

# **SALAMANDER SHORES HOTEL REDEVELOPMENT**

Soldiers Point Road, Port Stephens



## **URBAN DESIGN, LANDSCAPE & SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

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# **Salamander Shores Hotel Redevelopment**

## **URBAN DESIGN, LANDSCAPE & SUSTAINABILITY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the urban design intentions that have guided the concept design for the redevelopment of the Salamander Shores Hotel. The owner's brief proposes the demolition of the existing hotel and carpark, and the incorporation of a high quality resort hotel, serviced apartments, permanent residential apartments, restaurant, public bar/lounge, conference facilities, back of house servicing, and an appropriate level of car parking, set in a lush landscaped environment containing resort amenities.

### **1.0 SITE ANALYSIS**

A detailed site analysis and visual impact report has been prepared as a separate document. This report identifies the key existing drivers and constraints that have formed the basis for the urban design parameters around which the design of the development has developed. These key drivers are:

- The coastal setting
- The adjacent topography and landscape
- Existing on site vegetation
- Location to Soldiers Point Road
- Isolation from neighbouring residential areas
- Natural visual screening from the coast by dense vegetation on neighbouring reserve
- Open space directly opposite to the west
- Access directly from Soldiers Point Road
- An existing local hotel

### **3.0 EXISTING URBAN DESIGN DRIVERS**

#### **The Coastal Setting**

The site is located on the western side of an existing, well vegetated knoll that provides an excellent setting for a resort development of this nature. It has a direct connection to the coast without its presence overpowering the beachscape as has much of the recent neighbouring residential development.

#### **The Adjacent Topography and Vegetation**

The vegetated knoll on which the site is located, forms a natural backdrop to the neighbouring areas and provides the opportunity for the proposed development to sit

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lightly in the neighbourhood and existing vegetation. It is proposed that the maximum height of the structures will not exceed the height of the Angophora trees that characterise the site and the adjacent reserve to the east and south. This will ensure that the proposed buildings will be well screened from the coast and neighbouring residential areas and will not create additional visual impact in the region.

#### **Existing Site Vegetation and Visual Screening**

The site contains some fine existing trees that are to be preserved and planned around thereby ensuring that the landscape character of the new development will commence with a mature vegetation framework upon which to build the resort's gardens.

#### **Proximity to Soldiers Point Road**

Road access to the site is available from Soldier's Point Road for drop offs, parking and coach deliveries.

#### **Isolation from Neighbouring Residential Areas**

The site is naturally isolated from residential areas to the south, west and east. Strip coastal housing lies to the north but it is set well back from the site by a vegetated road and a road access corridor.

#### **A Local Hotel**

The existing local hotel provides a community meeting venue and anchors the site on the north-west corner. This function is seen as an important anchor for the site and is incorporated in the new plan.

## **4. PROPOSED URBAN DESIGN CRITERIA**

The detailed planning of the proposed resort was guided by additional urban design criteria as follows:

### **4.1 Landscape Set-backs (*DGR 2.1*)**

The bush fire study determined that ten metre set backs are required along the southern and eastern boundaries. This ensures the provision of quality open space along these boundaries and aids in the creation of a sensible site coverage percentage. In addition, the setbacks ensure that existing flora, fauna and associated native habitats are preserved.

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An additional, tapered set back of an average of 12 metres is also proposed along the western Soldier's Point Road boundary which will enable the retention of existing trees and the creation of an extension of the existing southern vegetation into the site to aid in the screening of the proposed hotel buildings behind.

Existing mature trees along the northern boundary provide the opportunity to create public open space, a café and hotel related to the public access way to the beach and jetty.

#### **4.2 Arrival and Vehicle Parking**

The primary access to the hotel and convention centre is at the northern end of the site off Soldiers Point Road. The arrival is through a landscaped setting and a prominent porte cochere. Permanent residents and previously checked in guests may take a separate entry to access the underground car park which will ensure that no on-street car parking will result from the development. Similarly deliveries and garbage will also arrive and exit via this separate entry and connect underground into the resort's back of house area and loading dock.

#### **4.3 Site Planning Principles**

The over-riding principles of the site planning are:

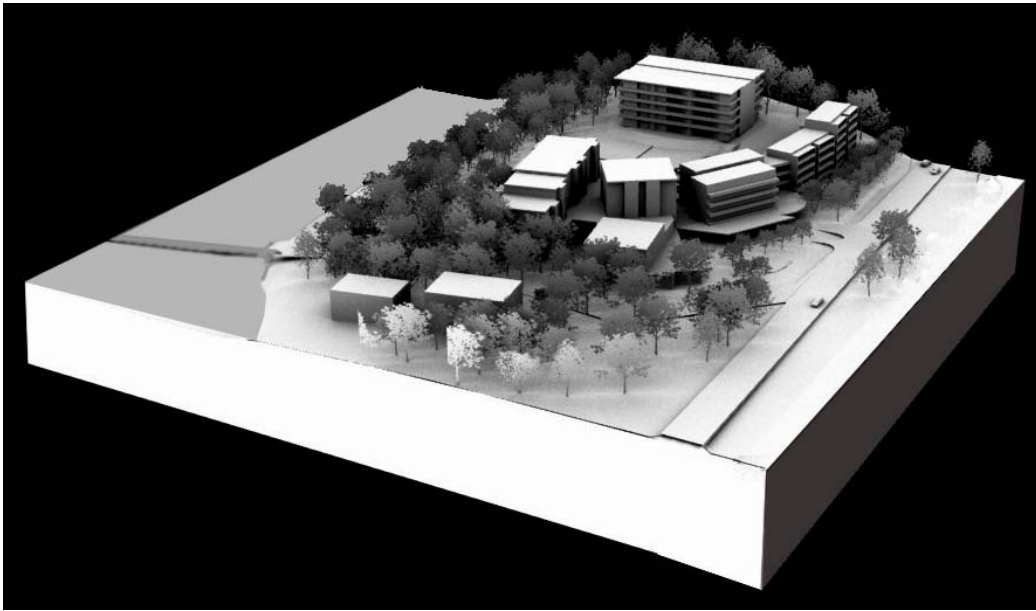
- To minimize the visual impact of the development
- To capitalize on the filtered views from the site over Port Stephens
- To reduce the visual impact of vehicle parking on the site whilst providing adequate space for the visitors and staff.
- To site the buildings in such a way that they minimize overlooking / privacy, and maximize views and define spaces that create useful and appropriate landscaped gardens and open space
- To provide an strong urban design focal point and active streetscape at the north western corner of the site where it will attract a greater public patronage.
- To provide significant boundary set backs to ensure that site coverage is appropriate to the area and the peripheral landscaping can be created to provide visual and privacy screening.

#### **4.4 Building Form, Bulk & Massing** (*DGR 2.1&Coastal Design Guidelines NSW*)

The objective of minimising building heights to that of the height of the trees (relative level 35) at the highest point of the site sets the general principal for massing, resulting in five storey buildings. The permanent residential apartments are located in a separate building at the highest point to the south of the site with filtered views of Port Stephens to

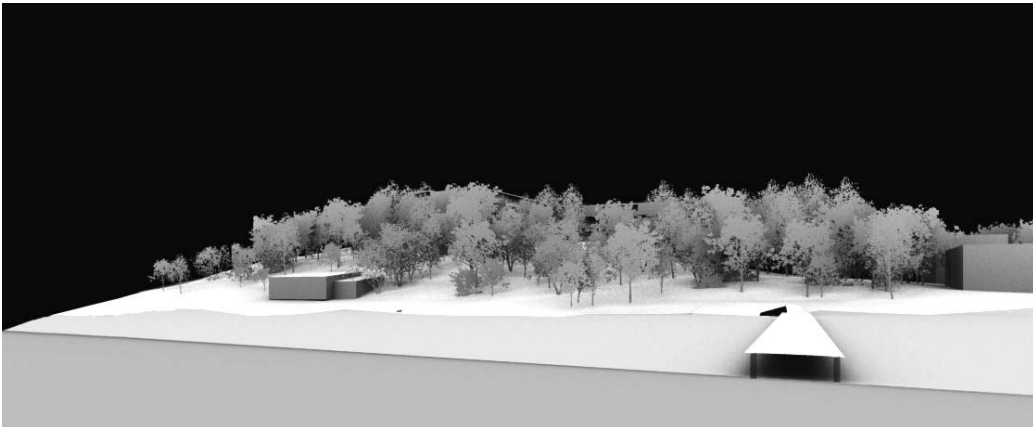
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*Figure 1: Model view of the proposed development facing south*

the east. Similarly the serviced apartments will also take advantage of the easterly views being located to the north east of the site. These five storey buildings will sit against the forest background and with their visual impact being minimal when viewed from all directions. (DGR 2.1)

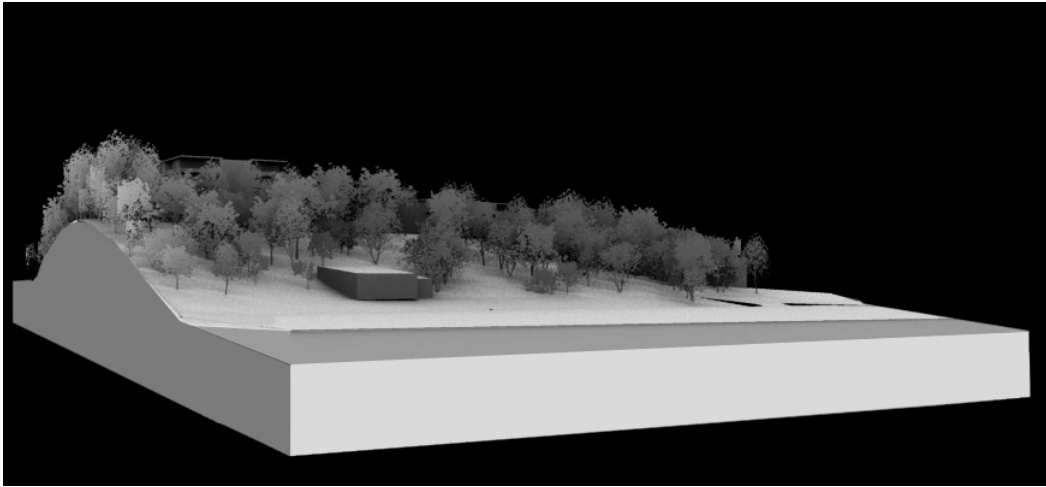


*Figure 2: Model view of proposed development from Jetty facing west*

The relative building height for the hotel buildings facing Soldiers Point Road is two storeys below the upper residential buildings thereby allowing greater sunlight access into the upper gardens and reducing the apparent massing of the development when viewed from along the road. This height control, together with the western landscape set back, will permit filtered Port Stephens views to the west from both the western buildings and the upper levels of the rear eastern residential apartments.

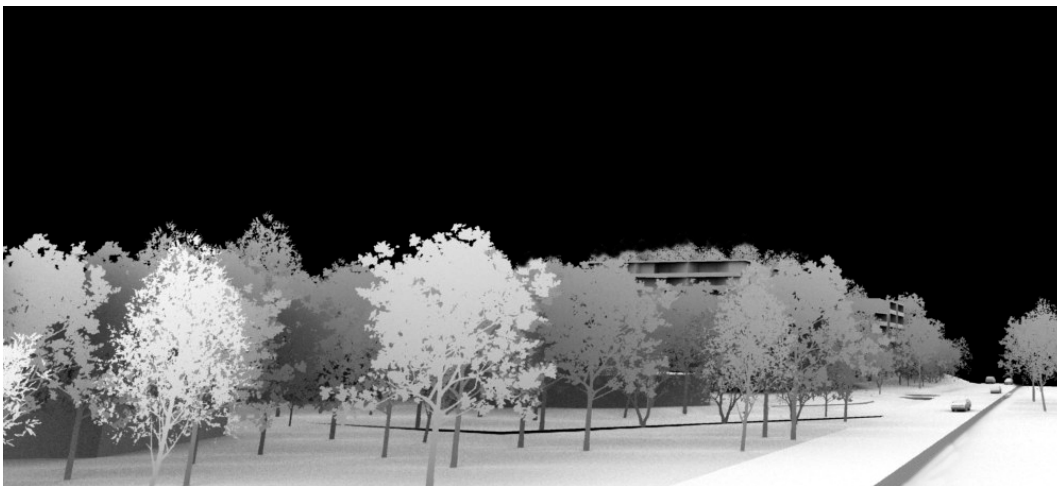
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*Figure 3: Model view from Wanda Wanda facing north west*

Anchoring the north-west corner are the more public oriented facilities of the development which will help to activate the streetscape in this area. The roads in this area provide access to the public jetty and beach to the east. The proposed locations of the bar, café and open courtyard under the existing mature trees will attract local patronage similar to that seen in the current resort. The building massing is terraced back into the site at this location which together with the existing trees, will help reduce the overall visual impact when viewed from the road. The lushly landscaped hotel driveway in this location will create a strong sense of identity, arrival, and visual streetscape focus to the development.



*Figure 4: Model view from Soldiers Point Road facing south west.*

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#### **4.5 Design Quality and Building Articulation (DG2.1)**

The development is being designed to a high quality to attract a sophisticated resort and conference market. It is to be managed by an internationally recognised hotel and conference centre operator.

In general, the building form is highly articulated reflecting the differing building usages within the resort complex. The Hotel rooms facing Soldiers Point road are framed by deep balconies that will breakdown the mass and scale of this façade which is also well screened by landscaping within the proposed setback. The hotel bar and café which anchor the resort on the north west corner will have an active public presence. The façade at ground will be characterised by open glazing, awnings and terraces that will be utilised by resort guests and visitors as well as the passing public using the beach and pier. The taller serviced apartment building and permanent residential building are located to the east and southern boundaries, utilizing the screening provided by the dense existing hillside vegetation. These buildings will be characterised again by the articulation of balconies across the façade.

The hotel entry will be framed by a porte cochere awning that will provided a sense of arrival and identity as well as breaking down the linear nature of the façade along Soldiers Point Road.

#### **4.6 Building Materials and Colour (DGR 2.2 & Coastal Design Guidelines NSW)**

It is proposed that the building materials to be incorporated will be chosen from a pallet of materials that will complement, and be appropriate to, the coastal location of the project. This will include local stone for paving and walls, timber (both recycled and sustainably grown), rendered concrete, aluminium windows. Colours will be recessive in order that they blend in to the surrounding vegetation and landscape and any highlight colours will be complementary to the local pallet..

#### **4.7 Overlook and Overshadowing (DGR 2.2 & Coastal Design Guidelines NSW)**

The closest neighbouring development to the site is private housing to the north east which is well screened from overlook from the new development by the existing dense vegetation of the adjoining knoll. The shadow diagrams (refer to Environmental Assessment Report) demonstrate that the new development does not overshadow the existing housing as it is located well to the north. The area is only partially shaded in summer by the existing vegetation in the late afternoon.

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Similarly, the coastal edge to the east is not effected by shading from the new development as the existing vegetation creates shade on the beach well before the building shadow has any impact.

#### **4.8 Amenity, Open Space & Landscape (DG 2.4)**

##### **4.8.1 Landscape Character**

The plan proposes six distinct landscape character types:

1. *The south and east bushfire setbacks:* Generally will contain low, well maintained shrub varieties to ensure that the fuel loading is kept to the required level but will provide a transition into the adjacent native bushland. A walking /jogging trail is incorporated in these areas.
2. *Soldiers Point Road southern set back:* This area will contain landscape terraces that will be planted with native species found in the neighbouring bushland that will extend the natural bush landscape into the site to enable a transition when approaching the site from the south.
3. *Hotel entrance and Porte Cochere:* To create a strong sense of arrival and visual identity for the resort the landscape in this area will present a formal statement with accent planting and groupings of flowering and canopy trees.
4. *Upper level Pool garden:* This is the central open space for the resort and contains the swimming pool, passive gardens and formal terraces to link with the lower areas. The planting will screen the impact of the necessary pool fencing and provide contemplative garden spaces for overlook and recreation.
5. *Northern Boundary:* This is the more public frontage of the resort which will attract visitors to the beach and jetty. The proposed café courtyard will provide a formal terrace under existing mature trees to service both the café and bar.
6. *Roof top terraces:* the areas over the low roof of the convention centre contain planter beds that will provide usable rooftop spaces as well as an interesting overview from the rooms facing this direction.
7. *Northern Boat Parking Area:* located immediately outside the northern boundary, this area is currently utilised for vehicle and boat trailer parking associated with the pier. Parking is undertaken in an informal manner and is visually unattractive to the Resort and to the immediate residential neighbours. The new development proposes to incorporate 10 double length parking bays and landscaping screening along Soldiers point Road and the Resort's northern boundary.

##### **4.8.2 Landscape Design (Refer to Landscape Plan Fig 5 below)**

The landscape design for the proposed development will be characterised by the use of low water use species that have been selected to reinforce and complement the adjoining local bushland and coastal character:

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Species will include:

- *Lagerstroemia indica* (crepe myrtle)
- *Angophora costata* (smooth barked apple)
- *Cupaniopsis anacardioides* (tuckeroo)
- *Doryanthes excelsa* (Gynea lily)
- *Strelitzia reginae* (bird of paradise)
- *Liriope 'evergreen giant'* (liriope)
- *Lomandra longifolia* (mat rush)
- *Raphiolepis 'oriental pearl'* (Indian hawthorn)
- *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (star jasmine)

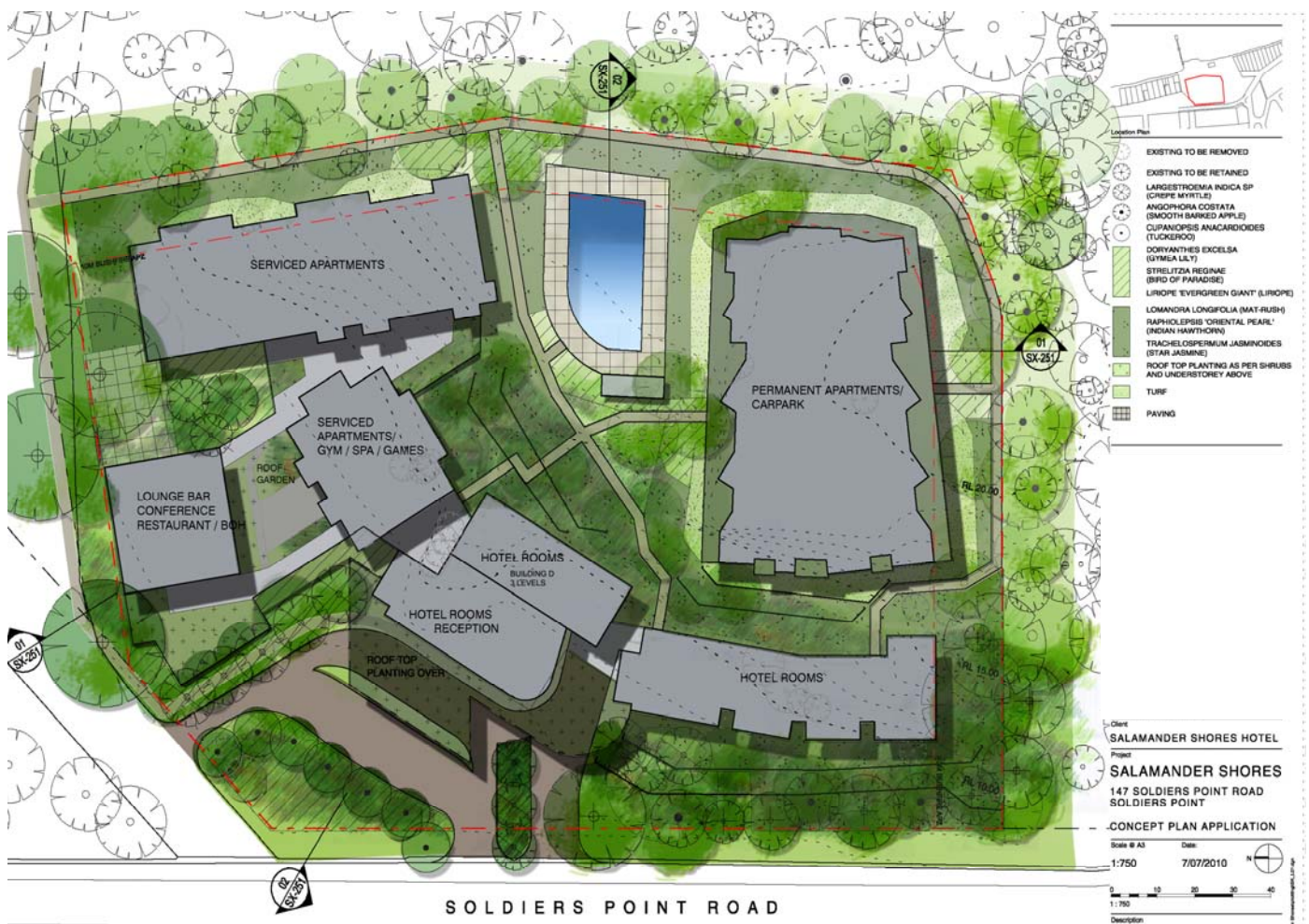


Figure 5 Landscape Plan

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#### 4.9 Sustainable Design Objectives and BASIX (DG 2.5)

Key ESD initiatives that will be involved in the detailed of the development will include the following: (also refer to BASIX summary below)

- Optimization of solar control with in the building by utilization of shadowing trees and building siting.
- Passive heating and cooling design
- Operable windows and natural ventilation
- Adequate levels of wall and roof insulation
- High efficiency performance glazing
- Use of smart electrical metering
- Optimize natural daylight levels
- Motion sensors and timer controls for common area lighting
- Use of materials with low embodied energy
- Dedicated compact fluorescent or LED lighting throughout
- External shading for eastern and western glazing
- Provision of energy and water efficient appliances (3.5star+)
- Use of high star rated taps
- Minimize use of Volatile Organic Compounds
- Use of low water species in landscape areas
- Bicycle storage facilities
- Rain water harvesting for landscaping and flushing
- Waste management during construction and post occupancy
- Reuse of clean fill

#### Basix Commitments Schedule

Building Usage:	Target Component:	No:	Description:
1. Commitments for dwellings.	a) Water	i	Plant indigenous or low water use species of vegetation throughout the area of land specified as landscaping.
		ii	Install an on-demand hot water recirculation system which regulates all hot water use throughout the dwellings.
		iii	Install an alternative water supply system, such as water tanks, configured to collect run-off from roofs. The system is to divert overflow and be connected as specified. As a minimum, the system is to be connected to landscape irrigation.
		iv	Install fixtures which meet the following minimum water use rating: All shower heads: 3 star All toilet flushing systems: 4 star All kitchen taps: 3 star All bathroom taps: 3 star
	b) Energy	i	Install a 5 star hot water heating system.

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		ii	Install a ducted individual fan to each bathroom. The fan is to be manually switched on and timer off.
		iii	Install a ducted individual fan to each kitchen. The fan is to be manually switched on and timer off.
		iv	Cooling to living areas is to be achieved by natural ventilation and ceiling fans
		v	Cooling to bedroom areas is to be achieved by natural ventilation and ceiling fans
		vi	Heating to living areas is to be achieved by 1-phase air conditioning 4.5 star
		vii	Heating to bedroom areas is to be achieved by 1-phase air conditioning 4.5 star
		viii	The 'primary type of artificial lighting' for each room in dwellings will be fluorescent lighting or light emitting diode (LED) lighting. The light fittings will only be capable of being used for fluorescent lighting or light emitting diode (LED) lighting.
		ix	Clothes line provided for each dwelling.
	c) Thermal Comfort	i	Construction of dwellings is to provide at least one ventilation opening in each habitable room.
		iii	Construct of the development is to be in accordance with all appropriate thermal performance specifications.
<b>2. Commitments for common areas and central systems /facilities</b>	a) Water	i	Fixture installed will meet the following minimum water use rating: All shower heads: 3 star All toilet flushing systems: 4 star All kitchen taps: 3 star All bathroom taps: 3 star All bathroom taps: 3 star Clothes washers: 4 star
		ii	Install a central alternative water supply system, such as a water tank, configured to collect run-off from roofs, and impervious areas in the development. The system is to divert overflow and be connected as specified. As a minimum, the system is to be connected to landscape irrigation, toilets, laundries, and car washing bays.
	b) Energy	i	The 'primary type of artificial lighting' for each common area will be fluorescent lighting or light emitting diode (LED) lighting. The light fittings must only be capable of being used for fluorescent lighting or light emitting diode (LED) lighting.
		ii	Install a centralised lighting control system or Building Management System (BMS) for the common areas.
		iii	Install systems and fixtures with the following minimum energy rating:
			Clothes washers: 4 star
			Clothes dryer: 4 star

**5.0 URBAN DESIGN CONTROLS SUMMARY**

Site Area	12.22ha	South Setback	10m
Site Coverage	46%	East Set back	10m
FSR	1.6 : 1	Maximum RL	35.5m
West set back	20m		