

Rev:C

3rd September, 2021

Project no 20120

Oaktree Retirement Villages, 2A Maude Street, Belmont

SEPP 65 DESIGN QUALITY STATEMENT

1.0 CONTEXT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER

- The site is located east of the Pacific Highway in an area currently undergoing change; with apartments becoming more prevalent and plans for major upgrades to the existing sports precinct that adjoins the site. The total site area is 9,793 m², currently occupied by the former Sporties single storey bowling club building and hardstand car parking. The site is roughly square in shape with a small handle to the south connecting Glover Street.
- The site has been identified as suitable for SEPP Seniors Living with good access to public transport, shops, health, recreational and community facilities. The development capitalises on the sites position, at the end of Maude St, to capture distant views across the sports fields and harness the northern aspect for good solar orientation.
- The massing of the proposed development is consistent with the objectives of Lake Macquarie City Council's vision for increased density and housing for Seniors. Over time, the development will form an appropriate backdrop to the upgraded sports precinct and formalisation of the eastern end of Maude Street;
- The project is articulated as a complex of two related building forms, joined along the southern elevation, that creates a central landscape courtyard. Generous deep soil curtilage is created to the perimeter of the site to improve amenity and provide a vegetated screen to the surrounding neighbourhood. The two building forms are expressed as a series of connected smaller components that reference the predominantly residential character of the area.
- The site planning and architectural form is based on a well-considered urban design rationale that efficiently uses the available area to create a rich urban composition, catering for independent living within walking distance to an array of support services and recreational activities.

2.0 BUILT FORM AND SCALE

- Consistent with the intended pattern of buildings envisioned in the vicinity, the new buildings have been structured to present as a package of connected 3 storey elements, forming a backdrop to a significant landscaped green belt.
- The scheme is configured as a series of connected urban buildings, united by a raised central courtyard and parking structure, setback from all boundaries. The built form is broken down in scale through the introduction of distinct, articulated breaks that introduce natural light and ventilation to the internal corridors. These breaks define a series of smaller 'neighbourhood' buildings.
- At the outside edges of the site, the eastern and western facades are arranged as a series of 3 storey articulated modules. Angled balcony forms and vertical louvres spanning the floors provide articulation, dynamic shadows, shading from harsh east and west sunlight and privacy between units.
- The orientation of the buildings, the expressed balconies and the articulation of the forms means that the majority of the apartments will enjoy good solar aspect and extensive views;
- The proposed building form has been articulated through the composition of solid wall panels, external vertical louvres, indentations, fin walls, screening and internal planning configured to protect the amenity and privacy between the buildings.
- The separation between the buildings exceeds that set out in the ADG, being approximately 18 metres apart as measured in the courtyard between balconies. Minimum setbacks to side boundaries is 6m, with the predominant building line well in exceedance of the ADG minimum.
- The considered site planning ensures excellent surveillance of the street frontages and central courtyard by all apartments. The design respects the amenity and privacy of neighbours through the use of generous setbacks and screen planting.

3.0 DENSITY

- The proposal is generally consistent with the anticipated density for the area. Any deviations outside these controls will be discussed in a separate clause 4.6 variation prepared by ADW Johnson.
- The density is deployed to best address the specific site conditions and constitutes an efficient use of precious urban land. The proposed density and dwelling mix will be appropriate in the local context, and the development provides a suitable mix of accommodation to support the shifting needs of the population over the next century (a minimum lifespan for such an apartment project);
- The proposal contains 75 new independent living units that provide a mix of accommodation to cater for downsizers and aging in place. The overall breakdown of the mix includes 47 x 2 bed units, 24 x 2 bed + study and 4 x 3 bed units. The studies and third bedrooms provide a large flexible space that are typically used for craft, storage, study etc. Oak Tree Retirement Living have derived this mix based on the common trends experienced within their other developments and expectations from residents.
- Each apartment is designed to fit its specific situation within the overall site plan, providing light, air, amenity, privacy, and a panoramic green or screened outlook;
- The proposed density and mix will be appropriate within this evolving, well serviced urban context, and acknowledges the site's existing urban qualities and urban potential. Given the proximity to public transport, public parks, community facilities, health services and shopping centres, this site is ideal for such a positive seniors independent living proposal.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY

- The intensive development of this well-located site within easy walking distance to public transport, parks, recreation and retail facilities promotes Compact City planning principles and is consistent with a raft of planning policies and best planning practices;
- The proposed development aims to meet the growing demand for substantial residential accommodation catering for senior members of the local community, and will add diversity to the area and promote continuity of generational interaction;

- Beyond compliance with BASIX's numerical standards, the site planning and building design maximise the benefits of passive solar design to the dwellings;
- 115kW solar power generation to offset power usage and reduce operating costs for residents.
- 52 of the 75 dwellings (69.3%) receive 3 hours of mid-winter sun between 9am and 3pm on 22 June. 58 dwellings (74.6%) will receive 2.5 + hours between 9am and 3pm.

The site planning and building design strives for excellent environmental performance within the constraints of the orientation of the site;

- There are minimal (5) single orientation south facing apartments;
- All living rooms (100%) open directly to courtyards or balconies, which offer protection from direct sun to interiors in summer;
- A high proportion of dwellings have orientations for prolonged access to daylight with a majority of corner units capturing morning or afternoon sun;
- Sun control is achieved by balconies, vertical louvres, overhangs and the like provided to most windows, appropriate to orientation. This strategy provides passive winter heating, better insulation while optimising privacy;

The buildings are designed to maximise natural ventilation as a high percentage of dwellings have excellent cross ventilation;

- 52 dwellings (69%) have openable windows in at least two orientations for excellent cross ventilation, which is in excess of the 60% cross ventilation requirement in the ADG;
- All apartments have a range of openable windows, doors and toplights, which will allow future occupants control of their internal environment. Allied to the cross ventilation provided by the high percentage of perimeter to most apartments, there is reduced reliance on air-conditioning for the dwellings;
- All common areas on all levels in each building (100%) are day-lit and naturally ventilated.
- External clothes lines are incorporated with each principle outdoor space, to reduce the reliance on mechanical drying and energy use.

5.0 LANDSCAPE

- this site's landscape strategy is a centrepiece of the site planning, with significant public domain and communal landscape initiatives;
- The landscape design is by Xeriscapes who have developed landscaping solutions for Oak Tree on a significant number of their retirement villages. In addition to this statement, Xeriscapes have developed a concept landscape design as part of the application;
- A landscaped communal courtyard is formed between the buildings that will significantly enhance outdoor amenity within the site. On the podium above the basement car park are proposed interactive communal spaces. This green oasis in the heart of the site is readily accessed from both residential cores and will be an integral part of movement through the site for residents. Many units will overlook these spaces, providing a pleasant green outlook;
- The scheme capitalises on the area available for deep soil landscape, particularly to the side boundaries and street frontages. The proposal creates 2,449m² (25%) of soft landscaping with 20% deep soil landscape.

6.0 AMENITY

- All dwellings have well-proportioned internal living spaces that open directly to private courtyards, balconies and terraces. All dwellings benefit from direct sun for internal and external living spaces;
- All dwellings have generous private outdoor spaces in the form of courtyards or balconies. All balcony and terrace areas are well in excess of ADG minima;
- In addition to the balconies off all living rooms, a number of main bedrooms benefit from a direct opening to a balcony, roof terrace or courtyard. This arrangement also allows a loop of circulation within many apartments, increasing their sense of spaciousness, openness to the outside, and sunlight;
- Conforming with the SEPP 65 Apartment Design Guide, all habitable spaces have 2.7 metre high ceilings resulting from a 3.1 metre floor to floor separation.

- All the common lobbies have natural light and ventilation.
- All apartments are adaptable dwellings to allow aging in place in accordance with SEPP (Housing for Seniors);
- Common garbage chutes have been provided at each lobby that conveys waste to sorted bins in the car park located at each core. The rooms are discreetly located and are to be mechanically ventilated. A central temporary garbage collection area is located at the entry off Glover Street. Garbage bins are temporarily moved to this location by the building manager for kerbside collection.

7.0 SAFETY

- The apartments will provide excellent animation and passive surveillance of the street, sports fields and courtyard spaces.
- The main street entry to the site is from Glover Street via a winding path and angled driveway. Both have been designed to avoid impact on the existing mature trees to be retained whilst maintaining clear sight lines. The main entry includes extensive glazing and surveillance from the Foyer and Communal Dining area. Units located above the communal areas have balconies and windows overlooking the drive and forecourt, which offers good passive surveillance. A secondary, secure pedestrian entry is provided to Maude Street located centrally to the courtyard.
- The open ended cores on all levels provide high-amenity entrances to all apartments. Each apartment's entry door is clearly legible to the common space;
- Lighting to the common lobbies and to the street entries to the building will animate the façade at night;
- The services and escapes are discreetly handled to minimise their impact on the common areas and footpath environment and to maximise landscape and residential space.

8.0 HOUSING DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

- The proposed development is extremely well located in relation to major public transport, shopping centres, parks and existing services. This well-serviced location should minimise reliance on the use of private motor vehicles;

- In contrast to many new developments in the LGA that comprise standard units, the proposal will enable local senior residence to remain in the area, maintaining intergenerational interaction and greater precinct wide diversity;
- The generous communal garden spaces can become a great asset for future residents and their visitors, and should engender a sense of community, provide recreational opportunities and the chance for easy socialisation. There is a common room centrally located with access to a dedicated courtyard for functions, exercise and social interaction.
- The building will be served by discretely placed common facilities, including large landscaped courtyards at podium level, a pool and associated amenities, garbage chutes at each level, generous naturally lit and ventilated lobbies. A common WC, gym and yoga space is to be provided where they would be of most convenience;

9.0 AESTHETICS

- The architectural design will bring a distinguished presence to the Belmont central core, sports precinct, streetscape and skyline. The scheme has a limited material palette that considers aesthetics, durability and maintenance.
- The Maude Street frontage is a sequence of well-scaled mineral paint and face brick façades, punctuated by landscaped elements. The articulated design is in the tradition of street wall buildings that define and reinforce the undulating alignment of the street. The façades have a calm arrangement of horizontal banding, which are calibrated by a range of minor and major vertical elements.
- The narrow north and south facades that face the streets have a striking expression of framed balconies, with full height aluminium screened elements, concrete and glass balustrades, and face brick façade treatments. The balconies provide deeply-modelled areas of shade. The Southern (Glover St) elevation is set back from the street, accessed via a tree lined drive. The wings are connected along the southern elevation, articulated by deep vertical blades and awning structure that denotes the formal entry to the complex;
- The buildings' east and west facades are highly articulated, giving architectural expression to the built form that integrates overhangs, screening and shading. Full-height window assemblies, vertical louvres and bold balustrade elements present a visually dynamic and interesting aesthetic derived from functionality;

CONCLUSION

The design achieves a high quality architectural, urban design and landscape resolution, and signals the revitalisation of the Belmont urban core and sports precinct;

- The design is a considered response to the future scale and character of the site and the precincts evolving urbanity.
- The site is the ideal setting for a Seniors residential project, and the project provides a **model for the envisaged redevelopment of the former Sporties site**.
- The site is well situated adjacent; public transport routes, recreational facilities, health and shopping centres and is thus **ideally located for urban consolidation**.
- With Council's involvement, the project can well relate to **important new treatments to the public domain**, especially the adjacent sports precinct.
- The **scale mediates between** that of the envisaged future character to the west and the existing landscape amenity to the east, reinforcing the urban outcomes for the area.
- The project has a **distinctive architectural character, scale and silhouette** that will be an appropriate addition to the area.
- The combination of articulated midrise buildings framing landscaped courtyards provides an **appropriate model** for matching higher density housing with high amenity locations.
- **Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)** issues have been holistically incorporated into the project.
- The **landscape design is fully integrated** with the site planning, and embellishes the interface between adjoining lots and the street frontages.
- The proposal **consolidates communal courtyard spaces** in the heart of the block, for the shared enjoyment of residents.

- The project addresses the need for Seniors Housing and incorporates **a diversity of residential accommodation**, incorporating the principles of adaptability, to increase opportunities for aging in place.
- The proposal satisfactorily considers the privacy and amenity of the neighbouring properties and **respects their redevelopment potential**.
- The project will create a **high quality residential environment** for future residents, with very good amenity in line with the objectives of the ADG requirements.
- The resolution of urban, architectural, environmental, and social design considerations demonstrates that the proposal is an **appropriate fit to its site and context**.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Joel Chamberlain', written over a horizontal line.

Joel Chamberlain

Architect; NSW ARB number: #11078

Senior Associate, CKDS Architecture