Dolphin Blue Development Design Statement

The intent of this report is to describe the proposal's design with reference to the NSW SEPP65 Policy, and is organised on the structure of the Planning NSW Residential Flat and Design Code.

PROJECT ADDRESS:	The Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort, Yamba Road, Yamba, NSW
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PROPONENT:	Blue Dolphin Development Joint Venture
SITE AREA:	Approx. 5.744 hectares
NUMBER OF STOREYS:	2 to 5
NUMBER OF UNITS:	224 Residential Units, 117 Tourist Units

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for a new development of 224 Residential units and 117 Tourist Facility units on the site of the existing Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort on Yamba Road. The site is located between Yamba Road and the Clarence River foreshore. The Residential component of this development will be comprised of a series of apartment buildings and detached villas. The Tourist Facility portion of the development will be comprised of similar apartment buildings with the inclusion of appropriate support facilities. The Tourist Facility will not be separately addressed in this report and has been treated with the same level of residential design quality as the remainder of the project.

The report's sections are as follows;

- context
- scale
- density
- social dimensions
- amenity
- resource, energy and water efficiency
- landscape
- safety and security
- aesthetics
- built form

CONTEXT

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context can be defined as the key natural and built features of an area. Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of a location's current character or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, the desired future character as stated in planning and design policies. New buildings will thereby contribute to the quality and identity of the area.

The proposed design has been generated from a comprehensive site analysis process that takes into account the physical, environmental and social context;

Building heights and forms have been designed in response to the general context of the site. Setbacks to the boundaries are varied and exceed the minimum statutory requirements. Building heights and forms are varied across the site to create character and a sense of individuality to each building.

The key contextual response has been in the form, massing and proposed materials of the buildings. Building forms have been kept to a 'human scale' with the employment of smaller solid elements, various uses of lightweight and perforated materials, and the rich integration of built form with landscape.

The site circulation network has been generated to encourage [and in many cases improve upon the existing] connectivity with the waterfront, particularly in providing direct accessibility between Yamba Rd and the Clarence River.

The APZ along the western boundary is proposed as a publicly accessible link to a re-activated waterfront, with public amenity and open space at the water's edge

Roof set-outs and 'silhouette' design borrows largely from existing roof types in and around Yamba, with an emphasis on larger roof overhangs, lightweight materials and 'coastal' roof forms.

Buildings and dwellings within have been arranged to maximise access to summer cooling breezes and to winter sunlight. Building sections also optimise the effectiveness of cross ventilation to dwellings.

SCALE

Good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings. Establishing an appropriate scale requires a considered response to the scale of existing development. In precincts undergoing a transition, proposed bulk and height needs to achieve the scale identified for the desired future character of the area.

BUILDING HEIGHT

Building heights range from 2 to 5 storeys and are varied around the site. Lower height buildings inhabit the public perimeter of the site with the higher buildings located centrally.

The building forms are organised according to a number of scaling principles in order to maintain a comfortable human-scale setting, e.g. various ground floors / ground levels are visually 'detached' from the ground to both allow for carpark ventilation and a more lightweight appearance; upper levels have recessed facades, darker colours, larger roof overhangs and smaller floor areas – all aiding in receding / recessing the upper portions of buildings; inclusion of a high proportion of lightweight / perforated materials to reduce opaque forms.

Building heights have been varied along public edges [ie. Yamba Road and the Clarence River] to create variation in silhouettes.

STREET SETBACKS

The proposal complies with all relevant boundary and street setbacks as a minimum, and with particular reference to Yamba Road and the Clarence River frontages these setbacks are exceeded, sometimes significantly. [e.g. Yamba Road].

The proposal's setbacks have been generated not so much in response to statutory requirements as from good sightline principles, e.g. the pedestrian sightline from Yamba Road is lower than many existing two storey dwellings along the southern side of Yamba Road

Yamba Road setbacks also allow for a deep landscape and planting zone, creating a robust landscape statement enriching the arrival experience into Yamba.

BUILDING SEPARATION

The proposal achieves good levels of amenity in terms of solar access and privacy for occupants, neighbouring sites and the public domain.

Proposed building extents and footprints have been generated to optimise opportunities for deep soil plantings and the retention of existing 'of value' trees.

Proposed buildings are sited to avoid overlooking or loss of privacy to the adjoining sites and will ensure adequate privacy for the development

The proposal has undergone thorough sun-shading studies and does not result in overshadowing to the public domain or the adjoining sites, or even to neighbouring buildings and public space within the proposal.

Building forms along Yamba Road have been kept as a series of smaller footprints in order to avoid the creation of a 'wall of buildings' – this allows good pedestrian and visual permeability into the site

DENSITY

Good design has a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields (or number of units or residents). Appropriate densities are sustainable and consistent with the existing density in an area or, in precincts undergoing a transition, are consistent with the stated desired future density. Sustainable densities respond to the regional context, availability of infrastructure, public transport, community facilities and environmental quality.

The proposal is in keeping with the optimum capacity of the site and the local area and in general terms maintains [or slightly reduces] the total population of the site during peak periods.

The proposal provides considerable modulation of external walls and uses many elements of 'small scale' to retain a human scale response.

Building forms promote thin cross-section buildings, which maximise daylight access and natural ventilation.

All proposed floor plates allow generous habitable balconies, with an emphasis on indoor-outdoor lifestyle and an acknowledgement that today's lifestyle is very leisure orientated.

The density of development will support the provision of additional retail, commercial, entertainment and community uses within the township of Yamba, which is essential for the future growth of the area.

Adequate car parking is being accommodated on site to meet the demand of the development, and is designed as such to avoid an 'overflow effect' on the neighbourhood.

The development will not adversely impact on the capacity or function of the surrounding road network as demonstrated in the Traffic Study prepared by Arup.

The density of development will not have adverse environmental impacts in terms of stormwater runoff, as detailed in the stormwater concept plan and supporting information prepared by Acor.

The development achieves a high level of amenity for the future occupants of and visitors to the buildings in terms of privacy, solar access, ventilation, dwelling sizes and layout and external living spaces.

The development does not impact on adjoining sites or the public domain in terms of overshadowing, privacy and views.

SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

Good design responds to the social context and needs of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability, and access to social facilities. New developments should optimise the provision of housing to suit the social mix and needs in the neighbourhood or, in the case of precincts undergoing transition, provide for the desired future community quality.

The Tourist Facility component of the site proposes, besides the residential aspects, a range of shared and publicly accessible uses including shops, refreshment rooms and licensed hotel facilities, all available to the public.

The western edge of the Tourist Facility has been designed to encourage public engagement with ground level facilities open to public use. Public access connecting Yamba Road to the waterfront is provided along this edge allowing an interaction between the public and both the reactivated foreshore and the proposed facilities.

The proposal will increase housing opportunities within Yamba with the provision of 224 dwellings.

A mix of dwellings is provided in terms of size, layout and design to increase housing choice and respond to market demands.

The dwellings are generously sized and dimensioned to provide a flexible layout and allow for a range of activities and uses, additional to household functions, such as home offices.

Refer also to the “Economic Benefit Assessment” prepared by Urbis JHD included with this submission.

AMENITY

Good design provides amenity through the physical, spatial and environmental quality of a development. Optimising amenity requires appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, outlook and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.

ACOUSTIC PRIVACY

Building separation, organisation of living-space locations and adjacencies of landscaped open space have all evolved in response to needs of privacy, both visual and acoustic

Living [active] and sleeping [quiet] spaces within floor plates have been arranged also in consideration of acoustic privacy

The design and construction of the building ensures acceptable amenity is achieved from external noise sources including road traffic. This is supported by the Acoustic Assessment prepared by Norman Disney & Young submitted with this application, which confirms that the proposal will achieve the acoustic requirements of the BCA and Australian Standards.

Shared or more public facilities i.e. those that may generate ‘people noise’ have been located with consideration of adjacent residential uses, and are primarily within shared zones of the Tourist Facilities or at the Yamba Rd / Clarence River edges

VISUAL PRIVACY

The proposal maximises visual privacy for the dwellings by providing adequate separation distances between the habitable rooms of the development and the adjacent sites or public spaces, particularly through the increased boundary setbacks provided.

The building separation distances for balconies and habitable rooms are in accordance with distances recommended in the SEPP 65 Design Code and in most instances significantly exceed the ‘rules of thumb’ as described in the code.

The landscaping of the development is designed to integrate with the buildings’ daytime / night-time uses and will form an extension of the indoor-outdoor theme.

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DAYLIGHT

The layout, orientation and design of the dwellings ensures that the majority of the dwellings (more than 70%) will receive in excess of 3 hours of direct sunlight to internal living areas and balconies between 9am and 3pm during mid-winter.

3D sun-shading software has been employed during the master plan process, ensuring that shared open space within the proposal is not overshadowed by built form. This process has informed the proposed height variations around the site

DWELLING PLANNING

The internal layout of the dwellings optimises amenity with well-proportioned rooms to provide a flexible layout that allows for furniture placement and a range of activities and uses.

All dwellings are provided with private open space in the form of a balcony, terrace or ground-level gardens and decks, all directly adjacent to and extensions of the main living areas.

The design and layout of living rooms and balconies is intended to create a seamless integration of internal and external spaces, with the use of unobtrusive stacking sliding doors and continuous flooring material. The integration of the balconies and internal living areas creates a continuous living space for maximum usability, all year round.

Internal planning has also focussed on maximising physical and visual connectivity with the surrounding landscape.

VENTILATION

Single aspect dwellings have been generally limited to a depth of approximately 10 metres, ensuring that adequate daylight and ventilation is achieved for these dwellings.

The proposal incorporates corner dwellings and cross-through dwellings to assist in facilitating natural ventilation and maximising daylight.

Resident's car parking is also to be naturally cross ventilated in consideration of the 'whole-of-site' residential amenity. Where required, mechanical boosting will be provided to remove areas of "dead air" within the carparks in order to comply with the appropriate standards.

ACCESSIBILITY & WAYFINDING

Access to all dwellings throughout the site will be equitable and comply with or exceed accessibility standards. This will be achieved with easy gradient pedestrian networks and lifts

All common entries to the apartment buildings are located so as to be easily visible from entry points to the site, and from within resident car park areas. This provides good passive surveillance and makes pedestrian navigation around the site simple and comfortable.

RESOURCE, ENERGY & WATER EFFICIENCY

Good design makes efficient use of natural resources, energy and water throughout its full life cycle, including construction. Sustainability is integral to the design process. Aspects include demolition of existing structures, recycling of materials, selection of appropriate and sustainable materials, adaptability and reuse of buildings, layouts and built form, passive solar design principles, efficient appliances and mechanical services, soil zones for vegetation and reuse of water.

The design, layout and construction of the building enables all dwellings to achieve a minimum BASIX requirement as per report provided by BASIX Sustainable Solutions.

The buildings will achieve the recommended insulation ratings for roofs, ceilings and walls.

Single aspect dwellings have been generally limited to a depth of 10 metres. While this slightly varies from the 9 metres recommended in the Design Code, it still ensures adequate daylight and ventilation is achieved for these dwellings. In addition, the majority of units will be naturally cross-ventilated.

A Waste Management Plan has been prepared by Acor Consultants for this application. The plan also provides details of the management of waste and recycling materials during the demolition and construction phases of the development.

The Waste and Recycling facilities for the development are located within garbage rooms in the buildings and are not visible from the street so as to ensure they do not impact on the overall appearance of the development or streetscape character.

The development will incorporate energy efficient appliances and hot water systems to minimise water consumption and maximise energy efficiency.

LANDSCAPE

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in greater aesthetic quality and amenity for both occupants and the adjoining public domain. Landscape design builds on the existing site's natural and cultural features in responsible and creative ways. It enhances the development's natural environmental performance by co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy and habitat values. It contributes to the positive image and contextual fit of development through respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character, or desired future character. Landscape design should optimise useability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity, and provide for practical establishment and long term management.

Refer separate landscape design report and documentation.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Good design optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public domain. This is achieved by maximising overlooking of public and communal spaces while maintaining internal privacy, avoiding dark and non-visible areas, maximising activity on streets, providing clear, safe access points, providing quality public spaces that cater for desired recreational uses, providing lighting appropriate to the location and desired activities, and clear definition between public and private spaces.

The proposal has been designed to optimise safety and security for the development and surrounding public domain as demonstrated by the following:

While safety and security is of great importance there is a strong desire to ensure that the development is not perceived as a "Gated Community" that is closed off from its context. The existing site allows easy public access to the foreshore of the Clarence River that forms the northern boundary of the site. This characteristic of the site is to be maintained and improved, particularly along the western boundary.

The proposal maximises opportunities for informal surveillance of the open spaces of the development by orientating the balconies and principal living areas of dwellings to overlook the landscaped spaces.

The entrance to the residential dwellings and the car parks will be well lit for safety and surveillance.

Security devices will be installed to the pedestrian entrances to the dwellings and car parks entry, to control access to private spaces

Secure on-site resident parking is provided, with direct and safe access from the car park to the dwellings via secure lift.

AESTHETICS

Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development. Aesthetics should respond to the environment and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area.

The proposed buildings incorporate quality aesthetics, which respond to the desired character as demonstrated by the following:

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FACADES

The facade is designed to respond primarily to internal/external functions [connection with landscape, lifestyle spaces, daylight, indoor-outdoor connectivity] and also to integrate the building into its local context with a considered balance of bulk and scale.

Materials are to be 'reflective-of-place', creating a sense of place is the core concept in this proposal. The proposed materials and finishes have been selected to consider the site's context in terms of appearance and proximity to the surrounding environments. The palette of materials is informed by the four different contexts around the edges of the site; Waterside [North, Clarence River], Urban [East end, 'Yamba' township], Land [South, Yamba Road and adjacent neighbourhood] and Nature [West, nature reserve].

Balustrades are designed to provide unobstructed views from within all living spaces whilst providing some privacy from the internal communal spaces.

A 3D photomontage and examples of material treatment have been submitted with this application.

ROOF DESIGN

Roof set-outs and 'silhouette' design is informed largely by existing roof types in and around Yamba, with an emphasis on larger roof overhangs, lightweight materials and 'coastal' roof forms

Some components of roofs will be 'detached' from the walls below [with clear glass between], creating a sense of floating roofs and lightweight elements while bringing daylight and spaciousness into the dwellings within.

All materials will be consistent with the natural palette of the site. Reflective or bright materials will not be used.

BUILT FORM

Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of building elements. Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.

BUILDING TYPE

Building types within the proposal are varied, ranging from semi-detached villas on grade to a range of larger apartment buildings.

Height, setback, form and axis orientation is varied throughout the site, avoiding particularly the 'gridded' setout evident in other benchmarked master plans.

CEILING HEIGHTS

The Residential Design Code recommends a minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.7 metres. The proposed development will achieve a minimum clear floor to ceiling height of 2.7m to living spaces, and where achievable will exceed this height.

Ceiling heights have been set higher than might normally be encountered in such a proposal – this is driven purely by the desire to create more 'breathable' dwellings with better air stratification, better cross ventilation, better daylight penetration and the provision of ceiling fans where desired.