

4 August 2023

2200717

Michael Edgar General Manager The Hills Shire Council PO Box 7064, Norwest NSW 2153

Via email: LMoran@thehills.nsw.gov.au

Attention: Laura Moran (Senior Town Planner, Forward Planning)

Dear Michael.

Re: Resubmission of Planning Proposal - 21-23 Victoria Avenue, Castle Hill (4/2021/PLP)

We write on behalf of Castle Hill Spotlight Property 2 Pty Ltd (the 'Spotlight Property Group'), the applicant for the Planning Proposal 4/2021/PLP, in response to your letter dated 9 May 2023 setting out feedback from Council regarding revised concept plans for the planning proposal for 21-23 Victoria Avenue, Castle Hill. The purpose of this letter is to submit an amended planning proposal package based on the revised concept plan for Council's assessment and preparation of its report to the Local Planning Panel.

As you may be aware there have been substantial detailed discussions between the applicant and Council since the planning proposal was first lodged 22 December 2020 to clarify issues and potential avenues for resolution. We would like to thank Council for its ongoing assistance since lodgement to clarify these matters for the applicant. Based on this feedback, amendments have been made to the proposal that we believe adequately resolve the issues raised by Council and has led to the preparation of a superior reference design to inform the proposed amendments to The Hills LEP 2019

The key amendments to the planning proposal based on Council's most recent letter is summarised below. Detailed responses to the issues raised by Council in its RFI letters and follow up correspondence is provided in **Schedule 1** (enclosed in this letter).

Key amendments to the Planning Proposal and technical studies

Pedestrian Link and Service Road

We recognise the role of the proposed east-west pedestrian link earmarked by The Hills DCP 2012 and its capacity to enhance permeability and access in the Norwest Service Sub-precinct. As you are aware, the revised scheme for the site has been revised to be:

- positioned along the alignment of the existing overland flow path and stormwater drainage pipes, with no buildings located over the stormwater easement or overland flowpath
- is now located at-grade, rather than being elevated to the upper ground level
- has been widened to a minimum 20 metres in width, which presents an opportunity to deliver a new linear park and through site link and is an improved response to managing the overland flow path across the site.

In response to Council's request for information on managing how vehicles will utilise the service link, the draft site-specific DCP includes new provisions to manage the intersection between the service link and the future through site link. Specifically, the design of the servicing lane will:

- incorporate traffic management and safety measures to slow servicing vehicles to 10km/h; and
- minimise the width of driveway footpath crossings and maximise the width of pedestrian clear paths of travel.
- prioritise pedestrian crossover movements at the intersection of the central east-west through site link by:
 - providing a safe and accessible pedestrian point

- implementing safety measures that indicate pedestrian crossing priority
- continuing the type of footpath material and grade of the through site link.

Furthermore, an updated Flood Impact Assessment (refer **to Appendix G**) to demonstrate the through site links compliance with the 9.1 Ministerial Directions related to flooding, including the 1% AEP. Habitable floors and entries adjacent to the through site link are also set 500mm above the finished surface level of the through-site link.

Inclusion of 'shop' as an Additional Permitted Use

Based on Council's feedback on the permissible uses under the E3 Productivity Support zone and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021, the planning proposal now only seeks to amend Schedule 1 of The Hills LEP 2019, to include 'shop' as an additional permitted use.

To address Council's concerns with regard to potential impact on the surrounding centres, a gross floor area limit of 3,300sqm for 'shop' is proposed in the planning proposal to prevent any adverse impacts on the established and emerging retail hierarchy. The revised Economic Impact Assessment (refer to **Attachment F**) has assessed the impact of this quantum of 'shop' as a permitted use. This assessment has confirmed that any trading impacts on existing centres would generally be very low (< 3%) as the retail component would generate a substantial share of sales from local workers and other visitors, and would not involve the substitution of a visit to other centres in the region.

Further examination of the potential impact on the emerging Hills Showground Village local centre was also conducted, based on likely redirection of local resident and worker spending. The analysis shows that total centre-level impacts would be approximately 6.8%, which is well within the range of a normal competitive retail sector and would not lead to viability issues or preclude planned developments, especially given the strong residential growth in the local area.

Given the above, we consider the proposed inclusion of 'shop' (up to 3,300 sqm of GFA) as an additional permitted use for the site under Schedule 1 of The Hills LEP 2012 will have an acceptable level of competition with the established and emerging retail hierarchy.

Car Parking

Council's feedback on the parking proposed in the revised reference scheme is noted. It is also important to note that the proposed height envelopes adopted by the draft site-specific DCP have adopted the intended built form outcomes of the draft Norwest Precinct Plan, which indicates a 6-storey height limit on the northern part of the site and 12-storey height limit on the southern part of the site. This will support an appropriate massing and bulk outcome for the site which will be further refined at the Development Application stage. The eventual location of car parking on site will also be further defined as part of any future Development Application for new development on the site.

The Traffic and Transport Report by CBRK (refer to **Attachment E**) confirms the assumptions (i.e. car parking rates) used and provide greater clarity on the proposed parking provision for the reference scheme. Specifically, the Traffic and Transport Report provides a clearer breakdown of the proposed car parking by land uses of the reference scheme and consistency with applicable parking rates of The Hills Development Control Plan and Transport for NSW's Guidelines for Traffic Generating Developments.

We trust that the information provided in this response addresses the matters raised by Council and allows the assessment of the planning proposal to proceed. Should you have any matters you wish to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact via email.

Yours sincerely,

David Attwood
Associate Director
dattwood@ethosurban.com

0424 425 462

Schedule 1 – Responses to request for further information

	Issue	Response
Request for Further Information Letter – Dated 1 April 2021		
	Road Widening	

As you would be aware, there is currently a detailed design process underway for the upgrade of the Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue intersection from a dual lane roundabout to traffic signals. Preliminary modelling has indicated that the preferred design may require additional landtake beyond what is currently identified as SP2 Infrastructure (Local Road Widening) under The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019. The modelling will also determine the extent of the left-turn slip lanes from Carrington Road to Victoria Avenue, which would impact on the developable area of the site and potential site layout.

Noted. It is understood that the proposed intersection design and road widening is still in its preliminary stages and is subject to change. It is anticipated that any future revisions to road widening alignment can be adopted as the planning proposal progresses through Gateway review and public exhibition and should not prevented progressing to these stages.

Outcomes of the modelling are expected to be known by around mid-2021 and we will endeavour to provide these to you expediently, given the implications on this particular site. A preliminary design drawing is attached for your information (note: this drawing is not yet approved and must not be distributed).

Setbacks and Landscaping

The proposal must account for the upgrade of the Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue intersection which may impact the corner of 21 Victoria Avenue. Based on the submitted concept and preliminary intersection design, future buildings on the site may be located within the revised boundary setback to both Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue, following the future upgrade.

Noted. The revised reference scheme and draft site-specific DCP (refer to **Attachment L**) accounts for the proposed upgrade of the Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue intersection. This has been based on the information provided by Council as part of its RFI letter, noting this is yet to be approved and may be subject to change.

Whilst it is considered that a 5 metre setback to Carrington Road may be appropriate to reflect the desired urban character of this interface, The Hills Development Control Plan 2012 Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct requires setbacks to be measured from the new road alignment following road widening. Accordingly, the concept should ensure that buildings can achieve a 5 metre setback from any revised

Noted. The draft site-specific DCP (refer to **Attachment L**) includes provisions on building setbacks for the site. All setbacks from Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue are based on the new road alignment following road widening, including the proposed 5-metre setback from the future road alignment of Carrington Road.

Issue	Response
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property boundary based on the most up-to-date intersection design (refer Attachment 1).

Additionally, it is recommended that setbacks to Victoria Avenue, including the hotel / office tower which is currently shown as having a setback of 12 metres, comply with the existing DCP requirement of 15 metres to safeguard the ability for deep soil and large trees. Again this setback should be measured from the revised property boundary in accordance with Attachment 1.

We note Council's position for a 15m building setback (measured from any revised property boundary after land take) to be applied along Victoria Road. The revised reference scheme and draft site-specific DCP has adopted an alternative setback approach to Victoria Road (based on the revised property boundary) with:

- A consistent 12m setback along the Victoria Avenue frontage
- A transitional building setback from 5m at the corner of Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road to 15m at the beginning of the proposed left turn slip lane as part of the future intersection upgrade which provides increased emphasis on the corner condition

With respect to the setback controls in Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct of the Hills DCP 2012 that were adopted in 2018, we understand that the adopted DCP retained the existing 15m setbacks to employment roads. However, we understand that upon review of the Showground Precinct Public Domain Plan (2018) this was without a detailed interrogation of alternative setback distances that could achieve an equivalent outcome with regard to the objectives of the setback controls, which are:

- a. To ensure development creates a positive streetscape and achieves a high quality architectural design that promotes light industrial activity.
- b. To provide an adequate buffer between industrial development and residential development

Given this, further analysis has been undertaken of the current setback condition along Victoria Avenue to understand the various street conditions present and to highlight any instances where there is a non-compliance with council's setback controls (refer to Section 6.4 of the Urban Design Report at **Attachment A**). The key findings of this analysis, highlighted the following:

- the majority of buildings are setback at 15m or greater, however there are instances where setbacks are less than 15m. This is evident along the northern end of Victoria Avenue on the Super Centre, Bunnings and Mercedes Benz dealership sites
- setback areas along Victoria Avenue are delivering a range of conditions, including carparking, hardstand and landscaping, with limited instances where setbacks of 15m are being used for the sole purpose of landscaping and/or planting of mature trees
- where green verges are provided, there are many instances where green landscaped/deep soil areas are as narrow as 7m
- there are many instances where mature trees have been planted within narrower setbacks.

When comparing the existing setback condition along Victoria Avenue, the landscaped setback treatment proposed by the reference scheme demonstrates that a superior outcome can be achieved, despite having varying setbacks proposed. This will be achieved by the following measures:

• ensuring the setback area along Victoria Avenue provides generous landscaped verges that include deep soil areas

Issue Response • requiring well as a e incorpor

- requiring landscaped setbacks to accommodate existing mature trees (where appropriate), as well as allow for new planting that are capable growing to a mature size
- incorporating understorey planting and permeable surfaces should reduce the extent of paved areas and to enhance the amenity of the streetscape environment.

These measures are reflected by the landscape design of the reference scheme and have been adopted as controls by the draft site-specific DCP (refer to **Attachment L**). Through the implementation of these measures through the draft site-specific DCP, we consider that the above objectives of Council's setback controls can be satisfied. In particular to create a positive streetscape and achieving a high quality architectural design.

In response to Council's concern that setbacks below 15m along Victoria Avenue will limit the growth of street trees, the Public Domain and Landscape Design Report (refer to **Attachment C**) provides details with regard to the proposed street tree planting along Victoria Avenue. Notably, this includes tree heights and canopy spread of the selected tree species at maturity which confirm that these can be planted within the proposed 12m setback zone without inhibit the growth of these street trees.

Stormwater, Flood and Engineering

Significant flood issues exist over the site which, if left unaddressed, will preclude the current proposal from progressing.

Since the lodgement of the planning proposal, there has been further coordination and clarification between TTW and Council Waterways Team on the flooding model and assumptions used to determine the flood impacts to the site. Since then, Council's Waterways team has approved the updated model and the existing flood conditions and results within the revised Flood Impact Assessment.

Based on the revised flood model, the revised Flood Impact Assessment (refer to **Attachment G**) confirms that under post development scenario, flood flows from Victoria Avenue are effectively conveyed into the existing through the proposed linear park and discharge via the eastern site boundary during the 0.2% AEP and PMF events. Overall, the proposed reference design demonstrates that a future development on the site is capable of complying with Council's Flood Planning Controls, with 500mm freeboard provided to the commercial floor level. The basement car park entrance is at 85.70m which remains flood free in the 1% AEP flood event and is 300mm above the 0.2% AEP flood levels at 85.40m.

The subject site is burdened by an existing Council-owned stormwater easement for twin 1800mm diameter stormwater pipes that traverse the centre of the site in an east to west direction. The easement does not allow any structure to encroach upon the pipes and prevent maintenance access, especially as the infrastructure is ageing and is likely to require maintenance or, at worst, replacement/reconstruction. The design which has been provided does not address the easement. A viable solution must be established to resolve this issue.

This issue is now addressed by the revised scheme which aligns the through site link with the overland flow path. The proposed width of the link to 20m will preserve Councils access to stormwater infrastructure during the lifetime of the proposed development. No buildings are proposed to be located over the stormwater easement or in the overland flowpath.

Issue	Response
A section of the ground level carpark is located within the 1% AEP flood level zone which poses danger to life and damage to property. As per The Hills DCP 2012 Part C Section 6 – Flood Controlled Land, no development can occur on a floodway area, a flowpath or high hazard area generated by flooding up to the 1% AEP flood level. Use of a publicly enclosed space as a floodway, or the presence of obstructions such as parked cars, columns and storage in the floodway, are unlikely to be supported.	As noted above, this issue is now addressed by the revised scheme.
Flash flooding may occur during a storm event presenting a high risk of danger to pedestrians and cars that could be present in the enclosed parking level. In addition, the configuration of the carpark entry and landscaping would obstruct the movement of flood waters from Victoria Avenue and narrows the flood path, increasing flow velocities and preventing the egress of vehicles, heightening the flooding risk. Likewise, the configuration of the building at the eastern end of the site must allow passage of floodwaters towards the adjoining downstream property. Floodgates currently proposed to prevent ingress of floodwaters into the lower building levels are not supported.	As noted above, this issue is now addressed by the revised scheme.
In additional to the above, the 1% AEP flood extent and flood levels at the site reported in TTW's Flood Impact Assessment report are significantly different from Council's Urban Overland Flow Study (UOLFS). Predicted flood levels within in the area are generally 500mm lower than Council's modelling and the assessment report should be amended to more accurately reflect site conditions and align with Councils modelling requirements.	This matter has been addressed in TTW's response to Council's comments and request for flood modelling clarification dated 11 May 2022. Council has since approved the updated model and the existing flood conditions and results within the revised Flood Impact Assessment (refer to Attachment G).
 The proposal will need to provide alternative methods of stormwater discharge, with the following options being preferred: Decommissioning the existing stormwater pipes and realigning and replacing them with a channelised drainage system in the existing location, constructed in a manner that facilitates maintenance and repairs. For instance, these channels can be provided with removable grated lids that will allow easy monitoring and access and at the same time permit surcharging and ingress of flows into the system. Relocating or rerouting stormwater pipes around the perimeter of the site, provided the invert levels of the existing drainage system allow for this to occur. The new pipes would run south along Victoria Avenue, then eastwards along Carrington Road and then northwards along the site's eastern boundary to re-join with the original pipe alignment. 	As noted above, this issue is now addressed by the revised scheme, proposes to convey stormwater flow through twin 1.8m diameter pipes across the development site as well as accommodate an overland flow path along the easement of the stormwater pipes.

Issue	Response
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The design of the development must have regard to the NSW Flooding Development Manual, Council's Design Guidelines – Subdivision and Development and Council's Flood Controlled Land DCP. All flood modelling and assumptions must be to the satisfaction of Council's Waterways Team and we would be happy to arrange for further discussions with the Waterways Team at a time convenient to you, should this be of assistance.

Noted. This matter has been fully addressed and agreed by Council in TTW's response to Council comments regarding flood modelling clarification.

Traffic, Access and Car Parking

Both Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road are located within a busy road network that experiences high levels of congestion during AM and PM peak hours. Due to the large amount of traffic that will be generated by the proposal, it is recommended that vehicular access only be provided via Salisbury Road, to reduce traffic impacts on both Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue, Should other access points be provided, these should be limited to left-in left-out only with treatments such as median islands and signage provided by the developer to prevent right turn movements into and out of the site.

The reference scheme for the planning proposal assumes that access from Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue will be left-in and left-out only to reduce potential road user conflict. This has also been incorporated into the draft site-specific DCP as a control to ensure this outcome at the Development Application stage.

It is also noted that the underlying assumptions of the supporting traffic assessment are not clear and should be further explained. For instance, the traffic generation rates used in the report are different to TfNSW Guide to Traffic Generating Developments. The traffic assessment applies a rate of 0.3 vehicles per room for the proposed hotels and 4 trips per 100m² for the Medical Centre. It should be demonstrated how these rates are calculated. If these rates are based on a survey of similar facilities, details of the survey should be provided.

The revised scheme has removed the proposed hotel land use and therefore has not been considered as part of the updated Traffic Impact Assessment.

With regard to proposed parking rates for medical centre use, TfNSW guidelines include traffic generation rates for medical centres, the surveyed centres are much smaller than that proposed (average size of 460m², compared to up to 1,386m² at the site). CBRK have reviewed other data regarding the traffic generation larger medical centres ranging in size from 1.500m² to 2.240m² GFA at Bankstown, Caringbah, Eastwood and Mt Druitt. The centres included general practitioners, specialists, day surgery and radiology/pathology service, which will be the types of service provided at Castle Hill. Therefore, the generation rate of four vehicles per hour per 100m² for the medical centre is based on the survey of these larger medical centres, which found traffic generation rates of one vehicle per 70m² in the morning and one vehicle per 25m² in the afternoon.

Additionally, the parking rates sought for each land use are not clearly stated and should be clarified (particularly where proposed rates differ from existing parking rates under The Hills DCP 2012). This requires a clearer breakdown of the gross floor area of each land use. Council has a separate rate for medical centres, gyms and childcares centres, and the gross floor area for each should be individually identified to the extent possible.

As detailed in the revised Traffic Impact Assessment (Attachment E), the likely range of required parking provision 1,200 spaces to 1,400 spaces, based on rates in both the Hills Shire DCP and surveys undertaken by TfNSW. The proposed parking provision for the Site will be within this range, which is appropriate for the current stage of the planning process. The Planning Proposal does not seek to propose specific parking rates for specific uses due to potential future changes and ongoing design development. Therefore, the final parking provision will be determined at the development application stage, when the final sizes and mix of uses is resolved.

Issue	Response
	Lastly, the range of approximately 1,200 spaces to 1,400 spaces is based on a development mix, and the DCP/TfNSW parking rates as shown in Table 2.1 of the revised Traffic Impact Assessment. The reference scheme currently allocates approximately 1,331 car spaces.

Pedestrian Links

The site benefits from close proximity to the Hills Showground Station. Accordingly, it is recommended that greater emphasis be placed on the pedestrian realm throughout the site to reflect its role as a destination and a pedestrian node for journeys on foot to other locations such as the Cattai Creek corridor

A key focus for the proposal is the delivery of quality public spaces that will support the opportunity for the site become a key node for the Norwest Service sub-precinct. The revised reference scheme and site-specific DCP has adopted changes to further enhance the quality of the proposed pedestrian realm within the site, which includes:

- the reduction of the proposed overall FSR from 2.61:1 to 2.3:1
- the partial redistribution of massing from south of the site to provide a greater balance of density and improved sightlines.
- positioning the east-west pedestrian through-site link along the existing overland flowpath and increasing its width to 20 metres to provide the opportunity to deliver a new linear park.

Part D Section 19 of Council's DCP (Figure 8) identifies a continuous pedestrian link connecting Victoria Avenue to the metro station, Cattai Creek and Castle Hill Showground, through the subject site and sites to the east. Concern is raised that the proposed service road which traverses the entire eastern boundary of the site will significantly hinder pedestrian movements along this important link. It is recommended that the service road be removed from the proposal and that alternative arrangement for vehicle turning movements within the site be explored.

The draft site-specific DCP includes new provisions to manage the intersection between the service link and the future through site link. Specifically, the design of the servicing lane will:

- incorporate traffic management and safety measures to slow servicing vehicles to 10km/h; and
- minimise the width of driveway footpath crossings and maximise the width of pedestrian clear paths of travel.
- prioritise pedestrian crossover movements at the intersection of the central east-west through site link by:
 - providing a safe and accessible pedestrian point
 - implementing safety measures that indicate pedestrian crossing priority
 - continuing the type of footpath material and grade of the through site link.

The current site layout and design does not create the impression that there are public and permeable through-site links, as the bulk of the buildings dominates the site and camouflages pathways. It is recommended that through-site links are better delineated by increasing pathway widths and reducing overhead space to facilitate visual sightlines which give the impression that the space is publicly accessible. Pedestrian networks should be clearly identifiable and should be able to easily accommodate areas for pedestrian flow, spaces for street infrastructure and outdoor dining to promote walkability and sociability.

The revised reference scheme and site-specific DCP has adopted changes to further enhance the quality of the proposed pedestrian realm within the site, which includes:

- the reduction of the proposed overall FSR from 2.61:1 to 2.3:1
- the partial redistribution of massing from south of the site to provide a greater balance of density and improved sightlines.
- positioning the east-west pedestrian through-site link along the existing overland flowpath and increasing its width to 20 metres to provide the opportunity to deliver a new linear park.

Bulk and Scale

ssue	Response
Whilst it is considered that there is merit for a higher density employmen evelopment on the site, the achievement of fundamental design rinciples through an improved site layout, adequate through-site links and a fine grain street address should be prioritised and may require a eduction in the overall FSR.	As noted in Council's latest feedback (9 May 2023), this issue has largely been resolved by the revised scheme.
he proposal should provide a more human scale through reduction of parse grain elements such as height and length of buildings and minima uilding separation. It is acknowledged that the proposed tower forms ave been designed to provide flexibility for different tenancy needs, owever floor plates of 1,200m2 to 2,000m2 are potentially excessive and onsideration should be given to reducing these in order to allow for more ender tower forms. Consideration should also be given to reducing uilding lengths and increasing building separation to minimise the visual ulk and scale of the proposal.	
here would be significant merit to utilising the flow-path through the site s an open, through-site link which would preserve easement access and ddress the pedestrian legibility issues previously raised.	
reater variation to the building heights and widths may also afford reater permeability throughout the site, encourage superior building rticulation and increase natural light into the development.	As noted in Council's latest feedback (9 May 2023), this issue has largely been resolved by the revised scheme.
CP Amendments	
hanges to planning controls under The Hills Development Control Plan 012 would be required to facilitate the proposed concept and secure key utcomes of any supported development concept. A package of proposed CP amendments should also be submitted for consideration along with my proposed revisions to the planning proposal.	to The Hills Shire Development Control Plan. The draft DCP addresses the following: • Building height

a) Road Widening

Issue	Response
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Can you please provide an update on the modelling outcomes and the status of its approval and any update to the preliminary design drawing provided with your letter?

Advice with respect to this matter has not changed since Council's letter on 1 April 2021 and further correspondence on 10th August.

While it is appreciated that your traffic engineer has assessed an alternate design without a left turn slip lane, the final design will ultimately be determined by TfNSW, following the completion of the regional transport and traffic modelling. The preliminary drawing design provided to you on 1 April 2021 is the most current information available and should be incorporated into your development concept and the potential land-take accounted for.

Noted. It is understood that the proposed intersection design and road widening is still in its preliminary stages and is subject to change. It is anticipated that any future revisions to road widening alignment can be adopted as the planning proposal progresses through Gateway review and public exhibition and should not prevented progressing to these stages.

b) Setbacks and Landscaping

Can you advise if a building setback of 15 metres to lower levels from Victoria Ave with upper levels setback 12 metres will achieve the desired deep soil planting along Victoria Ave?

This approach is not supported as it is contrary to the objectives of the setback controls and as trees will be limited in growth once they reach the reduced setbacks.

Setback controls seeks to achieve a range of objectives, not just deep soil. Councils preference is for a 15m setback as per the previous advice. However, alternative setback controls can be considered, however the onus is on the Proponent to submit information to justify and demonstrate that alternate controls would be a superior outcome.

Noting Council's current work to update strategic planning for the Norwest Strategic Centre, what are Council's views on variable building setbacks along Victoria Ave which add visual interest to the corridor at key points and deliver deep soil planting for large trees?

The applicable setbacks are contained within Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct, which was recently adopted by Council in September 2018. This DCP part stipulates a 15m setback (measured from any revised property boundary after land take) and represent the current adopted position of Council. There are opportunities to provide a visually interesting building within the existing minimum setback requirements. If you wish to seek an alternative setback controls, the onus is on the Proponent to submit information to justify and demonstrate that alternate controls would be a superior outcome.

We note Council's position for a 15m building setback (measured from any revised property boundary after land take) to be applied along Victoria Road. The revised reference scheme and draft site-specific DCP has adopted an alternative setback approach to Victoria Road (based on the revised property boundary) with:

- A consistent 12m setback along the Victoria Avenue frontage
- A transitional building setback from 5m at the corner of Victoria Avenue and Carrington Road to 15m at the beginning of the proposed left turn slip lane as part of the future intersection upgrade which provides increased emphasis on the corner condition

With respect to the setback controls in Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct of the Hills DCP 2012 that were adopted in 2018, we understand that the adopted DCP retained the existing 15m setbacks to employment roads. However, we understand that upon review of the Showground Precinct Public Domain Plan (2018) this was without a detailed interrogation of alternative setback distances that could achieve an equivalent outcome with regard to the objectives of the setback controls, which are:

- a. To ensure development creates a positive streetscape and achieves a high quality architectural design that promotes light industrial activity.
- b. To provide an adequate buffer between industrial development and residential development

Given this, further analysis has been undertaken of the current setback condition along Victoria Avenue to understand the various street conditions present and to highlight any instances where there is a non-compliance with council's setback controls (refer to Section 6.4 of the Urban Design Report at **Attachment A**). The key findings of this analysis, highlighted the following:

Issue Response

We would like to confirm with Council how the different setbacks from Carrington Rd and Victoria Rd can be applied to our site.

The planning proposal should be consistent with the setback requirements in Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct and should be measured from the revised property boundary following the additional land take for the left turn slip lane. Alternatively, as part of the planning proposal, it is open to you to seek alternative setback controls, through amending the Hills DCP 2012, and the onus is on the Proponent to submit information to justify and demonstrate that alternate controls would be a superior outcome.

- the majority of buildings are setback at 15m or greater, however there are instances where setbacks are less than 15m. This is evident along the northern end of Victoria Avenue on the Super Centre. Bunnings and Mercedes Benz dealership sites
- setback areas along Victoria Avenue are delivering a range of conditions, including carparking, hardstand and landscaping, with limited instances where setbacks of 15m are being used for the sole purpose of landscaping and/or planting of mature trees
- where green verges are provided, there are many instances where green landscaped/deep soil areas are as narrow as 7m
- there are many instances where mature trees have been planted within narrower setbacks.

When comparing the existing setback condition along Victoria Avenue, the landscaped setback treatment proposed by the reference scheme demonstrates that a superior outcome can be achieved, despite having varying setbacks proposed. This will be achieved by the following measures:

- ensuring the setback area along Victoria Avenue provides generous landscaped verges that include deep soil areas
- requiring landscaped setbacks to accommodate existing mature trees (where appropriate), as well as allow for new planting that are capable growing to a mature size
- incorporating understorey planting and permeable surfaces should reduce the extent of paved areas and to enhance the amenity of the streetscape environment.

These measures are reflected by the landscape design of the reference scheme and have been adopted as controls by the draft site-specific DCP (refer to **Attachment L**). Through the implementation of these measures through the draft site-specific DCP, we consider that the above objectives of Council's setback controls can be satisfied. In particular to create a positive streetscape and achieving a high quality architectural design.

In response to Council's concern that setbacks below 15m along Victoria Avenue will limit the growth of street trees, the Public Domain and Landscape Design Report (refer to **Attachment C**) provides details with regard to the proposed street tree planting along Victoria Avenue. Notably, this includes tree heights and canopy spread of the selected tree species at maturity which confirm that these can be planted within the proposed 12m setback zone without inhibit the growth of these street trees.

c) Stormwater, Flood and Engineering

We appreciate the background and technical underpinning of the Planning Proposal may not be self-evident to Officers and we would like an opportunity to explain this once the flood modelling is resolved.

The detailed input and consultation to date with Council's stormwater engineers is noted. It is understood that further work is required to resolve these important matters and that you are in direct contact with Council's Waterways Team.

Noted. This matter has been fully addressed and agreed by Council in TTW's response to Council comments regarding flood modelling clarification.

Issue	Response
d) Traffic, Access and Car Parking	
Can you confirm the provision of left-in left-out only access on Victoria Ave and Carrington Rd, in addition to Salisbury Rd access, is consistent with your advice and acceptable in-principle?	Noted.
Your interpretation appears consistent with the advice in Council's letter dated 1 April 2021 provided below:	
"Due to the large amount of traffic that will be generated by the proposal, it is recommended that vehicular access only be provided via Salisbury Road, to reduce traffic impacts on both Carrington Road and Victoria Avenue. Should other access points be provided, these should be limited to left-in left-out only with treatments such as median islands and signage provided by the developer to prevent right turn movements into and out of the site."	
We would like to discuss with Officer's a suitable approach to the provision of car parking in this large mixed used development where car spaces are shared between various land uses through day/night and weekday/weekend operation.	Noted
Clause 2.1.3 of Part C Section 1 – Car Parking of the Hills DCP 2012 facilitates dual use car parking and it is anticipated these provisions could be relied on. As part of precinct planning for Council's Strategic Centres of Castle Hill, Norwest and Rouse Hill, a broader holistic review of car parking rates is currently underway, which may include an approach to dual use car parking. This work has not yet been completed however it is open to a Proponent to submit an alternative arrangement or proposed control, including justifying and demonstrating that it achieves a superior outcome.	

e) Pedestrian Links

We would like the opportunity to review design options and explain this to Officers in our meeting. Can you identify key areas where through site links can be improved?

Figure 8 within Part D Section 19 of The Hills DCP 2012 identifies a continuous pedestrian link connecting Victoria Avenue to the Metro Station, Cattai Creek and Castle Hill Showground. A portion of this pedestrian link is identified on the subject site and the development concept should include a through site link in this location. The proposed service road will prevent the opportunity to deliver the through site link as • prioritise pedestrian crossover movements at the intersection of the central east-west through identified in the DCP and as such, the service road should be removed and alternative vehicular movement arrangements be explored within the site.

As noted previously above, further revisions have been made to the proposed service laneway to respond to Council's concern regarding potential vehicle and pedestrian conflicts at the intersection between the pedestrian link and the service laneway. Specifically, the draft site-specific DCP includes new provisions to manage the intersection between the service link and the future through site link. Specifically, the design of the servicing lane will:

- incorporate traffic management and safety measures to slow servicing vehicles to 10km/h; and
- minimise the width of driveway footpath crossings and maximise the width of pedestrian clear paths of travel.
- site link by:
 - providing a safe and accessible pedestrian point

Issue	Response
	 implementing safety measures that indicate pedestrian crossing priority continuing the type of footpath material and grade of the through site link.
Can you elaborate on the design criteria for through site links listed in Council's DCP and how they are best applied to our proposal? Figure 8 of Part D Section 19 of The Hills DCP 2012 identifies the location of through site links to be provided on your site. The DCP also includes design criteria for through site links, specifically development control 4 within Section 4.3 page 28 of the DCP.	Noted. The proposed minimum widths proposed by the draft site-specific DCP are 20 metres east west link and 8 metres north-south. This exceeds the minimum width of through-site links currently required by development control 4 within Section 4.3 page 28 of the Hills DCP 2012 (minimum of 4-metres).
Can you advise how Council understands the delivery of the link through properties to our east will occur? The delivery of the link through properties to the east will be achieved as individual development occurs in accordance with The Hills DCP 2012 Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct and providing through site links. Control 10 in section 4.1 of the DCP (page 13) enacts this requirement.	Noted. To facilitate the coordinated delivery of the east-west pedestrian link, the positioning of the link as part of our proposal has been re-positioned along the alignment of the existing overland flow path and stormwater drainage pipes, with no buildings located over the stormwater easement overland flowpath. This aims to allow adjacent properties to deliver the link without significantly inhibiting the developable areas on these sites that will ultimately enhance the likelihood of extending the pedestrian link east as part any future redevelopment.
f) Bulk and Scale	
Can you identify the areas of greatest concern in terms of bulk and scale in the proposal?	Noted. This issue has largely been resolved by the revised scheme as noted in Council's latest feedback (dated 9 May 2023).
Key concerns relating to bulk and scale include:	
 Building separation of 6m does not provide appropriate spaces for planting, through site links nor does is it effective in reducing the perception of building bulk; Floor plates of 1,200m² to 2,000m² are potentially excessive; Building length in excess of 180m is inappropriate; Articulation of 6m in a length of 180m is an ineffective in creating interest and depth to the building; Setbacks being increased would also reduce the perception of building bulk; Deep soil provision on the site is minimal, increased deep soil zoned would create more space between buildings and reduce the perception of bulk and scale. 	
As stated in Council's letter dated 1 April 2021, a reduction in the scale and overall FSR for the site may provide some flexibility to resolve the issues relating to bulk and scale. Current DCPs applying to industrial and business zoned land anticipate development at a significantly smaller scale that is being considered in this planning proposal and are therefore not appropriate to regulate the	

planning proposal and are therefore not appropriate to regulate the proposed development. Regulation via the current DCP would result in an

Response

unacceptable design outcome. A site specific DCP will be required to overcome this lack of harmony to ensure a poor design outcome is avoided. Further discussion regarding DCP amendments is provided below

Can you elaborate on Officer's reference to fine grain street address as it relates to the proposal?

Fine grain street address refers to building and design elements such as smaller entries, smaller tenancies, increased building separation, ensuring building heights are proportionate to road width, the absence of long blank walls and provision of outward facing uses, particularly on the ground floor. Creating interest for pedestrians experiencing the site is also critical, where the ground floor tenancies address the pedestrian connections through the site, for example through significant glazing at the ground level and locating doors and entries from pedestrian links. It is recommended that you refer to Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct of The Hills DCP 2012, which provides guidance and development controls with respect to place making and good public domain outcomes. Council also recently adopted a Public Domain Plan in 2018 for the Showground Station Precinct, which is applicable to the subject site and available for viewing on Council's website.

To support the fine-grain street address of any future development on the site, the draft site-specific DCP (refer to **Attachment L**) nominates locations for active street frontages to support greater engagement with the public domain and publicly accessible spaces within the site. This largely adopts the same requirements for active frontages as those currently contained within Part D Section 19 – Showground Station Precinct of The Hills DCP 2012.

While the draft site-specific DCP aims to encourage active frontages as part any future development where appropriate, it needs to be recognised that large format retail forms part of the intended set of land uses for the site (i.e. Spotlight and Anaconda). As you would be aware, large format retailers typically have required design specifications (i.e. sufficient load access, large showroom and storage areas etc.) where the ability to support active fine grain street frontages is not possible. Given this the proposed locations for active street frontages have been indicated where these can be appropriately delivered on the site.

g) DCP Amendments

Can you advise the level of detail envisaged in DCP amendments?

A complete site specific Development Control Plan is required. The site specific DCP should reinforce and ensure delivery of the key development outcomes proposed within your development concept and planning proposal material (where these aren't matters addressed by the LEP amendments). Development controls should not be replicated and where existing controls are intended to be utilised and the DCP should appropriately reference other sections. DCP amendments should relate to reinforcing site planning outcomes (including known environmental constraints such as flood planning), built form outcomes, setbacks, landscaping, solar access, car parking and vehicular/pedestrian access.

Noted. A draft site-specific DCP is provided as part of the resubmitted planning proposal package.

Post Meeting Letter - Dated 14 April 2022

Pedestrian Link and Service Road

It remains unclear how the pedestrian link and service road will co-operate effectively and avoid tension between pedestrian and vehicular users. Should the pedestrian link continue to dissect the service link in future

Noted. This issue has largely been resolved by the revised scheme as noted in Council's latest feedback (dated 9 May 2023).

Issue Response

iterations, it should be demonstrated through attractive precedents and supporting development controls that ensure the pedestrian experience is not compromised by the externalities of the loading docks, service roads and service vehicles.

Some of the examples provided, such as Kimber Lane in Haymarket, are considered to present an undesirable outcome. In some of these cases, the pedestrian links are narrow and lack adequate lighting or passive surveillance. Pedestrians would be discouraged from using links that do not appear safe or open and would be further discouraged by rubbish bins. service entries and various discarded items. In some of these cases, it also appears that the pedestrian link is periodically closed when trucks utilise the laneway to manage pedestrian safety. This is an unacceptable outcome as the reliable access to the pedestrian link is key to its usage. Further demonstration of how the development will incorporate unencumbered pedestrian access at all times, with a level of amenity and night time safety that is satisfactory to Council.

Future designs should prioritise pedestrian activity and minimise the visible presence of loading docks and service roads. At present, the service road and loading dock functions appear to be prioritised in the design. Draft development control plan amendments should be submitted with any revised package of material to demonstrate how the proposed concept will be regulated through planning controls and ultimately delivered.

Building Envelopes and Massing

It remains unclear how the building envelopes achieve a superior design outcome than what has previously been submitted. While the concept plans do not comprise dimensions, the floorplates appear to remain large, Council understands that the feasibility of A grade commercial space is a key consideration in the buildings configuration, however, this should not be provided at the expense of good urban design outcomes. Should the development require such large floorplates, but remain unable to accommodate appropriate setbacks, building lengths, deep soil space and building separation, it is likely that the proposal breaches the capacity of the site and a reduction in FSR should be considered in order to achieve these outcomes.

Noted. This issue has largely been resolved by the revised scheme as noted in Council's latest feedback (dated 9 May 2023).

Local Planning Panel Advice Letter - dated 21 November 2022

Iss	ue	Response
Ex	cessive Bulk and Scale	
i.	Reduced car parking rates for commercial and business uses, with a view to reducing traffic generation and the extent of parking proposed within building envelope above ground.	The proposed number of carparking spaces is in accordance with the RTA's <i>Guide to Traffic Generating Developments Version 2.2 October 2002</i> and the extent of the above ground parking has been reduced.
ii.	Investigation into opportunities to increase the amount of parking within basement levels, with a view to reducing the extent of proposed parking within the building envelope above ground.	The project team have explored further opportunities to increase the amount of parking within basement levels. The revised scheme responds to this concern through the reduced extent of above ground parking, while allocating a greater proportion of parking within basement levels when compared to the previous reference design.
iii.	A substantial reduction in floor plate sizes for commercial or parking levels above the specialised retail uses, to deliver a more slender tower form.	Commercial levels above the specialised retail uses have been removed as part of the revised scheme. This has reduced the building height of the northern building to 6 storeys presenting a reduced building mass and scale to Victoria Ave and Salisbury Rd, when compared to the previous reference design. The reduced height will also align with the proposed height in storeys under the draft Norwest Precinct Plan.
		Despite parking levels above the specialised retail uses largely retaining their floor plate size, the reduced overall building height achieves the LPP's intended outcome of reducing the bulk and scale of the proposal.
iv.	A possible reduction in floor space ratio and gross floor area sought.	The revised scheme has reduced the overall floor space ratio from 2.61:1 to 2.3:1, in line with the draft Norwest Precinct Plan.
V.	Removal of the proposed 'shop' component	The Planning Proposal seeks to include shops as a permitted use in order to enable a local convenience offer for local workers, visitors and residential population.
		The revised planning proposal seeks to limit the amount of Shop GFA to 3,300sqm to manage any adverse impact on existing retail centres in the surrounding area. This is supported by an Economic Impact Assessment which has assessed the amount of shop floor space and confirmed that this will not have any significant impact on existing centres in the surrounding area.
vi.	Increased building separation and substantial reduction in building heights.	The revised scheme incorporates a linear park (approximately 20m) along the existing stormwater easement, this has resulted in significant increases to building separation, in particular between the north and south buildings.
		The proposed building heights of the proposal have also been reduced to 6 storeys on the north portion of the site and 12 storeys on the south portion of the site. This will align with the proposed height in storeys under the draft Norwest Precinct Plan.
Sit	e planning	

Issue	Response
vii. Reconfiguration of the site to provide a pedestrian through site link along the overland flow path, with active frontages facing the pedestrian link.	The revised scheme has repositioned the proposed through site link along a proposed linear park (20m-wide) over the existing stormwater drainage easement and overland flow path.
viii. The pedestrian link should be located at grade at both Victoria Avenue and the rear boundary of the site, to seamlessly integrate with the surrounding pedestrian and public domain network.	The reconfigured east-west through site link now traverses through the site at grade to both Victoria Avenue and the rear of the site.
Additional and updated flooding information	

ix. Additional and updated flooding information should be submitted to reflect the revised planning proposal, including the Post-Development Flood Model and Flood Risk and Impact Assessment to the satisfaction of Council officers. This information should demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with the NSW Flood Plain Development Manual, that there is no increased flood impacts on adjacent properties and that there will be no reduction in available flood storage on the site. This would be necessary to justify any inconsistency with Ministerial Direction 4.1-Floodina.

An updated flood impact assessment has been undertaken to reflect the revised scheme. This has addressed its consistency with the NSW Flood Plain Development Manual and contain information required to the satisfaction of Council.

Feedback from Council on revised scheme - dated 20 April 2023

Additional Permitted Use

- The planning proposal is to be amended to reflect the Employment Zone Reform changes.
- Further justification around the inclusion of 'shop' as an additional permitted use is required, particularly outlining to understand its impact to established and emerging centres and explanation why the already permitted land use of 'neighbourhood shop' is not sufficient to serve onsite worker population.
- Consideration of a floor space cap for the land use of 'shop' to assist in mitigating impacts on the established and emerging retail hierarchy and supported by relevant economic and retail demand studies.

Based on Council's feedback on the permissible uses under the E3 Productivity Support zone and the State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021, the planning proposal now only seeks to amend Schedule 1 of The Hills LEP 2019, to include 'shop' as an additional permitted use.

To address Council's concerns with regard to potential impact on the surrounding centres, a gross floor area limit of 3,300sqm for 'shop' is proposed in the planning proposal to prevent any adverse impacts on the established and emerging retail hierarchy. The revised Economic Impact Assessment (refer to Attachment F) has assessed the impact of this quantum of 'shop' as a permitted use. This assessment has confirmed that any trading impacts on existing centres would generally be very low (<3%) as the retail component would generate a substantial share of sales from local workers and other visitors, and would not involve the substitution of a visit to other centres in the region.

Further examination of the potential impact on the emerging Hills Showground Village local centre was also conducted, based on likely redirection of local resident and worker spending. The analysis shows that total centre-level impacts would be approximately 6.8%, which is well within the range of a normal competitive retail sector and would not lead to viability issues or preclude planned developments, especially given the strong residential growth in the local area.

Issue	Response
	Given the above, we consider the proposed inclusion of 'shop' (up to 3,300 sqm of GFA) as an additional permitted use for the site under Schedule 1 of The Hills LEP 2012 will have an acceptable level of competition with the established and emerging retail hierarchy.

Pedestrian Link and Service Road

- The revised scheme indicated that the through-site link is located atgrade, as opposed to upper ground level, which has resolved the complication associated with the grade differences and enables the neighbouring site to connect to the link.
- The service road at the rear of the site intersecting with the service link is still not Council's preferred outcome, however it is of sufficient width and is not dominated by loading vehicles.
- The revised planning proposal package is to demonstrate the intended outcomes including proposed future development controls and how the vehicles which will utilise the service link will be managed.
- Aligning the through-site link with the overland path has resolved safety issues, however consideration should be given to the zones of influence of building foundations on existing pipes at the north-eastern and south-western sections of the through-site link
- The updated through-site link must demonstrate compliance with the 9.1 Ministerial Directions related to flooding, which includes compliance with the 1% AEP.
- Habitable floors and entry point located adjacent to the through-site link should be set 500mm above the finished surface level of the adjoining link, where steps/ramp may be required to deal with the level difference

We recognise the role of the proposed east-west pedestrian link earmarked by The Hills DCP 2012 and its capacity to enhance permeability and access in the Norwest Service Sub-precinct. As you are aware, the revised scheme for the site has been revised to be:

positioned along the alignment of the existing overland flow path and stormwater drainage pipes is now located at-grade, rather than being elevated to the upper ground level

has been widened to a minimum 20 metres in width, which presents an opportunity to deliver a new linear park and through site link and is an improved response to managing the overland flow path across the site.

In response to Council's request for information on managing how vehicles will utilise the service link, the draft site-specific DCP includes new provisions to manage the intersection between the service link and the future through site link. Specifically, the design of the servicing lane will:

- incorporate traffic management and safety measures to slow servicing vehicles to 10km/h; and
- minimise the width of driveway footpath crossings and maximise the width of pedestrian clear paths of travel.
- prioritise pedestrian crossover movements at the intersection of the central east-west through site link by:
 - providing a safe and accessible pedestrian point
 - implementing safety measures that indicate pedestrian crossing priority
 - continuing the type of footpath material and grade of the through site link.

Furthermore, an updated Flood Impact Assessment (refer to **Appendix G**) to demonstrate the through site links compliance with the 9.1 Ministerial Directions related to flooding, including the 1% AEP. Habitable floors and entries adjacent to the through site link are also set 500mm above the finished surface level of the through-site link.

Carparking

 A 25% reduction of carparking spaces (from 996 to 720) as it has resulted in has led to a more appropriate massing and bulk in the development, that is more sympathetic to the public domain. The overall bulk and scale of the buildings has reduced, as a result of the increased building separation and reduced building length. Council's feedback on the parking proposed in the revised reference scheme is noted. It is also important to note that the proposed height envelopes adopted by the draft site-specific DCP have adopted the intended built form outcomes of the draft Norwest Precinct Plan, which indicates a 6-storey height limit on the northern part of the site and 12-storey height limit on the southern part of the site. This will support an appropriate massing and bulk outcome for the site which will be further

Issue	Response
Further investigation into basement parking may further improve the urban design outcome. The northern portion of the site is unconstrained by the Sydney Metro Northwest easement and has the	be further defined as part of any future Development Application for new development on the site.
potential to accommodate basement carparking.	The Traffic and Transport Report by CBRK (refer to Attachment E) confirms the assumptions (i.e. car
The proposed carparking rates need to be clearly stated, including whether any shared use arrangements are proposed.	parking rates) used and provide greater clarity on the proposed parking provision for the reference scheme. Specifically, the Traffic and Transport Report provides a clearer breakdown of the proposed car parking by land uses of the reference scheme and consistency with applicable parking rates of The Hills Development Control Plan and Transport for NSW's Guidelines for Traffic Generating Developments.