JOINT REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST

JRPP No	2015HCC022	
DA Number	DA2015/0906	
Local Government Area	Newcastle City Council	
Proposed Development	Construction of a multi-unit residential development (230 units), associated site works and site consolidation.	
Street Address	147a - 149a Newcastle Road Wallsend, 12-18 Victory Parade Wallsend	
Applicant/Owner	Applicant - SNL Building Constructions Pty Ltd Owners - Arton Retirement Villages (Newcastle) Pty Ltd, Livo & Co Pty Ltd, A Whistle & Co (1979) Pty Ltd	
Number of Submissions	Nineteen (19)	
Regional Development Criteria (Schedule 4A of the Act)	The proposal is listed within Schedule 4A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, being development over \$20 million.	
List of All Relevant s79C(1)(a) Matters	 Environmental planning instruments: s79C(1)(a)(i) State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 - Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development State Environmental Planning Policy (Building and Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP) Development Control Plan: s79C(1)(a)(iii) Newcastle Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP) Section 94A Development Contributions Plan 2009 	
Documents submitted with report for panel's consideration	Appendix A - Recommended conditions of consent Appendix B - List of documents submitted with the application	
Recommendation	Approval	
Report by	Dean Wooding	
Report date	8 September 2016	

ASSESSMENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Development application (No.2015/0906) has been lodged with Council, seeking consent for a residential development comprising 230 units encompassing a mix of two, three and four storey units (plus basement); associated circulation space and 243 basement car parking spaces.

The development consists of 17 residential blocks, which are between three and four storeys in height and are divided into block numbers A - M, including:

- 39 one (1) bedroom units;
- 176 two (2) bedroom units; and
- 15 three (3) bedroom units.

The site is zoned R3 under Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP). The proposed use is defined as medium density residential development, which is permissible with consent in the R3 zone.

The proposal was placed on public exhibition for a period of 14 days from 4 September 2015 to 18 September 2015 in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2000* and Section 8 of Newcastle Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP).

Council received 19 submissions and a petition with 33 signatures during the exhibition period. In addition, two late submissions were received.

The application was referred to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) in accordance to the provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007. The RMS provided no objection, subject to conditions of approval for the development.

The key issues raised in the assessment relate to:

- height
- traffic
- contamination and Remediation
- SEPP 65 Apartment Design Guide

The proposal is referred to the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) for determination pursuant to Part 4 'Regional Development' of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011, as the proposed development is listed within Schedule 4A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EPA Act), with the proposed development having a capital investment value of \$34,187,000.

The application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions contained in **Appendix A**.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides a detailed overview of a development proposal for a residential development comprising 230 units with a mix of two, three and four storey units (plus basement), associated circulation space, landscaping and basement car parking for 243 spaces.

The development application is reported to the Hunter and Central Coast Joint Regional Planning Panel in accordance with 23G and Schedule 4A *EP&A Act*, as the development has a capital investment value (CIV) over \$20 million.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site, including the land occupied by Brickworks Park and Ausgrid up to Newcastle Road, was originally occupied by the Wallsend Brickworks which operated from 1891. Coal was also mined from the site with the entry to the mine located near 10 Victory Parade. The coal mine was known as the New-Tunnel Colliery (later known as Elemore Tunnel Colliery), run by the Newcastle Wallsend Coal Company.

The Brickworks operated until 1977. After this time the land was owned by Newcastle City Council and has largely been vacant, apart from the western part of the site that was used by RMS for road materials storage.

Brickworks Park, which is adjacent to the site, has been designed to commemorate the brickworks operation on the site. The remains of the chimney stack and material storage shed and other interpretative elements are included in the park.

3. BACKGROUND

The site has an area of 2.907 hectares, comprising of seven lots and has an irregular shape. It is accessed off Newcastle Road, via an unnamed road informally known as "Tunnel Lane". The site is located on a vacant former brick-making and mine-working land. As a consequence of its history, the site has an undulating and irregular topography. The site falls east to west approximately 10m towards the watercourse / drainage line near the south - western and western boundaries.

The site comprises of seven lots (as shown in **Figure 1** below), with a combined area of 28,720m². The zoning and photos of the site are shown in **Figures 2 to 10** below.

The site is highly disturbed containing dense infestations of weeds, dumped rubbish and dirt mounds. Most the vegetation on the site is regrowth and there is a stand of Brushboxes lining the access road from Tunnel Lane. There is stand of eucalypts along the south-eastern boundary with Brickworks Park and to the south-west within the Ausgrid site.

The site includes former hardstand areas for car-parking and concrete slabs of former buildings.

The immediate area of Wallsend / Jesmond was developed principally in the 1920's to 1940's and consists of single storey dwellings with some areas being redeveloped for medium density housing.

To the east, the site bounds Victory Parade with residential properties facing the site on the eastern side of the street. To the south, the site abuts Brickworks Park, a Council owned and managed public recreation area which provides for passive recreation including walking paths and BBQ facilities. In addition, there is a newly constructed cycle path along the southern boundary.

To the south-west are residential properties and a community centre within 'Iranda Grove'. To the west, the site bounds the regional Ausgrid depot and office complex. Ausgrid buildings and infrastructure are separated from the site by an electricity easement and a watercourse / drainage line.

To the north-west, the site abuts light industrial buildings at 147 Newcastle Road which provides no interface with the subject site or Tunnel Lane other than tilt slab concrete walls. To the north, the site is accessed by an unnamed road (known informally as Tunnel Lane), and to the north-east the site abuts newly constructed two storey dwellings at no. 8 Victory Parade. To the north of 8 Victory Parade, at no 4, is a three storey residential block.



Figure 1: The subject site which includes seven lots.

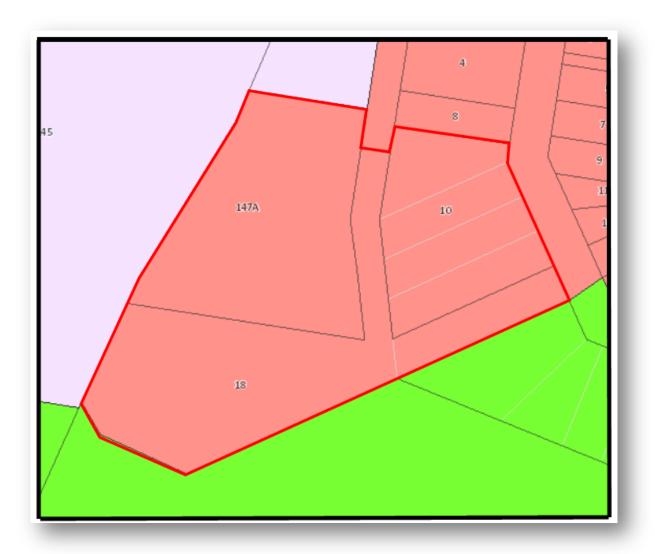


Figure 2: Zoning of the site (R3 large lot residential is pink, RE1 Public Recreation in green and Light Industrial IN2 in violet).

The site is subject to a number of environmental constraints (as mapped on Councils' GIS system) including:

- Flood prone land
- Contaminated land
- Bushfire prone land (Veg Category 1 and 100m and 230m buffer)
- Mine subsidence
- Acid sulfate soil Class 5



Figure 3: Site boundary with No. 8 Victory Parade.



Figure 4: Overland flow path - looking south from Newcastle Road.



Figure 5: Entrance to "Tunnel Lane".



Figure 6: The existing hard stand area on the site and the light industrial buildings to the north.



Figure 7: The view looking south across the site. Ausgrid is located beyond the trees to the right and Brickworks Park beyond the trees to the left.



Figure 8: View along western Ausgrid boundary - looking north from the site.



Photo 9: View of southern boundary with the newly constructed cycle path.



Photo 10: The entrance to Brickworks Park from Victory Parade.

4. PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the construction of a residential development consisting of 230 units. The dwellings are between three and four storeys in height, including a basement parking area which provides 243 car parking spaces.

The development consists of 17 residential blocks, which are divided into block numbers A - M, comprising:

- 39 one (1) bedroom units;
- 176 two (2) bedroom units; and
- 15 three (3) bedroom units.

The development is proposed in stages as follows:

Stage	Block	Туре	Height	Basem't Car Parking	Street Car Parking	M'Cycle	Bicycle
Stage 1	Block A	x 3 terraced homes	3 storey	3			
	Block B	x 41 apartments	3 storey	41			
	Block C	x 9 apartments	4 storey	9			
	Block D	x 6 terraced homes	3 storey	11			
	Block E	x 13 terraced homes	4 storey	15			
Total		72		79	23	7	14
Stage 2	Block F	x 20 apartments	4 storey	20			
	Block G	x 15 apartments	3 storey	15			
Total		35		35	4	3	0
Stage 3	Block H	x 12 apartments	3 storey	12			
	Block I	x 15 apartments	3 storey	15			
Total		27		27	6	2	4
Stage 4	Block J	x 56 apartments	4 storey	56			
Total		56		56	22	0	2
Stage 5	Block K	x 10 apartments	3 storey	10		1	1
	Block L	x 12 apartments	3 storey	12		1	1
	Block M	x 18 apartments	3 storey	18		2	2
Total		30		30	0	4	4
Site totals		230		243	55	12	24

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)

5.1.1 Section 23G – Joint Regional Planning Panels

Section 23G and Schedule 4A (3) of the EP&A Act requires the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) to determine applications for general development over \$20 million in value. The capital investment value of the application is \$34,187,000 including GST. The application is to be determined by the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel.

In addition, clause 20, 21 and 22 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* require the Joint Regional Planning Panel to be the determining authority for staged development applications, where the development is listed in Schedule 4A of the Act. This also requires that the JRPP determine all future applications associated with the staged development approval.

5.1.2 Section 79C Evaluation

The proposal has been assessed under the relevant matters for consideration detailed in s.79C (1) EP&A Act as follows:

5.1.2.1 Section 79C(1)(a)(i) provisions of any environmental planning instrument

State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011

This policy sets out the functions of regional panels in determining applications for regional development. Clause 20 and 21 of the SEPP require the Joint Regional Planning Panel to be the determining authority for development included in Schedule 4A of the Act. This includes development applications which exceed \$20m capital investment value. The application is therefore submitted to the Hunter and Central Coast Joint Regional Planning Panel for determination.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (ISEPP)

Traffic Generation

Schedule 3 of ISEPP, relates to traffic generating development and requires certain applications to be referred to the RMS. The application was referred to the RMS under Clause 104 due to the number of parking spaces in the development. The RMS provided a response on 17 November 2015 stating they have no objection but advise the following requirements are to be imposed with any consent:

- Left in from Tunnel Lane is not supported, and works be undertaken to restrict access are to be submitted and approved prior to the issue of a construction certificate for Stage 1; and
- No construction vehicles are permitted to use the Newcastle Road access.

It is considered that there will be no significant impacts on the classified (state) road network (refer to **Attachment B**). In addition, the RMS stated that:

- They are prepared to consider re-phasing the lights at the Newcastle Road / Victory Parade intersection;
- All matters relating to internal arrangements on site are matters for Council to determine.

The Councils Traffic Officer assessed the traffic report submitted with the application and determined:

"The amended traffic assessment has reviewed the amended trip distribution from the site and determined that the proposal will have an impact on the local road network however more substantial modeling undertaken by the RMS has identified network changes can be undertaken to ensure these signals operate satisfactorily in the future. I am satisfied with the methodology and conclusions adopted in this report and concur with its findings.

The future extension of SH23 is likely to provide additional capacity in the Newcastle Road / SH 23 roundabout which in turn will provide additional capacity within the Newcastle Road / Victory Parade intersection. Therefore this intersection is likely to see improved performance within the next 10 years. No objection to the proposal based on RMS advice provided."

Clause 45 of the ISEPP requires the impact on electricity distribution to be considered for certain developments. There is an overhead electricity distribution and an easement adjacent to the site. Transgrid have been notified of the application and do not consider the development to have an impact upon their infrastructure. On this basis, the provisions of SEPP Infrastructure have been met.

State Environmental Planning Policy No.55 (Remediation of Land) (SEPP No.55)

The applicant submitted a Remedial Action Plan that considered the potential for contamination on the site.

The former use of the site as a brickworks facility raised concern regarding potential contamination of soil and groundwater at the site. Since closure of the brickworks facility the proposed development site was also utilised for storage of surplus soil, rotor mill asphalt and building waste. The proposed development site was also subject to illegal dumping activities.

The Detailed Contamination Assessment revealed the presence of extensive filling across the proposed development site and the presence of an underground storage tank. Soil sampling revealed elevated concentrations of TRH and B(a)P within the fill material and the presence of asbestos containing material. Groundwater sampling was undertaken to assess impacts from the underground storage tank, but no elevated concentrations of contaminants were found.

Additional soil sampling was conducted to assess potential remedial options and the results revealed elevated levels of PAH and B(a)P in the fill material in the central portion of the site, but revealed limited concentrations of contaminants along the access road (known as Tunnel Lane).

Clause 7(1) (b) and (c) of SEPP No.55 require that where land is contaminated, Council must be satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state or will be suitable after remediation for the purpose for which the development is proposed.

The preferred method of remediation is a 'cap and contain' strategy. The proposed remediation methodology includes the excavation of material for basement level carparking areas and the capping of the remainder of the proposed development site.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer supports the strategy subject to a number of detailed conditions including the submission of a Site Audit Report and Site Audit Statement prior to issue of an Occupation Certificate. Once remediated it is considered that the site will be suitable for the proposed land use. On this basis, the provisions of SEPP 55 have been met.

<u>State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 - Design Quality of Residential Apartment</u> Development

A SEPP 65 Statement has been submitted with the application which addresses the nine design quality principles.

The scheme was also subject to comment from the Urban Design Consultative Group (UDCG) with excerpts and commentary of the main points provided below:

1. Context and Neighbourhood Character

UDCG panel - "The proposed development is located in an area to the south of Jesmond Town Centre. It is surrounded by Victory Parade to the east, the Brickworks Park to the south, Ausgrid's regional headquarters to the west, and a combination of light industrial and residential to the north.

The Newcastle Urban Strategy provides that this area has the opportunity to provide housing for the University or nearby hospitals. Located close to major traffic routes, shopping centres and recreational open space, this site is considered to have a high level of amenity."

2. Built Form and Scale

UDCG panel - "The development has been respectful of adjacent developments which are generally single residential properties and provided low scale development around the edges of the site with higher more urban apartment style buildings located in the centre of the site. While these buildings exceed the height limit their location in the centre of the development does not cause any significant issues for neighbours. These buildings are located along a network of vehicular and pedestrian paths linking back to the historic paths of the past and which seamlessly connect the new development to the existing park and to the local street network."

"The balconies of the majority of the apartments enjoy good northern solar access. Balustrades are otherwise proposed to be of either masonry or translucent rather than clear glass. It was suggested that the inclusion of some additional adjustable screening and more extensive solid upstands, would make the balconies more useful for residents while reducing the visual impact of stored items as viewed from the street."

Block D faces onto no. 8 Victory Parade to the north which has habitable room windows facing south, and with a separation distance of 10m (see below) there is a privacy issue between the two properties. To mitigate this impact, adjustable screens and opaque / obscure glazed balustrades are recommended (see condition 5).

Block E faces onto Victory Parade in a north-easterly direction. There are no first floor balconies facing onto the street and given separation distances of 29m between the block and properties on the eastern side of Victory Parade, the impact on privacy is considered minimal.

Privacy screens and glass balustrades have been added to the south facing first floor windows of Block K where these overlook Brickworks Park. This will significantly improve mutual privacy and the solid appearance of the blocks.

Awnings have been provided to windows to the northern, western and eastern windows throughout the site. As well as providing solar shading benefits, this will help break up the appearance of the facades.

3. Density

UDCG panel - "The surrounding area is in the early stages of transition to higher density but currently only two developments have been proposed with increased densities.

Given the very large site the density of the development is less than could be provided. The owner has opted to achieve a return based on a higher amenity of the units with increased open spaces between the dwellings rather than to maximize built form. The panel is supportive of the density proposed."

4. Sustainability

UDCG panel - "The development has been thoughtfully laid out with consideration to the topography and orientation providing most units with good access to sunlight and natural ventilation."

5. Landscape

UDCG panel - "The Landscape Architect indicated that as design development is progressing, opportunities are being identified for volumes within the car park below the extensive podium spaces, which could provide for adequate volumes of soil to support larger trees. This initiative was supported, and the applicant was encouraged to bring forward more detailed landscape plans that identify multiple locations for more substantial areas of usefully scaled trees and large shrubs to reduce the potential barrenness of the podium top areas. Some mounding and variation in the levels of the landscaped podiums were also considered useful in this regard."

Additional tree planting on the podium areas is recommended and a condition has been included on the consent in this regard (see condition 9).

6. Amenity

UDCG panel - "Generally the group was satisfied with the level of amenity being provided within the development with the exception of Block J, the circular group

of buildings. Here the circular layout resulted in buildings facing one another across the central courtyard with the space open in one point only. While adequate distances were maintained, the Group felt that this could be improved by changing the closed circular courtyard to a form which provided more opportunity for progression through the central space. By opening up the courtyard in more than one location perhaps out to the park would give pedestrians the opportunity to pass through this space."

Amended plans were supplied to address this issue and a vertical break was made in the design to include a southern pedestrian link through the site. Glazed lobbies were also provided with access doors from the courtyard to the external podium. This has assisted with breaking up the solid appearance of the blocks as well as providing practical access through the site.

UDCG panel - "Given that this is a large development with 230 units, it was suggested that a convenience shop may be justified to provide the residents with increased amenity. Alternatively given its suburban location, a childcare centre and or children's playground may also be appropriate to be located adjacent to the park and assist in creating a sense of community for the development".

Applicant's response - "Consideration was given to incorporating commercial / retail elements. Due to the proximity of the site to existing facilities (Jesmond) the introduction of services to the broader public would generate additional considerations with regard to access, security and insurance, to which the developer is not familiar and not interested in pursuing".

The applicant's response to this issue is supported by Council as the site benefits from its close proximity to the Jesmond Shopping Centre, which is located within 400m from the site. The Silveridge Community Centre is also located in Iranda Close 40m from the site and Brickworks Park is accessible via a pedestrian link from the site. Due to the location of nearby services and facilities it is not reasonable to insist on the provision of a childcare centre, children's playground or shop as part of the development.

7. Safety

UDCG panel - "The proposed pedestrian and vehicular links through the site connecting dwellings to the existing street network and Brickworks Park provide safe, clear paths for residents with good passive surveillance from adjacent dwellings."

The addition of the southern pedestrian link and the glazed lobbies as discussed above will provide additional passive surveillance on the site.

8. Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

UDCG panel - "The proposal provides a good mix of residential types, with dwellings being of one, two and three bedroom configurations, single level garden units, two storey maisonettes and large 3 bedroom townhouses.

The landscaped areas provide a mix of communal spaces including passive green areas, active spaces and gathering spaces which range from sitting spaces along the pedestrian pathways to communal BBQ areas.

This variety of units and outdoor areas allow for diversity of residents from singles, couples, flat mates, young families or older retirees. This diversity should help create a vibrant sense of community."

Amended plans have been received which indicate an increased amount of street furniture in the communal areas between blocks. This is likely to facilitate additional social interaction between residents.

9. Aesthetics

UDCG panel - "The aesthetics of the proposed development is influenced by the use of brick and the historical association with the site.

The proposal thoughtfully addresses the historic context to provide direction for the aesthetics of the buildings. Along the southern and western edges, a highly articulated built form is presented which has a lighter and more fragmented aesthetic with floating roofs and steel detailing at the upper levels linking the industrial heritage and more domestic scale of development in the Silver Ridge estate. However development to the east takes on a more urban form with shapes inspired by some of the more robust mine workings on the site.

The panel is generally supportive of the overall approach. However, where using urban forms and industrial style finishes, care needs to be taken with large buildings to ensure an appropriate residential feel to the buildings."

Numerical Compliances under the SEPP

A. Separation Distances

For buildings over three storeys, it is recommended that building separation increase in proportion to building height to ensure appropriate urban form, adequate amenity and privacy for building occupants. Suggested dimensions within a development, for internal courtyards and between adjoining sites are:

- up to four storeys/12 metres
- 12 metres between habitable rooms/balconies
- 9 metres between habitable/balconies and non-habitable rooms
- 6 metres between non-habitable rooms

The two residential townhouse blocks, Block E and the flank wall of Block D front Victory Parade have the potential to impact upon the eastern residential properties (no. 9 - 15 Victory Parade). However, the blocks are setback 8m from the footpath and when combined with the street width, there is a 29m separation between respective properties. Accordingly, the impact upon amenity and outlook is considered minimal. Block D is three stories in height and has the potential to impact upon single storey residential townhouses at no.8 Victory Parade. Block D has a separation distance of 4.6m from the balcony to the boundary. The southern facing walls of the adjoining four dwellings are positioned 4.4m from the common boundary and all properties have ground and first floor windows facing onto the subject site. The resultant separation is a variation to the Apartment Design Guide standard of 12m. However, given that Block D is only two stories in height and is located to the south of no.8 Victory Road, the proposed mitigation measures such as adjustable screens and opaque / obscure glazed balustrades (condition 5 of the consent) will minimise any privacy impacts.

B. Size of Units

If council chooses to standardise apartment sizes, a range of sizes that do not exclude affordable housing should be used. As a guide, the Affordable Housing Service suggests the following minimum apartment sizes, which can contribute to housing affordability:

- 1 bedroom apartment 50m²
- 2 bedroom apartment 70m²
- 3 bedroom apartment 95m²"

Additional bathrooms increase the internal area by 5m².

The proposed units all exceed the minimum size requirements for apartment size. These range from 107 - 125m² for a three bedroom unit, 76 - 93m² for a two bedroom unit and 51 - 61m² for a one bedroom unit.

C. Unit Configuration

- Provide primary balconies for all apartments with a minimum depth of 2 metres.
- In mixed use buildings: 3.3 metre minimum for ground floor retail or commercial and for first floor residential, retail or commercial to promote future flexibility of use
- In residential flat buildings or other residential floors in mixed use buildings:
- In general, 2.7 metre minimum for all habitable rooms on all floors
- The back of a kitchen should be no more than 8 metres from a window.
- The width of cross-over or cross-through apartments over 15 metres deep should be 4 metres or greater to avoid deep narrow apartment layouts"
- Every habitable room must have a windows in an external wall with a total minimum glass area of not less than 10% of the floor area of the room

A minimum floor to ceiling height of 3m has been achieved for all apartments. The applicant has stated that every habitable room has a window in an external wall with a total minimum glass area of not less than 10% of the floor area of the room. The back of kitchen distances all comply with the exception of 8 units in Block B, which equates to 3.5% of the entire development. This minor variation is considered acceptable as the units have good amenity.

D. Solar Access

Living rooms and private open spaces for at least 70% of apartments in a development should receive a minimum of two hours direct sunlight between 9 am and 3 pm in mid-winter.

The applicant has demonstrated that 72% of apartments receive at least two hours solar access in mid-winter. However 22% of apartments receive no solar access in mid-winter. The majority of these non-compliances occur in Blocks G and J, which face onto Brickworks Park and have an excellent outlook. Given the otherwise good amenity of these properties, this non-compliance is considered acceptable.

E. Storage

In addition to storage in kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms, the following storage is provided:

- 1 bedroom apartments 6m3
- 2 bedroom apartments 8m³
- 3 bedroom apartments 10m3

At least 50% of the required storage is to be located within the apartment

The applicant has demonstrated compliance with overall storage requirements, although in some cases the 50% requirement for storage within the apartments has not been met. Accordingly, a condition has been placed on the consent to ensure sufficient amenity for residents (see condition 6).

F. Cross Ventilation and Dual Aspect

Sixty percent (60%) of residential units should be naturally cross ventilated.

The applicant has demonstrated that 81% of all apartments are naturally cross ventilated.

G. Private Open Space

- 1 bedroom apartments require 8m² with 2m minimum depth
- 2 bedroom apartments require 10m² with 2m minimum depth
- 3 bedroom apartments require 12m² with 2.4m minimum depth

From the compliance table provided, 19% of the apartments do not meet the minimum requirements for private open space. However, a variation of more than 2m² applies to only 4% of apartments with a maximum variation of 7m². A large number of apartments exceed the minimum requirements for private open space by a substantial margin with 30% of all apartments having at least twice the required size. The overall amenity and design of the units and the extent of communal open space is acceptable and this variation is supported.

H. Communal and Public Open Space

Communal landscaping 25% of the site Communal open space receives 50% direct sunlight in mid-winter

The proposal provided 24% communal landscaping across the site and 79% of the communal open space receives direct sunlight in mid-winter. Given the overall amenity for residents, this minor non-compliance is considered acceptable.

I. Deep Soil Zones

7% deep soil zones for areas more than 1,500m²

The development has provided 23.5% deep soil which complies with this requirement.

J. Common Circulation Spaces

The maximum number of apartments off a circulation core to a single level is eight.

The maximum number of apartments in the proposal of a circulation core is 6, which complies with this requirement.

Comments on SEPP 65

The site has been derelict and in poor condition for many years and the scheme also represents a revitalisation of the Jesmond/ Wallsend area, compatible with the sites post-industrial status.

The scale, layout and massing of the development is appropriate within its context. The predominant use of face brick, with the use of browns reds and creams manufactured at the site, and corrugated metal for roofs, reflects the sites industrial heritage. The use of extensive communal open space and high quality landscaping will ensure an attractive and high quality environment for future occupants.

Amendments to the scheme have provided additional pedestrian access through the largest block, "J", and there have been improvements to solar shading and privacy. The scheme will enjoy excellent access to Brickworks Park and good pedestrian, cycling and vehicular links to Newcastle Road and nearby Jesmond Shopping precinct.

The level of amenity for residents is generally high and variation to numerical compliances is considered acceptable.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Building and Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004

State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (BASIX) 2004 applies to buildings that are defined as 'BASIX affected development', being "development that involves the erection (but not the relocation) of a BASIX affected building," (i.e.: contains one or more dwelling).

Accordingly the provisions of the SEPP apply to the current development proposal. In this regard the applicant submitted a BASIX Certificate (dated 16 September 2015) which list the commitments to achieve appropriate building sustainability. A condition is included on the development consent requiring such commitments to be fulfilled.

Hunter Regional Environmental Plan

The proposal is consistent with the provisions of the Hunter Regional Environmental Plan in providing an opportunity to accommodate long term housing growth outlined in Action 4.1.1.

Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012

Clause 1.3 – Land to which Plan applies

Newcastle *Local Environmental Plan 2012* (NLEP) applies to land identified upon the 'Land Application Map'. The subject development occurs within this area.

Land Use Table - Zoning

The site is zoned R3 Medium Density Residential under the NLEP 2012. The objectives of this zone are;

- 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.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To allow some diversity of activities and densities if:

- (i) the scale and height of proposed buildings is compatible with the character of the locality, and
- (ii) there will be no significant adverse impact on the amenity of any existing nearby development.
- To encourage increased population levels in locations that will support the commercial viability of centres provided that the associated new development:
 - (i) has regard to the desired future character of residential streets, and
 - (ii) does not significantly detract from the amenity of any existing nearby development.

The proposed development is defined as 'residential accommodation' and is permissible within the R3 zone with development consent. The proposal is considered to be acceptable having regard to the objectives of this zone.

Clause 4.3 Height of Buildings

The site has a height control of 10 metres and the application proposes a variation to this standard with a maximum height of 13.379 metres. This variation request is considered below under Clause 4.6.

Clause 4.4 Floor space ratio

The proposal complies with the 0.9:1 floor space ratio (FSR) having a FSR of 0.75:1.

Clause 4.6 Exception to development standards.

Clause 4.3 of NLEP 2012 specifies that the maximum height of the building to be 10m. The heights of buildings on the site vary, up to a maximum of 3.379m above the 10m height plane.

The objectives of clause 4.3 of NLEP 2012 is to:

- (a) to ensure the scale of development makes a positive contribution towards the desired built form, consistent with the established centres hierarchy,
- (b) to allow reasonable daylight access to all developments and the public domain.

Clause 4.6 of NLEP 2012 enables consent to be granted to a development even though the development would contravene a development standard. In assessing the proposal against the provisions of clause 4.6, it is noted that:

- 1. Clause 4.3 is not expressly excluded from the operation of this clause; and
- 2. The applicant has prepared a written request requesting Council vary the development standard and demonstrating that:
 - a) compliance with the development standard is unreasonable <u>or</u> unnecessary in the circumstances of the case, and
 - b) there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard.

The standard is appropriate in the context for which it is intended, being to establish a numerical height control for development that will ensure land can be developed without impacting on the character and amenity of an area, or having unreasonable impacts by way of overshadowing, privacy, loss of views etc for adjoining land. However, the scale and nature of the non-compliance subject to this variation is a result of the characteristics and topography of the site. The size and scale of the development and the considerable areas given to open space, landscaping, movement networks and infrastructure requirements, have also been considered.

The proposed non-compliances do not adversely affect the public benefit of maintaining the standard. In applying the height development standard it is reasonable to take into account the development typology and relationship to the site topography. In this instance the development site is reasonably large, and the topography can be characterised as sloping with inconsistent variation in levels from historical mine subsidence and past land use activities that modified the land form. The site is also reasonably unusual with its extensive frontage to public open space and limited common boundary with existing residential development. The extended frontage to the constrained Ausgrid land to the west and the industrial land to the north restrict potential amenity impacts to and from adjoining land. It creates a valuable opportunity to maximise development in this R3 zone and deliver the objectives of the substantial growth precinct with respect to capitalising on proximity to the Jesmond centre.

The buildings have been located to respect the topography and maximise height / density / FSR in a location that has little external impact. Strict adherence to the height standard would limit the yield and be contrary to the objectives of the local strategy and the NLEP. As depicted on the appended building height plans diagram, the majority of the development is within the height plane.

As detailed in the development application, solar access and overshadowing impacts are minimal and reasonable daylight access is provided to the proposed dwellings. Existing residential development on adjoining land is limited in its extent and there is little adverse overshadowing. This is a result of the fact the adjoining residential properties are either on the other (eastern) side of Victory Parade or to the north of the development so retain good solar access.

The property to the south contains extensive public open space (Brickworks Park). The boundary setbacks and location of facilities in this open space mean there are few adverse impacts on solar access. Land to the west contains an electricity easement and drainage line. The existing commercial buildings (Ausgrid) are set well back from the common boundary and there are little to no adverse impacts. The industrial zoned land immediately north is tilt slab construction built to the southern boundary, so there is no direct interface or opening and hence no impact on its solar access or amenity.

Residential flat buildings (RFB) are permissible in the zone. State Environmental Planning Policy No.65 (SEPP 65) and the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) provide that habitable rooms should have floor to ceiling heights of 2.7m. For a typical design on a sloping site the height would be:

Level	Description	Height (m)
Basement	Fully below natural level or absorbed in slope allowance	0
Ground	Slope allowance	1.8
	Residential floor to ceiling	2.7
	Structure	0.3
Middle	Residential floor to ceiling	2.7
	Structure	0.3
Middle	Residential floor to ceiling	2.7
	Structure	0.3

Middle	Residential floor to ceiling	2.7
	Structure	0.3
Тор	Residential floor to ceiling	2.7
	Roof structure	1.5
	2 Storey RFB	9
	3 Storey RFB	12
	4 storey RFB	15

As can be seen from the table, making allowances for the level changes on the site, a typical three storey RFB would exceed a 10m height plane. Further to this the ADG provides that when establishing building heights for sloping sites the street edges should provide allowances to increase height to facilitate appropriate built form outcomes.

The development standard is considered unreasonable in this regard as it hinders the achievement of the ADG and the broader planning objectives, particularly those prescribed in the Newcastle Strategy that seek housing diversity and higher density housing to reinforce urban centres.

Parts of the site are sloping with uneven transition from mining impacts and modification associated with previous land uses. As discussed above, in the context of RFB design, this has implications for compliance with height planes.

The extended boundary to the adjoining drainage line creates flood restrictions that sterilise part of the land as flood storage. This limits the ability to provide further housing at ground level and the variation to height allows the additional floor space to be provided where it achieves the best planning outcome.

The combination of level change and flooding restrict the ability to deliver medium density housing in the form of RFBs without exceeding the 10m height control. This is evident by the fact that even with proposed variations in height, the site FSR of 0.76:1 is below the allowable limit of 0.9:1.

The circumstances of the proposal are considered sufficiently unique as to limit the potential whereby subsequent proposals may benefit from any precedence and potentially undermine the value of the standard. The case is considered sufficiently unique for the following reasons:

- The site is characterised as a substantial growth precinct.
- The adjacent public open space provides a high level of amenity that would be of significant benefit to residents of medium – high density housing and this development should seek to capitalise on this and maximise housing delivery to take advantage of this.
- The site is in close proximity to Jesmond urban centre with good pedestrian and vehicle connectivity via the signalised intersection at Victory Parade and Newcastle Road.
- A review of aerial imagery and planning controls failed to identify other zoned, vacant infill sites of the size and locational advantage of this land in the general vicinity.

Strict adherence to the height control is therefore considered:

- Unnecessary as the development achieves the objective of Clause 4.3 Height of building in its current form. Strict compliance would hinder the ability of the development to deliver the form and scale of development anticipated in the Newcastle Urban Strategy and would also make no significant difference to the daylight access of adjoining land; and
- Unreasonable as no purpose would be served by requiring modification of the
 development to adhere strictly to the prescribed numerical standard. Strict
 adherence will limit the ability of the development to deliver the housing variety,
 form and density sought through the Newcastle Strategy and the built form
 outcomes in SEPP 65 and the ADG cannot be achieved at the allowable FSR
 while complying with the prescribed numerical standard

An assessment of the variation request has been undertaken and it is considered that the development adequately addresses the matters required to be demonstrated by clause 4.6(3). In addition, the proposed development is in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of the standard and the objectives for development within the R3 zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out.

Clause 5.9 Clause 5.9 Preservation of Trees and Vegetation

A total of 90 trees are proposed to be removed from the site. The proposal involves the removal of a stand of Brush Boxes centrally located on the site and the removal of a stand of Eucalypts in the south-east bounding Brickworks Park.

The indicative landscaping scheme demonstrates at least 126 small and medium trees will be planted throughout the site together with extensive areas of shrubs and three large rain gardens. 13 lemon scented gums, with a mature height of up to 35m, are to be provided adjacent to the southern boundary to provide transitional landscaping to Brickworks Park, with an additional 26 lemon scented gums across the site. Seven "fraxinus urbanite" street trees with a mature of 11m are proposed along the Victory Parade frontage.

These trees will improve the buildings setting and will provide shade for pedestrians. Other significant trees include 60 water gums (mature height 4.6 - 9.1m) and 16 tulips (mature height 20 - 30m). The applicant has indicated an intention to provide more trees of up to 5m height on the podiums of all blocks except D and E, however no details have been provided. It is recommended that additional conditions for more podium trees be included in the consent (see condition 9).

Clause 5.10 Heritage Conservation

The subject site is not State listed or listed for its 'local' significance in Schedule 5, Part 1 of Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012. The site is not an identified archeological site or located within a Heritage Conservation Area.

Clause 6.1 Acid Sulfate Soils

The subject site is identified as containing Class 5 Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS). Accordingly, any works within 500m of Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 require consideration under clause 7.1 of the LEP. As there is no Class 1 - 4 soils within 500m of the site, no further information is required.

Clause 6.2 Earthworks

To facilitate the development, the proposal includes the remediation of the site with consequent changes to site levels to raise the buildings above the flood level. Council's Engineer has advised the development is acceptable subject to conditions and the proposal complies with this provision of the DCP.

5.1.2.2 Section 79C(1)(a)(ii) any draft environmental planning instrument that is or has been placed on public exhibition

There is no exhibited draft environmental planning instrument relevant to the application.

5.1.2.3 Section 79C(1)(a)(ii) any development control plan (and section 94 plan)

The following sections of the Newcastle Development Control Plan 2012 (DCP) have been considered in detail during the assessment of the application.

3.04 Attached Dwellings and Multi Dwelling Housing

The development introduces a compact urban form and provides a good level of amenity for future residents and retains amenity for adjoining landholders. The development represents a more rational use of this larger allotment and provides much needed family homes for Newcastle residents in an area strategically identified to accommodate medium density growth. The scheme has also been assessed under the provisions of SEPP 65 - The Apartment Design Guide (as above) in detail and meets the requirements of the SEPP.

4.01 Flood Planning

This site is flood affected and flood information certificates were issued by Council. The applicant's engineers have used this information to set new building floor levels and basement garage entry levels to satisfy Council's current DCP requirements.

4.02 Bush Fire Protection

The south-west corner of the site is located within a vegetation category 1 bush fire zone and vegetation buffer, due to the presence of bushland within Brickworks Park and on the site. The development does not trigger a referral under section 100B of the Rural Fires Act 2007 and therefore is not considered integrated development. A bushfire threat assessment has been submitted by RPA, with the following recommendations;

- A minimum APZ of 20 metres will be required between future dwellings and vegetation situated to the southeast of the site.
- Future dwellings within the site should have due regard to the specific considerations given in the BCA, which makes specific reference to the Australian Standard (AS3959 – 2009) construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas.
- Roads are to be constructed in accordance with section 4.1.3 (1), PBP 2006.
- Any proposed development is to be linked to the existing mains pressure water supply and that suitable hydrants be clearly marked and provided for the purposes of bushfire protection. Fire hydrant spacing, sizing and pressure should comply with AS2419.1, 2005.

It is recommended that these recommendations form a condition of consent. Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to bushfire constraints (see condition 10).

4.03 Mine Subsidence District

The site is located within a mines subsidence district. A geotechnical assessment has been provided by Regional Geotechnical Solutions. The report identifies substantial mine workings in the south-eastern third of the site and makes a number of detailed engineering recommendations. The applicant has consulted directly with the Mines Subsidence Board and received a conditioned letter dated 25 November 2015.

4.04 Safety and Security

A Crime Risk Assessment has been provided by the applicant. This identifies that the site integrates suitable measures to mitigate crime risk and it has a low to medium low crime risk rating. A number of detailed recommendations have been made and it is recommended this forms a condition of consent (see condition 11).

4.05 Social Impact

A Social Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application. In concludes that the project is considered to provide an overall net positive social benefit. The impacts of the development are mitigated through the design and will be managed through long term government strategies to ensure service and infrastructure meets the growth projections detailed in the policy framework for Newcastle City and the Lower Hunter Region.

5.01 Soil Management

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in regards to the managing of soil impacts on the site and erosion and sediment control measures will be placed on the consent.

5.02 Land Contamination

A detailed assessment has been discussed under SEPP 55 in regards to contamination.

5.03 Tree Management

These matters have been assessed (above) under the NLEP and SEPP 55.

5.04 - 5.07 - Heritage and Aboriginal Heritage

The subject site is not State listed or locally listed for its 'local' significance in Schedule 5, Part 1 of Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012 and it's not an identified archeological site or located within a Heritage Conservation Area. The site is not identified with the AHIMS database as being of significance.

7.01 Building Design Criteria

The matters listed in Section 7 of the DCP (including FSR, height setbacks, open space, solar access, privacy, landscaping and visual impact) have been assessed within the NLEP and SEPP 65 requirements (above).

Noise

In regards to noise impacts, the applicant submitted an Acoustic Report which identifies that the site has the potential to be impacted upon by existing environmental noise sources. This includes traffic noise from Newcastle Road and the commercial/industrial unit complex located at 149 Newcastle Road. The Revised Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Reverb Acoustics dated January 2016 has recommended acoustic treatment of buildings F, G and H to mitigate potential noise impacts for the proposed

residential dwellings. It is recommended acoustic mitigation measures will be addressed by an appropriate condition of consent (see condition 73).

The Noise Impact Assessment has also undertaken an assessment of potential traffic noise impacts from vehicles entering/exiting the proposed development via Victory Parade. The Noise Impact Assessment has demonstrated noise from traffic associated with the proposed development will not exceed the criteria outlined in the NSW EPA's 'NSW Road Noise Policy' for a local road.

Glare

During the notification period, neighbours have raised concerns concerning the potential for headlight glare impacting upon existing residential properties in Victory Parade. There is an 18m separation from the kerbside on the west side of Victory Parade to windows at no.15 Victory Parade. The front garden of that property has an open aspect and a fall of approximately 0.5m to the street. Given the separation and topography of the respective sites, this impact is considered acceptable.

Fencing and Walls

No details of fencing have been provided although it is expected that the majority of the perimeter of the site will be fenced with the exception of the southern boundary of Street A. This open aspect will provide continuity with Brickworks Park. It is recommended that the design and appearance of the fencing be conditioned to have a high quality appearance (see condition 20).

Utilities and Services

An amended waste management strategy has been submitted which indicates that most general and recycling waste is to be located within basement areas in 240L bins. Residents would need to access the basements via stairs, lifts or via the ramp itself. With the exception of Block "J", all waste is to be collected by a superintendent for placement at kerbside for collection. The location of the kerbside collection has been identified and this does not compromise proposed visitor parking.

For collection within Block "J", a small rigid vehicle will be able to enter the basement to load the garbage from the store room near to the entrance, reverse into the aisle and drive up the ramp. A waste storage area has been identified at ground floor level for Block D, residential townhouses. Green waste will be separately collected by a gardening contractor and will be either removed from the site or stored in the vicinity of the manager's office and plant room in Building B.

These arrangements are considered acceptable and recommended to be secured by condition (see condition 12).

Traffic and Access

The proposal provides vehicular access to the site from Victory Parade via a private access road with an exit only (emergency entry only) via "Tunnel Lane" to Newcastle Road. The Councils Traffic Officer advises that proposed access to Victory Parade is supported. RMS is supportive of the development subject to their being a no left turn into "Tunnel Lane" except for emergency vehicles.

The amended traffic assessment has reviewed the amended trip distribution from the site taking into consideration no left turn into the site via Tunnel Lane.

There is the potential to impact on the local road network, however, RMS has identified network changes can be undertaken to ensure that signals at the Newcastle Road / Victory junction improving phasing of traffic movements.

The Councils Traffic Officer further advises the future extension of SH23 is likely to provide additional capacity in the Newcastle Road / SH 23 roundabout which in turn will provide additional capacity within the Newcastle Road / Victory Parade intersection. Therefore this intersection is likely to see improved performance within the next 10 years and no objections have been raised subject to RMS measures being implemented.

Parking

A total of 243 basement car parking spaces have been provided within the site which exceeds the minimum 230 spaces specified in the DCP. In addition, 55 on street car parking spaces have been provided for visitors which exceed the required 46 spaces. 12 motorcycle spaces have also been provided on the site.

A number of bicycle parking locations have been identified. The applicant confirms that residents are expected to store bikes either within their car spaces within the secure basements; within allocated storage areas (basement or internal); or, on balconies and courtyards. In addition, 24 spaces have been allocated to visitor bicycle parking. There appears to be plenty of space for bicycle storage, however, the details are insufficient and a condition of consent is recommended to ensure enough bicycle parking is provided prior to the issue of the Construction Certificate (see conditions 102, 122, 136, 150, 164).

Alternate Transport Modes

A number of buses run along Newcastle Road providing a connection to Wallsend, Glendale, the University, train stations and through to the city centre (Route 226 and 235). Route 231 runs along Victory Parade proving a direct connection between Wallsend and the city centre. The nearest bus stops are located approximately 400m from the site.

As part of the development, a footpath will be constructed along the western side of Victory Parade linking the site with Newcastle Road. There is also pedestrian access through the site to Brickworks Park and pedestrian access through "Tunnel Lane" to Newcastle Road. The Councils Traffic Officer advises that the internal pedestrian linkages are satisfactory.

The site is well serviced by cycle-paths and there is the newly constructed cycle path through the park linking Iranda Grove with Victory Parade.

Newcastle Section 94A Development Contribution Plan

The application attracts Section 94A Contributions pursuant to section 80A(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Newcastle Section 94A Development Contributions Plan. A contribution of 1% of the cost of development would be payable to as determined in accordance with clause 25(j) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (see condition 3).

5.1.2.4 Section 79C(1)(a)(iia) Planning agreements

No planning agreements are relevant to the proposal.

5.1.2.5 Section 79C(1)(a)(iv) the regulations (and other plans and policies)

The application has been considered pursuant to the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* and *Regulation 2000*. In addition, compliance with AS 2601 – Demolition of Structures will be included in the conditions of consent for any demolition works.

5.1.2.6 Section 79C(1)(a)(v) Coastal management plan

No Coastal Management Plan applies to the site or the proposed development.

5.1.2.5 Section 79C(1)(b) the likely impacts of the development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality

These matters have been assessed within the NLEP, DCP and SEPP 65 requirements (above).

5.1.2.6 Section 79C(1)(c) the suitability of the site for the development

These matters have been assessed within the NLEP, DCP and SEPP 65 requirements (above).

5.1.2.7 Section 79C(1)(d) any submissions made in accordance with this act or the regulations

The application was notified and advertised in accordance to the Regulations and 19 submissions and a petition with 33 signatures was received. The following issues were raised in the submissions.

Objection	Comment		
Statutory and Policy The height variations are uncharacteristic, have an impact upon outlook and will set a precedent in this area	The assessment report identifies that the height variations are appropriate within its context (as detailed in the above report).		
 Amenity There is a lack of amenity facilities for residents. Light Pollution from vehicles entering the driveway. 	The assessment report identifies that the development has a high level of amenity and consideration has been made to the impact of light pollution upon residential occupiers, which is considered to be minimal.		
 Traffic and Infrastructure Issues Development will lead to significant additional traffic congestion in surrounding streets which is a danger to vehicles and pedestrians. Victory Parade allows parking on both sides of the street which forces 	Council's Traffic Engineer considers the proposed traffic arrangements to be satisfactory and that the impact of the development can be absorbed by the surrounding road network. In addition, Council's Engineer has recommended upgrades to Tunnel Lane.		

vehicles, particularly larger vehicles, into the middle of the road and other vehicles have to manoeuvre to let traffic past.

- The Victory Parade and Newcastle Road junction is already heavily congested with vehicles backing up southbound along Victory Parade. The development will cause traffic chaos and leads to rat running down the access road at 4 - 6 Victory Parade to avoid the junction
- The development will encourage on street car-parking on Victory Parade.
- Council need to monitor traffic conditions for residential safety.
- Any consent should require an upgrade of Tunnel Lane as this is old poorly constructed road.
- An alternative traffic route has been proposed by residents. In particular, this involved ingress from Iranda Grove through Brickworks Park.
- The development will result in increased pedestrian movement in Victory Parade and there is no pedestrian pathway.

The development includes a proposal for pedestrian pathway to be constructed along the verge to the Victory Parade frontage. This will contribute to increased pedestrian connectivity to Newcastle Road.

The RMS have identified that they are prepared to consider re-phasing the traffic lights at this junction.

Timing

Re-consultation is requested as two weeks is insufficient time to respond in comparison to the length of time the applicant has to respond.

The application was notified in accordance to Council requirements.

5.1.2.8 Section 79C(1)(e) the public interest

The development is in the public interest as it will enable the orderly and economic development of the site.

6. CONCLUSION

Subject to a number of relevant conditions as recommended in the attached draft condition schedule, the proposal is considered to be acceptable against the relevant heads of considerations under section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Hunter and Central Coast JRPP, as the consent authority, approve development consent to DA2015/00906 (2016HCC022) for the construction of multi-unit residential development (230 dwellings) associated site works and site consolidation, at Lot 98 DP 9755, Lot 97 DP 9755, Lot 96 9755, Lot 95 9755, Lot J DP 13401 and Lot 21 DP 807401, 149A Newcastle Road Wallsend, 18 Victory Parade Wallsend, 147A Newcastle Road Wallsend, 16 Victory Parade Wallsend, 14 Victory Parade Wallsend, 12 Victory Parade Wallsend, pursuant to Section 80 of the EP&A Act subject to the conditions in Appendix A; and
- B. THAT those persons who made submissions be advised of the determination.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Recommended conditions of consent

Appendix B: List of documents submitted with the application