



**aevum**  
LIMITED

Retirement Living & Aged Care

Mr Sam Haddad  
Director General  
Department of Planning  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001  
**Attention: Mr. Sam Haddad**

Dear Sir,

**Re: Minister's Major Project Declaration of Cardinal Freeman Aged Care Village, Ashfield**

I am writing to request the Minister exercise her discretion and declare the proposed redevelopment of Cardinal Freeman Village Ashfield, a Major Project.

Aevum Ltd is the largest for-profit operator of aged care villages in NSW and is proposing a redevelopment of Cardinal Freeman Village costing in excess of \$100m.

The proposal provides a substantial increase in housing choices to elderly residents who are predominantly drawn from the inner west region including Marrickville, Canterbury, Leichardt and Burwood and as far away as Botany and the St George Shire.

The redevelopment will result in an increase of population from 300 to 500 residents and ensure the Village continues its role as the largest full service village (self care, serviced self care, high and low care) in the inner west.

Importance to the region, the scale of the investment and the impact on the future survival of the Village requires State level consideration.

Ashfield Council and their planning instruments do not contemplate or provide sufficient planning certainty for the type and scale of this much needed social infrastructure with broader regional benefits.

Accompanying this letter we have provided an executive summary and the formal request prepared by BBC Consulting Planners.

We look forward to your favourable declaration and for our application to be considered by the Department of Planning.

Regards,

Steve Mann  
Managing Director  
Aevum Ltd.

# Major Project Declaration

## Executive Summary

- Aevum is seeking Major Project Status for the redevelopment of the entire Cardinal Freeman Village in Ashfield.
- In order to provide planning certainty and allow the forward planning of relocations of existing residents and staging of construction works Aevum seeks a declaration by the Minister for a concept master plan (\$100m plus cap-ex) and a stage one application (for a 95 bed aged care facility and approximately 48 serviced self care units).
- Without planning certainty (Major Project Status) the redevelopment can not proceed and the future of Cardinal Freeman Village and the services offered to Seniors of the region would be uncertain.
- Full Village redevelopment of the 25 plus year old buildings and infrastructure is needed to meet current market expectations and compliance standards.
- The Village is currently the home to 300 Seniors, at the end of the redevelopment program it will provide a range of modern compliant housing choices to 500 Seniors.
- The Village is strategically well situated close to public transport and town centres.
- The local planning framework does not provide the certainty sought to allow this project to proceed.



# Aevum Ltd

- Aevum Ltd is the largest 'for-profit' operator of retirement living and aged care facilities in NSW.
- Aevum Ltd is an ASX listed public company [code AVE].
- Aevum owns and manages over 2000 retirement units, over 200 aged care beds in over 22 villages nationally.
- Cardinal Freeman Village, Ashfield is Aevum's largest village and is also the largest operating village (4.5ha) in the inner west region.
- Cardinal Freeman Village was developed for seniors living in the early 1980's and has not seen significant upgrade since then.
- The full continuum of care is offered at Cardinal Freeman Village being self care, serviced self care, high & low care accommodation.
- The average age of residents at Cardinal Freeman is 83 years.
- Aevum propose investing \$100m cap-ex into the initial redevelopment phase proposed in the concept master plan including the proposed stage one application.



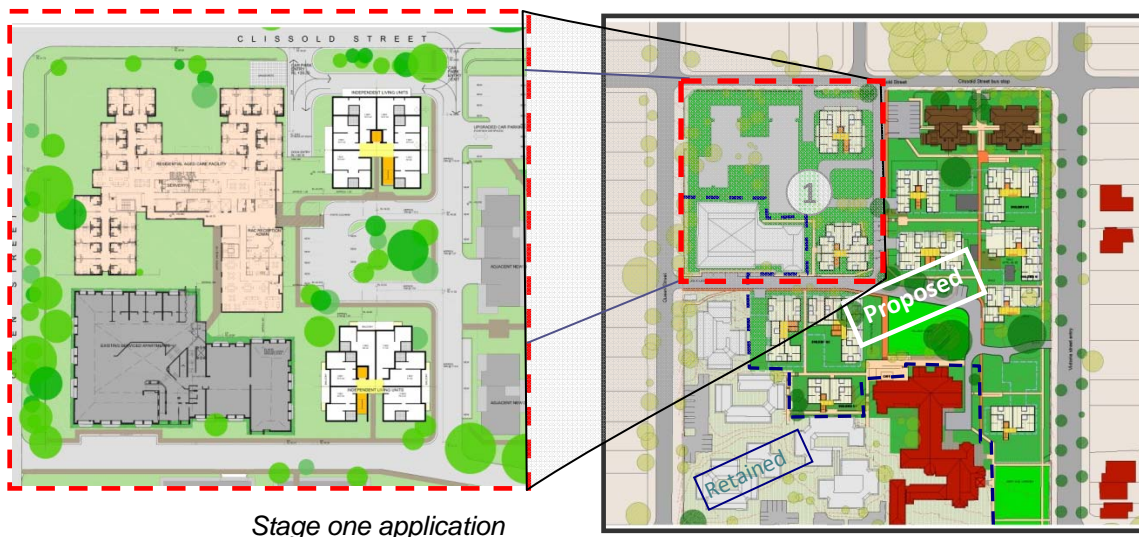


# The Application

## Concept master plan & stage one application:



Existing	➡	Proposed
<i>Stage One</i>		
<b>59 Bed High Care Nursing Home:</b> Quad and twin share rooms and shared bath rooms.	➡	<b>95 Bed High and Low Care Residential Care facility including Dementia services.</b> Single bed ensuited rooms including a dementia specific wing.
<b>60 Bed Low Care Hostel</b> Small bed sit rooms, communal dining and communal lounge.	➡	<b>48 serviced self care units</b> Purposed designed units capable of receiving resident funded care related services allowing "ageing in place"
<b>48 serviced apartments</b>	➡	<b>48 serviced apartments</b> Upgrades to lifts and common areas and unit refurbishments.
<i>Subsequent Stages</i>		
<b>169 Independent Living Units</b> 20 years old, are non compliant, do not meet resident requirements.	➡	<b>250 Self Care Units</b> 135 new compliant units (115 existing ILU's retained) New community and administration facilities including parks and cafe.



Stage one application

Concept masterplan

# Regional Significance

## Draft Sub-Regional Strategy – Inner west

Key issues addressed:

### Housing Types:

- Full continuum of care (self care, serviced self care, high & low care).
- Housing choices from affordable to mid market.

### Increased Density

- Consistent with SEPP Seniors Living, FSR < 1:1.
- Ashfield's housing targets (2031) of 2000 dwellings.

### Plan for an Ageing Population

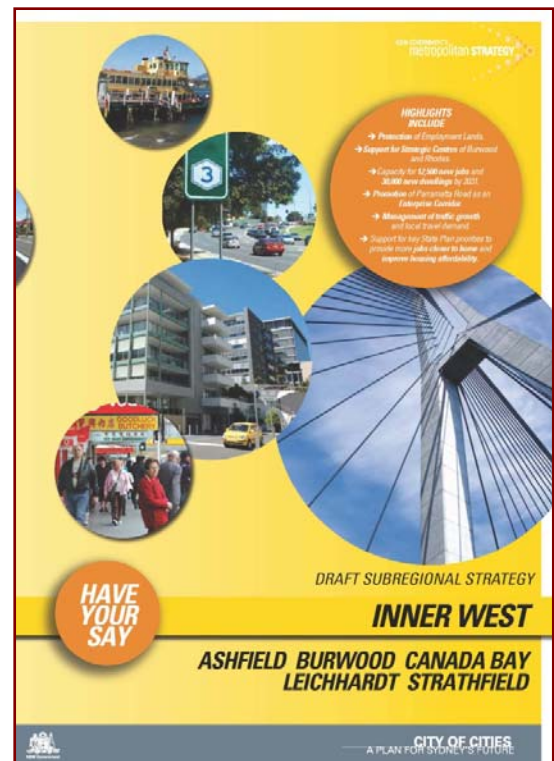
- Village is designed for ageing-in-place.
- Target demographic is 80 years.

### Employment

- 15 new permanent positions created.
- Over 1000 construction related jobs created over the course of redevelopment.

### Heritage and public parks

- Reinstates heritage curtilage to the existing LEP listed House and Chapel.
- Creates new public private park to the corner of Victoria and Seaview Streets.



# Planning Controls

## Planning Challenges

### Existing Zoning Anomaly:

- Western half of the site is zoned 5 (a) Church which precludes full site redevelopment for seniors living.

### SEPP Seniors Living (SEPP SL):

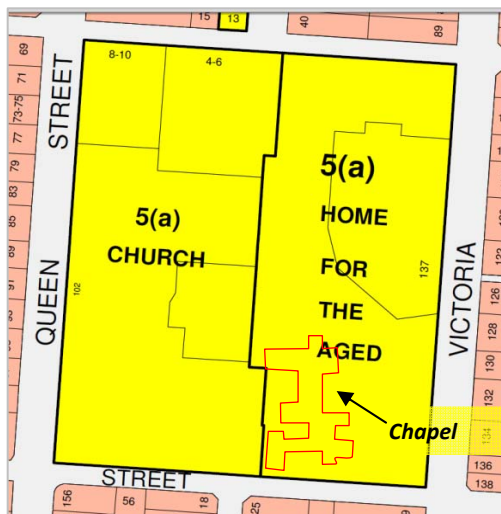
- Aevum can not submit a development application in Ashfield under the SEPP SL. The control only permits the Department of Housing or a community housing provider to make an application.
- Existing use rights relating to western half of the site do not exist as the use is permissible under the SEPP SL.

### LEP 2011:

- No planning certainty offered as demonstrated by Ashfield Council's pursuit for an extension to the SEPP SL exemption.
- The Department of Planning has expressed concern that Council's preparation of the Draft LEP 2011 is well behind program.

### Application History:

- 2003: 13 units recommended for conditional approval but rejected by Ashfield Councillors.
- 2006: 12 additional units approved by Ashfield Council.
- 2008: 6 additional units recommended for approval but rejected by Ashfield Councillors.
- 2008: LEC appeal for 6 additional units rejected on a technicality (see SEPP SL above).



Current Zoning under Ashfield's LEP





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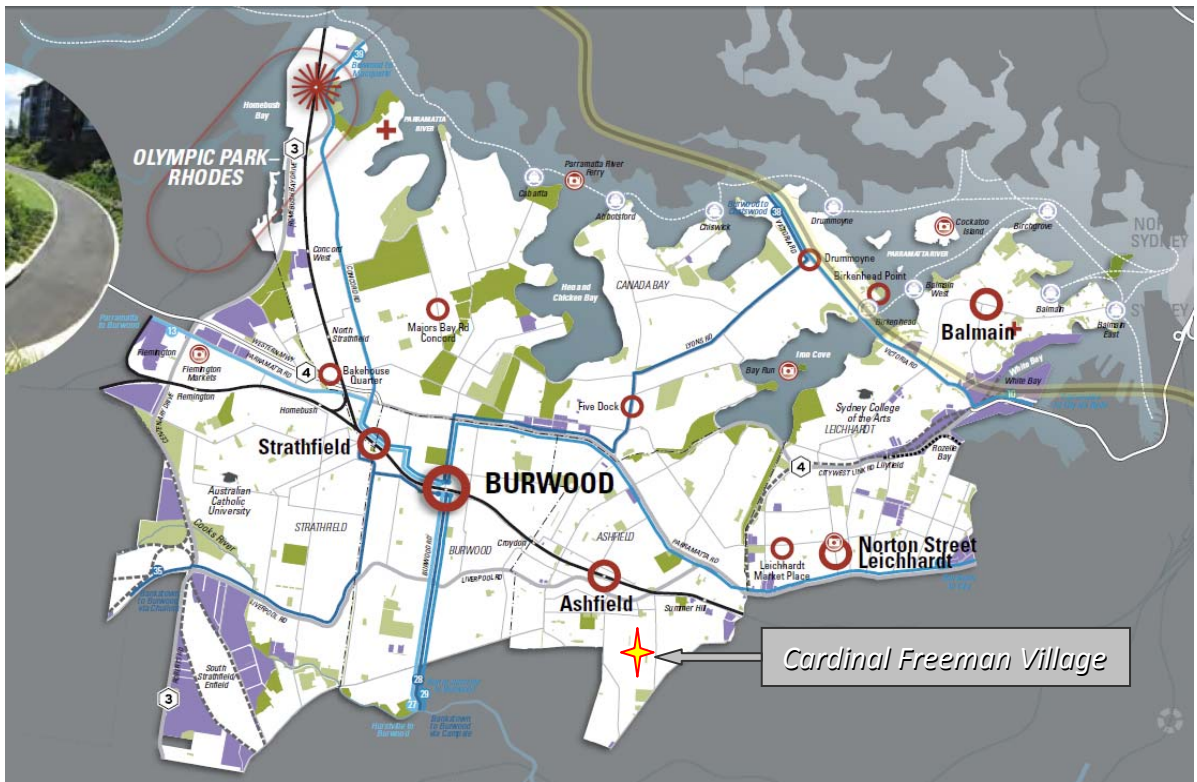
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- Urban design responds sympathetically in terms of height and bulk to surrounding development.
- Low traffic impact (demographic is a low user and has low ownership).
- Improvements to infrastructure (new substations, water and sewer upgrades etc).
- Improved environmental outcomes (water re-use strategies are proposed).
- Improved public amenity (new public private parks).



# Location

## Cardinal Freeman Village 137 Victoria Road Ashfield 2131



Draft Sub Regional Strategy – Inner West sub region





28 November 2008

Our ref: DHB/06026C

NSW Department of Planning  
23 Bridge Street  
SYDNEY 2000

**Attention: Mr Sam Haddad, Director General**

Dear Sir,

**re: Request for Minister's Opinion: Declaration of Development at Cardinal Freeman Village, Ashfield as a Major Project**

This letter accompanies a request by Aevum Limited, the owner of significant land holdings in the Ashfield Local Government Area seeking a declaration by the Minister under Section 75B of the EP&A Act and Clause 13 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 ("the SEPP") that specified development for the renewal and redevelopment of Cardinal Freeman Village is a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies. The authorisation of the Minister to apply for approval of a concept plan for a project is also sought.

This letter addresses the key requirements for consideration under Clause 13 as indicated in the guidelines published by the Department.

## **1. Executive Summary**

Cardinal Freeman Village has provided a continuum of care to seniors for nearly 30 years. Having only undergone select refurbishment programs over the years, the Village is in need of major renewal, refurbishment and expansion to meet current market expectations and future demand for senior's accommodation. The Village currently has over 300 residents who occupy a range of accommodation from independent living units through to Commonwealth funded aged care beds.

Cardinal Freeman Village holds the distinction of being the largest retirement village in Sydney's inner west, occupying a full suburban block of approximately 4.5 ha in Ashfield. The Project proposal is the redevelopment of the site in stages over an 8-10 year period. This strategy enables the Village to maintain services for the current senior community while undergoing redevelopment including upgrading the standard of existing accommodation to meet future demand.

The key elements of the project are:

- § A new 95 bed residential aged care facility to replace the existing older nursing home and low care hostel;

- § Replacement of existing 60 bed hostel with 48 serviced self care units;
- § An upgrade to the existing 48 serviced apartments;
- § 135 new self care units to replace some existing taking the total number of self care units from 169 to 250;
- § Consolidation of 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of external space into useable public private open space;
- § Major road alignments and pedestrian networks;
- § Addition of an estimated 10-15 permanent jobs; and
- § A total project value in excess of \$110m.

Due to the significant planning implications of this major seniors housing project, Aevum seeks declaration of the development as a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies based on the following:

- § The project satisfies the relevant requirements for major project declaration under Clause 13 of SEPP Major Projects (addressed below);
- § The major project status and an approval to an overall concept plan will give greater certainty to existing residents on the redevelopment program and its timing – this certainty has not been possible to date.
- § The site is zoned 5a Special uses (Church) and 5a Special Uses (Aged Care). There are existing aged care facilities on that half of the site zoned 5a Church uses. Development applications in the Ashfield local government area under the Seniors Living SEPP are not permitted by private organisations.
- § Council recently refused a development proposal for 'Building F' at the Village – a proposal that was almost identical to an application that had previously been approved by Council on the site ('Buildings A&B') –highlighting inconsistencies in Ashfield Council determinations and uncertainty for residents.

## 2. Background

### Introduction to Aevum

Aevum is the largest owner and operator of for-profit retirement accommodation in New South Wales. Aevum currently owns and manages 2123 retirement units and 202 aged care beds in 21 villages nationally, with 17 in New South Wales containing 1935 retirement units. Aevum offers **five (5) levels of care** and a total commitment to the principle of 'ageing in place'.

The core philosophy is to provide services that remove the responsibility and burden of maintaining your own home, as well as providing a caring environment with ample social interaction.

Aevum's experience is derived from a rich history of care, including more than 30 years of owning, operating and developing retirement villages and aged care facilities in NSW.

The proposed major project will be undertaken by Aevum who will continue to own and maintain the facility delivering improved aged care to existing and new residents of the village.

### **Introduction to Cardinal Freeman Village**

The Cardinal Freeman Retirement Village occupies the site of Glentworth House and Chapel. The site was originally occupied by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. The site was converted for use as an aged person's facility in 1979, involving the introduction of a variety of purpose-built aged care buildings. The existing site comprises 337 units of accommodation and aged care beds. The Village currently accommodates around 300 residents in a mix of accommodation types which cater to the varying needs of residents and the aged within the community.

The Village has a long history of association with aged care services to the local community. It was established through a series of building programs which began in 1978 involving the construction of a range of aged care and seniors housing accommodation. The site is fully self-contained and comprises a range of services and amenities for residents including doctors' consulting rooms, village shop, on-site dining room, hairdressing salon, library, billiards room, entertainment hall, and chapel. A shuttle bus to the local shopping and community areas is also available to residents.

The unique model of care at the Village is based on providing a continuum of care including self care, assisted living, hostel (low care) and nursing home (high care) accommodation. This enables seniors to age in place, with transition from self care through the various stages to palliative care provided in the nursing home available within a single site.

The village employs 105 – 110 high and low skilled workers.

### **3. Land on Which the Project will be Carried Out**

Cardinal Freeman Retirement Village is located at Victoria Street, Ashfield (see Figure 1) and comprises an entire city block bounded by Clissold Street, Queen Street, Victoria Street and Seaview Street. The site has an area of approximately 4.5 hectares.

The site is in single ownership and comprises a number of parcels of land as follows:

- Lot 101 in DP702245 – 8-10 Clissold Street;
- Lot 4 in DP 717062 – 4-6 Clissold Street;
- Lot 6 and 7 in DP 717644 – 102-102A Queen Street;
- Lot 1 in DP 1126717 – 137 Victoria Street.

The site has direct access to services and transport in a suburb that contains a number of special use precincts.



**Figure 1: Site Location**



#### **4. Development to be considered a Major Project**

##### **Existing Buildings and Current Projects**

Buildings within the site include:

- § Glentworth House and Chapel, heritage listed buildings (Ashfield LEP) containing activity rooms at ground floor and independent living units at first and second floor levels and large space for public worship;
- § A former disused convent building;
- § A 59 bed, high care nursing home with underground car park;
- § A hostel, known as 'The Lodge,' which contains 60 rooms and provides for low care needs;
- § 48 serviced apartments;
- § 169 Independent Living Units (ILUs) accommodated in a number of separate single and two storey buildings clustered across the site; and
- § An administration building and activity centre.

Current works nearing completion include Buildings A and B, existing two storey 12 unit independent living blocks being refurbished and extended to accommodate six additional units (in each building) over four storeys. These buildings are the subject of a consent to DA No. 10.2006.165.1 granted by Ashfield Council. Development which is the subject of this consent would not form part of the major project declaration.

##### **Description of Project**

The project involves the renewal, refurbishment and expansion of Cardinal Freeman Village, the inner west's only fully integrated aged care and seniors' living village with all four levels of care.

Investigations and early development initiatives by Aevum such as Buildings A and B discussed above highlighted that further significant renewal is required to achieve resident and community expectations on the standards of aged care.

The key elements of the project are:

- § Masterplanning the village layout and major road alignments;
- § Construction of a new 95 bed aged care facility to replace the existing older nursing home and low care hostel;
- § Replacement of existing 60 bed hostel with 48 serviced self care units;
- § An upgrade to the existing 48 serviced apartments;
- § 135 new self care units to replace some existing taking the total number of self care units from 169 to 250.
- § New underground parking (up to 150 spaces).
- § 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of consolidated new open space;

- § Preservation of historic buildings and significantly expanded landscape surrounds; and
- § Environmental design and sustainable development initiatives.

This development is reflected in the following Figure.



The project seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- § Significant growth in housing choice for the aged (self care, assisted care and high care);
- § Upgraded care facilities to comply with modern standards (including regulatory standards) and expectations;
- § Improved site layout to provide better quality, accessible open spaces with integrated community facilities;
- § Improved conservation of site heritage items through the restoration of historic curtilage and enhanced visibility both from within and outside the Village; and
- § Continued delivery and implementation of best practice environmental initiatives (stormwater management, solar access to units, energy efficiency and reduced water consumption).

### Job Creation

It is estimated 10-15 permanent new jobs will be created, including additional:



- § Specialised nursing home staff,
- § Administrative officers and assistants,
- § Community facility managers, and
- § Landscape and heritage maintenance staff.

### **Capital Investment Value**

The project has a Capital Investment Value in excess of \$110 million. Development will be staged over a period of 8 to 10 years to minimise impacts on existing residents. It is envisaged that applications will be made for parts of the project, commencing with the redevelopment of Building F and the residential aged care facility.

## **5. Major Projects SEPP Framework**

Subsection 6(1) of the SEPP specifies that:

*“Development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is development of a kind:*

*(a) that is described in Schedule 1 or 2...*

*is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies.”*

Schedule 1 of the SEPP is entitled “Part 3A projects—classes of development”. The proposed development satisfies the criteria of Clause 13(1) of Schedule 1 which is:

*13 Residential, commercial or 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.*

This process involves the Minister forming the opinion that the development is a residential, commercial or retail project with a capital investment value of more than \$50 million that is important in achieving State or regional planning objectives.

The development can be categorised as a residential project and has a capital investment value of more than \$50 million.

## **6. Justification for the Project - State and Regional Significance**

The Minister has published guidelines which will guide her decision as to what types of projects (which are more than \$50 million capital investment valued) are of importance in achieving State or regional planning outcomes.

These guidelines contain criteria that would need to be met in order for a development to be considered likely contribute to achieving State or regional planning objectives. It is considered that the project satisfies these criteria as indicated in the following table.

Criteria	Compliance	Discussion
<b>a) Local impediments to urban renewal</b>		
Is the development within a centre of urban renewal area nominated for growth in the Metro Strategy?	Yes	Ashfield is located in the Inner West Subregion nominated for significant growth by renewal.
Are there provisions in the LEP which are likely to prevent or frustrate the implementation of the Metro Strategy?	Yes	SEPP SL, the primary planning tool for Senior Living Developments does not allow an application to be lodged by Aevum for seniors housing in Ashfield Local Government Area.
Does the Council have the resources to assess and determine major projects?	No	Documented delays in processing time indicate limited available resources for major project applications.
Do Council practices demonstrate that projects important in implementing Metro Strategies can be determined on their merits?	No	Council delays in determining Building F.
<b>b) Facilitate housing or job growth</b>		
Will the development directly result in significant growth in housing choice?	Yes	The proposal provides a significant increase and improvement in housing choice and quality of care options for local area Seniors.
Will the development directly result in permanent jobs in the area?	Yes	The proposal will create 10-15 new permanent jobs.
Is the development in a centre identified in the Metro or Regional Strategy?	No	Ashfield is located in the Inner West Subregion.
<b>c) Transport accessibility</b>		
Is the development readily accessible to a railway, bus stop with frequent service?	Yes	The site is located adjacent to two existing bus stops with frequent services and 900m from Ashfield train station.
<b>d) Improved infrastructure</b>		
Will the development result in additional public infrastructure or services?	N/A	The area is fully serviced and any augmentation is readily achievable.
Will the development provide affordable housing or facilitate the delivery of health, education or other community service facilities?	Yes	The proposal will retain affordability to a portion of units; health and care services for seniors will be delivered on site.
Will the development contribute a significant increase in open space?	Yes	18 existing buildings will be demolished to create approximately 5,000m <sup>2</sup> of consolidated open space.

Criteria	Compliance	Discussion
e) Environmental sensitivity		
Is the project likely to significantly contribute to environmental conservation outcomes?	N/A	N/A
Is the project located in an area of high cultural heritage or landscape significance?	Yes	(LEP Listed) The proposal includes the restoration and ongoing management of 2 existing high value heritage buildings and the restoration of landscaped curtilage by demolition and consolidation of dwellings.
f) Local Council issues		
Will there be a benefit of having a single independent authority for the development where the project is located in more than one LGA?	No	N/A
Does traffic or other significant impacts principally affect the adjoining LGA?	No.	N/A
Is local Council the land owner or proponent for the project?	No.	N/A

It is considered that the project satisfies the nominated criteria and is of State or regional significance because:

- § The project is located in an area identified for urban renewal and increased urban development;
- § There are local impediments to the implementation of the project based on discussions and experience with the local council over the past 5 years;
- § The project relates to the largest integrated aged care facility with all five levels of care in the inner west of Sydney;
- § Cardinal Freeman Village provides accommodation for residents from a wide region with 55% from the Inner West and 45% from beyond the Inner West;
- § The large site is capable of providing ageing in place solutions for the region in an integrated fashion;
- § The project will provide growth in care and seniors accommodation and provide additional jobs for the region in an area identified for urban renewal close to existing urban services;
- § The project is readily accessible by public transport services;
- § The project will complement and enhance government infrastructure services and will contribute to the provision of affordable housing for the elderly and facilitate the delivery of health and community services;



§ The project includes the restoration and ongoing management of 2 existing high value heritage buildings and their landscaped cartilage.

Aevum has a vision for the site to provide a high quality integrated aged care facility providing five levels of care allowing ageing in place. This vision has benefits consistent with the State and regional planning policies of the State government. It is felt that this vision is beyond the ability of Council to assess and determine in an objective, consistent and expeditious manner devoid of local political issues and with the certainty required by existing residents and their families as to future development intentions.

Consequently it is considered that the Minister could reasonably form the opinion that the development is of a kind described in Schedule 1 and exercise her discretion to declare the development to be a major project to which Part 3A applies because of the development's importance in achieving State or regional planning objectives.

It is considered that the development satisfies Section 75B of the Act, relating to "Projects to which Part applies", being:

*"75B(2) Kinds of projects*

*The following kind of development may be declared to be a project to which this Part applies:*

***(a) major infrastructure or other development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is of State or regional environmental planning significance"***

The development of the site is consistent with the aims of the Major Projects SEPP, as set out below:

*"2. Aims of Policy*

*The aims of this Policy are as follows:*

*(a) to identify development to which the development assessment and approval process under Part 3A of the Act applies,*

*(b) to identify any such development that is a critical infrastructure project for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act,*

***(c) to facilitate the development, redevelopment or protection of important urban, coastal and regional sites of economic, environmental or social significance to the State so as to facilitate the orderly use, development or conservation of those State significant sites for the benefit of the State,***

*(d) to facilitate service delivery outcomes for a range of public services and to provide for the development of major sites for a public purpose or redevelopment of major sites no longer appropriate or suitable for public purposes,*

*(e) to rationalise and clarify the provisions making the Minister the approval authority for development and sites of State significance, and to keep those provisions under review so that the approval process is devolved to councils when State planning objectives have been achieved.*

The proposed project involves works to facilitate the orderly renewal of an important site by a company with a proven track record in the delivery of high quality aged care accommodation in a form not otherwise available in the inner west, and is therefore considered consistent with the above aims. The proposed development is an essential stage in the renewal and upgrading of seniors housing on the site. It is a significant part of the local community.

## **7. Appropriateness of a Concept Plan**

The concept plan approval process is considered appropriate for this development because it provides the opportunity for strategic issues associated with the development of the land including access, stormwater management, heritage curtilage and built form controls to be identified and resolved up front allowing for more detailed design and assessment of individual buildings and uses to take place as a subsequent stage in the development process and in accordance with the specific needs of existing and future residents and aged care delivery best practice. It will also provide greater certainty to existing and future residents on the proposed development and its timeframe.

Accordingly, Aevum also requests that the Minister authorise the preparation of a concept plan for the development under section 75M of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

## **8. Permissibility**

The site is situated on land zoned 5(a) Special Uses (Home for the Aged) and 5(a) Special Uses (Church) pursuant to the provisions of the Ashfield LEP 1985. A zoning anomaly exists whereby a significant proportion of senior housing is located on the 'Church' zoned portion of the site; while the Chapel is located on land zoned 'Home for the Aged'.

An application under SEPP Seniors Living cannot be made by Aevum under the current provisions of the policy that state that applications for approval under the policy may be made only by or on behalf of the Director-General of the Department of Housing or a Social Housing provider. There is an urgent need for a staged renewal of the site to improve the quality of care being provided to the residents in the village.

## **9. Further Information**

Should you require any further information or clarification of the above, please contact the undersigned or Greville Ingham of Greengate Property Group on 02 9256 5600.

Yours faithfully

**BBC Consulting Planners**



**Dan Brindle**  
**Director**

Email [dan.brindle@bbcplanners.com.au](mailto:dan.brindle@bbcplanners.com.au)