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**KIAORA LANDS  
REDEVELOPMENT  
URBAN DESIGN  
REVIEW**

Prepared for Woollahra Council  
January 2012

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of review

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HASSELL has undertaken a review of the proposed Kiaora Lands Redevelopment at New South Head Road and Kiaora Lane on behalf of Woollahra Council. The purpose of the review is to provide an independent assessment of the urban design and planning merits of the proposal having regard to the provisions of:

- \_Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 1995
- \_Double Bay Centre DCP 2002 (version 10/6/11 including amendments 1, 2 & 3).

The assessment is based on the documentation submitted as part of Development Application 11/0531 with specific reference to:

- \_Architectural Plans prepared by Nettletontribe (3109\_DA\_000 to 3109\_DA\_082)
- \_Statement of Environmental Effects prepared by The Planning Group NSW
- \_SEPP 1 Objections prepared by The Planning Group NSW
- \_Other related specialists report which form part of DA11/0531.

### 1.2 Summary of proposed development

The proposal seeks consent for a multi-storey commercial and retail development extending from New South Head Road through to the Council owned car park behind Kiaora Lane. The site also has frontage to Kiaora Road and is accessible from Patterson Street to the west and Anderson Street to the south.

The proposal is for two mixed use buildings separated by Kiaora Lane, which will be revitalised as a community focused pedestrian link activated by retail and with a public open space area of 500sqm.

The Library Building will be four storeys fronting New South Head Road will contain retail uses and pedestrian link to Kiaora Lane at ground floor. The upper levels will be part used for a library plus commercial and retail premises.

The Supermarket Building will front Kiaora Lane and Kiaora Road. Ground floor will be primarily enclosed car parking (174 spaces) plus retail uses along Kiaora Lane and Kiaora Road, activating the new public spaces. Level 1 will be occupied by a full line Woolworths Supermarket and Dan Murphy's store plus office space. Level 2 will have a rooftop car park.

Vehicles will enter the public car parking via Kiaora Road, Anderson Street and Patterson Street. A loading dock is located on the ground level of the Supermarket Building, entered by Kiaora Lane (from the west) and with egress along Patterson Street.

## 2 Urban Design Assessment

The following assessment considers the urban design merits of the proposal and is structured around the relevant provisions of Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 1995 (WLEP) and Double Bay Centre DCP 2002 (version 10/6/11 including amendments 1, 2 & 3), referred to as DBCDCP.

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### 2.1 Density

WLEP uses maximum floor space ratio (FSR) controls to guide built form density. WLEP establishes different maximum FSRs for the Library Building (3:1 FSR) and Supermarket Building (1.1:1). It is considered that site specific FSRs are appropriate given the differing context of the two sites. Based on the DA Area Schedule, the proposed FSR of the Library Building (3.08:1) and Supermarket Building (1.08:1) comply with WLEP.

As such, the overall density of the proposal is generally acceptable, subject to the specific considerations raised under height and built form envelope, discussed below.

### 2.2 Height

WLEP outlines maximum building heights for the Library Building (16.5m) and Supermarket Building (13m) and Section A2.4 of the DBCDCP contains more specific height controls which set height limits by building components. It is important to note that the WLEP defines height as 'in relation to a building, means the greatest distance measured vertically from any point on the building to the existing ground level immediately below that point.'

The proposed Supermarket Building complies with the relevant height controls and is considered a suitable height given the residential context of the site. Furthermore the overshadowing diagrams submitted in the DA confirm that the height of the building will not detrimentally overshadow adjacent dwellings.

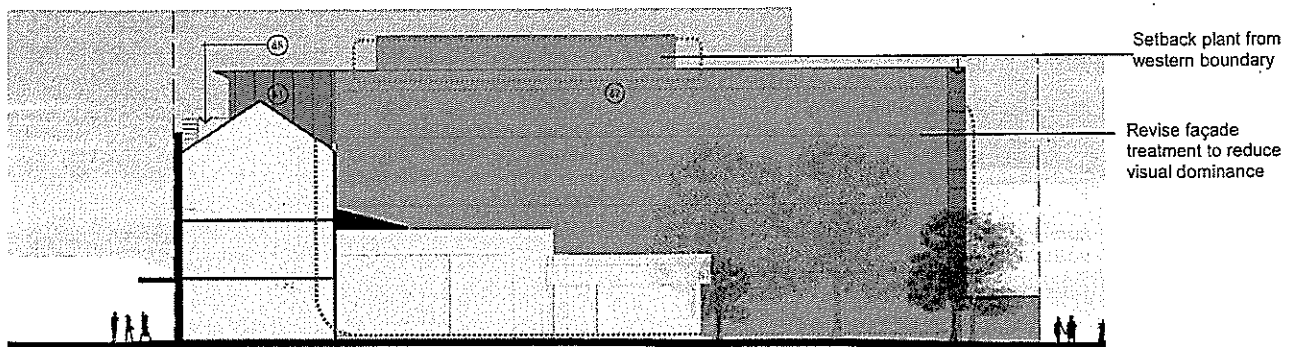
#### Height of Library Building

The western portion of the Library Building (16.83m to 19.9m) does not comply with the maximum height limit of WLEP (16.5m) nor the DBCDCP which recommends that the western portion have a maximum height of 14m having regard to the heritage qualities of the neighbouring hotel. The SEPP 1 Objection accompanying the DA seeks to justify the height exceedence on the basis that the additional height is 'consistent with surrounding development' and will not have visual or amenity impacts on the streetscape or the environment.

It is considered that the height exceedence is acceptable, primarily as it relates to the plant room (19.9m) which is setback 10m from the New South Head Road elevation. This additional height is not visible from the New South Head Road elevation and therefore does not diminish the streetscape presentation.

However, the additional height does exacerbate the visual dominance of the western façade of the building. This elevation will be visible from New South Head Road, Kiaora Lane and from within the neighbouring heritage hotel. It is also likely to remain exposed for some time, being adjacent to the heritage hotel.

As shown below, the blandness of the western elevation is not a desirable outcome. The lack of the design detail combined with the location of the plant on the western boundary exacerbates the visual dominance of this wall when viewed from the public domain. **It is recommended that the façade treatment of this wall be reviewed to minimise its visual intrusion and that the plant be setback from the western boundary as to not be visible from the public domain or intrusive on the neighbouring hotel.**



West Elevation- Extract from Drawing 3109\_DA\_042-B

## 2 Urban Design Assessment

### 2.3 Setbacks/ Built Form Envelopes

DBCDCP provides detailed setback provisions for each building in order to inform building envelopes of the Supermarket and Library Buildings.

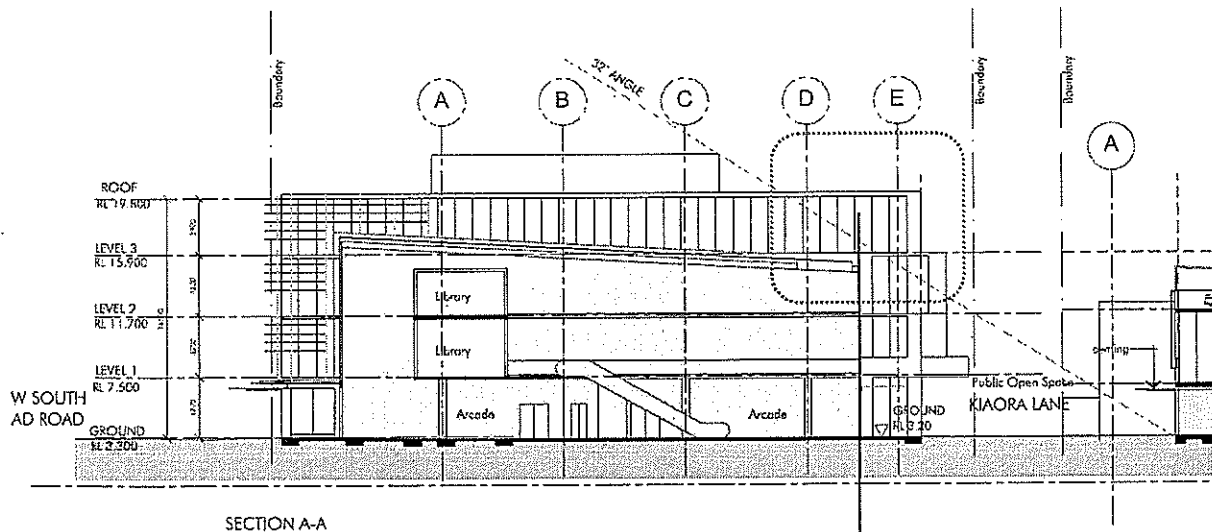
The Supermarket Building sufficiently complies with the ground level setback requirements of DBCDCP and in many instances exceeds the minimum setback requirements, improving the relationship between the building and its context. The Supermarket Building also meets the edge conditions of DBCDCP (A2.4).

#### Southern setbacks to Library Building

The Library Building responds appropriately to the established setback character along New South Head Road, in particular the parapet of the adjoining heritage hotel, and complies sufficiently with DBCDCP setback provisions for this elevation.

At ground level the southern elevation is also suitably setback to accommodate the new public plaza. However the limited setbacks of Levels 2 and 3 prevents optimal solar access into the plaza. DBCDCP requires that floor of the plaza receive solar access at midday on June 21 (A2.5.5.3 Control C2), this is further reinforced by Edge Conditions E and F (A2.4) which require built form to sit beneath a 32 degree angle from top of building to the southern side of the plaza. Section A-A below clearly shows the Library Building exceeds this angle.

The impact of the limited upper level setbacks is evident in the shadow diagrams supplied as part of the DA. These illustrate that the proposed southern elevation significantly reduces potential solar access to the public plaza, particularly during the winter solstice. It is considered that the upper levels of the Library be setback to comply with the 32 degree angle line in order to provide sufficient solar access and amenity to this significant public space.



SECTION A-A  
Extract from Drawing 3109\_DA\_031-C

Setback levels and 2 and 3 to 32 degree angle to ensure solar access to public plaza

## 2 Urban Design Assessment

### 2.4 Quality of Public Realm

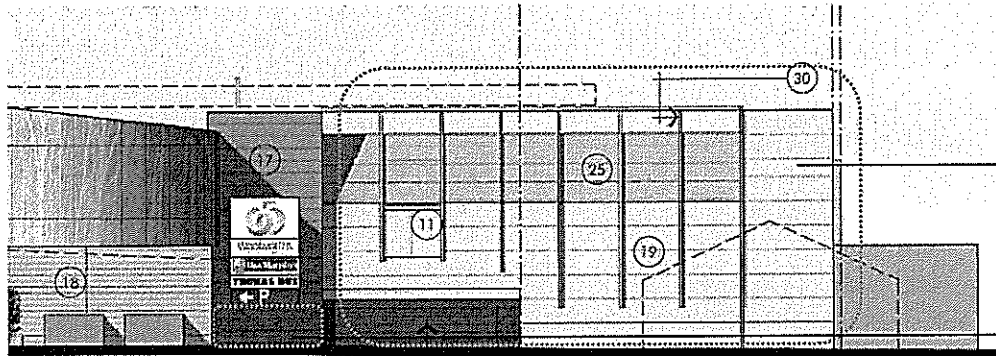
The quality of the public realm is shaped by how the building form responds to the streetscape. DBCDCP guides how the proposal should contribute to the 'desired future character objective' along all major streetscape interfaces.

The eastern façade of the Supermarket Building fronts Kiaora Road. The design response is a high quality and visually interesting façade that appropriately activates the street. Similarly the proposal provides a visually rich façade detail and public realm outcomes along New South Head Road, Kiaora Road and to Anderson Street.

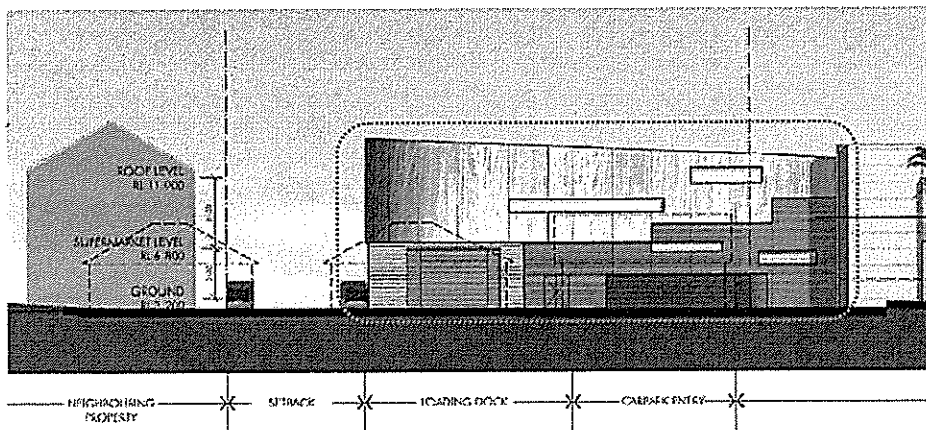
#### Patterson Street Elevation

The western elevation of the Supermarket Building wraps around Patterson Street, which is a leafy street with low scale dwellings. The proposal will significantly transform this street as a major (separated) access/egress to the public car park and a further egress point for loading vehicles. A pedestrian link is proposed along the western boundary of the site, linking Patterson Street to Kiaora Lane.

Whilst DBCDCP permits zero setback to the Patterson Street boundaries, it is considered that the walls are obtrusive to the existing character of Patterson Street. For example the choice of materials and design detail are of industrial character and do not respond to the surrounding suburban character. The removal of the London Plane tree on the northern side Patterson Street, which is recommended for retention at A2.3.2.6 of the DBCDCP, further diminishes the quality of the public realm. It is recommended that the western façade detail is revised to minimise visual bulk and provide a more sympathetic response to the suburban character of Patterson Street and to preserve the amenity of 4 Patterson Street. In addition, greater landscaping should be provided along this streetscape (i.e. adjacent to the car park egress to soften the appearance of this façade).



Extract from Drawing 3109\_DA\_041-C



Extract from Drawing 3109\_DA\_041-C

## 2 Urban Design Assessment

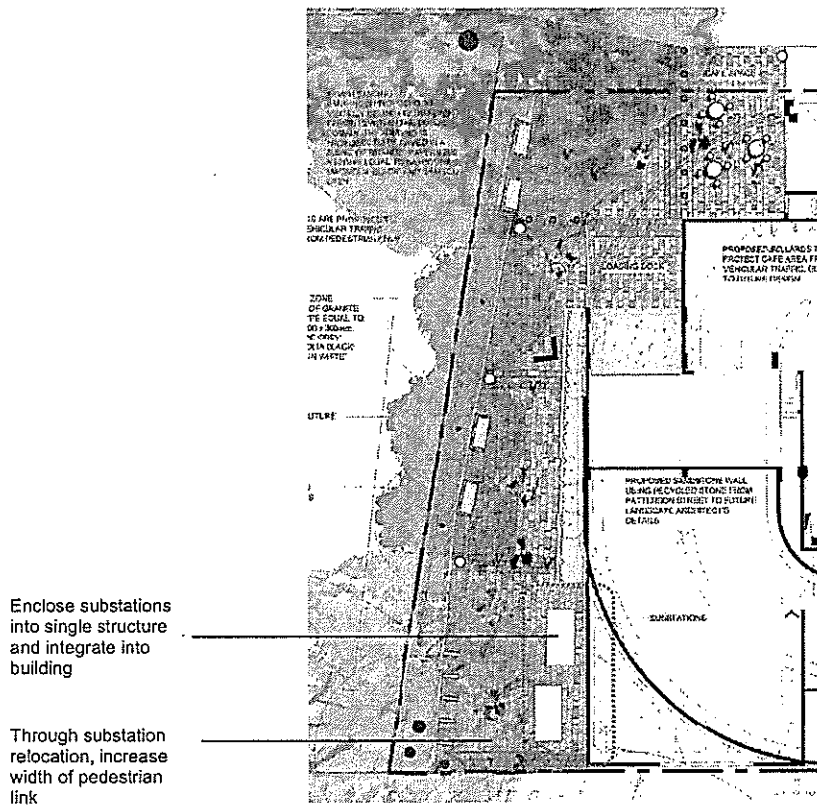
### 2.5 Pedestrian Linkages

The pedestrian link between Patterson Street and Kiaora Lane provides pedestrian access to the south and minimises pedestrian use of the western portion of Kiaora Lane, which will continue to be used as loading vehicle access. This pedestrian link appears to compensate for the lack of clearly defined pedestrian link between Kiaora Lane and Anderson Street (opportunity lost due to at-grade car parking), as envisaged by DBCDCP.

Whilst the width and overall design quality of the pedestrian link is satisfactory, there is concern that the pedestrian link lacks casual surveillance and contains a number of concealed places, reducing pedestrian safety.

The pedestrian link is fronted by a boundary wall and the blank external wall which encloses the car parking ramps, as such there is very limited opportunities for casual surveillance along the link. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the actual level of pedestrian movement along this link will be low as it is disconnected from the wider pedestrian network. **Whilst removing the link is not desirable, it is recommended that additional safety measures be provided along the pedestrian link, such as CCTV and prominent lighting.**

The width of the pedestrian link is impeded at the southern end by the two substations. The Landscape Plan below suggests that the substations are free standing and permit pedestrian movement around each substation. The accessible space around the substations creates potential spaces for concealment, in an area which has low casual surveillance and pedestrian activity. **It is therefore suggested that the substation area is enclosed and further integrated into the design of the building. The redesign should seek to increase the width of the pedestrian link as much as possible.**



Extract from Drawing LSK 09582 - 004 E



### 3 Conclusion

The Kiaora Lands Redevelopment proposal presents a high quality development which responds to the site's unique context and character, and will significantly enhance Double Bay as a retailing and community hub. In accordance with the site specific planning provisions of the WLEP and DBCDCP, the proposal incorporates a number of public spaces and linkages which will benefit the locality and results in a development which is in keeping with the scale of the established built form.

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As identified through the Urban Design Assessment, there are a number of design aspects which warrant further consideration in order to enhance the relationship of the building with its surrounds and to optimise the quality of new and existing public spaces. It is therefore recommended that the proposal be amended to incorporate the following design revisions:

\_ Façade treatment of the western elevation of the Library Building be reviewed to minimise its visual intrusion and that the plant be setback from the western boundary as to not be visible from the public domain.

\_ Levels 2 and 3 of Library be set back to comply with the 32 degree angle line in order to provide sufficient solar access and amenity to the new public space on Kiaora Lane.

\_ Façade detail of the western elevation to the Supermarket Building be revised to minimise visual bulk and provide a more sympathetic response to the suburban character of Patterson Street and to preserve the amenity of 4 Patterson Street. In addition, greater landscaping should be provided along this streetscape (i.e. adjacent to the car park egress to soften the appearance of this façade.

\_ Additional safety measures be provided along the pedestrian link between Kiaora Lane and Patterson Street, such as CCTV and prominent lighting.

\_ The substation area on the pedestrian link between Kiaora Lane and Patterson Street be enclosed and further integrated into the design of the building. The redesign should seek to increase the width of the pedestrian link as much as possible.

Subject to the inclusion of design amendments to address the issues listed above, it is considered that proposal is acceptable from an urban design perspective.

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