

9 October 2015

SCEGCS
Redlands Limited
C/- Bloompark Consulting Pty Ltd
Suite 2.02/41 McLaren St
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060

Attention: Mr Lee Thomson,

Urban Design Outcomes Letter – Master Plan for SCEGCS Redlands Senior School Campus at 272 Military Road, Cremorne – SSD 6454

BACKGROUND

We understand that the SCEGCS Redlands exhibition of its Environmental Impact Statement for the above proposal ended on Monday, 10 August 2015. We understand that during the course of the exhibition, both the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) and North Sydney Council (NSC) submitted comments with regard to particular elements of the proposal. We also understand the residents of No. 19 Waters Road made submissions during the exhibition period. The primary urban design comments from DPE, NSC and No. 19 Waters Road related to the bulk, scale and amenity impacts of Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the master plan.

Urbis has reviewed the proposal and the comments from DPE, NSC and No. 19 Waters Road and has formulated recommendations for each of the above stages to inform the built form and urban design outcomes of the proposal.

STAGE 1 – NEW LEARNING HUB

Comment

The Department of Planning questions the requirement for, and functionality, of the proposed courtyard area within the front setback of the proposed basement car park (temporary music/general education uses). The reduced deep soil planting area minimises the opportunity for the establishment of a suitable landscape scheme that would complement the elevated Gerard Street façade of the basement car park. Also, the Department questions the total number of car spaces.

North Sydney Council stated “*The basement carpark which forms part of Stage 1 has a minimal setback to Gerard Street and is raised approximately 2 metres above existing ground level. The proposal should incorporate a deep soil planting zone between the carpark and the Gerard Street boundary of the site so screen planting can be provided along the Gerard Street frontage to soften the built form and maintain the landscape character of the locality.*” And “*The proposal should incorporate greater deep soil landscaping zones across the site to improve the landscape buffer with adjoining properties and maximise the absorption of the surface drainage water across the site.*”

Response

Urbis suggests the following considerations with regard to the proposed basement car park which forms part of Stage 1:

- Replace proposed hardstand courtyard and raised planter boxes with a deep soil planting zone. The deep soil planting zone will allow for a substantial amount of plant material to reach a significant mature height thus permitting the Gerard Street interface to maintain its landscape character.
- Consider permanent educational uses to Gerard Street. The basement carpark to Gerard Street provides for a less than ideal street edge interface. The preferred street edge interface would be an active, 'eyes-on-the-street' approach. This approach would also be in alignment with crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles.
- Consider lighter façade treatment to east elevation to 8-12 Winnie Street apartment building. The proposed east elevation façade as lodged with DPE presents a large wall with a dark façade treatment. Given its northern exposure this dark treatment could make the space between the existing residential building and the proposed school building unnecessarily warm in the summer and dark in the winter. A lighter façade treatment combined with deciduous green wall would help to soften and cool this space in the summer months and brighten it in the winter months.

STAGE 2 – SPORTS AND MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE

Comment

The Department of Planning identified some key issues regarding the bulk and scale of the Sports Hall/ Drama Building. In particular the Department is concerned about the potential impact that the building envelope could have on existing Monford Place residential properties and its relationship with the existing scale of Military Road built form.

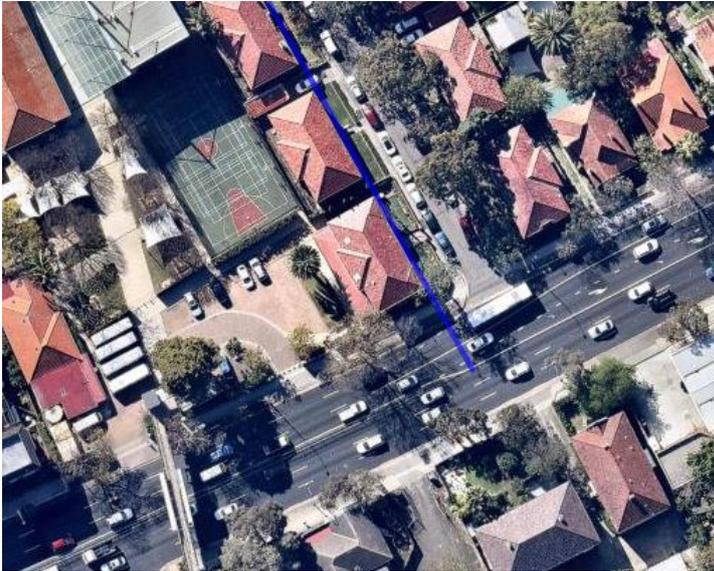
North Sydney Council raises specific concerns regarding the scale of the New Sports Hall and Drama Building (Stage 2) fronting Military Road. The New Sports Hall has a maximum building height of approximately 19.9metres and is significantly higher than existing buildings on the adjoining sites B4 Mixed Use and R4 High Density Residential zones that have maximum building heights of between 12m-16m.

Response

Urbis suggests the following considerations with regard to new Sports Hall and Drama Building:

- Increase the setback to Monford Place. The proposed setback to Monford Place as lodged with DPE is not generally consistent with the existing character as illustrated by the blue line in Figure 1. An increased setback to Monford Place will minimise the buildings perceived bulk and scale to the streetscape. We suggest the setback for the Sports Hall be in alignment with the existing residential buildings.
- Step down the building height to Monford Place. The proposed building Place as lodged with DPE presents a large continuous building mass to Monford Place with no setback to articulate the streetwall presence of the building. Stepping down the building to Monford Place in combination with an increased setback (as recommend above) will provide an articulated streetwall presence which will make the proposed new building more compatible and sympathetic to the existing surrounding built environment.

FIGURE 1 – EXISTING SETBACK TO MONFORD PLACE



- Interface to Military Road. The proposed built form to Military Road Place as lodged with DPE is generally consistent with the existing character of Military Road as a commercial boulevard as illustrated by the blue lines in Figure 2. The proposed glazing at the upper levels, the proposed entry to Military Road and the proposed street trees continue the built environment consistency that's occurs within the context of Military Road. However, the proposed building lacks a basic level of protection from the elements of rain, wind and sun. We suggest some consideration should be given to a type of weather protection; i.e. awnings. Awnings will not only help to provide a visually consistent streetscape while protecting pedestrians and people waiting at the relocated bus from the elements but also will mitigate the perceived height of the building while provide a human scale component.

FIGURE 2 – BUILT FORM TO MILITARY ROAD



STAGE 3 – REDLANDS HALL, ROSEBY BUILDING AND LIGGINS BUILDING REFURBISHMENT

Comment

No specific comment was made by the Department with regard to Stage 3.

North Sydney Council stated: “*The proposed works to the Liggins Building should ensure that the new interior layout is sympathetic to the original room configuration, retains its original joinery and other significant fabric, and that the front and side elevations are conserved.*”

Response

Urbis suggests the following considerations with regard to Stage 3:

- Preserve the intimate character of the interstitial space. We agree with Council that the proposed works to the Liggins Building Place as lodged with DPE should ensure that the new interior layout is sympathetic to the original building and that the treatment of the exterior spaces retains the intimate character and quality which exists today.

STAGE 4 – HUMPHERY LEARNING HUB AND RESOURCE CENTRE

Comment

The Department of Planning has concerns regarding the proposed building envelope and the potential impacts on the existing streetscape and adjoining residential properties.

North Sydney Council stated: “*The New Humphreys Building is setback a minimum of 1.5 metres from Waters Road with a maximum building height of approximately 21.4metres. The magnitude of non-compliance is of concern given its close proximity to residential zones that have a maximum building height of 12metres. The proposed building with its minimal setbacks to Waters Road and the likely scale of this building would dominate the streetscape and reduce residential amenity in terms of the loss of solar access to the adjoining property to the south west of the site.*”

Stage 4 of the Master Plan development also received comments from the residents of 19 Waters Road, in particular in regards to setback, building height, over shadowing and rooftop pool.

Response

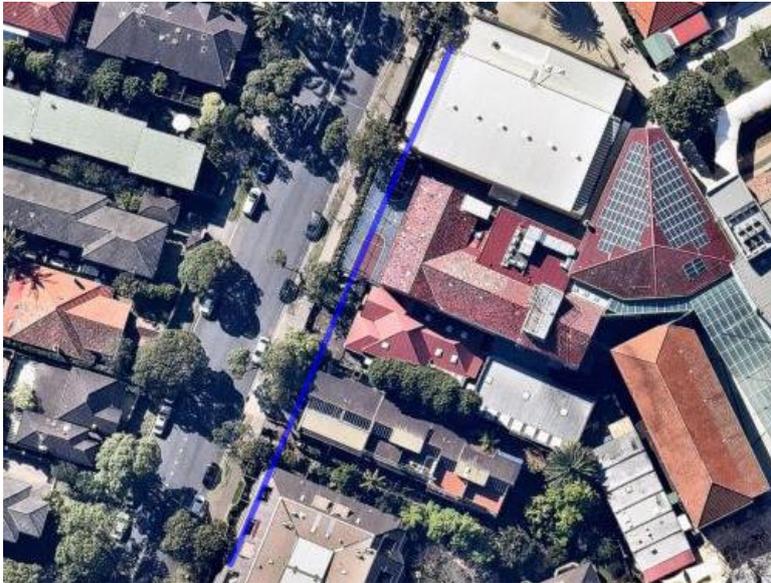
Urbis suggests the following considerations with regard to minimising the perceived impact of the proposed built form for the new Humphreys Learning Hub and Resource Centre:

- Increase the setback to Waters Road. The proposed setback to Waters Road Place as lodged with DPE is not generally consistent with the existing character as illustrated by the blue line in Figure 3. An increased and varied setback to Waters Road will minimise the buildings perceived bulk and scale to the streetscape. We suggest the setback for the Humphreys Learning Hub be in alignment with the Lang Gymnasium.
- Step down the building height to Waters Road. The proposed building as lodged with DPE presents a large continuous building mass to Waters Road with only a single setback to articulate the streetwall presence of the building. Stepping down the building to Waters Road in combination with an increased and varied setback (as recommend above) will provide an articulated streetwall presence which will make the proposed new building more compatible and sympathetic to the existing surrounding built environment.
- Increase the setback to adjacent residential building (19 Walters Road). The proposed setback to the residential building located to the south of the Humphreys Learning Hub Place as lodged with

DPE provides a less than ideal built form interface. While a two storey built form interface to a six storey or more built form is a very common occurrence through much of Cremorne, the space between the two built forms is usually greater than what is currently proposed. Therefore, we recommend increasing the separation between the proposed building and the existing residential building, i.e. increasing the setback to the boundary line. While these buildings do not fall under the purview of the Apartment Design Guide, we suggest a separation on the order of 9m – the minimum separation distance between habitable and non-habitable rooms.

- Step down the building height to adjacent residential building (19 Walters Road). The proposed building Place as lodged with DPE does not sufficiently step down to minimise its interface with the adjacent existing residential building. As mentioned above, a two storey built form interface to a six storey or more built form is a very common occurrence, however in this instance the resulting overshadowing impact is less than ideal. We suggest stepping down a portion of the building to allow for greater solar access to the existing residential building. This in combination with an increased setback will improve the bulk and scale compatibility of the proposed new building with development adjacent to the school boundaries.

FIGURE 3 – EXISTING SETBACK TO WATERS ROAD



STAGE 5 – ADAMS CENTRE EXTENSION

Comment

The Department of Planning identified some key issues regarding the bulk and scale of the new dance hub adjacent to the heritage listed former Cremorne Post Office. In particular the Department is concerned about the building envelope of the new addition and its relationship and potential impacts on the heritage significance of adjacent built form.

North Sydney Council stated: “*The three storey addition to the western elevation of the Adams Centre with a maximum building height of approximately 12.56m will impact upon the setting and curtilage of the former Cremorne Post Office. North Sydney Council considers that the bulk and scale of the new development will overwhelm the modestly scaled former Post Office by virtue of the inadequate building setbacks.*”

Response

Urbis suggests the following considerations with regard to the bulk and scale of the new dance hub adjacent to the heritage listed former Cremorne Post Office:

- Increase the separation distance to the former post office.
- Reduce the bulk of the proposed new Adams Centre Extension.

CONCLUSION

Urbis has assessed the EIS for SCECGS Redlands, Cremorne senior campus, which includes a Concept Master Plan and Stage 1 development application for the redevelopment of the site, and we have reviewed the comments submitted by both the Department of Planning and Environment and North Sydney Council with regard to the elements contained within the EIS. As such, we have formulated the aforementioned recommendations to inform the built form and urban design outcomes of the proposal. We feel the proposed recommendations and associated modifications to the proposal will help to improve build form outcome of the proposal.

Should you have any questions regarding our recommendations, please feel free to contact me at 8233 9900.

Sincerely,



Geoffrey Gerring
Associate Director