

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

DISCOVERY POINT PROJECT 1 PRINCES HIGHWAY WOLLI CREEK



MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

Submitted To Department of Planning
On Behalf of Discovery Point Pty Limited

Prepared in Conjunction with **BATESSMART™**

FEBRUARY 2010

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) report has been prepared on behalf of Discovery Point Pty Limited which is a co-venture between Australand Holdings Limited and Landcom.

This PEA has been prepared to inform and assist the Department of Planning (DoP) to determine the Director-General's Requirements (DGRs) for the proposed Concept Plan Application and Stage 1 and Stage 2 Project Applications. Discovery Point Pty Limited request the Department of Planning issue separate DGRs for the Concept Plan Application and each of the two proposed Project Applications as they will not necessarily be lodged concurrently.

This PEA is based on preliminary plans and images prepared by Bates Smart Architects, the winning entrant in a voluntary design competition conducted by Discovery Point Pty Limited in late 2009.

All development on the site has been declared a Major Project and accordingly we seek that all future stages of the development remain with the Minister for Planning as Consent Authority as related development under Section 75R and Section 75B(3) of the Act.

2. SITE AND LOCALITY

2.1 Site and Location

The Discovery Point site is located at 1 Princes Highway, Wollie Creek, as shown in Figure 1. The site has a total area of around 7.8 hectares.

Figure 1 – Location Plan



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Discovery Point comprises the following strata title schemes and Torrens title lots:

- Site 1 – SP79520 and SP75774
- Site 2 – SP77902 and SP79529
- Site 3 , 4 and 9 - Lots 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 206 in DP1103650
- Site 5, 6, 7 & 8 - Lot 12 DP1062413
- Open space lot – Lot 2 DP1048491 & Lot 13 1062413

The Discovery Point site is generally bound by the Illawarra Railway line to the west, Princes Highway to the east, Cooks River to the north and Magdalene Terrace to the south. The Wollie Creek railway station is located within the site.

Existing development on the site includes restored heritage listed buildings known as Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel, part of the Discovery Point Park, regenerated Mount Olympus communal open space area for residents, two completed mixed use buildings with associated swimming pool (Sites 1 and 2), one residential flat building currently under construction (Site 4), construction of part of Brodie Sparks Drive and associated public domain.

The Wolli Creek railway station and associated infrastructure are located within the site. The railway station is served by a temporary access road from Magdalene Terrace.

Photographs of the site are provided at **Figures 2 to 6** below.

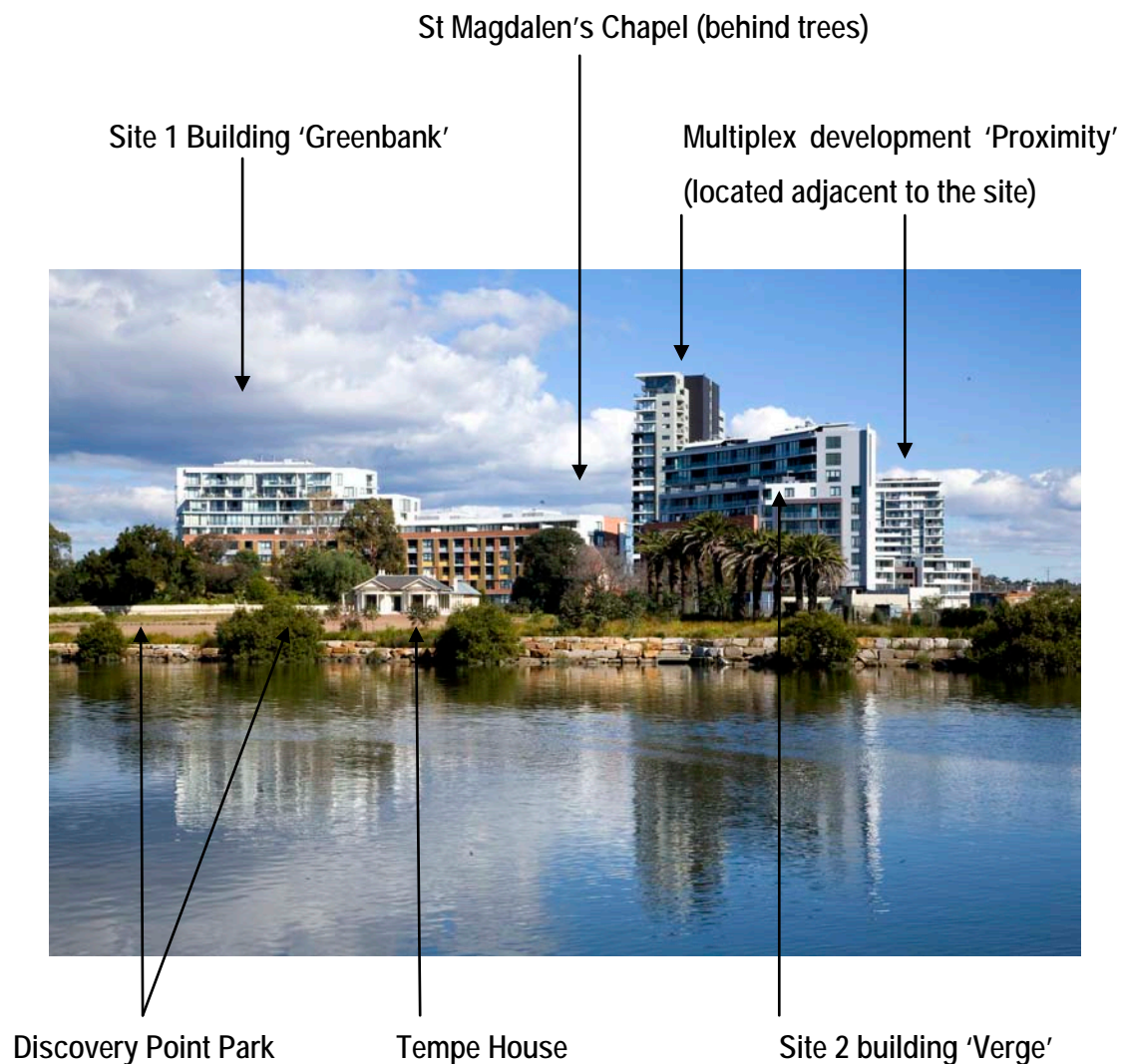


Figure 2: Eastern part of the site as viewed from Cooks River



Figure 3: Tempe House with Discovery Point Park in the foreground



Figure 4: Existing Discovery Point Site 1 building 'Greenbank'



Figure 5: Northern part of Discovery Point site with rail corridor in foreground



Figure 6: Southern part of Discovery Point Site still to be developed

2.2 Physical Site Features

Two mixed use buildings known as Greenbank and Verge (which form the first two stages of the Discovery Point Precinct) have already been developed on the site. Further north continuing the heritage arc, construction has commenced on a residential building referred to as Site 4 under the existing site Master Plan. These three buildings are to be excluded from the Concept Plan application area. A copy of the existing Discovery Point Site Landscape Master Plan is provided at **Appendix A**.

Wolli Creek Station is centrally located on the site with temporary vehicular and pedestrian access off Magdalene Terrace to the south. To the north of the station is an existing substation and switchroom with associated high voltage cables below ground which are to be retained insitu.

The railway line immediately to the east of the station has already been bridged by a concrete slab designed to accommodate an extension of Brodie Spark Drive at RL 6.5m (refer to **Figure 5**). Discovery Point Park is partially completed. Remaining works to the park are to be included in the Concept Plan application.

2.3 Area of Discovery Point Site to be subject to Part 3A

As shown in the above photographs, part of the Discovery Point site has already been developed in accordance with an existing master plan consent granted by Rockdale Council and subsequent development approvals issued under Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act)*.

Existing development on the site comprising Sites 1, 2 and 4, Mt Olympus and works to Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel and are excluded from the Part 3A Concept Plan application. These areas of the site will remain under the operation of Part 4 of the Act and existing applicable consents. The future use of the heritage buildings may however also form part of the Concept Plan application. All remaining land within the Discovery Point site including the partly constructed Discovery Point Park has been declared a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies. **Figure 7** shows the land subject to Part 3A application and the land excluded which will remain under Part 4 of the Act.

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Discovery Point Site Diagram

- Discovery Point Development site boundary
- Area of site to be excluded from Part 3A Application
- Remaining lands subject to Part 3A Application
- Heritage Buildings



Figure 7 – Land subject to and excluded from the Part 3A application

2.4 Surrounding Development

The Discovery Point site is located at the northern end of Wolli Creek in the local government area of Rockdale. Wolli Creek is a developing suburb adjoined by Arncliffe to the south, Tempe to the north and Cooks Cove and Mascot to the east. Photographs of surrounding development are provided at **Figures 8 to 12**.

Adjoining the site to the south is a mixed use development known as “Proximity”, (refer to **Figures 8 and 9**) which was developed by Multiplex. The Proximity development comprises around 290 apartments with a maximum building height of 21 storeys. Stage 1 of the development has been completed and includes ground level retail fronting Magdalene Terrace and Arncliffe Street.



Figure 8: View of adjoining Multiplex tower development ‘Proximity’ from Brodie Spark Drive with “NAHAS Construction” site in the foreground



Figure 9: Part of 'Proximity' development along Magdalene Terrace

Also adjoining Discovery Point to the south at 78-96 Arncliffe Street, Wolli Creek (refer to **Figures 8 and 10**) is a vacant disused industrial site which is currently subject to a Part 3A Concept Plan application for a mixed use development. The Planning Report submitted to the Department of Planning for this mixed use development known as the 'NAHAS Construction site' indicates that the proposed development includes approximately 25,000m² of retail space and 45,000m² of gross floor area for residential and serviced apartments. The report states that the residential component will include three towers ranging in height from 8 to 22 storeys.

In addition to the Concept Plan application, the proponent has recently lodged a Project Application for Stage 1 of the development. The Stage 1 Project Application proposal includes a temporary (15 years) supermarket, specialty retail and associated above ground car parking.

Discovery Point Site 1 Building – “Greenbank”

“NAHAS Site”



Existing public art at entrance to Discovery Point & Wolli Creek precinct

Figure 10: Adjacent ‘NAHAS Constructions’ site subject to current Part 3A application, looking east

Across the Princes Highway to the east is the Cooks River, Cahill Park, Tempe Recreation Reserve (refer to **Figure 11**) and Cooks Cove development site. Further to the east lies the Sydney International Airport (refer to **Figure 11**).

High density mixed use development is located to the west of the site across the Illawarra railway line in the suburb of Turrella, as shown in **Figure 12**.



Figure 11: View to the east with Discovery Point Park in the foreground



Figure 12: High density residential development located to west of Discovery Point site

3. BACKGROUND

The Discovery Point site was rezoned to permit mixed use development in 2000 under Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 149 (LEP 149). LEP 149 amended Rockdale Planning Scheme Ordinance (RPSO) as land in Wolli Creek was excluded from Rockdale LEP 2000 at that time. A site specific Development Control Plan known as DCP 45 – Railway Precinct was prepared at the same time as LEP 149.

Two consents were issued by Rockdale Council in 2001, known as the “Master Plan” consent (DA 500/01) and the “Sub-podium” consent (DA 600/01). A third consent (DA 463/01) was issued in 2001 which relates to development of the Discovery Point Park, foreshore open space and Mount Olympus landscaped area in addition to the restoration of heritage buildings.

Discovery Point Pty Limited purchased the site with the above mentioned environmental planning instruments and consents in place. RPSO was further amended in 2005 consistent with revisions proposed to the Discovery Point Master Plan. Minor amendments to DCP 45 followed the gazettal of the amending Rockdale LEP 172.

In August 2006, Rockdale LEP 2000 (Amendment 13) – Wolli Creek was gazetted which incorporated the provisions applicable to that part of the site zoned Mixed Use 10(a1) into Rockdale LEP 2000. That part of the site zoned 6(c) – Heritage Conservation remains in the RPSO and is noted as a deferred matter in RLEP 2000.

A further LEP amendment was required following the gazettal of LEP 2000 (Amendment 13) to reinstate the correct diagrams applicable to the Discovery Point site which had been omitted from the gazetted form of Rockdale LEP 2000 (Amendment 13). This LEP amendment is known as Rockdale LEP 2000 (Amendment 45).

The Discovery Point site is currently subject to a range of planning controls under Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2000, Rockdale Planning Scheme Ordinance and Rockdale DCP 45.

The Sub-podium consent DA 600/01 applies to all development works located below ground level. This application was not updated at the time the master plan revisions were approved in 2005 and therefore it must be updated via a Section 96 application each time a development application for an above ground building is lodged. The Concept Plan application will request that DA 600/01 cease to apply to those parts of site not already developed and the car park beneath Site 4 which is currently under construction, and that all future car park works be developed in accordance with the Part 3A Concept Plan application.

The Concept Plan application will also request that DA 500/01 cease to apply to those parts of the site not already developed/under construction. Further, the application will request that DA 463/01 cease to apply to the Discovery Point Park with the exception of works already undertaken and to the Foreshore Reserve. DA 463/01 will continue to apply to Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel in relation to the works already completed however the future 'uses' of these heritage buildings may form part of the Concept Plan application.

A request for the Minister's declaration under Clause 6 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005 ("Major Development SEPP") that the proposed mixed use development at 1 Princes Highway Wolli Creek (known as the Discovery Point site) is a major development to be determined under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP & A Act) was submitted to the Department of Planning on 24 December 2010.

On 29 January 2010, the Minister declared the proposal a Major Project to be considered under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act). A copy of the declaration letter is provided at **Appendix B**.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Note: This section of the report refers to Gross Floor Area in terms of Standard Instrument Gross Floor Area (SIGFA) which is discussed later in this section.

4.1 Proposed Development – Concept Plan Application

The Concept Plan comprises a mixed use development consisting of 123,000m² (SIGFA) of residential gross floor area and 9,000m² (SIGFA) of non-residential (commercial and retail) gross floor area, above and below ground parking, a new neighbourhood park and foreshore public open space, completion of the Discovery Point Park and construction of associated roads and public domain areas.

It is anticipated that the proposed development will comprise around 1,650 residential apartments in 12 buildings, a 5 storey commercial office building adjoining the Wolli Creek railway station with ground level commercial/retail uses, a small supermarket and ancillary retail space (neighbourhood retail). A new neighbourhood park is proposed at the southern end of the site framed by the proposed neighbourhood retail centre. A linear foreshore park is also proposed along the river front to connect to the existing Discovery Point Park. Communal open space for future residents is proposed to be provided through a series of roof top landscaped podiums.

Car parking for approximately 1,300 to 1,500 vehicles (subject to final mix and detailed design) is proposed with car parking below and above ground. The area for the car parking component is in addition to the proposed 132,000m² (SIGFA) and is not counted as gross floor area. One level of underground basement parking is to be provided across the site with the exception of an existing excavated portion of the site where three levels of basement parking may be provided. The site is constrained by a high water table and potential acid sulfate soils (PASS) which makes the construction and delivery of underground parking complex. All above ground car parking areas will be designed in a manner that ensures street frontages are activated and visual impacts are minimised by appropriate façade treatments.

The existing Discovery Point Park is proposed to be completed and embellished in a manner that opens the park up to the public domain with improved connections to the river front and the perimeter of the Discovery Point site to encourage greater use by the wider community. As the park is currently zoned Open Space under RPSO and made publicly available to the whole community, Discovery Point Pty Limited would seek to dedicate this park and associated heritage buildings to Rockdale Council under a Voluntary Planning Agreement.

The preliminary design plans prepared by Bates Smart Architects show anticipated building heights across the site ranging from the 5 storey commercial building to two 21 storey buildings (refer to **Figure 13** below). Some refinement of the heights for individual buildings may occur as part of the detailed design phase for the Concept Plan application however the maximum building height will not exceed 21 storeys. The maximum 21 storey building height responds to the height of the adjoining building to the south of the site developed by Multiplex and known as "Proximity".

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Indicative Design Competition Scheme

- Discovery Point Site Area —
- Excluded Area —
- Stage 1 Project Application Area —
- Stage 2 Project Application Area —
- Heritage Buildings —



Figure 13: Design Competition Scheme showing indicative proposed building heights

The Concept Plan application will be based largely on the winning scheme of a voluntary design competition conducted by Australand and Landcom in late 2009. The winning scheme was prepared by Bates Smart Architects. A copy has previously been forwarded to the Department of Planning.

For the purpose of submitting a Part 3A Concept Plan application, the existing gross floor area requirement under Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2000 has been converted to an equivalent gross floor area in accordance with the standard LEP instrument definition. This report refers to historical GFA for the site in terms of RGFA (Rockdale GFA) and the proposed GFA for the site in terms of SIGFA (Standard Instrument GFA). A summary of Gross Floor Area calculations and conversions is provided at **Appendix C**. The conversions are required due to different methods of calculation between instruments. In simple terms, the calculations undertaken by Lockley Land Title Solutions (refer to **Appendix C**) indicate that Standard Instrument GFA (SIGFA) generally equates to around 93.3% of Rockdale GFA.

In summary, 167,504m² (RGFA) gross floor area is currently permitted on the site under Rockdale LEP 2000 which equates to approximately 156,280m² (SIGFA). To date the developed GFA on the site (Sites 1, 2 and 4) is 29,279m² (RGFA), which leaves a balance of 138,225m² (RGFA) floor space still to be developed. This equates to a balance of 128,964m² (SIGFA) when measured in accordance with the standard instrument definition. The Concept Plan application proposes a SIGFA of 132,000m², which generally maintains the existing applicable maximum gross floor area for the site.

The key development parameters for the proposed Concept Plan application are:

KEY DEVELOPMENT PARAMETER	PROPOSED
Gross Floor Area (SIGFA)	123,000m ² residential
	9,000m ² retail/commercial
	132,000m ² total GFA (Excluding any GFA that may be applicable to carparking)
Building Height	Maximum of 21 storeys
Residential Unit Mix	Max 50% studios & one bedroom units Min 40% two bedroom units Min 10% three bedroom units
Car parking	Approximately 1,300 -1,500 spaces (subject to final mix)

4.2 Proposed Development - Stage 1 Project Application

The Stage 1 Project Application will include the construction of proposed Building 1c, part of Building 1b (comprising approximately 1,500m² (SIGFA) supermarket with one level of residential apartments above and rooftop communal open space area), a new neighbourhood park and associated landscaping, carpark and infrastructure works.

Proposed Building 1c is a thirteen (13) storey mixed use building with around 300m² (SIGFA) of ground level retail and approximately 9,800m² (SIGFA) of residential gross floor area. It is anticipated that around 130 residential apartments will be provided in proposed Building 1b (subject to final mix).

The proposed new supermarket is to be located on the ground level of Building 1b podium with one level of apartments and communal open space area above.

The new neighbourhood park (1a) is proposed to be developed in this early stage to complement the new ground level retail facilities proposed in Stage 1. A diagram identifying the area of the site subject to the Stage 1 Project Application is provided overleaf at **Figure 14** and at **Appendix D**.

4.3 Proposed Development - Stage 2 Project Application

The Stage 2 Project Application will include the construction of proposed Building 2 and the adjoining pedestrian street. Proposed Building 2 is a twenty-one (21) storey mixed use building with around 300m² (SIGFA) of ground level retail and approximately 15,500m² (SIGFA) of residential gross floor area and associated landscaping, carpark and infrastructure works. It is anticipated that around 210 residential apartments will be developed in proposed Building 2 (subject to final mix). A diagram identifying the area of the site subject to the Stage 2 Project Application is provided at **Figure 14** and in **Appendix D**.

4.4 Other Works

The Concept Plan application may seek consent for the community use of the heritage buildings if a Voluntary Planning Agreement can be negotiated with Council for the dedication of these buildings to Council as a community facility.

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Discovery Point Project Concept Plan + Project Application areas

- Concept Plan Application Area ■
- Excluded Area ■
- Stage 1 Project Application Area ■
- Stage 2 Project Application Area ■
- Heritage Buildings ■



Figure 14: Areas subject to Concept Plan and Stage 1 and Stage 2 Project Applications

5. KEY PLANNING CONTROLS & PERMISSIBILITY

5.1 Overview of Applicable Environmental Planning Instruments, Development Control Plans and Policies

The following key environmental planning instruments (EPIs), Development Control Plans (DCPS) and policies are relevant to the proposal:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005 (Major Development SEPP)
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (SEPP Infrastructure)
- State Environmental Planning Policy 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55)
- State Environmental Planning Policy 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development (SEPP 65) and the accompanying Residential Flat Design Code (RFDC)
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 (BASIX)
- Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2000 (LEP 2000)
- Rockdale Planning Scheme Ordinance (RPSO)
- Rockdale Development Control Plan 45 - Railway Precinct (Discovery Point) (DCP 45)
- Draft South Subregional Strategy

5.2 Permissibility

5.2.1 Zoning

The Discovery Point site is currently zoned part Mixed Use 10(a1) Railway Precinct under Rockdale LEP 2000 and part Open Space 6(c) Heritage Conservation under RPSO. That part of the site zoned 6(c) relates to the area occupied by the Discovery Point Park. The remainder of the site including Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel are zoned Mixed Use 10(a1) – Railway Precinct. That part of the site zoned Open Space 6(c) is marked as a Deferred Matter under Rockdale LEP 2000.

The 10(a1) zone permits with consent a large range of land uses including but not limited to residential, retail, commercial, café and recreation uses. The proposal is currently permissible with consent in the zone.

5.2.2 Land Use Diagram

In addition to zoning, an additional layer of permissibility exists for this site. Rockdale LEP 2000 contains a land use diagram for the site (Diagram 3 in Schedule 2 of the LEP) which identifies nine separate development sites within Discovery Point in addition to the Tempe House site (heritage items), plazas and foreshores areas.

This diagram works in conjunction with a clause in the LEP which generally restricts the uses permissible in the zone to the specified building footprints shown on the land use diagram. Development permissible on the nine development sites, the Tempe House site, foreshore areas and plazas is identified in a table also contained in Schedule 2 of the LEP. A copy of the existing land use diagram and table are provided at **Appendix E**.

5.3 Key Planning Controls

The Discovery Point site is currently subject to special provisions in the Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2000 (LEP 2000). The key special provisions include:

- A height control map which specifies building footprints and maximum building heights at podium and roof level (refer to copy provided at **Appendix E**);
- A land use control diagram showing nine (9) individual development sites within the Discovery Point site. This diagram also identifies the location of the Chapel, Tempe House, the Tempe House View Corridor, location of plazas and the foreshore area; and
- An underground areas diagram which shows the location of approved underground areas across the site and the location of infrastructure associated with Wolli Creek Railway Station.

A summary of the key planning controls is presented below.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005

Group 5 of Clause 13 of Schedule 1 of the Major Development SEPP provides for development with a Capital Investment Value (CIV) greater than \$100 million to be considered as a Major Project under Part 3A of the Act. The proposed Concept Plan has an estimated CIV of \$4 million.

All development on the site has been declared a Major Project and accordingly we seek that all future stages of the development remain with the Minister for Planning as Consent Authority as related development under Section 75R and Section 75B(3) of the Act.

It is anticipated that the Minister for Planning as Consent Authority would set up the future approvals regime for the site as part of the Concept Plan Instrument of Approval. We request that the future development stages for each building remain Project Applications under Part 3A. It is envisaged that minor development such as signage on the site may be delegated back to Rockdale Council under Part 4 of the Act. We envisage that this future approval regime in the Concept Plan Instrument of Approval may be achieved by setting a monetary threshold for

future development or potentially nominating the types of development that may fall under Part 3A and Part 4. We understand that the future approvals regime will be negotiated with DoP as part of the Concept Plan EAR.

A copy of the quantity surveyors calculation summary is provided at **Appendix F**. A detailed Quantity Surveyor Report will be prepared and submitted with each application.

State Environmental Planning Policy 55 – Remediation of Land

SEPP 55 requires the consent authority to consider whether or not land is contaminated, requires remediation and is suitable for proposed development.

State Environmental Planning Policy 65 + Residential Flat Design Code

SEPP 65 requires the consent authority to consider the ten design principles in SEPP 65 and rules of thumb in the Residential Flat Design Code (RFDC) in relation to proposals for residential flat development.

State Environmental Planning Policy (BASIX)

A BASIX Certificate is to accompany an application for all residential development demonstrating compliance with energy and water saving targets.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure)

SEPP Infrastructure requires referral to the RTA for proposals with greater than 300 dwellings. The application will need to consider Clause 85 of SEPP (Infrastructure) which relates to development adjacent to rail corridors and Clause 87 relating to impact of rail noise/vibration on non rail development.

Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2000

Rockdale LEP 2000 applies to that part of the site zoned Mixed Use 10(a1) - Railway Precinct. While the provisions of RLEP 2000 do not apply to the Part 3A application in accordance with Section 75R of the Act they are nonetheless outlined below as the Minister may take them into account in accordance with Section 75J of the Act.

Zoning

The site is zoned Mixed Use 10(a1) – Railway Precinct, with the exception of the Discovery Point Park area which is subject to RPSO. Objectives for the zone are provided in Clause 55B of the LEP.

Height

Maximum building heights are specified for nine development sites on a Height Control Diagram (refer to copy attached at **Appendix C**). The maximum permitted RL for the tallest building (existing Site 6) is set at RL 60 (or equivalent of 19-20 storeys).

Maximum Gross Floor Area - Total

A maximum total Rockdale LEP Gross Floor Area (RGFA) of 167,504m² applies to all buildings on all of the development sites. The LEP also prescribes maximum total gross floor area on a site by site basis for the nine development sites identified on the land use diagram.

Gross Floor Area – Minimum non-residential component

Of the total gross floor area permitted on the site, the component of non-residential gross floor area required is a minimum of 54,337m² (RGFA). The LEP also prescribes minimum non-residential gross floor area on a site by site basis for the nine development sites identified on the land use diagram. The bulk of the non-residential gross floor area (41,700m² RGFA) is allocated to Site 8, which was to comprise a commercial office building above the railway station.

Gross Floor Area – Maximum retail component

A maximum gross floor area of 14,000m² (RGFA) of retail floor space is permitted on the site.

Land Use Control

A land use diagram for the Discovery Point site is contained at Diagram 3 of Schedule 2 of the LEP (refer to copy provided at **Appendix D**). This diagram identifies building footprints for nine development sites, foreshore area, plazas and the Tempe House site. Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the LEP outlines particulars for development sites within the 10(a1) zone, including site objectives and land uses.

Underground Area Diagram

An underground parking areas diagram is contained at Diagram 4 of Schedule 2 of the LEP (refer to copy attached at **Appendix D**).

Parking

The number of underground parking spaces is not to exceed 2,210 spaces.

Heritage

The LEP lists the Tempe House Precinct as a heritage item. Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel are also listed on the State Heritage Register. Clause 62 of the LEP outlines the specific matters for consideration for development within the Tempe House Precinct.

Rockdale Planning Scheme Ordinance

The Rockdale Planning Scheme Ordinance (RPSO) still applies to that part of the site zoned Open Space 6(c) Heritage Conservation, which relates to the Discovery Point Park.

Rockdale Development Control Plan 45

Rockdale DCP 45 – Railway Precinct (Discovery Point) is a site specific Development Control Plan. DCP 45 outlines aims and objectives for development of the site and includes provisions relating to land use, built form, precinct character, urban form, building height, setbacks, solar access, materials and finishes, circulation and access, open space and public domain, views and vistas, heritage management, environmental management and public art.

Part 3 of the DCP establishes building envelopes and desired built form controls for each of the nine development sites, which are the same as the approved envelopes contained the Master Plan consent DA 500/01.

6. PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A preliminary environmental assessment has been undertaken to assist the Director-General to determine the requirements to be addressed in environmental assessment reports for the Concept Plan and Stage 1 and Stage 2 Project Applications.

The key considerations associated with development of the Discovery Point site are:

- Suitability of the site
- Sydney Metropolitan Strategy and Draft South Subregional Strategy
- Compliance with planning controls and policies
- Heritage considerations
- Open space and public domain
- Built form
- Interface with road and rail corridors
- Flooding issues
- Contamination and remediation
- Urban design
- Energy efficiency
- Acoustic impacts
- Amenity of residential apartments
- Social and economic impacts

6.1 Suitability of the Site

The site is zoned part mixed use and part open space and is located in the developing suburb of Wolli Creek. Wolli Creek Railway Station is located in the centre of the site and the land is also conveniently located close to the Princes Highway which is serviced by public buses. The site's proximity to transport infrastructure ideally provides for the proposed transit oriented development.

The proposed development is a predominantly residential development site with a neighbourhood shopping centre at the southern end and a 5 storey commercial office building adjoining the railway station. The proposed development responds to the established and projected demand for facilities in the area and will provide for the development of an affordable and sustainable residential community on the banks of the Cooks River.

The applicable LEP controls envisage the development of a high density environment on the site which is supported by an existing master plan consent.

6.2 Sydney Metropolitan Strategy/Draft South Subregional Strategy

Centres and Corridors

The site is located within Wolli Creek which is identified as a “village” in the draft south subregional strategy. The draft strategy classifies a village as a centre located within 600m radius from central transport/business node and containing a strip of shops with a small supermarket, hairdresser, take-away food shops and between 2,100 and 5,500 dwellings.

The Discovery Point project is consistent with the village classification contained in the sub-regional strategy. A total of 215 apartments have already been completed on the site. A further 88 apartments are under construction and an additional approximate 1,650 apartments are envisaged under the new Concept Plan application. The site is well serviced by public transport with Wolli Creek railway station located in the centre of the subject site.

The Concept Plan application will contain around 9,000m² (SIGFA) of non-residential gross floor area which should comprise around 5,000m² to 6,000m² (SIGFA) of commercial office space and approximately 3,000m² to 3,500m² (SIGFA) of retail space. The proposed retail space will include one large tenancy in part of Building 1b which could accommodate a small supermarket such as an IGA or Harris Farm Markets, or the like. Additional speciality retail and restaurant/café tenancies are to be located around the perimeter of the new neighbourhood park under proposed Buildings 1b, 1c, 2 and 3. Some ground floor retail tenancies may also be provided in the proposed commercial Building 14. One additional retail tenancy is proposed at the northern end of the site under proposed Building 7 which could accommodate a café and/or restaurant.

Housing

The Draft South Subregional Strategy sets an additional dwelling target of 7,000 dwellings for Rockdale LGA by 2031. The location of Wolli Creek Railway Station in the centre of the site makes Discovery Point ideal for a transit orientated development. Around 1,200 residential apartments were envisaged for the site under the current master plan consent. It is anticipated

that the revised Part 3A Concept Plan scheme will accommodate up to an additional estimated 1,650 dwellings in addition to the 215 apartments already completed. The proposed development will therefore make an important contribution to future housing growth in Rockdale LGA.

The proposed increase in the number of dwellings to be accommodated on the Discovery Point site is the result of the proposed reallocation of gross floor area on the site from commercial floor space to residential floor space. The proposed dwelling mix is still to be determined which could change the total number of dwellings. The proposal is consistent with the aim of the Metropolitan Strategy to focus residential development within centre and corridors with good access to public transport and local services.

Transport Accessibility

The site is ideally located within walking distance of Wolli Creek Railway Station and bus stops along the Princes Highway.

Economy and Employment

The Concept Plan proposal reallocates some of the approved gross floor area from non-residential to residential purposes. The existing master plan required the development of 54,337m² (RGFA) of non-residential gross floor space on the Discovery Point site, a maximum of 14,000m² (RGFA) of which was to be retail floor space. The bulk of non-residential floor space (41,790m² RGFA) envisaged under the existing master plan was to be provided in a commercial office tower above the existing railway station.

Discovery Point Pty Limited has run several expressions of interest campaigns for the development of the commercial office tower over the past few years. It became apparent that little demand exists for the development of a large commercial office building on what is predominantly a residential site with no main road exposure and significant infrastructure costs associated with building over a railway line and rail infrastructure such as the substation and high voltage cables. The market has clearly indicated that demand for commercial development is focused on main road locations or sites within established commercial centres or within new business parks.

The proposed Part 3A Concept Plan for Discovery Point will include around 9,000m² (SIGFA) of retail and commercial gross floor space. A further 1,763m² (SIGFA) of non-residential floor space has already been constructed on Sites 1 and 2, much of which remains vacant despite being completed 3-4 years ago.

An Employment and Retail Spending Benefit Report will be prepared and submitted with the Concept Plan application to support the proposed mix and quantum of land uses. A significant number of direct and indirect jobs during construction will be generated by the construction of around 1,650 apartments, a neighbourhood retail centre, parkland and associated infrastructure. The additional 9,000m² (SIGFA) of non-residential floor space that will exist on the site upon completion will continue to support local employment. Furthermore, in addition to the direct employment generated by the development, there will be a multiplier (or indirect) effects through the local, regional and state economies.

The Concept Plan application does not seek to reduce development opportunities on the Discovery Point site but rather reconfigure land uses to respond to past, current and future anticipated demand for services and facilities that are sustainable. It is intended that Discovery Point will become a vibrant residential community on the shore of the Cooks River supported by a well designed neighbourhood village centre. A smaller more appropriate commercial office building is proposed adjoining the Wolli Creek railway station to respond to any demand for commercial facilities on the site in the years to come.

6.3 Compliance with Key Planning Controls

The current local planning instruments applicable to the site primarily reflect the intent of the existing Discovery Point Master Plan. Both LEP 2000 and DCP 45 include diagrams which show specific building footprints, envelopes and land uses with more specific requirements contained in the existing master plan consent.

The proposed Concept Plan will replace the existing master plan as it relates to the remaining development area of the site. Consequently the proposal will differ from the footprints, heights and building envelopes contained in the existing LEP and DCP. The proposal will however retain some of the general design principles and objectives contained within these plans.

Furthermore, the proposal will be generally consistent with the maximum total permitted gross floor area control for the site with a minor increase of around 3,000m² proposed. The major difference between the existing scheme and the proposed scheme relates to the removal of a large commercial office tower above the railway line which was to accommodate 41,790m² of gross floor space and the conversion of this floor space to residential. The proposal replaces the planned commercial tower with a new five storey tower adjoining the railway line, which responds to market demand.

The approved equivalent 13,062m² (SIGFA) of retail floor space has been reduced to around 3,000m² to 3,500m² (SIGFA) in addition to the retail space already constructed at ground level of Sites 1 and 2. The proposed new neighbourhood shopping centre around a new public park at the southern end of the site will create a point of difference between the facilities and services at Discovery Point and the proposed regional facilities proposed on the adjoining

NAHAS site fronting the Princes Highway. This new neighbourhood centre will become the focal point of activity for the Discovery Point site and is ideally located adjoining the Wolli Creek railway station.

The height and land use controls in the existing Rockdale LEP 2000 and DCP 45 lack flexibility and prescribe very detailed building footprints and envelopes for nine nominated development sites. The existing controls impact upon future residential amenity as they were largely developed prior to the introduction of SEPP 65. One of the key design parameters for the new scheme is the creation of a high quality residential environment generally consistent with the principles of SEPP 65.

The proposed scheme includes a range of building heights with a maximum building height of 21 storeys applying to two buildings throughout the site. Height of residential buildings will range from 8 to 21 storeys whereas the commercial building will comprise around 5 storeys. The maximum height currently permitted under the LEP is RL60 (Site 6), which could equate to around 19 to 20 storeys.

In relation to car parking, approximately 1,300 to 1,500 additional car spaces are proposed for the new development, some of which have already been constructed under existing Master Plan Sites 1, 2 and 4 for future stages of the development. Around 500 car spaces have been developed/are under construction on the site, a proportion of which will be allocated to future stages of the Concept Plan development. The existing master plan consent permits a total of 2,210 spaces. The overall reduction in car spaces relates to the reduction in the size of non-residential uses and the recognition of the site's proximity to good public transport and principles of ecologically sustainable development.

6.4 Heritage Considerations

The restoration of the two heritage items Tempe House and St Magdalen's Chapel has been completed. A Conservation Management Plan exists for the Tempe House Precinct. The Concept Plan may include 'use' and dedication of these buildings through a VPA with Council.

An important feature of the approved master plan was the creation of a heritage arc around the perimeter of the Tempe House Precinct through height and façade treatment of buildings adjacent to the listed item. The heritage arc has been largely completed with the area at the northern end of the site still to be developed. The Concept Plan seeks to retain the arc concept in the design of two proposed new residential buildings at the northern end of the site.

6.5 Open Space and Public Domain

The Discovery Point site contains around 2.4ha of open space which is currently publicly accessible albeit privately owned. This comprises the Discovery Point Park which is partially completed and located between the heritage buildings and the Cooks River.

Other planned open space areas include plazas between buildings and a foreshore reserve. A landscape plan will be prepared and submitted with the Concept Plan application.

The proposed Concept Plan introduces a new public open space (approximately 1,750m²) at the southern end of the site which will be framed by a neighbourhood shopping centre. A small supermarket is planned in addition to spaces for speciality retail shops, cafes and restaurants all overlooking a central neighbourhood park and with good linkages through the site to Wolli Creek Station and adjoining mixed use developments. A new riverside reserve is also proposed along the frontage of the site with the Cooks River.

Enhanced private communal open space opportunities will be provided by a series of roof top podium gardens. It is anticipated that additional swimming pools and gyms will be constructed on the site for use by residents.

The proposed Concept Plan also introduces a wide public plaza at the northern end of Brodie Space Drive aimed at opening the central part of the site up to the river. A café/restaurant space is proposed at the far end of this new plaza overlooking the river.

6.6 Built Form

The proposed Concept Plan improves the built form of development on the site through more appropriate building orientation, diversity of height and more modulated building forms than envisaged under RLEP 2000 and DCP 45. The individual buildings while recognising high density development, will offer an improved response to the principles of SEPP 65.

6.7 Flooding Issues

The site is flood prone land. The previous master plan consent addressed flooding and sets a minimum floor level for development. An updated flood impact assessment will be undertaken for the new proposal and will accompany the Concept Plan application.

6.8 Contamination and Remediation

Issues of soil contamination have been addressed in the previous master plan consent. A site audit statement was issued in 2006 certifying that the site is suitable for high density residential land use (with minimal access to soil), commercial office/retail, associated pavements and roadways and open space.

Acid sulfate soils have been found at various depths on the site. The proposed Concept Plan seeks to address this issue by minimising the extent of excavation planned for the site and raising some car park levels above ground.

6.9 Urban Design

One of the main objectives associated with the revisions to the existing master plan is to improve the residential amenity and the design quality of residential development to be developed on this site. The proposed Concept Plan will include more diversity and an improved response to the principles of SEPP 65 and the Residential Flat Design Code.

6.10 Energy Efficiency

All future residential buildings will be designed to comply with BASIX. The potential to incorporate other initiatives such as cogeneration (combined heat and power), sewer recycling, stormwater re-use and solar hot water will also be explored.

6.11 Acoustic Impacts

A noise and vibration assessment will be submitted with each project application to address acoustic and vibration issues associated with the site's proximity to railway lines and the airport.

6.12 Social and Economic Impacts

A Social and Economic Impact Assessment Report will be prepared to accompany the Concept Plan application. This report will specifically address the social impacts of increased residential density on the site and the provision of services to support the population. The report will also examine the economic impacts of the proposal on other retail development in the local area and will include an economic spending benefit analysis.

Furthermore, the report will address the reduction of commercial floor space on the site and the ability of Rockdale to meet employment land targets outlined in the Draft South Subregional Strategy.

6.13 Voluntary Planning Agreement

The Concept Plan application may be accompanied by a voluntary planning agreement in relation to the potential dedication of the Discovery Point Park and the new foreshore reserve to Council as public open space and the existing heritage buildings to Council as community facilities.

6.14 Building Height and SACL Obstacle Limitation Surfaces

As previously discussed, the Concept Plan proposes building heights ranging from 5 to 21 storeys with a maximum building height of 21 storeys applying to two buildings across the site. A formal application for the Concept Plan development and height has recently been submitted to SACL for its consideration.

6.15 Traffic and Access

Access to the site will be retained via Brodie Spark Drive and a new road along the western perimeter of the site adjoining the Illawarra Railway Line. The Concept Plan includes an overall reduction in the number of car parking spaces to be provided within the development.

Access, parking and traffic matters will be addressed in a Traffic and Parking Report to be submitted with the Concept Plan application.

6.16 Staging

Development of the site will be staged. An indicative staging plan will be submitted with the Concept Plan application.

7. CONCLUSION

This report has provided background and a detailed description of the proposal to assist the Director-General to issue requirements for the preparation of environmental assessments to accompany a Concept Plan Application and separate Project Applications for Stages 1 and 2 of the development.

On the basis of the information contained in this PEA, it is requested that the Director-General issue separate requirements for the Concept Plan Application and each of the two Project Applications as the applications will not necessarily be lodged concurrently.

**APPENDIX A –
EXISTING LANDSCAPE
MASTER PLAN**

**APPENDIX B –
COPY OF PART 3A
DECLARATION LETTER**

APPENDIX C – GFA CALCULATION SUMMARY

**APPENDIX D –
AREAS SUBJECT TO CONCEPT
PLAN APPLICATION AND
STAGE 1 AND STAGE 2
PROJECT APPLICATIONS**

**APPENDIX E –
ROCKDALE LEP DIAGRAMS
AND TABLE**

**APPENDIX F –
LETTER FROM QUANTITY
SURVEYOR CONFIRMING CIV**