

Cardinal Freeman Village

Village Green

Community Facilities and Independent Living Units

SEPP 65 Architectural Description

137 Victoria Street, Ashfield
for Aevum Ltd



Design Verification



Design Verification Statement - Development Application

State Environmental Planning and Assessment Policy No. 65:
Design Quality of Residential Flat Development

to	NSW Department of Planning
prepared by	Philip Thalys, Registered Architect [NSW ARB registration number: #6780]
project	Cardinal Freeman Village, Victoria Street, Ashfield Village Green, Independent Living Units
date	15 September, 2009

In accordance with the SEPP 65 requirements;

- I hereby verify that I designed and supervised the preparation of the Development Application which seeks consent for the construction of 58 seniors Independent Living Units and associated facilities in the Village Green Precinct at the Cardinal Freeman Village, Victoria Street, Ashfield.
- I hereby verify that the proposal has been designed in accordance with the Design Quality Principles of the SEPP 65 and as the designer responsible, I hereby verify that the proposed design meets the principles of the SEPP 65. An explanation of how the design achieves these principles forms part of the application.

Yours Faithfully,

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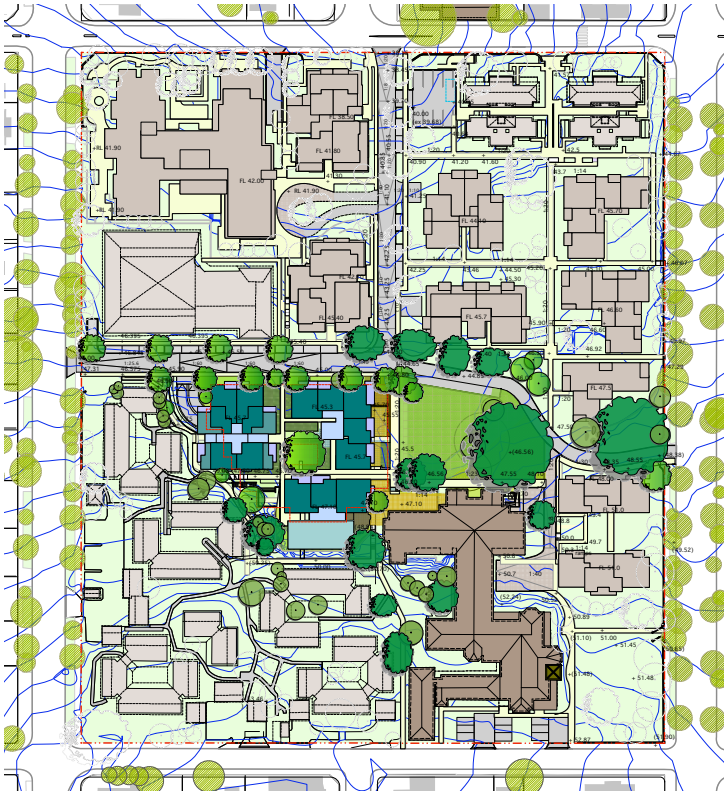
Photo Montages



View 1 - View from Queen Street entry looking down Queen Lane



View 2 - View towards Village Green



Site Plan

Principle 1: Context

- The Village Green Precinct, comprising major landscaped spaces and a group of buildings, is located in the centre of the Cardinal Freeman Village, which is a complex of seniors and aged care accommodation occupying an entire 4 hectare block in the heart of Ashfield. The block is square, bounded on all four sides by public streets. With the companion project application for a new Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) in the north-west quadrant, the Village Green Precinct form a comprehensive first stage for the renewal of the larger site. Further stages are described in the companion Concept Plan, which sets the objectives and vision for the site in its totality.

The Cardinal Freeman Village currently comprises approximately 25 buildings and clusters. There are two architecturally distinguished buildings located towards the southern end of the block. Glentworth House, a large 1880’s villa and a grand 1930’s Chapel are magnificently related structures that dominate the site. Formerly there was a group of substantial convent buildings in the site’s south west quadrant, matching the scale and orthogonal layout of the remaining convent buildings. These buildings were demolished before 1980, as seniors and aged care replaced the church related uses.

Seniors and aged care accommodation, comprising the remainder of the existing buildings, was developed across the site during the 1970’s, 1980’s and 1990’s. These buildings are predominantly two storeys in height and are of no particular design merit. The grounds are a series of open yards, traversed in part by driveways. There are a number of significant trees, and the site perimeter is well planted. There is a gentle slope down from south to north.

In 2006 Ashfield Council approved the additions to two of the 1980’s aged care buildings on the corner of Victoria and Clissold Streets. These buildings, four storeys in height containing 36 units, are now constructed and occupied;
- This part of Ashfield is characterised by a diverse building stock. There are a number of major institutions, including Sydney Private Hospital, Trinity Grammar School, Churches, Schools, and several other aged care facilities in the neighbourhood. There is a concentration of 3 and 4 storey apartment buildings nearby in Victoria Street. Houses in the vicinity include a number of substantial freestanding heritage houses set in gardens (such as in the adjoining Victoria Square block), assorted bungalows, smaller inter-war houses set on narrower frontages, and some recent project homes (see Concept Plan Part 1 for context and site Analysis). The groupings of institutional buildings tend to contrast with the scale of the houses. Many of the heritage-listed buildings in the neighbourhood have a strong architectural scale and urban presence, in contrast to the ordinary character of the suburban houses. Therefore the proposed building forms have appropriate modulation and presence that responds in a contemporary way to the substantial nearby Victorian and Federation era buildings,

- without recourse to a pastiche of period elements;
- The proposed Village Green Precinct forms the heart of a comprehensive site strategy to improve the landscape, open spaces, circulation, orientation, the heritage setting, parking, building form, communal and recreational facilities and accommodation across the Cardinal Freeman site. The Village Green Precinct is located at the centre of the site, at the crossing point of the principal reconfigured site circulation routes, so plays a critically important part of the site’s internal redesign;
 - When viewed from the few vantage points in the adjoining streets, the new development will nestle into existing and proposed landscape around the site, including enhanced perimeter planting. Therefore the proposal is well integrated with its setting in terms of landscape and streetscape views (see montages).

Principle 2: Scale

- The Village Green Precinct comprises a grouping of existing and new buildings that define a new central garden that benefits the entire Cardinal Freeman Village and reinforces the broader garden setting. Together the three new buildings frame a new residential courtyard and define the remade internal east-west street. The integrated urban design proposal creates a complementary scale relationship to the existing heritage items, streets and paths, and an appropriate new centrepiece for the site;
- The new facades respond to the orthogonal layout, scale of the wall height, and masonry character of the architecturally distinguished pair of Glentworth House and the Chapel, as a specific response to the curtilage of the historic pair (see Concept Plan Part 2 for this strategy). Specifically, the wall height has been set by the level of the existing Chapel eaves, allowing the historic buildings’ highly articulated silhouette of towers, parapets, hipped roofs and crosses to continue to dominate the site’s skyline;
- The buildings are fully integrated with the site landscape design, as they are space-defining rather than object buildings. The buildings define positive garden spaces, which are well integrated with the reconfigured access walkways, forming a legible circulation system. The buildings enjoy outlook to gardens on all sides, and comfortably sit in a leafy setting of new and retained trees. The presence of landscape in turn breaks up the building forms (see photomontages);
- The buildings are designed as three related buildings around courtyards, linked by open walkways. The consistent height and purposeful building alignments create clear address and integrated frontages appropriate to its position at the centre of this large site;
 - Q1 is the westernmost of the proposed buildings. It addresses the east-west street, and is lowered into the hill side to the south and west, thus reducing in height to provide a good transition to the existing buildings that will be retained nearby;
 - Q2 matches the street alignment of Q1, and turns the corner to frame the new Village Green with its east facade. The L-shaped building also helps to form the central garden courtyard;
 - Q3 sits to the south of Q2. Its straight north façade frames the central garden courtyard, while its east façade helps define the upper terrace that creates the setting for the Chapel and overlooks the Village Green. To the rear of Q3 is a glazed single storey swimming pool and gymnasium structure, which has a green roof.
- The heights and alignments of the perimeter walls have been carefully considered. The section responds to the slope of the existing ground levels, and considers the privacy of neighbours to the west and south. The lift overruns are integrated with the massing, concealed from view from the public domain and expressed as a small scale turrets.

- The architectural expression is united by a common palette of materials and forms that relate to fine brick traditions of the Ashfield area. Well-scaled openings connect inside and outside living spaces. The generous outdoor living areas are appropriately designed for their urban setting, while the balcony articulation and sun hoods within the overall massing differentiate individual dwellings.

Principle 3: Built Form

The site is reorganised around a new central Village Green, which creates a green forecourt to the major north façade of the Chapel, which has been insensitively obscured by Building E for the last 25 years. The Green is convenient to all parts of the site, making it the social focus of the site plan and providing a clear address and way-finding for residents and visitors. In contrast to the current convoluted site arrangement, the proposed combination of these built and landscape elements creates a clear presence and legible address for this large site. The project will have an articulated silhouette, set in a green frame of existing mature trees and proposed gardens.

- In the ground floor of the various buildings that define the central Village Green are placed communal facilities that serve all residents, visitors and staff -
 - The Chapel’s largely underused undercroft becomes a major communal space, with associated servery and toilets. This grand room will open to a new terrace that overlooks the Village Green. The garden storage at the eastern end will double as a men’s shed;
 - At the same level as the Chapel’s undercroft, Q3 will house complementary smaller and more open meeting and activities rooms. More discretely located in sunken garden courts at its rear, a new pool and gymnasium offer opportunities for active recreation. A guest room at the lower level provides short term accommodation for staff, family or visitors;
 - Q2 has the major Aevum site offices that prominently address the reconfigured east-west street, providing a convenient central point of contact for all. On the sunny east side of the Village Green is a generous new café and shop. At the rear is a consulting room for visiting doctors and the like, access off the Aevum foyer;
 - Q1 has the central garbage store located at lower ground, with easy concealed access for bins to Queen Street. Q2 and Q3 have small garbage holding rooms.
- The changes to the Chapel’s undercroft have been considered so as to retain the building’s heritage value, and have minimal intervention to the physical fabric. The principal external changes are 5 new steel framed doors and a new porch to give access and ventilation to the major new common room. The recent ceiling will be replaced to provide acoustic and fire separation to comply with the BCA, while the structural joints will be discretely strengthened to improve the buildings structural performance. The servery and toilets are inserted under the concrete beam structure under the crossing, retaining all the existing brick piers and exposing to view the concrete soffit. Interventions for services are kept to a minimum;
- The reconfigured east-west street runs from Victoria Street through to Queen Street. The east part of the street, starting at the historic gates, has a gently curving alignment, It has generously scaled with footpaths, visitor parking bays, traffic

control measures and tree planting, and provides clear and convenient address to all the buildings that front it;

- In common with Buildings A and B (already approved and constructed on the corner of Victoria and Clissold Streets) the proposal transforms the dispersed common facilities and self-care aged housing, providing contemporary standards of accommodation in place of the tight existing units. All south facing units are eliminated, new generous balconies created, lifts provide improved accessibility throughout, and common areas are transformed. The combination of the proposed changes brings this part of the site up to the standards set out in the SEPP Housing for Seniors and SEPP 65.
- The proposal comprises distinct building volumes that are robustly articulated. The blocks clearly read as related but discrete volumes, as they are separated by gardens and breezeways, and have independent roofs;
- The scale of individual elements and palette of materials have been carefully considered -
 - The group of three residential buildings that define the courtyard are cubic volumes in face brickwork, with a combination of different bonds;
 - The communal areas are expressed as concrete, concrete block or rendered frames, planes or volumes, with larger areas of operable glazing;
 - Lightweight steel canopies stand beside the masonry volumes of the buildings, providing shade and shelter for entries and outdoor seating areas;
 - The balconies are generously scaled, in part projecting and in part recessed for privacy and utility. The balconies assist in sun control;
 - The common circulation, balconies, hoods and corner windows are used in counterpoint to the solidity of the brick facades;
 - The horizontals of the parapets, balustrades and slab edges provide a consistent treatment to the elevations. The eaves and roofs are treated simply in a contemporary manner.
- The sunny common gardens provide sheltered, landscaped setting for residents. The gardens provide separation between the accommodation blocks, and allow all dwellings to enjoy sunlight, air and a leafy outlook. The site planning and landscape design have been carefully considered so that future residents and neighbours retain privacy, minimise overlooking and overshadowing;
- The grouping of buildings comprises a combination of 8 different dwelling types with variants, tailored to the particular site conditions and residential preferences. Within each of the above types, the size, aspect and internal arrangements differ to provide a spectrum of accommodation.

Principle 4: Density

- The proposal contains 1 non-residential studio unit plus 58 dwellings in a grouping of buildings around courtyards, gardens, and access walkways, which provide for contemporary needs and comply with current access standards. The following mix of residential accommodation is proposed;
 - 19 x 1 bedroom apartments (1 with private garden)
 - 8 x 1 bedroom + study apartments (2 with private garden)
 - 4 x 1 bedroom + sunroom
 - 9 x 2 bedroom apartments (1 with private garden)
 - 5 x 2 bedroom / 1 toilet+1 bathroom apartments (1 with private garden)
 - 6 x 2 bedroom / 2 bathrooms
 - 3 x 2 bedroom + study
 - 2 x 1 bed rooftop units with roof terrace
 - 2 x 2 bedroom + study rooftop units with 2 roof terraces
- The proposed density and dwelling mix are appropriate in the local context. In concert with the proposed community uses, the development provides a suitable mix of accommodation to support the needs of population into the future;
- The buildings will be served by a new basement car park, accessed by individual lifts to each building above. The car park provides 45 vehicle spaces for residents and staff, while visitors can park in the new street. The basement also accommodates plant, services and some storage.

Principle 5: Resource, Energy and Water Efficiency

- The renewal of this important, under-utilised site promotes Compact City planning principles and is consistent with planning objectives;
- The site planning and building design maximise the benefits of passive solar design to the dwellings -
 - 54 out of 58 dwellings (93%) receive 3 hours mid-winter sun between 9am and 3pm. All dwellings receive some direct sun during winter;
 - all dwellings have a combination of private courtyards, terraces and generous balconies open to sun and pleasant green outlook. All primary private open spaces open directly off living rooms and main bedrooms and offer protection from direct sun to interiors in summer;
 - 50 of the 58 dwellings (86%) have at least two open orientations for prolonged access to daylight, while 34 dwellings (59%) have access to light and air from three sides.
- Sun control, in the form of balconies, screens, eaves overhangs, deep reveals and the like is provided to living area and bedroom windows which have west, east or north orientation. New tree plantings also screen these elevations.
- The thin cross section design ensures that there is good daylight to the interiors, minimising any reliance on air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation;
- - 50 of the 58 dwellings (86%) have cross ventilation between openings in walls opposite each other (the 8 single orientation units have plenums and 2 have ventilating skylights);
- The typical glass to glass building depth is 8.0 to 10.0 metres with a maximum of 10.5 metres, which is substantially below the SEPP 65 maximum of 18 metres. This ensures a pleasant internal environment and good daylight throughout;

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Energy use is reduced by -<ul style="list-style-type: none">42 out of 58 dwellings (72%) have openable kitchen windows, while a further 8 kitchens have their back wall within 7 metres of the glazing. Therefore kitchens well exceed the RFDC Rule of Thumb for kitchens (as opposed to the 25% nominated in the RFDC);many bathrooms have natural light and fresh air, without the need for mechanical ventilation and lights during the day;a good percentage of laundries / second wc's have openable windows;The common areas to all levels of the apartments are sheltered but open to provide natural light and ventilation;The careful selection of elements such as low energy bulbs to common areas, motion sensor lighting and the like;The provision of gas water and space heating.The buildings are designed to maximise natural ventilation as all dwellings have excellent cross ventilation. A range of window and door types provides future occupants various options to control ventilation. All the topmost apartments have top light windows or skylights to give ventilation and light at the centre of the plan. The standards achieved are well in excess of RFDC recommendations;The proposed on-site detention and retention tanks capture rainwater for reuse or slow its peak flow. The water will be available for watering gardens, washing the garbage areas, and for flushing toilets (see separate Hydraulic Engineers Report).	<p>Principle 6: Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The central Village Green is the integral component of the overall site design. This space will act as the social focus for the residents, as well as provide a green presence at the heart of the site. The Green will have a number of social roles -<ul style="list-style-type: none">to the southern edge, an upper terrace opens directly off the main common room under the Chapel and smaller rooms under Q3. The upper terrace overlooks the Green and has a bbq and vine covered pergola for informal social gatherings;to the western edge, the café opens to a generous terrace. The extensive outdoor seating has a pergola frame overhead for shelter and definition;within the Green, there is a children's playground and a lawn for informal games of croquet, bowls or boules.The pool and gym also nestle into a particular garden setting, defined by the retained red brick retaining walls. These gardens are more intimately scaled, set into terraces, to give privacy and a more secluded ambiance to these spaces;A memorable element of the project is the garden setting with retained and proposed tree planting. All dwellings will enjoy a leafy outlook. The gardens will feature significant landscaping, detailed in the landscape plan accompanying this application. The confined basement excavation ensure that there will be a limited built footprint, maximising deep soil garden areas;Due to the size of the site, other common landscape spaces of different character are also available to future residents. These spaces vary in size, use, plant selection, form and scale, and are an integral component of site design. External spaces have planting, surveillance and easy access from common areas;The compact building footprint retain the established the deep soil landscaped zones. These deep soil zones allow the creation of garden spaces with trees that can grow to maturity. Most existing trees around the Village Green and site boundary will be retained. The perimeter landscape around this precinct will consolidate with adjoining gardens, creating a green outlook and providing effective screening (see Landscape Architect's Statement).	<p>Principle 7: Amenity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">All dwellings have well proportioned internal living spaces that open directly to private courtyards, balconies and roof terraces. All apartments have internal and external living spaces benefit from northern, western and eastern orientation. There are no south orientation units;All dwellings have generous private outdoor spaces in the form of courtyards, balconies, or roof terraces with a minimum depth clear dimension of 2.35 metres. These private open spaces comply with or exceed SEPP 65 minimum dimensions and areas;Secondary balconies are provided in addition to primary balconies where possible.Balconies are located to take advantage of sun, views and green outlook. Apartments on all levels will enjoy views to a variety of garden spaces;Privacy between buildings is achieved by attention to the building's massing, by off-setting the position of windows, by orienting the majority of the habitable rooms towards the street, gardens, and by keeping openings in side walls to a minimum. All kitchens and some service rooms are oriented to the courtyards;The internal layouts of the dwellings have been carefully considered to provide adaptability to suit the changing needs of future occupants and allow aging in place over time. The internal layouts comply with code requirements and expectations. The design was prepared with the input and review of an independent Access Consultant;All bedrooms are adequately sized. All main bedrooms have built-in storage. Almost all main bedrooms in the proposal open to private balconies, and have corner windows;In conformity with SEPP 65, the living spaces generally have 2.7 metre high ceilings throughout;All dwellings have adequate built in storage within the unit, with additional storage available in the basement.Care has been taken to create individual entrances to all dwellings, as front doors are set away from neighbour's doors. The airy common circulation at all levels provides outlook to the garden courtyard, and has the advantage avoiding dark internal corridors;The provision of 3 lifts provides direct access for people with disabilities to all dwellings from the street and garden levels. All resident car spaces are sized to disabled requirements, connected by lifts. The grounds have a variety of convenient paths, with complying ramps and handrails, and access where necessary to the lifts;	<p>Principle 8: Safety and Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The clear definition of the sequences of common spaces incorporating the site-wide path system and central courtyard positively contributes to the amenity of the future inhabitants of this stage of the renewal of the Cardinal Freeman Village site. The building entries have been designed to provide architectural and spatial interest, and clear address. At the Queen Street frontage, residential services such as a sheltered waiting area, a seat, letter boxes and signage are provided. The entry sequence provides address and clear orientation for residents, care-providers and visitors;Living areas, bedrooms and balconies overlook the internal street, gardens and paths to provide passive surveillance. External lighting is also provided to maximise night time amenity and safety in line with CPTED principles outlined in the Crime Risk Assessment prepared by BBC Consulting. The careful consideration of the site planning avoids furtive spaces that are not overlooked;All entries and lobbies are secure, with self closing gates and security intercoms. Swipe cards allow residents from other parts of the Village to access the Q1 and Q3 lifts, so that they can safely move from the upper grounds to the central facilities and Village Green;
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Principle 9: Social Dimensions

- This project continues the long tradition of using this site for community uses, as the site has accommodated for a convent, a chapel, reform school, and a collection of aged care facilities since before the First World War;
- The generous new communal facilities and spaces characterise the proposal. The Chapel undercroft provides a range of communal spaces, including the major common room and servery all allow regular meal services if required. There are also additional smaller common rooms, opening to the outdoor terrace. A central office services the entire village management, while café and shop, a gym and indoor heated pool, a consulting room, and a studio (which also can provide overnight accommodation for carers) are also provided. The combination of these facilities should positively contribute to the amenity of the future inhabitants of the development;
- There is a significant social benefit in the grouping of well-designed seniors living facilities on this site, which will benefit the wider community. The various parts of the site offer different levels of care, allowing residents to age in place. All new elements are clearly connected by accessible pathways, lifts and ramps;
- The proposed development contains an appropriate mix of residential units. The design has a number of distinct plan configurations that offer a range of one bedroom and two bedroom accommodation, many with additional flexible study spaces and sunrooms. The direct ground floor and lift access allows contemporary apartments to be available for seniors with restricted mobility. Thus, the development increases the housing choices available in the Ashfield area, and the wider inner west area;
- Many kitchens have windows and fanlights over entry doors opening to the common lobbies, which are generously sized. This encourages social interaction between neighbours, and the ‘signs of life’ provides a mutual safety net for the aged residents;
- Care has been taken to create distinctive common circulation spaces that will offer opportunities for social interaction between future occupants. These generous, naturally lit spaces allow for the personalisation of individual front entrances, as most front doors are set away from neighbour’s doors;
- The proposed development is well located in relation to public transport, a wide range of existing and new aged care and other support services, and parks. This is likely to minimise reliance on the use of private motor vehicles, and promote sociability.
- The site has also been considered for the ability to contain construction works and minimise disruption to existing residents. Particular attention has been paid to creating an adequate zone between the retaining walls of the new basemnt and the existing Building E. This will allow Building E to be retained for as long as possible during construction to facilitate the relocation process.

Principle 10: Aesthetics

- The proposal establishes a positive relationship in terms of scale, character and architectural quality with the major heritage-listed buildings on the Cardinal Freeman site, in particular the Chapel’s dominating north façade (as measured to the eaves). This new architectural scale is in contrast to the squat and sombre character of the 1970’s building stock;
- The facades are designed as finely detailed masonry elevations that continue the site’s best traditions while interpreting SEPP 65 requirements. Situated in an area where no building type or scale is predominant, the project has a considered architectural character, articulated in both form and scale. The elevations have been designed to positively relate to the better quality buildings in the neighbourhood, in terms of scale, wall height, masonry character and rhythm;
- The three dimensional design provides appropriate modulation and detail that responds in a contemporary way to the nearby historic buildings. Like the Chapel, the new buildings have a masonry character, with tall masonry piers defining the well scaled vertically proportioned openings;
- The common circulation spaces are open slots at the centre of the building form. This design feature provides good amenity and environmental design for the benefit of all residents, while articulating the building volumes into slender forms;
- The proposed roof forms relate to the individual parts of each building, further articulating the overall building form. This is in contrast to the existing monolithic and heavyweight roof forms (colloquially referred to as the “pizza huts”);
- The design avoids an institutional character, as the scale and identity of the individual dwelling is strongly expressed in all aspects of the design. Therefore open elements such as the grouped windows and balconies structures are distinct elements, seen against the mass of the masonry wall elements;
- The proposed architectural character expresses in a positive way the environmental and amenity objectives embodied in the design;

Conclusion

- The proposed addition of the Village Green Precinct and refurbishment of the Chapel undercroft in the Cardinal Freeman Village continues the coordinated upgrading of this important site. The design achieves a high quality architectural, landscape, heritage and urban design resolution, including;
- The Cardinal Freeman site is an ideal setting for a coordinated project, incorporating contemporary aged care and seniors accommodation in a generous landscape setting.
- The site is conveniently situated convenient to many local facilities, and is thus ideally located to provide increased density to better utilise existing infrastructure and services.
- The refurbishment realises a part of the proposed site master plan, as a key stage in the orderly improvement of the site.
- The project has a distinctive architectural character and scale that will be an appropriate addition to both the site’s urban heritage and Ashfield’s wider urban landscape.
- The project replaces outdated accommodation, bringing the site up to current space, amenity, environmental and safety standards.
- This stage provides much needed communal facilities, for the benefit of all current and future residents of the Village.
- The refurbishment provides contemporary seniors living accommodation, incorporating the principles of adaptability and accessibility, to increase the housing choices available in Ashfield.
- Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) issues have been holistically incorporated into the project.
- The project will create a high quality residential environment for future residents, with very good amenity.

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