

Attachment F: Design Review Panel Comments

The below table details the summary of the meeting minutes of the Shellharbour Design Review Advisory Panel meeting (DRP0005/2024 and DRP0006/2024) held for the first revision of the concurrent modification application pertaining to the concept approval and the stage 1 development under the concept approval for the built form, as such both sets of plans were to Council prior to lodgement of the subject application. The table includes comments from the Design Review Panel (DRP), Applicant's response, as well as Council's response.

The amended design is considered to adequately address the Design Review Panel's comments, by way of submission of amended plans or additional information, and also by way of recommended conditions of consent.

DRP Comment	Council Response
Context and Neighbourhood Character	
The subject site's location to the east of the Shellharbour City Centre gives it a pivotal role in the development of a compelling urban edge. Accessed from Wattle Road (identified as a major collector road) the site will create a clearly defined built form edge to the city and has the potential to consolidate city density while transforming the scale and character of this major street. As it transforms from a mere vehicular carriageway to a major residential boulevard, all efforts should be made to increasing Wattle Road's pedestrian amenity, walkability, activation and civic character. While improvements to the built form and the inclusion of open entry plazas between built forms at street level are generally supported, the Panel would also support the inclusion of parallel parking bays (removed at the direction of local authorities), not only to boost drop off potential, but also to increase address and access along this important frontage. The subject site falls steeply to its western boundary, which runs along a drainage corridor on the adjoining site, which is of a similar size and rises up to large scale retail facilities at the top of the hill. Currently accessed from a single entry at the north end of the site, the proposal includes a new north south aligned street and a new entry street at the south, which will provide more direct access to an existing NSW Land and Housing (LAHC) development south of the subject site. While street facing apartments along the newly aligned north south street are commended, more consideration needs to be given to pedestrian movement, including the provision of footpaths (perhaps to the eastern side of the street), lighting, seating, car parking spaces with integrated street trees and so on. The amended northern street – including its rationalised layout and removal of roundabout - while supported in principle - requires more work to establish its capacity	Pedestrian connectivity to be delivered through the development of the site, in accordance with the conditions included within the modified concept approval. Specifically, condition no. 5(h) specifies a 2.4m shared user footpath to be constructed along the entire Wattle Road boundary, with Council Road reserve. The condition to increase pedestrian connectivity, walkability and activation of the site. However, parallel parking bays will not be delivered along Wattle Road. Noting the traffic movement along the road, such parking is contradictory being an informal collector road and or changing the two lanes to allow for parallel parking would increase congestion along Wattle Road. In any case, within the site along Road no.1, 8 parallel parking bays are proposed within stage 1 and further to be delivered within later stages. The stage 1 development reflects the comments provided, as noted parking is proposed along Road no.1. The landscape plans demonstrate consistent tree planting between the internal road and western boundary to depict a high level street tree planting scheme. A pedestrian footpath is also demonstrated on the plans to ensure pedestrian connectivity and movement is enable through the site. A lighting assessment has been completed and street lighting to be proposed for the entire length of the internal access road. The pedestrian link between Precinct L, the immediately adjoining site to the west to be connected via pedestrian paths. The delivery is expected to be completed within later stages as noted within the plans. However, it is noted the proponent to deliver a temporary footpath to then finalise the location when the built form design within Precinct L is finalised.

to address slope and access requirements to the new development as well as the adjacent property (which may require LAHC approval), while providing a comfortable and well integrated pedestrian path to lower levels. The adjacent site to the west is the subject of a large development proposal comprising new streets and built form of up to six storeys - now the subject of Land and Environment Court proceedings. Given the crucial interface of these two developments along crucial infrastructure and the clear capacity for the sites to provide co-ordinated pedestrian/cycle connections as well as high quality shared public domain, greater analysis of this interface is required. The Panel would also encourage greater co-operation with adjacent developers and Council to ensure that urban design quality is optimised and that irrational, poorly considered outcomes (such as parallel streets separated by continuous boundary fencing) are avoided. Such collaboration may lead to vastly superior landscape and ecological outcomes – such as a linear water park at the base of the hill – especially if the adjacent developer were able to remove the boundary aligned street in favour of some increased access from the subject site.	
Built Form and Scale	
As noted above, the focus of amendments to the approved Concept Plan is focussed on Stage 1 of the development, which comprises four buildings at its southern edge, associated parking, streets and landscape. The Panel is generally supportive of all the amendments proposed, including: • increased building separation to achieve ADG compliance; • rationalised street layouts; • rationalised building layouts; • increased light and ventilation to circulation corridors; • introduction of street facing apartments at lower levels; • integration of loading to basement levels; • revisions to COS layout and resolution • slightly amended yield and unit mix While the introduction of plant enclosures at roof level slightly increases building height, the location and integration of such roof features at the height proposed is supported.	The concurrent modification application is approved, henceforth the concept approval modified as determined by the SRPP on 20 May 2025. The stage 1 development application is consistent with the modified concept approval. The subject application demonstrates a compliant solar access and cross ventilation design for the stage 1 units. A complete assessment of the ADGs has been completed, and the development for stage 1 is generally consistent and where inconsistencies with the guide is proposed, they are generally minor and or mitigated through excellent design solutions. The deep soil area remains consistent with the provision specified within the ADGs. Communal roof terraces are proposed on Level 5 of R1 and R3 buildings. The panel note general support for this arrangement, however, questioned the equitable access. However, given the design is for independent living and accessible paths of travels are delivered throughout the site, the design is considered to be equitable for all levels of mobility, and the final product of this arrangement offers greater amenity to future residents.

The Panel commends the Applicant's commitment to comply with the ADG's solar access and cross ventilation requirements; without detailed plans however, the Panel can only trust that compliances currently claimed will be verified at DA stage. It is noted that deep soil quantity has been slightly decreased; again, while the Panel supports the benefits of the reconfiguration of parking levels (especially in terms of street facing units and integrated loading), it trusts that ADG compliant deep soil will be demonstrated at DA stage. While the proposed communal roof terraces are supported generally, equitable access may be difficult to facilitate for seniors residents across such a large site. An alternative design strategy would complement freely accessible and interconnected courtyard level communal spaces with slightly more private communal terraces on each building. While this approach may lead to additional building height to accommodate roof level access and amenities – which the Panel would need to consider on merit - it could ensure that each resident has equitable access and proximity to both communal open space experiences. While the built form appears to rationally address the site's steep topography, concerns were raised at the meeting regarding the steep cliff like gaps between built forms, the resultant-built form scale at courtyard level and the likelihood of some units adjacent to these edges being partially underground. While it was acknowledged that belvedere spaces are a better operational outcome than the currently approved stair access (which given slope and Seniors' use is highly impractical) and early CGI's from courtyard level would suggest that built form is well resolved, it is anticipated that these potential built form, scale and amenity issues will be addressed at DA stage. The proposed four storey scale presented to the site's western boundary and Wattle Street is consistent with the scale outlined in the Precinct Development Strategy. However, in response to the sloping topography of the site, the western facades of building R1 and R3 are six storeys. Fortunately, these facades do not appear to be visible from any location within the public domain. So, the perceived scale of the development appears to remain consistent with the Precinct Development Strategy.	The design of the stage 1 buildings suitably addresses the sites topography and steps the built form to complement the land form and pattern. The steep cliff like gap is noted to be between R1 and R3, which is to be densely planted and uses terrace retaining walls to accommodate the site all. The area is not deemed accessible or available for future residents to access and the design notes there is limited access to the space. Council note the Applicant has considered the commentary, as has Council in the assessment of the stage 1 development and note the built form and scale is consistent with the site, local context, both existing and desired and natural and built fabric, and relevant planning framework, henceforth is aa exemplary design and development for a vacant and inactivated site.
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A view analysis should be provided from Benson Avenue and the playing fields to the west of the site, to assist in providing a clear understanding of the perceived scale of the development.	
Density As a result of the proposed amendments, the proposed GFA appears to have decreased by 79sqm, despite the yield increasing from 141 to 152 units. This would suggest that the design process has allowed for significant efficiencies being introduced, which is a hallmark of good design. With no changes currently proposed for future stages, it infers that the overall project's overall yield has increased. Provided that it complies with LEP and DCP requirements (such as built form, setbacks, height, parking, contributions etc.) the Panel has no concerns for such an outcome.	The concurrent modification sought to redistribute the GFA, increasing the floor space area within the stage 1 portion of the site. The subject development application is consistent with the modified concept approval, and the proposed GFA remains compliant. The LEP and DCP development standards for GFA are superseded by the modified concept approval, which permitted a total GFA of 45,800m. The proposed development does not exceed the permitted GFA. Similarly, the setback, heights, dwelling yield and parking are aligned with the modified concept approval.
Sustainability While specific sustainability commitments were not discussed at the meeting, the proposal's passive design appears to have been boosted by improved built form layouts, increased building separation, increased natural light and ventilation to typical lobbies and the interconnectivity and breeziness of communal courtyards. As ADG solar access, cross ventilation and deep soil compliances are essential contributors to sustainability, they will need to be confirmed at DA Stage. To achieve Design Excellence however, the applicant must demonstrate sustainability initiatives that exceed minimum requirements. To this end, an ESD (Ecologically Sustainable Development) Report could accompany the proposal, outlining how well considered sustainability measures are fully integrated into the proposed development, including: • Photovoltaic power generation for at least all the Communal areas within the project. • Stairs designed to encourage residents to use them in preference to lifts for lower levels (consider direct access from lobby, daylight, attractive stair door or electronic opener, visual connection to stair from circulation). • Electric charging stations provided at basement levels for car parking and e-bicycle storage areas. • Water storage and collection for irrigation purposes.	A complete assessment of the ADGs has been completed and found within Attachment B. The solar access, cross ventilation and deep soil is compliant. The proposal is classified as a BASIX building, and therefore considered under the <i>SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022</i> legalisation. The proposal is consistent with the thermal comfort and performance, water and energy use. EV charging is proposed within the basement, large tree planting is proposed evenly throughout the Stage 1 area, a variety of paving styles have been included and well-lit lobbies that are expected to receive natural ventilation have been demonstrated on the plans and in the design. The landscape plan to be updated to feature endemic species to offset the tree removal. Council is satisfied the proposed development employs sufficient sustainable practices and procedures.

• Provision of large-scale canopy trees within deep soil zones. • Use of permeable pavement in communal open spaces, and limited use within deep soil zones if required. • Encapsulation of substations. • Light and natural ventilation to lobbies and corridors. • Details of building construction and materials to demonstrate the minimisation of the project's carbon footprint. • Use of local endemic species to increase the biodiversity value of the development. • Introduction of WSUD to retain and use as much water on site as possible.	
Landscape The proposed landscape design for the development has not been developed at this stage. The following comments should be considered as the landscape design is revised: • Rooftops are a chosen destination and as such should provide additional, not principal COS. This appears to be the case on this development. It must be demonstrated how equitable access will be provided if only some, not all, buildings are provided with a rooftop. Ideally all should have a similar condition so access is simple and equitable. • The significant levels difference from Wattle Road into the development needs careful consideration to avoid the central space feeling cavernous, deep and disconnected. While terracing is an obvious solution, how this is done will add or detract from the quality of the spaces produced. • Likewise the 1.5m level difference across the internal courtyard spaces needs to be carefully considered. It appears that a large, relatively level lawn is to be provided outside the communal rooms. This would suggest the level difference is taken up further west and via walkways and ramps. The previous scheme used a lot of space to achieve these level changes, via ramps within gardens. This may be appropriate if usable space is not diminished or compromised or reduced. • The previous COS had many similarly-sized spaces. While there was a broad range of program (which should continue to be delivered) there was a lack of larger open space. In the revised	
	Councils Environment Officer has considered the proposed landscape design in relation to offset planting. The design is considered to suitably facilitate the necessary additional planting to be completed. Rooftop COS is deemed equitable in terms of access, and are considered to be supplementary spaces for future residents to enjoy, providing an alternative COS in conjunction with the ground floor COS. The ground floor COS completed is to be generally flat and of an accessible design, that connects the site and buildings. The orientation of all stage 1 buildings are noted to look inward into the centre, being the green heart of the development. The levels of the COS noted to be generally flat, forming a useable and practical space for residents. The deep soil zones are noted to be dispersed throughout the site, largely located parallel to the east and west boundary which supports the street tree planting design proposed within these spaces, and thus the tree planting success and viability. The existing trees within Councils Road reserve along Wattle Road are to be removed, as per conditions within consent, as such the oddly spaced design to be resolved.

scheme a larger variety of spaces catering for both active and passive, group and individual use, would be encouraged. • Consideration of how DSZ can be distributed, via a reconsideration of the carpark, is encouraged. The NS grove of palms may not require too much soil, however large canopy trees complementing this grove, and spread into other parts of the site would be beneficial. • The streetscape of Wattle Road has several oddly spaced existing trees. It would be great to see a resolution for this streetscape that respects these groupings and perhaps continues this pattern, or at least integrates new plantings with it.	
Amenity As noted above, the proposed amendments, including improved built form layouts, increased building separation, increased natural light, and ventilation to typical lobbies appears to increase Stage 1's amenity generally. In addition: • entry plaza spaces at upper levels will greatly enhance streetscape, pedestrian quality and individual building address at Wattle Road level. • street facing apartments will greatly enhance street amenity along the west facing frontage. • the new southern connecting street is yet to demonstrate its capacity to address slope and LAHC access requirements, while facilitating comfortable pedestrian movement to lower levels. • the interconnectivity and breeziness of communal courtyards appears to enhance open space amenity. • the provision of club facilities at courtyard level appears to provide appropriately scaled, sun lit and accessible facilities in an ideal location (to be detailed at DA Stage). • the integration of loading facilities within basements is commended. • ADG solar access, cross ventilation and deep soil compliances will need to be confirmed at DA Stage. • the strategy to expand the ability for the development to accommodate ageing in place is commendable. This appears to have been facilitated with meaningful refinements to unit layouts in addition to the commitment to provide home care services to all residents.	The proposed design is considered reflective of the commentary, and Council note the amenity of stage 1 to be a high-level design and present a pleasing outcome for the site and for the future residents who are to occupy the site. The built form suitably addresses and articulates Wattle Road, the entries are legible and well defined, so much so the roof pattern is representative of this. The street facing apartments achieve a suitable balance between activation and privacy, with 50% of the balconies behind the built form, residential component. In reference to the southern portion of Road No.1 has the capacity to accommodate the slope, and Council Engineers have considered the gradients. The communal courtyard promotes the breeziness referred too, being a linking area, which is anticipated to be continued throughout later stages of the development. The club facilities within R3 are a considered feature, and enable greater variety to residents that are to occupy stage 1. The club room promotes community and connection, which as research suggests is imperative in for seniors. Council is pleased with the amenity. The design demonstrates CPTED matters have been considered, which also enables a high level of amenity.

Diversity and Social Interaction	
While it has slightly changed, the Panel supports the amended dwelling mix as proposed. The Panel supports the arrangement of communal courtyards generally, including their access and interconnectivity, scale and character and integration of club facilities. As noted above, the panel encourages the Applicant to consider complementing the communal courtyards with slightly more private communal terraces to each building.	The amendment in dwelling mixology is representative of the changing market and social demands. Affordable housing options are also noted, to cater to all demographics within the classification of a 'senior'. Council concur with the DRP commentary, and believe the overall design and proposal is a high-level design, allowing for functionality and usability both with private residential spaces and COS areas. The COS area is noted to be considerably private, without being isolating and hindering passive surveillance.
Aesthetics	
The reference images and CGI's provided, while preliminary, would suggest that the proposed built form's overall massing, form, articulation is well considered and based on a site specific approach to architectural expression and language. Rather than changing the materiality and expression from building to building, the use of a common palette is an appropriate response to the new precinct on such a prominent site. Council's built form controls encourage a three-storey form with a recessive upper level (total 4-storeys) to Wattle Street. The current proposal is largely consistent with this control, with the exception of four storey forms that have been developed on the corners of buildings. As the four storey forms assist in identifying clear and legible building entries, they are supported by the Panel. A larger scale detail section would assist in providing a better understanding of the quality of finishes being proposed and also help to ensure that the architect's design intent is realised. All proposed screens and balustrade should be detailed (materials, finish, opening sizes etc). Servicing of the building must be considered and accommodated within the DA drawing package. The location of service risers, car park exhausts, AC condensers, down pipes and fire hydrant boosters should be accommodated. Consideration must be given to both materials and the integration of services.	The built form and scale is complementary to the site and established built formation within the Shellharbour City Centre. The proposed external materials and colours add visual interest and expression to Wattle Road and the City. The variety in materials, textures, colours and use of landscaping elements create a cohesive architectural presentation, that will positively enhance the area and precinct. The built form matches and reflect the site fall and pattern in a manner that does not create a bulky mass. The storey presentation and design of the upper level storey of all buildings creates a uniform pattern, with clear entry points. Sections, and external colour palettes have been included to assess the interface and presentation along all elevations and aspects. The use of screening, varied materials, window design and glazing assist with the observation and articulation, adding to the vertical imagery. The services associated and required to support the proposed development are integrated and well concealed to not detract from the aesthetics and presentation.
Recommendations	
The Panel encourages further refinement and additional detail regarding: • layouts of units and lobbies at all levels. • landscape quality of all courtyards and communal terraces.	Council acknowledge the design suitably reflects the commentary and advice provided by the DRP. It is noted the scope and design has been refined and amended in a manner that suggest great consideration has been employed.

• equity and access to communal terraces. • Internal amenity of individual apartments. • the demonstration of ADG solar access, cross ventilation. And deep soil compliance. • materiality and expression. • all interfaces with public domain. • the layout and provision of the proposed Club facility. • The provision of a view analysis. • the provision of detail sections through building facades.	Applicant response below acknowledges the recommendations. Council note the design is compliant with relevant planning instrument and development provisions, and is aligned with modified concept approval. The scope is a positive development for the site, having been vacant for a considerable amount of time, thus the development will enliven the site and provide housing to an important demographic within the Shellharbour Community.
Applicant Comment A meeting with the Design Review Panel (DRP) was held on 30 October 2023. During the meeting the proposed design and development was discussed and the DRP identified opportunities for further refinement and additional detail regarding: • Layouts and internal amenity of units and lobbies at all levels • Landscape quality of all courtyards and communal terraces • Equity and access to communal terraces • ADG solar access, cross ventilation and deep soil compliance • Materiality and expression • Interfaces with public domain • Layout and provision of the proposed club facility • Provision of a visual analysis • Provision of detail sections through building facades • All of the above matters have been considered and addressed as part of this DA.	