

Hurstville City Local Government Area

53-71A Forest Road, 108-126 Durham Street and  
6-15 Roberts Lane, Hurstville

## Peer review of Planning Proposal prepared by Dickson Rothschild

Report prepared for  
**Dickson Rothschild**  
31 March 2016

## Introduction

This peer review has been prepared at the request of Dickson Rothschild with which Neustein Urban has no professional or business relationship which could create any perception of a conflict of interest. Similarly, Neustein Urban is not a consultant to the applicant for the rezoning sought.

In carrying out this peer review, the following documents have been considered:

Planning Proposal prepared by Dickson Rothschild, dated 29 February 2016  
 Urban Design Report prepared by Dickson Rothschild, dated 29 February 2016  
 Economic Assessment prepared by HillPDA, dated February 2016  
 Hotel Demand Assessment prepared by HillPDA, dated 8 March 2016  
 Social Impact assessment prepared by HillPDA, dated February 2016  
 Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by Mott MacDonald, dated March 2016  
 Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Heritage 21, dated August 2015

### **Q1. Is the planning proposal a result of any strategic study or report?**

Whilst according with a number of relevant strategic studies of the area and the LGA at large, the Planning Proposal (PP) has been prepared in support of an appropriate opportunity created by the proponent. Nothing in the PP or supporting documents suggests any other study is in process which may deal with the subject site within the short to medium timeframe necessary to allow/encourage development of the site.

### **Q2. Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?**

As a rezoning is required to permit the land uses proposed in the PP, a planning proposal is the only way of achieving the intended outcomes. Additionally, changes to the FSR and height of buildings permitted on the site are reported in the PP. The process of rezoning is transparent, subject to a system of checks and balances and cognisant of local and state planning objectives. Hence a planning proposal is the best means of satisfying the necessary public outcomes required.

### **Q3. Is the planning proposal consistent with the objectives and actions of the applicable regional or sub-regional strategy (including the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy and exhibited draft strategies)?**

Much is written in the PP and the Urban Design Study of the compatibility of the proposal with local and State planning objectives described in the following studies/policies:

- *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, Department of Environment & Planning, December 2014
- *Sydney Visitor Economy Action Plan*, Visitor Economy Taskforce, 2012

- *Employment Lands Development Program Report*, Department of Environment & Planning, 2015
- *Draft Subregional Strategy South*, Department of Environment & Planning, December 2007

As has been demonstrated in the key reports, the proposal accords with the general studies of the subregion and the metro area as a whole. Not mentioned in such detail are the Hurstville Master Plan by the Government Architect's Office and the 2007 Public Domain Plan. Apparently both plans designated the subject site as a "key redevelopment site" and even a gateway to Hurstville.

However, the site was suggested for a Homemaker Centre even though such a use is not easily accessible (to cars) and is surrounded by residential zones. The subject proposal, for a mixed use development is a much better outcome, meeting subregional goals for employment and housing, without massive traffic generation or parking demand.

Importantly, the proposal forms a coherent TOD (Transport Oriented Development) which builds on the approvals already granted by Council along the railway line. Its height and scale match those of approvals and current applications. There is no better contextual description than the photo on page 4 of the Urban Design Report.

#### **Q4. Is the planning proposal consistent with a council's local strategy or other local strategic plan?**

As noted above, the proposal fulfils the two local strategies for the Hurstville Centre to a better degree than the recommendations/speculations of the studies. A tall, mixed density development accords with the emerging high density residential character of the area along the railway line at Hurstville. Furthermore, the group of three towers does form an appropriate gateway to Hurstville from the east, as designated in the studies.

To the extent that other locals approvals have been given for comparably large developments, the proposal is consistent with Council's local strategies in terms of height and FSR.

#### **Q5. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?**

The PP documents the compliance, or potential compliance, of the project with the applicable SEPPs. However, more can be said about the necessary compliance of the proposal with SEPP 65 "Design quality of residential flat buildings" and its referenced "Apartment Design Guide". Relevant to the PP, the most important ADG guidelines are those for building separation and overshadowing impacts. Building separations meet the ADG and shadows will mainly fall on the site itself and thus will be capable of resolution to meet the ADG, both internally and externally. Other ADG requirements such as building depth, sun access, natural ventilation, etc are all capable of resolution due to the large area of site, its favourable orientation and its separation from adjoining developments by roads on all three sides.

It is the ability of the proposal to meet the ADG that validates the FSR (3.5:1 plus bonus 1.5:1) and height demonstrated in the preliminary plans.

**Q6. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (s.117 directions)?**

As noted in the PP, the removal of 1.3ha of industrially zoned land is more than balanced, in employment terms, by the creation of business floor area in the proposal. The intent of the S117 Directions is therefore achieved. However, it may be necessary to protect the business component of the proposal with a control specifying a minimum business GFA in order to assure future compliance with the s117 Directions.

**Q8. Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?**

The most obvious adverse impact of the proposal is overshadowing. To a great extent, this is mitigated by the spaces between the site and other development, the surrounding roads and the preliminary design of the project itself. Problematic overshadowing of the baseball field to the south east in winter afternoons occurs after about 1.30pm and is due to the height of the proposal. The shadows of the buildings do not merge at this time. A significant reduction in overshadowing could be achieved by rotating the middle tower to reduce its afternoon shadow. What shadows fall on the field are at a reasonable distance from the baseball diamond in the southwest corner of the field.

There are no other significant adverse impacts due to the height, size and scale of the development

**Q7. Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?**

Not relevant to this very urban proposal.

**Q9. Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?**

The PP has addressed economic and social impacts and found these generally positive or better. I can see no adverse impact of the proposal which requires any form of mitigation. The proposal provides significant employment generating GFA as well as a large number of apartments. Both of these characteristics assist Hurstville LGA in meeting its State set targets. Were the site to remain industrially zoned, its employment generating potential would be smaller and it would not contribute to the LGA and State housing targets.

**Q10. Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?**

Listed in the PP is the local community infrastructure which is clearly adequate for a centre such as Hurstville. I assume that services such as electricity, gas, water, sewerage and drainage can service the development as it is within a dense urban area.

**Q11. What are the views of state and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in accordance with the Gateway determination?**

No Gateway determination as yet.