



Planning Proposal

Castle Ridge Resort  
350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill



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Attachment B –	Draft Development Control Plan
Attachment C –	Site Survey
Attachment D –	Traffic Assessment
Attachment E –	Seniors Living Demand Study
Attachment F –	Arborist Report
Attachment G –	Ecological Assessment
Attachment H –	Preliminary Geotechnical Advice
Attachment I –	Stormwater and Flooding Due Diligence Report
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Attachment K –	Hydraulic Services Due Diligence Report
Attachment L –	2018 Rezoning Review Record of Decision
Attachment M –	2017 Council Resolution
Attachment N –	2019 Rezoning Review Record of Decision
Attachment O –	2019 Council Resolution



# Executive summary

This Planning Proposal has been prepared by Architectus on behalf of Stockland to facilitate the redevelopment of an existing retirement village at 350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill.

The Planning Proposal seeks Council support to progress an amendment to The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2019. The proposed amendments include:

- **Schedule 1 Additional Permitted Use** – introduce ‘seniors housing’ as an additional permissible use on the site;
- **Height of buildings** (Clause 4.3) – amend the maximum building heights to provide a range of heights from 0 metres to 18 metres; and
- **Floor space ratio** (Clause 4.4) – introduce a maximum floor space ratio of 0.83:1 for the site.

A master plan has been prepared by Architectus to support the Planning Proposal. The master plan demonstrates that a high-quality built form outcome can be achieved under the proposed planning controls. The master plan provides for:

- An indicative yield of 247 high-amenity apartments that demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG)
- Buildings ranging from 3 to 6 storeys, with increased heights located in the centre of the site to minimise visual impacts. A zero metre height limit is proposed for central parkland;
- A 1,300m<sup>2</sup> Community Hub providing a range of on-site amenities and health facilities;
- A new internal road network, accessible basement car parking and footpaths to improve accessibility for residents.
- Retention of the large communal parkland, protection of the majority of significant trees, and 50% of the site as landscaped area.

A comprehensive overview of the master plan and design approach is provided in the Design Report at Attachment A.

A site-specific Development Control Plan (DCP) has been prepared to support the Planning Proposal. The DCP contains provisions relating to building design, setbacks, access, residential amenity, trees, site coverage and landscaped area. The Draft DCP is provided at Attachment B.

## The Site

This Planning Proposal relates to land at 350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill (the site), shown in Figure 1.

The site is bound by Old Northern Road to its east and low to medium density residential housing to its north, south and west. Pioneer Place Reserve is located to the south west of the site. The site is approximately 3.7 hectares in area and is currently developed for seniors housing (Castle Ridge Resort).



**Figure 1 Site plan**  
The site is outlined in red  
Source: Nearmap 2020

### Background

This is the third Planning Proposal for the site in the past three years. Two Planning Proposals were previously lodged: in June 2017 and January 2019.

The previous Planning Proposals were subject to a Rezoning Review, in August 2018 and August 2019. The Planning Proposals were considered by the Sydney Central City Planning Panel (SCCPP) and on both occasions the SCCPP confirmed the proposal had strategic merit, stating:

*“The Panel believes that the continued use of the site for Senior’s Living and provision of improved housing and support facilities would be beneficial planning outcomes. Accordingly, the Panel was satisfied that the Proposal has strategic merit.”*

The SCCPP raised a number of site-specific issues to be addressed, including:

- Proposed height and density – including consistency with the E4 zone objectives and local character
- Consistency between the proposed heights in the master plan and heights of buildings map
- Site disturbance and tree loss

In the August 2019 Rezoning Review, the SCPP were satisfied that potential ecological and geotechnical constraints would be addressed by the master plan and draft DCP.

These issues, along with previous issues raised by Council are further addressed in Section 4 ‘Planning Proposal History’.

This Planning Proposal has been revised to specifically address the Panel's recommendations and comments provided by Council. A response to the Panel's recommendations and Council's comments is addressed in Section 4 'Planning Proposal History'.

### **Planning context**

The Hills LEP 2019 is the relevant planning instrument applying to the site. The site is zoned E4 Environmental Living under The Hills LEP 2019. Seniors housing is prohibited in the E4 zone. The existing Village was approved and constructed in the 1980's and is now subject to existing use rights.

A maximum building height of 9 metres currently applies to the site under The Hills LEP 2019. There is no maximum floor space ratio control applying to the site.

This Planning Proposal seeks to amend The Hills LEP 2019 to introduce new planning controls for the site.

This Planning Proposal has been drafted in accordance with Section 55 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and *A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals*, NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2016). In line with these documents, this Planning Proposal explains the intended effect of the proposed instrument and sets out the justification for the making of the proposed instrument.

### **The need for more seniors housing**

The redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort is required to meet the needs of an ageing population, and an increasing demand for high quality seniors housing in The Hills LGA.

The Hills LGA has an ageing population, and the proportion of residents over 65 is increasing. As noted earlier, within 20 years there will be an additional 47,000 people over 65 (16% of the total population) in The Hills LGA.

The projected growth in people aged over 65 means that there must be more emphasis on planning for well-designed, and well-located seniors housing and aged care options that allow people to age in place.

The proposal responds to a growing need for seniors housing and will help meet the growing demand of a more diverse, and older population in The Hills LGA over the next 20 years.

The redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort presents an opportunity to renew existing seniors housing and address a significant anticipated shortfall in seniors housing in The Hills LGA, and Central City District.

### **The need for renewal**

The exiting Village has a number of issues currently impacting resident's accessibility, movement, and amenity. These include:

- Steep inclines and poor design of pedestrian routes with extensive stairs,
- Units that are not universally accessible, with stairs and no lifts,
- Lack of pathways and level access,
- Ageing infrastructure and facilities that no longer meet the needs of residents,
- Insufficient parking located too far from resident's units.

Redevelopment of the site is required to address these issues and facilitate the continued use and enjoyment of the site for seniors housing.



The options for addressing these issues under the current planning controls are limited. Seniors housing is a prohibited use in the E4 Environmental Living Zone. *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* does not apply to the site. Existing use rights, whilst able to be explored, do not provide a transparent pathway for the future planning of the site, nor the extent of renewal needed to bring the site up to modern day standards.

A Planning Proposal is the most appropriate pathway to facilitate renewal of the site. To support the Planning Proposal, a master planned approach has been undertaken which provides a holistic design approach to the site. The redevelopment of the site will provide opportunities for improved housing, a private shuttle bus service, and increased facilities on-site. This will allow residents to continue to age in place, close to infrastructure and existing social networks.

The proposed master plan and supporting amendments to the planning controls, provide a whole-of-site approach to renewal of the existing seniors housing, to deliver a modern, functional and high-quality senior's community in a landscaped, parkland setting.

A master planned approach enables a full redevelopment of the site, that will deliver improved housing, environmental, amenity and accessibility outcomes. Piecemeal redevelopment would not achieve these outcomes.

New seniors housing will be accessible and able to comply with the Apartment Design Guidelines. A new communal facility will be provided early in the development process for the benefit of existing residents.

The Planning Proposal will deliver a site-responsive development that not only provides improved seniors housing, but enhances the existing open space, retains significant trees, and mitigates any potential amenity impacts on neighbouring properties.

### **Strategic and site-specific merit test**

In accordance with *A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals*, prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), a Planning Proposal must demonstrate the strategic merit of the proposed LEP amendment. The Planning Proposal should also contain enough information to identify relevant environmental, social, economic and other site-specific considerations. Below is a summary of the Proposal's strategic and site-specific merit.

### **Strategic merit**

The Planning Proposal is supportable from a strategic planning perspective for the following reasons:

- It is in accordance with the ***Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities*** and the ***Central City District Plan***. Providing more seniors housing in an area with a rapidly ageing population is a key driver of the NSW Government. Seniors Housing is not being developed at a rate to meet future demand, which is anticipated to grow in response to an ageing population. By 2025, demand for seniors housing is forecast to double. In an area forecast to have an additional 11,000 people over the age of 65 in the next 10 years, opportunities to increase seniors housing will assist in meeting the growing demand for seniors housing. The Planning Proposal's consistency with the *Greater Sydney Region Plan* and the *Central City District Plan* is further outlined in Section 8.2.

- It is in accordance with ***the Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement 2019 (Hills Future 2036)***. Prioritising seniors housing and liveability outcomes for residents with better access to services and amenities is one of Council's key planning priorities. The Planning Proposal will improve the existing housing stock and increase choice for residents and also enable the provision of a full range of services, including medical facilities, craft rooms, a gymnasium and heated pool on site. An on-demand village bus will also operate, providing access to Castle Hill, and surrounding services and facilities. The Planning Proposal's consistency with *The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement, Hills Future 2036* is further outlined in Section 8.2.
- It is in accordance with the ***Hills Draft Housing Strategy 2019***. Planning for a diversity of housing including housing for seniors is one of Council's key planning priorities. As above, the Planning Proposal will improve the existing housing stock and increase housing choice for residents in close proximity to services and transport. The Planning Proposal's consistency with *The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement, Hills Future 2036* is further outlined in Section 8.2.
- It is in accordance with ***The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015*** which identifies the need for three additional aged care housing facilities to meet the needs of the growing aged population over the next 20 years. The provision of aged care facilities is critical, and the strategy recognises the role of the market in delivering seniors housing to meet the needs of an ageing population.
- **The site is strategically located in proximity to services and public transport.** Castle Ridge Resort is located approximately 1km from the Castle Hill Town Centre, a key strategic centre in the *Central City District* and the Castle Hill Metro Station, which provides access to a range of centres across the north-west corridor. The site and redevelopment are therefore considered to be in-keeping with the principle of concentrating development in and around centre locations.
- **The Planning Proposal will improve accessibility outcomes for residents.** The site has with excellent public bus services along Old Northern Road, and an on-demand village bus will provide direct access from the site to the Castle Hill Town Centre as required by the residents.
- **The site is already developed for seniors housing.** The site is already developed for seniors housing and given the limited large sites available for new seniors housing developments, particularly in areas with a rapidly ageing population, renewal and redevelopment of existing sites should be prioritised and encouraged.
- **The site is not isolated and is located in proximity to other seniors housing developments and local amenities.** Castle Ridge Resort is located close to other seniors housing developments, including Anglicare Retirement Village, and a range of supporting community facilities close to the site that provide opportunities for socialising and interaction for residents, including the Castle Hill Senior Citizen's Club, local churches (St Pauls Anglican Church and St Bernadette's Catholic Church), and the Castle Hill Arts Society. The site also sits immediately adjacent to Pioneer Park Reserve, a large public park offering residents green outlook and amenity.
- **The Proposal will allow people to Age-In-Place.** The proposal will support renewal of an established seniors housing community in Castle Hill, allowing

people to age in place, in a community focused environment, close to other seniors and their families.

Accordingly, the proposal is well justified on strategic planning grounds, and will deliver high quality, well-located and attractive seniors housing within an area with a rapidly ageing population.

#### **Site specific merit**

In preparing the Planning Proposal, significant consideration has been given to the constraints of the site, the relationship with adjoining properties, traffic, and environmental impacts.

Given the site's highly accessible location, the need for increased seniors housing in the Hills LGA, and the ability for all on-site impacts to be appropriately managed, the Planning Proposal is considered to have demonstrated site-specific merit.

The Proposal is appropriate for its context and it demonstrates site specific merit for the following reasons:

- It will facilitate **renewal of aged building stock, increase seniors housing**, and deliver **improved infrastructure, services, and access** within the site.
- It will facilitate **low-impact residential development, consistent with objectives of the E4 Environmental Living zone**, that responds to the site's topographical constraints, retains significant trees, and enhances the sites parkland setting.
- It presents an opportunity to **address existing accessibility issues, and upgrade ageing infrastructure** within the site.
- The Proposal has an **acceptable traffic impacts** as detailed in the attached Traffic Impact report at Attachment D.
- The Proposal confirms that potential **landslip and geotechnical constraints can be appropriately managed** as outlined in the Geotechnical Advice included at Attachment H.
- The master plan demonstrates that the proposed planning controls and building envelopes will deliver high amenity apartments and communal spaces, consistent with the requirements of the Apartment Design Guideline (ADG).
- The proposed design and built form **minimises visual, privacy and overshadowing impacts** for neighbouring properties. The proposal would result in only minor overshadowing to Pioneer Place Reserve and is not considered to have any adverse impacts on its surrounds.
- The proposal provides an **appropriate interface to surrounding properties**. A detailed interface study in the Urban Design Report (Attachment A) demonstrates the proposal provides an appropriate scale of development, with increased setbacks and lower heights to ensure no building would exceed 9m at the boundaries.
- The proposal provides for the retention of the majority of significant trees and achieves **50% landscaped area**.
- **Building envelopes and basement areas are contained within the existing development area**, minimising site disturbance and encroachment of buildings into open space.



- The Proposal will provide **improved on-site facilities and enhanced open space** to satisfy the needs of residents and will **not increase demand on local infrastructure**. A contribution toward the upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve is proposed as part of the redevelopment of the site.
- The Proposal is seen to be **consistent with the desired future character** for the Castle Hill suburb.

Urban design testing further demonstrates that the proposed amendments to The Hills LEP 2019 would result in a desirable urban design outcome for the site. Refer to the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.

The Planning Proposal seeks to provide high quality seniors housing that meets the requirements of existing and future residents, Council and the community, in such a way that manages all foreseeable on and off-site impacts. It is therefore considered to have site-specific merit.

### NSW Government Response to COVID-19

The NSW Government recognises the important role the planning system will play in the fight against COVID-19

This Planning Proposal responds to NSW Government's objective to keep the economy moving, support communities and keep people in jobs. In particular, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's (DPIE), Planning System Acceleration Program identifies the need to cut red tape and fast-track assessment processes to boost the construction pipeline and fast-track new projects. This Planning Proposal will boost the construction pipeline - and importantly, generate new jobs.

The DPIE have established three essential criteria that will be used to identify priority projects for prioritisation through the assessment process of the planning system. This Planning Proposal meets the established criteria and can deliver significant economic and public benefits. A response to each of these criteria is provided in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 Response to Priority Project Criteria**

Criteria	
<b>Jobs – do projects create jobs?</b>	Yes. The Planning Proposal will create approximately 759 jobs (construction and ongoing) and will generate an economic value of \$1.035 billion to the NSW economy.
<b>Timing – can the assessment and determination of the project be completed quickly, and can the project commence (for DAs) or proceed to DA (for planning proposals) within 6 months?</b>	Yes, if supported a DA would be lodged within 6 months. If the Planning Proposal is supported, Stockland are committed to commencing the project within 12-18 months.
<b>Public benefits – can the project deliver, or be a stimulus for the delivery of, public benefit?</b>	<p>Yes. This Planning Proposal can deliver a number of public benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Delivery of 247 high-quality seniors apartments</b> within an established community and highly accessible location. This is accordance with the NSW Government's Greater Sydney Region Plan and Central City District Plan, which highlights the critical need for more seniors housing.</li> <li>– <b>Retaining over half the site as landscaped area and open space</b> – This is in accordance with State and local planning strategies which seek to improve</li> </ul>

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open space provision, deep soil and tree canopy cover across Greater Sydney.

- **Contribution to the enhancement and upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve** – access to quality open space is of critical importance and improvements to Pioneer Place Reserve, a Council owned park, will provide benefits for the whole community.
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### Assessment

A number of technical assessments have been undertaken to support the Planning Proposal. The Planning Proposal should be read in conjunction with the supporting documentation at Attachment A to K, including the Urban Design Study, Seniors Living Demand Study, Traffic Assessment, Ecological Assessment, Arborist report, Geotechnical advice, and Electrical and Hydraulic Services Due Diligence.

These assessments support the objective of this Planning Proposal, which is to redevelop an existing seniors housing development to provide more and better seniors housing, deliver improved service and amenity, and ensure a whole of site-based approach to the management of environmental constraints.

The technical assessments support the need for the Planning Proposal, confirm the suitability of the site for redevelopment, and demonstrate that all constraints can be adequately addressed. Refer to Section 7 of this report for a detailed assessment of the Proposal.

### Recommendation

This Planning Proposal is, in effect, an amendment of the previous Planning Proposal's relating to the Site that was submitted to Council in June 2017 and January 2019.

The proposed masterplan has been revised in response to the site-specific issues and recommendations raised by the SCPP and Council. In this regard, we highlight that the site-specific issues have now been addressed, as detailed throughout this Planning Proposal and further supported by a number of technical reports which establish the suitability for redevelopment.

This Planning Proposal continues to demonstrate strong strategic merit and although the site is subject to existing use rights, the preferred planning pathway is a whole-of-site master planned approach, that will deliver improved environmental and design outcomes for the site. This outcome provides greater transparency and clarity to the community about the future of the site.

Accordingly, this Planning Proposal is well justified and will deliver high quality, safe and attractive seniors housing in an area with a rapidly ageing population. This is consistent with the actions and priorities identified in the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*, the *Central City District Plan* and *The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement*.

The Planning Proposal is therefore recommended to proceed to a Gateway determination.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Preliminary

This Planning Proposal has been prepared by Architectus on behalf of Stockland. The Planning Proposal seeks Council support to progress an amendment to the planning controls applicable to the site under The Hills LEP 2019.

The site is currently managed by Stockland and is known as the Castle Ridge Resort. The site accommodates approximately 113 detached and semi-detached independent living units within close proximity to Castle Hill Town Centre.

The Planning Proposal seeks an amendment to The Hills LEP 2019 to redevelop an existing 30-year-old retirement village at 350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill. Redevelopment of the site is required to provide more functional and contemporary seniors housing to meet the increasing demand for seniors housing, and the evolving needs of older residents.

A master planned approach enables a full redevelopment of the site, that will deliver improved housing, amenity, connectivity and accessibility. Piecemeal redevelopment would not provide this opportunity.

To facilitate the proposed redevelopment of the site, an amendment to The Hills Local LEP 2019 is required. The proposed amendments are outlined below.

- **Schedule 1 Additional Permitted Use** – Introduce 'seniors housing' as an additional permissible use under the current zoning of the site,
- **Height of buildings (Clause 4.3)** – Increase the maximum building height from 9 metres to 18 metres,
- **Floor space ratio (Clause 4.4)** – Introduce a maximum floor space ratio of 0.83:1 for the site.

This Planning Proposal has been drafted in accordance with Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and *A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals*, (NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2012). In line with these documents, this Planning Proposal seeks to explain the intended effect of the proposed LEP amendments and set out the justification for the changes.

An amendment to The Hills DCP 2012 (DCP) has been prepared to support the Planning Proposal. The DCP contains provisions relating to built form, site coverage, access, residential amenity, tree protection, and open space. The Draft DCP is provided at Attachment B.

The Planning Proposal is the result of a thorough analysis of the site and its context. This has involved detailed design investigations to consider the site-specific opportunities and constraints and establish proposed planning controls that will facilitate a built form that will complement the site's unique location, topography, and environmental qualities.

A master plan has been prepared to support the Planning Proposal. The master plan demonstrates that a high-quality built form outcome could be developed under the proposed planning controls. The master plan provides for:

- An indicative yield of 247 high-amenity apartments that demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG);
- Buildings ranging from 3 to 6 storeys, with the tallest buildings located in the centre of the site;
- Retention of the large central open space, and over 50% of the site as landscaped area;

- Retention of the majority of significant trees and a replanting strategy including 150 new trees on site; and
- Up to 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of communal space to provide for a range of facilities and services on site.

A comprehensive overview of the master plan and design approach is provided in the Design Report at Attachment A.

The proposed master plan and supporting amendments to the planning controls, provide a whole-of-site approach to renewal of the existing Village, to deliver a modern, functional and high-quality senior's community in a landscaped, parkland setting.

A master planned approach enables a full redevelopment of the site, that will deliver improved housing, environmental, amenity and accessibility outcomes. Piecemeal redevelopment would not achieve these outcomes.

## 1.2 About Stockland

Stockland is one of Australia's largest developers and runs 69 retirement villages, providing housing for over 11,000 people.

Stockland carries out regular independent surveys of its residents. According to the results, 93% of residents are extremely satisfied with their living circumstances, and 89% extremely happy with their social lives within Stockland villages.

This demonstrates a strong commitment by Stockland to provide the highest quality of seniors housing in Australia, part of what this planning proposal aims to achieve for the Castle Ridge Resort at Castle Hill.

Stockland are focused on socially and environmentally responsible development, delivering high quality, well-serviced and socially inclusive developments. The redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort is an opportunity to redefine excellence in design, lifestyle, service, and security in Stockland's retirement villages.

Stockland's reputation and commitment to high quality seniors housing, presents an exciting opportunity to renew the retirement village, and create a contemporary style of development that meets current market expectations, supports the local community, and maintains viability into the future.

## 1.3 Structure of this report

This report is prepared in accordance with the NSW Government's *Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals*, and is set out as follows:

- **Section 2: The Site and Context** – provides an overview of the site to which the Planning Proposal is intended to apply.
- **Section 3: The Proposal** – outlines the design principles and built form philosophy that have been identified to inform the master plan for the Castle Ridge Retirement Resort.
- **Section 4: Planning Proposal History** – provides an overview of the planning history including Councils assessment and resolution of the previous Planning Proposals and Rezoning Reviews.
- **Section 5: Objectives and intended outcomes** - provides a concise statement of the proposal objectives and intended outcomes.
- **Section 6: Explanation of provisions** – outlines the proposed amendments to the planning provisions within The Hills LEP 2019 to achieve the proposal.
- **Section 7: Assessment** - provides an assessment of potential impacts associated with the proposal.
- **Section 8: Justification** – provides the planning justification to support the proposal.

- **Section 9: Mapping** – provides the proposed LEP Maps.
- **Section 10: Consultation** – outlines consultation undertaken to date, and a recommended community consultation program that should be undertaken.
- **Section 11: Project Timeline** – outlines expectations for timeframe of the progression of the proposal.
- **Section 12: Conclusion** – concludes the report with a summary of findings and recommendations.

This report should be read in conjunction with Attachments A to O.

#### **1.4 Authors**

This Planning Proposal has been prepared by Katrina Burley, Associate Urban Planner, Paris Wojcik, Senior Urban Planner and Jasmine Bautista, Student Planner at Architectus. Greg Burgon, Principal at Architectus, has provided quality assurance.



# 2. Site Context

## 2.1 Site context

The site is located 350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill. The site is approximately 1km from Castle Hill Strategic Centre which provides an extensive range of services, amenities, and community facilities. This includes Castle Towers Shopping Centre (approximately 1.6 kilometres west of the site), Castle Hill Library (approximately 2.5 kilometres from the site), Castle Hill RSL club/ Aquatic Fitness Centre and Castle Hill Bowling Club (approximately 2.8 kilometres from the site). A small retail shopping strip, including a chemist, is also located along Old Northern Road, approximately 350m from the site (indicated distances are measured along footpath).

The site is well serviced by several bus routes that run along Old Northern Road linking the site to Castle Hill Town Centre, Rouse Hill Town Centre (approximately 9.5km north west of the site), and Parramatta (approximately 12.3 kilometres south of the site).

There are a number of established community facilities close to the site that provide opportunities for socialising and interaction for the Castle Ridge Resort residents, including the Castle Hill Senior Citizen's Club, local churches including St Paul's Anglican Church and St Bernadette's Catholic Church, and the Castle Hill Arts Society.

Directly to the east of the site, is the Anglican Retirement Village (ARV) which includes six retirement villages and five assisted living facilities. The most recent development within the village comprises community facilities including a café, community centre, a hairdressing salon, gymnasium and swimming pool.

The site is adjacent to Pioneer Park Reserve, a large public park south west of the site. The defining topography of the site, and the existing vegetation, attributes a unique sense of seclusion to the site within a scenic and peaceful parkland setting.



**Figure 2 Site context**

Source: NearMaps, with Architectus edits

## 2.2 Site details

### Existing land uses

The site was developed for the purpose of a retirement village in the 1980's. The site is currently zoned E4 Environmental Living under The Hills LEP 2019. Seniors housing is now a prohibited use in this zone. The site is owned and operated by Stockland as a retirement village. Stockland seek to retain operation of the site as a retirement village and undertake the redevelopment of the site for seniors housing.

The current accommodation at Castle Ridge Resort consists of 113 independent living units, a large communal parkland in the centre of the site and a small communal facility located in the north-east corner of the site. On-site facilities include an outdoor swimming pool, billiards room, library, and a covered BBQ terrace area.

Construction of Castle Ridge Resort began in the 1980's and has since been developed on a piecemeal basis without the benefit of a holistic master plan or broader vision for the Village.

The existing buildings are 2-3 storey masonry dwellings built along the sloping topography that falls steeply to the centre of the site. Refer to Figure 3. The existing Village is outdated and does not meet current design and accessibility standards. Vehicular and pedestrian access is not legible, with minimal mobility between the east and western parts of the site, with streets that are too steep to walk. Refer to Figure 4.

Ageing dwellings and infrastructure require a major redevelopment to provide contemporary accommodation options and ensure the village meets current standards. Additionally, on-site facilities no longer meet the needs of residents, including the outdoor swimming pool and billiards room (Refer to Figures 5 – 7)



**Figure 3 Existing independent living units**

Existing buildings are terraced into the hillside, with separate parking located below.

Source: Stockland





**Figure 4 Internal roads and stairways**  
 Steep roads and pedestrian pathways create accessibility issues.  
*Source: Architectus*



**Figure 5 The communal outdoor terrace**  
 A focal point for social gatherings in the village.  
*Source: Stockland*



**Figure 6 Communal outdoor swimming pool**  
 The redevelopment will include an indoor pool, more suitable for seniors  
*Source: Stockland*



**Figure 7 Communal Billiards room**

The billiards room is in the old stable building and is no longer fit for purpose  
*Source: Stockland*



**Figure 8 Communal parkland**

The central parkland and established tree provides a scenic and peaceful environment  
*Source: Architectus*

### **Legal description**

The subject site is an irregularly shaped allotment that consists of single lot, legally described as Lot 503 in Deposited Plan 1048808.

### **Site dimensions**

The site has a total area of 3.7 ha. It has a frontage of approximately 260 metres to Old Northern Road and 100 metres to Pioneer Park.

### **Land ownership**

The land in its entirety is owned by Stockland Cooperation Ltd, who is also the applicant for this Planning Proposal.

## 2.3 Current planning controls

### The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019

The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2019 is the primary environmental planning instrument applicable to the site. An extract of the key applicable controls is provided below with key map extracts following.

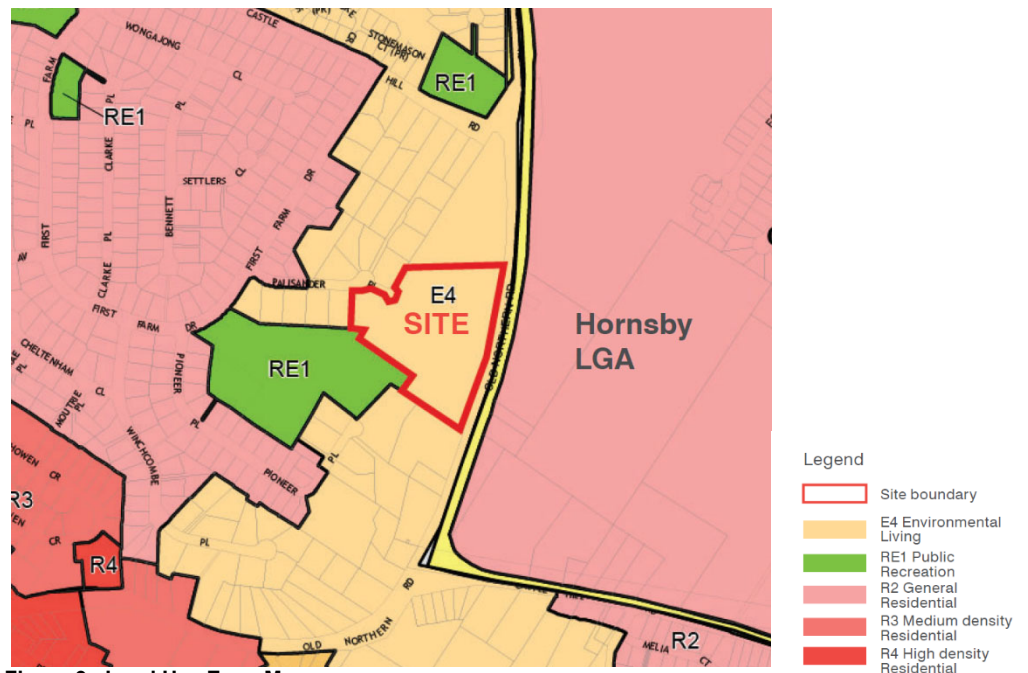
#### Land Use Zoning

The site is currently zoned E4 Environmental Living under The Hills LEP 2019. The E4 Environmental Living zone facilitates low-impact residential development, while ensuring development does not have any adverse impacts on the aesthetic and ecological values of the land. Seniors housing is a prohibited use under the E4 zone.

#### E4 Environmental Living

Objectives of the zone	<i>To provide for low-impact residential development in areas with special ecological, scientific and aesthetic values</i>  <i>To ensure that residential development does not have an adverse effect on those values</i>
Permitted without consent	<i>Home occupations</i>
Permitted with consent	<i>Bed and breakfast accommodation; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Community facilities; Dual occupancies (attached); Dwelling houses; Emergency services facilities; Environmental protection works; Home-based child care; Home businesses; Oyster aquaculture; Pond-based aquaculture; Roads; Secondary dwellings; Tank-based aquaculture</i>
Prohibited	<i>Industries; Service stations; Warehouse or distribution centres; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3</i>

Land surrounding the site in The Hills LGA is zoned E4 Environmental Living and RE1 Public Recreation. Land across Old Northern Road in Hornsby LGA is zoned R2 Low Density Residential. Refer to Figure 9.



**Figure 9 Land Use Zone Map**

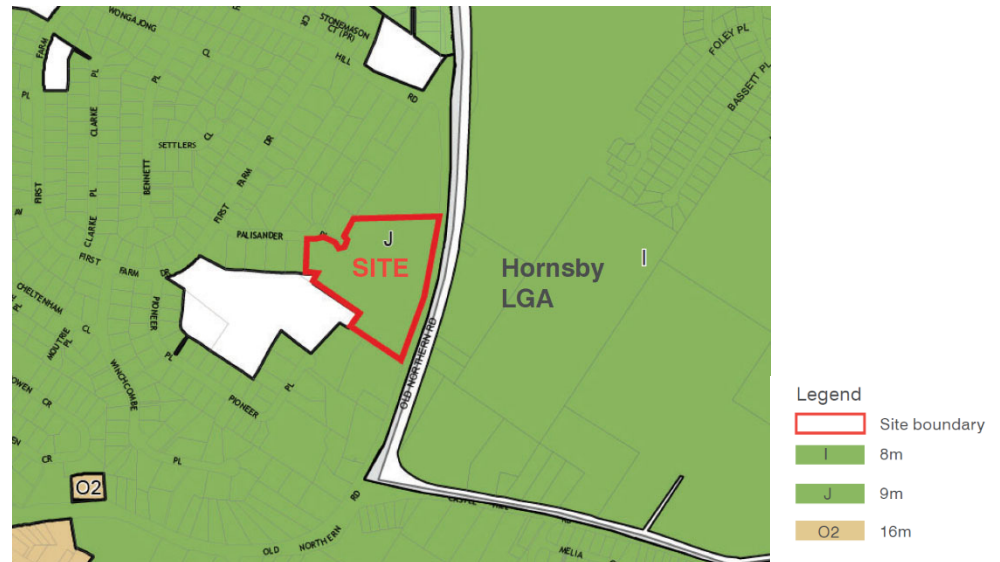
Site outlined in red

Source: The Hills LEP 2019 (Sheet LNZ\_024) and Hornsby LEP 2013 (Sheet LNZ\_010) with Architectus edits (2020)



## Building height

The maximum building height for development on the site is 9 metres. Adjoining lots within The Hills LGA also have a maximum height of 9 metres. Land on the other side of Old Northern Road in Hornsby LGA is subject to a maximum building height of 8.5m. Refer to Figure 10.



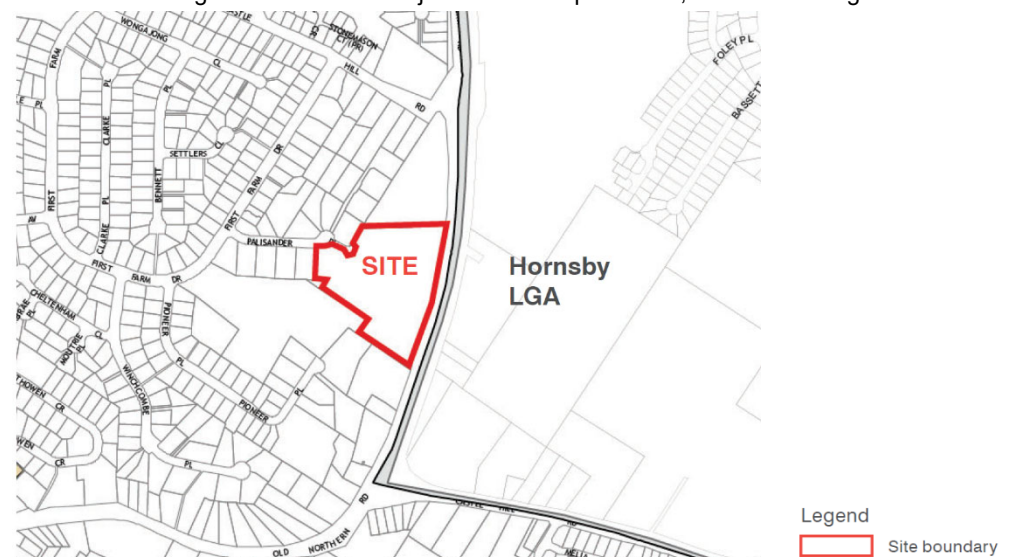
**Figure 10 Maximum building height map**

Site outlined in red

Source: The Hills LEP 2019 (Sheet HOB\_024) and Hornsby LEP 2013 (Sheet HOB\_010) with Architectus edits (2020)

## Floor space ratio

The site does not currently have a maximum floor space ratio under The Hills LEP 2019. Areas surrounding the site are not subject to a floor space ratio, as shown in Figure 11.



**Figure 11 Maximum floor space ratio map**

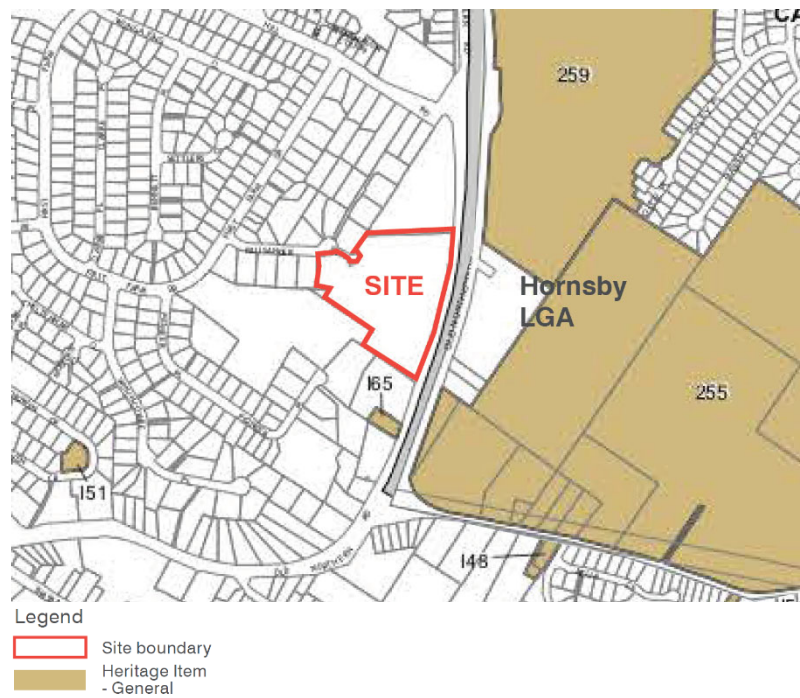
Site outlined in red

Source: The Hills LEP 2019 (Sheet FSR\_024) and Hornsby LEP 2013 (Sheet FSR\_010) with Architectus edits (2020)

## Heritage

The subject site is neither a heritage item nor is it adjoining any heritage items. As shown in Figure 12, the nearest heritage items are located across Old Northern Road, being Oakhill College north east of the site and Anglican Retirement Village to the south east (in the Hornsby Shire LGA).

The heritage significance of Oakhill College is attributed to the main school building and its grounds that were developed circa 1940. The grounds including the entry gates, dairy and stables within the Anglican Retirement Village site are local heritage items under the Hornsby LEP 2013.



**Figure 12 Heritage map**

Site outlined in red

Source: *The Hills LEP 2019 (Sheet HER\_024) and Hornsby LEP 2013 (Sheet HER\_010) with Architectus edits (2020)*





## 3. The Proposal

### 3.1 The Vision

The vision for the redevelopment of 350 Old Northern Road is to:

Create a high quality, accessible and connected seniors housing development, that reinforces the area's landscaped character and lifestyle, prioritising walkable and safe internal streets, and the retention of significant trees in a parkland setting.

Buildings will be focused around the large central parkland, which will be the focal point for social activity and outdoor recreation. Supported with a range of high-quality communal spaces and facilities, Castle Ridge will set a benchmark for contemporary seniors living.

Buildings will be located and designed to respond to the site's topography and natural features, creating a transition in scale and form across the site. The design of buildings will capitalise on the excellent local and district views, with all residents enjoying views to trees, parkland, and beyond.



### 3.2 The Master Plan

A master plan has been prepared by Architectus to support the Planning Proposal. Refer to Urban Design Report at Attachment A. The master plan demonstrates how the site could be developed under the proposed planning controls. The master plan has informed the proposed height and density controls, and provisions in the site-specific DCP.

Key features of the master plan include:

- Approximately 247 independent living units;
- Approximately 1,300m<sup>2</sup> community space for residents;
- 0.83:1 FSR / 30,750m<sup>2</sup> GFA;
- Compact and modestly scaled buildings ranging from 3-6 storeys in height;
- 34 out of 37 significant trees retained and over 150 new trees to be planted on site;
- Retention of 19,000m<sup>2</sup> of landscaped area and open space (50% of the site);
- Enhanced accessibility, including a new entry and arrival area, and improved internal streets and pedestrian paths and an on-demand Village bus service;
- Approximately 325 basement car parking spaces.

Refer to the illustrative master plan at Figure 13.



**Figure 13 Illustrative Master plan**  
*Source: Architectus*

Future development on the site will need to comply with all relevant planning controls and would be subject to a separate, detailed development application process at a later stage.

The Urban Design Report at Attachment A provides a comprehensive overview of the master plan and design approach for development on the site.

# 4. Planning Proposal History

*This Section provides an overview of the Site's planning process to date including a history of the previous Planning Proposal's and Rezoning Review's relating to the Site.*

## 4.1 Overview / Timeline

On 30 June 2016, Architectus on behalf of Stockland lodged a Planning Proposal with The Hills Shire Council (Council) seeking to amend The Hills LEP 2012 to:

- Introduce 'seniors housing' as an additional permitted use for the site under Schedule 1 'Additional Permitted Uses' (Note: the site is in an E4 Environmental Living zone where seniors housing is prohibited)
- Increase maximum height of buildings from 9 metres to a range between 14 and 27 metres for the site
- Introduce a maximum floor space ratio of 1:1 for the site.

On 12 December 2017, Council resolved not to support the Planning Proposal. Refer to copy of the Council's resolution at Attachment M.

On 12 February 2018, a rezoning review request was made with the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), as Council had notified that it did not support the Planning Proposal.

On 7 August 2018, the Sydney Central City Planning Panel (SCCPP) determined that the Planning Proposal should not be submitted for a Gateway determination because the proposal has demonstrated strategic merit but not site-specific merit. Refer to copy of SCCPP decision at Attachment L.

Following the decision of the SCCPP, the Planning Proposal was revised to address the Panel's recommendations and comments provided by Council. A response to the Panel's recommendations and Council's comments is provided in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

In January 2019 Architectus on behalf of Stockland lodged a (second) Planning Proposal with Council seeking to amend The Hills LEP 2012 to:

- Introduce 'seniors housing' as an additional permitted use for the site under Schedule 1 'Additional Permitted Uses' (Note: the site is in an E4 Environmental Living zone where seniors housing is prohibited);
- Increase the maximum height of buildings from 9m to various specific Reduced Levels (RL) ranging from RL 158.00 metres to 186.00 metres (equivalent to 3 to 6 storeys for buildings); and
- Introduce a maximum floor space ratio of 1:1 for the site.

On 14 May 2019, Council resolved not to support the Planning Proposal. Refer to copy of the Council's assessment at Attachment O.

On 22 May 2019, a rezoning request was made to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, as Council had notified that it did not support the Planning Proposal.

On 12 August 2019, the SCCPP determined that the Planning Proposal should not be submitted for a Gateway determination because the proposal has demonstrated strategic merit but not site-specific merit. Refer to copy of SCCPP decision at Attachment N.



Feedback from Council and the SCCPP is further discussed below.

#### 4.2 Issues raised in the 2017 Council resolution

On 12 December 2017, Council resolved not to support the Planning Proposal for the following reasons outlined in *italics* in the left-hand column of Table 2 below, followed by Architectus' response to each of these issues, which are addressed in the right-hand column.

**Table 2 Issues raised in the 2017 Council resolution**

Council issue	Architectus response
1. <i>There is insufficient strategic justification for the scale of built form and density proposed;</i>	In August 2018 the Planning Panel determined that the Proposal has Strategic merit. Providing more seniors housing in an area with a rapidly ageing population is a key driver of the NSW Government. The Planning Proposal responds to this need and will deliver high quality, well-located seniors housing within an area with a rapidly ageing population.
2. <i>The proposal would be inconsistent and incompatible with the objectives and character of the E4 Environmental Living zone under LEP 2012 and would adversely impact on the ecological and aesthetic values of the site and locality;</i>	<p>Development undertaken in accordance with the Planning Proposal has the ability to be consistent with the objectives of E4 zone. The Planning Proposal has been revised to minimise building footprints, retain more trees, and require less excavation.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal limits building footprints to 27% of the total site area, and the extent of basement area has from 40% (first Planning Proposal) to 25% (second Planning Proposal) and now 23.8% (subject Planning Proposal) of the site area.</p> <p>Several options for the land use controls were considered and retaining the E4 Zone was determined to be the best planning outcome.</p>
3. <i>The proposed density and built form results in an inappropriate development outcome on the site, likely to result in unreasonable amenity impacts on adjoining development and public open space; and</i>	<p>The initial Planning Proposal proposed heights of 4 to 8 storeys. Following feedback from Council and the SCCPP, the proposed heights were reduced to 3 to 6 storeys, with the tallest buildings located in the centre of the site, in accordance with the Panel's detailed recommendations.</p> <p>The Proposal also includes approximately 50% landscaped area and prioritises the retention of significant trees to ensure redevelopment of the site retains its parkland setting and contributes to local character.</p> <p>The Proposal does not overshadow any adjoining properties and building heights have been reduced to minimise visual and privacy impacts. The proposal does not result in any overshadowing of public open space. Refer to the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.</p>
4. <i>The proposal has not adequately addressed outstanding matters relating to geotechnical constraints, traffic impacts and increased demand for local infrastructure.</i>	<p><u>Geotech</u></p> <p>A Preliminary Geotechnical Assessment provided by JK Geotechnics (Attachment H) confirms that any potential geotechnical constraints can be appropriately managed as part of the redevelopment of the site.</p> <p><u>Traffic</u></p> <p>A deceleration lane is proposed as part of the Planning Proposal to improve access to and from the Site.</p> <p>A Traffic Assessment prepared by ARUP (Attachment D) confirms that the Proposal has acceptable traffic impacts and that future peak</p>

	<p>hour trips on Palisander Place are well within the capacity of a local street. Refer to Section 7.4.</p> <p><u>Local Infrastructure</u></p> <p>The Planning Proposal retains the 8,500m<sup>2</sup> central parkland and includes over 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of new communal facilities.</p> <p>An on-demand bus service will operate for residents providing access to services and facilities as required. Stockland is also willing to provide a contribution towards the upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve as part of the redevelopment of the site.</p> <p>The range of services and facilities proposed on-site ensures no increased demand on local infrastructure. Refer to a detailed overview of local infrastructure upgrades in Section 7.6.</p>
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Refer to Council's Resolution at Attachment M.

#### 4.3 Issues raised at the 2018 Sydney Central City Planning Panel

On 23 May 2018, Architectus on behalf of Stockland lodged a Rezoning Review (Ref: 2018SWC030 – The Hills Shire – RR\_2018\_THILL\_002\_00) with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

On 7 August 2018 the Sydney Central City Planning Panel (SCCPP) considered the request and determined that the Proposal had demonstrated strategic merit, but not site-specific merit.

The Panel provided the following reasons for their decision, outlined in *italics* in the left-hand column Table 3 below, followed by Architectus' response to each of these issues, which are addressed in the right-hand column.

**Table 3 Issues raised at the 2018 Sydney Central City Planning Panel**

SCCPP Issue	Architectus response
1. <i>The Panel believes that the continued use of the site for Senior's Living and provision of improved housing and support facilities would be beneficial planning outcomes'. Accordingly, the Panel was satisfied that the Proposal has strategic merit.</i>	Noted and agreed.
2. <i>In terms of site specific merit, the Panel considers that the proposed scale envisaged by the amended planning controls is excessive for the E4 zone and not in keeping with the existing or planned future character of the locality.</i>  <i>The Panel is also concerned about the excessive tree loss and excavation needed to accommodate the substantial proposed parking areas. In addition, the proposed height of buildings map and development footprints shown in the master plan are substantially inconsistent.</i>	Refer to the below.
The Panel sees merit in a revised planning proposal which provides:	
– <i>Heights of buildings that are generally 3 storeys along Palisander Place, 5-6 storeys in the centre of the site and 3-4 storeys along Old Northern Road;</i>	<p>The proposed heights were reduced in accordance with the Panel's recommendations such that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Heights of 3 storeys adjacent to Palisander Place;</li> <li>- Heights of 3-4 storeys for buildings directly fronting Old Northern Road, with generous setbacks provided.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The highest heights were located in the centre of the site (5-6 storeys) located directly opposite the park to ensure impacts are minimised on adjoining properties.</li> </ul> <p>The proposed building heights have been reduced from 4 – 8 storeys (first Planning Proposal) to 3 – 6 storeys (second Planning Proposal) and now 3 – 6 storeys (subject Planning Proposal).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Less site disturbance and tree loss through substantially reduced parking areas;</i></li> </ul>	<p>The proposed car parking rate has been reduced, along with the extent of basement area, to ensure less site disturbance and to maximise retention of significant trees.</p> <p>The extent of basement area has been sustainability reduced from initially 40% (first Planning Proposal) to 25% (second Planning Proposal) and now 23.8% (subject Planning Proposal).</p> <p>The Proposal will retain around 19,000m<sup>2</sup> of landscaped area and open space (equivalent to 50% of the site area).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Keeping the proposed building footprints but amended if necessary, to achieve greater tree retention;</i></li> </ul>	<p>Building footprints and the location of communal open spaces have been modified to ensure greater tree retention.</p> <p>A total of 34 out of the 37 high category trees on the site are proposed to be retained. A number of other trees on Old Northern Road and in the central open space deemed not to be significant by the Arborist report are also proposed to be retained to preserve the green, leafy character of the area. Significant planting is also proposed to mitigate any proposed tree loss.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>A height of buildings map that is consistent with the building footprints as shown in the master plan.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The Planning Proposal proposes a detailed maximum building height plan that aims to accurately translate the heights consistent with the master plan.</p> <p>Key changes compared to the previous Planning Proposal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All edges of the site will be limited by a 9m height limit.</li> <li>- A Nil height limit is proposed in the centre of the site. This is to protect and prohibit development in the large central communal open space.</li> <li>- Heights that match the building envelopes in the master plan – ranging from 9m to 18m</li> </ul>

Refer to the Sydney Central City Planning Panel Record of Decision at Attachment L.

#### 4.4 Issues raised in the 2019 Council resolution

On 14 May 2019, Council resolved not to support the Planning Proposal for the following reasons outlined in *italics* in the left-hand column, in the Table 4 below, followed by Architectus' response to each of these issues, which are addressed in the right-hand column.

**Table 4 Issues raised in the 2019 Council resolution**

Council Issue	Architectus Response
1. <i>There is insufficient strategic merit and justification for the scale of built form and density proposed, especially given the site is in an area that is largely isolated and outside of the walking catchment of Castle Hill Town Centre, is not serviced by sufficient infrastructure to accommodate the growth proposed and is heavily affected by environmental and topographical constraints.</i>	<p>In August 2019 the Sydney Central City Planning Panel maintained that the Proposal has Strategic merit.</p> <p>The site is located less than 1km from the Castle Hill town Centre. The site is in an area that is far from the term 'isolated' with similar surrounding land uses including the Anglicare Retirement Village, low-scale residential housing and public open space (Pioneer Place Reserve).</p> <p>The site is serviced by an efficient bus route with direct access to Castle Hill Town Centre, along with a range of other centers including Rouse Hill, Glenhaven, Knightsbridge, Parramatta and Sydney.</p> <p>The site will be serviced by private on-demand village bus service to ensure residents have access to nearby services.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal is accompanied by a carefully considered master plan, which has been revised to specifically respond to issues raised by Council and the Panel including responding to the sites environmental and topographical constraints.</p>
2. <i>The scale of development permitted by the proposal would be inconsistent with the objectives and character of the E4 Environmental Living zone under LEP 2012 and would adversely impact on the ecological and aesthetic values of the site and locality.</i>	<p>The Planning Proposal seeks to retain the E4 zone with seniors housing as an additional permitted use. This site-specific zoning strategy is unique to the site and will limit additional types of residential development to ensure that future development is consistent with the objectives of the E4 zone, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>To provide for low-impact residential development in areas with special ecological, scientific or aesthetic values.</i></li> <li>- <i>To ensure that residential development does not have an adverse effect on those values.</i></li> </ul> <p>The Planning Proposal demonstrates consistency with the above objectives by developing a master plan which complements the sites unique environmental and aesthetic values, which include responding to the sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Steep topography</b> – With a fall of 30m across the site, the master plan has been designed to integrate with the sites topography and sit below the ridgeline. The master plan has been designed to minimise the extent of excavation and address existing pedestrian accessibility challenges for residents to move safely and easily throughout the site.</li> <li>- <b>Presence of existing trees and vegetation</b> - The master plan that supports the Planning Proposal has been designed to retain 34 out of 37 high value trees. In addition, the landscape strategy for the site seeks to plant 150 new tree plantings to enhance the landscape character of the</li> </ul>

	<p>site, consistent with the green character of the local area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Provision of landscaped area and open space</b> – The master plan that supports the Planning Proposal has been designed to retain 19,000sqm of landscaped area and green open space (equivalent to 50% of the site).</li> <li>– <b>Views and natural parkland setting</b> – Due to the significant level changes and existing mature vegetation on and around the site, most buildings will be completely screened from view. Refer to Visual Impact Assessment (Section 6.8) in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.</li> </ul> <p>These matters are addressed in the site-specific DCP to ensure the redevelopment of the site is consistent with the master plan and the objectives of the E4 zone.</p>
<p>3. <i>The proposed density and built form results in an inappropriate development outcome on the site, likely to result in unreasonable visual and amenity impacts on adjoining development and public open space.</i></p>	<p>Architectus has considered the visual impact of the proposed buildings on adjoining properties and the surrounding area. Refer to Visual Impact Assessment (Section 6.8) in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A. Views have been selected from the public domain based on a topographic assessment of the local area and from where the site is most visible.</p> <p>The visual impact of the proposed buildings on the surrounding area is considered moderate to negligible depending on the viewpoint and its topographical height.</p> <p>Due to significant level changes and existing mature vegetation on and around the site, large parts of the proposed built form will be completely screened from view.</p> <p>The largest view impact will be from Old Northern Road as buildings are situated in close proximity to the public domain. These buildings present to Old Northern Road as no more than 3 storeys.</p> <p>Similarly, future buildings adjoining development along Palisander Place are restricted to a height of 3 storeys (which sits within a 9m high limit). This is not an unreasonable outcome as it is consistent with the height limit of adjoining residential development and will maintain the local character of the area.</p>
<p>4. <i>The proposal fails to adequately resolve a number of issues relating to traffic and movement which may result in pedestrian and traffic safety issues and exacerbation of existing issues on Old Northern Road and Palisander Place.</i></p>	<p>A Traffic Assessment has been prepared by Arup at Attachment D, to support the Planning Proposal. The Traffic Assessment determined that the increase in traffic movements is acceptable and can be accommodated within the existing network.</p> <p>The Assessment also confirms that any potential impacts can be appropriately managed through the introduction of traffic management measures, including signage to prevent the execution of U-turns along Old Northern Road. These measures will be addressed as part of a detailed traffic impact assessment required as part of any future development application.</p>

Refer to Council's Resolution at Attachment O.



#### 4.5 Issues raised at the 2019 Sydney City Central Planning Panel

On 22 May 2019, Architectus on behalf of Stockland lodged a Rezoning Review (Ref: 2019CCI039 – The Hills Shire – RR\_2019\_THILL\_001\_00) with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

On 12 August 2019 the Sydney Central City Planning Panel (SCCPP) considered the request and determined that the Proposal had demonstrated strategic merit, but not site-specific merit.

The Panel provided the following reasons for their decision, outlined in *italics* in the left-hand column of the Table below, followed by Architectus' response to each of these issues, which are addressed in the right-hand column.

**Table 5 Issues raised at the 2019 Sydney Central City Planning Panel**

SCCPP Issue	Architectus response
1. <i>The Panel is satisfied that the planning proposal demonstrates strategic merit.</i>	Noted and agreed.
2. <i>The Panel is not satisfied that the proposal demonstrates site specific merit. Whilst redevelopment to improve and provide additional housing at the facility would have merit, the current proposal is unsatisfactory in two respects.</i>	Refer to response below.
3. <i>The proposed height of buildings map would allow a scale of development out of character with its surrounds and inconsistent with the E4 objectives. The Panel also notes that the proposed height of buildings map is inconsistent with the Panel's reasons given in its decision of August 2018. Finally, the proposed height of buildings map is inconsistent with the building heights given in the master plan and draft DCP.</i>	<p>The proposed height strategy has been designed to minimise impacts to all the sites edges and ensure buildings provide an appropriate interface to neighbouring properties.</p> <p>Heights range from 9m to 18m, with the tallest buildings (up to 6 storeys) located in the centre of the site. A detailed interface study is provided in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.</p> <p>The proposed height of buildings map is consistent with the master plan and draft DCP.</p> <p><u>Old Northern Road</u></p> <p>Buildings along Old Northern Road are 3-5 storeys, with no building appearing greater than 3 storeys from Old Northern Road as a result of the fall of the site from Old Northern Road. A maximum building height of 9m applies to land within 13m of the boundary. This ensures no buildings would exceed 9m at the edge of the site. This creates an appropriate transition to adjoining residential dwellings and is appropriate scale of development</p> <p><u>342 Old Northern Road and Pioneer Place Reserve</u></p> <p>The significant drop in topography would allow a 4 storey building to sit at the same height or lower than the neighbouring town houses. This maintains a consistent height to Old Northern Road and neighbouring residential properties, reinforcing the existing character of the road, while reducing the visual impact of the proposed development when viewed from the street. A maximum building height of 9m applies to land within 10m of the boundary. This ensures no buildings would exceed 9m at the edge of the site.</p> <p><u>9 Palisander Place</u></p> <p>Buildings adjacent to Palisander Place step down in scale, with a maximum of 3 storeys at the edge of the site to provide an appropriate transition and interface to adjoining properties. The building sits within a 9m height limit.</p>

	<p><u>14 Palisander Place and 352 Old Northern Road</u></p> <p>Buildings adjacent to 14 Palisander Place are a maximum of 3 storeys and sit within the 9m height limit. The 9m height limit is consistent with adjoining residential development and the local character of the area.</p> <p>The proposed building height adjacent to 352 Old Northern Road is height; however, given the steep fall from 352 Old Northern Road to the site, the building sits 3 metres below any structures on 352 Old Northern Road and would not be visible. When viewed from Old Northern Road, this building would not appear more than 3 storeys.</p> <p>The setbacks to both boundaries (Old Northern Road and 352 Old Northern Road) allow for the retention of several significant trees on the site which will help screen the building.</p>
<p>4. <i>With respect to building height the Panel would have preferred:</i></p> <p>a) <i>A map that was consistent with the Panel's earlier reasons along the site boundaries consistent with the surrounding building heights controls of 9m;</i></p> <p>b) <i>Building height expressed as metres above existing ground level; and</i></p> <p>c) <i>Building heights corresponding with those given in the draft DCP and building boundaries corresponding with the building footprints in the draft DCP.</i></p>	<p>The proposed height of buildings map has been updated to reflect the building heights in the master plan and draft DCP. Building heights are expressed in heights in metres above existing ground level. As advised by the Panel, the height of buildings map does not include additional height for plant rooms and lift overruns. The Panel advised that this should be addressed through a Clause 4.6 variation at the DA stage. Based on this advice, the proposed maximum building height is to the top of the building only – with no allowance for lift overruns.</p> <p>Refer to proposed height mapping at Section 9.</p>
<p>5. <i>The Panel's second concern is that insufficient justification has been provided for the proposed 1:1 FSR. It was not evident that this FSR corresponded with the proposed building heights, nor that it would ensure an appropriate scale of development.</i></p>	<p>The proposed FSR has been reduced from 1:1 to 0.83:1 (equivalent to 30,750m<sup>2</sup> GFA), which is considered appropriate scale and form that aligns with the existing landscape character of the site.</p>
<p>6. <i>The Panel would have been assisted by a clear statement specifying all of the proposed social infrastructure to be provided in the planning proposal itself rather than in the supporting technical reports.</i></p>	<p>To support the Planning Proposal a range of new social infrastructure items are proposed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– An on-demand village bus will be available on request, between 8am and 6pm every day, and will be available to take residents to local shopping and entertainment venues, further reducing the need for private vehicle trips or increased demand on public bus services.</li> <li>– Over 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of new communal facilities including a gymnasium, indoor pool, health consulting spaces, activity rooms and mail delivery service in a new community hub. These services and facilities have been identified through consultation with existing residents. It will also improve the range of onsite facilities available to residents, meaning that the need for off-site journeys is minimised, reducing demand elsewhere as a result.</li> <li>– Over 50% of the site will be landscaped area and open space, including a large central open space and a range of smaller communal spaces, to ensure future development will adequately address, and reduce pressure on, demand on nearby local infrastructure.</li> </ul>

	<p>– Stockland will also provide a contribution towards the upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve as part of the redevelopment.</p> <p>Refer to Section 7.6 for further information on proposed infrastructure to support the proposal.</p>
<p>7. <i>The Panel would have been assisted by a clear description of the proposed private transport arrangements and services (i.e. buses and any other travel modes) in the planning proposal itself.</i></p>	<p>The proposed redevelopment is supported by a private bus service and a range of improvements to the internal road network to improve accessibility within the site.</p> <p>The proposal includes on-demand village bus service to provide convenient access for residents to local services and facilities. This service will be available to all residents, on request, between the hours of 8am and 6pm (hours to be confirmed in consultation with residents).</p> <p>The bus service will provide easy access to Castle Hill Town Centre, local community facilities and any other services required by residents. The private bus service will significantly improve accessibility for residents and reduce the number of private vehicle trips.</p> <p>Further detail is provided in Section 7.4 of this report and in the Traffic Assessment at Attachment D.</p>
<p>8. <i>The Panel is generally satisfied that potential ecological and geotechnical constraints would be addressed by the master plan and draft DCP.</i></p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Measures to manage the ecological and geotechnical constraints have been addressed in the Assessment section of this Planning Proposal (Sections 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9), Attachment F, Attachment G, and Attachment H as well as controls in the draft DCP which will be considered as part of any future development application for the site.</p>

Refer to the Sydney Central City Planning Panel Record of Decision at Attachment N.

#### 4.6 Summary of the previous and subject Planning Proposals

Following the decision of the Rezoning Review in 2019, a revised master plan has been developed in response to the issues raised by the SCCPP and Council. A comparison of the previous Planning Proposal (including the 2018 Planning Proposal) and new, subject Planning Proposal is summarised in Table 6 below.

**Table 6 - Comparison of Planning Proposals**

	<b>The Hills LEP 2019</b>	<b>2018 PP</b>	<b>2019 PP</b>	<b>2020 PP (subject PP)</b>
<b>Site Area</b>				37,012m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Zoning</b>	E4 Environmental Living	E4 Environmental Living	E4 Environmental Living	E4 Environmental Living
<b>Building Height</b>	9m	4 to 8 storeys (14 to 27 metres)	3 to 6 storeys (12 to 22 metres, including lift overrun and roof structures)	3 to 6 storeys (0m for open space) (0 to 18 metres, not including lift overrun and roof structures)
<b>FSR</b>	N/A	1:1	1:1	0.83:1
<b>Non-residential GFA</b>	-	1,700m <sup>2</sup> (community hub)	1,700m <sup>2</sup> (community hub)	1,300m <sup>2</sup> (community hub)
<b>No. of dwellings</b>	-	323	298	247
<b>Car parking (including visitors)</b>	-	420 spaces	388 spaces	325 spaces
<b>Significant trees retained</b>	-	28	34	34
<b>Landscaped area</b>	-	48%	53%	53%
<b>Central parkland</b>	-	8,000m <sup>2</sup>	8,500m <sup>2</sup>	8,680m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Extent of basement</b>	-	40%	25%	24%
<b>Landscape setback to Old Northern Road</b>	-	10m	9 – 12m	9 – 13m
<b>Landscape buffer to Palisander Place</b>	-	15m	14m	14m



## 5. Objectives and intended outcomes

### 5.1 Objectives

The Proposal aims to facilitate redevelopment of the existing retirement village, while maintaining the parkland setting and minimising impacts on neighbours

The objectives of this Planning Proposal are to facilitate the redevelopment of the Castle Ridge Resort, an existing seniors housing development at 350 Old Northern Road. Key objectives of this proposal are to:

1. Deliver increased seniors housing to meet increasing demand for seniors housing in The Hills LGA in accordance with the *Greater Sydney Regional Plan, Central City District Plan, the Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement 2019 (Hills Future 2036) and the Hills Draft Housing Strategy 2019*.
2. Provide a holistic and site-responsive approach that facilitates redevelopment of existing seniors housing on the site.
3. Maintain the natural qualities and parkland setting of the site by preserving significant trees, visual connectivity to landscape, and regional views.
4. Minimise the visual bulk and scale of buildings adjacent to boundaries to protect solar access and privacy of neighbouring properties and minimise overshadowing of Pioneer Place Reserve.
5. Deliver new community facilities and enhanced open space, ensuring the future development will adequately address, and reduce pressure on, nearby demand on local infrastructure.

6. Deliver increased density, while minimising and managing visual impacts, and providing an appropriate transition to adjoining development, such that the visual and amenity impacts can be mitigated.

## 5.2 Intended outcomes

The Planning Proposal is a response to the need to redevelop the existing seniors housing at 350 Old Northern Road. Built in the early 1980s, Castle Ridge Resort no longer meets the needs of its residents and requires a full redevelopment.

The intended outcome is to facilitate the redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort.

Seniors housing is a prohibited use in the E4 Environmental Living Zone. However, Castle Ridge Resort was developed as a permissible use in the 1980's and is subject to existing use rights.

*Section 41 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* allows for certain development of existing uses, including to:

- Be enlarged, expanded or intensified, or
- Be altered or extended, or
- Be rebuilt

However, there are limitations to the extent that an existing use can be changed. Changes can only be minor in nature, and not involve an increase of more than 10% in the floor space of the existing use. The use of existing use rights would also represent piecemeal development, and not promote maximum certainty for Council or the community.

Therefore, to enable a site-based approach to redevelopment, consistent with the master plan, and to promote transparency, a Planning Proposal is considered the most appropriate pathway to facilitate renewal of the site.

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend The Hills LEP 2019 to:

- Include seniors housing as an additional permitted use on the site;
- Increase building heights from 9m, to a range from 0m to 18m; and
- Introduce a maximum FSR of 0.83:1.

The proposed amendments are required to facilitate development of the site. The requested amendments are outlined in further detail in Section 6.



# 6. Explanations of provisions

## 6.1 Proposed amendments

To support the redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort, the proposed amendments to The Hills Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2019 are:

- **Additional Permitted Use** (Schedule 1) – to introduce ‘seniors housing’ as an additional permitted use at 350 Old Northern Road;
- **Height of buildings** (Clause 4.3) – amend the maximum height of buildings map to include a range of heights between 0m to 18 metres;
- **Floor space ratio** (Clause 4.4) – introduce a maximum floor space ratio of 0.83:1 for the site.

### Additional permitted Uses

The site is zoned E4 Environmental Living, which prohibits seniors housing.

The Planning Proposal seeks to introduce ‘seniors housing’ as an additional permitted use under Schedule 1 ‘Additional Permitted Uses’.

The Planning Proposal does not propose a change to the existing E4 Environment Living zone. The Planning Proposal, through the inclusion of seniors housing as an additional permitted use, will limit development on the site to seniors housing only - consistent with the existing land use.

Draft provisions for inclusion in Schedule 1 of The Hills LEP 2019 are outlined below:

#### 19 Use of certain land at Castle Ridge Resort, Castle Hill

- (1) *This clause applies to land at 350 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill, being Lot 503 in DP 1048808*
- (2) *Development for the purpose of seniors housing is permitted with consent.*

The proposed amendments will enable the development of new seniors housing in an existing retirement village, supported with improved community facilities and open space, replacing existing facilities that no longer meet the needs of residents.

### Land use zoning

This Planning Proposal recommends maintaining the site’s current land use zone as E4 Environmental Living, while permitting ‘seniors housing’ as an additional permitted use on the site.

This means that State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for seniors and people with a disability) 2004 will not apply to the site.

This site-specific zoning strategy is unique to the site, and will limit the potential for any additional types of residential development and ensure that future development is consistent with the objectives of the E4 zone. This approach was discussed with Council as part of previous Planning Proposals and was identified as the preferred zoning strategy for the site.

Retaining the E4 zoning ensures that future development continues to consider the environmental and character objectives of the E4 zone and will deliver a development approach that is low impact, responds to the site's topographical constraints and minimises any environmental impacts.

Various land use zoning options were considered in coming to this approach. The E4 zone is considered the most appropriate planning outcome for the site as it will ensure the E4 zone objectives continue to shape the development of the site. Importantly, retaining the E4 zone will ensure high density residential development is not permitted on the site. This approach is consistent with advice previously provided by Council.

The objectives of the E4 zone are:

- *To provide for low-impact residential development in areas with special ecological, scientific or aesthetic values.*
- *To ensure that residential development does not have an adverse effect on those values.*

The Planning Proposal is consistent with these objectives, ensuring future development will be capable of satisfying the objectives of the E4 zone. Overall, the Planning Proposal demonstrates:

- **Acceptable ecological impact** - Over half of the site is proposed to be retained as open space and landscaped area. This will minimise land disturbance and the extent of excavation, allowing for the retention of significant trees. The majority of significant trees will be retained (only 3 of the 37 identified significant trees would be removed) and 150 new tree plantings are proposed, resulting in low ecological impact. The small area of high value vegetation is to be retained in the proposed open space.
- **Acceptable geological impact** - potential geotechnical constraints and landslip has been considered and any impacts can be resolved and managed through ongoing monitoring and a detailed design response.
- **Acceptable impact on local character** - the steep topography of the site, location of proposed buildings, and existing vegetation ensures the Planning Proposal would result in minimal visual impacts and will make a positive contribution to the area's landscape and built form character. The proposed height of buildings map ensures no building on the site would exceed 9m at the edges.

### Maximum building height

This Planning Proposal seeks to amend The Hills LEP 2019 Height of Buildings Map to introduce maximum building heights ranging from 0m to 18m across the site. A zero metre height limit is proposed for the central open space, with building heights ranging from 9m to 18m for buildings proposed.

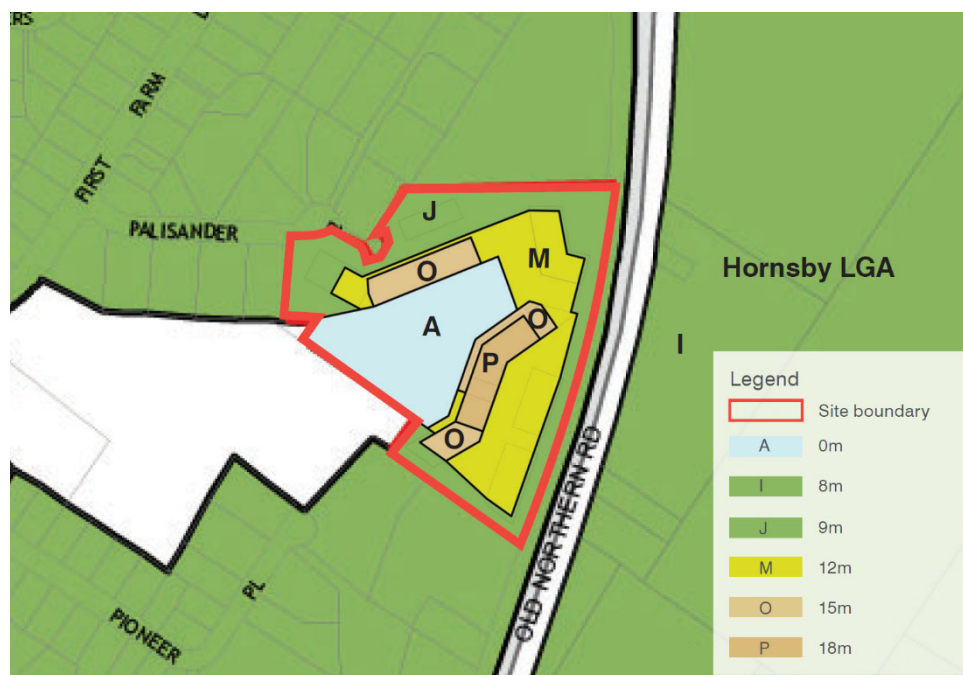
The proposed buildings heights are consistent with the master plan which recommends heights ranging from 3 - 6 storeys. The master plan does not propose development within the central parkland. Refer to the attached Urban Design Report (Attachment A). The draft DCP also includes design controls, including the requirement for upper level setbacks for buildings over 3 storeys to ensure building step with the slope of the land.

The proposed building heights ensure a site responsive height strategy that is consistent with local character, provides an appropriate transition to adjoining development and ensures a maximum height limit at 9m on all boundaries, with taller buildings located in the centre of the site. This is consistent with advice previously provided by the SCPP and The Hills Council.

Figure 14 shows the proposed height envelope across the site (heights in metres mapped from existing ground level). The maximum heights in metres proposed for inclusion in The Hills LEP 2019, is shown in Figure 15.



**Figure 14 Proposed height envelope mapping**  
Source: Architectus



**Figure 15 Proposed heights in metres**  
Source: Architectus

### Maximum floor space ratio

Under the current planning controls, the site is not subject to a maximum floor space ratio control. This Planning Proposal recommends that a maximum FSR of 0.83:1 be applied to the site under Clause 4.4 of The Hills LEP 2019.

The introduction of an FSR control will control the bulk and scale of development on the site, ensuring the intended design outcomes identified in the master plan can be achieved.

The proposed FSR would facilitate the development of approximately 247 seniors living apartments, while retaining over half the site as open space and landscaped area.

### **Amendments to The Hills DCP 2012**

To support the Planning Proposal, a draft site specific DCP has been prepared, at Attachment B.

The draft DCP is proposed for inclusion in Part D 'Site Specific', in The Hills DCP 2012. Additional provisions in the Sydney LEP 2012 would apply to development on the site.

The draft site-specific DCP includes the following provisions:

- Height in storeys plan and illustrative master plan;
- Maximum site coverage / landscaping control;
- Access points and preferred locations for servicing and loading;
- Open space and setback provisions;
- Specific controls for protecting views and the area's landscape character; and
- Car parking rates.

# 7. Assessment

The section below provides an assessment of the key planning issues relevant to the Planning Proposal.

A number of technical assessments have been undertaken to support the Planning Proposal. The Planning Proposal should be read in conjunction with the supporting documentation at Attachments A to K.

These assessments support the objective of this Planning Proposal, which is to redevelop the existing seniors housing to deliver improved seniors housing, accessibility and on-site facilities, while protecting the scenic and environmental values of the site.

The technical assessments support the need for the Planning Proposal, confirm the suitability of the site for redevelopment, and demonstrate that all environmental constraints can be adequately addressed.

A master plan has been prepared to support the Planning Proposal (refer to Attachment A). The master plan ensures future development can comply with all relevant built form, separation, and amenity requirements.

## 7.1 Built Form

The Planning Proposal is the result of a thorough analysis of the site and its context. This has involved detailed design investigations to consider the site-specific opportunities and constraints and establish proposed planning controls that will facilitate a built form that will complement the site's unique location, topography, and environmental qualities.

The indicative building envelopes have been developed with a view to limit new development to areas where development currently exists. This ensures that encroachment onto the parkland is minimised and that this special area, which is so intimately connected to the character of the site, is retained.

The Planning Proposal ensures that the built form minimises impacts on existing vegetation by concentrating development within existing building footprints and disturbed parts of the site, away from the central parkland area of the site.

The proposed built form strategy responds to the topography of the site, provides an appropriate transition to adjoining development, minimises overshadowing to open space and limits visual impacts from adjoining properties.

The built form approach is responsive to the site's boundaries, including Old Northern Road and Palisander Place. The Planning Proposal limits building heights to 9 metres at all boundaries of the site and proposed buildings include modulated setbacks to present a lower 3-4 storey interface to all edges. By reducing the proposed building heights at the site's boundaries, visual bulk and scale is minimised, amenity to open space and neighbouring properties is protected, and development is consistent with local character and surrounding height limits.

The Urban Design Report (Attachment A) provides a detailed overview of the built form strategy including a cross sections and interface study to examine the relationship of the proposed built form with surrounding development. An overview of the key interface conditions and proposed built form response is provided in Figure 16 – 21.



## Old Northern Road

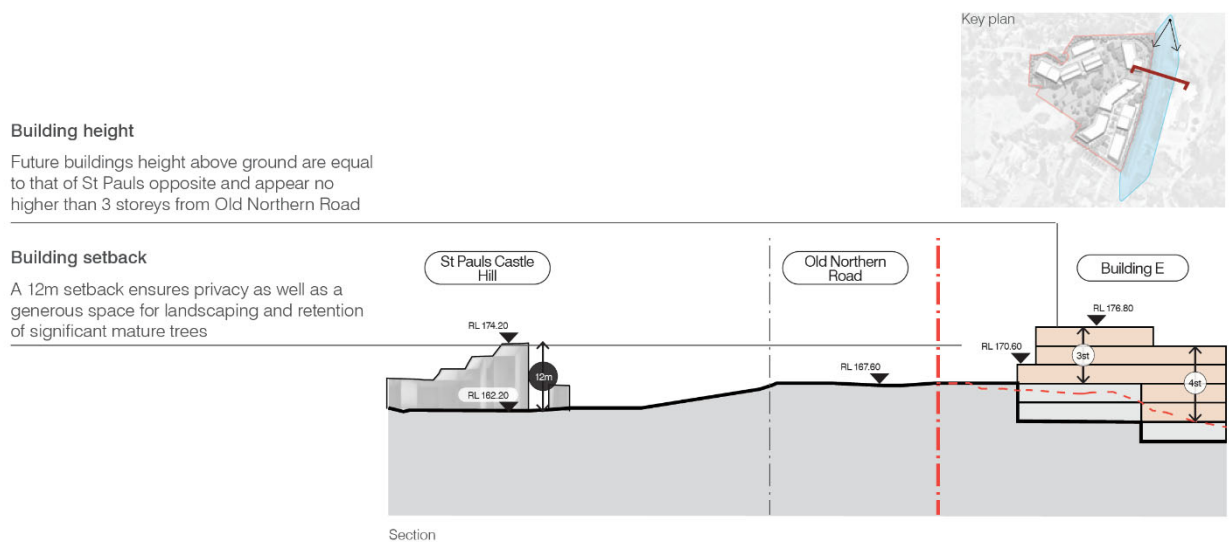
### *St Paul's Church*

Located across Old Northern Road is St Paul's Anglican Church, Castle Hill. The topography drops and the proposed setbacks and heights provide an appropriate interface to surrounding development and open space.

The 3-5 storey building along this interface maintains its 9m height control within 12m of the boundary, meaning building heights appear no greater than 3 storeys from Old Northern Road. This creates an appropriate transition to adjoining residential dwellings and is consistent with existing streetscape character.

This height of proposed building envelope is less than 3m above the height of the church, which is comparable to the relative ground levels of each site. Refer to Figure 16 below.

A significant setback (within the site) of 12m from Old Northern Road ensures privacy and allows for deep soil/ landscaping, as well as retention of existing significant trees to screen the proposal and mitigate visual impact.



**Figure 16 Interface condition to St Paul's Church Old Northern Road**

Source: Architectus

### *342 Old Northern Road*

This interface is characterised by townhouse development at 342 Old Northern Road. The existing townhouses sit higher than many of the existing buildings on site as evidenced by the retaining wall structure.

The roof ridgeline of the row of townhouses fronting Old Northern Road sit at an RL of 183.87 while the row of townhouses fronting the site sit at an RL of 182.99.

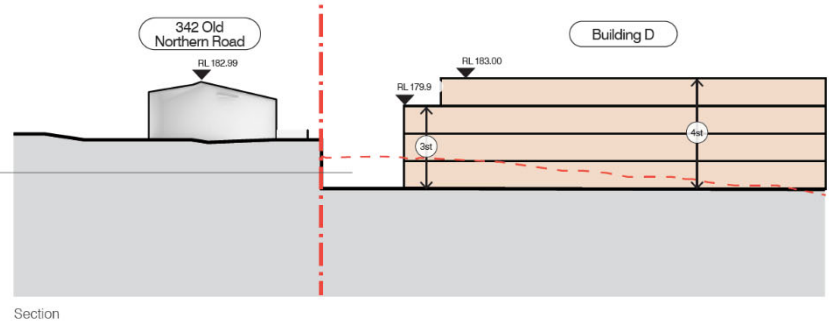
The steep topography on the site allows a proposed building envelope of 4 storeys to be positioned at the same height, or lower than the neighbouring townhouses while maintaining a consistent height to Old Northern Road. Refer to Figure 17.

#### Building height

Future building of 4 storeys sit at the same height or lower than the adjoining town houses

#### Building Setback

Proposed 9m side setback allows for landscaping, and maintains privacy and the view of tree tops from neighbouring properties



**Figure 17 Interface condition to 342 Old Northern Road**  
Source: Architectus

#### 352 Old Northern Road

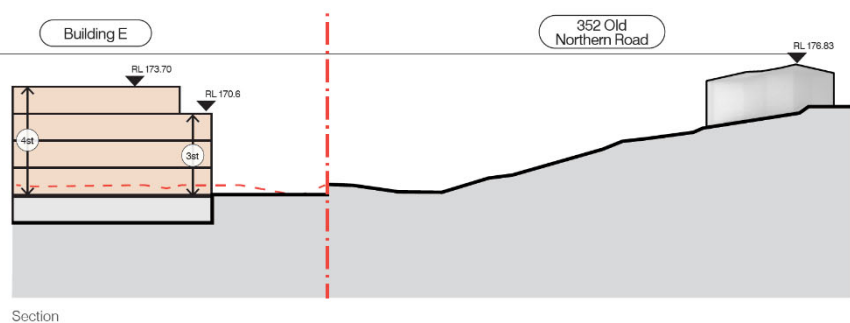
This interface is characterised by a large landscaped setback and a single storey dwelling at 352 Old Northern Road. The land rises steeply to the north.

The proposed building envelope works with the slope of the land, with the 5-storey building appearing as a 3-storey building when viewed from Old Northern Road. The setbacks to both boundaries (Old Northern Road and 352 Old Northern Road) allow for the retention of several significant trees on site, which will screen future buildings.

The significant rise in topography allows the proposed 4-5 storey building to sit 3m lower than the neighbouring single storey dwelling. Refer to Figure 18.

#### Building height

A 3 storey interface to Old Northern Road, transitioning to 5 storeys in the centre of the site. The relative height is 3m lower than the adjacent building at 352 Old Northern Road

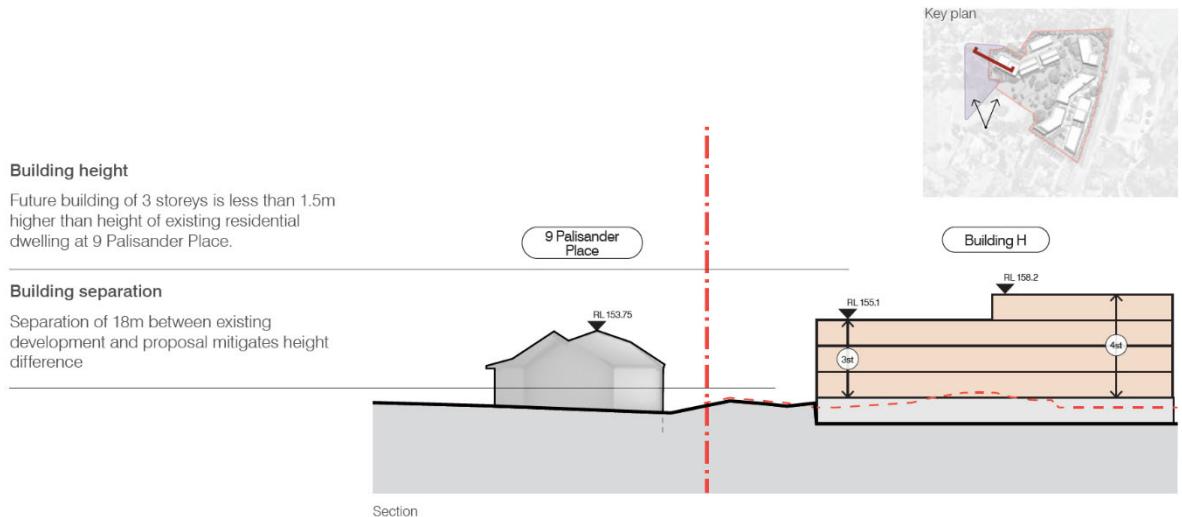


**Figure 18 Interface condition to 352 Old Northern Road**  
Source: Architectus

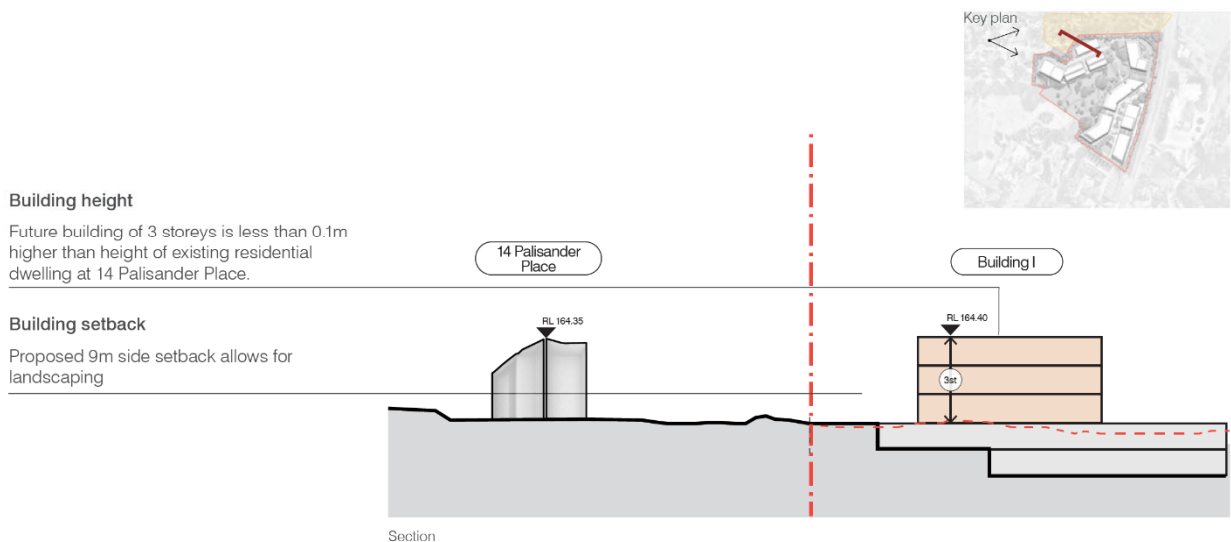
### Palisander Place

This interface is characterised by 2-storey dwellings at 9 and 14 Palisander Place. The Roof ridgeline of this building sits at an RL of 153.75. The proposed building envelopes at this interface are a maximum of 3 storeys.

The majority of the 3 storey building sits within a 9m height limit, which is consistent with adjoining residential developments, and helps to maintain the local character of the area. Building setbacks from property boundaries provide additional separation to ensure the amenity and privacy of residents and allow for the retention of existing vegetation.



**Figure 19 Interface condition to 9 Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*



**Figure 20 Interface condition to 14 Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*

### ADG compliance

The proposal was assessed against criteria in the Apartment Design Guide (ADG), including building separation, cross ventilation, solar access, communal open space and deep soil.

Detailed testing demonstrates that the proposed building envelopes and apartments in the master plan can achieve compliance with the requirements in the ADG.

Testing demonstrates that the buildings envelopes can be designed to achieve excellent internal amenity, privacy and outlook, consistent with the requirements of the ADG. A summary of ADG compliance is provided in Table 7 below.

A detailed assessment of the reference scheme and ADG compliance is provided in the Urban Design Study at Attachment A.

**Table 7 ADG compliance**

ADG testing	Reference Scheme	Requirement	Compliant
<b>Building separation</b>	Proposed building envelopes meet the minimum building separation requirements in the ADG.	- Up to 4 storeys: 6-12m - Up to 8 storeys: 9-18m	✓
<b>Cross ventilation</b>	65% of apartments are capable of being cross ventilated	At least 60% of apartments are naturally cross ventilated in the first nine storeys of the building	✓
<b>Solar access to apartments</b>	- 78% of apartments receive 2 hours of sunlight in mid-winter - 12% of apartments receive no sunlight in mid-winter	- At least 70% of apartments receive 2 hours direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm in mid-winter - A maximum of 15% of apartments in a building receive no direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm mid-winter	✓
<b>Communal open space</b>	Communal open space has a minimum area of 38% of the site	Communal open space has a minimum area equal to 25% of the site	✓
<b>Solar access to communal open space</b>	- 60% of communal open space receives more than 2 hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm mid-winter - 40% of communal open space is not overshadowed at any time	50% direct sunlight to the principle usable part of communal open space for a minimum of 2 hours between 9am and 3pm mid-winter	✓
<b>Deep soil</b>	The master plan achieves 40% deep soil	Minimum 7% deep soil	✓

## **7.2 Solar Access**

The proposal will have acceptable solar impacts and will maintain excellent solar access to adjoining properties and open space. Detailed solar analysis is provided in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.

### Solar access to residential dwellings

Provisions in The Hills DCP 2012 outline the requirements for solar access to adjoining residential dwellings. The provisions in The Hills DCP 2012 state:

- Buildings must be designed to ensure that adjoining residential buildings and the major part of their landscape receive at least four hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm on 21 June.

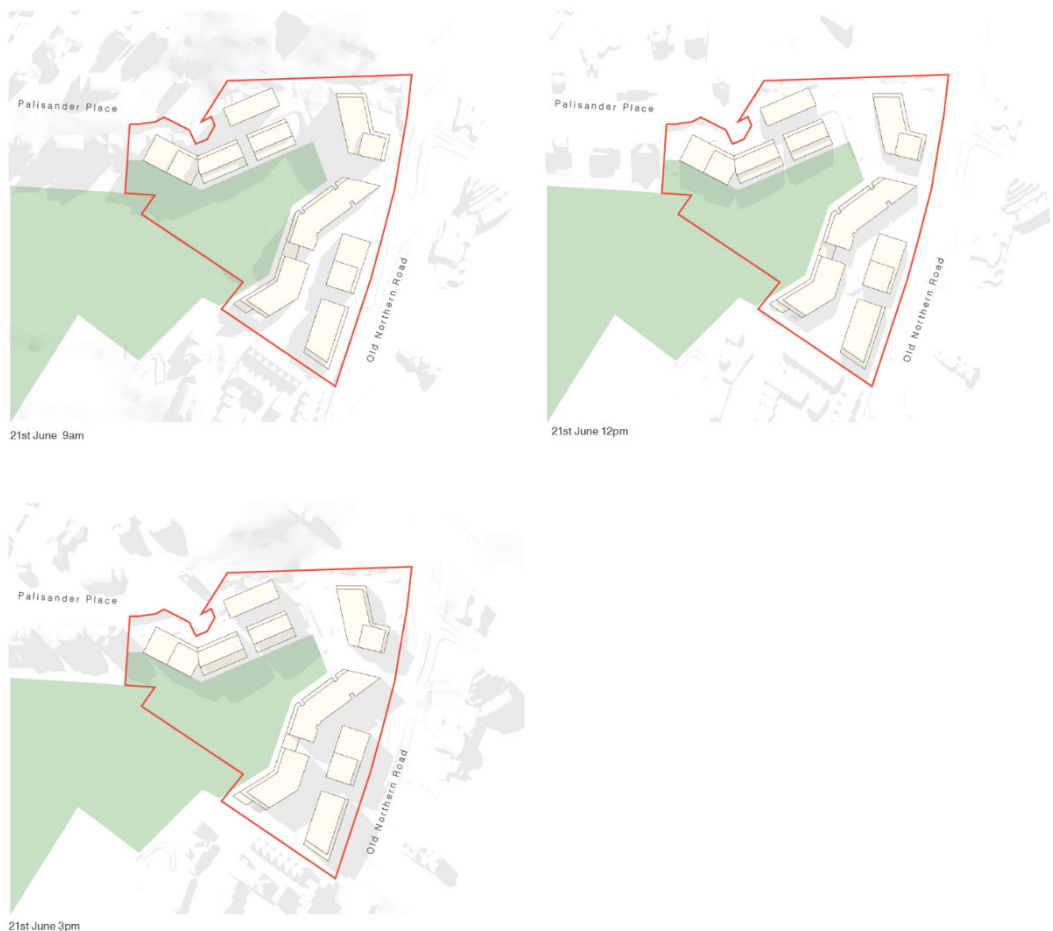
The Planning Proposal ensures no overshadowing to adjoining dwellings (existing properties to the west and south of the site) or their open space. The master plan provides increased setbacks and lower heights at each interface to minimise overshadowing to neighbouring properties and open space.

The master plan demonstrates that future development on the site can comply with the solar access provisions in The Hills DCP 2012, with all adjoining dwellings receiving at least 4 hours of sunlight in mid-winter. Future development on the site will be required to demonstrate compliance with these provisions.

#### Solar access to Pioneer Park Reserve

The proposal will maintain excellent solar access to Pioneer Place Reserve, achieving 4 hours of sunlight between 11am and 3pm in mid-winter.

The proposed development will result in some minor overshadowing to Pioneer Place Reserve in midwinter. Any overshadowing is limited to a small area containing dense vegetation in the northeast of the site, between 9am and 11am, and would not impact any useable area of the park. It is noted that the adjacent dwellings on Palisander Place already overshadow Pioneer Place Reserve in mid-winter. Refer to the shadow diagrams at Figure 21.



**Figure 21 Shadow diagrams 21 June**  
*Source: Architectus*



### 7.3 Visual impact

A Visual Impact Assessment is provided in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A. The assessment concludes that the proposal would have acceptable visual impacts on surrounding residential development and public open space.

The steep topography of the site, location of proposed buildings, and existing vegetation ensures the proposal would result in minimal visual impacts and make a positive contribution to the area's landscape and built form character.

The proposal has been designed to minimise visual impacts from surrounding properties and public open space and has been designed and tested to ensure future development does not create any unreasonable amenity impacts on adjoining development and public open space.

Due to significant level changes and existing mature vegetation on and around the site, large parts of the proposed development will be completely screened from view. The master plan demonstrates that the tallest buildings, located in the centre of the site, would not be concealed behind vegetation and are not visible at the site edges as demonstrated in the Visual Impact Assessment in the Urban Design Report at Attachment A.

#### Pioneer Place Reserve

The Visual Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development would not be visible from Pioneer Place Reserve. Refer to Figures 22 and 23.



**Figure 22 Existing view from Pioneer Place Reserve**  
*Source: Architectus*



**Figure 23 Proposed view from Pioneer Place Reserve**  
*Source: Architectus*

#### Old Northern Road

From Old Northern Road the proposal has minimal visual impact. The proposed buildings on Old Northern Road, are same height, or lower, than the adjacent townhouses at 342 Old Northern Road. This provides a consistent height along Old Northern Road and reduces the visual impact of the proposed development. Refer to Figures 24 and 25 and Figures 26 and 27.



Figure 24 Existing view looking south from Old Northern Road  
Source: Architectus



Figure 25 Proposed view looking south on Old Northern Road  
Source: Architectus



Figure 26 Existing view looking north from Old Northern Road  
Source: Architectus



Figure 27 Proposed view looking north from Old Northern Road  
Source: Architectus

#### Palisander Place

From the south eastern interface at Palisander Place, the visual impact of the proposal is low. The proposed building envelopes are only slightly higher than the existing buildings and would appear as a 2-storey building when viewed from Palisander Place.

The proposal provides generous setback and is screened by mature vegetation reducing visual impacts further (note, the Visual Impact Assessment was undertaken in winter to demonstrate the worst-case impact).

The built form appears as 2-storeys at each interface, which fits within the local character of the area and ensures minimal visual impact from neighbouring properties and local streets.

Refer to Figures 28 and 29, Figures 30 and 31 for views of proposed development from Palisander Place.



**Figure 28 Existing view looking east from Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*



**Figure 29 Proposed view looking east from Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*





**Figure 30 Existing view looking south west from Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*



**Figure 31 Proposed view looking south west from Palisander Place**  
*Source: Architectus*

## 7.4 Traffic and Transport

A Traffic Assessment has been prepared by Arup at Attachment D, to support the Planning Proposal. This report provides an assessment of the existing traffic and transport environment and the potential impact of the proposed development. The Traffic Assessment confirms that any potential traffic impacts associated with the Planning Proposal are acceptable and can be appropriately managed.

### Existing conditions

The site is accessed by road via Old Northern Road and Palisander Place. The main entry to the site is from Old Northern Road. Palisander Place provides a secondary access point to the site. Access from Palisander Place is gated and limited to residents only.

The site currently contains 145 car parking spaces. Two bus stops are located on Old Northern Road. These stops provide access to bus services which link the site to Castle Hill Town Centre, Rouse Hill, Parramatta, and Central Sydney. Northbound and southbound services include the 603 and 652X service.



**Figure 32 Internal road network and access points**

The site is accessed via Old Northern Road and Palisade Place.

Source: Architectus

The site currently contains 145 car parking spaces. Two bus stops are located on Old Northern Road. These stops provide access to bus services which link the site to Castle Hill Town Centre, Rouse Hill, Parramatta, and Central Sydney. Northbound and southbound services include the 603 and 652X service.

### Road network

#### *Intersection modelling*

Key intersections were modelled using SIDRA software. The results indicate that the network is operating at a good level of service with capacity to accommodate future demand generated by the development.

The results provided in Table 8, indicate that all intersections are operating at Level B to C (good to satisfactory operation) and the proposed development is unlikely to affect the key intersections modelled.

Upgrades being considered by The Hills Shire Council, including upgrades to Old Northern Road and Old Castle Hill Roads, are likely to improve operations of these intersections. The modelling did not consider these potential upgrades.



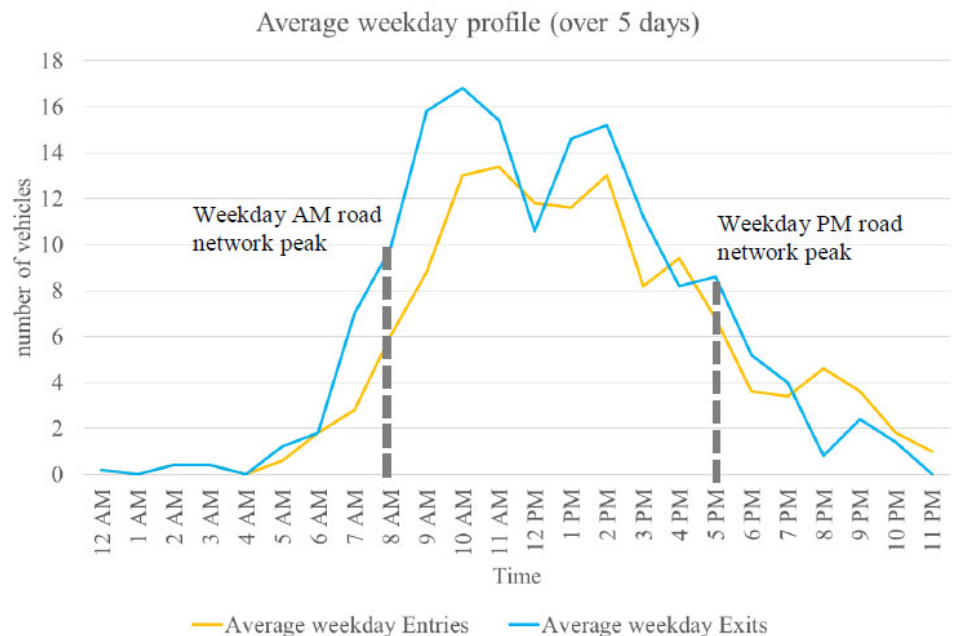
**Table 8 Intersection modelling**

Intersection	Period	Degree of Saturation	Average delay (seconds per vehicle)	Level of Service
Old Northern Road / Old Castle Hill Road	Morning peak - existing	0.81	26	B
	Morning peak – existing + development	0.83	27	B
	Evening peak - existing	0.67	22	B
	Evening peak – existing + development	0.46	23	B
	Saturday peak - existing	0.83	22	B
	Saturday peak – existing + development	0.70	22	B
First Farm Drive / Palisander Place	Morning peak - existing	0.62	34	C
	Morning peak – existing + development	0.67	37	C
	Evening peak - existing	0.27	27	B
	Evening peak – existing + development	0.30	28	B
	Saturday peak - existing	0.34	21	B
	Saturday peak – existing + development	0.39	23	B

Source: Arup

#### Traffic movement

Traffic counts undertaken at the site indicate that peak movements from the site occur around 10am weekdays, with residents avoiding the network during peak hours on weekdays.

**Figure 33 Weekday traffic counts**

Source: Arup

Furthermore, the occupancy rates for seniors housing are much lower than traditional residential development, generating significantly less traffic movements.

The internal site road network currently allows vehicles to access the site from Old Northern Road or Palisander Place. Access to the site from both Old Northern Road and Palisander Place is proposed to be retained.

Based on the existing pattern of traffic activity, future peak hour trips were assigned to Palisander Place as shown in Table 9. The assigned future peak hour trips to Palisander Place are well within environmental capacity of a local street of 200 vehicles per hour, as defined in the Guide to Traffic Generating Development (RMS). The Planning Proposal will not significantly increase traffic volumes on Palisander Place, and therefore is not likely to impact the amenity of neighbouring properties.

**Table 9 Traffic flows on Palisander Place**

	Eastbound vehicles/hour				Westbound vehicles/ hour			
	Palisander Place Existing	Existing development	Additional development traffic	Total future traffic	Palisander Place Existing	Existing development	Additional development traffic	Total future traffic
AM Peak	3	0	0	3	13	6	8	21
PM Peak	15	0	0	15	9	1	5	14
Sat Peak	7	1	3	10	9	3	3	12

Source: Arup

#### Private bus service

To support the redevelopment of the site, an on-demand village bus service is proposed. This service will be available to all residents, on request, between the hours of 8am and 6pm (to be confirmed in consultation with residents).

The bus service will provide easy access to Castle Hill Town Centre, local community facilities and any other services required by residents. The private bus service will significantly improve accessibility for residents and reduce the number of private vehicle trips.

#### Proposed road upgrades

The existing access point from Old Northern Road is proposed to be retained as the main site entry and exit point. To improve access to the site and reduce any impacts on northbound traffic, a 60m left turn deceleration lane is proposed on Old Northern Road.

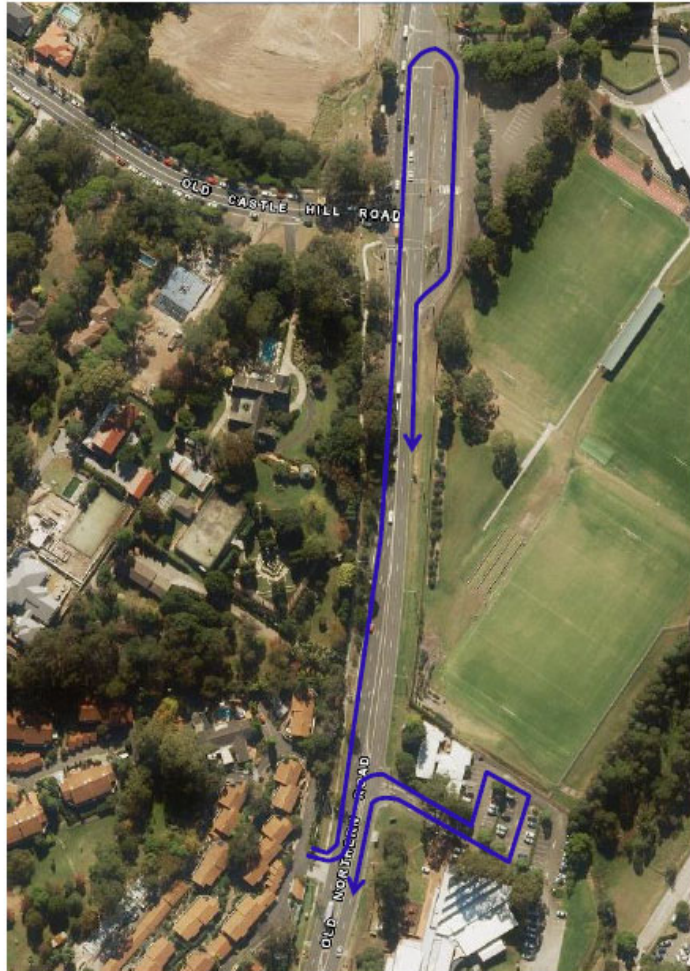
The proposed deceleration lane will improve access and increase safety when entering the site from Old Northern Road (northbound). Refer to Figure 34. The deceleration lane can be accommodated within the 8.5m wide road verge on Old Northern Road. The remaining verge width would contain a relocated footpath and landscaping similar to the existing conditions. Further landscaping is proposed within the site providing an adequate setback to proposed development



**Figure 34 Proposed deceleration lane on Old Northern Road**

Source: Arup

Vehicles exiting the site on Old Northern Road that wish to travel southbound are able to join the right turn bay into St Paul's Church access roadway to turn around. It is recommended that a No U-turn sign be installed at this location to remove any potential for a U-turn on Old Northern Road. Vehicles may also use the drop-off zone at Oakhill College adjacent to Old Castle Hill Road intersection with Old Northern Road. A right turn bay allows cars to turn into this facility. Refer to Figure 35.



**Figure 35 Possible right turn locations**

*Source: Arup*

Currently, vehicles exiting the site to travel southbound can utilise multiple routes from Palisander Place and Old Northern Road.

The Traffic Assessment determined that the increase in traffic movements is acceptable and can be accommodated within the existing network. Any potential impacts can be appropriately managed through the introduction of traffic management measures, including signage to prevent the execution of U-turns along Old Northern Road. These measures will be addressed as part of a detailed traffic impact assessment required as part of any future development application.

#### Pedestrian access

In response to the introduction of a deceleration lane on Old Northern Road, the central pedestrian refuge on Northern Road is proposed to be relocated 40m south of its existing position. The refuge provides access to bus stops on each side of Old Northern Road and to St Pauls' Church. The relocation of the crossing will have minimal impact on the overall accessibility for pedestrians.

The proposal includes significant improvements to the internal pedestrian network, including level and accessible walkways and accessible access between car parking and apartments. The improvements to the internal street network will significantly improve pedestrian accessibility around the site.

### Car parking

Parking guidelines in the Seniors Living SEPP and rates in The Hills DCP 2012 have been considered for the proposal. Based on the rates in both guidelines, an average rate of 1.3 car spaces per bedroom is considered appropriate for the development. This would result in 325 car parking spaces being provided on site.

All resident car parking spaces are proposed to be provided underground. This will provide direct access to buildings and improve accessibility between apartments and car parking for residents. Some on-street parking is proposed to be distributed around the site for general visitor use. The car parking rate of 1.3 spaces per bedroom is proposed for inclusion in the site-specific DCP.

## **7.5 Seniors Housing Demand Study**

A Seniors Living Demand Study has been prepared by Elton Consulting to support the proposal at Attachment E.

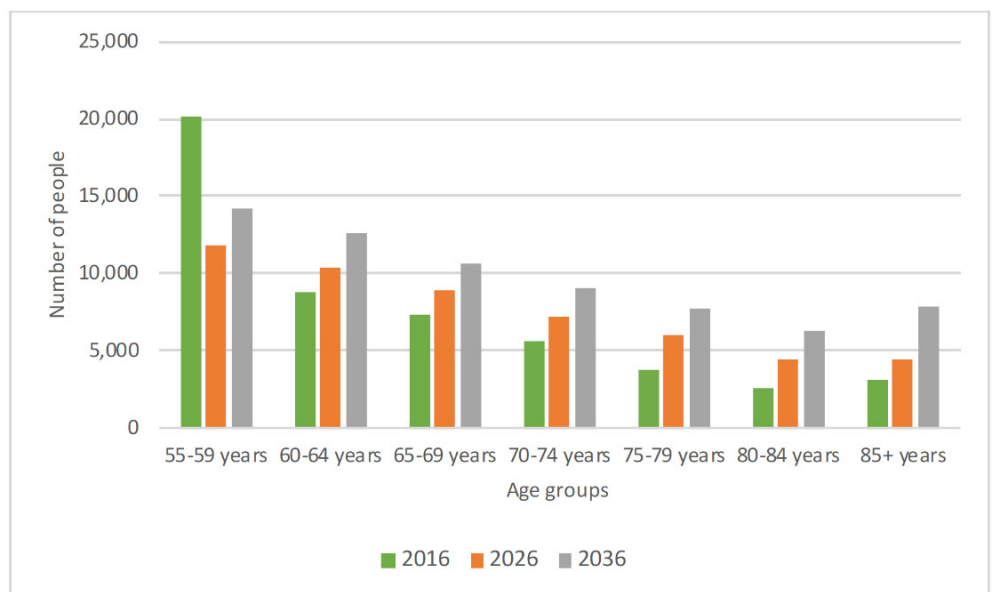
The Report identifies that seniors housing is not being developed at a rate to meet future demand, which is anticipated to grow in response to an ageing population.

### Projected increase in seniors

By 2025, demand for retirement living accommodation is forecast to double, however present rates of development will not be able to keep up with demand, potentially leading to a shortage of housing built to specifically meet the needs of older people.

Over the next 10 years the number of older residents in The Hills and Hornsby LGA's is set to grow substantially – almost doubling in number by 2031, representing an additional 48,000 residents aged 65 or more.

Most of this growth will occur as a result of the ageing of existing residents, rather than inward migration. The growth will be particularly strong in the 70+ age groups and the number of residents aged 80 or more will almost triple. The report concludes that meeting the needs of the rapidly growing older population is a top priority for both The Hills Shire Council and Hornsby Shire Council.



**Figure 36 Average projected growth for The Hills and Hornsby LGA 2016-2036**

Source: NSW DPE Population Projections, 2016

### Changing needs for seniors housing

Elton's study identifies the changing needs of older residents and expectations of seniors housing, including demand for larger apartments (two and three bedrooms with storage and parking), higher-quality developments, and improved access to facilities and services.

The report assesses the quality of the existing dwellings and infrastructure on the site and the future economic viability of the village. Elton's assessment concludes that a full redevelopment of the site is required to meet market standards and the increasing demand for seniors housing.

Elton's study provides an assessment of the drivers affecting demand in retirement village living. It finds the population of older people is rapidly growing and are increasingly wealthy, independent and healthy. As such the population has higher needs and expectations of services provided by retirement villages. These changing lifestyle preferences from retirees is driving the need for larger scale villages that can offer high quality services and facilities, in an environment that focuses on a low maintenance lifestyle and high residential amenity.

The Planning Proposal seeks to address these issues by providing improved quality of housing, open space and on-site facilities that will meet modern standards and deliver improved outcomes for residents.

The redevelopment of existing retirement villages will only occur if significant uplift in density can be achieved. The ability to deliver improved outcomes for residents can only be achieved through a full redevelopment of the site. The proposal is placing the needs of existing residents first, ensuring no one has to leave the village during redevelopment and that the redevelopment cannot come at a cost to existing residents.

#### Capacity of existing Villages to meet demand

Elton's study provides an overview of the existing retirement villages in The Hills District and concludes that the existing retirement villages do not offer a good match with local demand. Elton's assessment identifies the following gaps between existing supply and demand:

- Contemporary demand is for a higher quality housing product than offered in many villages, which are largely based on a modest and dated design template from the 1980s.
- Demand is mainly for two and three bedroom dwellings with storage and garaging. There is, if anything, a surplus of small one-bedroom and studio units, while demand exceeds supply of larger units.
- Older villages provide reasonable streetscape and some small patio gardens, but offer little in terms of quality urban design, high quality open spaces, or responsiveness to their setting. New developments are recognising this and responding with attractive master-planned design.
- The majority of local retirement village housing is aimed at a relatively affordable price. However, an increasing proportion of locals can afford something much more luxurious. Quality village accommodation at a price that matches local expectations is in high demand.
- Several new villages have been developed in the last few years offering high quality, well-designed accommodation and facilities, but these are located in new housing areas rather than in established suburbs.
- Based on projected population growth and existing ratios, local demand for retirement village accommodation will require a large increase in stock. However, the level of demand will in practice depend on the quality and appropriateness of the new supply.

#### The case for redevelopment

The existing Village is an attractive and leafy site, with good views, and its location is excellent. It is close to facilities in Castle Hill, it has easy access to the Sydney-wide transport network, and there are key facilities nearby. These include a large private hospital nearby, a wide range of health facilities, fast access by road and rail to public hospitals, and several residential aged care facilities within the close-by ARV Castle Hill Villages.

This Planning Proposal seeks to ensure that the site is used to its full potential, by offering future generations a desirable place to age in place. If Castleridge is to fulfil its potential it must offer housing, facilities and an environment that meet contemporary expectations.

This Planning Proposal responds to the changing needs of residents who seek access to a wider variety of health and community facilities, and includes:

- A range of contemporary on-site facilities, including a new club house, an indoor swimming pool, gym, health and wellness spaces, and craft rooms.
- A private on-demand Village bus to provide easy and convenient access to local services and amenities.
- A large central open space that is accessible and provides a range of passive and active recreation opportunities
- Large, high-quality apartments - with an average apartment size of 110m<sup>2</sup> and more than 25% three-bedroom apartments.



- New internal streets, footpaths and communal gardens that provide step-free access and can be directly accessed by all residents.
- Contemporary, high amenity seniors housing that meets the requirements of retirees, including basement car parking, with lifts taking residents directly to their units.

## 7.6 Local Infrastructure

### *Community and on-site facilities*

The site is extremely well serviced by existing social infrastructure and community facilities, including the Castle Hill Senior Citizen's Club, local churches including St Paul's Anglican Church and St Bernadette's Catholic Church, and the Castle Hill Arts Society.

The proposed redevelopment will deliver new communal facilities and enhanced open space, ensuring the future development will adequately address, and reduce pressure on, demand on nearby local infrastructure.

One of the drivers for the Planning Proposal is not only to improve the existing housing stock and increase choice for residents but enable the provision of a full range of services, including medical facilities, craft rooms, a gymnasium and heated pool on site. These services and facilities have been identified through consultation with residents.

The Planning Proposal includes over 1,300m<sup>2</sup> for new and improved on-site facilities including a gymnasium, indoor pool, health consulting rooms, activity rooms and mail delivery services in a new community hub.

The Planning Proposal will significantly improve the range of onsite facilities available to residents, meaning that demand on local services and the need for off-site journeys is minimised, reducing demand elsewhere as a result.

### *Transport*

The introduction of an on-demand village bus will provide easy and convenient access to Castle Hill town centre, local community facilities, facilities within the Anglicare Village, and other services required by residents. The village bus will be available on demand, between 8am and 6pm every day. The village bus service will reduce the need for private vehicle trips and demand on public bus services.

The proposal does not trigger the need for any intersection upgrades; however, a deceleration lane will be provided on Old Northern Road and internal roads and footpaths will be upgraded as part of the development of the site.

### *Open space*

The Planning Proposal retains the large central parkland, with proposed improvements to allow a range of passive and active recreation uses. In this regard, the social and recreational needs of residents will be catered for with the delivery of new facilities and embellished open space within the site.

The site is well-serviced by existing public open space, being adjacent to Pioneer Place Reserve. The redevelopment of the site provides the opportunity to consider improvements and enhanced accessibility to Pioneer park Reserve. *The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015* identifies potential future improvements to Pioneer Place Reserve to meet the growing recreational needs of the future population.

Stockland welcomes the opportunity to work with Council to understand local recreational needs and provide a contribution towards improvements to Pioneer Place Reserve as part of the proposed redevelopment of the site.

The proposal includes substantial on-site resident facilities and communal open space to meet the needs generated by future residents. Given the extent of services and facilities provided on-site, the Planning Proposal will not significantly increase demand on local infrastructure.

The Hills Section 7.12 Contributions Plan applies to development on the site. Any future DA's will be subject to levies in accordance with the plan, where applicable.

An overview of the proposed infrastructure upgrades to support the proposal is provided in Table 10.

**Table 10 Proposed upgrades**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Funding / Delivery Arrangements</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Transport</b>		
<i>Local roads</i>		
Improvements to the local road network, including:	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deceleration lane on Old Northern Road</li> <li>- New internal street network and upgraded entry from Old Northern Road</li> </ul>		
<i>Walking and cycling</i>		
Pedestrian and streetscape improvements, including:	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Footpath and landscaping upgrades on Old Northern Road</li> <li>- Relocation of pedestrian refuge on Old Northern Road (associated with new deceleration lane)</li> </ul>		
<i>Public transport</i>		
Provision of a dedicated on-demand bus service for residents	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland
<b>Open space</b>		
<i>Local</i>		
Contribution towards upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve	Monetary contribution to The Hills Council as part of Section 7.11 contributions	Stockland
New and upgraded open space on site (approx. 14,000m <sup>2</sup> of open space to be upgraded on site)	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland
<i>Regional</i>		
Contribution towards provision of regional open space	Monetary contribution to The Hills Council as part of Section 7.11 contributions (if required)	Stockland
<b>On-site facilities</b>		
Provision of 1,300m <sup>2</sup> Community Hub	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland
Contribution towards provision of community facilities in the local area	Monetary contribution to The Hills Council as part of Section 7.11 contributions	Stockland
<b>Utilities</b>		
Upgrades to local utilities including electrical and telecommunications	Works as part of development. To be funded by developer.	Stockland

## 7.7 Trees

The Planning Proposal is supported by an Arborist Report (Attachment F) which identifies the location of high category trees worthy of retention. A total of 91 trees were identified and assessed as part of the arboricultural impact assessment. Of these trees, a total of 37 were identified as high category trees (Category AA, and A). Important trees are considered moderate to high significance and display good health and condition.

A principle of the master plan is the retention of significant trees. This will ensure the established landscape character will be maintained and enhanced as part of the Planning Proposal.

A total of three high category trees, and 21 low category trees are proposed to be removed as a result of the Planning Proposal (refer to Figure 37). As outlined in the Arborist report, the retention of the remaining tree cover will ensure there is only a moderate impact on the wider setting.

A comprehensive landscaping strategy to mitigate the loss of trees is proposed, comprising a total of 150 replacement plants to ensure the sites landscapes, parkland setting is maintained and enhanced through redevelopment of the site.

The Planning Proposal ensures that the built form minimises impacts on existing vegetation by concentrating development within existing building footprints and disturbed parts of the site, away from the central parkland area of the site.



**Figure 37 Significant trees**

Source: *Naturally Trees and Architectus (2020)*

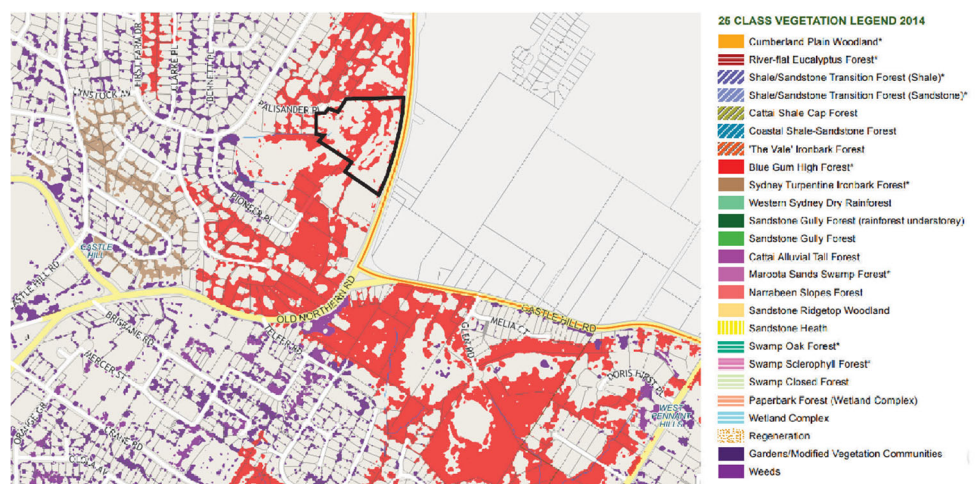
## 7.8 Ecology

An Ecological Assessment has been undertaken by ACS Environmental at Attachment G. The assessment determined that the site is highly modified and there are no threatened species or ecological communities that would be directly impacted by the proposal.

Ground-truthing of tracts of canopy vegetation within the residential sections of the site by ACS Environmental indicates that all individuals of tree and shrub species were planted as part of the original development of the site in the 1980s.

The central parkland area is landscaped with exotic ornamental species and non-locally indigenous species, with a small number of planted Sydney Blue Gum occurring within the canopy. This vegetation does not contain any threatened flora species or threatened ecological communities.

The Ecological Assessment confirms that in contrast to The Hills Vegetation Classification map 2014 (Figure 38), no areas of Blue Gum High Forest occur within the residential areas of the site. Though unlikely, remnant trees, or individuals derived from remnant vegetation, may occur in the south-western corner, however, none of these trees would be impacted by the proposed redevelopment. The proposal concentrates development away from the parkland, within existing building footprints and disturbed parts of the site. The Planning Proposal will retain the majority of high category trees on site, and over 150 new trees are proposed to be planted as part of the Planning Proposal.



**Figure 38 Vegetation Cover Classification Map**

Site is shown outlined in black

Source: The Hills Shire Council land and property mapping with Architectus edits (2020)

An assessment of threatened species found that habitat for these species does not occur at the highly modified and landscaped site. An assessment of species of fauna recorded within 5km of the site and listed under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* as threatened, found that habitat for these species does not occur at the highly modified and landscaped site. Though some threatened fauna species such as the Powerful Owl, Grey-headed Flying Fox and Eastern Bentwing Bat may occasionally forage in the vicinity of the subject site, it is considered that none would be impacted by any proposed redevelopment of the site.

As there are no threatened species, ecological communities or populations occurring at the subject site, it is not considered necessary to undertake any further assessment of significance or refer the proposal to the Director General of Office of Environment and Heritage or to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy.

The Ecological Assessment concludes that the development resulting from this Planning Proposal would not result in any significant or direct impacts on any threatened, rare, or regionally or locally significant flora and fauna communities.

## **7.9 Geotechnical**

Preliminary Geotechnical Advice has been provided by JK Geotechnics at Attachment H. JK Geotechnics advice confirms that geotechnical constraints can be managed and do not pose any significant constraint to redevelopment of the site.

The site is steeply sloping and is identified in The Hills LEP 2019 as subject to potential land slip. The findings of the Preliminary Geotechnical assessment indicate that the current residential buildings are located on higher, stable ground, with the proposed new buildings are expected to be predominately positioned and founded in stable shale bedrock.

The proposed redevelopment within the eastern half of the site is feasible from a geotechnical perspective, subject to completion of further geotechnical investigation. Further geotechnical investigation of the western portion of the site is also recommended.

Further investigations recommended by JK Geotechnics include deep core boreholes and test pits, as well as the installation of specialised instrumentation to monitor the depth and rate of creep movement and groundwater pressures. In order to accurately assess the creep movement, a monitoring period of two years is recommended. Monitoring of creep movement and groundwater pressures is currently being undertaken on site.

Notwithstanding hillside instability of the site, JK Geotechnics confirm that engineering solutions to stabilise and drain the hillside can be devised to adequately manage site conditions. Engineering solutions include the installation of cast-in-situ retention systems (for example, anchored contiguous pile walls), over-excavation down to stable shale bedrock, installation of drainage within the hillside excavation to alleviate any future building of groundwater pressure, and backfilling the excavation up to the design bulk levels with engineered fill.

These measures will be addressed as part of the detailed design and development of the site. Further investigation will be required during the detailed design phase, and any issues in relation to the stability of this area can be addressed through practical engineering solutions suitable for the site.

## **7.10 Stormwater and Flooding**

A Stormwater and Flooding Due Diligence Report has been prepared by Northrop at Attachment I.

The due diligence assessment confirms that the proposal is supportable from a drainage and stormwater management perspective. The site is not flood affected.

The site slopes down towards an existing watercourse located along the western boundary. Surface runoff from the site drains through a pit and pipe system towards the centre of the site, with a number of overland flow paths throughout the site.

Currently, stormwater flows are reduced by a number of above ground and below ground on-site detention (OSD) basins and tanks which are located throughout the site. Northrop have advised that some existing OSD basins may need to be reconfigured as part of the redevelopment of the site. Northrop note there are a number of possible locations for reconfigured or additional OSD basins within the site.

Northrop recommend that the existing watercourse within the site boundary be rehabilitated and landscaped, including rock lining and bank stabilisation, as part of any future development on the site.

These requirements will be a consideration as part of the detailed design. A detailed stormwater management strategy will be provided as part of any future DAs for the site.



### **7.11     Hydraulic and Electrical Services**

An Electrical Services Due Diligence Report and Hydraulic Services Due Diligence Report have been prepared by Northrop at Attachment J and Attachment K.

Northrop have undertaken due diligence assessments to confirm the capacity of hydraulic and electrical infrastructure to service the proposed redevelopment.

Northrop's assessment confirms that the existing utility infrastructure, including sewer supply, natural gas supply and potable water supply, has sufficient capacity to service the proposed development. Fire hydrants and fire sprinkler systems will be required to be installed as part of any future development to further service and provide safety measures to the proposed retirement village.

Northrop have advised that based on the anticipated electricity demand generated by the proposed development, minor upgrades to the electricity network may be required, including two new substations on the site.

Utility and servicing upgrades will be addressed in the detailed design phase and considered in any future DA's for the site.

# 8. Justification

## 8.1 Section A – Need for the planning proposal

### ***Q1. Is the Planning Proposal a result of any endorsed local strategic planning statement, strategic study or report?***

This Planning Proposal has resulted from the following strategic documents:

- *Seniors Living Needs Study*
- *The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (Hills Future 2036)*
- *The Hills Shire Draft Housing Strategy*

#### ***Seniors Living Needs Study***

A Seniors Living Demand Study for Castle Ridge Resort has been prepared by Elton Consulting, and is appended to this report at Attachment E.

The Report identifies that seniors housing is not being developed at a rate to meet future demand, which is anticipated to grow in response to an ageing population.

By 2025, demand for retirement living accommodation is forecast to double, however present rates of development will not be able to keep up with demand, potentially leading to a shortage of housing built to specifically meet the needs of older people

The report assesses the quality of the existing dwellings and infrastructure and the future economic viability of the village. Built in the early 1980s, Castle Ridge Resort is showing signs of its age and no longer meets the needs of its residents. The report concludes that a full redevelopment of the site is required for the village to meet market standards and increasing demand for seniors housing. This Planning Proposal seeks to redevelop the existing retirement village to facilitate an increase of seniors housing in Castle Hill and ensure the Village meets the needs of existing and future residents.

Elton's study also provides an assessment of the drivers affecting demand in retirement village living. It finds the population of older people is rapidly growing and are increasingly wealthy, independent and healthy. As such the population has higher needs and expectations of services provided by retirement villages. These changing lifestyle preferences from retirees is driving the need for larger scale villages that can offer high quality services and facilities, in an environment that focuses on a low maintenance lifestyle and high residential amenity.

The need for social housing is also highlighted in Greater Sydney Regional Plan and the Central City District Plan. Refer to Section 8.2 for more details.

The Planning Proposal seeks to address these issues by providing improved quality of housing, open space and community facilities that will meet modern standards and deliver improved social and community outcomes for residents.

#### ***The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (Hills Future 2036)***

The Hills Shire Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), *Hills Future 2036*, was endorsed by Council on 22 October 2019. The LSPS sets out Council's 20-year vision for The Hills LGA and will inform amendments to The Hills LEP 2019.

The LSPS aims to create well planned, attractive and convenient neighbourhoods that contribute to Greater Sydney as a growing city, while retaining the character and elements that make The Hills unique.

Planning Priority 6 of the LSPS seeks to 'plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney's growing population'. The Hills Shire population is expected to grow by almost 80 per cent between 2016 and 2036, requiring an additional 38,000 dwellings over the next

20 years. To accommodate this growth, there will need to be a focus on planning for a diversity of housing in the right locations that meets the needs of the community at all stages of their lives. The LSPS recognises over the next 20 years there will be an increasing proportion of residents aged over 65, driving the need for more seniors housing in the LGA.

Planning Priority 7 'Plan for new housing in the right locations' outlines the need for the right type of housing to be provided in the right location. Castle Ridge Resort is an existing seniors housing development in area of high amenity, close to services and transport, which forms part a large cluster of seniors housing and an established seniors community.

Castle Hill is identified as a Strategic Centre within the Shire. By amending the planning controls that currently apply to Castle Ridge Resort, this Planning Proposal will increase density and supply of contemporary seniors housing in very close proximity to the core of Castle Hill Town Centre, consistent with the objectives of the LSPS.

Planning Priority 8 'Plan for a diversity of housing' in the LSPS recognises that new housing needs to suit a range of budgets and lifestyles. Planning for a diversity of housing, including seniors housing, will make it easier for people to relocate within their local area and stay connected to community services, friends and family while achieving the lifestyle that they desire.

Council acknowledge that many seniors still want the privacy and space that a detached dwelling provides without the maintenance burden of a larger landscaped lot. This means there is an increasing need to develop more seniors housing, so that they can stay in their community as their needs change.

The LSPS notes that larger seniors housing developments may provide for shuttle buses and medical facilities for residents, providing easy and convenient access to day to day services may need on site. Council also recognise that larger seniors housing developments can take on the density and form of medium and high-density housing developments.

The redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort will allow for an extensive range of on-site facilities and services, including a shuttle bus service and health consulting rooms for visiting medical professionals. With improved housing that is accessible, and a wide range of services on-site, the redevelopment of the existing Village will not only provide for more seniors housing but will improve liveability and accessibility for existing and future residents.

### ***The Hills Shire Draft Housing Strategy***

The Hills Draft Housing Strategy 2019 was endorsed by Council on 22 October 2019 and seeks to establish the strategic direction for housing in the Hills Shire to 2036.

The Hills Shire is expected to see an increase in the number of people aged 55 and over, highlighting a demand for suitable housing for this age group. Empty nesters in The Hills Shire rather opt for smaller dwellings within centres or move into senior housing developments.

The Draft Housing Strategy refers to research conducted by the World Health Organisation in the *World Report on Aging and Health 2015* which found a common preference among older people for remaining in their local community and maintaining their social networks throughout the aging process.

The Draft Housing Strategy identifies that housing provided for seniors must be focused in areas that are located close, or have public transport connections made available, to centres that include retail, medical services, and community and social facilities. This will improve liveability for seniors as well as prevent residents from being socially isolated. The Planning Proposal seeks to deliver these outcomes, with improved seniors housing that is close to a Strategic Centre and with convenient access to services and facilities made available through an on-site shuttle bus service.

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

Yes. There are no alternative processes to achieve the intent of this Planning Proposal due to the current planning controls that apply to the site under The Hills LEP 2019.

The site is currently zoned E4 - Environmental Living. Seniors housing and Residential Flat Buildings are prohibited in the E4 zone.

Castle Ridge Resort is an existing use, but the scale of changes required to bring the Village up to current standards means that development under existing use rights provisions would be ad hoc and provide little transparency.

Additionally, *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for seniors and people with a disability) 2004*, does not apply to E4 zoned land and therefore, cannot be used to facilitate development of seniors housing on the site.

A Planning Proposal is required to ensure the ongoing use of the site as an important seniors housing asset.

The Planning Proposal ensures a whole-of-site based approach to redevelopment, which is the best means of achieving the intended outcomes.

**Is there a net community benefit?**

Yes, this Planning Proposal will allow a well-located, existing retirement village to be redeveloped, increasing the supply of seniors housing which will meet current market and lifestyle expectations.

With a forecast increase in older residents within The Hills LGA (+ 25,000 by 2036), this Planning Proposal responds to the critical need for additional seniors housing and provides the community of Castle Hill with a greater supply of contemporary seniors housing choices.

The Planning Proposal provides the opportunity for more older residents to age in place. Most Australians want to downsize within their own community, with their existing networks and support services. The Planning Proposal ensures more seniors housing is provided in area with a rapidly an ageing population. Importantly, this means that more older people in The Hills LGA will have the opportunity to remain in their community as they age.

One of the core drivers for the Planning Proposal is not only to improve the existing housing stock and increase choice for residents, but enable the provision of a full range of services on site. This will ensure that Castle Ridge Resort will provide a higher standard of convenience and comfort through improved design, easier access requirements and an overall better quality of living.

## **8.2 Section B – Relation to strategic planning framework**

This section provides a summary of the strategic planning framework within which the Planning Proposal outcomes for the site have been considered.

The following legislation, planning instruments, planning controls, and other plans and policies (including drafted plans and policies) are applicable to the proposal:

**Planning context summary**

Strategic plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <i>A Greater Sydney Region Plan: Metropolis of Three Cities 2018</i></li><li>– <i>Central City District Plan 2018</i></li><li>– <i>Northwest Rail Link Corridor Strategy and Castle Hill Station Structure Plan 2013</i></li><li>– <i>The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015</i></li><li>– <i>The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement, Hills Future 2036</i></li><li>– <i>The Hills Shire Local Strategy 2008</i></li><li>– <i>The Hills draft Housing Strategy 2019</i></li></ul>
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Current planning controls	Environmental Planning Instruments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>State Environmental Planning Policy No 55 - Remediation of Land</i></li> <li>– <i>State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 - Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development</i></li> <li>– <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004</i></li> <li>– <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017</i></li> <li>– <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007</i></li> <li>– <i>The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019</i></li> </ul>
Legislation	Development Control Plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>The Hills Development Control Plan 2012</i></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&amp;A Act)</i></li> </ul>

**Q3. Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional or district strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?**

**Is the proposal consistent with the relevant district plan within the Greater Sydney Region, or corridor/precinct plans applying to the site, including any draft plans?**

Yes. The Planning Proposal is consistent with the objectives and actions of the following strategies, as set out below.

- *Greater Sydney Region Plan (2018)*
- *Central City District Plan (2018)*
- *Northwest Rail Link Corridor Strategy and Castle Hill Station Structure Plan 2013*
- *The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015*

#### **A Greater Sydney Region Plan**



**Figure 39 Greater Sydney Region Plan**

The location of the site is illustrated by the black dot, adjacent to the Castle Hill Strategic Centre.

Source: Greater Sydney Commission



The Greater Sydney Region Plan sets NSW Government's 40-year vision (to 2056) and establishes a 20-year plan to manage growth and change for Greater Sydney. It provides direction for Sydney's productivity, environmental management, liveability, and for the location of housing, employment, infrastructure and open space.

The vision seeks to meet the needs of a growing and changing population by transforming Greater Sydney into a metropolis of three cities— the Western Parkland City, the Central River City and the Eastern Harbour City. The vision is supported by 'Ten Directions' to guide the growth of the city. The Directions are each supported by a set of Objectives. Of particular relevance to this Planning Proposal are the following Directions and Objectives:

*Liveability:*

*A city for people*

- Objective 6: Services and infrastructure meet communities' changing needs
- Objective 7: Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected

*Housing the city:*

- Objective 10: Greater housing supply
- Objective 11: Housing is more diverse and affordable

*A city in its landscape*

- Objective 27: Biodiversity is protected, urban bushland and remnant vegetation is enhanced

This Planning Proposal seeks to amend the permissible planning controls applicable to the site to allow development that will retain and intensify the existing use of the site for seniors housing, to provide a range of high quality housing options that are competitive with market standards. The master plan for the site proposes to redevelop the site and deliver a quality built environment within a scenic parkland setting. Renewal will facilitate improved accessibility and connectivity across the site.

Consistency of the planning proposal has been assessed against the Greater Sydney Region Plan in Table 11.

**Table 11 Strategic directions - Greater Sydney Region Plan**

Greater Sydney Region Plan (2018)	Consistency	Comment
<b>Liveability</b>		
<b>A city for people</b>		
Objective 6: Services and infrastructure meet communities' changing needs	Yes	<p>The Plan recognises the need to plan for changing demographics. The Central City will experience the greatest proportional increase in people over 65 years. This will generate greater demand for health, social and aged care services than currently exist.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal responds to the need for more seniors housing and will help to provide housing to match changing household composition and increasing demand for smaller households. The proposal includes improved facilities and infrastructure, to ensure new housing is matched by the services and facilities needed to support an older population and allow more people to remain in their communities. Furthermore, the amenities required by residents will be provided on site, reducing demand elsewhere.</p>

Objective 7: Communities are healthy, resilient and socially connected	Yes	<p>The existing retirement village is hindered by poor internal circulation, connectivity and accessibility.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal will facilitate a healthy and socially connected lifestyle for residents by providing a highly walkable and accessible environment, with opportunities for gathering, gentle exercise and community activities.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal will provide 3,500m<sup>2</sup> of new accessible communal open spaces, and retain 19,000m<sup>2</sup> of deep soil and green open space (approximately 53% of the site). The communal open spaces are varied and located throughout the development, consisting of small communal terraces for small social gatherings, BBQ areas and a vegetable gardens for the cultivation of produce.</p> <p>A pedestrian network that minimises steeper gradients to within an acceptable range between 1:20 and 1:14 will encourage pedestrian access and physical activity.</p>
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### Housing the city

Objective 10: Greater housing supply	Yes	<p>The Plan identifies the need for greater housing choice and providing improved services and infrastructure to meet the needs of an older, growing population. Key to this is providing more seniors housing, in an accessible community, with improved services and facilities.</p> <p>As our communities change and grow, there will need to be more housing and a greater range of housing to create more liveable neighbourhoods and support an ageing population. Key to this will be demand for housing that caters for older, and smaller households. This means that as people age, they can move into smaller homes, with less maintenance and age in their local community, which is important for social connectedness and well-being.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal specifically responds to this objective, by delivering new and improved seniors housing, along with supporting community facilities and improved infrastructure, to meet the growing demand for seniors housing in The Hills LGA.</p>
Objective 11: Housing is more diverse and affordable	Yes	<p>Of critical importance is the need to provide a diversity of housing, particularly in areas characterised by larger homes and single detached dwellings, such as The Hills.</p> <p>The Plan recognises that there is a limited availability of smaller dwellings to meet the growing proportion of small households. Planning for an ageing population means a greater proportion of housing must be designed for smaller, older households.</p> <p>The renewal of Castle Ridge Resort can help address the growing demand for smaller households in The Hills LGA. The aim of this Planning Proposal is to increase the amount of seniors housing, along with significant infrastructure and accessibility improvements, to provide better housing choice for residents and encourage more empty nesters to move into smaller dwellings.</p>

### A city in its landscape

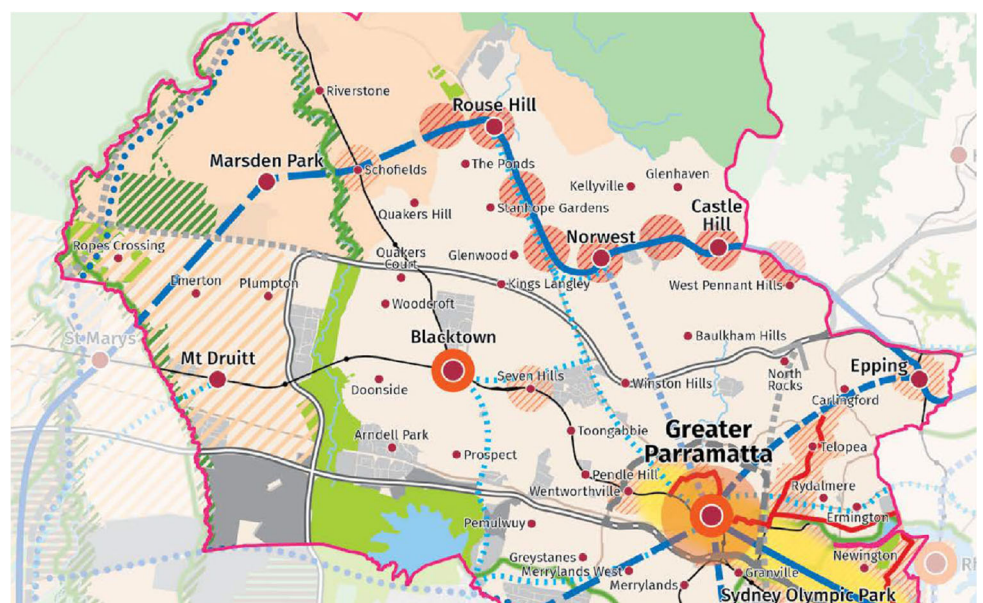
Objective 27: Biodiversity is protected, urban bushland and remnant vegetation is enhanced

Yes

The Planning Proposal is informed by an Arborist report that identifies the location of significant trees. The Planning Proposal prioritises the retention of significant trees in the redevelopment of the site. Refer to Attachment F.

The Planning Proposal prioritises redevelopment of the site in its parkland setting. The Planning Proposal will not directly impact endangered remnant vegetation. The Planning Proposal minimises impacts on existing vegetation, retains significant trees, and locates development within the existing disturbed parts of the site, away from vegetated areas. Over half of the site would be retained as landscaped area and open space, with 34 significant trees retained, and 150 new trees proposed. This will improve biodiversity outcomes across the site.

### Central City District Plan



**Figure 40 Central City District Plan Structure Plan**

This image illustrates the District context of the site.

Source: Greater Sydney Commission

The 'Central City District Plan' supports the implementation of the 'Greater Sydney Region Plan' for specific local areas. The Plan proposes a 20-year vision for the Central City District.

Of relevance to this proposal, and the Plan includes District specific Planning Priorities that include:

#### *A city for people*

- Planning Priority C1: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs
- Planning Priority C2: Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities

#### *Liveability*

- Planning Priority C5: Providing housing supply, choice and affordability with access to jobs, services and public transport

The Planning Proposal achieves the objectives of the District Plan's liveability priorities by increasing the number and diversity of dwelling types available. Increasing the provision of seniors housing is an important action for the District, given the rapidly ageing nature of

the population. The Plan forecasts an addition 122,100 people aged over 65 between 2016 and 2036.

The Proposal will also encourage a greater cross section of people to lead physically active and socially connected lives. The Plan reinforces this as an essential outcome for the health of people ageing in a community.

**Table 12 Central City District Plan**

<b>Central City District Plan</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>A city for people</b>		
Planning Priority C1: Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs	Yes	<p>The increase in people aged over 85, represents the greatest proportion growth with a 285% increase from the 2016 population. The Planning Proposal responds to a growing need for seniors housing and will help meet the growing demands of a more diverse, and older population in The Hills LGA over the next 20 years.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal is consistent with this objective of the District Plan by increasing the number and diversity of dwelling types available. Increasing the provision of seniors housing is an important action for the District, given the rapidly ageing nature of the population. The Plan forecasts an addition 122,100 people aged over 65 between 2016 and 2036.</p>
Planning Priority C2: Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities	Yes	<p>The Planning Proposal would deliver a more functional development with increased accessibility and better internal circulation. It will also deliver well-designed, high amenity buildings to meet the seniors housing needs of the existing and future community.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal would facilitate the redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort, which would allow people to age in place, and gain the social and recreational benefits of living in a retirement community.</p>
<b>Liveability</b>		
Planning Priority C5: Providing housing supply, choice and affordability with access to jobs, services and public transport	Yes	<p>To meet the needs of an ageing population, there will need to be a significant increase in apartment living, smaller homes and seniors housing to allow people to age in place.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the planning controls applicable to the site to allow the redevelopment of the existing retirement village to increase the supply of seniors housing and provide a range of high-quality housing options. Increasing the supply of housing in a highly accessible location in close proximity to employment, health and transport infrastructure is consistent with the vision and objectives of the Plan.</p>

## **Northwest Rail Link Corridor Strategy and Castle Hill Station Structure Plan 2013**

In line with the delivery of the North-West Rail Link, the Castle Hill Station Structure Plan 2013, prepared by Transport for NSW and NSW Department of Planning and Environment, identifies opportunities for growth and development for Castle Hill as a Major Centre. This strategy envisages the centre to reflect a vibrant mixed use precinct with offices, retailing, community facilities, recreation and housing serving 500,000 people by 2036. To accommodate the additional growth, the structure plan identifies areas for growth areas. Maximum density (7 to 20 storey buildings) is proposed east of Castle Hill Station with medium density areas further north east along the Old Northern Road.

## **The Hills Corridor Strategy 2015**

The Strategy identifies the Castle Hill Precinct as a major centre and identifies opportunities for additional density and growth within the town centre and areas within close proximity to the future Castle Hill station. The following key principles are relevant to this Proposal.

- *Housing to match The Hills Shire needs*

A diversity of housing options is to be provided to respond to future demand, with a particular focus on the delivery of viable and attractive apartment living for families, and to encourage “empty nesters” to trade their family home for a multi-unit dwelling to make available more traditional family homes. To support this goal, new multi-unit developments must be of outstanding design, size, and density.

The Strategy also identifies the need for three additional aged care housing facilities to meet the needs of the growing aged population over the next 20 years. The Strategy identifies the provision of aged care facilities as critical and recognises the role of the market in delivering aged care and seniors housing developments to meet the needs of an ageing population in The Hills LGA.

- *Facilities to match the Shire lifestyle*

Residents of new developments should have access to open space, recreation, and community facilities in line with the lifestyle enjoyed by existing Hills residents. Social infrastructure is important to support growing communities and local open space and community facilities are important to the daily lives of residents to help people feel connected with their local community.

The Hills Corridor Strategy identifies Pioneer Place Reserve as an investigation site for future improvements to meet the growing recreational needs of the future population. This provides an opportunity to consider improving access to, and better utilising, existing open space to expand passive recreation opportunities across both public and private parkland.

A contribution towards improvements to Pioneer Place Reserve will be provided part of the proposed redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort.

The Planning Proposal responds to these principles by providing housing that will meet the needs of an ageing population, delivering upgraded open space and community facilities, and providing improved walking connections and community spaces to increase liveability and support the social needs of residents.

The Planning Proposal responds to the critical need for additional seniors housing in The Hills LGA and will facilitate high quality seniors housing, that responds to contemporary standards and delivers a financially viable seniors housing development.



## **Assessment Criteria (strategic and site specific merit)**

### **a) Does the proposal have strategic merit?**

Yes. The Planning Proposal has strategic merit and should be supported. A response to each specific criteria for demonstrating whether a Planning Proposal has strategic merit is provided below.

#### ***Criterion 1: Will the proposal give effect to the relevant regional plan outside of the Greater Sydney Region, the relevant district plan within the Greater Sydney Region, or corridor/precinct plans applying to the site, including any draft regional, district or corridor/precinct plans released for public comment?***

Yes. The Planning Proposal will give effect to the relevant objectives in the Greater Sydney Region Plan, and planning priorities in the Central City District Plan. Refer to Table 11 and Table 12 in this section.

#### ***Criterion 2: Will the proposal give effect to a relevant local strategic planning statement or strategy that has been endorsed by the Department or required as part of a regional or district plan or local strategic planning statement?***

Yes. The Planning Proposal is consistent with The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement, The Hills Shire Local Strategy, and Draft Housing Strategy. Refer to Tables 13 and 14, and Table 15 in this section.

The LSPS highlights that the proportion of people aged over 65 will increase from 2016 to 2036. The planning proposal facilitates the delivery of quality seniors housing at Castle Ridge Resort for this demographic. The subject site has been assessed against the relevant planning priorities identified in the LSPS, and is deemed consistent. Refer to Table 13 in this section.

The subject site has been considered against the relevant local Council plans, as addressed in this Section of the report and is consistent.

#### ***Criterion 3: Will the proposal responding to a change in circumstances, such as the investment in new infrastructure or changing demographic trends that have not been recognised by existing strategic plans?***

Yes. Seniors Housing is not being developed at a rate to meet future demand. Over the next 10 years there will be an additional 11,000 people over the age of 65 in The Hills LGA and demand for seniors housing will double.

The proposal specifically responds to the changing demographic profile and the growing demand for seniors housing in The Hills LGA.

This means we need to plan for an ageing population and increase seniors housing in The Hills LGA. The proposal responds to this need, by delivering contemporary seniors housing, supported with modern facilities and improved services that allow more residents to remain in their local communities.

Given the increasing demand for seniors housing, the renewal of existing seniors housing sites must be prioritised. The ability to secure large sites for seniors housing, close to a major town centre, transport and established community and aged care facilities is a challenge. Therefore, the redevelopment of existing seniors housing presents an opportunity to increase seniors housing supply, provide greater housing choice in established areas, and deliver improved facilities and services to meet the needs of older residents.

The redevelopment of existing retirement villages will only occur if significant uplift in density can be achieved. The ability to deliver improved outcomes for residents can only be achieved through a full redevelopment of the site. The proposal is placing the needs of existing residents first, ensuring no one has to leave the village during redevelopment and that the redevelopment cannot come at a cost to existing residents.

The Planning Proposal seeks to facilitate the renewal of the outdated seniors housing at Castle Ridge, but importantly will address issues associated with ageing infrastructure and lack of facilities. The current community facilities are not up to modern standards, either in terms of size or quality. The proposal responds to the changing needs of residents who seek access to a wider variety of health and community facilities, and the Planning Proposal aims to improve the amenity and lifestyle available to residents through:

- A range of contemporary facilities, including facilities such as a new club house, an indoor swimming pool, gym and wellness spaces, and craft rooms.
- A large central open space that is accessible and provides a range of passive and active recreation opportunities
- New internal streets, footpaths and communal gardens that provide step-free access, and can be directly accessed by all residents.
- Contemporary seniors housing that meets the requirements of retirees, including basement car parking, with lifts taking residents directly to their units.

***b) Does the proposal have site-specific merit?***

Yes. This Planning Proposal demonstrates site-specific merit for the reasons outlined below, and should therefore be supported.

***Criterion 4: Does the proposal have regard for the natural environment (including known significant environmental values, resources or hazards)?***

The site does not hold any significant environmental values and is not affected by any resources or hazards that preclude the site from redevelopment. **Section 7** of this report, and the supporting Attachments at A to K, demonstrate the site is not affected by any environmental constraints which would reasonably preclude the proposed development.

The Arborist Report (Attachment F) identifies the location of high category trees worthy of retention. Of these trees, a total of 37 were identified as high category trees (Category AA, and A). A total of 3 high category trees, and 21 low category trees are to be removed. To offset any loss of trees, a comprehensive landscape strategy provides 150 new plantings to ensure the development has a positive environmental and biodiversity outcome.

The Ecological Impact Assessment (Attachment G) determined that the site is highly modified, and there are no threatened species or ecological communities that would be directly impacted by the proposal.

Preliminary geotechnical advice (Attachment H) confirms that the geotechnical constraints can be managed and do not pose any significant constraint to redevelopment of the site.

***Criterion 5: Does the proposal have regard for the existing uses, approved uses, and likely future uses of land in the vicinity of the proposal?***

The site is already developed for, and used as seniors housing. Given the limited number of large sites available for new seniors housing developments, particularly in areas with a rapidly ageing population, renewal and redevelopment of existing sites should be prioritised and encouraged.

Castle Ridge Resort is located close to other seniors housing developments, including Anglicare Village, and a range of supporting community facilities, including St Paul's Church. The Planning Proposal will support renewal of an established seniors community in Castle Hill, allowing people to age in place, in a community focused environment, close to other seniors and their families.

It is important to note that the retirement village is an existing use and currently already exceeds the maximum building height controls under The Hills LEP 2019. Given the need for a full redevelopment and increased density across the site to achieve a viable development outcome, the potential to achieve the vision for the site under existing use rights is limited.

The site is surrounded by more recent low density residential housing, with new residential release areas currently being developed along Old Northern Road. In response, the proposal has been carefully designed to ensure future development is consistent with the local character. This has resulted in the tallest buildings being located below the ridgeline, in the lower portion of the site, to minimise visual impacts. The proposal includes a large, landscaped setback along Old Northern Road and generous landscaped setbacks to surrounding residential development, including a 12m landscaped setback to development on Palisander Place. Over half of the site will be retained as open space and landscaped area, ensuring the proposal will retain and enhance the site's existing parkland character.

The proposed development has been designed to minimise visual impacts from surrounding properties and public open space and has been designed and tested to ensure future development does not create any unreasonable amenity impacts on adjoining development and public open space.

The Visual Impact Assessment in the Urban Design report demonstrates that the proposed development would not be visible from Pioneer Place Reserve, and that views of the built form from surrounding properties are minimal. The proposal also retains the large central parkland, and the extent of the existing building area, minimising the potential for any overshadowing to Pioneer Place Reserve and adjoining residential dwellings.

***Criterion 6: Does the proposal have regard for the services and infrastructure that are or will be available to meet the demands arising from the proposal and any proposed financial arrangements for infrastructure provision?***

Yes. The proposed redevelopment will deliver new community facilities and enhanced open space, ensuring the future development will adequately address, and reduce pressure on, demand on nearby local infrastructure. A detailed overview of the proposed infrastructure upgrades to support the development is provided in Section 7.6 of this report.

The Planning Proposal includes over 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of new on-site facilities including a gymnasium, indoor pool, health and well-being and activity rooms and over 14,000m<sup>2</sup> of upgraded open space on site. The range of facilities and communal open spaces proposed will meet the needs of residents and will not increase demand on local infrastructure.

Given the sites' location adjacent to Pioneer Place Reserve, a contribution towards the upgrade of Pioneer Place Reserve will be provided as part of the development of the site.

Enhanced accessibility will be provided with the introduction of an on-demand shuttle bus service, new village entry and deceleration lane, and new internal streets and pedestrian pathways.

The Planning Proposal will significantly improve the range of facilities available to residents on-site, meaning that the need for off-site journeys is minimised, reducing demand elsewhere as a result.

***Q4. Is the proposal consistent with Council's local strategy or other local strategic plan?***

Yes. The Planning Proposal is consistent with the objectives and actions of Hills Future 2036 (The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement), The Hills Shire Council Local Strategy, and The Hills Draft Housing Strategy.

**The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (Hills Future 2036)**

The Hills Shire Council endorsed Hills Future 2036, The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), in October 2019. This LSPS aims to set out The Hills Shire's land use vision, planning priorities and actions to 2036. Relevant planning priorities are outlined in Table 13.

**Table 13 The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement**

<b>The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Economy</b>		
Planning Priority 2: Build strategic centres to realise their potential	Yes	The proposal seeks to provide 247 new units for seniors within proximity to Castle Hill strategic centre. The increased resident intake at Castle Ridge Resort will facilitate Castle Hill in becoming a strategic centre as residents will make use of the available retail, community facilities, recreation and cultural facilities near to them.
<b>Shaping Growth</b>		
Planning priority 6: Plan for new housing to support Greater Sydney's growing population	Yes	<p>Demographically, the Hills Shire is expected to see a proportional increase in the number of people aged over 65, highlighting a need for more housing suitable for seniors.</p> <p>The planning proposal aligns with Planning Priority 6 as it will deliver 247 new seniors living units. The proposal will also offer the opportunity for new community facilities and spaces that will support the needs of seniors at Castle Ridge Resort, including activity rooms, green roofs, a new open space, gym and indoor pool.</p>
Planning Priority 7: Plan for new housing in the right locations	Yes	<p>The proposal will provide housing in an area that is well serviced by public transport and well connected to essential, facilities and amenities. The site is conveniently located close to Castle Hill strategic centre where needed services and retail will be available.</p> <p>The site is regularly serviced by buses that connect Castle Ridge Resort to Castle Hill, Parramatta and the City. The on-demand bus service will also provide improved accessibility for residents.</p>
Planning Priority 8: Plan for a diversity of housing	Yes	Planning Priority 8 addresses that planning for housing diversity is important for making it easier for people to relocate within their local area and stay connected to community services, friends and family while achieving the lifestyle that they desire. The planning proposal responds to this by providing housing that allows local residents to 'age in place' as they become seniors and require greater support.
Planning Priority 9: Renew and create great places	Yes	<p>The planning proposal responds to Planning Priority 9 by creating a safe, enjoyable neighbourhood for residents of Castle Ridge Resort. The planning proposal will deliver spaces for community development and social interaction with new facilities, including a new community hub, green open space, pool, gym and activity rooms.</p> <p>The proposal also aligns with Planning Priority 9 by improving connectivity on site via a new village street that will form a central spine across the site. This central spine is to be the main walkway through the site and will establish an element of village life. The improved pedestrian network will also allow for improved way-finding and legibility.</p> <p>The planning proposal will enhance the scenic and natural landscape of Castle Ridge Resort by planting 150 trees. The proposal provides an opportunity for communal and private green roofs which will improve amenity for residents.</p>
Planning Priority 10: Provide social infrastructure and retail services to meet residents' needs	Yes	The proposal will provide opportunities for new community facilities and spaces that will encourage social interaction between residents. A new community hub will provide spaces for a range of community and cultural events and activities to be held. The planning proposal seeks the provision of a new community green space,

		pool and gym that will encourage residents to engage in physical activity together, ultimately improving quality of life.
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Planning priority 11: Plan for convenient, connected and accessible public transport	Yes	<p>The proposal responds to Planning Priority 11 as it seeks to provide quality seniors housing in an area that is well serviced by public transport. There are two bus stops conveniently located on site which connect Castle Ridge Resort to Castle Hill interchange, Parramatta and the City.</p> <p>The available bus services will also contribute to Greater Sydney becoming a 30-minute city by linking residents to Parramatta CBD.</p>
Planning Priority 13: Expand and improve the active transport network	Yes	<p>The planning proposal will deliver a new communal green, flexible open space that will enhance residents' physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>The proposal will improve the active transport network by upgrading movement corridors across the site, which will promote greater resident mobility.</p>
Planning Priority 15: Provide new and upgraded passive and active open spaces	Yes	<p>The proposal could provide for a new green, flexible open space. The topography of the site represents an opportunity for green roofs to be provided, as both communal and private open space. These open spaces will encourage physical activity amongst residents and will create opportunities to connect people to the natural environment.</p> <p>The planning proposal will utilise an open space hierarchy to guide the provision and embellishment of open space.</p>
<b>Environment</b>		
Planning Priority 17: Protect areas of high environmental value and significance	Yes	<p>The planning proposal acknowledges that the site has a parkland setting and seeks to enhance its environmental value and significance. The planning proposal will provide opportunity for 150 new tree plantings and landscaping to further enhance the parkland setting of the site and ensure that the landscape is consistent with the green character of the local area.</p> <p>The planning proposal embraces the scenic views of natural landscapes on site and presents an opportunity to create green roofs for residents to appreciate their natural surroundings.</p>
Planning Priority 18: Increase urban tree canopy cover	Yes	<p>The planning proposal will increase urban tree canopy cover by planting 150 new trees on site. The proposal also presents an opportunity for green roofs. These will help maintain the green nature of The Hill Shire, and contribute to mitigating the urban heat island effect, and support cleaner air and water for residents.</p>



## The Hills Local Strategy

Adopted in 2008, The Hills Local Strategy provides strategic guidance for development within the LGA. The strategy was compiled by collaborating State and Local strategic directions for the LGA. The strategy identifies Castle Hill as a major centre within the LGA.

This Planning Proposal is seen to be in accordance with the key directions defined under the Strategy which are addressed at Table 14 below.

**Table 14 The Hills Shire Local Strategy**

<b>The Hills Shire Local Strategy</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<p>The following strategic elements apply to major centres within the shire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Transport interchange</li> <li>– Taller commercial built form i.e.8 or more storeys</li> <li>– Higher order retail and destination shopping</li> <li>– Higher density and variety of housing i.e. seniors living, affordable housing</li> <li>– Community services and facilities including Police Station, Government offices, Council Chambers, major library</li> <li>– Strong pedestrian activity day and night</li> <li>– Entertainment including restaurants, cinemas, Theatres</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>Castle Hill is identified as a major centre within the Shire. By amending the planning controls that currently apply to Castle Ridge Resort, this Planning Proposal will increase density and supply of contemporary seniors housing in very close proximity to the core of Castle Hill Town Centre, consistent with the strategic elements of the Local Strategy.</p>
<b>Residential Direction</b>		
<p><u>R1 Accommodate population growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– R1.1 Ensure that planning controls effectively provide for balanced growth in the Shire's population.</li> <li>– R1.2 Provide for well-located housing close to services, supported by appropriate infrastructure.</li> <li>– R1.3 Facilitate the timely delivery of planned residential development.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The Seniors Living Demand Study identifies a growing seniors population within The Hills LGA and particularly within the suburb of Castle Hill.</p> <p>This Planning Proposal will allow for the timely delivery of contemporary and modern senior housing developments in a scenic parkland setting, whilst being in proximity urban amenities and transport services.</p>
<p><u>R2 Respond to changing housing needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide a diversity of housing choice that is appropriate to resident's needs.</li> <li>– R2.2 Promote a range of housing that is affordable to households of varying financial capacity</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>It is noted that the current seniors housing stock does not generally suit the contemporary demands and lifestyles of senior residents. This Planning Proposal will facilitate redevelopment of an aged seniors housing development. Renewal will allow the site to accommodate facilities that meets the needs of residents and contemporary seniors living standards.</p>
<p><u>R3 Provide a sustainable living environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– R3.1 Contribute to the development of communities that offer a sense of place and community connection.</li> <li>– R3.2 Improve the environmental sustainability of residential development.</li> <li>– R3.3 Manage potential conflicts between more intense land uses and residential amenity.</li> <li>– R3.4 Ensure the protection of the Shire's cultural heritage as residential growth happens.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The proposal is designed to reinforce the natural parkland setting of Castle Ridge Resort.</p> <p>The steep topography of the site has been used to the advantage of accommodating the proposed density without impacting adjacent properties. The design awards the site with a unique quality of privacy in a parkland setting, whilst being in proximity to Castle Hill Town Centre.</p> <p>The Master Plan also centralises the resort's proposed community hub and introduces a new pedestrian spine, encouraging community interaction, and ensuring equitable access to all future residents.</p>
<p><u>R4 Facilitate quality housing outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– R4.1 Protect and enhance residential character and streetscape in lower density residential areas.</li> <li>– R4.2 Monitor and improve the design quality of higher density residential development.</li> </ul>	Yes	<p>The proposed built environment is considered to be a good development outcome for the site. A contextual design approach has been applied to develop the Master Plan for the site in context with its unique setting.</p>

This Planning Proposal will facilitate the planning amendments necessary to achieve a high-quality design and architectural outcome for the site.

### The Hills draft Housing Strategy 2019

The Hills Draft Housing Strategy 2019 was endorsed by Council on 22 October 2019 and seeks to establish the strategic direction for housing in the Hills Shire to 2036. The Strategy sets out planning priorities aligned with The Hills Shire's LSPS to meet the housing needs of the future population. Relevant planning priorities and the consistency of the planning proposal are outlined in Table 15 below.

**Table 15 The Hills Shire Draft Housing Strategy**

The Hills Shire Draft Housing Strategy	Consistency	Comment
Plan for housing supply to support Sydney's growing population	Yes	<p>The number of people aged 55 years and over is anticipated to increase in The Hills Shire, showing a demand for more housing fit for this demographic. Additionally, empty nesters are opting to move into seniors housing developments and into smaller dwellings near to centres.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal will respond to future population projections and the housing demand of The Hills Shire by delivering 247 new high-quality independent living units in Castle Hill strategic centre. The Planning Proposal will foster the needs of residents by providing an opportunity to deliver community services and new facilities that are suitable for seniors, including improved site connections and an established community hub.</p>
Plan for new housing in the right locations	Yes	<p>The site is an appropriate and suitable location for seniors housing because of its close proximity to Castle Hill strategic centre. The site is already well connected and within reach of available transport, enabling residents to have access to essential infrastructure and services, such as medical facilities and retail.</p> <p>The Site is also close to Castle Hill Station Precinct, where Castle Hill metro station can provide greater access to infrastructure and services across the north western areas of Sydney. The close proximity to services and transport options facilitates an improved quality of life and prevents social isolation. The on-demand bus service will also improve the liveability of residents by linking the site to essential services.</p>
Plan for a diversity of housing	Yes	<p>The strategy notes that between 2011 and 2016, there was an increase of approximately 1,300 residents who needed assistance with core activities, with the largest proportion of people aged 85 years and over. This suggests that there is an increased demand for housing for seniors and people with a disability with higher levels of care.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal will allow a well-located, existing retirement village to be redeveloped to meet current market and lifestyle expectations. The Planning Proposal provides the community of Castle Hill with a greater supply of contemporary seniors housing choices.</p> <p>The proposal enables local residents to age in place and allows people to remain connected to their social networks as they age and require greater care.</p>
Renew and create great places	Yes	<p>The site is currently zoned E4 Environmental Living. Seniors housing and Residential Flat Buildings are prohibited in the zone.</p> <p>The planning proposal will facilitate the site to become a 'great place' by providing an opportunity to upgrade Castle Ridge Resort to meet contemporary standards for seniors living, improve pedestrian and vehicular access, and provide sufficient parking for residents. The planning proposal also provides an opportunity</p>

	<p>to increase amenity of the site and improve the quality of life for residents through the provision of new open spaces, green roofs and new facilities such as an indoor pool, gym and activity rooms.</p> <p>The planning proposal will also plant 150 new trees which will maintain the green, leafy characteristic of the area and ensure the Resort is attractive.</p>
Provide services and social infrastructure to meet residents' needs	<p>The planning proposal will facilitate the provision of new community facilities for residents, which will enhance village life at Castle Ridge Resort and provide opportunities for residents to connect and interact with each other.</p> <p>The proposed new pedestrian village street will be the focus of day-to-day activities, which allows for street activation and enables residents to socially interact with each other. The site is also situated close to Castle Hill strategic centre where a range of services are available to meet the needs of residents.</p>

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

Table 16 below summaries the Planning Proposal's consistency with State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) and with Regional Environmental Plans (SREPs) - Deemed SEPPS.

**Table 16 State Environmental Planning Policies**

<b>State Environmental Planning Policies</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
State Environmental Planning Policy No 19— Bushland in Urban Areas	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 21— Caravan Parks	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 33— Hazardous and Offensive Development	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 36— Manufactured Home Estates	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 47— Moore Park Showground	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 50— Canal Estate Development	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 55— Remediation of Land	Yes	Future development applications will be required to address the requirements of Clause 6 of SEPP 55.
State Environmental Planning Policy No 64— Advertising and Signage	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy No 65— Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development	Yes	This Planning Proposal is consistent with the objectives and aims of SEPP 65 and the ADG.
State Environmental Planning Policy No 70— Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes)	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Aboriginal Land) 2019	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004	Yes	SEPP BASIX is to be considered in future development.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Concurrences and Consents) 2018	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Gosford City Centre) 2018	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004	N/A	The site is within an 'Environmental Protection Zone', and therefore, the SEPP does not apply to development on the site (under Schedule 1 of the SEPP). Despite this, the proposal is in accordance with the aims and objectives of the SEPP and the master plan is consistent with the design principles in the SEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007	Yes	SEPP Infrastructure is to be considered in future development as the site has frontage to a classified road. Future development will need to ensure compliance with the provisions of the ISEPP.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019	N/A	N/A

State Environmental Planning Policies	Consistency	Comment
State Environmental Planning Policy (Kosciuszko National Park—Alpine Resorts) 2007	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Kurnell Peninsula) 1989	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Penrith Lakes Scheme) 1989	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production and Rural Development) 2019	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (State Significant Precincts) 2005	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Drinking Water Catchment) 2011	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Three Ports) 2013	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Urban Renewal) 2010	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017	Yes	The Planning Proposal is consistent with the aims of the SEPP. SEPP Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas is to be considered in future development where any tree removal is proposed.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Employment Area) 2009	N/A	N/A
State Environmental Planning Policy (Western Sydney Parklands) 2009	N/A	N/A

**Q6. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (s.9.1 directions)?**

A review of the consistency of the Planning Proposal with the Ministerial Directions for LEPs under Section 9.1 of the EP&A Act 1979 is discussed at Table 17 below.

**Table 17 Response to Section 9.1 Directions**

No.	Direction	Consistency	Comment
<b>Employment and Resources</b>			
1.1	Business and Industrial Zones	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not affect land within an existing or proposed business or industrial zone.
1.2	Rural Zones	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not affect land within an existing or proposed rural zone.
1.3	Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not relate to the mining of coal or other materials, production of petroleum or extractive materials.
1.4	Oyster Aquaculture	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not relate to oyster aquaculture.
1.5	Rural Lands	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to an existing or proposed rural or environmental protection zone.
<b>Environment and Heritage</b>			
2.1	Environment Protection Zones	Yes	This Planning Proposal applies to land zoned E4 Environmental Living. The site currently accommodates an existing seniors housing development (existing use rights). Under the The Hills LEP 2019, current zoning allows for urban development while permitting the aesthetic and ecological quality of these lands are preserved.



			<p>The proposal is underpinned by an Arborist report prepared by Naturally Trees (Attachment F), and Geotechnical assessment prepared by JK Geotechnics (Attachment H). The findings and recommendations of these reports has informed building footprint, orientation and internal circulation network on the site.</p> <p>The Planning Proposal is consistent with the objectives of the E4 zone, with a low impact development, that will not have any adverse impacts of the environmental or scenic values of the land.</p>
2.2	Coastal Protection	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land within the Coastal Zone.
2.3	Heritage Conservation	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not affect land within a heritage Conservation Zone.
2.4	Recreation Vehicle Areas	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not seek to enable land to be developed for the purposes of a recreation vehicle area.
<b>Housing, Infrastructure and Urban Development</b>			
3.1	Residential Zones	Yes	<p>The Planning Proposal will facilitate the delivery of high quality seniors housing to meet the needs of the existing and future community in the Hills LGA. The development will increase housing supply and improve the choice of dwelling types available.</p> <p>The site is currently an existing retirement village and as such the proposed development will only increase residential density at a well-located site without impacting resource lands.</p>
3.2	Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not relate to the location or provision for caravan parks or manufactured homes.
3.3	Home Occupations	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not seek to change the permissibility of home occupations in dwelling houses.
3.4	Integrating Land Use and Transport	Yes	The site is within 1km of Castle Hill bus interchange, Castle Hill Town Centre and Castle Hill Station which is currently undergoing construction. The Planning Proposal will enable the intensification of seniors housing in a well connected site and encourage use of public transport. In addition, the site is also serviced by an on-demand private village bus, providing efficient access to Castle Hill Town Centre, and reducing demand on private vehicles trips.
3.5	Development near Regulated Airports and Defence Airfields	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not affect land in proximity to a regulated airport or defence airfield.
3.6	Shooting Ranges	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not seek to affect, create, alter or remove a zone or provision relating to land adjacent to or adjoining an existing shooting range.
3.7	Reduction in non-hosted short term rental accommodation period	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not include non-hosted short-term rental accommodation.
<b>Hazard and Risk</b>			
4.1	Acid Sulfate Soils	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land identified as having a probability of acid sulfate soils.
4.2	Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land that is within a mine subsidence district or that has been identified as being unstable.
4.3	Flood Prone Land	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not seek to create, remove, or alter a zone or provision that affects flood prone land.
4.4	Planning for Bushfire and Protection	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land that is identified as bush fire prone land.
<b>Regional Planning</b>			
5.1	Implementation of Regional Strategies	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land subject to a regional strategy.

5.2	Sydney Drinking Water Catchment	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Sydney drinking water catchment.
5.3	Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the nominated Council areas.
5.4	Commercial and Retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in Council areas on the north Coast.
5.5	Development in the vicinity of Ellalong, Paxton and Millfield (Cessnock LGA)	<i>Revoked</i>	
5.6	Sydney to Canberra Corridor	<i>Revoked</i>	
5.7	Central Coast	<i>Revoked</i>	
5.8	Second Sydney Airport: Badgerys Creek	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the vicinity of Badgerys Creek.
5.9	North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy	Yes	The proposal increases the supply and diversity of seniors housing stock in close proximity to Castle Hill Town Centre, and future Northwest Metro Station. The proposal is not considered contrary to the North West Rail Link Corridor Strategy.
5.10	Implementation of Regional Plans	N/A	The Planning Proposal is consistent with the Central City District Plan.
5.11	Development of Aboriginal Land Council land	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to Aboriginal Land Council Land.
<b>Local Plan Making</b>			
6.1	Approval and Referral Requirements	Yes	The Planning Proposal does not include any provisions which would require the concurrence, consultation or referral of any development application to a Minister or public authority and does not identify any development as designated development.
6.2	Reserving Land for Public Purposes	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not propose to create, alter or reduce any existing zoning or reservation on the land for a public purpose.
6.3	Site Specific Provisions	Yes	The Planning Proposal does not propose any unnecessarily restrictive site-specific planning controls.
<b>Metropolitan Planning</b>			
7.1	Implementation of A Plan for Growing Sydney	Yes	The Planning Proposal is consistent with the objectives in the Greater Sydney Region Plan.
7.2	Implementation of Greater Macarthur Land Release Investigation	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Macarthur Land Release Investigation area
7.3	Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Parramatta Road corridor.
7.4	Implementation of North West Priority Growth Area Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	N/A	The Planning proposal does not apply to land in the North West Priority Growth Area.
7.5	Implementation of Greater Parramatta Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Parramatta Priority Growth Area.
7.6	Implementation of Wilton Priority Growth Area Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Wilton Priority Growth Area.
7.7	Implementation of Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor.

7.8	Implementation of Western Sydney Aerotropolis Interim Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.
7.9	Implementation of Bayside West Precincts 2036 Plan	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in Bayside West.
7.10	Implementation of Planning Principles for the Cooks Cove Precinct	N/A	The Planning Proposal does not apply to land in Cooks Cove.

### 8.3 Section C – Environmental, social and economic impact

***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?***

The Planning Proposal will not adversely affect any threatened species, populations or ecological communities.

The Ecological Assessment (Attachment G) confirms that the Planning Proposal would not result in any significant or direct impacts on any threatened, rare, or regionally or locally significant flora and fauna communities. Refer to Section 7.8 of this report.

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

No, there are no other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal. The Planning Proposal has adequately addressed all likely environmental impacts. Refer to Section 7 of this report, and Attachments A to K.

The Planning Proposal, and supporting master plan, confirms that all potential environmental impacts can be appropriately managed and mitigated.

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

Yes. The proposed redevelopment of the existing seniors housing will have a positive social and economic impact.

This Planning Proposal will bring significant economic benefits to The Hills District and the broader NSW economy. The Planning Proposal will create approximately 759 jobs (construction and ongoing) and generate an economic value of \$1.035 billion – creating significant economic benefits for the local economy.

Stockland is committed to delivering the redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort, and if approved, Stockland could commence within 12-18 months. The commencement of this project would inject investment in the NSW economy and keep people in jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An analysis of local demographic trends and demand for retirement living has been undertaken by Elton Consulting and confirms that the Planning Proposal would have a positive social impact. Refer to Attachment E to this report.

Overall, this Planning Proposal will result in a development that has positive social outcomes. In particular, seniors housing has a number of benefits, including:

- Improved accommodation and services to allow for ageing-in-place,
- Deferring entry to residential care, allowing residents to remain in their own home longer,
- Improved open space and connection to nature, including over half the site as landscaped area and apartments that all have a connection to green,
- Social cohesion and a sense of belonging improving community participation,
- Access to services and facilities – the redevelopment will provide residents with the best services and facilities in any retirement village in the vicinity.
- High quality housing in a pleasant, safe and accessible environment.

#### **8.4 Section D – State and Commonwealth interests**

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

Yes. There is adequate public infrastructure to support the Planning Proposal. The Proposal seeks to facilitate the redevelopment of existing seniors housing, with a full range of infrastructure upgrades and services to support the redevelopment. Refer to Section 7.6 of this report for an assessment of proposed infrastructure to support the Planning Proposal.

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

Two Planning Proposal's for the site were subject to a rezoning review in August 2018 and August 2019. The Central City Planning Panel established on both occasions that the proposal has strategic merit and provided recommendations to be addressed in a revised Planning Proposal. The recommendations of the Panel have been addressed in this Planning Proposal.

Further consultation with State and Commonwealth agencies will be undertaken after a Gateway Determination is issued (if required).

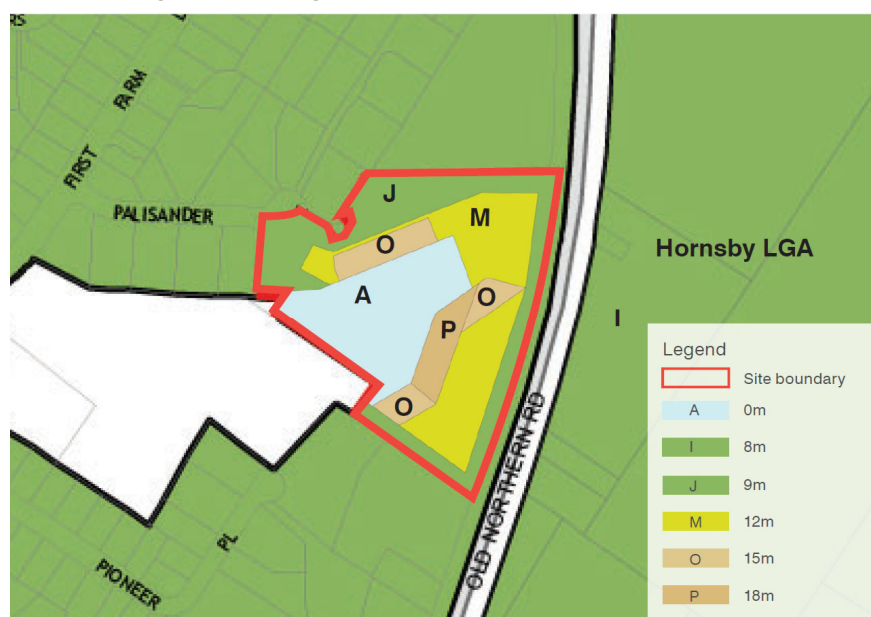
# 9. Mapping

This Planning Proposal seeks to amend the following maps of The Hills LEP 2019:

- Height of Buildings Map – Sheet HOB\_024
- Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet FSR\_024

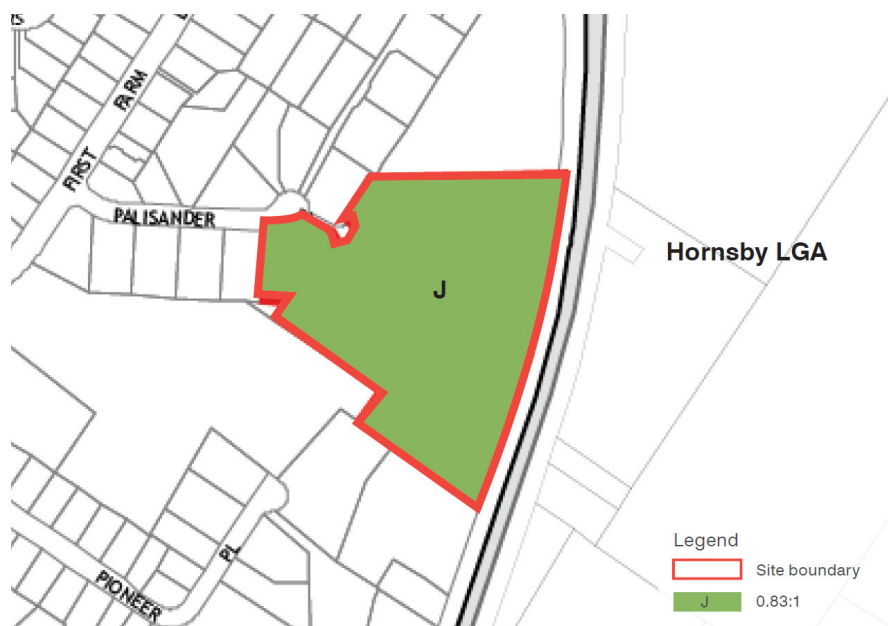
The proposed LEP maps are shown at Figure 41 and Figure 41.

## 9.1 Height of Buildings Map



**Figure 41 Proposed Height of Buildings Map**  
Source: Architectus and The Hills LEP 2019

## 9.2 Floor Space Ratio Map



**Figure 42 Proposed Floor Space Ratio Map**  
Source: Architectus and The Hills LEP 2019



# 10. Consultation

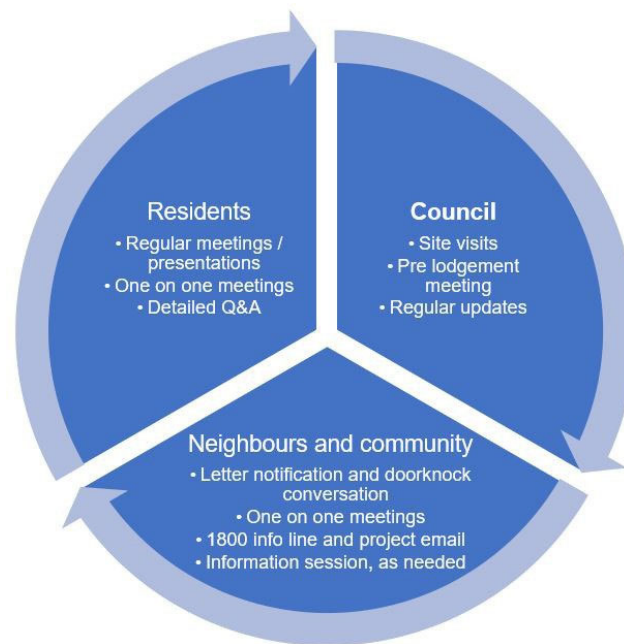
## 10.1 Consultation

The proposed redevelopment has been subject to extensive consultation with The Hills Council and residents of Castle Ridge Resort. In 2015, Stockland commenced discussions with residents, neighbours and Council in relation to the proposed redevelopment of Castle Ridge Resort.

Two previous Planning Proposals were lodged in 2016 and 2019 which sought to redevelop the site for seniors housing. The Planning Proposals were subject to a rezoning review in August 2018 and August 2019.

This process has provided the opportunity for extensive consultation. All issues raised by Council, the Panel, residents and the community to date have been addressed in this Planning Proposal.

The recommendations provided by the Central City Planning Panel, along with issues raised by Council have been addressed in this Planning Proposal.



## 10.2 The Hills Shire Council

There has been ongoing consultation with The Hills Council staff to discuss the proposed redevelopment over the past five years as part of previous Planning Proposals for the site.

A meeting was held with Council and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on the 31 March 2020 to discuss key issues and advise Council that Stockland intended to lodge a new Planning Proposal.

In the meeting, Council staff advised that the proposed height and density remains the key issue. Council did acknowledge that the site is an existing use and some uplift on the site will be required to facilitate redevelopment. Council staff reinforced Council's previous views on height and density on the site, including keeping building footprints similar to existing building footprints, limiting bulk and scale particularly at the edges by reducing

building heights to 9m at boundaries, while recognising the potential for some higher buildings of 4-6 storeys in the centre of the site where hidden from view.

Over the years Council has identified the following issues during the process for the previous Planning Proposal:

- Council officers were of the view that heights should transition from 2, 3 and 4 storey development at the edges of the site, with taller development concentrated in the centre of the site.
- Several options for the land use zoning approach were presented to Council as part of the previous proposal. The proposed approach (seniors housing as an additional permissible use in the existing E4 Zone) was preferred on the basis that the underlying objectives and intent of the zone was preserved, and because this approach did not allow for this site to be redeveloped for a medium density residential flat building.
- Council officers were interested in the visual impacts of the proposal and Architectus worked with officers to select and test views from certain points. This visual impact analysis is included in the Design Report at Attachment A.
- Council have also raised concerns about traffic impacts and management over the years. These comments are summarised in Council's report on the previous Planning Proposal. The Planning Proposal and associated traffic assessment address all of these concerns.
- Other issues include biodiversity impacts, geotechnical constraints and demand on local infrastructure.
- The Planning Proposal responds to all issues raised by Council. The Planning Proposal demonstrates strategic and site-specific merit, and that all impacts can be appropriately managed.

Further consultation with Council will occur following the submission of the Planning Proposal.

### **10.3 NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment**

A meeting was held with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Council staff in March 2020. It is anticipated that further consultation with the Department of Planning and Environment will be undertaken throughout the Planning Proposal process.

### **10.4 Community**

Stockland has, and will continue to engage with the community, particularly owners and residents of adjoining properties.

### **10.5 Existing on-site residents**

The existing residents of the Castle Ridge Resort have been consulted on the need to upgrade the existing facilities, the renewal of the site and the planning process.

Stockland has prepared a Communications and Engagement Plan to guide interaction with stakeholders and ensure ongoing engagement and communication with residents.

Discussions commenced with residents about the challenges of the site and the vision to renew it in December 2015. Since that time Stockland have met regularly with residents, using detailed presentations to seek their feedback on the progression of the site's master plan. Stockland have also made themselves available to residents and their families for a number of one-on-one meetings as requested.

Through this consultation it has become clear that one of the key frustrations of residents is the uncertainty in relation to the staging and delivery of the proposed redevelopment because of the extended timescale of the re-zoning process. Stockland has also engaged with the Village's residents committee, who have been strong advocates for the residents of the village and have provided regular feedback on the proposal as it progressed. Stockland is committed to ongoing consultation with residents and will continue to engage with residents throughout the Planning Proposal process.

A significant result of this engagement is that following resident feedback and subject to sufficient yield and relevant terms and conditions, Stockland has committed to providing existing residents the option to live in the new apartments once they are constructed without financial impact.

Feedback from residents has played a key role in developing the master plan, including:

- Options for redevelopment;
- Proposed staging;
- Community facilities; and
- Design elements relating to retirement village amenity and seniors housing quality and services.

Stockland is committed to ongoing consultation with residents and will continue to engage with residents throughout the Planning Proposal process.

#### **10.6 Consultation strategy**

The duration and requirements for public exhibition of the Planning Proposal will be provided as part of a Gateway determination. Community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken in accordance with these requirements.

It is anticipated that the Planning Proposal will be publicly exhibited for a period of 28 days on Council's website and in newspapers circulated within The Hills Local Government Area (LGA). It is also anticipated that adjoining and nearby property owners and residents will be notified in writing of the Planning Proposal.

# 11. Project timeline

The timeframe for the proposed amendment to the Hills LEP 2019 is expected to be dependent on the consideration by Council of the Planning Proposal and the progression of any additional information requested by Council to satisfy any matters required to be addressed as part of a Gateway determination.

It is considered that the technical studies required to progress the Planning Proposal to a Gateway determination have been submitted along with this Planning Proposal.

## 7.1 Indicative project timeline

Detail on indicative project timeframes are provided below.

Stage	Timing	Responsible Organisation
Lodgment of Planning Proposal	28 August 2020	Stockland/ Architectus
Council endorse Planning Proposal	November 2020	The Hills Council
Gateway determination issued	February 2021	Minister (or delegate)
Public exhibition	April 2021	The Hills Council
Council resolve to finalise Planning Proposal	October 2021	The Hills Council
LEP amended	December 2021	The Hills Council

# 12. Conclusion

This Planning Proposal has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), and the requirements set out in 'A Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals'.

This Planning Proposal provides comprehensive justification for the proposed amendments to The Hills LEP 2019 with respect to land at 350 Old Northern Road Castle Hill. Specifically, the Planning Proposal seeks to:

- Amend Schedule 1 Additional Permitted Uses to allow seniors housing on the site;
- Introduce a maximum floor space ratio (FSR) control applicable to the site of 0.83:1;
- Amend the maximum height of building applicable to the site to a range from 0 metres to 18 metres;

The proposed amendments to The Hills LEP 2019 are intended to facilitate redevelopment of the existing seniors housing on the site.

The Proposal has strategic and site-specific merit and it is recommended that Council forward the Planning Proposal to the Minister for Planning for a Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the EP&A Act.

# Attachment A – Design Report - Under Separate Cover



# Attachment B – Draft Development Control Plan

## Attachment C – Site Survey

# Attachment D – Traffic Assessment

## Attachment E – Seniors Living Demand Study

## Attachment F – Arborist Report

# Attachment G – Ecological Assessment



## Attachment H –Preliminary Geotechnical Advice

# Attachment I –Stormwater and Flooding Due Diligence Report

## Attachment J – Electrical Services Due Diligence Report

## Attachment K –Hydraulic Services Due Diligence Report

## Attachment L – 2018 Rezoning Review Record of Decision

## Attachment M – 2017 Council Resolution



## Attachment N – 2019 Rezoning Review Record of Decision

## Attachment O – 2019 Council Resolution