

Urban Design Analysis

for Proposed High Density Residential Development at 63 – 77 West Parade, WEST RYDE for Housing NSW

In consideration of the 10 Design Quality Principles Pursuant to
State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of
Residential Flat Development

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Figure 1. Perspective of Concept Development

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State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65.

State Environmental Planning Policy No.65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development (SEPP65) was gazetted on 27 July 2002. The SEPP aims to improve design quality of residential flat development; specifically:

1. To ensure that it contributes to the sustainable development of New South Wales:
 - i. By Providing sustainable housing in social and environmental terms
 - ii. By being a long term asset to its neighbourhood
 - iii. By achieving the urban planning policies of its regional and local contexts
2. To achieve better built form and aesthetics of buildings and of the streetscapes and the public spaces they define
3. To better satisfy the increased demand, the changing social and demographic profile of the community, and the needs of the widest range of people from childhood to old aged, including those with disabilities
4. To maximise amenity, safety and security for the benefit of its occupants and the wider community
5. To minimise the consumption of energy from non-renewable resources, to conserve the environment and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

The SEPP applies to residential flat development comprising a building 3 storeys or higher in heights above ground level and 4 or more self-contained dwellings. It presents 10 design quality principles, which are intended as a guide to achieving good design and the means of evaluating the merit of proposed design solutions.

Design Verification Statement

The project of the Proposed High Density Residential Development at 63-77 West Parade, West Ryde, as described in the Part 3A Concept Application to the NSW Minister of Planning, has been proposed so as to be capable of being further design developed to comply with regard to the Design Quality Principles of SEPP 65 as addressed below;

The 10 Design Quality Principles comprise:

- Context
- Scale
- Built Form
- Density
- Resource, Energy and Water Efficiency
- Landscape
- Amenity
- Safety and Security
- Social Dimensions
- Aesthetics

Consideration of Design Quality Principles

Principle 1: Context

"Good design responds to 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 site is located in close proximity to the West Ryde Town Centre, and thus is in a built-up precinct. The eastern edge of the site is bordered by a rail corridor, with the West Ryde train station south of the site. There are existing residential towers immediately south of the site, and approved dense residential towers immediately across the rail corridor. Properties opposite the site are primarily 3-4 storey residential flat buildings as "walk-ups".

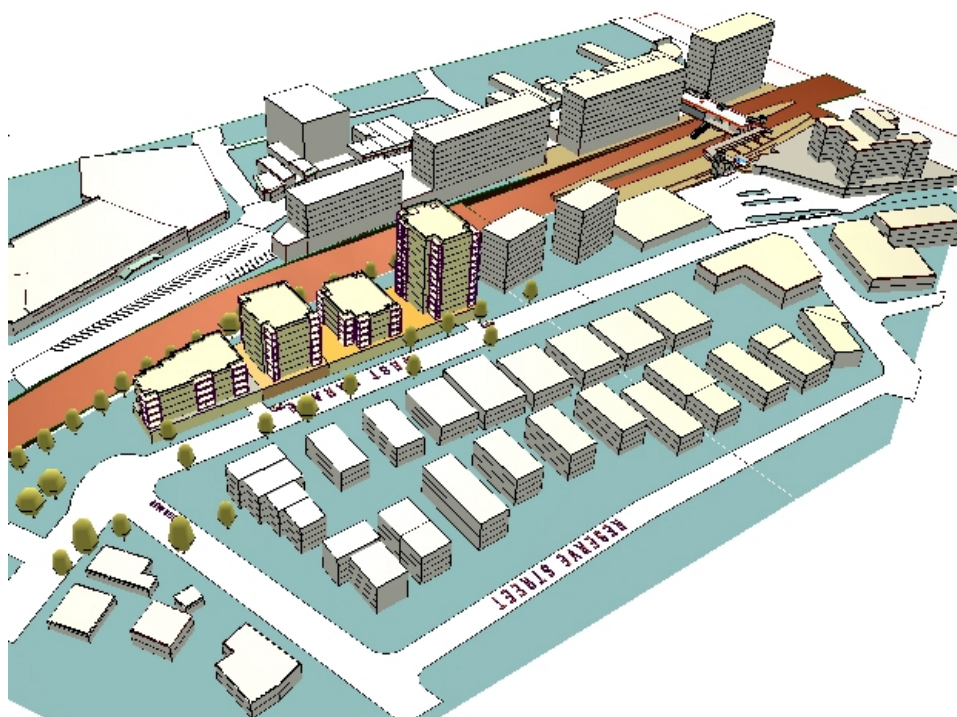


Figure 2. Context

It is evident that the precinct within which the site is located is undergoing a residential densification process, and thus the precinct character is changing accordingly. This accords with the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy for increased development at centres. In this context, the development on the site could be seen as an infill development within the evolving town centre.

The proposed development is considered to effectively respond to its context as it:

- Proposes a bulk, scale and height in keeping with the current and approved future character of West Ryde in this location;
- Provides appropriate setbacks to boundaries;
- Offers a multiple tower form, which provides appropriate massing whilst reflecting the existing street pattern of built form and space.
- Proposes a series of tower heights that respond to the varying existing residential situations along the length of the site, from a tall tower adjacent the existing residential towers to the south to a short tower at the northern end, adjacent the 3-4 storey "walk-ups" and low scale residential;
- Capitalises on views to and from the development
- Frames the street along West Parade with retail at street level.
- Considers the interface with the rail corridor by locating parking on the ground level and proportionately lower number of dwellings at lower storeys.
- Encourages activity and surveillance from within the built form, within the site generally as well as over public areas.

Principle 2: 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."

As noted above, the character of the area and surrounding buildings is that of varying residential scales, from individual dwellings to 9+ storey towers. With the approved development immediately across the rail corridor considered, this West Ryde precinct is undergoing a residential densification process of high density and high scale nature.

In this context the proposed development exhibits an appropriate bulk, scale and height, dynamically responding as residential situations change along the length of the site and the rail corridor.

Principle 3: Built Form

"Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose, in terms of alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of building elements.

Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of the streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook."

Development with the site must address the issues of siting, orientation, configuration, character, size and bulk of adjoining developments.

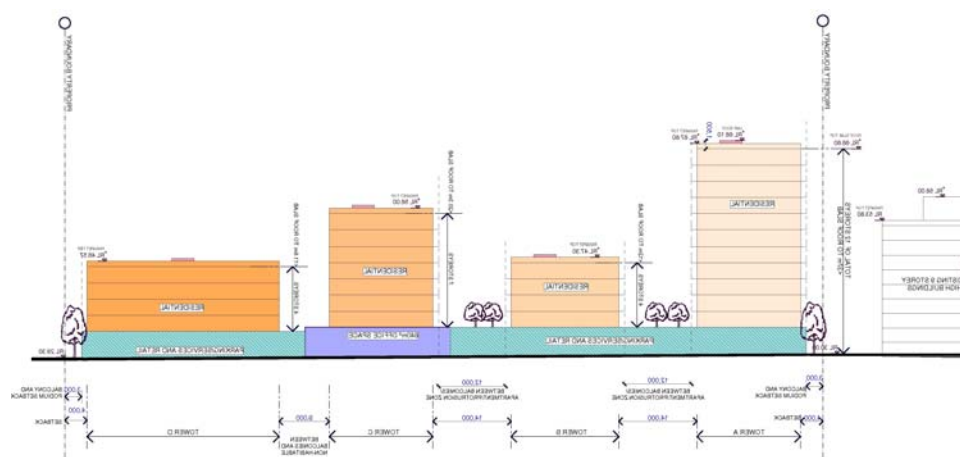


Figure 3. West Parade Elevation

The proposed development is considered to effectively respond to built cues by;

- Articulating the massing into multiple towers which reduces bulk to the street and enhances the existing built form pattern.
- Providing large podium areas between the towers which facilitate a green character and provides easily accessed light recreation areas, reducing the impact of the built form.
- Breaking of the visual appearance of the building through well designed articulations in elevation with balcony perimeter zones, reducing the impact of the buildings scale and mass on the streetscape.
- Providing appropriate levels of separation between towers creating distinct divisions of public and private space through physical and visual boundaries.
- Avoiding excessive driveways by containing two designated entrances to the front of the site, bordered by retail areas, and concealing the parking to behind this retail and below ground maximising opportunities for pedestrian access to the retail/street interface.

Principle 4: 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 on and 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 site is located within a residential area which is undergoing steady change toward higher density residential development. The immediate area is currently growing, with the approved multistorey, multi-tower development across the rail corridor.

It is therefore reasonable that the development maximise opportunities as proposed in such a location which will inevitably develop to a higher density area.

Such a density is sustainable as it not only responds to the regional context, but also responds to the existing infrastructure of the West Ryde Town Centre's facilities as well as to the public transport opportunities as provided by the West Ryde train station and bus interchange south of the site.

Principle 5: Resource, Energy and 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 site enjoys good exposure to northern sunlight. Cool summer breezes are predominantly from the north east. These climatic characteristics of the site provide opportunities for the development to maximise upon solar access and take advantage of natural ventilation. A massing response that caters to these environmental opportunities is that of multiple towers.

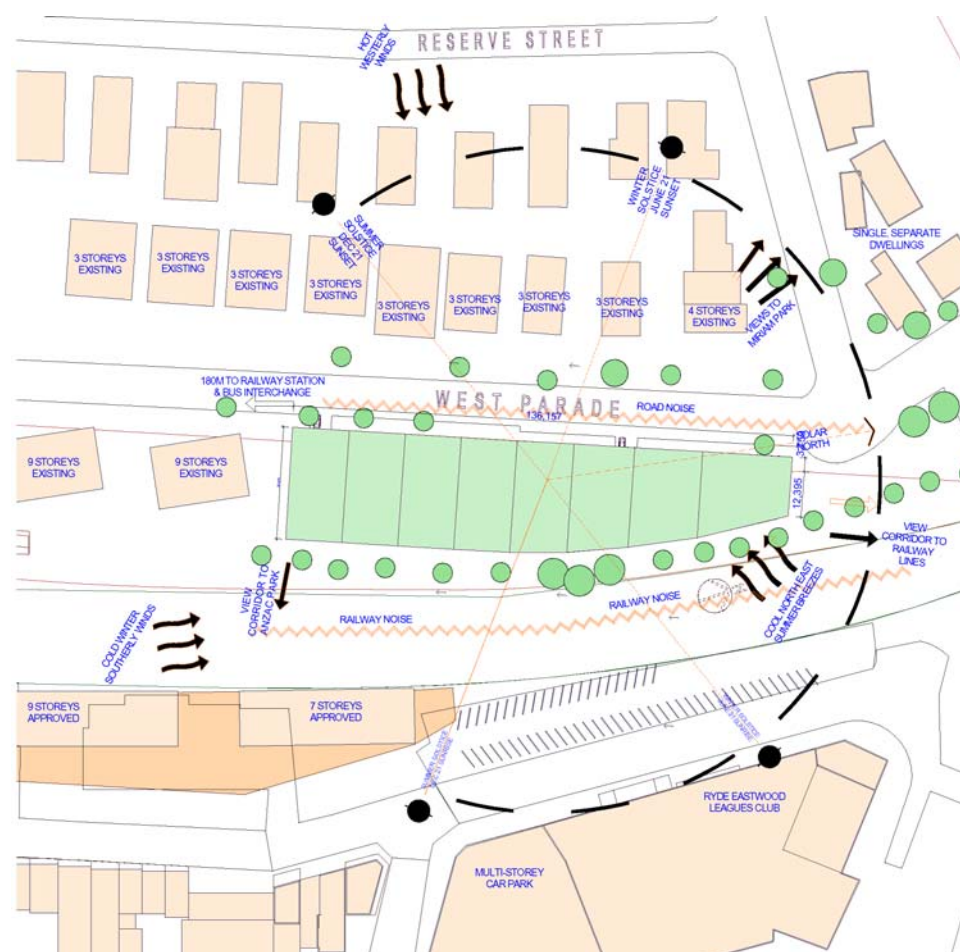


Figure 4. Site Analysis

- By distributing the mass into four towers, each tower has a north facing façade.
- The west and east façade's of each tower can be optimised with solar massing to regulate internal temperatures.
- Configuration of unit plans to provide effective cross ventilation to living areas is best achieved by this multiple tower form, minimising unit depth and thus facilitating cross ventilation.
- Provision of a large podium area facilitates stormwater collection for reuse on site, as well as a large space for vegetation, improving air quality and providing visual amenity.

Principle 6: 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 usability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity, and provide for practical establishment and long term management."

The general area in which the site is located has limited vegetation beyond nature strip trees and planting. The development recognises the importance of high quality landscaping areas as well as the importance of vegetation in operating sustainably with the built form. Thus, the development proposes heavy planting of native species across the large podium area.

Water management would be integrated into the podium planting scheme. The landscaped podium provides for privacy and social opportunities, shading the units on the lower floors of each tower as well as providing opportunity for communal light recreation spaces between the towers.

Respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character is considered in the provision of a 3 metre deep soil landscaping strip to both sides of the property, providing amenity for both occupants and the adjoining public domain.

Principle 7: 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."

The development has been proposed so as to be capable of being further design developed to comply with regard to the Design Quality Principle of Amenity. The proposal facilitates such design development as to provide;

- Outlook to the street, and to podium courtyards.
- Good internal circulation and provision accessible entry for residents, via a lift or stair from the basement car park and ground level.
- Maximised living area dimensions
- Generous bedroom sizes
- Balcony's to extend internal living areas where possible
- Provision for private separate storage in basement car park.
- Maximised privacy through tower separation, careful placement of windows, provision of screening and landscaping and generous building separation and setbacks.

Principle 8: 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 the 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."

Units within the proposed development address both the street as well as the shared podium area between the towers for informal surveillance of these areas, especially informal surveillance of the entrance areas off the street. Further to this, the potential provision of transparent balustrades improves the visual surveillance on shared zones.

Strategic low height planting on the podium (with a few medium sized trees) allows for visual separation of the units from the podium without the opportunity for personal concealment.

The proposal offers the opportunity for a developed design to avoid any dark or non-visible areas. A developed design would sufficiently illuminate the podium at night. Adequate security lighting would also be positioned in the basement car parking level and the entry zone.

Street edge offices and retail to the street maximises activity on West Parade, clear and safe access points are provided amidst the retail areas.

Principle 9: 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."

The proposal provides the opportunity for units with a mix of apartment layouts and sizes, including the provision of both social and private housing. A developed design from this concept proposal has the potential to provide affordable units that cater for the changing needs of residents over time.

The site enjoys access to a variety of social facilities within the West Ryde Town Centre.

Principle 10: 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 environmental and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area."

As noted above, the established and transitional architectural character of the locality provides certain flexibilities to improve the architectural presentation and contribution of new development to the area's aesthetic quality.

The concept for the site has been proposed so as to be capable of being further design developed to provide a composition of building form, materials, colour, architectural treatments, articulation and style that will be considered to present a thoughtful design outcome which demonstrates a high standard of aesthetic quality. The outcome will present a modern visual response whilst contributing to the existing built form in the area.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed High Density Residential Development at 63-77 West Parade, West Ryde facilitates and provides the framework whereby the development may provide an enhanced level of amenity to future and existing residents and to the general environment. It assists in responding and contributing to the desired future transition of the area.

Thus, the proposed High Density Residential Development is considered to be readily capable of achieving the ten design quality principles sought by SEPP 65.