

BRIEFING DETAILS

BRIEFING DATE / TIME	Wednesday, 16 October 2024
LOCATION	MS Teams Videoconference

BRIEFING MATTERS

PPSHCC-274 – Port Stephens – DA 16-2023-707-1 – 4A Vardon Road Fern Bay 2295 – Seniors Housing Development (independent living units) comprising 172 dwellings, community centre, recreation facilities, open space, site works and associated infrastructure

PANEL MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE	Alison McCabe (Chair), Roberta Ryan, Tony McNamara
APOLOGIES	Nil
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Nil

OTHER ATTENDEES

COUNCIL ASSESSMENT STAFF:	Emily Allen, Ryan Falkenmire, Kristy Nunan, Bryn Cotterill
APPLICANT TEAM	Alan McKelvey, Chris Old, Michael Rodgers, Andrew Brown
DEPARTMENT STAFF	Leanne Harris,

COUNCIL BRIEFING:

- Overview of the proposal and site.
- 3 RFIs to date – most issues resolvable.
- Site access remains unresolved with various arrangements proposed to date. Council and TfNSW have previously requested all access via Vardon Road. Options proposed by applicant:
 - Left in and left / right out via Nelson Bay Road proposed
 - Amended to left in left out with a slip lane to prevent queuing with traffic lights at Vardon
- Further traffic assessment provided; however, Council is not satisfied that road safety matters have been addressed sufficiently.
- There are broader strategic implications for the future of Nelson Bay Road including duplication of the road (currently unfunded) and flooding and drainage issues and traffic safety matters.
- Flooding – overview of extent of flooding and proposed floor levels and relationship to the PMF with a flood emergency plan prepared. All buildings above 1%. PMF – sheltering on site. Significant warning time for evacuation (days).

APPLICANT BRIEFING

- Overview of development proposal.
- Combined entry is the main change and still to be resolved.
- Comprehensive RFI response submitted in July.
- AHIP still outstanding due to concurrent works by Ausgrid.
- Overview of design changes and revised masterplan and community precinct activation and pathways.
- Site access options:
 - Access from Vardon and Nelson Bay - preferred
 - Vardon Rd only
 - Nelson Bay Road only
- Applicant is seeking a sense of arrival and this will be achieved from the Nelson Bay Road access proposed.
- Applicant exploring options with Defence Housing re a joint approach to signalized intersection on Vardon Rd.
- Additional car parking proposed – concept design only at this stage with amended plans being finalised.

PANEL COMMENTS:

- The Panel notes that the application is yet to be formally amended to reflect the proposed changed site access arrangements. Any amended application will need to include the displacement / replacement of car parking associated with an access off Vardon Road on the golf course site and relationship to existing approvals.
- The Panel need to understand TfNSW's position in relation to the left in / left out onto Nelson Bay Road from a regional transport network perspective, noting that the locality is undergoing significant planned change. The Panel will take expert advice from transport engineers and will seek a briefing from TfNSW if necessary.
- The Panel requires Council to specifically consider and assess road safety impacts. To this end Council should request a road safety audit to accompany the application.
- Other than design and flooding, the key issues for the application are transport, traffic safety and strategic transport planning for this road corridor. The result of these matters will outweigh the applicant's marketing considerations and preference. Council should take a position and complete their assessment.
- The Council need to check their powers for imposing consent conditions regarding the traffic lights verses the need for VPA arrangements. The Council is encouraged to get legal advice to support their position.
- Given the sensitive nature of the land use and vulnerable population proposed the Panel expect a very clear assessment of the flood impacts and flood emergency planning including evacuation processes.
- Panel are keen to deal with the merits of the application and request that the assessment be finalised and the DA be reported for determination as soon as practical.