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**35 HONEYSUCKLE DRIVE, NEWCASTLE
NSW**

DESIGN EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

March 2018

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

On the 15th January 2018, Doma Group received the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) outlining the key items to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the redevelopment of 35 Honeysuckle Drive.

One of the key issues raised was as follows:

3. Design Excellence

- Describe the design process leading to the concept design
- Provide a design excellence strategy, including opportunities for design review throughout the planning process, for the detailed design and subsequent delivery of the development which demonstrates how design excellence will be achieved in accordance with the requirements of clause 7.5 of the Newcastle LEP 2012, in consultation with the Government Architect NSW.

This report sets out the proposed design excellence strategy to be submitted to the Government Architect of NSW to ensure this issue is addressed prior to lodging the EIS.

1.2 NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL LEP 2012 – CLAUSE 7.5

The Newcastle LEP extract (clause 7.5) sets out the following applicable criteria:

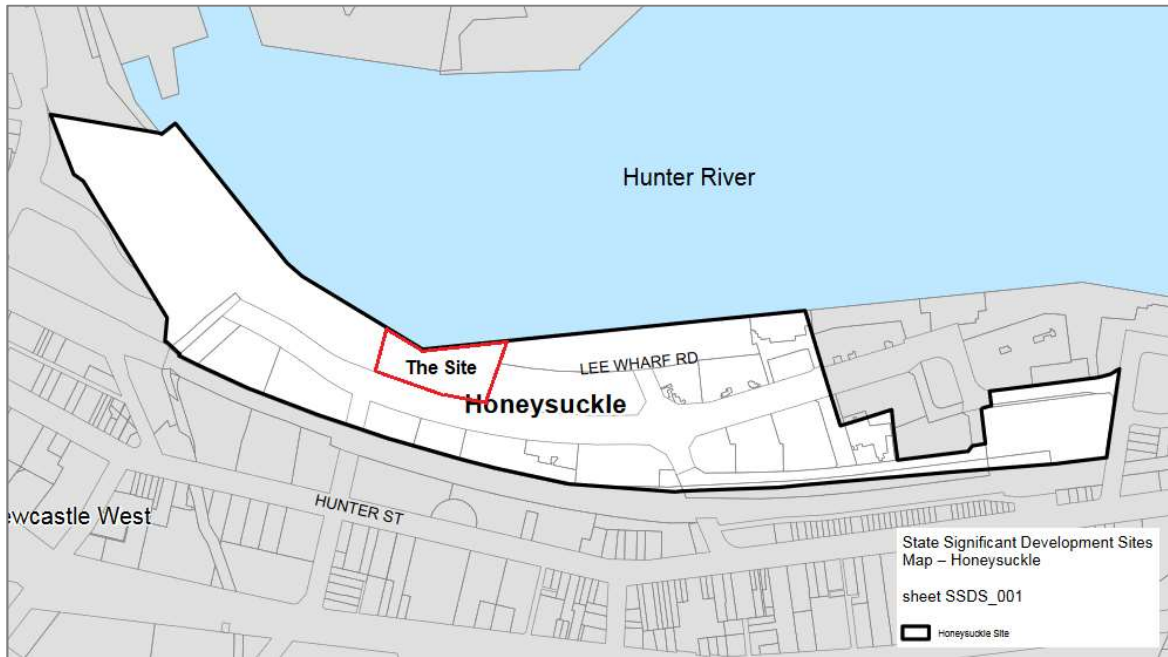
7.5 Design excellence

- (1) This clause applies to the following development on land to which this clause applies.
 - (a) the erection of a new building, or
 - (b) additions or external alterations to an existing building that, in the opinion of the consent authority, are significant.
- (2) Development consent must not be granted for development to which this clause applies unless the consent authority considers that the development exhibits design excellence.
- (3) In considering whether the development exhibits design excellence, the consent authority must have regard to the following matters:
 - (a) whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved,
 - (b) whether the form and external appearance of the development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,
 - (c) whether the development detrimentally impacts on view corridors identified in the *Newcastle City Development Control Plan 2012*,
 - (d) how the development addresses the following matters:
 - (i) heritage issues and streetscape constraints,
 - (ii) the location of any tower proposed, having regard to the need to achieve an acceptable relationship with other towers (existing or proposed) on the same site or on neighbouring sites in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form,
 - (iii) bulk, massing and modulation of buildings,
 - (iv) street frontage heights,
 - (v) environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity,
 - (vi) the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development,
 - (vii) pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements,
 - (viii) the impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain.

1.3 BACKGROUND

In July 2017, the Hunter Development Corporation (HDC) called for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the sale and development of the premium waterfront site located at 35 Honeysuckle Drive (the Site) formerly known as Lee 4.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 states that development within the Honeysuckle area with a capital investment value of more than \$10 million is identified as State Significant Development (SSD). As such this development has the NSW Department of Planning as the approving authority.



This was two stage Disposal Process which aims to deliver a high-class design led development and be a catalyst for lifting the standard of architecture across the Honeysuckle precinct and CBD. The Site is north facing, has uninterrupted panoramic harbour views and is situated in the centre of the Honeysuckle Redevelopment Project in Newcastle, NSW.

The Site is zoned B4 Mixed Use and is approximately 5,250m² in area. With a potential 11,550m² of GFA, the Site is near the new light rail, the university city campus, market town and the booming West End.



Photo above – Aerial image of the site in the emerging Honeysuckle precinct

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Doma Group and their architects SJB successfully won the open tender from HDC in December 2017 and the land sales contract was exchanged on the 11th of December 2017.

The development proposal was not strictly compliant with the LEP and will require Doma to lodge a Clause 4.6 Development Application seeking amendments to the Maximum Building Heights. The application to lodge a Clause 4.6 variation has been supported by HDC and their design panel as it delivers strong urban planning outcomes for the site.

Doma Group through their planning consultant KDC lodged a SEAR's application on the 19th December 2017 with the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) inside the one-month deadline from contract exchange. Contractually HDC require Doma Group to lodge a Development Application within 6 months of contract.

On the 15th January 2018, Doma Group received the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) outlining the key items to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the redevelopment of 35 Honeysuckle Drive.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE DESIGN AND SELECTION OF THE PREFERRED DEVELOPER

2.1 DESIGN GUIDELINES

HDC as custodians of the land are driving a process that strives for better design outcomes in the Cottage Creek Precinct. It is recognised that good design is not only dependent on good designers. To ensure future proposals are of a high standard, the assessment weighting and the measures implemented throughout the tender process must also be considered.

In June 2017, HDC engaged Chrofi architects to prepare a Design Guideline document known as '*Lee 4 Design Criteria and Objectives CROPHI 2017*' (Attachment XX?) to help ensure Proposals submitted exhibited a high standard of design. It is a key reference document for design excellence.

The guidelines were developed to show proponents how they may address the design criteria objectives. These guidelines include a reference design that proponents could utilise in their own designs or propose alternate measures to to address and satisfy the design objectives.

The objectives and guidelines are driven by the intention to generate an authentic, intimate and truly great place for building occupants and the public alike. The objectives and guidelines consider the needs of the public, the feasibility of the development and the desired future character of the building and surrounding spaces.

2.2 SELECTION PROCESS

Hunter Development Corporation's (HDC) design excellence strategy for the above site (the Site) leading up to the selection of Doma Group was as follows:

- HDC liaised with the Government Architects Office and obtained the Ministers approval to release the site using a two-stage disposal process

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- HDC formed the Design Review Panel (DRP) to evaluate submissions against any design based criteria. The DRP initially comprised Lee Hillam from Government Architect NSW and Phillip Pollard from Newcastle City Council's, Urban Design Consultative Group (UDCG).
- HDC sought Expressions of interest (EOI) in July 2017 to develop the site and received a total of eight submissions.
- This EOI included the CHROFI Guidelines and required proponents to respond to the following criteria weighted 50% each
 - capability of the proposed development team, including its commitment to achieving design excellence,
 - appreciation of the site and understanding of the site design objectives.
- Following a review of the proposals HDC shortlisted three proponents to participate in the Request for Detailed Proposals (RFP).
- Lee Hillam from the Government Architect of NSW provided input on the RFP documents, including Evaluation Criteria 3 – Design.
- The Design Criteria was the main criteria and given a weighting of 50% to ensure a high standard of design is realised. The evaluation also considered the net financial offer and the level of certainty that a proposal will proceed to consent and ultimate development
- During the RPF stage HDC issued an Addendum to confirm that *'while HDC has adopted the Design Objectives, the CROPHI document and the reference designs included within it are provided as a reference only and Proponents may choose to adopt or pass over elements of the reference design as they determine is appropriate in their RFP. Proposals submitted would be assessed on their merit and response to the Evaluation Criteria, not to the extent they are similar to the CHROFI reference designs'*.
- HDC expanded the DRP so that it comprised the following members:
 - Lee Hillam – NSW Government Architects Office
 - Dr Philip Pollard – Amenity Urban & Natural Environments / Newcastle City Council's UDCG
 - Michael Otswald - Amenity Urban & Natural Environments / Newcastle City Council's UDCG
 - Murray Blackburn Smith –Newcastle City Council's UDCG

Each member of the DRP complied with HDC's confidentiality and conflict of interest protocols.

- Each shortlisted proponent was required to provide the DRP and mid-way design presentation, with the aim to provide progressive feedback on the design development This was held on the 4th October 2017 and the minutes of this meeting and the DRP feedback are attached in Appendix A.
- On the 19th October the RFP closed and the three submissions were received from the shortlisted.

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- The DRP reviewed the submissions and met with the Evaluation Panel to discuss the merits of each. The DRP ranked the submissions, and considered Doma's design to be superior to the other two. The Evaluation Panel scored Doma and the other submissions accordingly
- Doma was identified as the preferred proponent and Contracts were exchanged 11 December 2017. The contract is subject to Doma obtaining development consent within 12 months and subject to some elements of the design being developed further in consultation with the DRP and HDC Doma is current working towards refining its design to satisfy the Sale Contract

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 DOMA GROUP'S DESIGN PROCESS THAT LEAD TO THIS CONCEPT

Doma Group engaged leading architects SJB to design the project. SJB were chosen given the firm's demonstrated capability and its listing on the *NSWGA's Supplier List 2017*. Locally, SJB have designed the site directly adjacent for Doma Group in Newcastle as well as being actively involved in the 'East End' development in the Newcastle CBD.

During the two-stage selection process Doma Group and SJB responded to the HDC tender requirements and were notified as being the preferred proponent. Since then Doma Group and SJB have engaged / consulted on the design development progression with the DRP on the following occasions:

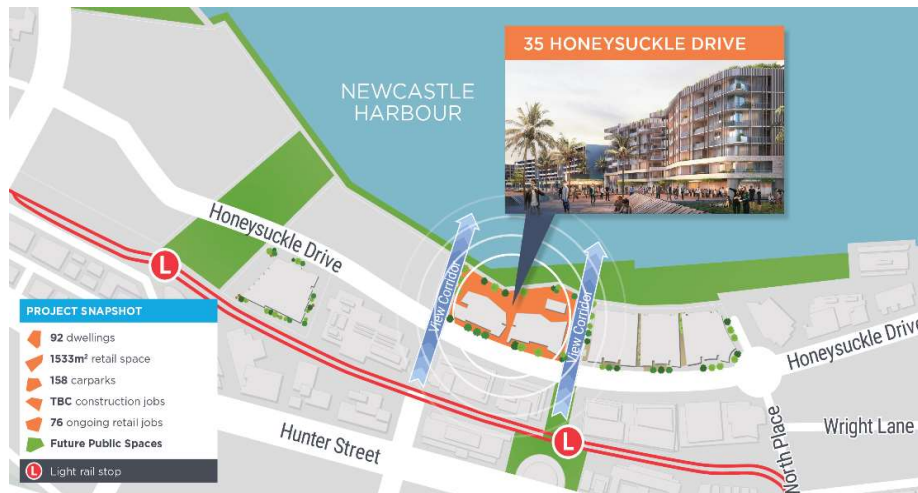
- Presentation 1 - 17th January 2018
- Presentation 2 - 13th February 2018
- Presentation 3 – 20th March 2018 (proposed) 

This forum has allowed a collaborative approach to the design development and the opportunity for the DRP (including the City of Newcastle and the NSW Government Architect) to ensure the design excellence provisions of the LEP can be met.

After Presentation 3 it is expected that HDC and the DRP will endorse the design concept as the agreed 'Purchasers' Proposal'.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed EIS application will seek consent for the redevelopment of the site for a mixed-use development involving ground floor commercial premises with residential units above; with associated on site basement car parking.



Specifically, the proposal includes the following:

Construction of two (2) nine (9) storey mixed use buildings consisting of commercial/retail uses, residential apartments and carparking. The proposal will comprise the following:

Two basement levels of parking, providing approximately 180 car park spaces. Vehicular access to the site is via Honeysuckle Drive; and

Ground level retail pavilion comprising seven (7) commercial/retail spaces (1551m² in total);

91 apartments, consisting of 17 one-bedroom, 41 two-bedroom and 33 three-bedroom units; and

Associated landscaping design.

The design and architectural treatment of the building has had due regard to the site's prominent location within the Honeysuckle precinct and its proximity to the Hunter River foreshore. The façade treatment proposed provides high amenity for future occupants of the building and proposes a high quality visual presentation.

The proposal has been designed to provide a high level of activation to the Honeysuckle Drive and foreshore frontage through the provision of commercial/retail uses, a retail pavilion and public open space. Generous landscaping for the site is proposed, including a partial green roof. Further to this, works to upgrade the site with public domain with timber decking, seating and ample deep soil landscaping are proposed. This open space area fronting the waterfront will be for the use of the public and residents of the site. The apartments are provided with private open space in the form of balconies.

3.3 OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICS

Development Specifics	Proposal
Site Area	5,250m ²
Gross Floor Area	Allowable: 11, 550m ² Total proposed: 11,400m ² = Overall FSR: 2.17:1

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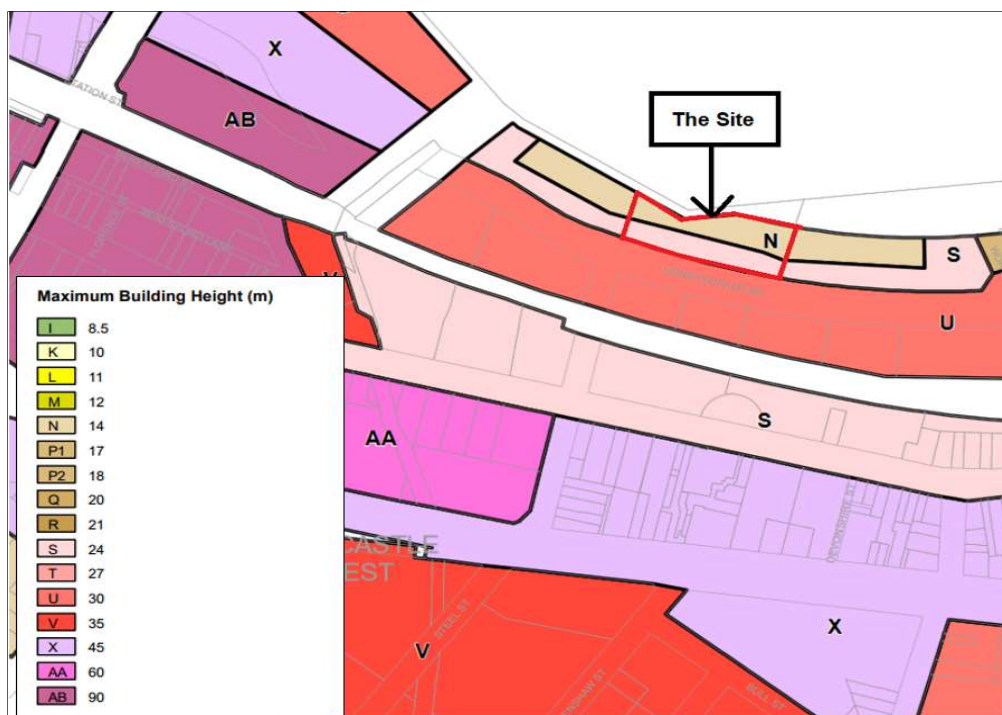
Building Layout	Basement Level: Carpark Ground floor: Commercial premises and retail pavilion Levels 1 – 7 : Residential Apartments = Total building height of 9 storeys (approx. 25.4m)
Apartment Mix	17 x one (1) bedroom apartments 41 x two (2) bed apartments 33 x three (3) bed apartments = 91 apartments total
Parking Provision	To meet the DCP provisions in 2 levels of basement

3.4 HEIGHT OF THE PROPOSED BUILDINGS

The Newcastle LEP establishes two (2) height controls for the site, with a maximum height of 14m applicable to the northern portion of the site and a maximum height of 24m applicable to the southern portion of the site (refer to Figure over). The proposed development consists of a maximum height of 25.4 metres and therefore does not strictly comply with the height controls of the site. This approach was however encouraged by the Design Review Panel to provide visual inters along the length of Honeysuckle Drive (refer to Minutes in Attachment A).

Further detail and assessment will be provided in the EIS.

Figure below – Building Heights Map Extract from LEP 2012 (HOB_004G)



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3.5 FLOOR SPACE RATIO

The Newcastle LEP establishes two (2) FSR controls for the site, with a maximum FSR of 2:1 applicable to the northern portion of the site and a maximum FSR of 2.5:1 applicable to the southern portion of the site. The development has been designed so as to comply with the FSR requirements across the site, with an overall FSR of 2.17.

4.0 DESIGN EXCELLENCE APPROACH

4.1 WAY FORWARD AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY

Following the satisfaction of the design matters required in the contract to the satisfaction of HDC, which is expected early March 2018 Doma Group then will continue with the preparation of the EIS.

As the DRP is made up of key stakeholders including the Government Architect, City of Newcastle and the Urban Design Consultative Group it is anticipated that they will internally brief their organizations and provide feedback via HDC to Doma Group. It is not intended before the lodgment of the EIS to provide presentations separately to these organizations.

As a contractual requirement, Doma Group is required to lodge the full Development Application and EIS consistent with the agreed Purchasers Proposal to HDC for approval prior to lodging with the Department of Planning. The EIS is to address all matters raised by the Department of Planning in the SEAR's received on the 15th January 2018.

Following receipt of this approval from HDC, Doma will lodge the EIS to the Department of Planning for Approval.