



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

849, 853, AND 859
PACIFIC HIGHWAY
AND 2 AND 8
WILSON STREET,
CHATSWOOD

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF
BB WILSON PROPERTY PTY LTD
4 MARCH 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) has been prepared by Urbis Ltd (**Urbis**) on behalf of BB Wilson Property Pty Ltd (**Billbergia**) (**the applicant**). The EIS is submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure (**DPHI**) in support of a State Significant Development Application (**SSDA**) for the site at 849, 853, and 859 Pacific Highway and 2 and 8 Wilson Street Chatswood (**the site**).

The site is located on Cammeraygal Country, and we acknowledge the Traditional Owners, their elders past and present and their deep and continuing connection to their land.

The SSDA seeks consent for a mixed-use development (**the proposed development**) comprising 36 storeys, inclusive of the 30% floor space ratio and height of building uplift provisions in *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* (**Housing SEPP**). Development consent is sought pursuant to Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1 of the Housing SEPP which relates to development for in-fill affordable housing.

An aerial photograph of the site detailing the development footprint is provided at **Figure 1**.

The purpose of the project is to facilitate the delivery of mixed-use development, including high-quality housing, inclusive of affordable housing, in a well-placed strategic location and deliver a built form outcome that is consistent with the emerging and desired future character of the Chatswood CBD.

This EIS has been prepared in response to the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (**SEARs**) dated 8 August 2024, issued for the project (DPHI Reference: **SSD-74319707**).

Project Site

The site is referred to as 849, 853, and 859 Pacific Highway and, 2 and 8 Wilson Street, Chatswood and it located in the Willoughby Local Government Area (**LGA**). The legal property description of the site is:

- Lot 1 Deposited Plan (DP) 1189541 (8 Wilson Street (Lot 1 O'Brien Street))
- SP 52947 (2 Wilson Street)
- SP 1496 (849 Pacific Highway)
- SP 60178 (853 Pacific Highway)
- SP 10110 (859 Pacific Highway)
- SP2 land fronting Pacific Highway.

The site has a 67.77m frontage to the Pacific Highway, a 50.31m frontage to Wilson Street, and 47.81m frontage to O'Brien Street. The total site area is 4,294 sqm.

The site is located north of the Chatswood CBD, approximately 500m from the Chatswood Train and Metro Station and bus terminals. The site's immediate urban context includes the train line which runs parallel to the site on the eastern border, commercial high-rise buildings to the south, and medium-density residential flat buildings to the west. The site is currently occupied by four medium density residential flat buildings and a two-storey industrial building. An aerial photograph of the site is provided in **Figure 1**.

Description of Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises:

- Demolition of existing structures, tree removal, and remediation works;
- Earthworks, excavation and retaining walls;
- Construction and operation of a 36-storey mixed use development with a commercial podium and two residential tower forms above (containing a total of 332 x residential apartments);
- Vehicular access via O'Brien Street; and
- On-site car parking and loading within six (6) basement levels (+ mezzanine level).

The proposal is defined as a mixed-use development comprising 'commercial premises', a 'childcare centre', and 'shop top housing'. The total gross floor area (**GFA**) of the proposed development is 36,323 sqm.

The residential accommodation comprises:

- 239 x market apartments and 59 x affordable apartments (47 x one-bedroom, 125 x two-bedroom, 133 x three-bedroom, and 3 x four-bedroom apartments); and
- 24 x live / work apartments.

SSD Qualification

The proposal has an estimated development cost (**EDC**) of **\$310,450,400** (including GST) (**Appendix I**).

The proposal is defined as State Significant Development (**SSD**) pursuant to Schedule 1, Section 26A of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (**Planning Systems SEPP**), as it is development to which Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1 of the Housing SEPP applies in that:

- It is not prohibited under an Environmental Planning Instrument (**EPI**) applying to the land;
- It has an estimated cost of development that exceeds \$75 million for the residential component;
- It meets the accessibility criteria of the Housing SEPP; and
- It will provide at least 10% of the total floor space as affordable housing for at least 15 years.

In accordance with Section 4.5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (**EP&A Act**), the Minister is the consent authority for the proposal. Accordingly, this DA is lodged with the DPPI as an SSDA.

Feasible Alternatives

Various alternatives were considered when developing the proposal. A 'do nothing' approach would fail to capitalise on the opportunity to revitalise the site, which is located in an optimal location less than 500m from Chatswood Station and identified in the Willoughby Housing Strategy as a focus area for mixed-use residential development in the CBD. The proposal delivers a significant contribution to Willoughby housing targets, inclusive of affordable housing, and non-residential uses such as a childcare centre and active street frontages. Given this, a "do nothing" approach would result in a severe underutilisation of the site.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to achieve the design excellence provisions of the Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012 (**LEP**). An architectural design competition concluded with PBD Architects selected as the winning scheme, demonstrating strong podium articulation and massing, and high performing solar amenity and cross-ventilation. The design competition scheme was prepared prior to the amendment to Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1 of the Housing SEPP which allows a 30% uplift in floor space ratio (**FSR**) and building height development standards associated with the provision of affordable housing.

Progressing with the design competition scheme (for solely market housing and no affordable housing) would not capitalise on the bonus scheme introduced by the NSW Government and not deliver much needed affordable housing in an accessible location. Accordingly, the applicant has sought to accommodate the additional 30% FSR and building height on the site, while retaining the key design principles established through the design competition process (via a GANSW endorsed "Bridging Design Excellence Strategy").

The SSDA option was selected as the most appropriate pathway forward as it delivers the most orderly development outcome, that is both viable for the applicant and delivers significant public benefit through the provision of 15% of the total floor space as affordable housing in a well-placed location with high amenity.

Consultation

Community and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken by Urbis and the appointed project team in the preparation of the SSDA. This includes direct engagement and consultation with:

- Community and special interest groups (via scheduled briefings) and surrounding residents (via a newsletter drop, online community survey and drop-in information sessions); and
- Government, agency and utility stakeholders.

The outcomes of the community and stakeholder engagement have been incorporated into the proposed development, and are detailed at **Section 5** and **Appendix RR** of this EIS.

Justification of the Project

The EIS has assessed the project against the requirements of the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (**SEARs**) (**Appendix A**) and relevant planning instruments and policies (**Section 4** and **Appendix C**). The key issues identified within the SEARs have been assessed in **Section 6** of the EIS. This assessment has been informed by specialist reports which include recommendations and mitigation measures. The assessment of key issues includes mitigation measures which can be adopted to ensure the project does not result in any significant impacts. These mitigation measures are included at **Appendix D**.

The project is a positive development outcome for the site and surrounding area for the reasons outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1 Summary of Development Outcomes

Matter	Response
Design Excellence / Better Placed	The proposal achieves design excellence through a Bridging Design Strategy (Section 6.1.1) and aligns with the objectives of Better Placed (Appendix M).
The project is consistent with strategic planning policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greater Sydney Region Plan: A Metropolis of Three Cities ▪ Our Greater Sydney 2056: North District Plan ▪ Willoughby Local Strategic Planning Statement ▪ Chatswood CBD Strategy ▪ Willoughby Housing Strategy 2036 ▪ Future Transport Strategy ▪ Better Placed ▪ Connecting to Country Framework ▪ NSW Housing Strategy: Housing 2041 <p>An assessment of the project against these strategies is provided in Section 2.6.</p>
The project is consistent with State and local development controls	<p>The development is permissible with consent and meets the statutory requirements of relevant environmental planning instruments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> ▪ <i>NSW Biodiversity Act 2016</i> ▪ <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> ▪ <i>Environmental Planning Assessment Regulation 2021</i>

Matter	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021</i> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021</i> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021</i> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022</i> ▪ <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021</i> ▪ <i>Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012</i>
<p>The project minimises impacts on the natural environment</p>	<p>Due to the existing the nature of the site with residential and commercial uses, there will be minimal impact on the natural environment as a result of the development.</p> <p>The design incorporates climate resilient approaches including cross-ventilation, strategic material selection, generous thermal massing, and drought tolerant landscaping (Section 6.1.7). These measures do currently not exist on the site.</p> <p>The proposed development addresses all the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) in accordance with the requirements of Section 193 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.</p> <p>Wind mitigation measures prompted by the Design Integrity Panel (DIP) have been implemented following a professional wind study (Appendix R).</p>
<p>The project minimises impacts on the built environment</p>	<p>The proposed building complies with the key NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) design guidance and criteria, which will ensure a high standard of amenity for occupants and minimise impacts on the built environment.</p> <p>The proposal has undergone an architectural design competition in accordance with the requirements of the LEP. The competition Jury confirmed the SSDA scheme exhibits 'design excellence' through a 'Bridging' Design Integrity process.</p>
<p>The project has positive social impacts</p>	<p>The proposed development enables the delivery of 308 x residential apartments (including 59 x affordable apartments) and 24 live/work studios. These apartments will be high-quality, in an accessible and amenity-rich location in the Chatswood CBD to address the housing shortfall in NSW.</p> <p>A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared in accordance with DPHI's <i>Social Impact Assessment Guideline (2023)</i> to assess changes to the following elements of value to people: way of life, community, accessibility, culture, health and wellbeing, surroundings, livelihoods, and decision-making systems.</p> <p>The SIA provides a consolidated list of measures to enhance positive social impacts and mitigate negative social impacts. Overall, the project is predicted to provide a range of key community benefits and a development outcome consistent with the local and State government vision for the area. Any potential negative impacts are isolated and can be successfully mitigated.</p>
<p>The project has positive economic impacts</p>	<p>The proposed development strengthens Chatswood CBD's position as a commercial and strategic hub by stimulating employment and economic growth.</p> <p>The proposed development will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ support existing and future infrastructure investments in the area. ▪ encourage a residential population that boosts activity beyond business hours, potentially enhancing Chatswood's nighttime economy and solidifying its status as a strategic centre where people can live, work, and play. ▪ contribute to direct employment during construction.

Matter	Response
The site is suitable for the project	<p>Considering the characteristics of the site and its immediate surroundings, the proposed development is appropriate for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It aligns with the vision to increase housing supply in key locations, particularly those near major transport hubs such as Chatswood. ▪ It offers a mix of uses that will support population growth of both residents and workers in a strategic area, enhancing Chatswood's role as a residential community and facilitating a competitive employment market by creating a more vibrant and appealing precinct. ▪ It provides high-quality housing at a crucial location, enhancing housing stability and diversity in Chatswood, and includes 15% affordable housing. ▪ The site is free from critical constraints such as flooding, bushfire hazards, and endangered species. A Remedial Action Plan has been prepared to remediate any contamination or hazardous materials (refer Section 6.2.4). ▪ The proposal aligns with the objectives of the mixed-use zone and the proposed land uses are permissible with consent on the site.
The project is in the public interest	<p>The proposal will provide the following public benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revitalise a strategically located site within walking distance of existing Chatswood Metro Station and CBD including retail, social, cultural, open space, and employment opportunities. ▪ Contribute to the Chatswood local economy. ▪ Increase housing supply. ▪ Enhance the public domain within and around the site. ▪ Promote social connectedness and cultural expression through a high-quality public domain, Connecting with Country-inspired public art, and activated ground floor tenancies.

The EIS demonstrates that the project has significant merit and should be approved subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures described in this report and supporting documents.