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**Urban Design Statement accompanying a Section 4.55 Application to modify existing DA Consent
2016/17/1 at 27-35 Punchbowl Road, Belfield.**

This statement accompanies a Section 4.55 application to further modify the approved consent to develop a mixed use building at 27-35 Punchbowl Road (**subject site**), and considers the proposal substantially the same from an urban design point of view in terms of massing, streetscape, design, and potential impact as the existing DA consent.

Please refer to the attached Urban Design Analysis & Streetscape Studies for more detailed graphics and analysis of the proposal.

Background

The aim of the Section 4.55 application is to optimise and improve the transition between the development on the subject site and the approved development at 37-39 Punchbowl Road (**adjacent site**), thus improving the overall streetscape of the area and providing a better urban design outcome for the subject site.

The original approved DA design for the subject site, DA 2016/17, was prepared following thorough consultation with Council from April 2015 to January 2017.

At the time of the original DA design, it was understood that it was desirable to provide a 2-storey transition between the subject site and what was at the time the potential future development on the adjacent site. This was in keeping with the Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012 (**LEP**) controls and with Council's vision for the area.

The original DA was approved on 15 June 2017. Since then, a development application for an 8-storey building at the adjacent site has been approved, creating a 3-storey height difference between the two buildings which is not only a poorly resolved transition which has significant detrimental impacts on the streetscape and the subject site, but is contrary to Council's vision for the area.

LEP Intent

The Strathfield LEP presents a series of controls for the Belfield Town Centre aimed at encouraging the redevelopment of the area and transforming a former industrial area into an attractive mixed use boulevard.

Following the same principles used in other parts of the LGA, the LEP controls allow for higher buildings on the corner of Punchbowl Road and Water Street to create a sense of gateway and reinforce the

intersection. The LEP controls therefore allows elements two storeys higher (6 metres) than the adjacent areas, which is 22 metres compared to 16 metres, or 7 storeys compared to 5 storeys.

Despite these controls, Council has approved a 8-storey building on the adjacent site, much higher than the relevant planning controls, which has resulted in a height difference of 3 storeys or 9.20 metres between the approved development on the subject site and the approved development on the adjacent site. This excessive height difference creates a poorly resolved transition and an awkward streetscape.

A better streetscape

The current approved designs for the adjacent site and the subject site present a 3-storey step between the buildings with an unresolved blank wall on the eastern side the adjacent site fronting onto the subject site, which is also visible from the street. In addition to the 3-storey step, the contours of the subject site means that there is an additional half metre drop of the building as the topography falls away from the corner down towards the East.

In order to to create a better transition between the adjacent approved massing and the subject building, the current Section 4.55 application seeks to add one storey as an infill to building A and part of building B on the subject site which will result in a better urban outcome, a more articulated streetscape and a reduced impact of the adjacent blank wall, whilst retaining the prominence of the corner in accordance with the LEP intent.

As shown on the images of the Urban Design Analysis & Streetscape Studies, the current 3-storey gap creates a feeling of separation between the two elements as the difference in scale is dramatic. The additional volume on the subject site proposed by this Section 4.55 application completely transforms the relationship between the two buildings and creates a more consistent and coordinated streetscape that highlights the corner and provides a well considered transition to lower heights towards the east.

The additional volume on the subject site improves the overall feeling of the street whilst not having any significant impact on the perceivable bulk and scale, as the higher building on the corner remains the main reference. From a bulk point of view, the difference is negligible, whilst from a streetscape perspective, there is a vast improvement.

Design.

The design for the frontage of the subject site currently presents a series of four 5-storey buildings stepping down the site to the east following the topography of the streetscape, and designed to create an articulated, stepping streetscape. This articulation creates a transition between the higher density corner to the west of the subject site and the lower density environment to the east of the site.

The proposed changes in this Section 4.55 application follow the same principles and the same breakdown. The changes to the built form are proposed so the western edge abutting the adjacent site is increased by one storey, while keeping the same internal layout and the same façade, materiality and alignment. In this way, the overall appearance and breakdown of the building hasn't been altered and the scale of the elements remain the same.

The overall height of the development has only increased by 300mm in this application, as building D as approved in the original DA is higher than buildings A and B. This means that the overall bulk and scale remains the same.

In summary, the infill volume proposed in this application does not change the composition, scale or appearance of the façade.

As the proposed infill storey presents the same layout as the floors below, with living rooms facing north to the rear and dual aspect layouts, the overall performance of the building in terms of amenity is not affected by the changes. The additional apartments receive plenty of sunlight and almost all of them are cross ventilated.

Potential impacts as a result of this Section 4.55 Application

- **Overshadowing**

There is no significant additional overshadowing resulting from the changes in the massing of the building on the subject site. The additional overshadowing, as shown in the Urban Design Analysis & Streetscape Studies, only affects the frontage of 5 dwellings on the southern side of Punchbowl Road between 2pm and 3pm in winter, however those dwellings will still receive 5 hours of direct sunlight. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the existing street trees located in front of these dwellings, plus the vegetation on the front gardens, are likely to already overshadow the dwellings at that time of the day. Thus, we conclude there are no unreasonable additional overshadowing impacts as a result of the proposed modification of this Section 4.55 application.

- **Privacy and Overlooking**

There is no additional impact in terms of privacy or overlooking. The additional 5 apartments proposed in this Section 4.55 application are facing north, the same as the apartments below, and overlook mainly the subject site and a small part of the adjacent site. However only the area of the adjacent site that can be seen from the apartments is a blank wall with no openings, and as a result no overlooking can occur and no privacy matters will arise. Thus, we conclude there are no unreasonable additional privacy and overlooking impacts as a result of the proposed modification of this Section 4.55 application.

Substantially the same development.

In urban design and architectural terms, the only difference between the original approved DA design (June 2017) and the proposed modification in relation to the interface with the public domain is the infill storey to building A and part of building B.

This proposed modification has no significant presence on the overall scale of the streetscape as the building on the adjacent site will be higher, the overall height of the development has not significantly changed (300mm), and the eastern and northern portion of the building are not proposed to be modified by this application.

The proposed modification has not altered the rhythm, scale, articulation or materiality of the façade, all of which remain substantially the same.

The addition also does not present any significant additional impact in the surrounding areas in terms of overshadowing, privacy and overlooking, which remain substantially the same.

We note that the buildings to the rear of the subject site were amended by way of a previous Section 4.55 application, which was approved by Council on 15 May 2018. Those approved amendments followed the same principles as the approved DA in that they presented the same setbacks, materiality and height as the originally approved building, thus being substantially the same. Council at that time agreed with this position.

As the previous and the current Section 4.55 applications relate to development on different portions of the subject site, and considering that in our view the current Section 4.55 application is substantially the same as the originally approved development, we also conclude that the development proposed in this

Section 4.55 application is substantially the same as the development as the development that was modified by the previous Section 4.55 application

Considering all of the above, we believe that, in general terms, the development on the subject site if this Section 4.55 application is approved remains substantially the same development in regards to design and appearance, while offering a much better urban outcome.

The proposed changes have minimal impact on the surroundings, while improving the overall experience of the boulevard and remains substantially the same as the existing DA consent.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russell Olsson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Russell Olsson
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