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Preliminary Environmental Assessment Concept Plan Application



76 Belmore Street, Meadowbank
(Also known as 8 Junction Street, Meadowbank)

Achieve Australia Limited

Prepared for: Achieve Australia Limited
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Preliminary Environmental Assessment
Belmore Street, Meadowbank

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1 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Don Fox Planning (DFP) on behalf of Achieve Australia Limited (Achieve Australia) to accompany a request under Clause 6 of State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (Major Development) 2005 to seek the Minister's declaration of the proposal as a Major Project under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act).

The purpose of this Preliminary Assessment Report is to:

- outline the concept of the proposed development;
- review relevant environmental planning instruments;
- review relevant planning controls;
- identify the key issues that will need to be addressed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) report to accompany the Concept Plan application;
- seek the Director General's Requirements (DGRs) pursuant to Section 75F of the EP&A Act for the preparation of the EA report for a Concept Plan application; and
- request that the Minister make the necessary Ministerial declaration pursuant to Clause 6(1) of SEPP (Major Development) 2005 to enable a Concept Plan application to be made under the provisions of Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

Achieve Australia is the proponent for the Concept Plan Application.

2 Who is Achieve Australia

Achieve Australia is an approved service provider under a range of programs funded by the NSW Human Services, Ageing, Disability and Homecare and programs funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Achieve Australia supports people with disability to live and work in the community with varying degrees of independence. People are supported to learn and maintain life and work skills, develop relationships, make choices about their lives and participate in community activities.

Achieve Australia services include:

- Accommodation Support
- Leaving Care
- Younger People in Residential Aged Care (pre-approval)
- Specialist Support Services
- Day Services
- Transition to Work
- Disability Employment Services
- Commercial Enterprises – Australian Disability Enterprises

3 Background

3.1 Consultation to date

Achieve Australia commenced consultation with Ryde Council during the exhibition of the then draft LEP 2008. When draft LEP 2008 was exhibited, the height of buildings map

nominated the maximum building height for the subject site as 9.5m. Ryde LEP 2010 was gazetted on 30 June 2010 and the maximum building height applying to the site remains the same as the draft instrument being 9.5m.

The heights proposed in draft LEP 2008 were of concern to Achieve Australia as they did not promote the opportunity for the redevelopment of the site, being a large land holding. The site presents characteristics which warrant consideration of higher building heights due to:

- A site size which is large enough to enable potential amenity impacts to be substantially internalised;
- The opportunity to encourage an extended curtilage for a local heritage item on site by allowing flexibility in the distribution of development potential;
- A site context which includes minimal interface with existing and future low density residential and a locality which is changing with an increasing presence of medium to high density residential development;
- A location which is conveniently accessible to a range of public transport options and existing shops and facilities; and
- A site size that can efficiently provide for additional housing at higher densities to contribute to the satisfying the growing housing needs of the Sydney region.

We understand that Council at the time was unaware that the subject site (comprising a number of allotments) was owned by the one organisation (being Achieve Australia), and that Achieve Australia had plans for the redevelopment of the site. Council suggested that Achieve Australia lodge a submission to the draft LEP and a submission was duly prepared on behalf of Achieve Australia and submitted with Council on 28 January 2009.

The Council considered a report to the Committee of the Whole on 6 May 2009 which contains a response to the submission (and possibly other submissions) on the issue of height. The response reads:

"The Section 65 Certificate issued by DoP required the Height of Buildings Map to be amended to reflect the heights permitted within the Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA) Master Plan and height approved by recent developments consent [sic] and Court decisions.

In the MEA Master Plan heights are provided in storeys and in cross sections. A conversion of storeys to metres to satisfy the Standard LEP occurred. The following is a summary of storeys to metres conversion for properties that apply to Meadowbank.

Storey	Metres
2	9.5
3	12.5
4	15.5
5	18.5

A review of height for Meadowbank should be considered upon preparation of an amending LEP or the comprehensive plan for the CoR [City of Ryde]." [page 10]

The issue of height was therefore deferred to a future LEP process after the Standard Instrument LEP is gazetted.

Following the lodgement of the submission a further three meetings were held with Ryde Council's planning staff to discuss the site and site specific planning parameters for the development of a site specific master plan. At the time, the progressed status of draft LEP 2008 was seen by Council staff as an obstacle to amend the draft LEP but staff agreed to Achieve Australia developing concept sketches for consideration.

NBRS + Partners Architects prepared concept sketches for discussion with Council's planning staff and the following is a summary of the main issues raised by Council's staff during the subsequent meetings:

- Belmore Street should present as a treed boulevard
- Pedestrian access across the site
- Conservation of the heritage house
- Vehicle access points and parking
- Boundary setbacks
- Heights
- View corridors
- Concept sketches presented were seen as being compatible with development in the general area

The Council staff preferred the open courtyard option with heights of generally 6 storeys to the north increasing to 8 storeys to the south.

Council staff considered that Achieve Australia should explore the option of lodging a Concept Plan application with the Department of Planning as the most appropriate mechanism to deal with the proposal given the departure from height controls proposed in the then draft LEP 2008.

3.2 Major Project Application for Meadowbank

On 3 March 2010, the Deputy Director-General declared a project covering a large parcel of land in the Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA) as a project to which Part 3A of the EP&A Act applies. The Deputy Director-General has also authorised the lodgement of a Concept Plan application for the land (MP 09_0216). The sites included in the Concept Plan application as indicated in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment report dated December 2009 are illustrated in **Figure 1**. Also illustrated on **Figure 1** are the sites in the MEA which have already been redeveloped as well as the subject site. The existing redeveloped sites and Concept Plan authorisation clearly indicates the urban renewal that is taking place in the MEA.

The land is a significant holding bounded by Belmore Street (diagonally opposite the subject site), Constitution Road, Bowden Street and Rothesay Avenue and contains the majority of land within this area. An isolated parcel further to the east adjacent to Church Street is also included.

A Preliminary Assessment Report has been submitted to the Department of Planning and the Director-General Requirements have been issued for a Concept Plan application and a Project Application for stage 1 of the development.

The Concept Plan is effectively an urban renewal of the existing Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA) comprising residential, open space and stormwater improvements. The Preliminary Assessment anticipates building heights of between 6 to 8 storeys similar to recent redevelopments in the immediate area.

One of the DGRs is for the proponent to seek to amalgamate other adjacent land holdings within the MEA mainly due to the number of isolated sites between the lands identified at this stage. Achieve Australia's site is not one of these isolated sites, but is within the MEA and adjacent to the Concept Plan area of the above project. Achieve Australia's Concept Plan application correlates well with the above Concept Plan application as it provides an opportunity for a review of the planning controls for another large land holding within the MEA.

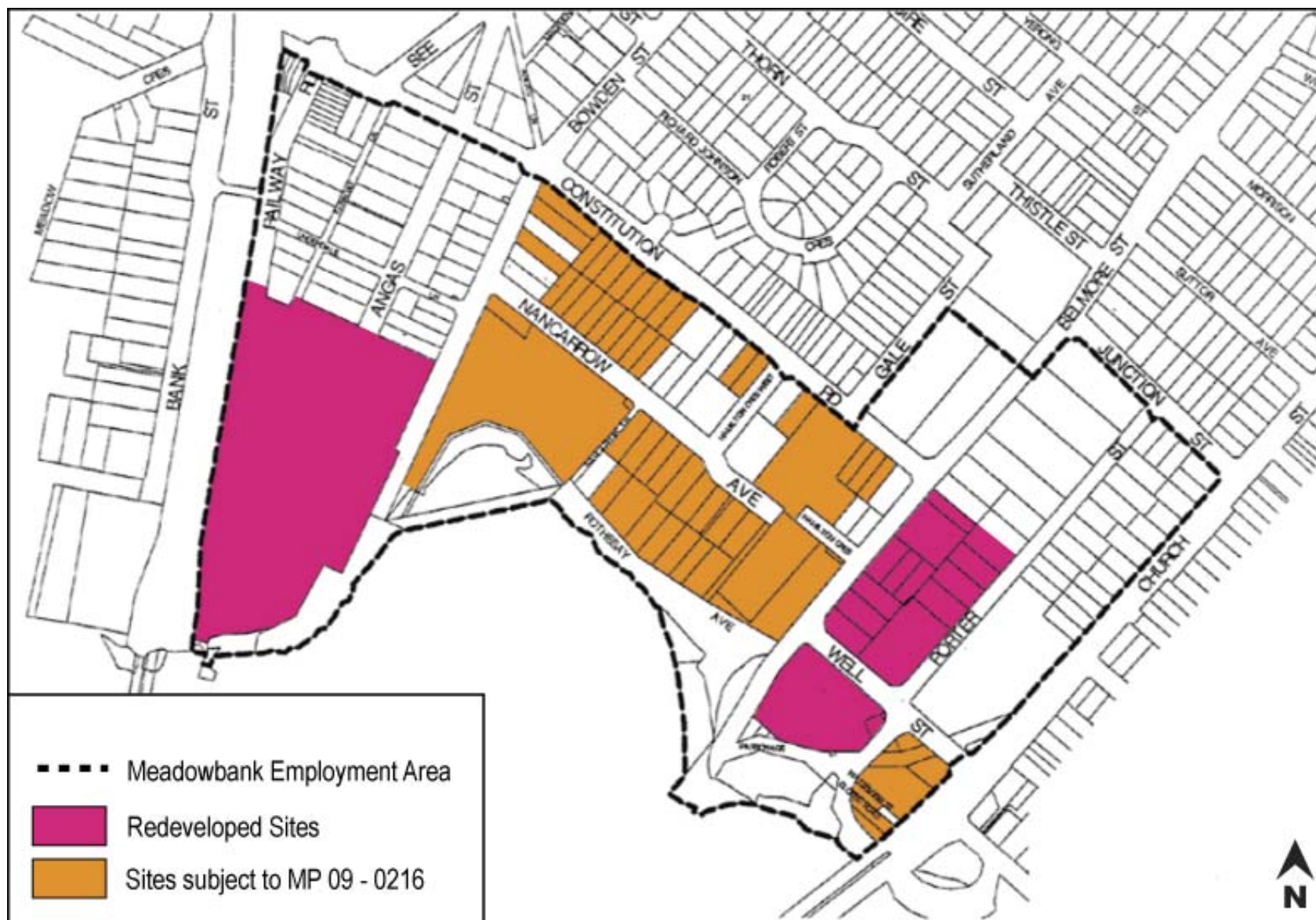


Figure 1: Meadowbank Employment Area and Concept Plan MP 09_0216 sites

4 Subject Site and Locality

4.1 Site Location

The site is located in the suburb of Meadowbank in the Ryde local government area (see **Figure 2**). The site is approximately 14 kilometres west of the Sydney CBD and 400m north of the Parramatta River.

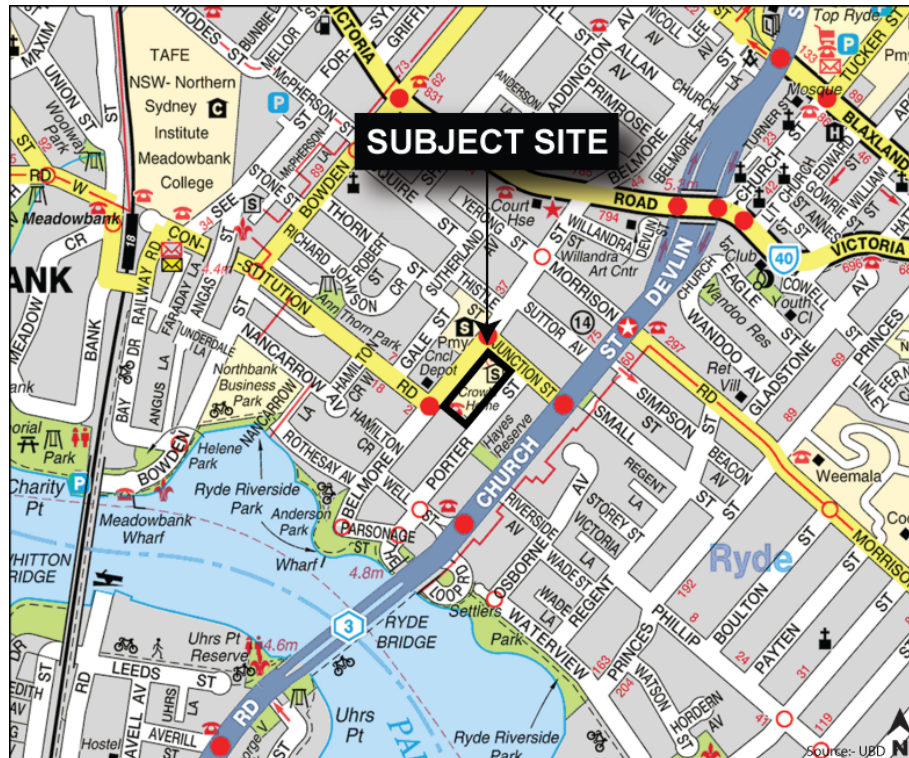


Figure 2: The site location.

4.2 Site Description

The site has three street frontages including Belmore Street, Junction Street and Porter Street. The subject site comprises the following six parcels of land:

- Lot 13 DP 4481
- Lot 14 DP 4481
- Lot 1 DP 921633
- Lot 11 DP 51349
- Lot 12 DP 51349
- Lot 1 DP 1109537

The site has an area of 16,143m² and the following approximate dimensions:

- A frontage of 167m to Porter Street (eastern boundary).
- A frontage of 98m to Junction Street (northern boundary).
- A frontage of 164m to Belmore Street (western boundary).
- A length of 96m to the southern boundary.

A survey of the subject site is included at **Appendix A**.

Figure 3 is an aerial photograph of the subject site. Key features of the site are briefly described below:

- The site is located on the mid slope between Victoria Road and the Parramatta River and is a generally evenly graded site. There is a very slight rise running east-west through the site. From this rise the site falls to the south and north (with slight crossfall from Porter Street to Belmore Street).
- A number of buildings are constructed across the site ranging from one to two storeys in scale (note the white roofed building in the north western corner has been removed since the photograph was taken). Many of the buildings are dilapidated and have outlived their useful life.
- A building located centrally on the site is identified as a heritage item under the Ryde Planning Scheme Ordinance.
- Mature trees predominantly along the northern and western frontages with scattered trees through the remainder of the site.
- One vehicular access point off Belmore Street. A further two vehicle access points in Porter Street. A further vehicle crossing is located off Junction Street but does not appear to be a main access point.



Figure 3: Aerial photograph of subject site.

Achieve Australia currently operates a number of its services from the site. There is a residential centre housing 36 people with disability. A central kitchen and laundry also operates the site servicing the residential centre. However, the buildings are nearing the end of their useful life and the accommodation standard provided by the existing buildings is reaching a point of requiring significant upgrading. Achieve Australia believes that this would be best achieved through replacement of the buildings.

Day services are also provided on site which is a service supporting people with disability to build meaningful life skills and connections to the community through facilitating their engagement in a range of activities such as; sports, recreational activities, art, music, literacy and numeracy development. These activities generally operate during weekdays.

Achieve Australia is considering the relocation of the Day Services due to the conditions of the existing buildings.

4.3 Surrounding Locality

The subject site is located in a transitional area between the industrial/employment area of Meadowbank on the lower slope towards Parramatta River and the residential areas occupying the upper slope leading back up to the ridge at Victoria Road.

Figure 4 is a contextual site analysis which illustrates the surrounding development and context of the subject site.



To the east on the opposite side of Porter Street there is a small group of three single storey residential properties (including a small cluster of single storey villas) to the north and industrial buildings of two storey scale further south.

To the north on the opposite side of Junction Street are detached single and two storey dwelling houses.

To the west on the opposite side of Belmore Street are the Meadowbank Public School and the Ryde Council depot. Both of these sites are predominantly one to two storey scale buildings with substantial areas of open space.

Immediately adjoining to the south are single storey industrial/warehouse buildings. This site has approval for a residential flat building development of up to 4 storeys in height. Slightly further to the south is a large residential flat development which is nearing completion. The buildings have a scale of 5 to 7 storeys at the northern end (refer **Figure 5**) dropping to a 4 storey in scale towards the Parramatta River.



Figure 5: Recent residential flat building development to the south of the subject site.

4.4 Surrounding Road and Public Transport Network

Road Network

The main surrounding road networks are:

- The north-south arterial route of Church Street/Devlin Street is located to the east of the site. Access to and from Church Street at several intersections with right turn movements at the signalised intersection of Junction Street. A loop road under the northern end of the Ryde Bridge provides access for south bound traffic to the western side of Church Street/Devlin Street and also provides access for traffic leaving Meadowbank heading south.
- The east-west arterial of Victoria Road is located further to the north of the site. Belmore Street provides access to/from Victoria Road (with right hand turn movements prohibited).

- The grade separate intersection of Victoria Road and Devlin Street provides for all traffic movements.

The surrounding roads of Junction Street, Bowden Street and Constitution Road signalised in the immediate vicinity of the subject site and are designed to operate as the main thoroughfares through the Meadowbank suburb.

Public Transport

Public transport options within easy access of the subject site include:

- Trains at Meadowbank Station which provide access along the Northern Line to the city via Strathfield or Hornsby to the north. The site is within an 800 metre radius of the train station (refer **Figure 4**).
- Local and regional bus routes that operate through the area along Junction Street, Bowden Street and Constitution Road and Church Street and Victoria Road providing access to Top Ryde, Gladesville, Parramatta, Chatswood, city via Victoria Road, Rhodes and Sydney Olympic Park.
- Parramatta Rivercat ferry service which operates from Meadowbank Wharf providing services to Parramatta and Circular Quay.

Pedestrian and cycleway networks are also available in the immediate locality, particularly along the Parramatta River foreshore.

5 The Proposed Concept

Approval is sought for a Concept Plan application for the entire site for a residential flat building development. Concept sketch plans are attached at **Appendix B** which illustrates the indicative site planning and building scale proposed for the site.

The Concept Plan will involve the retention of the existing heritage item on the site and demolition of the remaining structures.

In general the Concept Plan application will seek approval for the following elements.

5.1 Land Use and Density

A residential development is proposed in the form of a number of residential flat buildings and a central recreation facility to be housed in the retained and restored heritage item building.

An indicative yield of between 350 to 400 dwellings is proposed which will comprise a mix of one, two and three bedroom dwellings. Achieve Australia's intention is to provide supported housing for approximately 25-40 people in the future dwellings of the proposed apartments.

This density is anticipated to yield a gross floor area of approximately 40,000m² which equates to a floor space ratio of approximately 2.5:1 based on a site area of 16,143m².

5.2 Indicative Building Siting and Envelopes

Appendix B illustrates the anticipated proposed concept for the siting of building footprints and envelopes.

A curtilage study has already been undertaken by NBRS + Partners Architects to establish the appropriate approach for the site planning having regard to the retention of the heritage item. In addition the three road frontages, existing pattern of development and solar access also plays a determining role in the location of building zones.

The Concept Plan will propose buildings around the perimeter of the site addressing each road frontage providing both street address and active street frontages. The centre of the

site will form the main open spaces areas providing the curtilage around the retained heritage item as well as separation between proposed building envelopes.

The Concept Plan will propose building zones which, combined with modulation and articulation, will break down the building mass to each street elevation and internal elevations.

The Concept Plan will also propose building heights for each building footprint. The Concept Plan sketch at **Appendix B** illustrates the indicative building heights that will be sought in the Concept Plan application. Heights range from single storey for the retained heritage item and between 4 to 8 storeys for the residential buildings. The distribution of heights across the site again is designed to respond to site constraints and opportunities, with particular regard for surrounding land uses and building scale, tree retention and solar access.

The proposed heights correspond with the range of heights envisaged in the Concept Plan application MP09_0216 for the wider MEA.

5.3 Car Parking and Vehicular Access

The Concept Plan will also seek approval for vehicular access points and car parking.

The Concept Plan sketch at **Appendix B** envisages five separate vehicle access points. One of these provides at grade access to a circular driveway in the centre of the site (being the circular driveway associated with the heritage item). The remaining four access points will provide access to basements under residential buildings. Two access points are proposed from Belmore Street and two from Porter Street.

Council's DCPs and RTA guidelines will be used to determine appropriate car parking provision for the final dwelling yield and dwelling mix proposed in the Concept Plan application.

5.4 Tree Retention and Open Space

During preliminary meetings with Ryde Council's professional staff, existing trees have been identified as a site attribute that should be retained, in particular the row of Camphor Laurel trees along the Belmore Street frontage.

The Concept Plan sketch illustrates the intention to retain these trees and therefore retain this landscape feature in the locality.

The Concept Plan will also identify the landscaped area to be provided around the remainder of the site.

5.5 Staging

Staging of the proposed development will also be sought as part of the Concept Plan application and documented in the Environmental Assessment Report to accompany the Concept Plan application.

The supported housing intended to be provided on site by Achieve Australia will be delivered on a stage by stage basis.

5.6 Future Applications

It is anticipated that future applications after an approval of the Concept Plan would be determined under the provisions of Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

6 Relevant Legislation and Planning Controls

The key environmental planning instruments and planning policies or strategies that apply to the site or are relevant to the project are discussed below.

6.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005

Clause 6 of the Major Development SEPP provides that development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is of a kind described in Schedule 1 of the SEPP, is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

In this instance, the proposal falls within a class of development for the purpose of a residential project with a capital investment of more than \$100 million.

Given the scale of the project it is therefore requested that the Minister form an opinion that the proposed development is of a kind referred to in Schedule 1 of the Major Development to which Part 3A of the EP&A Act applies.

6.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

Subdivision 2 of Division 17 of the Infrastructure SEPP relates to development in or adjacent to road corridors and road reservations. Clause 104 relates to *“development on a site that has direct vehicular or pedestrian access to any road—the size or capacity specified opposite that development in Column 2 of the Table to Schedule 3.”*

The proposal will comprise greater than 300 dwellings and therefore Division 17 applies, if the proposal were a development application.

In accordance with clause 104(3), the RTA will be consulted as part of the preparation of the EA. The EA will also address the matters for consideration under clause 104(3) including:

- site accessibility;
- movement of people to and from the site and the extent of multi-purpose trips;
- the potential to minimise the need for travel by car; and
- potential traffic safety, road congestion or parking implications of the development.

6.3 State Environmental Planning Policy No 55 – Remediation of Land

The historical research carried out by NBRS + Partners indicates that a petrol bowser was installed at the Porter Street entrance of the property. Aside from the petrol bowser, the site has been used for residential and educational purposes for many years which in themselves would not have been potentially contaminating land uses. A preliminary site investigation of the site will be undertaken to determine if there is potential for site contamination. The findings of this report would be documented as part of the EA.

6.4 State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development

SEPP 65 and the accompanying Residential Flat Design Code applies to the proposed development. The proposal is for a Concept Plan application and therefore the full range of considerations under the Residential Flat Design Code would not be relevant. Part 01 – Local Context and Part 02 – Site Design are the main components of the Residential Flat Design Code that are relevant at this stage of the design process and will be documented as part of the EA.

6.5 Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005

SREP (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 is now a deemed SEPP. The site is located within the Sydney Harbour Catchment, but is not identified as being within a ‘Foreshores and Waterways Area’, a strategic foreshore sites, a heritage item or a wetlands protection area.

The SREP contains a set of planning principles to be considered in the preparation of environmental planning instruments and development control plans in the preparation of environmental studies and master plans for the purposes of the EP&A Act.

The principles that would be of relevant to the subject site and a Concept Plan application include:

- Hydrological and ecological processes;
- Visibility of the development from the waterways or foreshores;
- Water quality of urban run-off including the reduction of the quantity and frequency of urban run-off, prevent the risk of increased flooding and conserve water; and
- Protection against urban salinity processes and minimising the disturbance of acid sulfate soils.

These matters can be addressed in the Environmental Assessment at a conceptual level as detailed design and measures would be more relevantly considered as part of subsequent detailed applications.

6.6 Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy

The Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy applies to the Ryde local government area. The key actions and directions of relevance to the site and the project are briefly outlined below.

Economy and Employment

The Strategy sets an employment target of an additional 60,000 jobs by 2031 of which 21,000 are proposed for Ryde LGA.

The Strategy identifies seven strategic employment lands precincts in the Inner North Subregion that should be retained for industrial purposes. Meadowbank is not identified as one of the precincts. Meadowbank is identified as a 'mixed use area' in the Strategy and the Ryde LEP 2010 is consistent with this aspect of the Strategy (as discussed in Section 6.7 of this report). The Strategy notes that The City of Ryde Council has prepared a master plan for the area as a mixed use precinct, serviced by ferries and Meadowbank Station.

Centres and Corridors

The site is located approximately 1km from Top Ryde which is categorised as a Town Centre under the Strategy and provides a recently opened regional shopping centre which possibly elevates its status to a Major Centre within the Strategy's hierarchy.

The site is also located approximately 750 metres from Meadowbank which is categorised as a small village under the Strategy. However, since the preparation the draft Strategy, the Shepherds Bay shopping centre has opened (providing two supermarkets and speciality shops) which would be classed as a stand-alone shopping centre under the Strategy. This shopping centre is located approximately 800m from the site.

Housing

The Strategy sets a target of an additional 12,000 dwellings for the Ryde LGA by 2031. An 'Action' of the Strategy is for 60-70% of new housing to be accommodated in existing urban areas, focused around centres and corridors to take advantage of existing services such as shops and public transport. The site is well placed to a Town Centre (possibly Major Centre) a local centre and standalone centre.

One of the Actions relating to housing is for Councils to plan for sufficient zoned land to accommodate their local government area housing targets through their Principal LEPs. Ryde Council has prepared a draft LEP for the LGA consistent with the Standard Instrument, however, draft LEP is a 'like for like' transfer of existing provisions into the

Standard Instrument format and does not review zones to plan for housing growth. A comprehensive LEP will be prepared after local studies have been completed including a housing strategy (Item 3, Council of Whole Committee, Agenda 9/06).

Transport

The Strategy notes that the site is bound by four strategic transport corridors offering different forms of public transport options including:

- Church Street/Devlin Street as a strategic bus corridor (immediately to the east);
- Victoria Road as a strategic bus corridor (to the north);
- Ferry Wharf and route (to the south); and
- Train line and station (to the west).

6.7 Ryde Local Environmental Plan 2010

Ryde LEP 2010 was gazetted on 30 June 2010.

The subject site is zoned B4 Mixed Use under Ryde LEP 2010. This zone permits a broad range of uses, including the following:

“Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Business premises; Child care centres; Community facilities; Educational establishments; Entertainment facilities; Function centres; Hotel or motel accommodation; Information and education facilities; Office premises; Passenger transport facilities; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Retail premises; Roads; Seniors housing; Shop top housing; Waste or resource transfer stations; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 4” [our emphasis].

Item 4 – prohibited development - does not identify residential flat buildings as being a prohibited use and are therefore a permissible use within the B4 Mixed Use zone.

The subject site is proposed to have a maximum building height of 9.5m. The floor space ratio control map, minimum lot size map and residential density map do not detail controls for the subject site (or the wider MEA).

The land is identified as being within the Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA) on the Centres Map. However Ryde LEP 2010 does not contain any provisions for this Centre.

Two of the parcels (Lot 1 DP921633 and Lot 11 DP51349) are identified as a local heritage item under the Ryde LEP 2010.

6.8 Meadowbank Employment Area (MEA) Master Plan (Amendment No. 5)

The MEA Master Plan, as amended applies to the subject site. The section 149 certificates for the subject sites note that the MEA Master Plan is a ‘deemed DCP’. The Master Plan is *“a guiding framework and strategic intent for future development. It seeks to capitalise on the potential of the area as an emerging focus of change.”*

The Master Plan divides the MEA into 9 precincts. The subject site is contained within Precinct 9 – Special Uses. The Master Plan envisages that *“existing uses will continue. New development may be up to 2 storeys high, with a five metre landscape setback. Usage to be determined by Council based on merit of development.”*

The vision that existing uses will continue is considered to be inconsistent with the B4 Mixed Use zone under Ryde LEP 2010 which permits a broad range of land uses including residential flat buildings.

The site is underutilised with many buildings at or near the end of their useful life. The site is large at just over 16,000m² providing an opportunity to more fully realise the potential of the underutilised land in a location well served by public transport and accessible to services and facilities.

The Master Plan also limits height to 2 storeys which does not encourage the redevelopment of the site.

These factors justify the need for the review of the planning controls which can be achieved through the Concept Plan application.

The MEA Master Plan will be considered in the EA.

6.9 Development Control Plan 2010

Ryde DCP 2010 was adopted by Council on 16 June 2010 and came into effect on 20 June 2010 concurrently with Ryde LEP 2010. DCP 2010 is effectively a revision of Ryde DCP 2006.

Section 4.2 of the draft DCP incorporates the Meadowbank Employment Area Master Plan.

This DCP can be considered in the EA for the Concept Plan application.

7 Environmental Impacts

The following key environmental issues and impacts are considered to be of most relevance to the assessment of the Concept Plan application.

7.1 Traffic Access, Transport and Car Parking

Key issues regarding traffic are:

- Traffic generation;
- Impacts on the local road network including surrounding intersections; and
- Traffic and access arrangements to the site;

The locality is well serviced by three modes of public transport that can provide an opportunity to reduce dependence on car travel.

Council's DCP contains car parking rates based on dwelling sizes and distance to railways stations.

A traffic assessment will be prepared including traffic modelling (existing and proposed) to address the above issues. Assumptions can be made in this assessment about dwelling yields in order to provide a meaningful estimate of car parking requirements and traffic generation.

7.2 Heritage

The site contains a heritage item. A Curtilage Study has already been carried out by NBRS + Partners Architects to establish the appropriate parameters for the building. Based on this study, the proposed concept retains the heritage item, removes unsympathetic additions and provides a significant curtilage around the building and landscape items.

Adaptive reuse of the building is proposed to provide related communal recreation facilities for the development.

A heritage impact statement in accordance with the Heritage Council guidelines would be prepared to accompany the EA addressing the impact of the proposal upon the heritage item.

7.3 Height

As discussed in Section 6 of this report, the current planning controls apply a two storey height control across the site. The Concept Plan would seek a variation to this height control. Consideration of additional height is justified on a number grounds including:

- The site is well located close to public transport, including being within an 800m radius of Meadowbank Railway Station consistent with the Metropolitan Strategy.
- The site provides an opportunity to provide additional housing to assist in achieving the dwelling targets under the Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy.
- Recent developments to the south along Belmore Street are subject to a 4 storey height control, however the approved development is up to 7 storeys in height for many of the northern buildings, illustrating a different development trend. This height is also reflected in the Height of Buildings Map in Ryde LEP 2010 which nominates an 18.5m height control over that development site.
- The site is large and underutilised with many buildings having reached the end of their useful life and the site is well placed to take advantages of the site's access to transport and services, as has started to occur to the south of the site.
- Ryde LEP 2010 is essentially a transition from the former Ryde PSO to the Standard Instrument format without any revision of zonings, floor space ratios or height controls. Therefore opportunities for increased housing density are not reflected in Ryde LEP 2010. Opportunities for future housing we understand will be considered once the Local Planning Strategy is completed, one element of which will be a housing strategy. The subject site has therefore not been reviewed in the context of the Ryde LEP 2010, despite some obvious development trends in the immediate vicinity.

Further, Ryde City Council prepared a draft Meadowbank Employment Area DCP 2007 which sets out the future policies for the MEA and planning initiatives targeting the renewal and revitalisation of the MEA. The initiatives are intended to “*see the employment area progressively transition into a transit-oriented, mixed use environment.*” The draft DCP 2007 sets out a number of development controls for the MEA including height controls which are detailed on a street block approach. The height control for the subject site is shown as 4 and 6 storeys for the subject site. The DCP was placed on public exhibition but has not progressed, but illustrates recent thinking in terms of the future direction for the MEA.

The recent authorisation of the Concept Plan application for the wider MEA also provides the justification to review the planning controls and height controls for this site. The proposed heights correspond with the height envisaged in the Concept Plan application MP09_0216.

There is considered to be sufficient justification to warrant the consideration of a variation to the current height controls.

The EA will be accompanied with an analysis of the height controls proposed for the site and the heights of surrounding development, urban form and streetscape character, including the likely future character of the area.

7.4 Tree Retention

There is an avenue of Camphor Laurel trees along Belmore Street which Council's planning staff indicated should be retained as part of the redevelopment of the site. There are also mature trees along the northern perimeter of the site.

The MEA Master Plan envisages new tree planting along both sides of Belmore Street to create a boulevard from Junction Street down to the foreshore parks. New street trees are also proposed along Junction Street.

The concept proposes to retain existing trees around the perimeter of the site where possible. An arborist report will be prepared to accompany the EA which will examine the existing trees to establish their health and safe useful life expectancy and ensure that they are capable of being retained in the context of the proposed concept.

7.5 Urban Form

The Concept Plan will be documented with plans to illustrate building envelopes including heights, street setbacks, internal setbacks and gross floor areas for each building and landscape design.

The plans and EA will also analyse the view corridors in the immediate locality and how the site integrates with the surrounding pedestrian network (particularly opportunities for pedestrian through site cross-over, both of which are issues raised by Council).

7.6 Relocation of Existing Residents

The site currently houses 36 people with disability. The buildings are nearing the end of their useful life. The current residents will require relocation in the foreseeable future.

Achieve Australia's intention is to provide supported housing for approximately 25-40 people in the future dwellings of the proposed apartments. A co-housing model of accommodation would be considered whereby people would be housed throughout the completed development to achieve full social inclusion. This co-housing model directly supports Achieve Australia's core business of 'promoting social inclusion' which is conducive to the full integration of people into the community. The co-housing model would require the relocation of people with disability into their new accommodation in a staged manner.

Whilst there will be an interim period in which the existing residents would need to be relocated, this will be temporary. The proposal therefore has the potential to deliver a positive social outcome by improving the current accommodation standard and providing housing for people with disability in a manner that fully integrates within the wider residential community.

7.7 Geotechnical Issues

Contamination

The historical research carried out by NBRS + Partners indicates that a petrol bowser was installed at the Porter Street entrance of the property. This potential contamination source as well as other potentially contaminating activities that might have been conducted on the land will be assessed in a preliminary desktop analysis that can determine that the land can be made suitable for residential purposes and outline the necessary remediation requirements for future applications.

Soil Salinity

The subject site is indicated to be within 500m of Class 2 and 3 acid sulfate soils on the Acid Sulfate Soil Maps accompanying Ryde LEP 2010. Clause 6.1 of the Ryde LEP 2010 requires that if the site is below 5m AHD then a preliminary assessment for acid sulfate soils will be carried out to determine if the excavation of a basement could lower the water table below 1m AHD. The preliminary assessment will accompany the EA.

Other Geotechnical Matters

A general geotechnical assessment will be carried out to determine other geotechnical constraints that might affect future development. This report will accompany the EA.

7.8 Acoustics

The acoustic impacts of traffic along Church Street / Devlin Street to the east could potentially impact upon the site. The recent residential redevelopment that has taken place immediately to the south suggests that acoustic impacts can be readily managed in the design of future buildings and could be addressed at the DA or Project application stage.

If necessary a preliminary acoustic assessment could be carried out to set appropriate parameters for future residential development.

7.9 Infrastructure and Water Management

The existing capacity and any necessary augmentation of utilities such as electricity, gas, water, sewer, and telecommunications will be identified as part of the EA.

Preliminary stormwater management plans will be provided to demonstrate how stormwater management measures are to be integrated into the proposal. Concept stormwater plans will be provided with the EA.

8 Consultation

Initial consultation has taken place with Ryde Council planning staff with several meetings convened to discuss the current planning controls and concepts for the site. Council has expressed an in principle support for the proposal, but has suggested that the Part 3A approvals mechanism be utilised owing to the height departure and the status of the then draft Ryde LEP 2008 (now gazetted Ryde LEP 2010) which was too advanced to incorporate amendments to the height controls forming part of the LEP.

A meeting has also been held with the Department of Planning, as suggested by Ryde Council's planning staff to investigate the use of the Part 3A approvals mechanism.

Further consultation can be undertaken with Ryde Council's planning staff if necessary. Consultation with the RTA will also be undertaken during the EA process.

9 Justification and Conclusion

The subject site is large at just over 16,000m² and underutilised with many buildings at or near the end of their useful life, providing an opportunity to more fully realise the potential of the site.

The site is well served by public transport and is conveniently accessible to services and facilities, particularly being within 800m of Meadowbank Railway Station and close to the recent redevelopment of the Top Ryde Shopping Centre and a new standalone shopping centre at Shepherds Bay. The site's location for increased housing density is therefore considered to be consistent with the Metropolitan Strategy, and provides an opportunity to assist in achieving the dwelling targets under the Draft Inner North Subregional Strategy.

The recently gazetted Ryde LEP 2010 has not explored opportunities for increased housing density to achieve the Metropolitan Strategy objectives.

Recent redevelopment to the south along Belmore Street of up to 7 storeys in height is an example of the transition taking place in the Meadowbank area. The transition is also reinforced by the recent authorisation of a Concept Plan application for the majority of land within the MEA.

DFP considers there to be sufficient strategic justification for the proposal to be declared a Major Project and for the authorisation of the lodgement of a Concept Plan application.

This Preliminary Assessment provides an overview of the project to assist in the preparation of the Director-General's Requirements for a Concept Plan application.



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APPENDIX A

NOTES

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MARKS ADOPTED:

VERTICAL DATUM:

DATUM: A.H.D.
B.M. ADOPTED: S.S.M. 26247
R.L. 22.326
SOURCE: S.C.I.M.S.

A	FINAL ISSUE	5/05/09
REV.	AMENDMENTS	DATE

CLIENT:

A.C. FOUNDATION
No.2 ROWE STREET
EASTWOOD NSW 2122

PLAN

SHOWING DETAIL & LEVELS OVER
PART OF "THE CROWLE HOME"
BELMORE STREET, RYDE

Degotardi, Smith & Partners
Consulting Surveyors
Established 1957
Incorporating Morrow & Young

11/19-23 Bridge Street
Pymble NSW 2073
Telephone: (02) 9440 1100
Facsimile: (02) 9440 1055
E-mail: surveys@degotardi.com.au
Website: www.degotardi.com.au



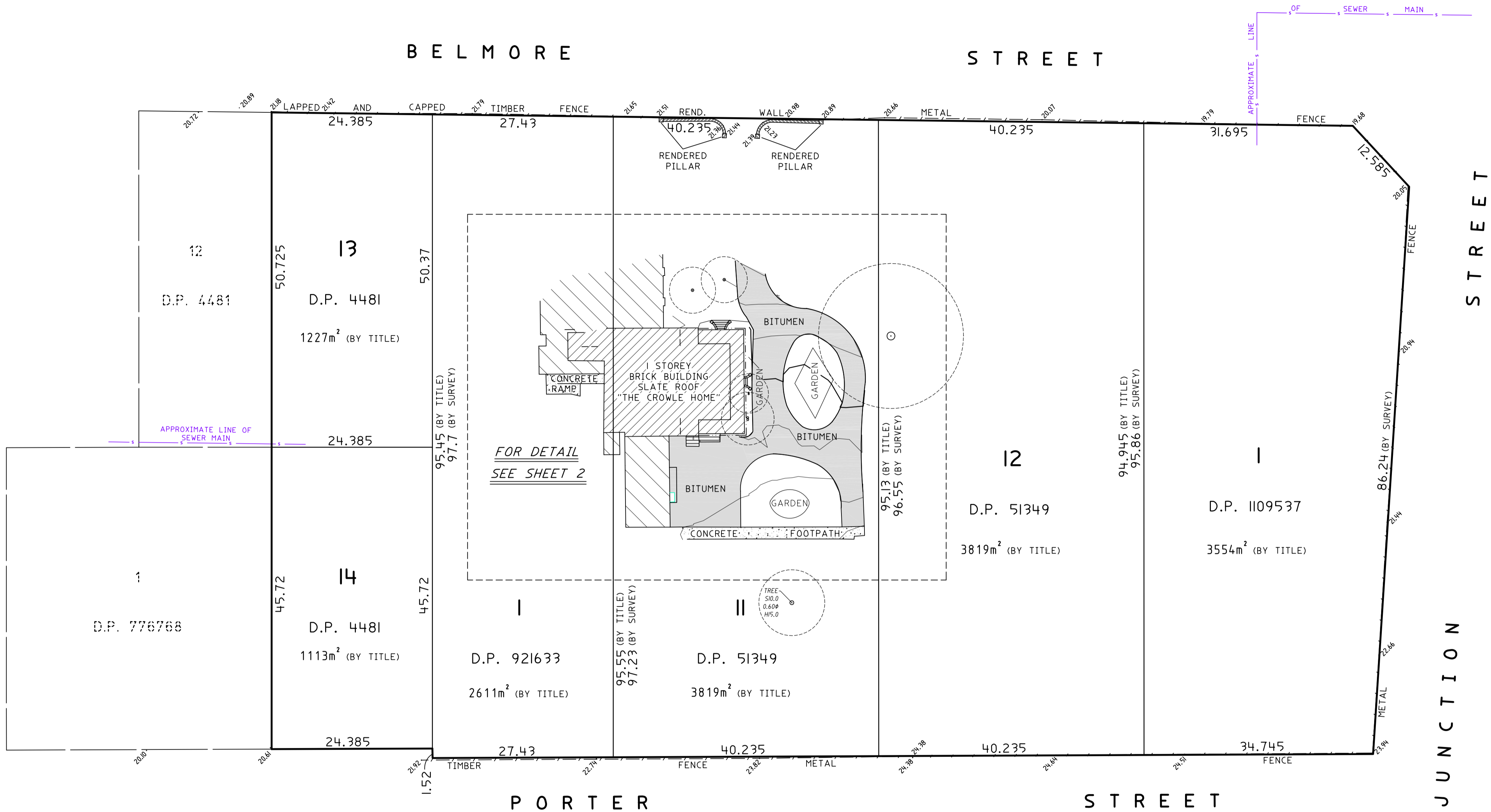
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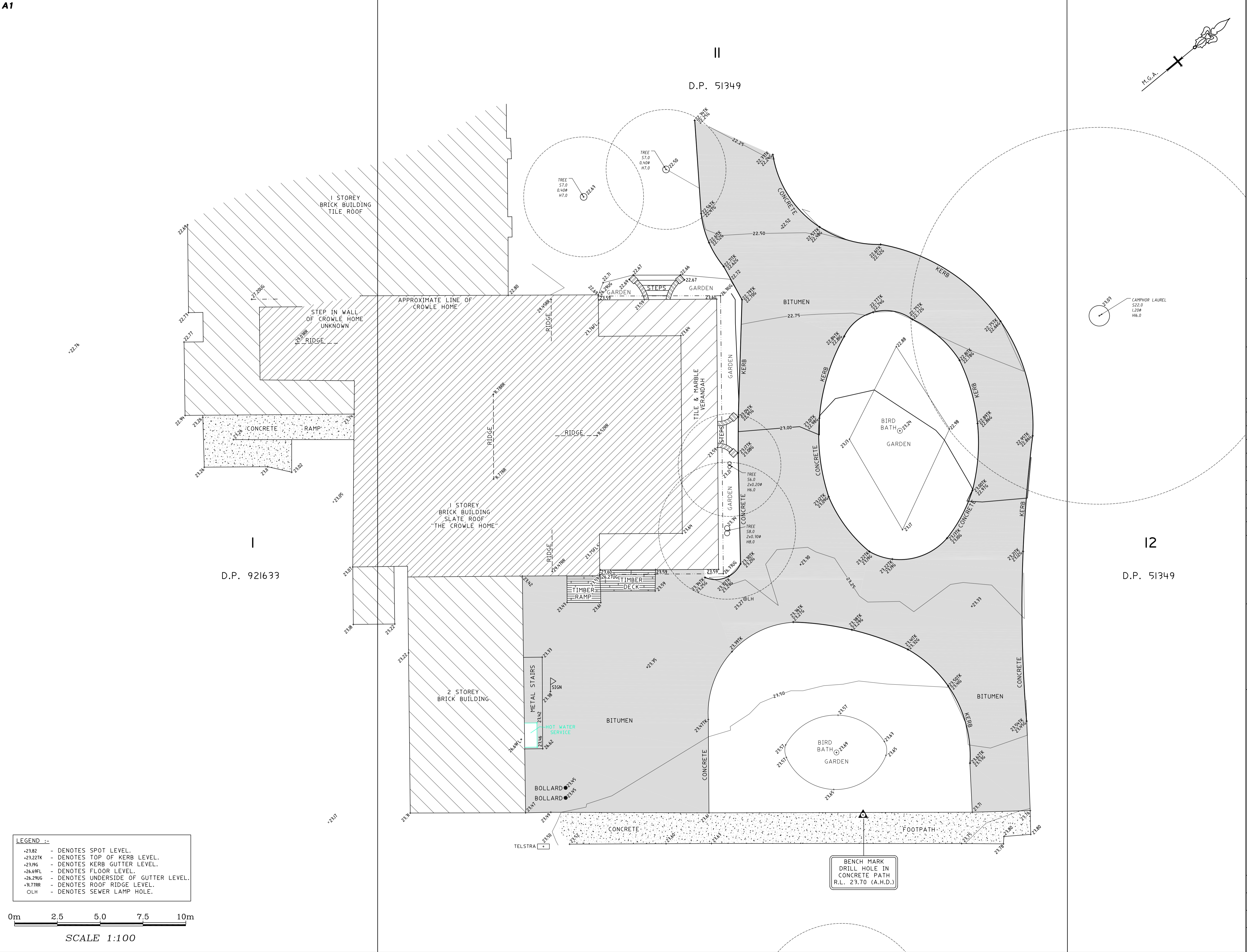
L.G.A. RYDE		SHEET 1 OF 2	
SURVEYED M.P.	DRAWN P.R.G.	CHECKED M.P.	APPROVED
SURVEY REFERENCE 31887		SCALE 1:400	DATE 5/05/09
DRAWING NUMBER 31887A01.DWG			REV. A

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+23.82	- DENOTES SPOT LEVEL.
+23.22TK	- DENOTES TOP OF KERB LEVEL.
+23.96	- DENOTES KERB GUTTER LEVEL.
+26.69FL	- DENOTES FLOOR LEVEL.
+26.29UG	- DENOTES UNDERSIDE OF GUTTER LEVEL.
+8.77RR	- DENOTES ROOF RIDGE LEVEL.
OLH	- DENOTES SEWER LAMP HOLE.





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APPENDIX B

