

Consideration of lower level apartments

1 Details of the proposed lower level apartments and discussion

- 1.1 The proposal comprises 42 apartments which have a split level design, with their lower level below the adjoining ground levels. This includes 27 apartments along the northern side of Buildings B, C and D which have lower levels and courtyards which are up to 3 m below the new public domain level. This is 8 % of the total apartments. Direct access is provided from the public domain level via an access bridge to each apartment. 15 apartments within Buildings E and F which are located adjoining the internal courtyards also have lower levels and courtyards which are up to 1.5 m below the new communal courtyard level. This is 5 % of the total apartments. The location of these apartments is shown in Figure 1 below.

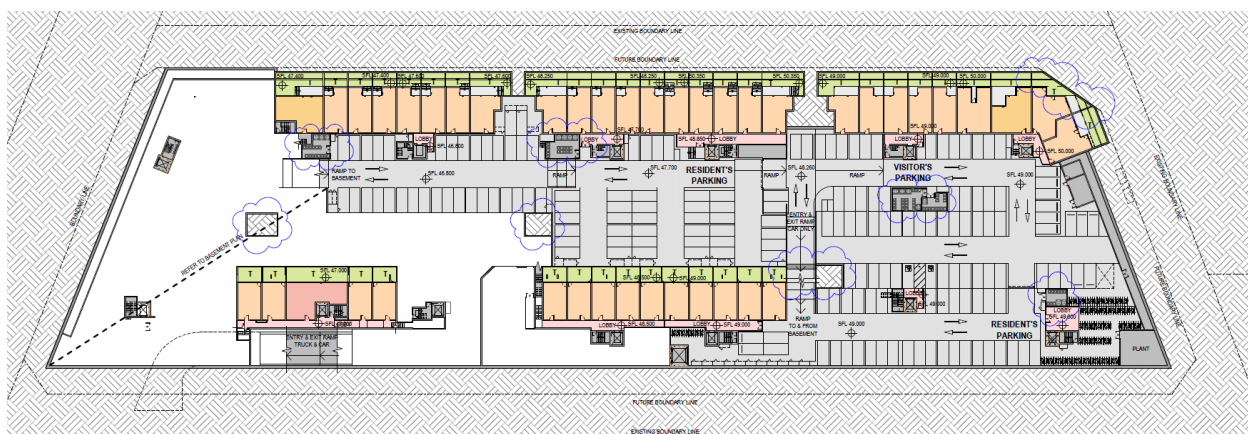


Figure 1: Extract from the Overall Ground Lower Plan, Drawing No. TP01.02, identifying the location of the apartments which are below their adjoining public domain or internal courtyard levels.

- 1.2 The architect's statement submitted in support of this application provides justification for the proposal, and states that the proposal comprises two new typologies as a new suburban way of living, being an urban edge terrace and a private courtyard terrace, in addition to the standard traditional terrace. These forms are demonstrated in the section plan in Figure 2 below.

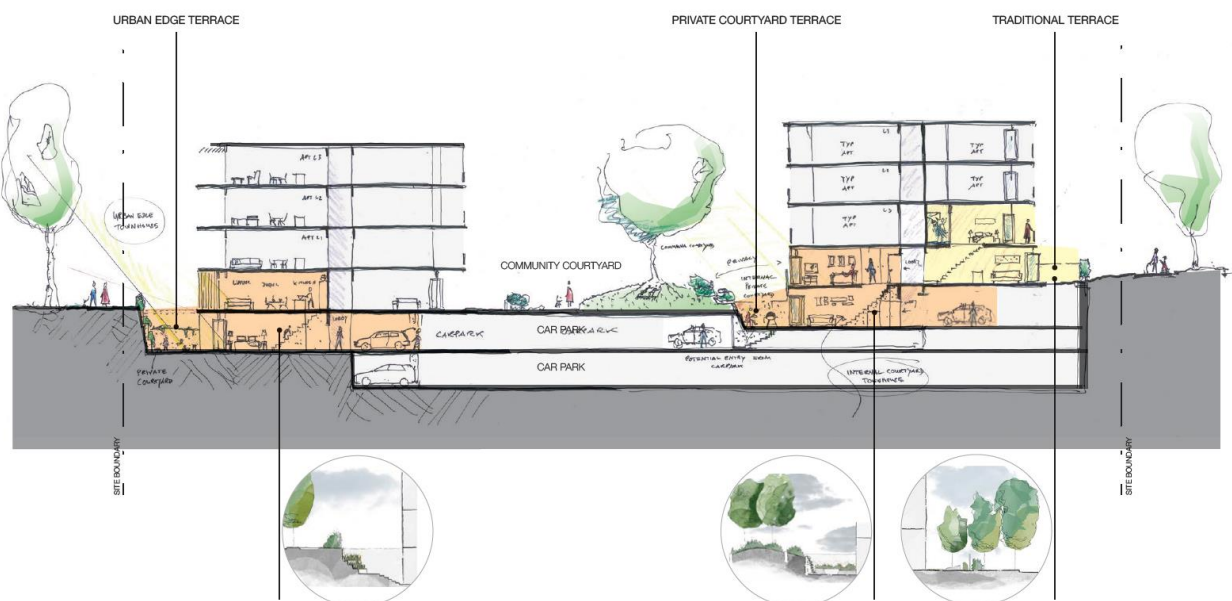


Figure 2: Extract from Section 3 Design Evolution and response from the Architect's Design Report dated December 2016 demonstrating the design intention of the proposed courtyards.

- 1.3 A copy of the Applicant's submission which demonstrates their justification for the merit of proposing 42 apartments with floor levels below the public domain level, including photomontages, is provided at Attachment 8.
- 1.4 Our City Architect has reviewed the application in detail and advises that apartments below ground are typically not supported, however the design of the apartments that are below ground in this development are a specific response to the site constraints and supported for the following reasons:
 - a. The overall proposal is well designed
 - b. The double height unit solution has been well conceived – the units are only proposed where they face north to ensure sun access
 - c. Its inclusion gives amenity benefits, otherwise unattainable (see below)
 - d. Privacy is easily managed (as for ground floor units you would use blinds)
 - e. The courtyards created are more secure and private than ground level courtyards.
- 1.5 The benefit of this overall design is that its basement waste collection solution is better than any other proposal we have seen. It achieves this by shifting what would otherwise be ground level units to replace them with basement ramps within the building envelope. The lost floor area is compensated in the lower level of the two level units. As a consequence the proposal maximises communal open space without having it compromised by a large cut in the site to accommodate a vehicle ramp.
- 1.6 We recognise the solution as a good one and understand why it is different from other proposed or approved Development Applications which seek to add living levels below ground floor level with only commercial motivation as the driver.
- 1.7 It is also noted that the 15 split level apartments within Buildings E and F feature a lower level courtyard which is only up to 1.5 m below the new communal courtyard level, and does not impact on the appearance and the activation of the public domain.
- 1.8 The Applicant has advised that their proposal provides an innovative and high amenity scheme which warrants support. The Applicant also identifies that there is no specific correlation between the areas of height variation and the location of lower level apartments, with some areas of height variation not located above lower level apartments, and conversely there are locations where the development is below the height control but lower level apartments have been provided. The height variations arise as a result of the varied topography across the site and the desire to deliver a part 4 / part 5 storey development in a 12 m height control.
- 1.9 Although the proposed lower level apartments are inconsistent with the direction of Part 3C Public Domain interface of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG), which provides direction for the relationship between levels and the scenarios between apartments and the public domain, we consider this to be a carefully considered design approach which is supported in this instance.