

8 September 2021

Michelle Fawcett

Georges River Council

PP2020/001 | 19-25 MACQUARIE PLACE AND 46-56 PITT STREET MORTDALE | AMENDED PLANNING PROPOSAL

Dear Catherine, Michelle and Harkirat

The purpose of this letter is to provide a summary of amendments to the above Planning Proposal, arising from our meeting with you on 24 August 2021.

24 August 2021 Meeting

We appreciate the meeting held following the Councillor workshop, which considered the amended planning proposal submitted in July 2021. We note the advice received from staff as follows –

- The Mortdale Town Centre masterplan will be on exhibition until the end of September.
- In the interim the policy in relation to the Mortdale Gardens submission is –
 - o A maximum height of 28m of built form above ground
 - o A cap of 3:1 of FSR above ground, inclusive of affordable housing offer
 - o Consideration would be given to additional GFA contained wholly below ground
 - o The upper 2 levels of the built form facing the R3 land across Macquarie Place and The Strand is to be recessed to ensure that there is not an unarticulated 28m high street wall
 - o Consideration must be given to the way in which the proposal relates and transitions to the R3 zoned land; and should be supported by a contextual analysis

Amended Planning Proposal

Following receipt of the advice of Council officers, and noting the relayed commentary made by the Councillors at the workshop, the planning proposal is amended. This

letter is supported by an updated Reference Design that indicates a likely built form arrangement that will arise from the proposed planning controls.

In summary the amended planning proposal comprises:

This Planning Proposal seeks to amend the Hurstville LEP 2012 to allow for the redevelopment of the site for the purposes of mixed use development by:

- Rezoning the land parcels (19-25 Macquarie Place and 46-56 Pitt Street, Mortdale) to B2
- Amending the Maximum Building Height to be 28m (allowing for generous floor to ceiling heights at the activated ground floor and lift overrun).
- Amending the Maximum Floor Space Ratio to 3.0:1; comprising 0.75:1 non-residential and 2.25:1 residential.
- Making provision for the potential to achieve an additional 0.5:1 Floor Space Ratio for below ground commercial and business purposes.
- A VPA offer consistent with the principles of the Affordable Housing Contributions, exhibited as part of the Mortdale Town Centre review.

The attached Reference Design pack provides a built form and spatial illustration of the above controls, along with photomontage that illustrates a potential outcome and confirms the intended activation at street level and renaissance of the site.



We have reviewed the Mortdale Masterplan on exhibition and concur with its findings that the subject site is without any constraints (as illustrated on the relevant Constraints Overlay Map) and is rightly recognised as an “opportunity site” (on the Opportunities Diagram). Consistent with these findings, and the aspiration for a comprehensive redevelopment and revitalisation of the site, our clients have given further consideration to the opportunity to realise a positive sub grade space. Our clients are reviewing a number of uses for this space such as a speciality food and beverage offering (cocktail bar and basement restaurant), or a unique boutique retail space.

Transition to R3 Residential

During the meeting on 24 August 2021 Council officers stated that there was no urban design analysis supporting the planning proposal. We note that an Urban Design Report, prepared by Bureau SRH, was submitted with the Planning Proposal. We also note that the re-submission in July 2021 specifically discussed the relevance of the original Urban Design Report. It was noted that –

- *The amendments made to the Planning Proposal are refinements to the proposed planning controls, rather than a wholesale amendment to the design approach, urban design analysis, or planning arguments that underpinned the original submission.*
- *The town centre comprises a highly fragmented land use pattern, resulting in the inherent challenge of the need for future consolidation of numerous sites to achieve redevelopment sites.*
- *Redevelopment of the town centre should not erode the existing urban character of the town centre comprising a number of 1-2 buildings along the main streets, and that controls need to be fashioned to ensure that the character is protected, with recessed greater heights. In addition, the town centre pattern allows for “marker developments” on key sites in key locations.*
- *The subject site is an appropriate “marker” or “anchor” development site that marks the entry point to Mortdale Town Centre and exhibits a good consolidated size, regular configuration and has excellent frontage that can contribute to town centre activation and place making.*
- *These attributes support the proposed planning outcome of increased height and density.*
- *The sites size and configuration allow for the modelling of built form to ensure that there is a positive contribution to the town centre and allowing for impacts such as*

overshadowing being capable of being resolved by employing varying heights and separations.

- *The above principles remain relevant and no amendment to these principles arises because of the amendment to the Planning Proposal outlined in this submission.*

We append the urban design study also to this submission and continue to rely upon these key matters iterated above.

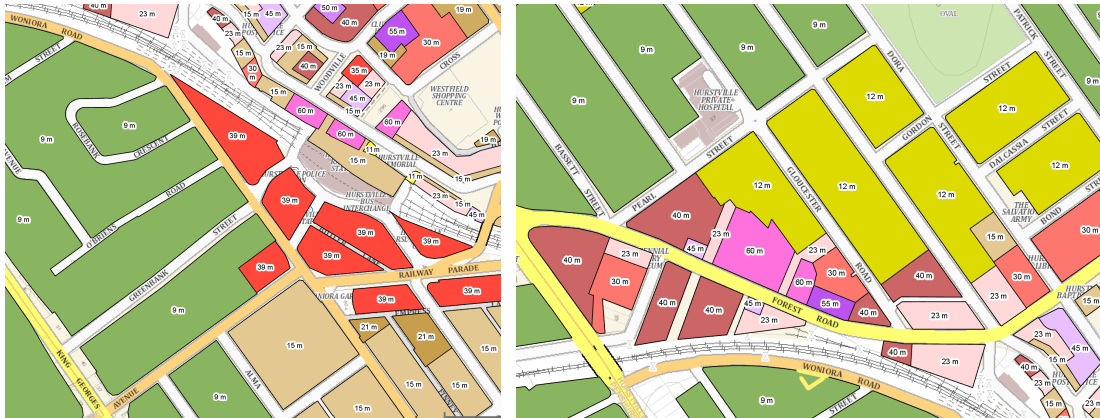
However, we also provide additional commentary in response to the question arising in the recent meeting as to the way transition to the adjoining R3 zoned land is managed.

Transitioning to the R3 Land

North and West of the subject site, across The Strand and Macquarie Place, the R3 zone provides a height of building control of 12m. It is common practice in strategic and statutory planning to have consideration to the relationship between buildings that arises out of the planning controls. Planning controls, in particular mapped zone, height and FSR controls, give rise to blunt transitions. The built form relationship at the boundary between changing planning controls can be handled in a number of ways.

The Apartment Design Guideline suggests one approach that provides an additional 3m separation when it is proposed adjacent to a different zone that permits a lower density of development. Therefore, under the ADG a transition from a 8 storey building to a 3 storey building is recommended to provide an additional 3m setback on top of the recommended 9m setback (resulting in 12m total separation). The ADG deals with transition by requiring a modest increase in separation where sites adjoin.

In other cases, the planning response has been to provide bold transition at site boundaries that result in a visually obvious transition. This typically occurs at the edges of CBD's or town centres. Georges River Council has numerous examples of significant changes in height of building controls exhibiting bold transition, as illustrated in Hurstville CBD where there are transitions across lot boundaries of 39m to 9m (430%); of 23m to 12m (190%); of 40m to 12m (330%), and of 60m to 12m (500%). These are illustrated in the mapping extracts below, sourced from the Planning Portal.



The “blunt” transition model has also been adopted in NSW for heritage items or heritage precincts, and so provides a visual and massing recognition of the heritage item or precinct. This is most obviously illustrated by the blunt change in planning controls from the tower forms at Circular Quay adjacent the diminutive forms within The Rocks. See image below of the “blunt” transition that serves to emphasise the heritage nature of The Rocks (source: google streetview).

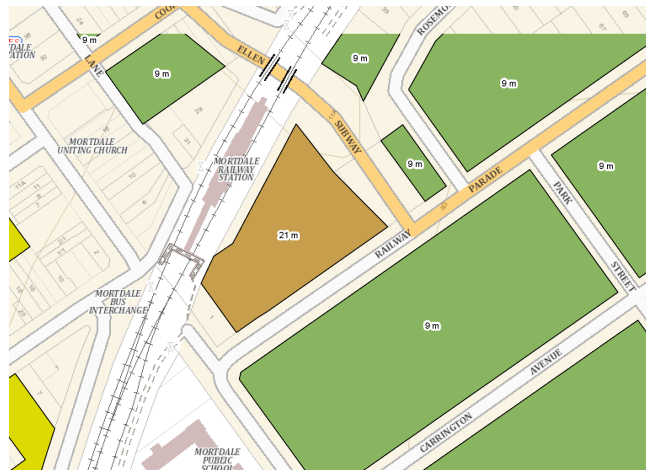


Most relevant to the planning proposal under consideration is that most commonly implemented by strategic planners, being the use of streets to provide the point of transition between planning controls. This method ensures that changes in planning

controls are not managed across lot boundaries where contention can arise about appropriate application of separation distances, and where pressure is often applied by owners of land with the “lesser” controls to seek an upzoning to ensure their land enjoys the “better” controls. This approach is commonly recognised as the most appropriate way to deal with transition in planning controls.


Relevantly, this approach has been employed already in the Mortdale Town Centre. The below height of building extract (source: planning portal) demonstrates that the the boundary of the height control is marked by roads and the rail line. The street forms the point of “transition” and effectively manages many of the impacts that can arise.

In Mortdale the transition from 9m to 21m in height and the resulting transition from 2 storey to a 6 storey form is achieved appropriately across the road. The 4 storey transition (or 233% numerical change) is effectively resolved through the generous transition provided by the road carriageway and also the public footpaths and street landscaping each side of the carriageway.



The planning proposal before the Council does not seek to adopt a “blunt” transition as exists in Hurstville CBD where changes in height of up to 500% occur across back fence lot boundaries.

The planning proposal before the Council proposes to manage the transition between heights in the well established, recognised method of across streets. Noting that this methodology is accepted and in place within the Mortdale town centre. The proposal is to transition from 28m to 12m, and exhibits the same 233% percentage variation to that adopted and in place in the Mortdale town centre as discussed above.



In conclusion, the urban design approach set out in the proposal to managing a change in planning controls is robust, commonly used, and exists already in the Mortdale town centre.

Amenity Impacts

We note that Council mentioned at the meeting on 24 August 2021 that the relationship of the future redesigned Club with the residential zoned lands in proximity to the site will need to be considered. We appreciate the observation and note that the Reference Design does not predetermine a design for the Club and that a detailed design development phase will proceed after confirmation of the PP being adopted. The design development phase will consider at that appropriate time numerous design and merit issues such as traffic movements, pedestrian movements, activation zones, acoustic measures, lighting, etc. These matters cannot be assessed or pre determined through the Planning Proposal process.

Overview of Proposal

Zone Proposed

The proposed zone of B2 is consistent with the Mortdale Town Centre exhibition.

FSR Proposed

Consistent with the exhibited Mortdale Town Centre Masterplan and Urban Design Study the planning proposal is amended to seek an above ground FSR of 3:1, comprising a split of 0.75:1 of non residential and 2.25:1 of residential. Site specific provision to deliver up to 0.5:1 FSR is a necessary and appropriate inclusion having regard to the ideal opportunity to deliver a unique sub grade space within the town centre.

Height Proposed

28m

Voluntary Planning Agreement

The introduction of an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme is an excellent initiative contained within the Mortdale Town Centre exhibition material. We have made enquiry with Georges River to confirm that application of the draft policy to the site.

Our understanding of the implications of the policy is that a calculation of the bonus control would result in an in-kind contribution of affordable housing of 311m², based


on the site area of 4,612m² and the bonus FSR of 0.5:1 (0.75:1 non residential and 2.25:1 residential).

Subject to confirmation of the above from Council, our clients VPA offer is equivalent to that arising from the Council scheme, being in kind dedication of apartments with no less than 311m² of GFA in total.

Planning Proposal Public Benefits

In addition to the VPA dedication, this Planning Proposal will be directly responsible for delivering the following key benefits:

- **Revitalisation of Mortdale RSL.** The proposal will deliver a reinvigorated RSL club on the ground floor which will activate Macquarie Place and Pitt Street. This will assist with nurturing a stronger Mortdale by growing investment, business opportunities and jobs in this strategic centre.
- **Housing variety.** The Mortdale is a place of variety and contrast, from the leafy neighbourhoods of with single and two storey dwellings to the commercial area located on Morts and Pitt Street near the Mortdale train station. Mortdale is a diverse urban area and the proposal seeks to deliver a variety of housing opportunities within 250m of Mortdale train station. This enables the opportunity to create a housing which is well connected to public transport, health services, education services, employment and recreational facilities.
- **Housing supply.** The proposal comprises new housing supply, choice and affordability with access to jobs, services and public transport.
- **High quality public domain.** The proposal will ensure the delivery of new pedestrian links along both Macquarie Place and Pitt Street which will enhance the pedestrian environment including the safety of people accessing the site and accessing surrounding land. The new RSL building provides significant community benefit through street level activation with the aim of creating a new vibrant facility for the community.
- **Commercial uses.** The proposal is consistent with the aspirations of Georges River Council to enliven the centre and deliver employment floor space to meet an employment target.
- **Employment.** Ensuring the Mortdale RSL Club is contemporised to meet the needs of the future community is to be secured with the revitalisation of the Club facility. This will ensure the Club continues to deliver a service to the residents and likewise local employment opportunities. The development of this site seeks to enhance the



future status of Mortdale as a local centre. During the construction phase there will also be a number of construction related jobs created.

Regards

Adam Byrnes
Think Planners Pty Ltd

1. Amended Reference Design
2. Original Urban Design Report for Reference