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Bundaleer Aged Care Centre, Wauchope Urban Design Assessment

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1 Introduction

Background

Bundaleer Care Services have submitted a Planning Proposal to amend the controls for land at nos.4-8 Johnstone Street and no. 67 High Street Wauchope, increasing the maximum building heights and FSR to accommodate a new 104-bed aged care facility (on Johnstone Street) and a new sub-acute care unit (on High Street). The site is adjacent to the Wauchope District Memorial Hospital. It is irregularly shaped, spanning two streets. An existing nursing home has the larger frontage and a generous setback to Johnstone Street, and the single lot fronting High Street is vacant.

Council has considered this Planning Proposal as generally having strategic merit, and would like to confirm that development of this site does – or if not, how it can – contribute positively to the objectives of the Wauchope Framework Plan (2009) and North Coast Urban Design Guidelines (2008). The purpose of the assessment is to identify what is needed to support “a sense of community identity and unique character for the Wauchope Town Centre”, and to respond “sensitively to the density and scale of the existing settlement” – noting that this may have already changed over the last 10 years.

The deliverable is an independent urban design assessment of the Proposal against Council’s strategic vision for the Town Centre and surrounds, with supporting recommendations for built form scale and massing. These recommendations will inform, and may require changes to, the amended planning controls proposed with the current scheme. The built form envelopes were developed with input from a specialist aged care architect within Architectus.

Executive summary

- We fundamentally support the merit of providing Aged Care services and facilities in the neighbourhood, on this site, understanding that there are community benefits.
- Our recommendations, therefore, are predicated on supporting that use, and are for that use only. They reflect a larger built form scale than that envisaged by the Wauchope Town Centre Framework Plan, and permitted under the current controls, for this area. We have made concessions for this facility as far as we comfortably can, while seeking to minimise amenity and character impacts in the precinct.
- The area character has changed little since the Framework Plan and the overall vision and strategy remains relevant. However, a recent DA for Wauchope Public School that proposes a 12m (approximate) building height which effectively extends the scale of the town centre ‘core’ west. It is considered to support a similar height increase on the Bundaleer site while still being consistent with the Framework Plan objectives.
- The applicant’s proposed FSR and heights are predicated on a concept plan which is indicative. There is no requirement for the building envelopes and draft plan layouts sighted to date to carry through to DA. Similarly, the LEP allows and will continue to allow a range of land uses and building types, including residential flat buildings: the uses could change over time to other uses which may be problematic for the site. This underpins our recommendation that amended LEP controls apply only to the specific Aged Care services currently nominated.
- The large size of the Johnstone Street site (Site A) means that some additional height can be contained towards the centre of site and have any visual and overshadowing impacts managed within the site itself. This was an important consideration in enabling a partial 4th storey.
- The relative narrowness of the High Street site (Site B) makes it difficult to achieve a large setback to both sides along with a viable building envelope. We considered whether this envelope would impact on future development of the Hospital site adjacent by forcing any new building to set back at some distance. However on balance we acknowledge that, ancillary to Site A, Site B can have a narrower side setback than would be supported for a different use or the site on its own.

Introduction

Methodology

This urban design assessment was undertaken to test and recommend appropriate planning controls for the site, which would support Council's broad strategy for urban growth, as well as its vision for Wauchope town centre.

To do this, we undertook a site visit and spoke with the applicant and their architect to help identify opportunities and constraints for the site and its context. We also took photographs of the representative streetscape character and key interfaces with neighbouring uses. We reviewed the suite of planning documents and assessed the existing urban character against visions and strategies for the area, for currency and relevance. We then modelled variations on three different building envelope scenarios:

1. the existing height (8.5 metres) and FSR controls (we applied residential envelopes to provide an alternative built form option to the existing aged care facility, to reflect the R1 zoning)
2. the current proposal (a height of 14.5 metres and FSR of 1.41:1 according to the applicant's drawings)
3. varying heights and massing for the two lots, testing 'fit' with neighbours and the streetscapes.

It is not the purpose of this urban design assessment to critique the applicant's concept in detail: nor is it to question the applicant's stated requirements for the various on-site facilities. It is, however, to take a wider view, to consider whether those requirements can be accommodated on the site without negative impacts on neighbours and area character.

That approach meant that the third scenario was developed by considering 'where not to build': where would a new building need to step in and step back from its boundaries. We drew on the DCP for side and rear setbacks. It is noted that the proposal seeks consent to amend the Heights and FSRs for the site at this stage and that residential flat buildings are permissible on the subject site and would be achievable under the applicant's proposed controls. Therefore, consideration of SEPP 65 and the supporting Apartment Design Guidelines was useful for comparison: we modelled residential envelopes (this is shown as Scenario 3a), as well as an institutional footprint.

When we modelled the applicant's building envelopes, and applied an 80% efficiency to the Gross Floor Area (GFA) to estimate the Floor Space Ratio (FSR), our resulting FSR was considerably lower than the 1.41 proposed by the applicant. This highlights the challenge in determining FSR 'from the outside in' – that is, from the envelopes – rather than from the inside out – from measuring the design itself.

To deal with this, we have recorded the lower FSR (calculated by us) against Scenario 2. We have done this because it is consistent with our approach for the other scenarios, and we wanted to show a 'like for like' comparison.

The building envelopes illustrated in Scenario 3b represent one option for future built form, within the recommended front, rear, side and upper level setbacks, and site cover. There may be other options but all should meet the controls. This is to enable intensification while still supporting the neighbourhood character.

LEP controls are 'blunt instruments'. They are therefore supplemented with recommended DCP controls (Section 5) that further shape the built form on the site. The role of DCP controls is to support a positive 'fit' with the context by refining the LEP controls.

All recommendations were derived from Scenario 2b after extensive testing of various building envelopes (refer to Section 4).

2 Planning context

North Coast Urban Design Guidelines 2008

- Wauchope is classified as a town and is specifically called up as one of the case studies (section 6.6), which includes a summary of characteristic landscape character, streetscape, buildings, and interface with private land.
- Landscape character: on the river plain and bounded by forests, river and low lying farmland; dense planting through the streets (mature established trees, indigenous and exotic temperate vegetation)
- Streetscape: residential streets less formal than town centre core, sometimes asymmetric kerb, gutter and grassed verges; dwellings of a consistent alignment and setback strongly determine character
- Buildings: “robust and simple character”, typically modest detached houses with several instances of higher density such as aged accommodation; public buildings are typically “high quality and robust”
- Interface: informal driveways, low front fencing, mature planting in generous front setbacks.

Town Centre Framework Plan 2009

This is a 10-15 year strategy which aims to “create a sense of community identity and unique character for Wauchope”. It identifies a “concentration of peripheral commercial uses along the Oxley Highway to the west of the town” but the main focus is on the core retail / commercial area.

The vision (desired future character) for the whole town centre includes “buildings [of] a consistent character with wide, shady verandahs or awnings, weatherboard and masonry facades to simple parapet or pitched roof forms”. Institutional, larger footprint building types are not specifically called up in this vision; however, the lodged DA for Wauchope Public School (adjacent to the subject site) offers a useful contemporary interpretation with simple, sweeping roof forms and overhanging eaves over the proposed new building.

Planning controls derive from the Framework Plan’s recommendation to establish a town centre core around the main retail / commercial streets.

LEP controls for the surrounding area:

- FSRs of 1.5:1 and 1:1 define the town centre core. Outside this, FSR is 0.65:1
- Interestingly, there is not a simple nexus between these

controls and the height controls: some areas with an FSR of 1:1 are only enabled to 8.5m high, the same as the peripheral areas with 0.65 FSR. This is to reflect their efficient traditional strip retail form.

- The 11.5m height limit (the highest in the locality) straddles high street and is bounded by the railway station to the east and (parts of) Campbell Street to the west. We note that the DA for Wauchope Public School would effectively extend that higher height limit across Campbell Parade to the corner with Waugh Street. Considered together with the Bundaleer site, there is an argument for acknowledging that the town centre core is also expanding to the west and that the ‘core’ height is therefore appropriate here.

Existing LEP (2011) site controls

- Zoned R1 – general residential. This includes but is not limited to the following uses: Boarding Houses, Multi-Dwelling Housing, Residential Flat Buildings, Seniors Housing, Shop-top Housing
- RFBs are not currently relevant because the 8.5m height limits buildings to two storeys.
- Maximum FSR of 0.65:1 (up to 1:1 consent cannot be refused for aged care use)
- Maximum height 8.5m

DCP (2013) Part 3 Development Specific Provisions

Section 3.3 covers residential flat development, visitor accommodation and mixed use development. There are no specific controls for aged care facilities. As noted, the recommendation from this assessment is not for residential development, so the numeric controls are not relevant, but the DCP high level guidance is still a consideration.

Relevant objectives are:

- To integrate with the neighbourhood
- Front setbacks are to provide adequate open space for landscaping, visual and acoustic privacy
- To provide a streetscape that is consistent and complementary to existing development
- To allow flexibility in the siting of buildings while limiting the extent to which any building overshadows or overlooks adjacent properties
- To provide acoustic and visual privacy
- To provide adequate area for deep soil planting.

Planning context

SEPP (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004

SEPP Seniors applies as the land is zoned for dwelling houses (Zoned R1), site area is larger than 1000sqm, and site frontage is greater than 20m. Whilst the SEPP applies to future DAs, the proposed built form under the planning proposal should be able to be realised in the future, and thus compliance with design principles contained within SEPP Seniors should be met. The proposed uses are not identified as 'infill self-care housing' and therefore compliance with Seniors Living Policy: Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Development (2004) is not required

As per Clause 45 of the SEPP Seniors, an additional FSR of 0.5:1 is permissible if 10% of total dwellings for the accommodation of residents in the proposed development will be affordable places as per Clause 45(6) of SEPP Seniors. The subject proposal does not provide 10% affordable places as defined by Clause 45(12) and is therefore not eligible for the additional FSR. Therefore, the maximum achievable FSR for the subject proposal under the existing controls is 0.65:1. However, under Division 2 Clause 48, any subsequent DA would not be able to be refused on the basis of density and scale if the FSR was equal to or less than 1:1.

Division 2 Design Principles (sections 33 – 38) apply to the Planning Proposal. The neighbourhood amenity and character principles are relevant principles are particularly relevant. Quoting from the SEPP,

The proposed development should:

(a) recognise the desirable elements of the location's current character (or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, where described in local planning controls, the desired future character) so that new buildings contribute to the quality and identity of the area, and

(b) retain, complement and sensitively harmonise with any ... relevant heritage items that are identified in a local environmental plan, and

(c) maintain reasonable neighbourhood amenity and appropriate residential character by:

- providing building setbacks to reduce bulk and overshadowing, and
- using building form and siting that relates to the site's land form, and
- adopting building heights at the street frontage that are compatible in scale with adjacent development, and
- considering, where buildings are located on the boundary, the impact of the boundary walls on neighbours, and

(d) be designed so that the front building of the development is set back in sympathy with, but not necessarily the same as, the existing building line, and

(e) embody planting in sympathy with, but not necessarily the same as, other planting in the streetscape, and

(f) retain, wherever reasonable, major existing trees.

Visual and acoustic privacy, solar access and accessibility are also important both within the development and for its neighbours. While for the subject site the neighbours are almost all non-residential uses, the R1 zoning suggests these principles are relevant. They also represent good urban design practice. In particular,

The proposed development should consider the visual and acoustic privacy of neighbours in the vicinity and residents by:

- appropriate site planning, the location and design of windows and balconies, the use of screening devices and landscaping, and
- ensuring acceptable noise levels in bedrooms of new dwellings by locating them away from driveways, parking areas and paths.

It should also:

- ensure adequate daylight to the main living areas of neighbours in the vicinity and residents and adequate sunlight to substantial areas of private open space, and
- have obvious and safe pedestrian links from the site that provide access to public transport services or local facilities, and
- provide attractive, yet safe, environments for pedestrians and motorists with convenient access and parking for residents and visitors.

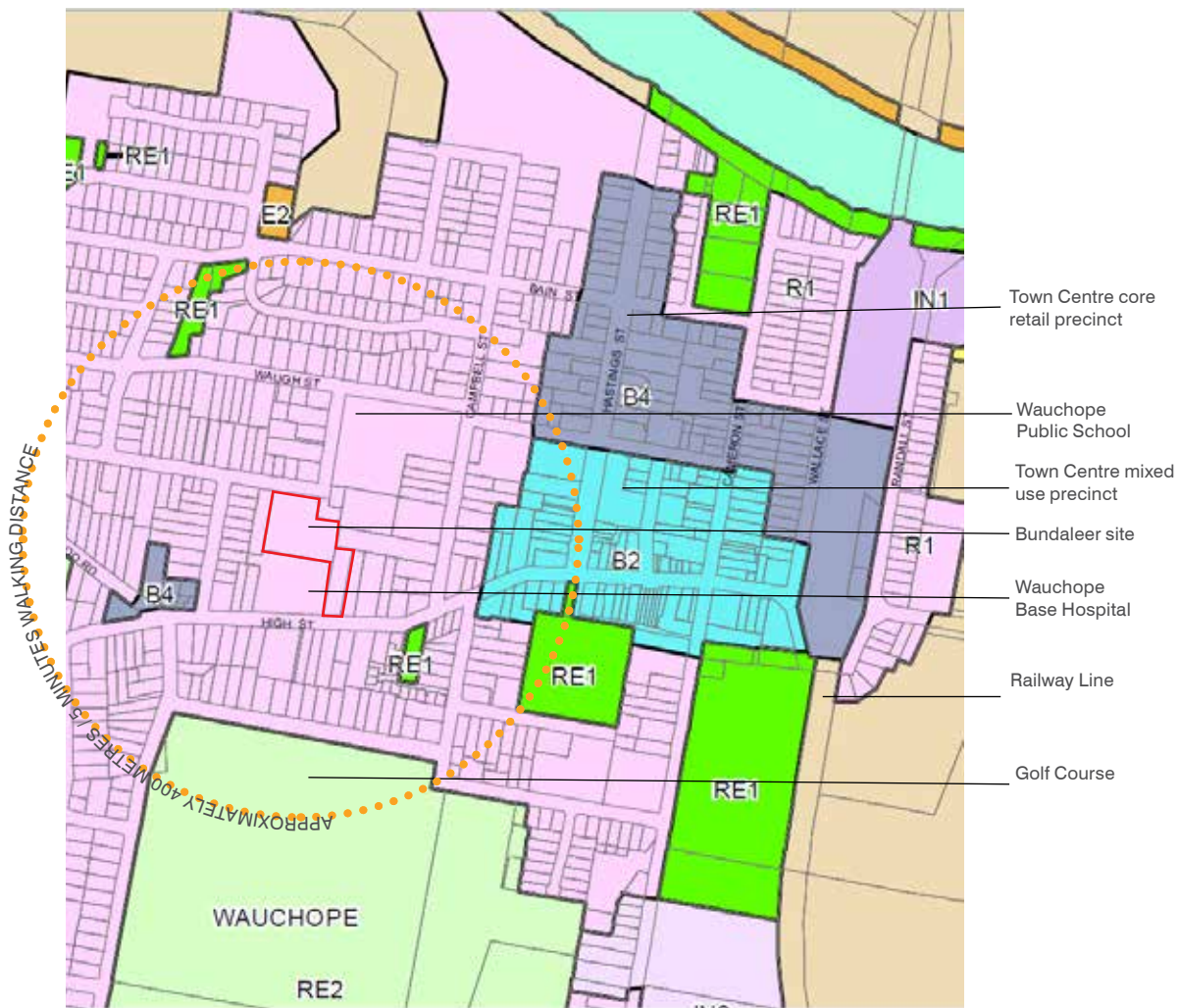
3 Site context

Existing character

The wider precinct

While the immediate context has the character of an established, low scale residential area, the site is within 400 metres of the town centre, Wauchope Public School and the TAFE. On High Street, it forms part of a 'health cluster' that includes the public hospital (to the west). In this sense it straddles the commercial core of the town centre and the residential neighbourhoods around it.

The map below shows the site in relation to the surrounding land use zones under LEP 2011.



Site context

The immediate context

The diagram opposite shows the features of the streets and spaces around the site. On the pages following are photographs illustrating the area character, which are numbered and keyed to the diagram.

Johnstone Street

Built form: Johnstone Street's existing character is set by consistently low scale single storey dwellings. There is a mix of age, condition and materials but most houses appear original (ie. not extended upwards). Wauchope Public School along Mackay Street is a collection of larger footprint buildings and smaller prefabs arranged (seemingly randomly) across a large area, with formal and informal connecting paths, and backing onto the large playing field that also edges the Bundaleer site. The school grounds, together with the church land (and unfenced along that boundary) gives the immediate context a generous, green setting.

Streetscape character: The existing nursing home is distinct from its residential neighbours in being a larger building mass spread across its site, but sits reasonably comfortably with its surroundings because of its low height (single storey), low pitched roof, recessive colours and large landscaped front setback which includes mature canopy trees, lawn and garden beds. The trees have the effect of reducing the apparent scale of the building and soften the outlook from houses across the road into the site. It benefits from the school and church grounds, which give it 'elbow' room and assist in supporting the larger building footprint. The street is 20m wide (boundary to boundary), with a narrow strip concrete footpath (south side only) set within grass verges. Street trees are intermittent and the strongest vertical elements are timber electricity poles. Fences vary from none, to low, to hedging and shrubs; and front gardens are mostly set to lawn and shrubs

Street setbacks: The existing facility is set well back from the road (in the order of 27m to the front wing and 51m to the entry wing). Its neighbour (no. 10) has a setback of around 6.5m, and further west a mixture of 'fronts' and 'sides' of

houses are set back between 2.5 – 6m. Along this southern side of Johnstone Street there is little consistency. Along the northern side the predominant front setback line is around 5m.

High Street

Built form: Oxley Highway / High Street is a main approach to Wauchope town centre and has seen the development of small businesses and services along its length. In the immediate area there are health-related uses that supplement the Wauchope District Memorial Hospital: dentist, pathology clinic, surgery (and a veterinarian). Despite the changed uses, High Street remains predominantly residential and low scale (single storey) in character. The Hospital has the largest building footprint, but is also modest in appearance: single storey, with separate roofs (rather than one large one) and the contrasting front verandah breaking down its apparent scale.

Streetscape character: Like Johnstone Street, most of the 'green' character comes from plantings within front or back gardens. The footpath is wider than on Johnstone Street (about 1.8m) and there are no trees in the grass verge between it and the edge of the carriageway. However the impression near the site itself is of a well vegetated streetscape because of mature trees including jacarandas, and large shrubs including tibochina, planted at the front boundary or within the front setbacks. There are two notable trees opposite the Hospital (aurucaria bidwillii (bungle bungle) and a Norfolk Pine in the front of an older cottage. Most properties have low or no front fences although interspersed with these, to the west of the site, are several properties have high, solid front fences or hedges that conceal the houses behind. To the east, towards the town centre core, the interface is more open and direct, consistent with the use of dwellings for health-related commercial activity requiring some visibility to and connection with the street.

Street setbacks: As a result of the lots being oblique, rather than perpendicular, to High Street, the buildings are angled to the street, and the front building lines do not follow the street alignment; rather they get progressively deeper from east to west. Generally, front setbacks are in the range from 4.5 – 9m and are more generous immediately adjacent to the site. The Hospital's front setback ranges from 6m (closest to the subject site) to around 14m and accommodates a porte cochere, parking, and mature trees and shrubs; on the other side of the site (Dentist, no. 65 High Street) the setback varies from around 9.7 – 11m.

Site context



Site context



Johnstone Street looking west: long, straight vista towards distant hills. Grass verges (footpaths on south side only) and intermittent tree planting give a sense of an open, relatively unstructured streetscape



The corner of Johnstone and Mackay Streets, looking north past Wauchope Public School's collection of low-scale prefab classrooms, and east across the school and church grounds within the block. The canary palm, and cricket nets to the right are on axis with the view south down Mackay Street towards part of the existing Bundaleer building.



The existing Bundaleer facility on Johnstone Street (Site B) has an extremely deep setback (about 26 metres at this point), set to grass which ties in visually with the school grounds. While the building is set on a slight rise, there is little impact on the streetscape – rather, the combination of setback and single storey height fit well with the neighbourhood.



The existing Bundaleer building steps back even further on the western part of its site and almost 'disappears' behind the trees and landscape treatment.

Site context



5 Bundaleer is well screened by vegetation from its western (residential) neighbours, and the driveway access provides good separation



6 The existing covered entry to the Bundaleer facility is a simple portico structure.



7 The driveways to Bundaleer and the District Hospital are on the same north-south axis, creating a strong through-block link used informally for emergency and service vehicles



8 A new Hospital palliative care unit is located close to the southern boundary of the Bundaleer site. Both buildings are single storey but the Hospital building has a more dominant presence: it is elevated, has higher ceiling heights and high level windows. Patient rooms face north but there are minimal privacy issues due to the back of house / service character of Bundaleer in this location, and screen planting (in a landscape strip on the Bundaleer side)



9 Looking north from the rear of the High Street site (Site A), the openness of the interior of the block is apparent. Trees define the property boundaries but the ground plane is highly permeable



10 From the rear boundary of the High Street site, this view of the existing interface between Bundaleer and the church / school grounds shows a rather abrupt (and close) transition between building, fence and open space



11 Looking back towards High Street from the currently vacant block, the softening effect of mature trees and shrubs towards the boundaries is evident



12 The generous back garden of the eastern neighbour (Wauchope Dental) is typical of the original house and lot pattern, and remains representative of most of the residential dwellings and a significant number of those converted to commercial uses

Site context



Looking west down High Street (Oxley Highway) the built form scale and streetscape treatment is similar to the surrounding streets, despite the interspersed commercial uses. Directly opposite the District Hospital a small street-edging building is unusual in the area; and next to it are two prominent trees in front of an old character cottage.



The District Hospital frontage breaks the usual pattern along High Street with its deep setback containing a curved driveway and small porte cochere.

Part of the Hospital is contained within former dwellings and therefore presents as part of the residential neighbourhood. Mature trees and shrubs in the grassed front setback - and the absence of front fences - make a positive contribution to the streetscape.



Continuing east down High Street towards the town centre core, more commercial is mixed with residential, although the built form scale is consistent. What differs is more commercial use of front setback for access and parking, and some front fencing to formalise private space, which means that the street appears less 'green' in some areas

The subject site on High Street looks across to single storey houses with a mix of no front fences, low fencing, hedges or shrubs defining the boundary.



Adjacent to the site, Wauchope Dental is typical of local neighbourhood modifications to make a dwelling house suitable for commercial use: formed driveway, ramp to the entry, signage and formal front fence

4 Scenarios

Scenario Overview

Scenarios are building envelopes – containers for the buildings, not the buildings themselves.

Scenarios 2, 3a and 3b show how the site could be redeveloped with greater density than the current controls. There are multiple building configurations possible depending on use and type. Scenario 2 was extrapolated from drawings provided by the applicant that are based on a concept design. It has a greater level of refinement of the building envelopes, reflecting the greater detail of the design.

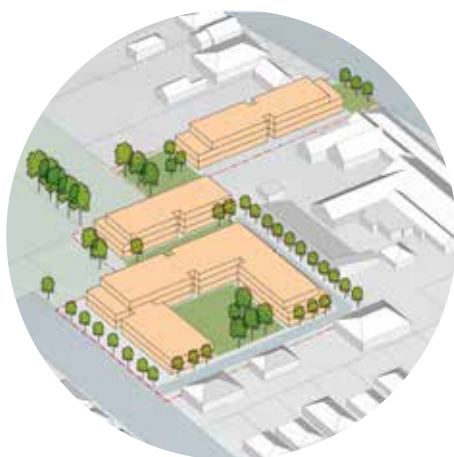
Scenarios 3a and 3b are not intended to be built: they are indicative only. They took Scenario 2 as a starting point and considered where the neighbourhood 'fit' and impact might be enhanced. In some areas this resulted in a reduction of the envelope, in others the potential to extend it.



Scenario 1 - Complying



Scenario 2 - Current Proposal



Scenario 3A - Residential



Scenario 3B - Institutional

Scenarios

Scenario 1 - Complying



Scenario 1 - Illustrative 3D Massing

	Site A	Site B
Site Area	7,711	2,347
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	4,708	1,350
Floor Space Ratio (FSR) 75% efficiency	0.61:1	0.58:1

This scenario is for 2 storey semi-detached houses and townhouses.

Key features

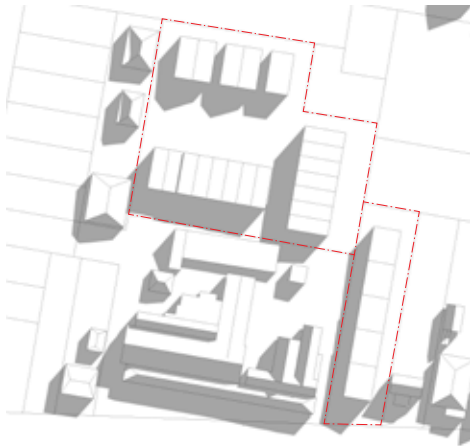
- responds to rhythm and scale of houses on Johnstone Street
- enables smaller setback to Johnstone street on basis of smaller 'house and front garden' typology
- preserves deep soil / landscaped area as communal space
- establishes 6m minimum boundary setbacks including for High Street
- can achieve current FSR control for High Street but only with some loss of open space at rear of lot



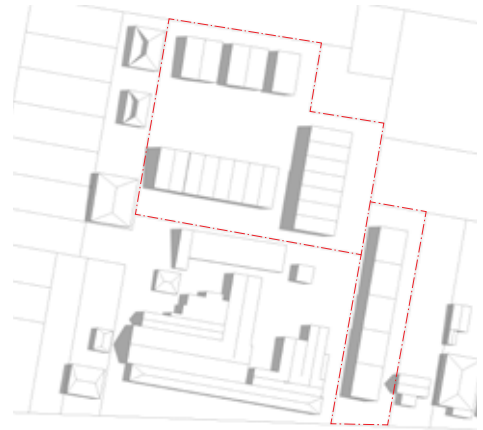
Scenario 1 - Setbacks

Scenarios

Solar Analysis



June 21 9am



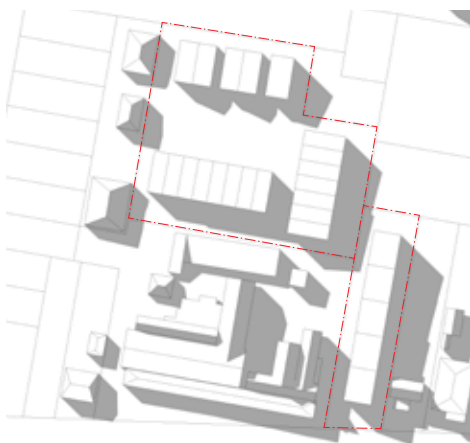
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June 21 12pm



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June 21 3pm



December 21 3pm

Scenarios

Scenario 2 - Current Proposal



Scenario 2 - Illustrative 3D Massing

	Site A	Site B
Site Area	7,711	2,347
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	9,043	2,666
Floor Space Ratio (FSR) 80% efficiency	1.17:1	1.14:1

This scenario is for a 2-4 storey Aged Care facility.

Key features

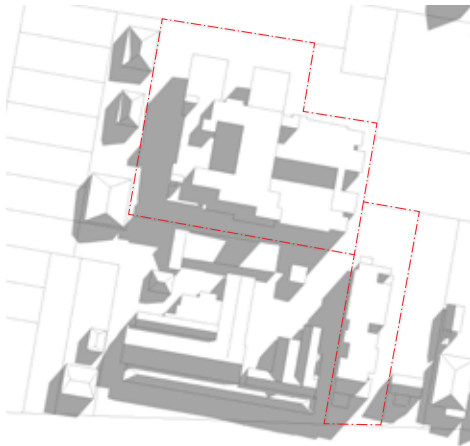
- generous setbacks: Johnstone Street, west neighbour and High St rear
- 3 storey presentation to Johnstone Street, driveway/vehicle dominated
- Visual / scale / amenity issues from 4 storeys: High Street along most of its length and Johnstone St portion both have impacts
- 6m rear setback gives small separation from Hospital palliative care unit which is close to its boundary
- minimal setback from High Street site to Hospital



Scenario 2 - Setbacks

Scenarios

Solar Analysis



June 21 9am



December 21 9am



June 21 12pm



December 21 12pm



June 21 3pm



December 21 3pm

Scenarios

Scenario 3a - Residential

This scenario was developed to explore what kind of building footprints would be achievable with intensification of the site. It is not a recommendation for this kind of development, but a point of departure and comparison for Scenario 3b.



Scenario 3a - Illustrative 3D Massing

	Site A	Site B
Site Area	7,711	2,347
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	6,545	1,829
Floor Space Ratio (FSR) 75% efficiency	0.85:1	0.78:1

This scenario is for 2- 3 storey apartments

Key features

- 2 storey presentation to Johnstone Street
- retention of landscape / deep soil for internal courtyard
- building separation meets or exceeds Apartment Design Guide
- minimum 9m setbacks to west and south (Johnstone Street)
- wider side setback (4m) between High Street and Hospital - but still arguably would have privacy / overlooking issues
- upper level setbacks (above 2 storeys) to all interfaces with open space and to southern boundary with Hospital



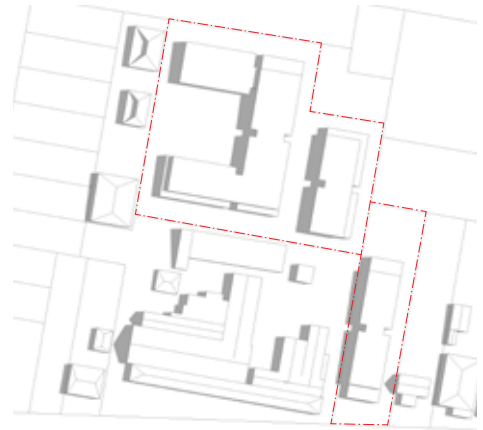
Scenario 3a - Setbacks

Scenarios

Solar Analysis



June 21 9am



December 21 9am



June 21 12pm



December 21 12pm



June 21 3pm



December 21 3pm

Scenarios

Scenario 3b - Institutional

This scenario was developed through an iterative process of testing the impacts of the building envelopes. The testing included considering multiple views from around the site (see key views opposite) to help determine heights and setbacks.

The envelopes shown below do not include roofs as these could take different forms. They were however tested to the overall 11.5m and 14.5m heights requested by the applicant for 3 and 4 storeys. The LEP height recommendation reflects this, in that it is an 'absolute' limit in metres (refer Section 5).



Scenario 3b - Illustrative 3D Massing

	Site A	Site B
Site Area	7,711	2,347
Total Gross Floor Area (GFA)	9,397	2,146
Floor Space Ratio (FSR) 80% efficiency	1.22:1	0.91:1

This scenario is for 3 storey commercial / institutional buildings

Key features

- generally maximum 3 storeys and increased front, side and rear setbacks, to respond to context and address street interface, visual impact from streets, neighbour amenity. Small 4 storey area possible
- maximum 2 storey street wall presentation to High Street is critical
- upper level setbacks above 2 storeys: upper level setbacks are deeper at the interface with streets to protect lower-scale streetscape character
- side setbacks enable circulation and landscape areas

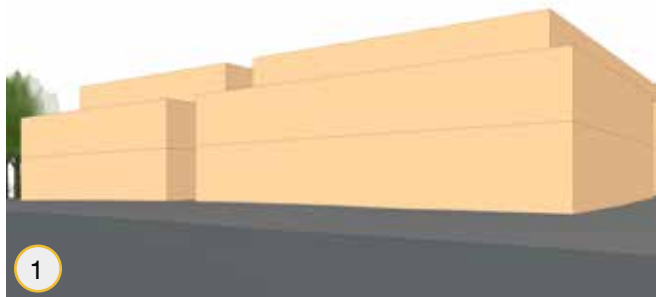


Scenario 3b - Setbacks

Scenarios

Key Views

These views reflect Scenario 3b and are taken from average eye height (1.5m) from public streets and the school grounds. They were used to arrive at the appropriate extent of a possible 4th storey to the Johnstone Street building, the 2 storey street wall height, and the (additional) depth of the upper level setbacks. They therefore support the recommendations deriving from Scenario 3b.



Looking south obliquely from Johnstone Street - 4th level not visible; 2 storey character predominant



Looking north along the existing service access adjacent to Wauchope District Memorial Hospital - 4th level pulled back to the east so as not to be visible along the through-site link



Looking south along MacKay Street - the further away, the more the 4th storey can be seen; but equally the distance reduces its impact



Looking east from Graham Street. The 4th level is visible but distant and the modelling does not include some of the screening trees



Looking west from the Wauchope Public School grounds - the existing large trees along the church boundary screen the 3rd and 4th levels



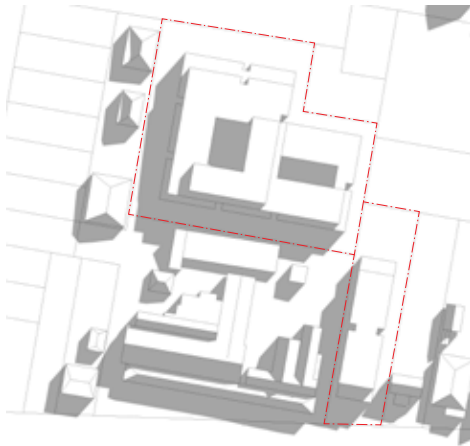
Looking north from High Street. The 4th level is screened by the Hospital buildings



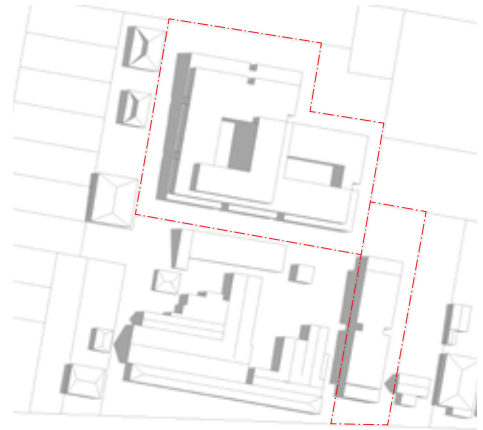
View locations

Scenarios

Solar Analysis



June 21 9am



December 21 9am



June 21 12pm



December 21 12pm



June 21 3pm



December 21 3pm

5 Recommendations

LEP controls

We fundamentally support the merit of providing Aged Care services and facilities in the neighbourhood, on this site, understanding that there are benefits to the community. Our recommendations, therefore, are predicated on supporting that use, and are for that use only. They reflect a larger built form scale than that envisaged by the Wauchope Town Centre Framework Plan, and permitted under the current controls, for this area. We have expanded those controls as far as we comfortably can, while seeking to minimise amenity and character impacts in the precinct.

1. The following controls relate to Scenario 3b and apply only to the proposed Aged Care uses on the site. not for residential uses (including standalone seniors housing)
2. An 11.5 metre height limit, enabling 3 storeys, is generally appropriate. It is a contextual response, reflecting all the strategic plans prepared to date, with some relaxation of the Wauchope town centre boundary. It also supports the existing and desired future character of the area. It enables intensification while containing the visual, amenity, and functional impacts on neighbours and streetscapes.
 - To supplement the overall height control, we recommend a 2 storey street wall height and interface with school and church grounds. This should be established through a meaningful upper level setback, above the 2 storeys, of at least 6 metres to the street (*refer DCP recommendations*)
3. Notwithstanding, we acknowledge that the size of the Johnstone Street parcel (Site B) may be able to support a small additional 4 storey (14.5m) area in the centre. The L-shaped envelope in Scenario 3b is 36m x 34m x 12m deep. **This is conditional** on the applicant demonstrating that there are no overshadowing impacts on neighbours (including the Hospital, and the school grounds); and that the 4th level is minimally visible from public streets.
4. The High Street site (Site A) is considered the more sensitive, due to its narrower width and the greater visibility of built form to the street. 3 storeys is considered a significant concession to the proposed use; 4 storeys would, from our evaluation, have significant impacts and is not supported. Even 3 storeys will likely change the character of the streetscape and we are therefore proposing DCP provisions to help moderate that impact.

5. The recommended heights in metres are:

- High Street 11.5m
- Johnstone Street 11.5m generally, with an identified area of 14.5m conditional upon demonstration of no negative visual or amenity impacts

NB: These controls are for the whole envelope: that is, they include all roofs, any services or lift overruns, with no permitted breach of the upper limit.

6. The purpose of the FSR control is to ensure an appropriate interface with surrounding sites, within the height proposed.
7. FSR controls should be separate for the separate parcels. Our work showed the difficulty of achieving a similar FSR on the High Street parcel to the Johnstone Street parcel, and simply averaging the FSR over the whole site could deliver a poorer outcome for the smaller parcel.
8. The recommended FSRs are slightly higher than the FSRs generated through modelling, to acknowledge that modelling is an estimate and that there may be efficiencies able to be achieved in detailed design. They are:
 - Johnstone Street 1.3:1
 - High Street 1:1.

DCP provisions

The following is a suggested addition to Part 5. Area based provisions: Wauchope Town Centre within the Port Macquarie-Hastings DCP. It acknowledges the strategic importance of providing for an ageing population, and the capacity of the subject site to provide for aged care and ancillary services adjacent to the Wauchope Memorial District Hospital.

While the Aged Care site was not nominated as a separate character precinct in the Wauchope Framework Plan, it and its immediate surrounds still reflect a predominant low scale, residential character consistent with that Plan. The development provisions are to guide future development to achieve good amenity and good 'fit' with the desired neighbourhood character.

Recommendations

Development Guide: Aged Care site

The Aged Care site is located west of the Wauchope local centre / commercial precinct, bounded by Johnstone Street to the north, High Street and the Wauchope Memorial District Hospital to the south, a commercial property and the grounds of Wauchope Public School and the PCEA Hastings River Congregation (church) to the east, and a residential property to the west.

While the site is set within an established, low scale, predominantly residential area, it is also within 400 metres of the town centre, Wauchope Public School and the TAFE. It forms part of a 'health cluster' that includes the adjacent Wauchope Memorial District Hospital. In this sense it bridges from the mixed use precinct of the town centre to the established (and desired future) character of its residential setting.

Objectives	Development Provisions
To ensure that new development respects and responds to the established low-scale residential scale and massing	<p><i>NB: Setbacks are to the outside edge of any balconies or other extrusions from the main facade.</i></p> <p><i>NB: Upper level setbacks are additional to the front, side or rear setback for the lower storeys - in other words they are a further 'step in'</i></p>
	<p>Built form should make an appropriate transition down to adjacent buildings such that the scale and massing relationship is sympathetic. In particular:</p>
	<p>Street wall height</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built form is to maintain a 2 storey street wall height to be consistent with the desired residential character (fronting both Johnstone and High Streets) <p>Roof form - High Street</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider designing the High Street (Site A) facade so that the third storey is concealed, or partly concealed, within a roof form that effectively presents the building as two storeys at the street interface.
	<p>Upper level (street) setbacks (above 2 storeys) should be generous to reinforce the street wall height datum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Street: 6m back from the front building line Johnstone Street: 6m back from the front building line, ie. minimum 20m <p><i>NB: this control assumes a height in storeys limit of 3 storeys (11.5 metres) for High Street and for the greater part of Johnstone Street</i></p>

Recommendations

Objectives	Development Provisions
To reinforce the spatial proportions of the street and the open, well vegetated streetscape character	<p>Front setbacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On High Street the front setback should be in keeping with the prevailing setback along the street. The building line should be perpendicular to the lot boundary, to maintain the angled pattern. • On Johnstone Street the front setback should be a minimum 14m to reduce potential impacts on neighbours opposite and to retain something of the existing generous, green character. • Both front setback areas should have landscaping to the full depth of the setback across minimum 30% of the site width. • Both front boundaries should not have solid, high fences. Low hedging or no fences are preferred.
To maintain the amenity of neighbouring sites, whether for residential, commercial, education or institutional use and/or Maintain the amenity of neighbouring sites and the new development, in terms of overshadowing habitable and hospital rooms, private and public open space, and of visual and acoustic privacy	<p>Optimise setbacks to neighbouring properties, particularly sensitive interfaces where new development may overlook and/or overshadow existing uses. Specifically:</p> <p>Side setbacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally break up the massing of larger building types • High Street: 3m to the west, 6m to the east • Johnstone Street: 12m to the west, 6m to the school grounds (north and east) <p>Upper level (side) setbacks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Street site: none: ie. all 3 storeys have the same side setbacks: 3m west and 6m east) • Johnstone Street site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for the 3rd storey: 3m in addition to the side setbacks (ie. 15m west and 9m east and north) – for the 4th storey: this part of the envelope is set well back from the western and northern boundaries, to minimise neighbourhood impacts. The 4th storey envelope is 9m east and 16m south of the 3rd storey building line (or 24m and 36m from the western and northern boundaries respectively); note that the northern setback for the 4th storey is aligned with the 6m side setback to the internal northern boundary. <p>Rear setback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnstone Street site: 9m to interface with Hospital palliative care unit; otherwise 6m <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for the 3rd storey: an additional 3m in addition to the rear setback (ie. 12m) – for the 4th storey: an additional 3m from the 3rd storey setback (ie. 15m)
To enable large, contiguous deep soil zones, particularly in the centre of the street block, both to support landscaping including large canopy trees, and stormwater infiltration	<p>Rear setback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Street site: 23m (aligning with rear boundary of Johnstone Street, Site B) <p>Upper level (rear setback)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Street site: 6m in addition to 23m (ie. 29m)
To contribute positively to the design quality of Wauchope's building stock	<p>Consideration of building design should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking up the massing so that the overall appearance is not 'monolithic' • Stepping in (and out) long walls to avoid unrelieved, blank facades • The use of materials, and recessive colours, that pick up on the neighbourhood palette • Architectural roof forms appropriate to the building use: simple forms that add interest to the skyline are preferred over 'domestic' style pitched roofs; consider the opportunity on the High Street site to conceal the third storey while creating interest on the skyline and streetscape.

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