

COUNCIL SUBMISSION on MOD 2 to MP10_0112 & MP10_0113 – Modification application for STAMFORD CONCEPT PLAN and PROJECT PLAN FOR STAGE 1

The substantive element of the submitted modification is a change to the mix of units proposed. As a consequence of the proposed increase in smaller units and the deletion of larger units, the facades need to change and an increase in car parking numbers is sought. The change in mix is the subject of Council's submission along with the impact on car parking provision.

Another element of the modification is required to satisfy a condition of the earlier Concept Plan Approval by the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) to provide a minimum area of open space in the middle of the site. Council makes no comment on this matter.

The name changes proposed for the buildings are also a matter on which Council will make no comment other than to advise that the former proposal to use the names of former Governors of NSW for a development in an area originally set aside by a former Governor (as the Field of Mars) and now named as a suburb for another Governor (Macquarie) was considered to be a positive option. In any case, the allocation of addresses for the completed development will be made in accordance with the Australian New Zealand Street Addressing Standard (ASNZS 4819-2011) and that the naming of the proposed undedicated roads will be made by Council in accordance with the Geographical Names Board Road Naming Policy. This will hopefully alleviate any future confusion that may arise for people living in "Melbourne in Macquarie Park" or "Hobart in Macquarie Village" etc..

Change in Unit Mix

This is not the first of the Major Projects approved in City of Ryde that has subsequently sought to increase the approved unit yield by reducing the approved number of three bedroom units and increasing the number of one bedroom and two bedroom units. In this case, it also proposed to reduce the size of both the one bedroom units and the size of two bedroom units as well as deleting the three bedroom option completely.

APPROVED No. of UNITS (Stage 1)	PROPOSED No. of UNITS	DIFFERENCE
291(page 10) 310 (page 27)	340	+ 49 (+17%) or +30 (+9.6%)

APPROVED SIZE OF UNITS (Stage1)	PROPOSED SIZE OF UNITS	DIFFERENCE
One bed: 50m2 - 68m2	One bed: 50m2 – 60m2	Nil to minus 8m2 (-11%)
Two bed: 78 m2 – 107m2	Two bed: 60m2 – 90m2	Minus 18m2 (-30%) to minus 17m2 (-18%)

Justification for the Change in Mix

The submitted application identifies that *“...provision of an increased number of smaller apartments to Stage 1 of the project is in response to strong market evidence from surrounding developments that buyer demand for smaller apartments is high and reflects the changes to the market since the application was originally lodged in 2010.”* (page 23) This is clearly not a planning argument to justify change. It seems mainly to be a marketing strategy. No substantive planning reason is provided in the submitted documentation to support the modification but the market strategy is clearly enunciated on Page 31. The application is silent on what the implications will be for the site accommodating an increased resident population.

It is Council's submission that genuine planning grounds need to be provided to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and to the Planning Assessment Commission as the approval authority. If density and car parking increases are to be sustained on marketing data alone, then the need for planning as a discipline and as an activity of government is diminished.

Social Impact Assessment

The first application for this development site included a Social Impact Assessment. The fact that it did so was applauded in Council's original submission on the project. It was at least an attempt to consider the potential impacts of the proposed development. In light of changing circumstances, the SIA should be revisited and amplified. In there may lay the beginnings of a consideration of what the likely impact of the proposed changes will be. What are the implications of not providing for the part of the market seeking larger units? Will the aged population or other cohorts be excluded? What if this unit size and mix becomes the benchmark for development in the future Urban Activation Precinct? Will that undermine the objectives for housing choice? A market driven model should not be considered to be the best approach to provide for all future housing needs in Macquarie Park.

Smaller units and a greater residential density will increase the importance to residents of having open space available. On page 29, an argument is presented that the proposed changes are consistent with current approvals. While there is no reduction in the quantum of open space proposed on the site, the proportion of open space per unit must be less due to the increase in the number of units. What is the difference in the amount of open space per residents if the approved scheme is compared to the proposed scheme?

Traffic and Car Parking

Any increase in the number of units on the site should not create additional traffic movement associated with the development site. Council recognises that the proposed increase in unit numbers is a result of a change to the unit mix. However, a consequence of this increase is an increase in car parking spaces and hence an increase in the number of traffic movements for the site. Council's earlier submissions raised particular concern as to the inadequacy of the road network around the site to accommodate additional traffic. All the major intersections nearby have reached capacity and the only access to the development site is via a dead end road with a left-in / left out turning movement to and from a major arterial road close to one of those intersections. A continuation of the argument that the additional traffic is incremental (and by implication, does not make the failing situation any worse) is not satisfactory. Given the proximity to public transport and employment options

which underpins the original Concept Plan approval, there is an argument that any increase in unit number should not be accompanied by additional car parking provision.

If this argument sounds familiar, it is because it applies similarly to other high density development in the locality approved under Part 3A.

With regard to traffic and car parking, the comments made by the Planning Assessment Commission in its report dealing with the first Modification application for this site are noted. The Commission's view was that *"an increase in parking rates is not justified considering the site's good accessibility and acknowledged limits of the road network. While the Commission agrees that increased density on the site is desirable, it considers that any such increase may only be approved if there is no additional parking."*

In tables on Pages 26 and 28, in the columns headed "Proposed Stage1 Project Approval 75W Modification" under the categories of "Car Parking" (page 26) and "Car Parking Provision" (page 28), the comment made are respectively "no change" and "no change proposed". The comment is correct insofar as the rate of car parking provision is not proposed to change but clearly should not be interpreted as saying that the actual number of spaces proposed on site is not changed. In this regard, the proponent's position is encapsulated in the penultimate paragraph of the Executive Summary (page iv) where it reserves its position to seek to vary condition C5 of the Concept Plan Approval in a future (modification) application.

The number of additional car parking spaces now proposed as a result of the modified design should be made clear before the application is determined. Based on the information contained in the application, the increase appears to be somewhere between 18 to 34 spaces or an additional 6% to 12% for Stage 1 (residential) only.

Condition C5 is modified as follows:	
Car Parking	
C5	Future Development Applications shall demonstrate: that they provide on-site car parking
(a)	For residential apartments having a combined GFA of up to 46,420m ² , on-site car parking must be provided at rates compliant with the Roads and Maritime Services (formerly Roads and Traffic Authority) Guide to Traffic Generating Development's requirements, which are as follows: (a) 0.6 spaces per 1 bedroom apartment; (b) 0.9 spaces per 2 bedroom apartment; (c) 1.4 spaces per 3 bedroom apartments; (d) 1 space per 5 apartments for visitors; and
(b)	For any residential apartments that cause the combined GFA of residential apartments on-site to exceed 46,420m ² there must be no provision for parking spaces, other than visitor parking at the rate of 1 space per 5 apartments.
(c)	For commercial on-site car parking must be provided at 1 space per 40m ² 46m ² of commercial GFA.

Extract from Planning Assessment Commission Instrument of Modification providing the required car parking rate for MP10_0112 (MOD 1)

Dedication of Affordable Housing Units

Previously, the Statement of Commitments for this project has identified the dedication of two units at Stage 1 and two units at Stage 2 to Council for affordable housing. Schedule 4 attached to the current Modification application (which identifies that it relates to both the Concept Plan approval for the whole project and to Stage 1) does not fully reflect this commitment. The wording in the table under the category of “affordable Housing” identifies that the Proponent will dedicate only two dwellings within Stage 1 for this purpose. It is assumed that this is an oversight and will be rectified prior to any determination to include the commitment that two dwellings within Stage 2 are also to be dedicated for affordable housing. It is noted that Condition C11 of the modified consent includes reference to “four units”.

Further on this matter, the wording of the commitment is that the dedicated units will be “appropriately sized and located” – whatever that means. This modification application provides an opportunity for the Department to put some additional rigour into those words to ensure that the units provided as “affordable” do not only represent the least saleable or most poorly located dwellings within the complex. While Council has no expectation that they will come from the premium offering, the dedicated units should have a minimum of two bedrooms and identification of the units should be made prior to the release of the Construction Certificate for the relevant stage. Handover of the units should occur prior to the release of any interim or final Occupation Certificate for the relevant stage. Council would appreciate the Department’s consideration of its request to strengthen the terms of the consent in this regard.

Conclusion

Council accepts that the Concept Plan for the Stamford site has been approved and is seeking to ensure that the development that results from implementation of that approval will be one that optimises amenity for the future residents while protecting as much as possible, the amenity of current residents. Any modifications approved under a Section 75W application should clearly demonstrate a better design and amenity outcomes for the proposed development and not be simply a tool to increase yield for the site.
