

DA no. : JRPP-14-1593

Proposal: 5 x 4 storey residential flat buildings

Location: Lot 4 DP 135883, No. 828 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill

SEPP No. 65 – Design quality principles

i. **Principle 1: Context**

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context can be defined as the key natural and built features of an area. Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of a location's current character or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, the desired future character as stated in planning and design policies. New buildings will thereby contribute to the quality and identity of the area.

The subject development is a greenfield development within the Area 20 Precinct of the North West Growth Centre, as identified by the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 (Growth Centres SEPP). The Precinct is currently characterised by large lot rural residential living, however, the area is currently undergoing transition, with surrounding sites similarly zoned medium density, permitting residential flat buildings and multi-dwelling housing to a height of 12 m.

The desired character of an area is largely determined by the planning controls specified under the Growth Centres SEPP and DCP. In this regard, the following objectives are established for the R3 zone:

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a medium density residential environment.
- To provide a variety of housing types within a medium density residential environment.

General compliance with these policies has ensured that an appropriate design solution has been derived.

The development responds to the context of the site, providing a development with adequate building separation, large balcony areas overlooking central common open space areas. The intensity of the use is suitable in the context, given the close proximity to services, facilities, Rouse Hill town centre and future North West rail link also makes this a highly desirable site for the development.

ii. **Principle 2: Scale**

Good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings. Establishing an appropriate scale requires a considered response to the scale of existing development. In precincts undergoing a transition, proposed bulk and height needs to achieve the scale identified for the desired future character of the area.

The Growth Centres DCP establishes a maximum site coverage of 50% of the site, to ensure development is of a suitable bulk and scale. The development has a site coverage of 43%, which demonstrates compliance with the site coverage control.

The development is generally consistent with the maximum permissible building height on the site of 12 m, with point encroachments only to a maximum of 600mm. Building height variations are only a result of the topography of the land and do not unreasonably affect the scale of the development. The design of the proposed buildings provides for articulation to facades and variation in front setbacks to ensure the scale of the development and impact on the streetscape is adequate.

The provision of 12 m building separation internally as well as 6 m side setbacks to adjoining sites ensures that adjoining sites can be developed to a similar scale.

iii. Principle 3: Built Form

Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of building elements. Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.

The proposed design has been developed in keeping with the requirements of the Residential Flat Design Code (RFDC) and the Growth Centres SEPP and DCP requirements in relation to building alignment, setbacks and building type.

The development provides for 5 individual 4 storey apartment buildings. Buildings are suitably setback, and respond to the constraints on the site. For example, the development is provided with an increased setback to Windsor Road. The use of blade walls adds interest to the building façade and variation in colours and finishes enables the built form to respond to the site's context within an urban release area.

The proposed development provides an acceptable level of internal amenity, providing 3,071 sqm of communal open space. The development has been provided with setbacks and open space areas which comply with the minimum requirements and ensure that the development maintains an appropriate built form.

iv. Principle 4: Density

Good design has a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields (or number of units or residents). Appropriate densities are sustainable and consistent with the existing density in an area or, in precincts undergoing a transition, are consistent with the stated desired future density. Sustainable densities respond to the regional context, availability of infrastructure, public transport, community facilities and environmental quality.

The Growth Centres SEPP establishes a maximum floor space ratio of 1.75:1 on the subject site. The development is below the maximum FSR, providing an FSR of 1.7:1. The density is considered appropriate for the site and compliant with the maximum control.

In addition, the Growth Centres SEPP establishes a minimum residential density of 25 dwellings per hectare, which is a minimum number of dwellings which must be built on the site. The site has an area of 2.035 hectares, therefore a minimum 51 dwellings are required for the site. The development proposes 253 units and therefore complies within the required minimum density of the site.

By achieving the minimum density on site, whilst still being below the maximum permissible FSR, the development is considered to be suitable on the site. The proposal achieves the objectives of the Growth Centre planning instruments, which aim to cater for an increasing population through the provision of higher density housing near regional centres.

The proposed density is also considered sustainable given the proximity of current infrastructure and services, including recreation facilities, support services, Rouse Hill town centre, existing North West bus transit and the future North West Rail link.

v. **Principle 5: Resource, Energy and Water Efficiency**

Good design makes efficient use of natural resources, energy and water throughout its full life cycle, including construction. Sustainability is integral to the design process. Aspects include demolition of existing structures, recycling of materials, selection of appropriate and sustainable materials, adaptability and reuse of buildings, layouts and built form, passive solar design principles, efficient appliances and mechanical services, soil zones for vegetation and reuse of water.

The proposal has been designed so each unit receives a satisfactory level of natural light, energy and ventilation. Adequate building separation has been provided between buildings to ensure common open spaces receive adequate solar access. In particular, the proposal provides:

- 71% of the units with at least 3 hours of solar access to the main living areas.
- Active and passive sun control systems, including aluminium shading devices
- Installation of low energy saving devices.
- Natural cross-flow ventilation to 66% of the units.

The submitted Waste Management Plan (WMP) also details measures to maximise recycling during the construction and operational phases of the development.

vi. **Principle 6: Landscape**

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in greater aesthetic quality and amenity for both occupants and the adjoining public domain. Landscape design builds on the existing site's natural and cultural features in responsible and creative ways. It enhances the development's natural environmental performance by co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy and habitat values. It contributes to the positive image and contextual fit of development through respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character, or desired future character. Landscape design should optimise useability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity, and provide for practical establishment and long term management.

The landscape design will be integrated with the proposed buildings to provide a high level of aesthetic quality on the development site and a high level of amenity for the future occupants of the development.

The proposal provide 3,071 sqm of communal open space. The submitted landscape plans identify embellishment of these area with a central common open space area amongst the residential flat buildings of 4,315 sqm. The common open space area is proposed to be embellished with native planting, hardscape and turfed areas. Common open space BBQ areas have been provided as well as outdoor seating areas.. A minimum 25% of the common open space is deep soil zone to enable planting of mature vegetation throughout the development.

The application has been supported with the submission of a landscape plan prepared by Ecodesign. The landscape design incorporates large canopy tree planting, small tree planting and shrub planting throughout the development.

vii. Principle 7: Amenity

Good design provides amenity through the physical, spatial and environmental quality of a development. Optimising amenity requires appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, outlook and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.

The design of internal units provide for generous unit areas, a minimum of 1 balcony area and individual unit storage areas. Balcony or terrace areas are directly accessible from the internal living areas. All apartments have direct access to the basement via centrally located lifts and stairs, where parking for residents and visitors will be provided. Visual and acoustic privacy is addressed through the provision of 12 m building separation between units, privacy/solar access louvers on balconies and dense landscaping throughout the site. All apartments have easy access to waste rooms, provided on each floor near the lifts, for the disposal of garbage into chutes and recyclables into collection bins.

71% of the proposed units also receive a minimum 3 hours solar access to the main living areas, and 66% of the units achieve natural cross-flow ventilation.

viii. Principle 8: Safety and Security

Good design optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public domain. This is achieved by maximising overlooking of public and communal spaces while maintaining internal privacy, avoiding dark and non-visible areas, maximising activity on streets, providing clear, safe access points, providing quality public spaces that cater for desired recreational uses, providing lighting appropriate to the location and desired activities, and clear definition between public and private spaces.

The proposal affords good casual surveillance of the street frontage and internal common open space areas through the design of the residential flat buildings. Appropriate lighting is also to be provided to all common areas to increase the safety of those areas, especially at night. With regards to the parking areas, secure access is to be maintained at all times. Conditions will be imposed to encourage separation between the resident and visitor parking spaces has been achieved through their location, and basement car parking is to be provided with security garage doors at the basement level.

ix. Principle 9: Social dimensions and housing affordability

Good design responds to the social context and needs of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability, and access to social facilities. New developments should optimise the provision of housing to suit the social mix and needs in the neighbourhood or, in the case of precincts undergoing transition, provide for the desired future community. New developments should address housing affordability by optimising the provision of economic housing choices and providing a mix of housing types to cater for different budgets and housing needs.

The ground level also provides substantial on-site recreation facilities for residents, including a terrace areas, BBQ facilities and relaxation spaces. Pedestrian links are also available to the public parks. These areas are created to promote a high quality lifestyle within the development.

The development proposes a variety of housing choices comprising 38 x 1 bedroom units, 205 x 2 bedroom units and 10 x 3 bedroom units. The variation provides a range of housing choices and promotes affordability for the community, therefore satisfying the intent of this principle.

The design also provides 26 adaptable apartments (i.e. 10 % of the total number of units), as required by the DCP and the BCA, thus providing a choice of attractive living locations and facilities to persons with disabilities and their families.

The development provides high levels of amenity to future residents and alternate housing opportunities in the locality. The proximity of the site to the Rouse Hill town centre and future North West Rail link will also increase amenity levels of future residents.

x. Principle 10: Aesthetics

Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development. Aesthetics should respond to the environment and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area.

The development has been architecturally designed. The building massing and facades are articulated to break down the scape and create a building identity, while maintaining the surrounding amenity.

The use of blade walls, varying colours supported by a principle render brick finish enables the building façade to be a high quality, aesthetically pleasing design. Buildings are designed to incorporate architectural roof features and provide for variation in façade design. The building design incorporates sliding aluminium louvers and glass balustrades. The main finishes of the building façade include render and paint finish, an 4 principles colours. Photomontages which demonstrate the buildings colours and finishes is held at **Attachment 2**.

Accordingly, it is determined by the above assessment that the proposed development is acceptable when considered against the 10 design principles identified under SEPP 65.