

Detailed information about proposal and DA submission material

1 Overview

- 1.1 This Development Application has been lodged by JS Architects Pty Ltd for works at 249, 259 and 271 Railway Terrace, Schofields on behalf of the owner, Provincial Investments (NSW) Pty Ltd.
- 1.2 The proposed development is for demolition of 2 existing dwellings and structures, dam dewatering, subdivision of 3 lots into 6 residential superlots and 1 residue lot for drainage, public roads, construction of 20 Residential Flat Buildings, basement car parking, street tree planting, landscaping and stormwater drainage works.
- 1.3 The site has frontage to both Railway Terrace and Pelican Road, both being collector roads. Two levels of basement parking are provided across the 6 residential superlots which contain 1,301 car parking spaces. Road construction includes half-road frontage to both Railway Terrace and Pelican Road and 5 internal public roads. Dam dewatering, stormwater drainage, landscaping, street tree planting and temporary OSD is proposed.
- 1.4 Proposed Lot 7 is a drainage-zoned lot, with a proposed area of 7,467 m².

2 Residential component

- 2.1 The proposed development is for 20 x 5-storey Residential Flat Buildings with 1,010 apartments and car parking over 2 basement levels (1,301 car parking spaces).
- 2.2 The 1,010 units will include a mix of studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom apartments. The breakdown is 70 studio, 160 x 1-bedroom, 632 x 2-bedroom and 148 x 3-bedroom apartments.

3 Supporting reports and documents

- 3.1 The following documents were submitted with the proposal:
 - Statement of Environmental Effects which includes the Clause 4.6 variation request
 - SEPP 65 Design Verification Statement
 - Report for decommissioning of farm dam
 - Road and Rail Traffic Noise Impact Assessment
 - Site Contamination Assessment Stage 1 Report
 - Geotechnical and Salinity Investigation Report
 - Civil engineering design plans
 - BASIX certification
 - Arborist report with Tree Survey
 - Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Assessment
 - Survey
 - Accessibility and BCA Compliance Report
 - Building Code of Australia Compliance Assessment Report

- Architectural plans, Issue A dated 3/7/2017
 - Landscaping plans
 - External finishes schedule
 - Quantity Surveyors report
 - Waste Management Plan
 - Traffic and Car Parking Assessment Report
 - Demolition information - a site plan and site investigation report phase 1
 - MUSIC models and OSD design
 - Subdivision plan – drawn by an architect. Several versions of the subdivision plan have been submitted.
- 3.2 On 21 August 2017 an Urban Design Report and a report from the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council was submitted.
- 3.3 On 26 June 2019 amended stormwater and civil drawings were submitted.
- 3.4 On 26 May 2020 plans were submitted which provided amended ground floor and basement plans and a revised subdivision/road reserve plan.
- 3.5 Amended architectural plans were submitted on 21 August 2020 and amended civil engineering plans were submitted on 8 September 2020 and 15 September 2020.

4 Height and scale of buildings

- 4.1 A number of the proposed 20 x 5 storey Residential Flat Buildings exceed the maximum permitted building height of 16 m.
- 4.2 The request to vary from the maximum height of building standard under Clause 4.6 of the GC SEPP is at pages 32-35 of the Statement of Environmental Effects. This addresses the building height of the 20 RFBs and addresses the variation under Clause 4.6 for the maximum height of building standard. Figure 11 shows the “lobby areas that exceed maximum building height” but does not give particulars as to which of the 20 buildings this relates to. At page 34 it states “the structure exceeding the maximum building heights for all buildings are relatively a small portion of area in comparison with the overall building footprint”.
- 4.3 The topography of the site shows that the ground surface falls gradually towards the west to Railway Terrace, with the lowest point of the site being the dam located at 259 Railway Terrace. The elevation is mapped between RL 27 m and RL 36 m AHD.
- 4.4 The elements which exceed the maximum height of building standard include the roof lobbies, lift overruns, fire stairs and the roof structure. The lifts and stairs provide access to the communal open space available on the rooftops.

5 Traffic and parking matters

- 5.1 The applicant has submitted a Traffic and Car Parking Assessment report prepared by EB Traffic Solutions, dated 7 August 2017, with the proposal. This report assessed the existing conditions and provided a description of the proposal. It assesses the development’s car parking requirements, the on-site parking supply required for car parking and bicycle parking, it outlines the carpark layout and the traffic impact of the proposal.
- 5.2 The proposed development is located opposite the railway corridor, with Schofields railway station located 350 metres to the north. The site fronts onto Railway Terrace to the west and Pelican Road to the east. There is a kindergarten on the eastern boundary of the site (Hopscotch Kindergarten) at 46 Pelican Road.

- 5.3 Public transport is available by train and bus connections. The bus route T74 operates between Riverstone and Blacktown via the Schofields bus/rail interchange.
- 5.4 The traffic report assesses a proposal for only 17 residential flat buildings across the 6 lots, with 6 separate 2 level basement carparks. The traffic report refers to the provision of residential parking with a 10% accessible provision.
- 5.5 The total proposed parking provision referred to in the traffic report is 1,287 spaces, whereas the proposal in the SEE refers to 1,301 spaces.
- 5.6 375 bicycle parking spaces will be provided, with 20% of these at ground level.
- 5.7 One to 2 car wash bays have been generally provided in each basement car parking level.
- 5.8 No electric car charging stations will be provided.
- 5.9 The traffic impact of the proposal is for an average of 5 vehicle trips per dwelling per day to be generated, which includes up to 0.5 vehicle trips per dwelling during the weekday peak hours. It is anticipated that the proposal will generate around 100 vehicle movements for Lot 1, 100 vehicle movements for Lot 2, 90 vehicle movements for Lot 3, 55 vehicle movements for Lot 4, 45 vehicle movements for Lot 5 and 115 vehicle movements for Lot 6 during the am and pm peak hours. The directional distribution is estimated to be 80% of traffic exit and 20% enter the site during the am peak hour; and during the pm peak hour 30% of traffic will exit the site and 70% will enter.
- 5.10 The report concludes that the traffic to be generated by the proposal will be minimal and is not expected to adversely impact upon the safety or operation of the surrounding road network.

6 Arborist report

- 6.1 An Arborist report with tree survey was submitted with the proposal, which provides an assessment of existing trees on site and on neighbouring sites.
- 6.2 It is noted that there are 37 trees, including 2 trees on neighbouring properties. Thirty-four trees are required to be removed to make way for the proposal. The 2 trees on the neighbouring properties are to be protected.
- 6.3 The visual tree assessment was carried out by an arborist and a horticulturist. It noted that the dwellings, sheds and fenced off paddocks are located towards the front of the site where native vegetation has been cleared for roadway and sewer work upgrades. 259 Railway Terrace has a large dam at the front of the property. Due to land clearing for animal grazing, there has been left a sparse canopy of medium to tall remnant (Cumberland Plain Woodland) trees and planted ornamentals in poor to moderate condition. Ground cover is mostly Kikuyu and other introduced grasses and weeds.
- 6.4 The report documents the trees which are in good condition and of a high environmental significance, being Tree 1 Eucalyptus crebra (Narrow Leaved Ironbark), Tree 2 Eucalyptus microcorys (Tallowood), Tree 9 Eucalyptus tereticornis X hybridised (Forest Red Gum/Ironbark) and Trees 11, 12 and 13 Corymbia maculata (Spotted Gum group). These are all nominated for removal.
- 6.5 Tree 33 Eucalyptus tereticornis X hybridised (Forest Red Gum/Ironbark) will not be impacted by site development and can be retained. However, as a stand-alone tree with recent trunk damage it is likely to succumb to environmental changes within the next 5 – 10 years (author's comment). This is nominated for removal.
- 6.6 The trees are exempt from environmental controls under the Growth Centres SEPP and the Cumberland Plain Woodland remnant trees are not a constraint to development activities on the sites.
- 6.7 The only trees nominated for protection are the 2 trees located on the adjoining properties, which are trees 23 and 24 (Narrow Leaf Ironbark) located at 239 Railway Terrace, which are to be retained and protected.

6.8 A tree removal plan was not submitted.

7 Landscaping and open space

7.1 The architectural plans submitted with the application provide landscaping plans.

7.2 Communal open space areas are addressed in 9 below.

7.3 The landscape plans for each residential lot are the same in outline and elements provided, and include:

- perimeter planting
- a series of pathways
- barbeque areas located in an intermittent fashion
- turfed areas, which are not able to be easily accessed due to planting to the perimeter
- communal open space located at both ground level and at the roof top levels
- street trees.

7.4 A separate street tree plan with maintenance details for the subdivision has not been submitted.

7.5 The communal areas shown on the landscape plans do not include a diverse range of hard and soft landscaping features. Concrete paving is listed for the driveways. Material details of the paths and congregation areas are not provided. Table and chair settings are shown but no details on design or materiality. No shade devices appear to be provided at ground level.

7.6 There is limited screen boundary planting with some medium hedging plants and lower level planting.

7.7 On the ground level, communal open spaces include small turfed areas that do not have great utility. There are no tree shaded areas. Details of paving for pathways is not provided. There is no use of timber, e.g. areas of decking.

7.8 The rooftop plans, which provide for communal open space areas, show hard paving for the full areas, with bench seats, barbecues and no landscape detail provided. Details of further intended design is not provided.

7.9 Apartments at the ground level within the street setback area have balconies and courtyards and insufficient dimensions are shown on the plans to assess their compliance. Access from the street to these apartments varies in accessibility and legibility.

8 Deep soil zones

8.1 The deep soil zones are shown on the architectural plans. They demonstrate that the deep soil zones provided are quantitatively compliant as they exceed 15% of the total site area, but do not accord with the qualitative requirements of the ADG, as they are located only on the periphery of the lots.

8.2 The bulk of the deep soil zone areas are proposed at the perimeter of the lots. There will be no deep soil zone areas of 6 m by 6 m provided within the central portions of the lots. The landscape drawings demonstrate that larger tree species will only be able to be provided at the periphery of each lots, and larger tree species are not able to be located within the central areas of the site.

9 Communal open space

9.1 The communal open space (COS) requires the provision of 25% of the site area. The COS areas and calculations are shown on the architectural plans. They show that the

minimum 25% of site area required under Objective 3D-1 of the Apartment Design Guide is provided.

- 9.2 The majority of the COS areas are provided on the balconies and on the rooftops. The extent of these areas at ground level ranges between 3.8% and 5.9% of the site area. The extent of COS areas provided through the provision of balconies ranges between 19% and 31% of the site area. The extent of COS areas which are provided on the rooftops across the 20 RFBs on the 6 residential lots ranges between 15.8% and 24% of the site area.
- 9.3 Calculations have not been provided on COS at ground level. The landscape plans demonstrate that as there are no deep soil zones placed within the centre of each lot, it will not be possible to plant large trees to provide shade to the COS areas.
- 9.4 The shadow diagrams demonstrate that the solar and daylight access requirements for the COS areas at ground level is not achieved across some lots on the site.
- 9.5 All apartments above ground level will have balconies.

10 Design

- 10.1 The 20 buildings are contemporary in design and are located across the 6 proposed residential lots. The building form is repetitive, and the articulation and materiality does not provide a high level of differentiation across the development.
- 10.2 The external finishes include render with no masonry proposed. The materials proposed on the external materials schedule include:
 - concrete painted panels in Dulux Dandelion Yellow, Glowing Coals, Effervescent Lime, Lexicon White and Light Grey
 - aluminium imitation external cladding
 - aluminium grey panel privacy sliding screens in white
 - frosted safety glazing for balustrades
 - aluminium grey louvres for external sun shading
 - concrete roof ceiling painted white.
- 10.3 The design as proposed is monotonous and repetitive in form within this emerging high-density neighbourhood.
- 10.4 No landscaping is proposed to either side of the driveways on each lot.
- 10.5 Articulation in the building façades is provided by the use of balconies.
- 10.6 Building setbacks are generally compliant with the exception of the 5th level which does not comply with the ADG setback requirement of 9 m to the boundary and 18 m between buildings (balcony to balcony).
- 10.7 Ground level apartments differ in the access arrangements to the street, with some apartments not being directly accessible.
- 10.8 A Design Verification Statement prepared by registered architect Simon Ochudzawa of JS Architects Pty Ltd, registered architect no. 6865, has been provided, in line with the requirements of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development.

11 Setbacks

- 11.1 The proposal complies with the SEPP 65 setbacks, with the exception of the setback to a number of balconies (4.3 m – 5.5 m setback rather than 6 m setback) and with the

exception of the 5th storeys which are not setback a further 3 m, to 9 m, as required by the ADG.

12 Acoustic impacts

- 12.1 The proposal was accompanied by an acoustic assessment, entitled Road and Rail Traffic Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Rodney Stevens Acoustics, dated 4 August 2017 which aims to address the proposal's amenity impacts in relation to noise.
- 12.2 The acoustic consultant took acoustic readings from the site. In the analysis the consultant refers to the site being located 215 m from the nearest operating railway track, although the rail corridor is adjacent to the site (approximately 60 m).

13 Geotechnical investigation

- 13.1 The Statement of Environmental Effects prepared by Michael Gheorghiu dated August 2017 states that the environmental assessment found that the associated impacts of the proposal are considered to be minimal and manageable.
- 13.2 A report, entitled Geotechnical and Salinity Investigation Report, by Geotesta dated 31 July 2017, undertook soil contamination and salinity assessments. It provided recommendations on the design parameters of the footings and geotechnical parameters to address the non-to-slightly saline nature of the site, and the possibility of the presence of perched groundwater resulting from infiltration of surface runoff.

14 Site contamination and dam decommissioning

- 14.1 The Site Contamination Assessment Stage 1 by Geotesta, dated 30 July 2017, provided a Stage 1 Preliminary Site Investigation that reviewed the current and historical activities on the site and assessed the potential risk of soil/groundwater contamination existing on the land.
- 14.2 The site was mainly used as grazing land with rural residential properties located on 249 and 271 Railway Terrace, and a farm dam and metal sheds located on 259 Railway Terrace. As part of the geotechnical investigation, 6 boreholes were drilled across the site and no fill material was encountered. The site is likely to be underlain by shales and the potential for groundwater movement is likely to be low. The site is not expected to be underlain by acid sulphate soils.
- 14.3 The site is considered to have a low risk of soil and groundwater contamination. However, the site history, desk study and inspection indicate past dwelling construction and activities on the site that have the potential to have introduced contaminants to the site in the form of asbestos as a construction material, pesticides for pest control, and heavy metals. The areas of contamination concern include the dwellings, sheds, dam, and areas of possible cropping or market gardens.
- 14.4 The Stage 1 report concluded that a further Stage 2 environmental investigation is considered necessary in order to determine what, if any, remediation is required to render the site fit for residential use and meet the site acceptance criteria with reference to the residential standard in the NEPM 2013 Guidelines. No Stage 2 site contamination report accompanied the proposal.
- 14.5 A report for the decommissioning of the farm dam was prepared by Geotesta, dated 9 August 2017, regarding the existing farm dam at 259 Railway Terrace and an elevated turkey's nest dam constructed by cut and fill, which was generally filled with rainwater and used to water the cattle. The report incorrectly references the guidelines of The Hills Shire Council rather than Blacktown Council in relation to dewatering requirements. It provides conclusions and recommendations to ensure there is no impact from the decommissioning of the dam such as flooding or other hydrological considerations.

15 Stormwater drainage works

- 15.1 Civil engineering plans were submitted, including drainage plans, together with a subdivision plan.
- 15.2 These have been reviewed by Council's Engineering and Drainage Sections and further amendments were requested. Council has received a number of amendments to the subdivision plan, drainage plan, road plan and civil engineering plans.

16 Waste

- 16.1 The proposal allows for on-site waste collection at the basement level. Vehicular access into the site is from the public roads within the site with collection at Basement Level 1 from the loading bays.
- 16.2 The waste collection service will use a heavy rigid vehicle (HRV) which is 11 m long. The report refers to the requirements of both Bankstown Council (turning circle, clearance and maximum ramp grade) and Blacktown Council (DCP requirements for waste rooms).

17 Storage

- 17.1 The storage requirements are noted on the architectural plans in relation to storage provided at the basement levels for the apartments, waste and bike storage.
- 17.2 Storage for the apartments is referenced on the calculation data table within the plans.

18 Demolition

- 18.1 The site contains sheds and machinery sheds on the northern part of 249 Railway Terrace, 1 dwelling in the south-western corner of 271 Railway Terrace with outbuildings and other structures, 1 dam in the western portion of 259 Railway Terrace, and 35 trees, the majority of which are located on 249 Railway Terrace, as outlined in the tree survey within the arborist report.
- 18.2 Demolition is included as part of the proposal but the complete requisite information has not been supplied, e.g. information and photographs of structures to be demolished, work plan.
- 18.3 The Waste Management Plan includes a section for demolition.

19 Aboriginal heritage

- 19.1 An Aboriginal due diligence assessment prepared by Baker Archaeology dated 3 August 2017 notes that no Aboriginal sites have been previously recorded within the land. Significant Aboriginal sites in the local area are associated with major watercourses such as Eastern Creek and First Ponds Creek. The study area does not occur on archaeologically sensitive landforms. The assessment advised that "All parts of the land were inspected and no Aboriginal objects were identified on the property. No archaeologically sensitive areas occur on the land based on its landform and disturbance".
- 19.2 A letter from the Deerubbin Aboriginal Land Council, dated 18 August 2017, was also submitted. This advised that a representative inspected the site at the time of inspection for the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment, and no Aboriginal cultural materials were found. The Land Council has no objection to the proposed development.