

## Mixed use hotel, residential and retail development 33 Cross Street, Double Bay

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May 2008

Prepared for **Ashington**



Clause 6 request for the Minister for Planning's  
Part 3A Major Project declaration &  
Preliminary Environmental Assessment

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**Quality Assurance**

Reviewed by

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 Date

This document is for discussion  
 purposes only unless signed.

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## 1 Background

This report has been prepared on behalf of Ashington to submit an outline of the proposed mixed use development at 33 Cross Street, Double Bay comprising of a boutique hotel, new retail tenancies and hotel residences. This report provides details of the proposed project including a site description, preliminary designs, preliminary environmental assessment and justification as to why the proposed development should be considered a Major Project under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). We request confirmation of such from the Department of Planning.

A Preliminary Environmental Assessment of the proposal has also been provided in this report, based on the standard preliminary assessment requirements for Part 3A projects. A copy of these standard requirements is provided at **Appendix K**.

This preliminary assessment is provided to request the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements for preparation of a development application for the Project.

### 1.1 Introduction

Ashington propose to redevelop the property at 33 Cross Street Double Bay into a mixed use hotel, residential and retail development (the project). This report has been prepared on behalf of Ashington to demonstrate that the project satisfies the criteria under Clause 6 of Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* and as such request for the Minister for Planning to declare the Project a Major Project under this legislation and consequently become the consent authority. This report also provides a preliminary environmental assessment of the project in order to determine the key issues for the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements (DGRs). This Clause 6 request follows an initial meeting with the Department of Planning on 6 March 2008 where the project was discussed and development options presented.

The site is in need of substantial upgrade for the following reasons:

- The upgrade of the site to a high standard would act as a catalyst for future redevelopment and regeneration of the Double Bay Town Centre;
- To significantly improve the architectural appearance of the building and provide a more beneficial urban development outcome for the site and surrounding area (solar access, overshadowing, building bulk, activation of street level etc);
- To upgrade and improve pedestrian access and amenity through and around the site.

All of the above will contribute to the revitalisation of the Double Bay village as a premier tourism and shopping destination and be a catalyst for improved commercial activity in the greater Double Bay Town Centre area. Generally, Council and community feedback regarding the concept of a mixed use development including a high quality boutique hotel has been positive and in favour of the proposal as providing the greater Double Bay community with considerable improvements.

## 1.2 Preparation of the application

The project team is made up of the following:

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Proponent</b>                         | Ashington      |
| <b>Architect and Urban Planner</b>       | Architectus    |
| <b>Economic consultant</b>               | Hill PDA       |
| <b>Community consultation consultant</b> | Urban Concepts |
| <b>Architectural review consultant</b>   | Alec Tzannes   |

This project team will be expanded to include a full range of specialists to respond to the Director Generals Environmental Assessment Requirements.

### Ashington

Ashington is high quality development firm. Their business model focuses on the upper end of the prime market and is not necessarily limited to a specific property classification. The main initiative of Ashington is to form a client base and reputation by providing superior luxury and stylised property assets that target affluent purchasers through the provision of additional services, superior design quality in the most prestigious locations. Examples of some of Ashington's previous developments include the following:

- 46A Macleay Street, Potts Point is a mixed use refurbishment of the Potts Point Post Office Exchange. The building provides 41 luxury office spaces over 5 floors. The ground level accommodates seven high end retailers and the lower ground floor is home to an emporium of fresh produce (Refer to Error! Reference source not found.).
- 2-14 Kings Cross Road, Kings Cross is a mixed use development that incorporates commercial office space, a boutique hotel, ground floor restaurant, mezzanine level bar and a residential penthouse. The hotel extends its services to the office uses and provides additional services which enhance the office uses and amenity of the business lounge and function centre.
- 10 Wylde Street, Potts Point, is a serviced apartment complex that will offer 270 degree views of the harbour and superior design quality.



Figure 1. 46A Macleay Street, Potts Point

Ashington is currently in receivership of the subject site and building.

## 2 Site Description

### 2.1 The site, legal description and existing use

The site is located at 33 Cross Street, Double Bay at the midpoint between Bay Street and New South Head Road near the corner of Transvaal Avenue (refer to the location map at **Figure 1**).

The registered property description of the site is Lot 1 on DP 793525.

The subject site has an area of 3,675sqm. The site is currently operating as the Stamford Plaza Hotel Double Bay (formerly the Ritz-Carlton Hotel) but it is scheduled to cease operations in March 2009.

### 2.2 Location

The site is located in Double Bay, approximately 4km from Sydney's CBD within the Local Government Area (LGA) of Woollahra. Surrounding land uses are a mix of retail and commercial in the near vicinity to the site. Bondi Junction is the closest Major Centre and is located approximately 2km to the south of the site.



**Figure 2. Location Map**

The site is shaded red and is located in the northern portion of the Double Bay Town Centre.



### 2.3 Existing development

The subject site comprises an existing 28.5m, 6 storey structure, generally built to the boundaries. It incorporates a 140 room hotel, 11 conference and event rooms, a ballroom, restaurant, gymnasium and a roof top swimming pool. The site also comprises a retail arcade on the ground floor and a two level basement car park with 173 car spaces for hotel guests and a public car park currently operated by the hotel.

The building has a gross floor area of 14,920sqm, giving it a floor space ratio (FSR) of 4.06:1. Architectural drawings of the existing building prepared by Leffler Simes Architects Pty Ltd dated May 1989 are provided at **Appendix J**.

The hotel is a typical design of its time. The existing hotel detracts from Double Bay. The buildings mass and uniformity is inconsistent with the fine grain character and urban structure of Double Bay. The appearance of the existing hotel is not considered to be an exemplary design worthy of preservation.

The structure has a problematic layout in that there are no quality connections with greater Double Bay which has a fine urban grain of interconnected laneways for pedestrians that create intimate spaces for retail activities, socialising and reflection. The internalised shopping arcade has no street presence and does not conform to the desired external shopping experience that gives Double Bay its alternative feel to Bondi Junction which provides its desirability as a place for shopping, dining and for entertainment.

It is understood that the existing hotel has experienced a low level of occupancy which has been a continuing trend since the hotel's change from the Ritz Carlton to the Stamford Plaza. The associated retail arcade is struggling especially since the expansion of retailing at Bondi Junction. There are a number of retail units vacant at the time of writing this report. Upon the closure of the Stamford Plaza Hotel by the current operators (scheduled for March 2009) the hotel component for the site will become vacant and it is expected that the associated retail users will be disaffected even further.



**Figure 3. View looking north of the Stamford Plaza Hotel**  
The upper level hotel suites in levels 2 ,3 ,4 and 5 are setback behind a two level podium element fronting Cross Street. The blank wall presentation to the east detracts from the Cross Street and Transvaal Avenue streetscapes.



**Figure 4. View looking north east to the Stamford Plaza Hotel**  
The proposed design will link the hotel and mixed use developments to create a flowing retail experience with both internal and external retail shops.





**Figure 5. Existing retail tenancies at the Stamford Plaza Hotel**

The retail tenancies on the site are internalised within an arcade with no street presence. The arcade connected with entries to surrounding areas to the west to the Georges Centre and to the north and east.

## 2.4 Local context

### ***Built form and streetscape***

The built form and streetscape in Double Bay town centre is a mixture of retail, commercial and residential buildings that are generally below 6 storeys in height. A considerable number of dwellings are 2 storeys in height and possess retail uses on ground with residential or commercial accommodation on the upper level. A mix of detached and attached dwellings and residential apartment dwellings surround the town centre. Taller buildings surround the town centre in Darling Point, Potts Point and Bellevue Hill.

### ***Adjoining development***

The adjoining properties to the north of the site between the hotel and Sydney Harbour are low rise residential dwellings.

To the East the site primarily adjoins of detached cottages which accommodate a combination of retail and commercial activities focused on Transvaal Ave.

The southern side of Cross Street has commercial and retail uses.

The building that directly adjoins the site on the western side (45 Cross Street, Double Bay) is a 5 level mixed use building with retail and commercial uses on the ground floor, commercial uses on first level and residential apartment accommodation on levels 2-5, 1 and 2 storey retail shopping.

**Heritage**

The site does not contain any items of heritage significance. The site adjoins a conservation area shown on the map below in blue.



**Figure 6. Heritage Map**

The site is not identified as a heritage item, nor does it adjoin an item of heritage significance. The site adjoins a Heritage Conservation Area, located to the east. (Source: Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 1995).

**Landscape and Topography**

The site is located in a landscape basin. Ridgelines surround the Double Bay centre to the south, east and west. The low-lying location of the site with surrounding steep terrain make the view shed relatively small and contained.

**Transportation**

Regular bus services are provided on New South Head Road which is the primary vehicular access route from Double Bay to Central Sydney.

The nearest train station is located at Edgecliff, approximately 1km to the south west of the site, which services to the CBD and connections to other lines.

A ferry service that offers connections to Circular Quay and the Upper North Shore is located in the Double Bay foreshore at the end of Bay Street.

**Vehicle access**

Vehicles access the site via an entrance off Cross Street. The existing car park entry is via a shared basement entry with the adjoining development at 45 Cross Street.

**Pedestrian access**

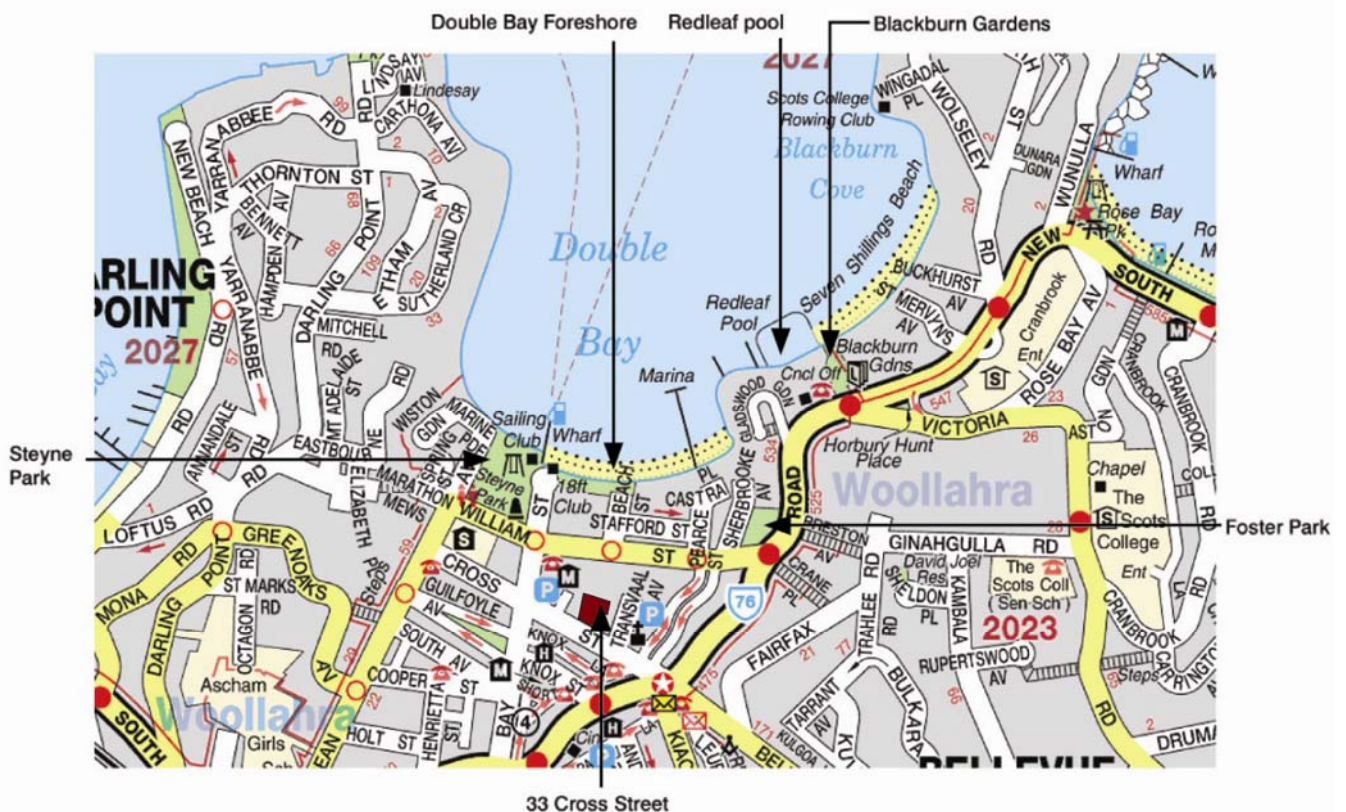
The site currently has an internalised north south through site pedestrian connection that is open during normal business hours. These pedestrian access ways link the main Cross Street entrance to Transvaal Avenue to the east and William Street to the north. Outside normal business hours the access ways are locked by the hotel for security reasons.

**Parking**

The existing development has an underground parking facility that provides 173 car parking spaces.

**Surrounding open space and vegetation**

There is an ample amount of open space in the surrounding Double Bay area. **Figure 7** provides a location map with open space areas noted.



**Figure 7. Local open space within the vicinity of Double Bay**

The site is surrounded by high quality open space particularly on the foreshore and at Steyne Park to the north east of the subject site.



### 3 The Proposal

#### 3.1 Project description

The proposal is for a mixed use development integrating a high quality hotel and hotel residences with retail uses at ground floor level.

The proposal comprises of the following:

- A high quality boutique hotel containing 66 suites within a four storey podium.
- High end fashion retail precinct for Double Bay consisting of 2043sq.m of retail space at ground level fronting Cross Street and surrounding a new 795sqm publically accessible plaza which will enhance existing connections from the site to surrounding streets.
- New type of residential accommodation with 33 hotel residences (described below within three (3) building elements above the podium up to a maximum of 14 storeys.

**Figure 8** and **Figure 9** provide views of the 3D massing model of the proposal.

The hotel aims to provide the highest level of service and accommodation, setting a new benchmark for hotels in Australia. Examples of similar projects include The Montage in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles and One Hyde Park, London. These are exemplary hotels that effectively integrate residential and retail uses. These example hotels extend their services to permanent residents on request. This form of serviced residential accommodation known as hotel residences has been successful in the United Kingdom and United States of America but is new to Sydney. A description of international examples is provided at **Appendix G** incorporating background, use mix, built form and relevance to the proposal.

The socio-economic profile of the eastern suburbs makes it a suitable place to pioneer this new model of integrated hotel in Sydney. The residential hotel model could also lessen the strain of the aging population on the economy and aged care services industry by providing an intermediate step prior to aged care facilities. This proposal provides an opportunity for this new model of development within a suitable location, well serviced by existing community infrastructure, thereby enabling aging in place.



Figure 8. 3D view of proposal from the south west

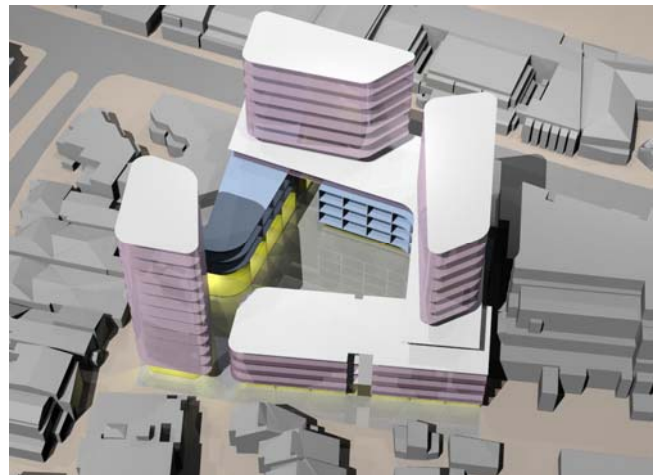
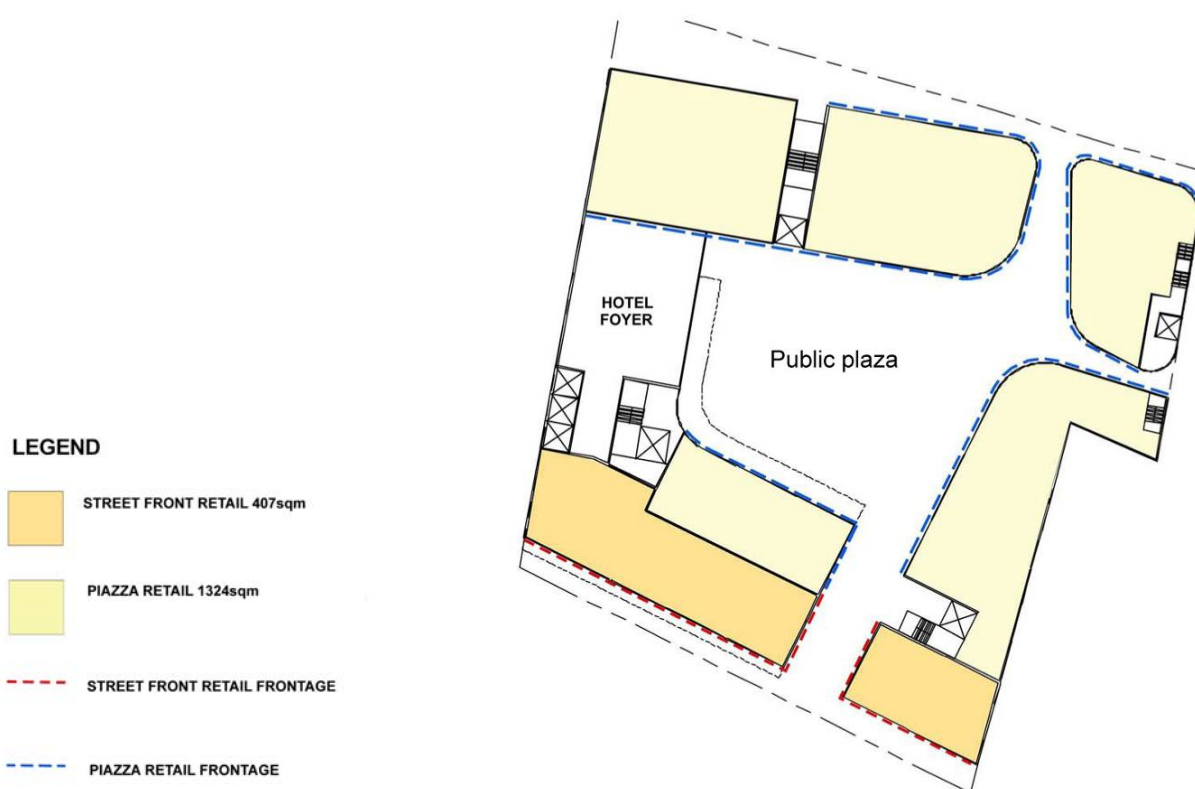


Figure 9. 3D view of proposal from the north

### 3.2 Proposed uses

The proposed building will consist of an integrated mix of uses which incorporates a hotel, retail tenancies and hotel residences. Each of these uses are permissible in the 3(a) General Business Zone:

- The hotel component of the development will consist of 66 hotel suites which will be accommodated within the podium of the development. The main hotel entrance is accessible from the public plaza.
- A total of 33 hotel residences will be provided in the three taller elements above the podium. Each of the hotel residence buildings will have an entry which is accessible from the public plaza or through site walkways.
- Some of the retail uses will be related to the primary hotel use and will rely on hotel guest's expenditure. This is a typical arrangement in many luxury hotels where fashion boutiques are located in the lobby areas. The retail component of the development will be provided at ground level in the public plaza and fronting Cross Street as identified in Figure 10. A total of 2043sq.m of retail floor space is proposed.



**Figure 10. Location plan of retail uses**

Retail uses front Cross Street to activate the street. In addition retail uses will surround the new public plaza, located in the centre of the site. North is up the page and Cross Street, to the south of the site is at the bottom of the plan. Approximately 75% of the total retail floor space has a frontage to the public plaza. This is a significant addition to the retail frontage to public spaces in Double Bay.

### 3.3 Floor space ratio

The existing Floor Space Ratio is 4.06:1. The proposed Floor Space Ratio is 4.06:1. No additional floor space is proposed.

**Table 1** provides a summary of the proposed floor space areas of each use and at each level of the proposed development.

The retention of the floor space is a key issue as Council's 2.5:1 control requires any future development of the site to be substantially smaller than the existing building. It is considered that the current Council controls stifle development and promote refurbishment of a structure that contributes negatively to the public domain.

The proposal has the potential to be of significant benefit to Double Bay in terms of its revitalisation and urban form. It is considered that the existing floor space should be retained but re-distributed so that positive urban and economic outcomes can be achieved, particularly to achieve an open plaza at ground level connected to the surrounding area.

**Table 1. Gross Floor Area**

| Level         | Description | Area (sqm)    |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| <b>Ground</b> | Retail      | 1602          |
|               | Hotel       | 245           |
| <b>1</b>      | Hotel       | 769           |
|               | Residential | 790           |
|               | Retail      | 440           |
| <b>2</b>      | Hotel       | 1294          |
|               | Residential | 814           |
| <b>3</b>      | Hotel       | 1294          |
|               | Residential | 814           |
| <b>4</b>      | Hotel       | 240           |
|               | Residential | 765           |
| <b>5</b>      | Residential | 581           |
| <b>6</b>      | Residential | 862           |
| <b>7</b>      | Residential | 862           |
| <b>8</b>      | Residential | 862           |
| <b>9</b>      | Residential | 862           |
| <b>10</b>     | Residential | 562           |
| <b>11</b>     | Residential | 562           |
| <b>12</b>     | Residential | 350           |
| <b>13</b>     | Residential | 350           |
| <b>Total</b>  |             | <b>14,920</b> |

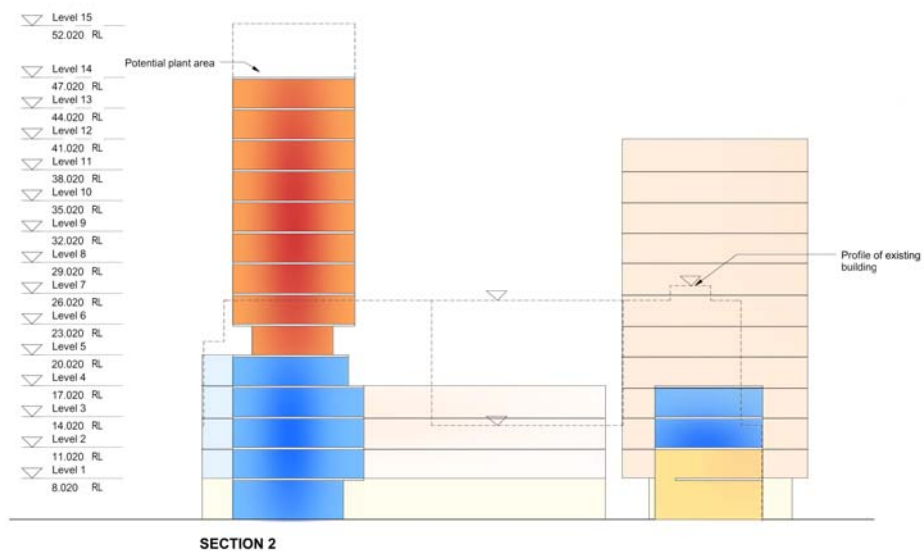
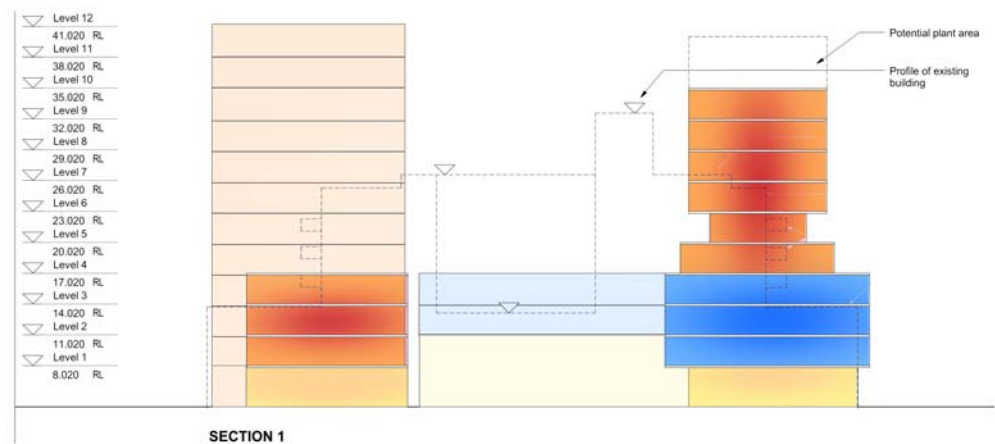
In summary the proposed floor space for each use is as follows:

- Residential – 9,035sqm
- Hotel – 3,843sqm
- Retail – 2,043sqm

### 3.4 Building height

The proposal redistributes the floor space contained within the existing 6 storey building into a 4 storey and 3 small tower elements of 10, 12 and 14 storeys. The central part of the site and its links to the surrounding street and lane network are not built on and comprise elements of a publically accessible plaza.

Figure 11 provides two sections through the site to illustrate the varying height of the proposal. The outline of the existing building is shown. A full copy of the architectural drawings of the existing development is provided at **Appendix A**.



**Figure 11. Sections showing mix of uses and building form and scale**  
The sections show retail uses in yellow, hotel use in blue and residential use in orange/red



### 3.5 Vehicle access and parking

A formal Traffic and Parking Assessment will be undertaken and provided with the Environmental Assessment documentation. The numbers of underground parking spaces provided will be determined on specialist traffic advice. Existing basement parking is proposed to be retained but will need to be reconfigured to account for the change of use. Therefore a definitive number of car parking spaces can not be provided at this stage. Vehicle access will be maintained from Cross Street and Woollahra Council's car parking requirements will be considered at the Environmental Assessment stage.

### 3.6 Pedestrian access

The existing hotel does not offer an unrestricted pedestrian connection through the site. The internalised retail arcade of the existing facility is open 7 days between 7am and 6pm and provides a north-south through site link to Galbraith walkway and beyond to William Street. After these hours the access way is locked for hotel security reasons. In addition, the existing pedestrian access way is internalised and uninviting, making pedestrians feel like hotel interlopers when the through site access is open.

The proposal incorporates a public square that has three separate access points that will remain publically accessible at all times. The open plaza will invite pedestrians into the space. The 3 separate access points will improve the permeability of the development and its surroundings and will improve pedestrian amenity.



**Figure 12. Retail layout and access plan**

Ground floor level incorporates a publically accessible plaza. Retail uses, in (yellow) will surround the plaza and will activate the space. The hotel lobby, shown in blue is located on the western side of the plaza and will be accessed off the plaza space. Pedestrian connections are proposed from the central plaza space through Galbraith Walkway and beyond to William Street. A connection is also proposed to Transvaal Ave to the east and to maintain and enhance connection to the retail arcade in the Georges Centre to the west.

### 3.7 Urban design review

As part of Architectus’s internal review process external review comments on the proposal have been obtained from Alec Tzannes a well renowned architect familiar with the areas built form and regulatory framework. Furthermore the comments from Alec Tzannes reflect his opinion of the proposal as submitted with this Clause 6 request. Alec has provided design advice during the preliminary stages as well as providing the design review provided at **Appendix D**.

*“In summary, my understanding of Ashington’s objectives for this site is as follows: to demolish and rebuild with a new functional brief of mixed uses including above ground residential apartments without an increase of the overall building area on the site; to significantly improve the design and amenity of the public domain; to significantly improve the built form to better relate to the adjoining properties and Double Bay in general, including significant improvements to the quality of architecture; and to employ advanced technology to minimise green house emissions and contribute positively to the objective of delivering sustainable new building infrastructure with any redevelopment.”*

*“Continuing the work undertaken to date is worthwhile in my view, as the potential benefits to the area are significant with reasonable prospect of addressing the compliance issues of material significance. A number of the breaches have little if any, negative effects on adjoining properties or the public domain and meet the underlying objectives of the relevant development controls.”*

Architectus and Ashington have also sought the opinion of Peter Webber Emeritus Professor of Sydney University who has also provided his verbal endorsement to the project.

### 3.8 Development of the Proposal

#### **Urban design and planning objectives**

The key principles that have driven the design are to provide a high quality integrated hotel development with ancillary retail and residential uses which:

- Embody a high level of design and amenity;
- Demonstrate leadership in ecologically sustainable development for a mix of uses through energy and water efficiency initiatives that will go beyond BASIX compliance.
- Possesses exemplary town centre design that will make a positive contribution to Double Bay by:
  - Opening up the site to provide a central plaza space with open air entries to the site’s street frontages that will enhance the pedestrian experience along Cross Street and through the site; and
  - Providing a better distribution of floor space providing a finer grain development that opens up the existing enclosed monolithic building.
  - Promoting a development that will have positive economic benefits for the Double Bay commercial area through employment generation and positive spin off effects for local businesses.

- Retention of the existing amount of floor space to ensure a hotel is sustainable and is supported by adequate retail uses and a mix of apartments in an integrated fashion.
- Providing a high quality development, that is world class and that will attract tourism expenditure to Double Bay and the broader Sydney region. The retention of a hotel on site has been supported by both Council and the community.

### Options analysis

Architectus has developed and tested six options to redistribute the existing FSR in different forms to investigate how each option meets urban design and planning principles for mixed use town centre developments. The presentation of the options to both Woollahra Council and the Department of Planning are provided at **Appendix F**.

The options were analysed against the following principles:

#### *Urban grain*

Double Bay has an intricate network of laneways and alleyways which give Double Bay its unique fine grained retail environment. The development aims to create additional access to the surrounding area by increasing the permeability of the ground plane so pedestrians can flow through the site in a number of alternative directions.

#### *Public ground plane*

The subdivision pattern of Double Bay generally has a fine grain. The activation of the ground plane with new high end retail uses will create a hub for passive recreational activities and shopping for public enjoyment. Error! Reference source not found. **Figure 13** shows the ground floor plan, illustrating the amount of outdoor space proposed in the open plaza.



**Figure 13. Ground floor plan**

Publicly accessible plaza space will make a positive contribution to the Double Bay town centre. Cross Street is at the bottom of the image. The plaza will have retail uses that activate the space with potential for outdoor dining which is characteristic of the retailing experiences in the surrounding Double Bay area, which will be enhanced by the development.

### **Activation**

The proposal aims to activate the ground plane by providing increased access and a combination of uses that will feature high-end fashion retailing, cafes, restaurants and potentially a bar. **Figure 13** shows a 3D perspective of what the public plaza could look like with a range of active retail uses.

### **Local economic boost for retail**

It is expected that by obtaining desirable high end fashion retailers in combination with other compatible uses, that Double Bay will once again be recognised as the place to obtain goods of the highest quality and therefore the proposal will be the stimulus to regenerate purchaser interest in the precinct, creating beneficial flow on effects to other retailers in the area.

### **Building height/building bulk**

The redistribution of floor space to improve the urban design and amenity of the site is most effectively achieved by increasing building height above the existing building height in some parts of the site whilst reducing the height in other parts of the site.

### **Visual impact**

Full visual assessments of the proposed impacts in regards to important public views will be prepared during the next stage of the process (Environmental Assessment). Preliminary investigations suggest that the visual impact from areas surrounding the site will be acceptable and the proposed building elements will fit comfortably within the surrounding context, refer to **Appendix F**.

### **Overshadowing**

Shadow diagrams are provided at **Appendix F**. The diagrams indicate that the proposal will result in minimal additional overshadowing. A more detailed analysis of the various options is also provided at **Appendix F**.

### **Consultation**

Ashington met with Woollahra Council to present the proposal including a range of development options. Initially Council indicated support for an urban design panel process to consider the proposal. A copy of the presentation to Council is provided at **Appendix F**.

Following these discussions with Council, Council indicated that they no longer supported an approach to consider the proposal due to the proposal's non-compliances with the statutory requirements that applied to the site. **Appendix F** outlines the reasons why Council did not support this approach.

This Clause 6 request follows an initial meeting with the Department of Planning on 6 March 2008, where the redevelopment of the site was discussed including development options.

In addition to discussions with Woollahra Council and the Department of Planning, a public meeting was held on 12 April 2008. Preliminary discussions were undertaken to gauge the community's desired outcomes

for the site which could be taken into account during the development of the ultimate option. Three sessions were held throughout the day which was facilitated by Urban Concepts Pty Ltd, Social Planners and Community Consultation specialists. A summary of the public meeting minutes are provided at **Appendix C** which includes a response to each of the issues raised. The key initial comments from the community included the following:

- People felt that a hotel was essential in Double Bay. Provided a great opportunity to revitalise the site and the greater area and increase commercial opportunities through tourism and retail uses.
- Comments were made that the existing building could be improved to provide better design outcome and also improved solar access on Cross Street and ground level activation. Concerns were raised about the bulk, scale, overshadowing and privacy of any new designs for the building.
- Concerns were also raised about future parking needs of the development.
- People questioned whether a refurbishment project would offer quality residential and asked if it was considered that a new building would offer superior residential accommodation.
- Concerns were raised over the management of construction impacts to the surrounding properties and residents.

Further consultation will be undertaken with the community through the Part 3A planning process and a formal community consultation strategy will be developed in accordance with the Department of Planning publication “*Guidelines for Major Project Consultation*” dated October 2007. The issues identified during consultation with government agencies and the community will be addressed in the Environmental Assessment to address the Director General’s Requirements.

## 4 Planning context & regulatory framework

### 4.1 Metropolitan planning context

#### ***Sydney Metropolitan Strategy***

The proposal will support the objectives of the Metropolitan Strategy and East Subregional Strategy as it:

- provides additional retail uses to compliment Double Bay
- provides additional residential dwellings
- contributes to a 24 hour town centre
- maintains a hotel in a desirable Sydney Harbour side destination

The Metro Strategy provides a target for 60-70% of new dwellings to be located within existing centres. Double Bay is located in close proximity to Central Sydney and is considered to be an appropriate location for additional housing with increased densities due to its access to existing urban services and its proximity to open space, amenities, services and public transport including the eastern suburbs railway line.

### **Sydney Metro East Subregional Strategy**

The East Subregional strategy identifies Double Bay as a town centre and forms part of the Woollahra Local Government Area. The strategy states that:

*“Double Bay contains a mix of retail, commercial, service and residential uses. The retail activity is characterised by small scale specialty retailing concentrated between Knox and Cross Streets, and along New South Head Road, Bay Street and Cross Streets. The expansion of retailing at Bondi Junction in recent years has impacted on the Double Bay centre.”*

**Source: The Sydney Metro East Subregional Strategy page 50**

The East Subregional strategy provides that Woollahra has an employment capacity target of an additional 300 jobs in the area by 2031. The proposal will provide employment opportunities for 171 people, the majority (75%) will be related to tourism.

The East Subregional strategy also identifies the need for increasing residential densities in local centres in order to create more vibrant places with greater housing opportunity.

The proposal will increase residential densities in the Double Bay Town Centre which will assist in improving the vibrancy of the area. Additionally, the hotel residences offer a new form of serviced accommodation which is currently unavailable. The additional services will allow aged residence to avoid moving to aged care facilities due to the available decrease in labour intensive household tasks offered by the hotel. Therefore it is considered that the proposal will vastly improve the available housing choice for the aging population by providing a type of suitable accommodation that offers daily assistance which will allow elderly resident to age in place in a more comfortable, workable environment.

Double Bay is identified as a town centre under the East Subregional Strategy with a mix of small scale specialty retail concentrated between Knox and Cross Streets and along New South Head Road, noting also:

*“The expansion of retailing at Bondi Junction in recent years has impacted on the Double Bay Centre. Edgecliff provides local services and is focused on the transport interchange and small shopping centre”*

**Source: East Subregional Strategy Page 50**

It is considered that given the impacts from the proliferation of retail services at Bondi Junction that Double Bay will benefit from the increased vibrancy, activity and employment supported by additional residential development.

Additionally, the proposal will create a public plaza with retail uses to provide a focal point for an increase in quality retail floor space. It is considered that additional quality retail tenants that would be attracted to the precinct could then contribute to an improvement in the vibrancy of the Double Bay town centre by providing a wider range of quality products.

## 4.2 Local Environmental Planning Instruments

### ***Land use and zoning***

The site is zoned 3(a) Business General under the Woollahra LEP 1995. Permissible developments within the 3(a) zone are any developments that are not prohibited. Mixed use developments including hotel, retail and residential flat building uses are not prohibited, and are therefore permissible with consent.

Hotel buildings offer the best opportunity to deliver landmark developments as their physical appearance and individuality often benefit the branding and successful marketing of the hotel, in other words there is a significant benefit to cost ratio which grants an impetus for more bold, imaginative and inventive designs.

It is considered that Double Bay could benefit from a quality landmark development as it has the potential to regenerate Double Bay. Providing high quality structure will set a new standard for the regeneration of Double Bay with positive benefits to the retail precinct.

### ***Floor space ratio and building height***

The FSR control for the site is contained in the WLEP 1995. The Double Bay Centre DCP contains supporting illustrations that control height for the site. The objectives of the height control are contained in the LEP 1995.

Given the current non-compliance of the existing building with regards to its height and FSR and the proposal's approach to retain the existing floor space by incorporating taller elements, it is appropriate to discuss the implications of the FSR and Height controls in conjunction with one another.

The existing building currently exceeds the maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR) specified under LEP 1995. The maximum FSR under Clause 11 of the WLEP1995 is 2.5:1. The existing building has an FSR of 4.06:1

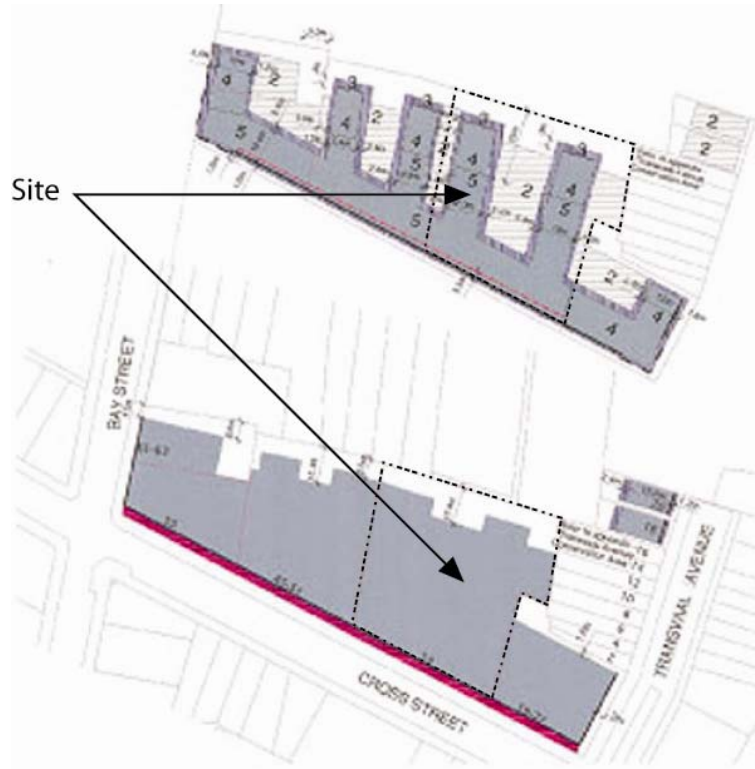
The proposal does not seek any additional floor space above the existing amount provided on site. Rather an alternative configuration is proposed that will result in better urban design and built form.

The LEP contains a Height Map, however the map does not allocate a height limit for the site. Clause 6.3.2 of the Double Bay Centre DCP 2002 states that the permissible height of development in the Double Bay Centre is indicated on the control drawings in sections 5.5 to 5.11. The control drawings illustrate that the height for the site is between 7.5 metres and 16.5 metres in accordance with the map provided at **Figure 13**

The existing building has a height of 28.5 metres which exceeds the maximum height limit. It is proposed to redistribute the existing floor space area to achieve an open air ground level plaza. This redistribution proposes building envelopes of 10, 12 and 14 storeys within a 4 level podium.



| No OF LEVELS | MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE BUILDING HEIGHT |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2            | 7.5m height                         |
| 3            | 10.5m height                        |
| 4            | 13.5m height                        |
| 4.5          | 14m height - carparks only          |
| 5            | 16.5m height                        |



**Figure 14. Double Bay Centre DCP height control plan**

The building height diagrams shows a height ranging from 2 storeys at the centre of the site to 5 storeys along Cross Street. Source: Double Bay Centre Development Control Plan 2002



**Figure 15. Double Bay Centre DCP 3D height control diagram**

Source: Double Bay Centre Development Control Plan 2002

It is requested that a merit based assessment of environmental impacts is granted given the potential positive implications expected to result in terms of urban design and economic revitalisation. A merit based assessment will be provided in the Environmental Assessment and will address visual impact, view sharing, context, bulk and scale and overshadowing of the proposal.

#### 4.3 Double Bay Commercial Centre Development Study

Hill PDA Property Consulting recently completed the *“Double Bay Commercial Centre Development Study”*, for Woollahra Municipal Council.

The central findings and recommendation of the study was that it had suffered from the impact of Bondi Junction and is suffering from a lack of maintenance and investment. The centre is seen to be in need of a physical overhaul to re-establish its market appeal and competitiveness, noting that it’s street based form and town centre atmosphere provided opportunities not available to Westfield Bondi Junction.

The proposal will contribute to revitalisation of Double Bay in this respect. It results in the replacement of a tired building with little public amenity and poor relationships to the public domain with a significant contribution to the character and amenity of the town centre that re-establishes the primacy of the public domain, provides a vibrant mix of uses and has the potential to act as a significant catalyst for the wider revitalisation and investment in the centre.

Hill PDA has also been engaged by Ashington to prepare a comprehensive economic impact assessment of the application to determine how the proposal addresses the findings of the Double Bay Study (to be provided with the Project Application documentation).

A preliminary economic assessment of the proposal, completed for this Clause 6 application has focused on the complementary attributes of the project in achieving the objectives of their Study, commissioned by Woollahra Municipal Council. It has identified that the proposal will create 107 additional jobs in the area that are directly related to tourism. In addition Hill PDA have indicated that “...the proposed development as a whole will indirectly generate in the order of 1,992 job years in the construction industry.

In summary it is believed that the proposal has many positive economic implications that will complement and enhance Double Bay in the required areas as outlined in the Hill PDA document provided at **Appendix B**.

Hill PDA have identified that the proposal will result in additional economic benefits as follows:

- The high quality development will attract excitement and interest in Double Bay, therefore acting as a stimulus for further investment and shopping trips to the benefit of the centre as a whole.
- The proposed development will create an open space that will enhance the character of Cross Street and its vitality of the benefits of the centre and its revitalisation as a thriving place to visit, stay longer and spend.
- The proposed development will enhance pedestrian connectivity to Galbraith walkway (and in turn residential dwellings in William Street) to businesses in Cross Street.

#### 4.4 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects)

*State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP): Major Projects* provides the criteria that identify the types of projects that are to be determined under Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

Clause 6(1)(a) of State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Major Projects states that major projects are “*Development that in the opinion of the Minister, is development of a kind that is described in Schedule 1 or 2,..*”.

#### **Clause 13 Residential, Commercial and Retail Projects**

Clause 13 (1) of Schedule 1 lists developments that are:

##### **“13 Residential Commercial and Retail Projects**

*(1) Development for the purpose of residential, commercial or retail projects with a capital investment value of more than \$50 million that the minister determines are important in achieving State or regional planning objectives”.*

Napier & Blakeley have advised that the CIV for the proposed development is \$129,000,000 (a Capital Investment Valuation Report is provided at **Attachment H.**)

It is our understanding that Council fees and financial costs are excluded from the calculation of CIV. The relevant amounts attributed to Council fees and financial costs were removed and the CIV has been revised to **\$113,978,931.**

The development has an estimated Capital Investment Value of that exceeds the \$50 million threshold. The proposal is important in achieving both State and Regional Planning objectives, particularly by providing an exemplary town centre development that contributes to and provides a catalyst for, the East Sub-regional strategy objectives for Double Bay Town Centre. The proposal may also act as a model for town centres elsewhere in the metropolitan region.

#### **Clause 17 Tourist, Convention and Entertainment Facilities**

Clause 17 of Schedule 1 provides various classes of development that may be considered Part 3A applications if:

##### **“17 Tourist, convention and entertainment facilities**

*Development for the purpose of tourist related facilities, major convention and exhibition facilities or multi-use entertainment facilities that:*

- (a) has a capital investment value of more than \$100 million, or*
- (b) employs 100 or more people, or*
- (c) has a capital investment value of more than \$5 million and is located in an environmentally sensitive area of State significance”.*

Preliminary calculations indicate that the development will generate 171 new jobs of which 128 are related to tourism operation of the hotel, hotel residences and ancillary retail uses. A breakdown of the calculation is provided in a letter provided by Economic Consultant, Hill PDA at **Appendix B.** In addition a Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) Hotels Advisory Report, dated May 2008 (see **Appendix I**), prepared for the proposal calculates the employment numbers that are generated by the hotel and hotel residences. A summary of the JLL and Hill PDA employment figures generated by the proposal is as follows:

- Hotel jobs = 80
- Hotel residences related jobs = 21
- Tourism related retail jobs = 27
- Additional retail jobs = 43

**Total = 171**

In terms of the additional tourism related jobs above the existing situation, it is important to acknowledge the existing hotel is underperforming and currently operates below capacity. The retention of the existing hotel in its entirety is not a viable option. An alternative is to refurbish the existing building for residential apartments which would mean the loss of the hotel use.

The preferred option proposes the retention of the hotel use, but at a size and level of service and quality and mixed with other sympathetic uses, which will be more appropriate to the current hotel market and for this town centre location. Community feedback has indicated general support for a hotel in Double Bay. The preferred option will reconfigure the hotel use as a boutique hotel with hotel residences and retail uses that will provide sustainable employment opportunities, which will have economic benefits for the Double Bay. If the building was converted into residential apartments because this was considered more economically viable than retaining the existing hotel the existing hotel employment could not be maintained.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed development meets the non-discretionary criteria under Clause 17(b) of Schedule 1 of SEPP (Major Projects) 2005 and, therefore can be considered as a major project to which Part 3A applies.

The project could therefore be considered a project to which Part 3A applies under *both* Clause 13 *and* Clause 17 of Schedule 1 of SEPP (Major Projects) 2005.

#### 4.5 Guidelines for Part 3A Major Projects

The Department of Planning has published guidelines for Part 3A of the *EP&A Act 1979*. The guidelines titled: “*Criteria for declaring development to be a Major Project under Clause 13 of Schedule 1 of the Major Projects SEPP*” provide criteria for projects to be considered projects to which Part 3A applies. These guidelines are addressed in this section in terms of both Clause 13 and Clause 17 criteria as there are similarities in terms of determining the significance of the project and the reasons why the Minister for Planning should declare the proposal a Part 3A project. The relevant guidelines are addressed as follows:

#### **“(a) Local impediments to urban renewal**

***Is the development within a centre or urban renewal area nominated for growth in the Metro Strategy or a regional or sub-regional strategy?”***

The East Sub-regional Strategy identifies Double Bay as a town centre. Double Bay is describes as containing:

*“a mix of retail, commercial, service and residential uses. The retail activity is characterised by small-scale specialty retailing concentrated between Knox and Cross Streets. The expansion of retailing at*

*Bondi Junction in recent years has impacted on the Double Bay centre”.*

The Woollahra Local Government Area (LGA) has been identified under the East Sub-regional Strategy for 300 additional jobs and 2,900 additional dwellings by 2031. The proposal will positively contribute to the Double Bay Town Centre by providing for 171 jobs of which 128 are directly attributable to tourist related employment. Given the recent decline in retail activity in Double Bay it is considered that the injection of new jobs in Double Bay is important to increase employment and satisfy the targets set out in the East Sub-regional Strategy.

In addition to employment generation it is considered that the development will assist in managing the competition between competing retail centres namely Double Bay and Bondi Junction. The East Sub-regional Strategy states:

*“Population growth within the subregion and adjacent suburbs will continue the demand for significant retail growth. A subregional approach to retail development is required to explore relationships between retail centres and manage competition on both local and subregional centres.”*

The proposal offers an opportunity to create a very high standard of retailing shopping experience. This distinction in the retail market will help manage competition with Bondi Junction and other retail precincts in eastern Sydney. A detailed economic impact assessment of the proposed retail mix will be provided with the Environmental Assessment.

The proposal will inject new retail experiences into Double Bay, which will compliment the investment Council has made to the public domain.

The development will result in the renewal of an existing area which is identified under the Metropolitan Strategy *City of Cities* document as being an area where a portion of the 60 – 70% of new housing should be provided within established areas.

The proposed residential apartments, will contribute to the achievement of constructing 2,900 new dwellings within existing centres in the Woollahra precinct by 2031.

***“Are there provisions in the LEP which are likely to prevent or frustrate the implementation of the Metro or regional strategy.”***

Woollahra Municipal Council’s current FSR and height controls for the site require new development to have less height and floor space than currently exists. The combined effect of the existing development controls for height and floor space is that there is no incentive to develop the site other than to refurbish the existing building. The refurbishment of the hotel for its use as residential accommodation has been explored. This exploration, presented at **Appendix F** shows that the refurbishment option will not result in the achievement of an exemplary town centre development. The refurbishment option will not result in public benefits that include increasing connections through the site with its surroundings and the provision of an open air retail plaza that is characteristic of the Double Bay town centre.

The current planning controls clearly create a negative environment that is economically prohibitive to new developments. To achieve this high quality mixed use development, the existing floor space of 4.06:1 must be maintained in order to provide adequate incentives for redevelopment, improvement and the retention of a component of tourist accommodation on site. As indicated by Woollahra Council in their correspondence at

**Appendix E**, Council will not entertain proposals that exceed the current development controls. As the existing controls do not recognise the existing building and that the controls require a reduction in the existing floor space ratio and height of the building. This inconsistency is not a desirable climate to attract substantial, much needed improvements to this site, and Double Bay generally.

***“Does the Council have the resources to assess and determine major projects?”***

It is considered that Woollahra Municipal Council may have adequate resources to assess the application, though the actuality of such is unknown.

***“Do Council’s practices demonstrate that projects important in implementing Metro or regional strategies can be determined on their merits.”***

Exemplary mixed-use town centre developments are necessary for achieving the objectives of the East sub-regional Strategy and Metro Strategy. The present local development controls however, work against the achievement of such outcomes.

Given previous discussions with Woollahra Municipal Council it is not considered that the Council’s practices demonstrate a commitment to achieving the vision provided in the Metro or East Sub-Regional Strategy.

***(b) Facilitate housing or job growth***

***Will the development directly result in significant growth in housing choice?***

The proposal will result in a new type of residential accommodation for Sydney that is ancillary to the primary hotel use of the site. The hotel will provide complementary services for permanent residents in the hotel residences. This new type of housing is significant as it will provide positive flow on effects to Double Bay and surrounding areas in terms of an increased amount of retail spending.

***Will the development directly result in permanent jobs in the area?***

The proposal will result in 171 full time equivalently jobs for the hotel and ancillary retail uses. This is a significant number of jobs, particularly considering the employment target for Woollahra Local Government Area under the East Sub-regional Strategy of 300 new jobs by 2031. Hill PDA have provided comments on the number of additional jobs (128) that are directly associated with tourism.

***Is the development in a centre identified in the Metro Strategy or Regional Strategy?***

Double Bay is identified as a town centre under the East Sub-regional Strategy.

## 5 Preliminary environmental assessment

### 5.1 Introduction

This preliminary environmental assessment is based on the requirements for preparing preliminary environmental assessments published by the Department of Planning. Refer to **Appendix L**.

This preliminary environmental assessment is intended to determine the key issues with the proposal that will form the basis of a detailed environmental assessment.

### 5.2 Key Issues

Significant investigations have been undertaken to fully understand the development context. Information including Council's development controls, state metropolitan plans, site assessment and Hill PDA's retail study have been utilised to better understand the best outcomes for the Double Bay precinct and community.

It is considered that the key issues relating to the site that require further discussion fall into the following categories.

1. Inconsistency with development standards and controls
2. Overshadowing
3. Redistribution of floor space to increased height
4. Reduction in the size of the existing hotel
5. Economic impacts relating to additional retail uses and types of retail
6. View loss/ sharing
7. Pedestrian access and amenity
8. Car parking
9. Traffic
10. Visual impact
11. Demolition
12. Construction impacts

These matters are further addressed below:

#### ***1. Inconsistencies with environmental planning instruments***

##### **Floor Space Ratio (FSR)**

The maximum FSR under Clause 11 of the LEP 1995 is 2.5:1. The existing building has an FSR of 4.06:1 and therefore does not comply with the controls for the area.

The objectives of the floor space ratio standards set by clause 11 are as follows:

- (a) *to set the maximum density for new development,*
- (b) *to control building density, bulk and scale in all residential and commercial localities in the area in order to achieve the desired future character objectives of those localities,*
- (c) *to minimise adverse environmental effect on the use or enjoyment, or both, of adjoining properties, and*
- (d) *to relate new development to the existing character of surrounding built and natural environment as viewed from the streetscape, the harbour or any other panoramic viewing point.*



It is considered that the proposal complies with the objectives (b),(c) and (d) as the development will not cause significant environmental impacts to adjoining properties and will relate and contribute to the character and built form of Double Bay.

It is considered that the maximum density set by the FSR controls referred to in objective (a) is lower than the existing density of the current Stamford hotel development and therefore does not relate to the existing urban fabric of Double Bay. It is considered that the FSR control which is substantially less than the existing development effectively restricts development due to the associated negative economic implications. The current FSR control stifles progressive development which has the ability to positively contribute to Double Bay and therefore the relevance of the existing FSR should be considered on merit.

Objective (b) aims to provide buildings with an FSR that will achieve the desired future character of the area. It is considered that the current FSR contradicts the FSR control as the current 2.5:1 control effectively prevents development that will improve the future character of Double Bay as it promotes the refurbishment of structures that detract from the area whilst providing an unreasonable economic environment to provide new structures that offer substantial improvements to the site and greater Double Bay.

### Height

The LEP has a Height Map, however a height limit is not identified for the site. Clause 6.3.2 of the Double Bay Centre DCP 2002 states that *“the permissible height of development in the Double Bay Centre is indicated on the control drawings in sections 5.5 to 5.11.”* The controls drawings illustrate that the height for the site is between 7.5m and 16.5m. It is considered that the proposals FSR should be retained and therefore the best option to provide additional benefits in terms of pedestrian permeability on the ground plane is to redistribute the existing floor space to alternate areas of the site which will in turn result in a higher building in some areas.

The objectives for height outlined in the Woollahra LEP 1995 are as follows:

- (a) *to minimise impact of new development on existing views of Sydney Harbour, ridgelines, public and private open spaces and views of the Sydney City skyline,*
- (b) *to provide compatibility with the adjoining residential neighbourhood,*
- (c) *to safeguard visual privacy of interior and exterior living areas of neighbouring dwellings,*
- (d) *to minimise detrimental impacts on existing sunlight access to interior living rooms and exterior open space areas and minimise overshadowing,*
- (e) *to maintain the amenity of the public domain by preserving public views of the harbour and surrounding areas and the special qualities of the streetscapes.*

It is not considered that the proposed height contravenes any of the objectives for height.

The justification for the non-compliance with Council's FSR and height controls is that if the controls were strictly applied the result would be smaller buildings than currently exist and it is unlikely that any new development of the site would take place other than the adaptation of the

existing building. The inconsistency between the existing building and the controls are a disincentive to improve the urban design and built form of the existing building, due to it not being recognised by Council's controls.

Significant positive urban design, built form and economic benefits including increased connectivity, aesthetic appearance and economic revitalisation are expected to result from the proposal. New development, which is vital to revitalise the currently underutilised hotel on the subject site should be permitted to maintain the current FSR (in a better alternate format). If not, progressive urban improvements will be stifled as a result of controls that permit less development opportunity than currently exists.

To achieve the urban design and built form benefits outlined above, a proposal that exceeds the maximum height limit incorporating the existing FSR, will improve the connectivity at ground level, provide a range of complementary town centre uses and improve the general aesthetic appearance of development in this key location in the heart of Double Bay.

The provision of taller elements in certain parts of the site and lower elements on others will free up the site planning to allow public open space to be provided with a central plaza with through site pedestrian access linking with surrounding areas.

## **2. Overshadowing**

A presentation that was previously tabled at Woollahra Council provided at **Appendix F** which includes preliminary shadow diagrams. The presentation of shadows illustrate that the preferred option will result in some minor additional overshadowing. Final shadow illustrations will be provided with the Environmental Assessment, and will determine the full extent of overshadowing impacts of the proposal in the surrounding private properties and the public domain.

## **3. Redistribution of existing FSR to increased height**

The redistribution of FSR to provide a publically accessible permeable ground plane has meant that floor space has been relocated to alternate areas. During the initial design stages, a number of options for reallocating the existing floor space were developed. The option that gave the best overall outcome consists of a podium style development with 3 building envelopes above the podium. It is considered that this option is justifiable and acceptable in terms of its environmental impacts. The Council presentation provides further detail on the design options investigated and outlines the criteria that lead to the selection of the preferred option:

## **4. Reduction in the size of the existing hotel**

It is not expected that the reduction in the size of the hotel will cause any negative impacts to the economic activity in Double Bay due to the fact that the existing hotel currently operates significantly below its maximum capacity and represents sub-prime hotel accommodation. Hill PDA will provide comment on whether the proposed hotel will have positive or negative economic implication for Double Bay. Hill PDA's will provide an economic impact assessment for input into the Environmental Assessment.

## **5. Economic impacts of the amount and type of retail uses**

Hill PDA will provide a detailed economic and retail impact assessment in regards to the expected implications resulting from increasing the amount

of retail space on the site which will be provided with the environmental assessment.

Hill PDA have made a preliminary assessment of the proposal and have provided forecasts in regards to the expected employment generation provided by the development, the proportion of the generated employment that is directly related to tourism and the expected increase in economic activity resulting from the development. Hill PDA's preliminary economic implications document is provided at **Appendix B**. A more detailed economic impact assessment will be provided with the Environmental Assessment.

#### **6. View loss/ sharing**

A preliminary assessment of visual impacts and views is provided in the Council presentation at **Appendix F**. The preliminary assessment indicates that the proposal will not have any significant effects on the views from existing premises or the public domain. In addition the photos from the harbour indicate that the development will be appropriate in its context as the harbour view indicates that Double Bay and the backdrop of Bondi Junction visually possesses a number of tower structures. A more detailed assessment will be provided with the Environmental Assessment.

#### **7. Pedestrian access and amenity**

Quality pedestrian access and amenity are essential for areas like Double Bay where street front retailing is the key activity on ground level. The existing hotel does not provide a quality pedestrian environment and improving the amenity at ground level is considered to be a key indication of the success of the development. Considerable effort has been made to ensure that the proposal creates a quality pedestrian environment which is publically accessible on a permanent basis where recreational activation and retail uses are located to provide a more active and interconnected environment.

#### **8. Car parking**

The existing hotel includes a car-parking facility with 173 spaces. The facility has 2 components which include hotel parking and a public car park that is managed by the hotel. A preliminary assessment of Woollahra Council's Development Control Plan for Off Street Car Parking Provision and Servicing Facilities 1995 indicates that the existing parking facility will be able to accommodate the new development and remain compliant. Currently 173 parking spaces are available and initial calculations indicate that the proposal requires 163 spaces to comply, leaving an additional 10 space surplus.

A formal layout of the car parking facilities will be provided with the Environmental Assessment after consultation with a relevant traffic and parking specialist has been undertaken.

#### **9. Traffic**

The traffic implications will need to be considered by a suitable professional to ensure that the proposal does not significantly affect the capacity of the local road network and intersections in the area. Given the preliminary assessment of a reduced need for parking, it is possible that impacts will be reduced.

### **10. Visual impact**

The proposal is in a location visible from the Harbour and New South Head Road. The topography surrounding the site is characterised by the ridgelines to the south, east and west, characteristic of Sydney Harbour inlets. The Double Bay Town Centre is located in the flat area of the natural landscape bowl, with the surrounding ridges providing a level of containment to the viewshed.

Given the proposed height of the hotel, the potential visual impact of the proposal is considered to be a key issue that requires careful consideration to ensure the visual amenity of the site and its context.

A detailed visual assessment will be provided at the environmental assessment stage.

### **11. Demolition**

The existing structure will require substantial demolition to make way for the proposal. All of the aboveground structures on site will be removed with the exception of the car park entrance located on the adjacent site. The basement levels will be retained to provide the parking areas for the new development. The retention of the car park will avoid further excavation and potential impacts on the ground water table.

A demolition management plan will be prepared with the environmental assessment to manage potential impacts on adjoining buildings. The plan will provide appropriate management provisions for dust control, noise and demolition related traffic.

### **12. Construction Impacts**

The surrounding community have raised concerns in regards to the impacts of the proposals construction including issues such as noise and dust generation. A Construction Management Plan will be prepared which will include strategies for noise mitigation and the containment of airborne particles. Construction traffic will also be assessed to manage construction vehicle movements.

A detailed assessment of the proposal will be undertaken at the Environmental Assessment stage, which will be based on the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements.

## 6 Conclusion

The site is in need of substantial upgrade for the following reasons:

- The upgrade of the site to a high standard would act as a catalyst for future redevelopment and regeneration of the Double Bay Town Centre;
- To significantly improve the architectural appearance of the building and provide a more beneficial urban development outcome for the site and surrounding area (solar access, overshadowing, building bulk, activation of street level etc); and
- To upgrade and improve pedestrian access and amenity through and around the site.

All of the above will contribute to the revitalisation of the Double Bay village as a premier tourism and shopping destination and be a catalyst for improved commercial activity in the greater Double Bay Town Centre area. Generally, community feedback regarding the concept of a mixed use development including a high quality boutique hotel has been positive and in favour of the proposal as providing the greater Double Bay community with considerable improvements.

In conclusion, we request the Minister declare the project to be one to which Part 3A applies, as the project is consistent with:

- the non-discretionary criteria under Clause 13 and 17 of Schedule 1 of SEPP (Major Projects), for construction values of more than \$50 million and the generation of 128 jobs being related to tourism.
- the discretionary criteria under Clause 13 of SEPP (Major Projects) as the proposal is of regional significance in terms providing a new model of hotel accommodation that will have positive economic benefits that will assist in revitalising Double Bay Town Centre a key urban centre within Eastern Sydney.
- the SEPP (Major Projects) 2005 criteria, as there are local impediments to the achievement of the orderly and economic use and development of the site and in the achievement of the East Subregional Strategy in terms employment opportunities and providing an exemplary town centre development. The current development controls do not recognise the existing hotel. The development controls are a disincentive to make meaningful improvements to the existing built form as they require development to have a floor space ratio and height which are less than the existing building.

**We respectfully request that the Minister for Planning declare under Clause 6 of SEPP (Major Projects) 2005 the proposal to be a project to which Part 3A applies and issue the Director General's Environmental Assessment requirements for the project.**