

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Abercrombie Precinct Student Accommodation

Principle 1: Context

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context can be defined as the key natural and built features of the area.

The subject site is located between the Darlington primary school and the proposed Sydney university business school redevelopment with street frontage to Abercrombie street. The project site has a site area of 1877m² with site boundary dimensions of 77.7m x 28.7m.

The proposal is setback three metres from the Abercrombie street boundary and 6m from the adjacent proposed university business school buildings. Open landscaped areas separate the proposal from business school.

The site is currently occupied by the University of Sydney building H09 child care centre. This building is a single storey brick building setback from the streetscape with secure fencing and pedestrian access only from Abercrombie Street. The existing university buildings Along Abercrombie street in addition building H09 have also been proposed for demolition as part of the universities Abercrombie redevelopment.

The predominant built form along the southern side of Abercrombie Street adjacent to the proposed student housing is privately owned 2-3 storey residential terrace houses. Within the same block along the northern side existing buildings include the university buildings and the Darlington public school.

The proposed mixed use development includes university offices and administration at ground level, a communal dining hall facility and the lobby to the accommodation. Three stories of student accommodation sit above the ground plane with a communal open terraced landscaped space and small apartment.

The transparent and porous nature of the ground plane allows for good visual and physical connections between the proposed campus facilities the ground office and communal areas and the active streetscape. The student accommodation levels contain a layered operable facade screen to control views, privacy and environmental performance requirements between the project and the context while responding to the finer grain of the adjacent residential terraces. The open terrace level above provides amenity to the occupants through landscaped open space that retains views to the distant cityscape with northern solar access.

The proposed mixed use residential development is in keeping with the current context of the surrounding sites being both a combination of residential and communal facilities. The proposal seeks to raise the value of the site by creating a well articulated and rich building that will enhance and develop the positive characteristics of the existing streetscape and broader context while looking towards the future possibilities of the area.

Principle 2: Scale

Good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings.

The proposed building has a maximum height of 14.5m above street level measured to the top parapet of the roof terrace. The project is setback 3m from the street boundary continuing the existing setbacks of the streetscape.

The proposed built envelope is articulated as a porous and transparent communal ground plane with a lightly screened student housing building above. A small apartment at the terraced roof level is setback so as not to be read within the immediate streetscape.

The building seeks to develop a transitional building typology between the proposed University business school and the residential grain of Abercrombie Street and local context. This is achieved through the continuation at ground level of the existing communal facilities, allowing porous pedestrian access to and from the proposed business school and through developing a fine residential grain that will complement and enhance the existing Abercrombie street terraces.

Principle 3: Built Form

Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the buildings purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and manipulation of building elements.

The built form responds both to the current contextual requirements while also responding to the envisaged future character of the locality. Furthermore the building envelope has been carefully considered with the amenity of the existing adjacent built forms. The proposed envelope has no negative impacts with no significant loss of views, vistas or over shadowing to surrounding buildings.

Principle 4: Density

Good design has a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields [or numbers of units or residents].

There is a current lack of onsite student accommodation provided at the University of Sydney. This proposal seeks to provide a necessary medium scaled accommodation facility that responds and develops the character of the surrounding residential buildings.

20 parking spaces have been allocated within the proposed new business school basement parking. This provides the required council parking numbers while not adding any additional parking to the existing streetscape.

The proposal provides the following:

Above Ground

Apartment [1 bedroom]	96
Communal	3

Ground:

Administration	4
Visiting Academics	4
Reception/Lobby	1
Kitchen	1
Library	1
Dining Room	1
Communal	1

Parking:	10
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The density responds to current demands for onsite student accommodation while also providing an important population for surrounding business and public/communal facilities.

Principle 5: Resource, energy and water efficiency

Good design makes efficient use of natural resources, energy, and water throughout its full lifecycle, including construction.

The proposal embodies excellent passive systems of sustainable design such as:

- 50% of units face north, allowing living spaces to optimise solar access, reduce heating and artificial lighting.
- Proposed selection of low embodied-energy materials.
- Sun-Screening devices to reduce solar gains and increase control of the internal environment against late afternoon sun.
- Fully operable facades to allow for good ventilation to all apartments.

Principle 6: Landscape

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in greater aesthetic quality and amenity for both the residents and for the public domain.

The student Housing accommodation landscape area provides various opportunities for passive recreation including open lawn space, quiet seating areas and a communal bbq facility, this courtyard will provide both respite and social interaction for resident students. The courtyard is accessible from the North South through site link and is also envisaged to be activated by non-resident students. The planting scheme to this courtyard will maintain continuity of species with the precinct, including transplanted *Elaeocarpus* (Blueberry Ash) from Boundary Lane, *Livistona* palms, *Banksia* spp and ornamental native shrubs and groundcovers.

This through-site link provides clear passage with articulated passive seating zones. At the southern end, a grove of *Livistona* palms emerging from the paving with associated seating creates a plaza that complements the building scale and provides visual continuity with the *Livistona* plantings in the Ground Level (south east) Courtyard.

At the northern end, a new Blue Gum is proposed in lieu of the existing Blue Gum to be removed as part of the site works. Symbolically, the new Blue Gum will be a marker tree at nexus of the through site link and Boundary lane, reinforced with a passive seating zone adjacent.

Principle 7: Amenity.

Good design provides amenity through the physical, spatial and environmental quality of a development.

Open plan individual one bedroom apartment layouts have been provided to maximise efficiency provide orientation towards controlled views, allow good ventilation and provide good solar access.

Each apartment has access to a small Juliet balcony with a user operated vertical sliding timber screen that can be both fully closed or half open. This screen provides flexible options for varying types of views, privacy and solar control to suite the individual needs of the occupant. An internal blind provides for full privacy and blackout to daylight and streetlight.

Further communal amenity is provided at the ground plane through careful landscape design that provides for both covered and shaded areas. A communal dining hall with kitchen facilities has been allocated at the ground level providing enclosed communal dining and recreation.

At each level of the student accommodation a central communal dining and kitchen area has been allocated along the northern facade. This space can be fully opened during sympathetic weather and provides northerly solar access and cross ventilation.

A roof terrace area provides open outdoor space with good solar access and views over immediate context out to the distant cityscape.

Principle 8: Safety and security

Good design optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public domain.

The main entrance to the lobby is via Abercrombie Street into to a security controlled lobby. Sight lines from the apartments, neighbouring buildings and from Abercrombie Street provide safe and secure access to the lobby of the project. The car park entrance will be controlled via a security pass at the basement level of the proposed business school.

Lighting along boundaries, in lobbies and communal areas to maximise sight will be provided. In addition the multi storey nature of the development and orientation of living spaces towards the public domain, including balconies, maximises casual surveillance.

Principle 9: Social dimensions and housing affordability

Good design responds to the social context and needs of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability and access to social facilities.

There is a current lack of student accommodation at the University of Sydney. The proposal aims to cater for a growing need to add additional on-site student accommodation.

Student accommodation is necessary to provide affordable and convenient accommodation for overseas and interstate students. It is also critical in creating a safe and vibrant on-site student experience. Student accommodation will also add a necessary social balance to the residential area and provide an additional population for surrounding businesses and public facilities within the area.

The proposal also provides a combination of private open space and practical common areas catering for both formal and informal recreational and learning activities. The inclusion of physical accessibility features such as level footpaths and lifts also caters for the varying degrees of accessibility in the general population.

Principle 10: Aesthetics

Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, texture, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development.

The project's aesthetics are driven by the particular and specific needs and requirements of student accommodation, local context, the proposed business school and the environmental and physical characteristics of the site and location.

The accommodation aspect has been carefully considered within the streetscape to complement and enhance the existing residential grain while providing a transitional building to the proposed Sydney university business school.

From the streetscape at ground level the building appears as a transparent porous and vibrant communal volume. The proposed new development visually and physically connects the activity along the streetscape with the activity of the communal and public areas both of the student accommodation and the proposed spaces of the Sydney university business school.

The above residential facades include fully operable glass sliding doors with access to a Juliet balcony. These are clad in an operable timber screen that provides for user operated control of views, privacy and solar requirements. The fine grain of the operable screen and careful material selection reduce the mass of the building and relate to the finer grain of the surrounding residential terraces.