**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

**6 Discovery Drive, Yass – Development Proposal Submission**

**Introduction**

This document outlines the justification for the proposed development at 6 Discovery Drive, Yass. The proposal encompasses a dual-occupancy residence and associated infrastructure, designed to comply with the Yass Valley Development Control Plan 2024 (DCP) and other relevant guidelines. This submission directly addresses the council’s previously raised concerns regarding building scale, visual impact, and site suitability. Through a detailed analysis of the regulatory framework and neighbourhood context, we demonstrate that the development aligns with local planning objectives and complements the established character of the area.

**Property and Development Overview**

The property at 6 Discovery Drive, Yass, is a 26,952 m² residential lot situated in a unique precinct that blends modern residential, traditional homes, commercial structures, and some light industrial facilities. The diverse nature of the precinct allows for flexibility in design while adhering to the overarching planning principles of the Yass Valley Council.

**Site Context and Analysis**

The Discovery Drive/Reddall Street precinct is characterized by an eclectic mix of building styles and uses, reflecting its historical development patterns. Properties in this area range from single-family dwellings to light commercial and agricultural structures, contributing to a heterogeneous built environment. This contextual variety is emphasized in the Yass Built Form Study 2011, which describes the precinct as having “no strong built form features” and recognizes the potential for contemporary design approaches. This flexibility supports the incorporation of a modern aesthetic for 6 Discovery Drive.

The property is located on a slope with a natural elevation change of approximately 5-7 meters from the top (north) to the bottom (south). This topographical variation presents a unique opportunity to integrate the proposed structures into the landscape, utilizing the natural contours to reduce visual prominence and enhance site integration.

**Development Proposal Details**

The proposed development includes a primary dwelling, a secondary residence, and an attached garage, designed to meet the needs of a dual-occupancy residential use. The total built area is 1,115 m², representing less than 4% of the total lot area. The development strategy emphasizes minimal site coverage, ensuring that the majority of the land remains as open space, maintaining the area’s low-density residential character.

* **Primary Dwelling:**
	+ The proposed residence is a modern two-story structure utilizing a level design to follow the natural slope of the site. This design minimizes the need for extensive cut-and-fill earthworks and allows the building to be partially embedded into the hillside, further reducing its visual profile.
* **Secondary Dwelling:**
	+ The existing residence is a single-story building situated at the elevated easterly portion of the block approximately 100m from eastern most wall of the primary dwelling. This layout maximizes privacy between the two units and creates a cohesive residential complex functioning as a unified development. The proposed dwelling will likely not be visible to the existing occupancy.
* **Garage and Storage Facilities:**
	+ The garage is integrated into the main level of the proposed dwelling, designed to accommodate up to 30 vehicles, reflecting the owner’s need for secure car storage. The garage’s footprint has been optimized to reduce visible bulk and is partially concealed behind existing vegetation.

**Key Design Features**

* **Building Height:** The maximum building height is 7.8 meters, within the 8-meter limit stipulated by the Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP). The height is measured from the natural ground level to the highest point of the roof, as per regulatory requirements.
* **Site Coverage:** The development occupies only 4.1% of the site area, preserving over 25,800 m² of green space. This exceeds typical residential requirements and aligns with the council’s objective to promote open spaces and preserve the natural environment.
* **Materials and Finish:** The exterior will feature black Colorbond cladding, a durable and low-maintenance material that is visually recessive in the landscape. The use of masonry accents on select façades adds texture and interest, breaking up the building’s form and integrating it with the earthy tones of the surrounding environment.
* **Earthworks:** Earthworks have been carefully planned to achieve a balanced cut-and-fill approach. This minimizes disruption to the natural landscape and ensures that no excessive importation of fill material is required. The earthworks will be primarily confined to the building footprint, with measures in place to control erosion and sedimentation.
* **Drainage and Stormwater Management:** A new drainage plan has been developed to rectify historical issues, including the installation of retention basins and redirection of overland flow. This will not only prevent water pooling and erosion but also enhance the site’s overall stability.

**Summary Table of Compliance Metrics**

| **Metric** | **Proposed Value** | **Maximum Allowable Value** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Building Height | 7.8 meters | 8.0 meters |
| Site Coverage | 4.1% | 50% |
| Plot Ratio | 0.0399 | 0.5:1 |
| Total Built Area | 1,115 m² | N/A |
| Open Space Retained | 25,837 m² | N/A |

**Addressing Council’s Previous Concerns**

The refusal of the initial development application cited three primary concerns: building scale and height, visual impact on the streetscape, and site suitability. Each concern is addressed below with detailed explanations and supporting documentation.

1. **Building Scale and Height**
	* **Compliance with Height Regulations:**
		+ The Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP) specifies in Clause 4.3 that the maximum permissible building height in R1 General Residential Zones is 8 meters. The proposed development meets this requirement, as verified through site-specific topographic surveys and architectural drawings.
		+ Height Compliance Analysis:
			- The building’s highest point is measured at 7.8 meters above the natural ground level, remaining within the allowable limit.
			- Building design approach utilizes the sloping topography to create a secreted structure, reducing the visual bulk and ensuring the development harmonizes with the existing landscape.
			- Detailed cross-sections and elevation profiles are included in Appendix A, showing the building’s height relative to both existing site contours and adjacent structures.
	* **Plot Ratio and Site Coverage:**
		+ Clause B.1.3 of the Yass Valley Development Control Plan 2024 (DCP) sets a maximum plot ratio of 0.5:1 for dual-occupancy developments in R1 zones. The proposed development has a plot ratio of 0.0399, significantly lower than the allowable limit, supporting a low-density residential use.
		+ The building’s footprint, including the garage and secondary residence, covers only 1,115 m² of the 26,952 m² lot, preserving 25,837 m² of open space. This complies with the DCP’s objective to minimize built form dominance and maintain neighbourhood character.
	* **Precedent Developments:**
		+ Recent approvals for similar developments within the Discovery Drive/Reddall Street precinct include properties on Orion Street and Hope Street, where structures of comparable height and scale were deemed appropriate. These precedents reinforce that the proposed building height and scale are consistent with local development patterns.
2. **Visual Impact**
	* Visual impact was a key concern in the council’s previous assessment, specifically regarding the potential dominance of the structure within the streetscape and surrounding properties. Several strategies have been implemented to mitigate visual impact, ensuring the building integrates seamlessly into the environment.
		+ **Building Placement and Orientation:**
			- The primary dwelling is situated below an existing dam wall and approximately 40 meters away from the closest point of Discovery Drive, utilizing the existing topography to naturally screen the building from public viewpoints.
			- The living portion of the structure is oriented to face west, reducing its visibility from the main road and ensuring that it remains subordinate to the landscape.
		+ **Use of Materials:**
			- The choice of black Colorbond cladding was made for its low reflectivity and ability to blend with natural surroundings. This material choice is supported by Clause J.6.3 of the DCP, which recommends the use of visually recessive colours and finishes in non-heritage areas to reduce the perceived bulk of large structures.
			- Textured masonry cladding will be applied to the western elevation, creating visual interest and breaking up the façade to avoid a monotonous appearance.
		+ **Visual Screening and Landscaping:**
			- A comprehensive landscaping plan (see Appendix B) includes the planting of over 50 additional Leighton Green conifers along the northern and western boundaries. These trees, once mature, will form a dense screen, reaching up to 9 meters in height.
			- Understorey planting of native shrubs and groundcovers will soften the base of the building and create a layered visual buffer.
			- A line-of-sight analysis (included in Appendix C) shows that the building will be largely obscured from surrounding properties and public roads, even before the tree screening reaches maturity.
		+ **Mitigation of Overlooking and Privacy Intrusion:**
			- The west-facing balcony has been reduced in size and relocated to the southern elevation to prevent any direct line of sight into neighbouring properties. Window placements have been adjusted to focus views towards the Bowning Hill, further mitigating privacy concerns.
3. **Site Suitability and Earthworks**
	* The council’s concerns regarding the volume of earthworks and site suitability have been addressed through a revised engineering and site management plan:
		+ **Engineering Solutions for Site Stability:**
			- A detailed geotechnical report (Appendix D) outlines the measures required to ensure stability, including a balanced cut-and-fill approach to minimize the volume of imported fill material.
			- The proposed design includes a series of retaining walls and terracing, stabilizing the soil and preventing erosion while promoting drainage and natural water flow across the site.
		+ **Sediment Control Measures:**
			- Best practice sediment control measures will be implemented during construction, including silt fencing, sediment basins, and regular site inspections to manage erosion risks. The construction management plan has been attached as Appendix E, detailing these measures.

**Community Impact**

The proposed development will contribute positively to the community in several ways:

* **Increased Housing Diversity:** The dual-occupancy design responds to the growing need for diverse housing options in Yass, accommodating varying demographics, including young families, retirees, and individuals seeking investment opportunities.
* **Economic Stimulus:** The construction and subsequent occupation of the dwellings will generate local economic activity, creating jobs and supporting local tradespeople and businesses.
* **Enhanced Neighbourhood Character:** The development introduces modern architectural elements and landscaping that enhance the visual appeal of the precinct, contributing to Yass’s ongoing urban renewal efforts while respecting the area’s historical context.

**Conclusion**

In summary, this proposal is designed with careful consideration of local planning regulations, community expectations, and the unique characteristics of the site and surrounding area. We respectfully request the Yass Valley Council to reconsider the previous refusal and grant approval for this development application, which is aligned with the council’s vision for sustainable growth and community enhancement.

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