrian access into conservation landscape areas provides high quality experience of the tall forest environs, ponds and riparian areas, with circular routes and seating locations affording a variety of enjoyable walks and resting locations;
- Creation of specific treatments corresponding with the VMP of the Blue Gum High Forest including matrix planting and landscape treatments for areas:
 - o At least 10m from buildings to appropriate interfaces with conservation zone;
 - o Under existing tree canopies;
 - o Not under existing tree canopies
 - o Surrounding the water bodies.

For the residential buildings the site planning has sought to provide a landscape setting for each building envelope, and also to each of the site boundaries where relationship with neighbours and the streetscape require specific landscape design treatment to achieve suitable outcome.

3.2 Bushfire Protection Planning

Bushfire risk identification and consideration has been a key aspect of site assessment and development of VMP proposals, site planning, and landscape design proposals. Graham Swain of Australian Bushfire Protection Planners Pty Limited has participated in site survey and analysis, and in setting controls and then reviewing developing and final design proposals in order to minimise bushfire risk is suitably addressed in the development application proposals.

Treatments for the Conservation Area, Managed Buffer Zone and the landscape design have incorporated input from ABPP to ensure on-going minimisation of risk of fire from the landscape including:

- Suitable separation of tree canopies from built form environs;
- Suitable vertical separation of stratum of the landscape;
- Provisions for access to landscape areas for management and for fire prevention or fighting vehicles and activities;
- On-going management of the landscape to reduce fire fuel materials and plant growth from the landscape.

The Managed Buffer Zone will complement the Conservation area through having local native ground layer species and canopy separated trees to the specifications in the Bushfire Report.

3.3 Hydrology and Riparian Landscape Areas

The Stormwater Management and Riparian Issues report prepared by NPC describes the Water Sensitive Urban Design Approach adopted for all elements of the project, including components of water management for buildings and surrounds. For the Conservation Area proposals were developed through collaboration between Ecology, Hydrology and Landscape consultants. Landscape features include use of vegetation to stabilise the site; vegetation and ponds along the drainage line through the site (providing habitat and assisting water cleansing); and construction of wetland pond areas with associated riparian landscape treatments. Further detail of stormwater related issues, stormwater drainage concept proposals, and soil and erosion control measures is provided in the accompanying NPC documents.

The VMP establishes design parameters and outcomes for the proposed water bodies. A comprehensive design and long term management strategy will be developed for proposed riparian ponds and riffle area between the ponds. Water edge profiles will be developed to significantly restrict access (including permeable fencing embedded in landscape if appropriate), with suitable profiles to water edges to allow egress if required. The water reticulation will be developed to water aeration and movement so as to reasonably eliminate mosquitos and algal blooms. Inclusion of native fish will be considered in developing ecology proposals for the ponds, with beneficial habitat opportunities for birds, bats and broad spectrum of native wildlife.

3.4 Heritage Elements in the Landscape

The landscape proposals have been prepared with input from the Heritage Consultant Architect, and identity significant opportunity to utilise and feature existing remnant garden elements in the landscape, and to utilise building elements and materials in pavements, walls and as feature

elements in select locations as may be appropriate. The feature entry walls at 1 Avon Road are being retained and partially re-built in order to address the reconfigured entry road and pedestrian pathway. Feature stone retaining walls along the railway land boundary are being substantially retained and rebuilt in locations, including reinstatement of the landscape feature close to the entry walls.

The overgrown nature of much of the site restrict the ability to fully survey and determine the extent of remnant landscape cultural features – with assessment and protection / re-use opportunities to be undertaken as part of the detail design stage. Landscape stairs and paving propose extensive re-use of feature building and landscape sandstone walls existing on site of 1 Avon Road and elsewhere. Heritage consultant input will continue through the detailed design stages of the project to reasonably maximise the opportunities revealed by clearing of the weed infestation currently covering much of the landscape.

3.5 Streetscape Improvements

As shown, the footpath and road interface is to be provided a significant upgrading, which will be consistent with the high quality streetscape treatments in adjoining and nearby Pymble residential streetscapes. Detail design treatments of street trees and road verge, footpaths, site access and security, boundary fencing, signage, letter-boxes and the full range of streetscape considerations to meet the requirements of Council have been considered in the proposals and will be detailed in full in the design development of the streetscapes.

3.6 Landscape Boundary Treatments

Boundary landscape treatments and landscape relationships between sites and buildings have been a key consideration of developing site planning and detailed design proposals for residential buildings. All existing trees and boundary fencing and walls, and detailed levels and relationships with new building proposals have been considered in the design development. Trees along boundaries have been given highest priority for protection, and new landscape aims to reinforce the visual screening and buffer aspects to reduce views between buildings and overlooking of garden areas. Where adjoining residences are elevated, and land slopes down to the site of new buildings, taller screening trees with continuous foliage habit for their full height have been included. In addition to boundary interface with proposed residential buildings, many of the adjoining residences of the site will enjoy the benefit of improvement of their existing boundary with vegetated areas, with conservation area upgrading proposals to understood to significantly improve their boundary condition.

3.7 Access Driveways

Landscape design has been integral with locating and treatment of each of the proposed driveways, so that tree protection, new landscape, and allied pedestrian paths and access points are fully coordinated with driveways to create an integrated landscape treatment and character. For Buildings 3, 4 and 5 the provision of a dedicated pedestrian set-down location has been made adjacent driveways so as to provide a quality landscape address and forecourt for pedestrian arrival and departure. Driveway threshold treatment will provide boundary fencing, landscape and residential identification that is consistent with similar 'battle-axe' site entry treatments nearby in the streetscape. Detail design consideration has also been given to truck delivery and turning, and temporary and emergency parking capacity maintenance and Rural Fire Service vehicles. Building 1 is proposed to have a more traditional streetscape relationship with pedestrian arrival able to be suitably provided to the Avon Road footpath, with an entry pedestrian gate, pergola and letterboxes, and a 'classic Pymble' boundary hedge and picket fence and allied trees and landscape.

3.8 Common and Private Residential Open Space

As shown on the plans, garden and lawn areas are provided adjoining residential buildings, but only where Conservation area landscape treatments have not been deemed to take priority. The creation of naturalistic landscape setting towards the central open space is the clear priority for the landscape treatments to the residences. The presumption is that the general environmental and aesthetic amenity determines the typology for lifestyle choice, where natural setting is preferred to extensive garden and recreation amenity. For the cultural garden areas as shown in open space areas, paths meander through garden areas, with layered exotic planting presenting to open lawn areas as is typical of much of the local area. The slopes of the site suggest a meandering form for pathways as they follow contours down the slope – with accessible journeys providing a more scenic route, and stairs provided for more direct route for able-bodies access. Existing trees retained in the gardens are generally the dominant element throughout cultural gardens, but as shown on the plans there are areas where new tree planting allows creation of a new landscape to compliment adjacent building form and create boundary screening where required.

Ground floor apartments are suitably afforded garden courtyards where opportunity presents, with many ground floor apartments provided the alternative of an interface with either cultural 'Pymble garden areas', or as shown on plan many have terraces or balconies that directly address the natural fern and low native shrubs and scattered trees of the Conservation area.

3.9 Conservation Area and Managed Buffer Zone

The proposals for the Conservation Area open space are as described generally on the drawings, and as described in the Anne Clements & Associates Flora report, and the Vegetation Management Plan described in that report. The VMP describes the conservation and enhancement of the degraded Blue Gum High Forest in the Conservation Area, and for the Managed Buffer Zone adjoining the Conservation Area. The Managed Buffer Zone adjoining the Conservation Area is to be managed to meet the bushfire requirements of Graham Swain of Australian Bushfire Protection Planner Pty Limited (ABPP). ABPP has specified an at least 10 m wide managed buffer zone to the Conservation Area downslope of Buildings 3, 4 and 5.

3.10 Pedestrian Access, Walkways and Network

The site pathway network and general access provisions have been developed by Site Image in conjunction with Marchese + Partners Architects, and related project team members. The design proposals were reviewed by Mr Mark Relf of Accessibility Solutions, and adjusted to suit input provided.

The site planning establishes four key outcomes for pedestrian paths across the site, being:

- Provision of a cross-site accessible link to allow residential areas to the north of the site access across the site towards the Pymble railway station, being a link that is not currently provided and that will create significant benefit to the local community;
- Provision of public access to the Conservation area to enjoy the natural open space amenity of the area (whilst ensuring that environmental value of open space is protected by restricting extent of these access paths);
- Providing accessible pedestrian access routes to each of the four residential buildings through meandering landscape paths that feature the extensive site landscape;
- Providing pathways with stairs that provide most direct access route to from streets and between residential buildings and different open space areas of the site.

The plans illustrate the pathway network, and show the detail of connectivity to external paths, including to the roadside footpath link along the boundary of PLC School towards Pymble station – being a key link in terms of the transport amenity afforded this site by its proximity to the railway. There is indication also of a maintenance access ‘bush track’ pathway to the lower part of the gully, with very limited access and low level pathway provision to discourage general access.

Generally, the pathway character and finishes are to strongly correlate with the two principal zones of the site, being the Conservation and Cultural landscapes. The Conservation area pathways are to have highly permeable finishes such as crushed granite and open jointed stone pavement where surface protection against erosion is required. Stairs are to be constructed from stone recovered from landscape walls and from existing residences on the site. In Cultural landscape areas paths are to be more structured with hard paving material as is appropriate to complement the varying architecture and finishes of each building (typically unit paving, stone paving or other pavements selected to suit each location).

Pathway design is to incorporate seating, lighting and generally be designed to provide a high level of amenity, safety and feeling of security through providing clear sightlines and clarity of destination and interim points along the journey. Clear way-finding signage and interpretive graphics and signs will be provided to direct movement and inform, and to educate regarding the site natural and cultural heritage.

3.11 Landscape Materials and Installation

All materials are to be installed new and or of the best quality and fit for purpose. The whole of the landscape works is to be carried out in conjunction with appropriate Ecology and Aborist consultancy onsite guidance working in conjunction with a suitably qualified Landscape Contractor who is experienced in horticultural practice, landscape construction, and planting techniques. All work shall be faithfully carried out in the most tradesman like and substantial manner in accordance with accepted superior trade standards and applicable Australian Standards.

Identified materials for reuse from existing residences and from landscape areas are to be salvaged and safely stored and protected and made good to be suitable for reuse as appropriate. Identified heritage items are to be protected or stored and reinstated as approved by the Heritage consultant. Finishes to the walls and pavements are to remain in keeping with the quality and appearance of the built elements. Pavement finishes are to be of a type that has adequate slip resistance and does not present an uneven surface to avoid trip hazards. Landscape lighting will provide displays of feature elements (seating walls, water features and advanced tree planting) as well as providing an ambient light source to illuminate garden areas while avoiding light “washing” into private spaces.

3.12 Planting Design

Preparation of detailed planting plans is to be completed as part of detailed design development for each part of the site. Planting design and proposed species will be prepared in accordance with an approved VMP, and in consultation with Council and relevant authorities to ensure suitability for the respective Landscape Zones described on the landscape plans, being: Conservation Area; Managed Buffer Zone; and General Landscape Zone.

3.13 Establishment Maintenance

For Conservation Areas and Managed Buffer Zones works are to be maintained in perpetuity to fulfil the requirements of the approved VMP and associated bushfire management guidelines. For General Landscape Zone areas, installation of the works shall be subject to a 52 weeks defects liability period, and thereafter will become the responsibility of the Body Corporate. The landscape contractor shall be required to undertake regular maintenance inspections and works during this period and replace any failed plants / finishes / equipment as determined to be defective. As a part of the Construction Documentation the landscape specification shall describe a full Maintenance Schedule.

The use of irrigation system will aid the successful establishment and long-term development of the landscape. Regular inspections and reporting by the Landscape Architect on behalf of the developer will occur during this period to ensure the completed works are completed in accordance with the approved scope and requirements. At handover the contractor will issue a set of as built documents, operation manuals, warranties and guarantees.

Maintenance of the landscape after this period will become the responsibility of the residential body corporate for communal open spaces, with requirements of the VMP and on-going maintenance and management requirement undertakings consistent with the project commitments and agreed Council approval requirements.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Through the design process Site Image have sought to address the objectives and detailed aspects / requirements of Ku-Ring-Gai Council's relevant DCP's and Landscape Codes, BCA and Australian Standards, as well as the requirements of SEPP 65 (Design Quality of Residential Flat Development) with regard to quality and amenity and living environment surrounds for the proposed development.

The design brief to the project team was to create a high quality residential development that will conform with the development guidelines of Council and relevant Authorities, and provide:

- protection and enhancement of the significant environmental features on the site;
- suitable design response in terms of water sensitive urban design, ecology, bushfire management, hydrology and on-going land management;
- an appropriate response to the character of the locality;
- a specific response to the site conditions, site heritage and existing landscape;
- an appropriate, considerate relationship with adjacent properties to respect their landscape setting, privacy and outlook.

In keeping with this brief the landscape design it is believed that the proposals for General Landscape Zones (as described on the plans) establish a character, scale and style that compliments the large landscape conservation area on the site, proposed architecture and appropriately establishes residential garden amenity, and garden environs for building frontages to streetscapes generally consistent with the landscape character of the neighbourhood.

The landscape design has sought to meet the important functions of privacy screening, visual softening of views to building facades, common open space amenity for residents, sun / shade provisions and screening at boundaries.

It is believe the proposals are suitable for Preferred Project consideration and approval, and can form the basis and provide guidance for subsequent detailed design and documentation for all areas of the site.

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Site Image NSW Pty Ltd as agent for Site Image NSW Partnership