

27 May 2014

Centuria
Suite 39.01, Level 39, 100 Miller St
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Attention: Andre Bali
Head of Development

Architecture
Urban Design
Planning
Interior Architecture

RE: 339 Military Road, Cremorne (DA 008.2014.00000042.001)
Urban Design Response to submissions

Dear Andre,

Further to our engagement by Centuria to provide urban design advice for the development of 339 Military Road Cremorne, this letter sets out our urban design advice in response to the submissions to the recent Development Application (DA 008.2014.00000042.001). Architectus has previously provided an Urban Design Report which was submitted as part of this Development Application.

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Architectus' urban design advice is set out below under a series of headings relating to key issues raised in the submissions.

Auckland
Brisbane
Melbourne
Shanghai
Sydney

Height

The five storey height of the proposal exceeds the numeric LEP control of 12 metres (approximately four storeys). A number of submissions raise concern that this is not in keeping with the LEP objectives or the character of the locality.

Architectus considers that a five-storey response is in keeping with the future character of the site's context. Most sites within the centres along Military Road (Neutral Bay, Cremorne Junction and Spit Junction) have permitted five-storey building heights.

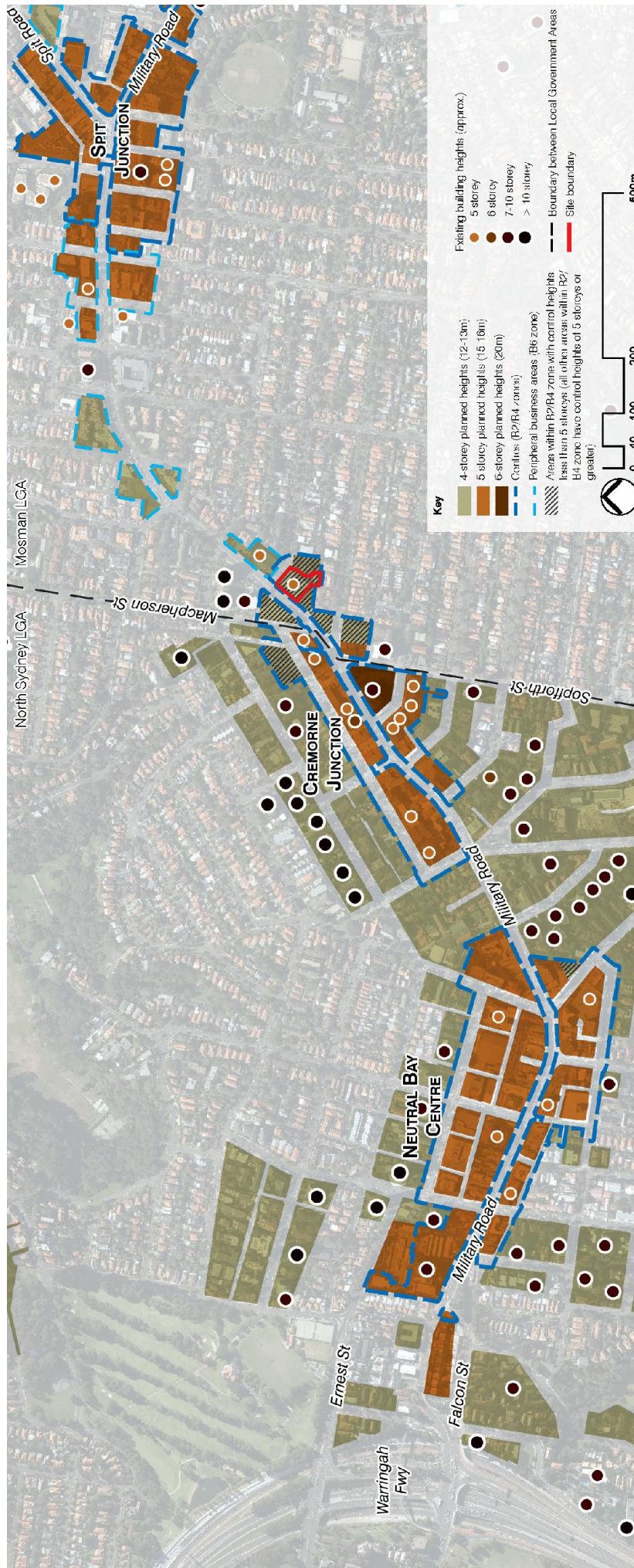
There is an incongruity in the planning controls within the Cremorne Junction Centre as it is split between the North Sydney Local Government Area (which includes the larger portion of the Cremorne Junction Centre) and Mosman Local Government Area (which includes the site). Along Military Road within the Cremorne Junction Centre, North Sydney Council permit heights of 15 metres or greater whilst Mosman Council permit heights of 12 metres only. Within similar neighbouring Centres (Neutral Bay and Spit Junction), 15 metres is also permitted on all sites facing Military Road.

Existing building heights within the context of the site also include larger buildings including recent buildings of five to six storeys within the Cremorne Junction Centre as well as older taller buildings. The existing building on the site also appears as five-storeys in part (due to the plant structure which has no setback from Military Road) and is not dissimilar in height from the proposal.

The existing and planned building heights within this area are shown in the diagrams and photographs below.

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Managing Director Sydney:
Ray Brown
Nominated Architect
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Planned heights and relationship to centres

The hatched area shows an incongruity in the height controls in Cremorne Junction where the existing controls show four storey heights while other the sites along Military Road within B2/B4 'centres' are five or six storeys.



- 5-6 storey developments within Cremorne Junction (generally recent)
- Taller, older blocks (generally mid-late 20th c. tower blocks)

 Boundary between Local Government Areas
 Site boundary (approx.)

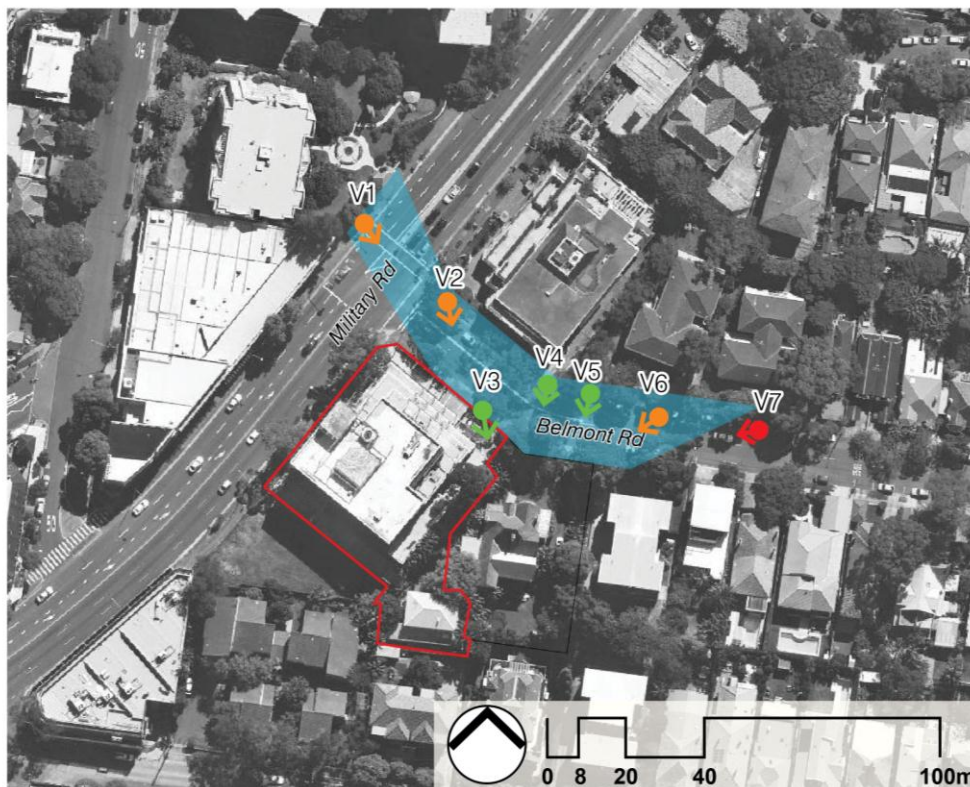
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Within the context described above, the proposal is contextually appropriate and provides good outcomes for the LEP objective for the height of buildings “to ensure that new buildings are compatible with the desired future character of the area in terms of building height and roof form and will produce a cohesive streetscape”. The height of the proposal is therefore considered to be appropriate.

Public domain views of Alma House

Concern has been raised through a number of submissions regarding the proposal’s visual relationship to Alma House.

Alma House is not a prominent element in public domain views. Due to a significant setback, the sharp angle of Belmont Road and existing large trees, it is generally glimpsed in part rather than perceived as a whole and forms a minor component of views, where the broader view outside the heritage item is often undistinguished. Its visibility is confined to approximately 100m along Belmont Road and part of Military Road. This is described through the plan and photographs below.



Visual catchment of Alma House

- Site
- Photographs V3,V4,V5 - Unobstructed view of Alma House
- Photographs V1,V2,V6 - Partial/obstructed view of Alma House
- Photograph V7 - No view of Alma House
- Approximate public domain visual catchment of Alma House





The Land and Environment Court Planning Principle on Public Domain Views (set out in *Rose Bay Marina Pty Limited v Woollahra Municipal Council and anor* [2013] NSWLEC 1046) provides guidance on the consideration of the importance of public domain views. Although the heritage significance of Alma House gives some importance to views of it, the following features of it reduce its visual significance:

- The location for obtaining views of Alma House is relatively limited.
- Views of Alma House from the public domain are generally partially obstructed by trees or built form.
- View locations generally have a low intensity of pedestrian use whilst in vehicular views Alma House is not a focus of views and may be seen only for a very brief duration.
- Existing views of Alma House include modern-designed buildings which do not complement the historic, large-setback character of Alma House including the existing commercial building on the site and also the adjacent 112 Belmont Road to the east of Alma House which is identified within Mosman Council's 'Glover and Nathan's Estates Conservation Area Ranking Map' as having an "Adverse" impact on the Heritage Conservation Area.
- None of the features of the view are likely to be considered as 'iconic'.

In addition to the above, the disparity in land uses between the sites means that there is likely to continue to be a visual disparity between the sites in any proposed built form, as there is at present. The site forms part of a Centre and requires a typology which addresses this, where Alma House is a small residential building with a considerable setback from its Street Frontage.

Due to the above it is considered that the proposed visual relationship between the proposal and Alma House is acceptable and appropriate.

We understand from discussions with Centuria and the project team that there may be a number of possible design alterations that could be carried out to improve the proposal's relationship with Alma House.

Street wall

Concern has been raised within the submissions regarding the street wall response of the proposal and in particular its apparent non-compliance with the DCP controls relating to a two-storey street wall element and 45 degree height plane extending from this for storeys above (Mosman Business Centres DCP 5.1 P9).

Given the context of the Cremorne Junction Centre which includes many buildings with a four-storey street wall, including recent examples (see photographs above discussed under 'Height'), the proposal's street frontage approach is appropriate to its context. Compliance with a two-storey frontage with a 45 degree plane behind this would create a stepped built form, providing a poor visual outcome for the streetscape.

The proposal is therefore considered to provide an appropriate urban design response in relation to this issue.

FSR and amenity (visual privacy and overshadowing)

Concern has been raised within the submissions about the proposal's exceedance of the numeric Floor Space Ratio control and its amenity effects on neighbouring buildings, in particular Alma House.

The proposal does not affect the ability of any other building or principal private open space to receive 2 hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm on 21 June. It therefore satisfies the DCP controls for overshadowing. All buildings affected, including Alma House, retain around 3 hours of sunlight during midwinter, well in excess of the two hour standard. This is demonstrated

through the solar access diagrams which have been submitted with the proposal and in Architectus' Urban Design Report which accompanied this.

Good architectural design practices have been employed by the proposal to ensure overlooking is minimised. The top storey (which creates the exceedance of the Floor Space Ratio control) will not result in any significant view loss or privacy impacts (visual or acoustic) from neighbouring properties.

The amenity impacts of the proposal, including those from additional floor space above the numeric control are therefore reasonable and acceptable.

Conclusion

As described above, there is strong urban design justification for the design decisions taken, including the following:

- The proposed height and street wall approach of the proposal provides a good relationship to the Cremorne Junction centre which would not be provided by a scheme which is strictly compliant with the numerical controls.
- The streetscape relationship between the proposal and the adjacent Alma House is also acceptable, and has been improved by the proposed amendments to the plans.
- The proposal does not cause unacceptable amenity impacts on surrounding buildings and any impacts due to non-compliance with existing controls are minimal.

Due to the unique circumstances of the site, incongruity in the current controls and the reasonableness of the impacts due to any non-compliance, the proposal's height and floor space ratio are reasonable in urban design terms.

The proposal is recommended for approval on these urban design and amenity issues.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Harrison
Director Urban Design and Planning