

Rachel Forster Hospital Redevelopment SEPP 65 Design Quality Principals

Lippmann

Principle 1 Context

The former Rachel Forster Hospital site is located within Redfern's established residential precinct surrounded by Pitt Street to the east and Albert Street to the North.

Policies which control development on the site include:

- § State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects)
- § Redfern Waterloo Built Environment Plan 2006
- § SEPP 65

The site area is approximately 6923sqm and accommodates the former hospital buildings. Parts of the existing buildings which demonstrate "modern design" and hence aesthetic significance are confined principally to the north and eastern elevation of Building 1 and the colonnade on the eastern elevation of Building 2. The concept plan proposes the adaptive re-use of Building 1 and new multi-unit residential apartments identified as Buildings 2, 3 and 4. It is proposed that the colonnade on the eastern elevation of the new Building 2 be incorporated in the design of the building.

The site is well located in terms of access to employment, transport and a range of services making it ideal for redevelopment for residential purposes. The locational benefits of the site are evidenced by the following:

- § The site is situated within 3km of the Sydney CBD providing excellent access to employment and business opportunities;
- § Redfern railway station is located within 500m, providing exceptional access to the Sydney rail network. The site is within 200m of bus services operating from the city to: Marrickville, Port Botany and East Gardens (routes 308, 309, 310) and 500m of services operating from Millers Point to Kingsford (route 343). Other services are also provided which operate in peak times;
- § The site is located within close proximity to a range of community facilities;
- § Redfern Park and Oval are within 250m of the site providing good recreational opportunities. The provision of publicly accessible open space as part of the redevelopment of the Rachel Forster site will enhance recreation and open space opportunities for the surrounding community;
- § The site is within 200m of local shops and services located on Redfern Street and approximately 300m of Regent Street which provides additional services. The Surry Hills shopping centre is approximately 1km from the site and other centres are accessible via train or bus; and
- § As the social and economic renewal of Redfern-Waterloo continues under the Built Environment Plan, the local benefits of the site for residential development will be enhanced with greater employment and business opportunities, access to social and cultural facilities and improved infrastructure.

The former hospital site is located within an established residential area and is surrounded by housing with the exception of a warehouse adjoining the western boundary. All land immediately surrounding the site, including the warehouse site, is zoned for residential purposes.

The surrounding residential development is characterised by terrace housing to the north and east and medium and high density housing to the west and south. The six Department of Housing towers to the south are prominent elements within the built for context, with the tallest towers exceeding 30 storeys, providing a backdrop to the site.

The diversity in the scale and form of the surrounding residential development supports the establishment of a mix of lower and medium scale residential buildings on the site, which is appropriate and sensitive to the site's context.

Principle 2 Scale

The development scale is controlled by the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 Schedule 3 State Significant Sites, Part 5 'The Redfern-Waterloo Authority Sites'. Under the SEPP a three-storey height limit applies along Albert Street and a six-storey height limit applies to the remainder of the site.

The existing building located on the southern part of the site (Building 1) is five storeys above ground level and includes an additional basement level. There is an existing plant room located on the roof of Building 1 which is approximately 3.3 metres high.

The concept plan proposes an additional storey to Building 1 which will result in a building height of 6 storeys above ground level. This is consistent with the scale of the adjoining multi-unit development immediately to the south of the site which has a height of up to six storeys. The scale of Building 1 has also been minimised by setting back the sixth storey from the northern, western and eastern edge of the building.

Proposed Buildings 2, 3 and 4 are 3 storeys above ground level and are compatible with the predominant scale of development along Albert Street and Pitt Street, which are characterised by terrace houses and a modern townhouse development.

Proposed Buildings 2 and 4 are 3 storeys above ground level. The permissible height for proposed buildings 2 and 4 under the SEPP is 6 storeys.

Proposed Building 2 is sited within the footprint of the existing 2-storey building which is linked to Building 1. The proposed public open space between Pitt Street and the proposed building provides a generous setback to the street. Maintaining the existing colonnade on the eastern elevation of Building 2 will further minimise the impact and scale of the new building. Building 2 faces Pitt Street and is compatible with the predominant scale of the terrace houses and town house development along Pitt Street.

Building 4 will not be visible from Pitt Street. The blank wall of a warehouse building (approximately 3 storeys in height) abuts the western boundary of the site.

Proposed Building 3 along Albert Street is 3 storeys above ground level. Under the SEPP (Major Projects) the maximum permissible height on this part of the site is 3 storeys.

The concept plan takes into consideration significant features being the relationship between the colonnade and the built form of Building 1. The additional storeys have been significantly set back to reduce the impact on the heritage items, which are highlighted on the concept plan drawings.

The concept plan has been configured such that the building to the north of the site reflects the scale of the terrace housing in Albert Street. The extension to Building 1 at the southern section of the site is consistent with the multi-unit development on Pitt Street.

Principle 3 **Built Form**

The concept plan responds to the built form of the existing buildings on site and surrounding streetscape. Building 1, 2 and 3 maintain the 'H' shaped configuration of the original former hospital buildings. These buildings are also largely located within the original building footprints.

The additions to Building 1 and the third storey on Building 2 are setback to maintain the integrity of the of heritage elements.

The built form has allowed for the retention of the landscaped forecourt along Pitt Street, which is proposed to be dedicated as public open space.

The built form is consistent with the surrounding built form i.e. two – three storey terrace houses and more modern townhouses along Pitt Street and Albert Street.

The buildings are located to take advantage of distant and local views, while maintaining good solar access. Car parking and visitor parking are located within a two level basement carpark accessed from Pitt Street the southern end of the site.

The built form is consistent with design concept outlined for the site in Redfern-Waterloo Built Environment Plan (Stage 1).

Principle 4 **Density**

The density is controlled by the SEPP (Major Projects) 2005 with a floor space ratio (FSR) of 2:1 applying to the site. The source of the 2:1 floor space ratio is the Redfern - Waterloo Built Environment Plan (BEP). The floor space ratio was derived from urban analysis that was undertaken in the development of the BEP, which included examination of the development density and built form on site and of the surrounding area. From this building envelopes were derived for the site, which informed the floor space ratio of 2:1.

The concept plan is not seeking approval for a floor space ratio other than the maximum permitted FSR of 2:1. Based on the site area of 6,923sqm the maximum gross floor area that can be achieved for the site is 13,846sqm. This would yield in the order of 150 apartments on the site.

The appropriateness of the density is also supported by the locational benefits of the site detailed in the discussion of context above. Furthermore, as detailed in the Assessment of Traffic and Parking Implications undertaken by Transport and Traffic Planning Associate the density will not have any adverse traffic impacts, and adequate car parking can be accommodated on site to meet the demand generated by around 150 apartments.

Principle 5

Resource, Energy & Water Efficiency

Resource efficiency is accommodated within concept plan with the retention and adaptive reuse of the existing Building 1.

As the proposal is for a concept plan, many of the issues regarding resource, energy and water efficiency will be resolved during the detailed design stage undertaken with a subsequent Project Application.

The design of the concept plan is intended to enable the achievement of water and energy efficient reduction targets and satisfaction of BASIX at the Project Application stage.

The general location and orientation of the buildings maximises sunlight, daylight and ventilation to reduce reliance on artificial heating and cooling. As demonstrated in the Indicative Apartment Layout (Drawing No. A013) the buildings are capable of accommodating crossover apartments which maximise natural ventilation and solar access.

The Building Services Report prepared by *Armstrong* accompanying the concept plan outlines a range of water conservation initiatives that could be accommodated in the subsequent application, including rainwater storage tanks.

Principle 6

Landscape

A landscape concept diagram and principles have been developed by Oculus Landscape Architects to demonstrate how landscaping could enhance the site, streetscape and neighbourhood character. Some of the key principles of the landscape design include:

- Contribute to the character of Pitt Street by providing a vegetated public open space with tree retention, new tree and shrub planting, paths and informal seating.
- Use landscape design to delineate between the public open space and private space.
- Provide landscaping for privacy and visual amenity for future residents.
- Provide vegetation that requires low water use and low maintenance.

Principle 7

Amenity

The concept plan seeks to optimise amenity in terms of daylight and sunlight access; ventilation, views and outlook; private open space and access to public open space. The number, layout, mix and size of apartments does not form part of the concept plan application. An Indicative Apartment Layout (Drawing No A013) has been prepared to demonstrate that the proposed building footprints, location and envelope will maximise apartment amenity. This is demonstrated by the following:

- The majority of the apartments will be north facing, as they will be accommodated within Buildings 1 and 3, which are orientated to the north. Accordingly the building layout and envelopes ensures that 70% of apartments are capable of receiving 3 hours of sunlight to living areas and private open space between 9am and 3pm midwinter in accordance with the Residential Design Code.

- Private open space can be provided for all apartments. Most private open space will be in the form of balconies, which will have a minimum depth of 2m.
- The proposed public open space is conveniently located for the use and enjoyment of future residents.
- Buildings have been orientated to maximise views and outlooks of the city, proposed public open space and local vistas.
- There is potential to provide individual access to all ground level apartments from Albert Street, the proposed public open space or communal open space.
- Building orientation and separation ensures privacy between apartments.
- Crossover apartments can be accommodated within the buildings to maximise natural ventilation.

Principle 8

Safety & Security

One of the concept plan objectives is to ensure the development is safe and secure for residents and visitors as well as contributing to the safety of the public domain.

The communal and private open spaces within the development are for passive recreation allowing a level of passive security via resident observation from adjoining terraces.

Principle 9

Social Dimensions

The concept plan will increase housing choices within the Redfern area. As outlined above the number, layout, mix and size of apartments does not form part of this concept plan application. However, as demonstrated by the Indicative Apartment Layout (Drawing No A013) a mix of apartment types, layouts and sizes can be accommodated within the buildings including: 1 bed; 1 bed + study; 2 bed; 3 bed; single and two storey to reflect the diverse social mix within the Redfern area to sustain a vibrant community.

Principle 10

Aesthetics

As the proposal is for a concept plan, the details of the building appearance are not yet known. A draft Statement of Commitment has been included requiring that the future Project Application demonstrate design excellence in terms of architectural design, materials and detailing and overall building appearance.

Further to the above, the detailed design and treatment of the additions to Building 1 and Building 2 behind colonnade will require careful consideration to ensure the integrity of these heritage elements are maintained. It is envisaged that the rooftop addition to Building 1 will be light-weight, unobtrusive and setback on the eastern and northern façade. The palate of materials is likely to consist of steel, glass and aluminium cladding, which are lightweight.