

ITEM MAYORAL MINUTE: 27 LEEDS STREET, RHODES (DA 527/2011)

Department Executive Services

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

Council is currently assessing an application for 500 residential units, at 27 Leeds Street, Rhodes which will be determined by the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP). This site is currently zoned industrial under the Canada Bay Local Environmental Plan where residential development is not permitted. The application is, however, allowed under the State Environmental Planning Policy – Affordable Housing by virtue of the then known, Department of Planning issuing a ‘Site Compatibility Certificate for the proposal. 50% of the apartments are intended for affordable rental housing for a period of 10 years.

The provision of affordable rental housing is supported by the City of Canada Bay. Indeed Council owns 24 affordable rental units for key workers in the City. Over the past few years Council has entered into voluntary planning agreements with developers to deliver this public benefit to the City. Council’s units will be held in perpetuity unlike the affordable units proposed at 27 Leeds Street which only need to be made available for 10 years.

Despite Council’s support for affordable rental housing it should not be provided at the expense of good planning outcomes for the community as a whole. I have serious concerns about the development being proposed.

The Leeds Street industrial precinct is located on a prominent peninsula on the Parramatta River and the subject site is indeed part of an identified Strategic Foreshore site under the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan – Sydney Harbour Catchment 2005. A Master Plan is usually a requirement for the redevelopment of strategic sites but this requirement has been waived by the Department. A Master Plan would ensure that issues such building height and form, open space provision, public infrastructure and traffic management are addressed and delivered in a holistic manner. This site should not be developed on an individual basis as this will undoubtedly result in poorly considered planning outcomes.

If this application is allowed to proceed then it will have a domino effect on other industrial sites in Leeds Street and result in cumulative impacts. These impacts will include poor urban design, a lack of view corridors, inadequate public open space and uncoordinated foreshore access.

Council has sought to create liveable and well planned suburbs guided by Master Plans and Development Control Plans that provide good results for the entire community. Rhodes West is a case in point.

I have declared a non pecuniary conflict of interest in respect of this matter and will stand aside from the JRPP in its dealings with this application.

I seek Council's support in standing against this inappropriate development application.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council advise the Joint Regional Planning Panel of its opposition to the approval of DA 527/11 for the reasons outlined above.
2. THAT the Mayor nominate two alternate panel members to participate in the Joint Regional Planning Panel in the assessment of this application.

