

## Randwick Design Excellence Panel Endorsed Recommendations

<b>Item</b>	3	<b>Date of report</b>	May 2020
<b>Address</b>	Meriton Little Bay Cove Planning Proposal, <b>LITTLE BAY NSW 2036</b>	<b>Application no.</b>	RZ/4/2019
<b>Date of meeting</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2020		
<b>Panel members</b>	Michael Heenan (Chair), Richard Nugent , Jonathon Knapp (abstaining)		
<b>Council staff</b>	Terry Papaioannou		

### INTRODUCTION

Attached is a copy of the minutes relating to this SEPP 65 meeting.

The Panel's comments are intended to assist Council in their design consideration of an application against the SEPP 65 principles. The absence of a comment under a head of consideration does not imply that particular matter to be satisfactorily addressed, more likely the changes are suggested elsewhere to generate a desirable change.

Your attention is drawn to the following;

- SEPP 65, including the 9 Design Quality Principles and the requirements for a Qualified Designer (a Registered Architect) to provide Design Verification Statements throughout the design, documentation and construction phases of the project.
- The Apartment Design Guide, as published by Planning NSW (July 2015), which provides guidance on all the issues addressed below.

Both documents are available from the NSW Department of Planning.

#### **Note:**

*The Design Review Panel is appointed by the NSW Minister for Planning, on the recommendation of Council. The Panel's written and verbal comments are their professional opinions and constitute expert design quality advice to Randwick Council, the architect and the applicant.*

1. *To address the Panel's comments, the applicant may need to submit amended plans. **Prior to preparing any amended plans or attending additional Panel presentations, the applicant MUST discuss the Panel's comments and any other matter that may require amendment with Council's assessing Planning Officer.***
2. *When addressing the Panel's comments by way of amendments, if the applicant does not propose to address all or the bulk of the Panel's comments, and wishes to make minor amendments only, then it should be taken that the Panel considers the proposal does not meet the SEPP 65 requirements. In these instances it is unlikely the scheme will be referred back to the Panel for further review.*
3. *In this report it is noted that the proponent has lodged a rezoning application which includes some considerations other than those outlined in SEPP 65 and commentary has been made as appropriate.*

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### **PANEL COMMENTS**

This Planning Application proposes changes to the FSR and height for the site that will result in approximately 1,909 new dwellings, a local centre with provision for a supermarket, retail, medical centre, gym, childcare centre and possible hotel and dedication of a total of approximately 3.3 ha of open space (including the current constructed open space on the site). No changes are sought to the boundary of the E2 Environmental Conservation land containing Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS).

The Panel acknowledges the importance of understanding the site in a strategic context, but is obliged to limit its comments to design aspects and attributes of the site area included in the Planning Application.

This is the second time the Panel has reviewed this site, and is familiar with the site and the surrounding area. The urban designer for this project is PTW and the proponent is Meriton. The Panel has been requested to review the plan on its own merits and not as a comparison to the previously submitted design by SJB.

The Panel has addressed its comments in terms of additional information required to better understand the proposal and its impacts, the layout of the proposal itself, and the intensity of the density proposed. These are interrelated and are noted as such below.

### **Principle 1: Context and Neighbourhood Context**

The site is located to the east of Anzac Parade just to the north of the recently developed residential area of Little Bay. The site is in single ownership and consists of approximately 12.3ha in total developable with an established open space framework consisting of a local park and E2 Environmental Conservation Area. Just to the north of the site is area zoned R3, Medium Density Residential, containing a LAHC estate. It is anticipated that this estate may be redeveloped consistent with LAHC's strategy to create integrated precincts of market rate housing coupled with state sponsored housing. North of this is the Long Bay Correctional Facility which may be redeveloped over time, however no time frame has been established for this transition.

Surrounding these large landholdings is a fairly continuous fabric of low density residential development consisting of single family homes mixed with occasional small scale residential flat buildings. This area is located in close proximity to the coast with recreation and open space uses. The site directly abuts The Coast Golf Club which extends eastward from the E2 zoned lands with an uninterrupted view to the water. This portion of the coast line contributes to an uninterrupted green area that reaches to Cape Banks and around the peninsula to Botany Bay.

Recent development has occurred to the south of the site and to the west of the site along Anzac Parade as part of an earlier redevelopment of the Prince Henry Hospital site.

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### Principle 2: Scale and Built Form

Allowable heights vary from block to block and range from 18 metres at Anzac Parade to 8 metres across eastern blocks. The surrounding areas are generally 9.5 metres allowing for three storey buildings. This planning proposal shows building heights that greatly exceed allowable. They have, in part, been based on long term speculation as to the certainty and location of transport improvements.

In the proposal the current central open space on the site has been retained and sets up a mediating zone between the western, or urban neighbourhood, and eastern, or coastal neighbourhood, portions of the site. These neighbourhoods have been linked with a central spine that ties the retail centres of each neighbourhood, across the central open space, to the coast through a new wedge shaped open space in the east. The Panel feels that the overall site structure plan is supported with comments noted below.

Proposed heights reach up to 18 storeys on the western portion of the site and up to 12 storeys on the eastern portion of the site tapering down towards the coastal open space edge with 2 storey terrace houses. The highest massing, in the western portion, is centred within the precinct and tapers down to the precinct edges with 9 storeys facing the development across Galaup Street and 2 storey terraces facing a similar building type to the south. A scale change occurs north of these terraces across Solarch Avenue where the proposed massing steps up to 6 – 8 storeys. Recent development to the west and south of the site reaches 5.5 storeys.

Although the strategy for managing scale has merit, with additional height towards the western portion of the site, the Panel feels that overall heights proposed, as driven by the development intensity, are incompatible with surrounding development and result in unacceptable outcomes. A limited number of visual impact images have been provided to demonstrate the impacts of the proposed massing and the Panel would like to see additional viewpoints to better understand the proposal and its impacts. Long distance views from surroundings and close views from adjacent streets and opens spaces should be provided.

A variety of building types have been proposed and this provides some relief in the distribution of scale across the site, however the overall streetscape experience is that of multi-unit blocks. The smallest blocks in the coastal neighbourhood already reach the height of the tallest buildings in the surrounding Prince Henry development. This suggests that the scale change proposed is an order of magnitude greater than what would be considered contextually appropriate.

Proposed changes to the street configuration are acceptable and will allow greater flexibility in the development. The Panel would like to see a greater emphasis put on the integration of the proposed street layout and structure plan with developments to the north and south. The structure plan indicates a potential coastal link to the north and a corresponding gesture should be made to the south.

The Panel questions the appropriateness of the configuration of lots in the southeast of the proposal as these do not appear to have identifiable street addresses and would result in a considerable amount of built form and private gardens directly abutting parkland.

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### **Principle 3: Density**

The proponent previously noted that the Land and Environment Court in December 2009 granted development consent to a Stage 1 Master Plan across the site comprising an FSR of 0.5:1 including varying residential building forms ranging in height between 2 - 6 storeys. Current net FSR controls vary from block to block and range from 0.5:1 to 1.5:1. An overall FSR of 2.0:1 has been proposed across the site which quadruples the current allowable amounts. Net FSR calculations have not been provided.

The implication that the site forms part of the Anzac Parade corridor with long term future transport improvements are under study is not sufficient justification for an up zoning of this scale at this time. This substantial increase in density results in excessive building height and bulk. Additional visual impact images would be needed to further understand this outcome. Galaup Street, which has existing buildings of 5.5 storeys, would face buildings up to 15 storeys for a significant portion of the street frontage. Proposed 2 storey terrace houses on Solarch Avenue would face buildings of up to 8 storeys with 13 – 15 storey portions of buildings just beyond.

### **Principle 4: Sustainability**

No detailed information has been provided. This is not relevant for this assessment and the Panel reserves comment on this Principle.

### **Principle 5: Landscape**

The landscape strategy maintains the current central open space and provides additional open space to total approximately 3.3 hectares. The existing neighbourhood park along Solarch Avenue has not been retained. A variety of new smaller neighbourhood parks have been proposed as corridors between buildings, in a building courtyard configuration and as a new wedged shaped open space reaching from the coastal neighbourhood centre to the open space of the coast beyond. The Panel supports the gesture of bringing the open space experience into the heart of the scheme and the east/west link that draws movement between Anzac Parade and the coast. A more legible public space, as opposed to the landscaped street corridors illustrated, would help define the identity of the urban neighbourhood. The Panel reserves further additional comment on this Principle.

### **Principle 6: Amenity**

Shadow diagrams have been provided which show minimal shadow impacts on the development at Little Bay to the south however it is unclear how solar access is achieved for the designated public places within the proposal itself. Most high-rise tower forms have an E/W orientation that suggests that ADG solar access requirements may be met however it was noted the orientation of the grid may make compliance challenging. Other aspects of the ADG, such as cross ventilation have been only demonstrated at a high level and the Panel reserves further comment on this Principle.

### **Principle 7: Safety**

Streets provide passive surveillance. Additional consideration needs to be given to the configuration of the public domain where built form directly abuts open space. Clear pathways and sightlines need to be maintained in order to ensure that CPTED principles are embedded in the design.

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### **Principle 8: Housing Diversity and Social Interaction**

While this is a Planning Proposal only and does not provide details regarding architecture, a greater variety of building and residential types should be considered along various streetscapes, perhaps defining the central open space, as demonstrated in the Little Bay development to the south.

### **Principle 9: Aesthetics**

No detailed information has been provided. This is not relevant for this assessment and the Panel reserves comments of this Principle.

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel supports the site strategy that defines two characters, an urban neighbourhood and a coastal neighbourhood, connected by a pedestrian spine that links Anzac Parade to the coast. Additional information is also required for the Panel to fully understand the implications of the proposal. The above notwithstanding, The Panel feels that the proposal needs significant reworking as the scale, bulk and height of the proposed built form exceeds what would be acceptable on this site.

Consideration should also be given to rationalising the site so the all development lots are provided with appropriate street addresses and legible public accessways define the interfaces between development parcels and public spaces.

The Panel would like to review this proposal again should it be modified.