



Director, Urban Assessments
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Your Reference: MP 10_0158
Our Reference: NCA/1/2011
Contact: Kale Lafferty
Telephone: 9806 5393
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Attention: Caroline Owen

23 February 2011

Dear Ms. Owen,

**Major Project 10_0158 – Residential Development – Buildings 7 & 8
61 Mobbs Lane - Epping - Channel 7 Site (Epping Park)**

I refer to the public exhibition of the above Major Project seeking approval for the construction of Buildings 7 and 8 containing a total of 130 dwellings. Please be advised that Council raises issues with the proposed development with respect to urban design, compliance with SEPP65, accessibility and the provision of adaptable dwellings. These issues are addressed within this submission.

Urban Design

Approved Concept Plan Review (MP 05_0086)

The proposal generally compiles with the controls outlined in Fig 8.9 Building Envelope Control Diagram of the approved Concept Plan (MP 05_0086). However, several issues are raised in relation to SEPP65 Residential Flat Design Code requirements, which are discussed further within this submission.

Height & Character of the Area

Building 7 has a proposed height of 3, 5 & 6 storeys. Building 8 has a proposed height of 6 storeys. Despite being approved within the concept plan, Council does not support the construction of 6 storey buildings on this site.

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 notes that *'good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings'*

Council's previous submissions regarding the redevelopment of this site have noted that the overall scale of the proposal is of concern as there is a distinct contrast with existing development in the area. The residential flat buildings containing 6 storeys are considered inappropriate in scale for this location. The development proposed in its current form is likely to over dominate the context within which it is located. As a result, concern is raised that the proposal in its current form will set an undesirable precedent for future development in the Parramatta local government area.

It is also noted that the 6 storey buildings are not located within a 10 minute walking distance from either of the two stations in the vicinity neither are they near a major urban attractor such as a town centre or shops. This is counter to the strategy proposed by the Department of Planning, Parramatta Council and general good transport and land use planning practice of concentrating increased density in town centres and around transport nodes to reduce car travel, improve convenience and increase the city's social, environmental and economic sustainability.

Streetscape & Design Review

The southern elevation of Buildings 7 and 8 face onto 'Road 2' of the development, with a 2m setback to the street. This street setback is mainly taken up by private outdoor courtyards for the ground floor apartments. The levels of the courtyards are between 0.55m and 1.21m above street level and are screened by fencing and hedge planting. There is very little activation along this southern façade and there are opportunities to improve the streetscape by having individual entries to the ground floor apartments facing the street.

The elevation of Building 8 presents a continuous built edge to 'Road 2' of over 100m. Whilst an attempt has been made to reduce the bulk of this façade through indentation of the plan and articulation of the facade, it still presents a long expanse of built form to the streetscape. This long expanse of building generates residential amenity issues relating to daylight access and natural ventilation, as well as its bulky presentation to the streetscape. Building 8 should be broken into 2 separate buildings to reduce bulk and improve residential amenity. This would address the SEPP 65 residential amenity issues discussed below.

SEPP65 Design Issues

The following aspects of the proposal do not meet key SEPP 65 Residential Flat Design Code requirements including:

(a) Daylight Access

The number of single aspect apartments with a southerly aspect is 38%, which is significantly above the SEPP 65 Design Code maximum of 10%. It is noted that a Solar Access Report has been supplied which states that the proposal meets the separate requirement that 70% of apartments receive at least 3 hours of winter sun. These figures however do not specify which rooms receive the solar access and the amount of solar access received to those rooms (eg. whether more than 50% of the window receives sunlight).

(b) Building Separation

The proposal does not meet key SEPP 65 guidelines for building separation. The proposed separation between buildings 7 and 8 does not meet the following SEPP 65 recommendations:

- 12m is recommended between habitable rooms / balconies (7m is provided); and
- 9m between habitable rooms / balconies and non habitable rooms (7.5m is provided).

Visual privacy is addressed by landscaping but this does not provide acoustic privacy.

(c) Natural Ventilation

The proposal does not meet the SEPP 65 requirement for a minimum of 25% of kitchens to be naturally ventilated. Only the end apartments of Buildings 7 and 8 have kitchens with an external window, giving 26 out of 130 apartments (20%) with naturally ventilated kitchens.

Additionally, many of the apartments have the back of kitchens that are more than 8m from a window. A large number of apartments have the back of kitchens that are over 9 m from an external window.

(d) Streetscape

There are opportunities to activate the streetscape of the proposal with individual entries to the ground floor apartments along the street, as recommended by the SEPP 65 Design Code. The design is stated as complying on page 6 of the Design Verification Statement but no individual entries are shown in the design drawings.

(e) Internal Circulation

Building 8 has 9 apartments per core, which is above the SEPP 65 recommended maximum of 8. This could be addressed if building 8 is broken down into 2 separate buildings.

(f) Building Depth

The building depth for building 7 and 8 varies but is approximately 20m, which is above the SEPP 65 maximum depth of 18m.

Accessibility & Adaptable Dwellings

Accessibility for people with disabilities and the provision of adaptable housing has not been adequately addressed within the Environmental Assessment Report. In this regard, it is considered appropriate to provide an access report and details of all adaptable dwellings in accordance with the AS1428.

Access is to be provided for people with disabilities to all dwellings. As a general rule of thumb, 1 per 10 dwellings should be adaptable. In this respect, at least 13 adaptable dwellings should be provided as part of this application.

Traffic & Parking

The proposed development provides for a total of 201 parking spaces in the basement level (174 spaces for residents; 26 spaces for visitors of which 15 spaces in the basement & 11 spaces on-street, and 1 carwash bay) and 44 bicycle spaces. The number of parking spaces provided on-site for the proposed buildings 7 & 8 (201 spaces) complies with Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005. Accordingly, it is considered acceptable.

The parking layout as shown on the approved concept plan is considered acceptable.

Conclusion

Council strongly opposes the proposed 6 storey height of Buildings 7 & 8.

Notwithstanding the above, and should the Department be of the mind to approve the height within the application, it is considered that the proposed development should be amended to comply with SEPP65 and the Residential Flat Design Code.

A better urban design outcome would be achieved if Building 8, which is over 100m in length, was separated into two individual buildings with adequate building separation (as per SEPP 65). This would reduce the bulk of the development and address key SEPP 65 Residential Flat Design Code requirements relating to building separation, daylight access and natural ventilation that have not been met by the current proposal.

It is recommended that the proposal is amended so that:

- Building 8 is separated into two individual buildings with adequate building separation to meet to SEPP 65 requirements;
- a maximum of 10% of apartments are single aspect south facing units (as per SEPP 65);
- there is a minimum separation of 12m between habitable rooms / balconies of buildings 7 and 8 (as per SEPP 65);
- a minimum of 25% of apartments to have kitchens that are naturally ventilated with direct access to an external window (as per SEPP 65);
- the maximum distance between the back of kitchen and an external window is 8m (as per SEPP 65);
- the ground floor apartments along the southern elevation are accessed directly off the street, with individual pedestrian entries activating the streetscape (as per SEPP 65);
- there is a maximum of 8 apartments per building core (as per SEPP 65); and
- there is a maximum building depth of 18m (as per SEPP 65).

An access report and details of all adaptable dwellings in accordance with the AS1428 should be provided and amendments made where appropriate to ensure access is to provided for people with disabilities to all dwellings and at least 13 adaptable dwellings are provided as part of this application.

Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above application and looks forward to further consultation on this matter.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above matters, please contact Council's Senior Development Assessment Officer, Kate Lafferty on 9806 5393.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Robert Lang
Chief Executive Officer