

SECTION 75W PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT



HONEYSUCKLE CENTRAL



PREPARED FOR
HONEYSUCKLE CENTRAL UNIT TRUST
MARCH 2011

Ref : 10010

SECTION 75W PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT
HONEYSUCKLE CENTRAL for HONEYSUCKLE CENTRAL UNIT TRUST

Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 63 109 684 648)

Address:

Suite 1, Level 1, 104-106 Vincent Street, Cessnock
PO Box 93, CESSNOCK NSW 2325

Contact:

(ph) 02 4991 4793

(fax) 02 4990 7551

(email) admin@insiteplan.com.au


QUALITY ASSURANCE

This document has been prepared, checked and released in accordance with the Quality Control Standards established by Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd

Issue	Date	Description	By
A	08.03.2011	Draft	SL
B	09.03.2011	Edit	JD
C	09.03.2011	Client Review	Client
D	10.03.2011	Final Review	SL
E	10.03.2011	Approved	SL

Copyright © Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd

This document has been authorised by : _____



Disclaimer

This report has been prepared based on the information supplied by the client and investigation undertaken by Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd & other consultants. Recommendations are based on Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd professional judgement only and whilst every effort has been taken to provide accurate advice, Council and any other regulatory authorities may not concur with the recommendations expressed within this report. This document and the information are solely for the use of the authorised recipient and this document may not be used, copied or reproduced in whole or part for any purpose other than that for which it was supplied by Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd. Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd makes no representation, undertakes no duty and accepts no responsibility to any third party who may use or rely upon this document or the information.

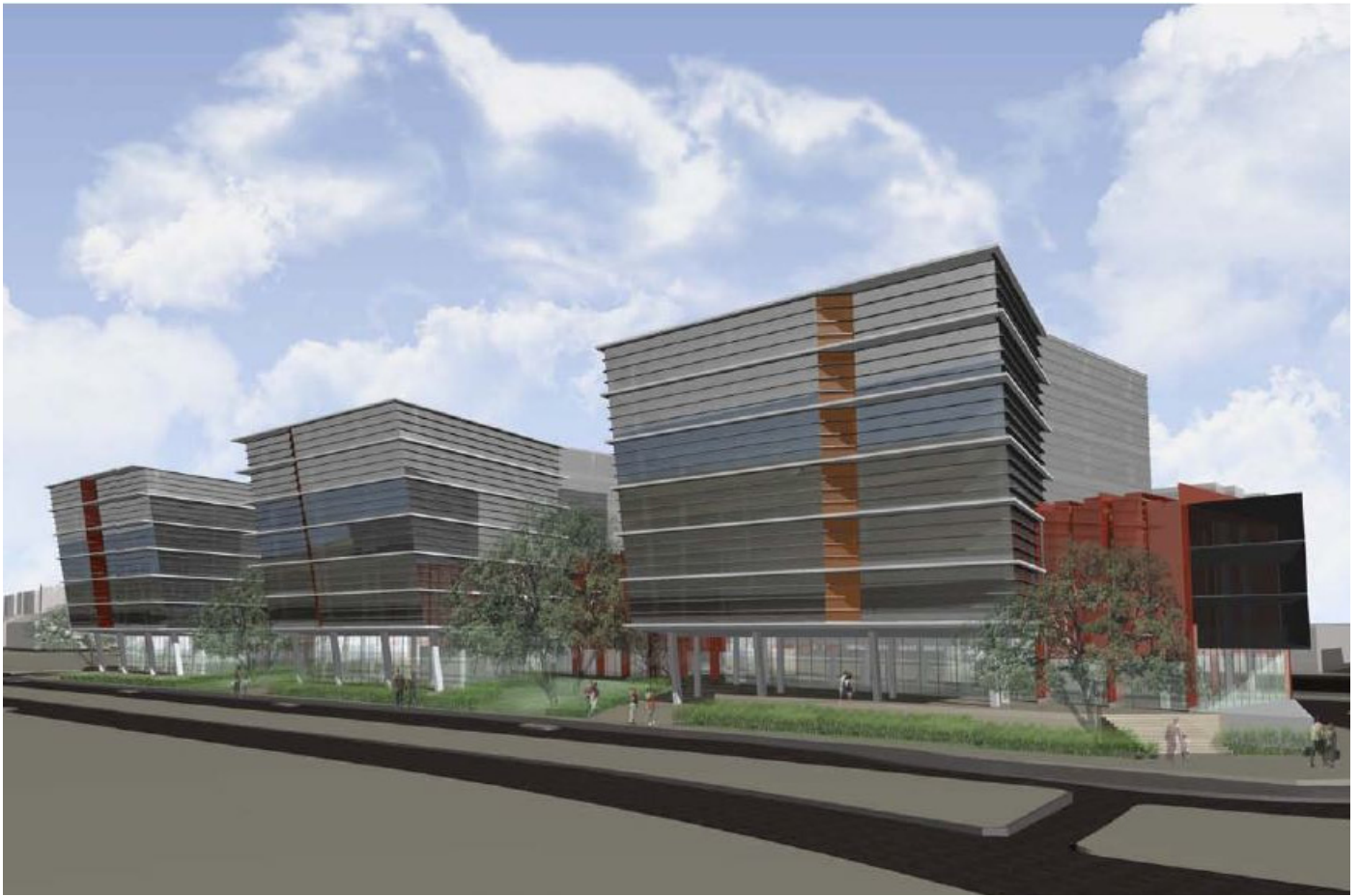
Confidentiality Statement

All information, concepts, ideas, strategies, commercial data and all other information whatsoever contained within this document as well as any and all ideas and concepts described during the presentation are provided on a commercial in confidence basis and remain the intellectual property and Copyright of Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd and affiliated entities.

This document has been registered with our solicitors along with a copy of all previous materials.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1	3.5 Condition B6.....	13
1.1 The Site	2	3.5.1 Northern Elevation Amendments.....	14
<i>Figure 1 - Subject Site.....</i>	<i>2</i>	3.5.2 Southern Elevation Amendments.....	14
1.2 Background.....	3	3.5.3 Landscaping.....	15
1.3 The Proposal	3	3.5.4 Consideration by NCC.....	16
1.3.1 Approved Development.....	3	3.6 Access, Parking and Traffic	17
1.3.2 Proposed Amendment.....	4	3.6.1 Access.....	18
1.3.3 Amendment Details.....	5	3.6.2 Carparking.....	18
1.4 Amendment Implications	5	3.6.3 Bicycles.....	18
1.4.1 Building Footprint.....	5	3.6.4 Traffic Impacts.....	18
1.4.2 Landscaping.....	5	3.6.5 Pedestrian Access.....	19
<i>Table 1 - Landscaping Details.....</i>	<i>6</i>	3.6.6 Public Transport Access.....	19
1.4.3 Total Building Plan Area.....	6	3.7 Public Domain, Activation and Safety	19
<i>Table 2 - Building Plan Areas.....</i>	<i>6</i>	3.8 Mine Workings and Risk of Subsidence	19
1.4.4 Gross Floor Area.....	7	4. CONCLUSION.....	20
<i>Table 3 - Gross Floor Areas.....</i>	<i>7</i>		
1.4.5 Building Height.....	7	APPENDICES	
1.4.6 Carparking.....	8	Appendix 1 - Suters Design Modification Report	
<i>Table 4 - Carparking.....</i>	<i>8</i>	Appendix 2 - Newcastle City Council Urban Design	
1.5 Reasons for the proposed modifications.....	8	Consultative Group Minutes 16/02/2011	
2. STATUTORY PROCESS.....	9	Appendix 3 - Traffic and Carparking Assessment	
2.1 Modification of Minister's Approval	9		
2.2 Director General's Requirements	9	ENCLOSURES	
2.3 Consultation	9	Enclosure 1 - Suters Honeysuckle Central Modified	
3. PLANNING ASSESSMENT.....	10	Drawings	
3.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act	10	Enclosure 2 - Terras Landscape Plans for Honeysuckle	
3.2 Ecologically Sustainable Dev. Principles	10	Central	
3.3 Environmental Planning Instruments	11		
3.3.1 SEPP 71 (Coastal protection).....	11		
3.3.2 SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007.....	11		
3.3.3 Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008.....	12		
3.3.4 Lower Hunter Regional Strategy	13		
3.3.5 Newcastle DCP 2005.....	13		
3.3.6 Newcastle City Plan.....	13		
3.4 Built Form / Design / Visual Impacts	13		



1. INTRODUCTION

Insite Planning Services Pty Ltd have been engaged by the Honeysuckle Central Unit Trust to prepare this Section 75W Planning Assessment Report which accompanies an application made pursuant to Section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to modify consent MPO-0043. This consent was issued by the Minister on the 28th September, 2009 in respect to a project known as Honeysuckle Central. Honeysuckle Central is major commercial development located in the heart of the Honeysuckle precinct, Newcastle. The modification has been triggered by condition B6 of the consent which required the proponent to submit revised architectural and landscape Masterplans to the Department prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate. Those revisions have been completed in consultation with Newcastle City Council, who has conditionally endorsed the revisions, and the nature of the new revised design requires an amendment to the consent.

The amendment to the consent relates to condition A3 which lists the plans that were approved as part of the consent. These plans need to be replaced with new plans that comply with condition B6.

The major design change to the project is the deletion of two (2) of the three (3) access ramps located off Wright Lane. There have also been a number of other modifications to the southern and northern facades of the development as well as to the proposed landscape treatment of the site. These changes have resulted in a significant improvement to the overall design of the building and in particular allowing streetscape activation on the four sides of the development site.

The primary planning issue that has resulted from the architectural revisions, and in particular the deletion of the two access ramps, is an increase in carparking area (and numbers) and commercial floor area. The approved development reached and did not exceed the limit of the Floor Space Ration (FSR) as provided under Clause 23 of the Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008. Given that there has been an increase in the commercial floor area there has been a corresponding relatively minor 5% increase in the FSR to 2.63:1. This report addresses this issue and all other relevant considerations as detailed in the Departments original assessment report dated July 2009. Importantly the footprint

of the development has reduced in area, the total plan area of the development is reduced while the height has remained the same. Consequently the bulk and scale of the development, which is the underlying objective of the FSR standard, has actually reduced and this is the primary argument to support the modification.

1.1 THE SITE

The development site is known as Honeysuckle Central and is located on the southern side of Newcastle Harbour and the northern side of the Great Northern Rail Line. The site is bound by Honeysuckle Drive to the north, Wright Lane to the South, Worth Place to the West and a new road to the east (see figure 1 – Site Location).

The site is currently owned by the Hunter Development Corporation, a subsidiary of the NSW State Government, who are under contract to sell the site to the Honeysuckle Central Unit Trust (the Trust). The Trust have obligations under this contract to deliver the project and that includes commencement of works on site in June 2011

The site is currently owned by the Honeysuckle Central Unit Trust, a subsidiary of the Buldev Group and who have a contractual arrangement with the previous owners of the site, the Hunter Economic Development Corporation, to deliver the project.

The original application was lodged by the Eureka / Buldev Joint venture, however Eureka are no longer involved in the project. The site is now controlled through the Buldev Group via its subsidiary the Honeysuckle Central Unit Trust.

The site sits in the centre of the Honeysuckle development area. Existing development within this area includes a mix of commercial, residential and retail uses. The Honeysuckle Precinct Masterplan has seven (7) precincts. These are known as Carrington, Cottage Creek, Honeysuckle, Hunter Street, Linwood, Marina and Wickham. The development site sits within the Honeysuckle precinct.

To the east of the site are located the relatively new “Chifley” apartments; to the south Wright Lane, a public carpark and the rail line; to the west of the site sits the site of the proposed Newcastle University City Campus and to the north existing mixed use development including residential, retail, commercial and entertainment.

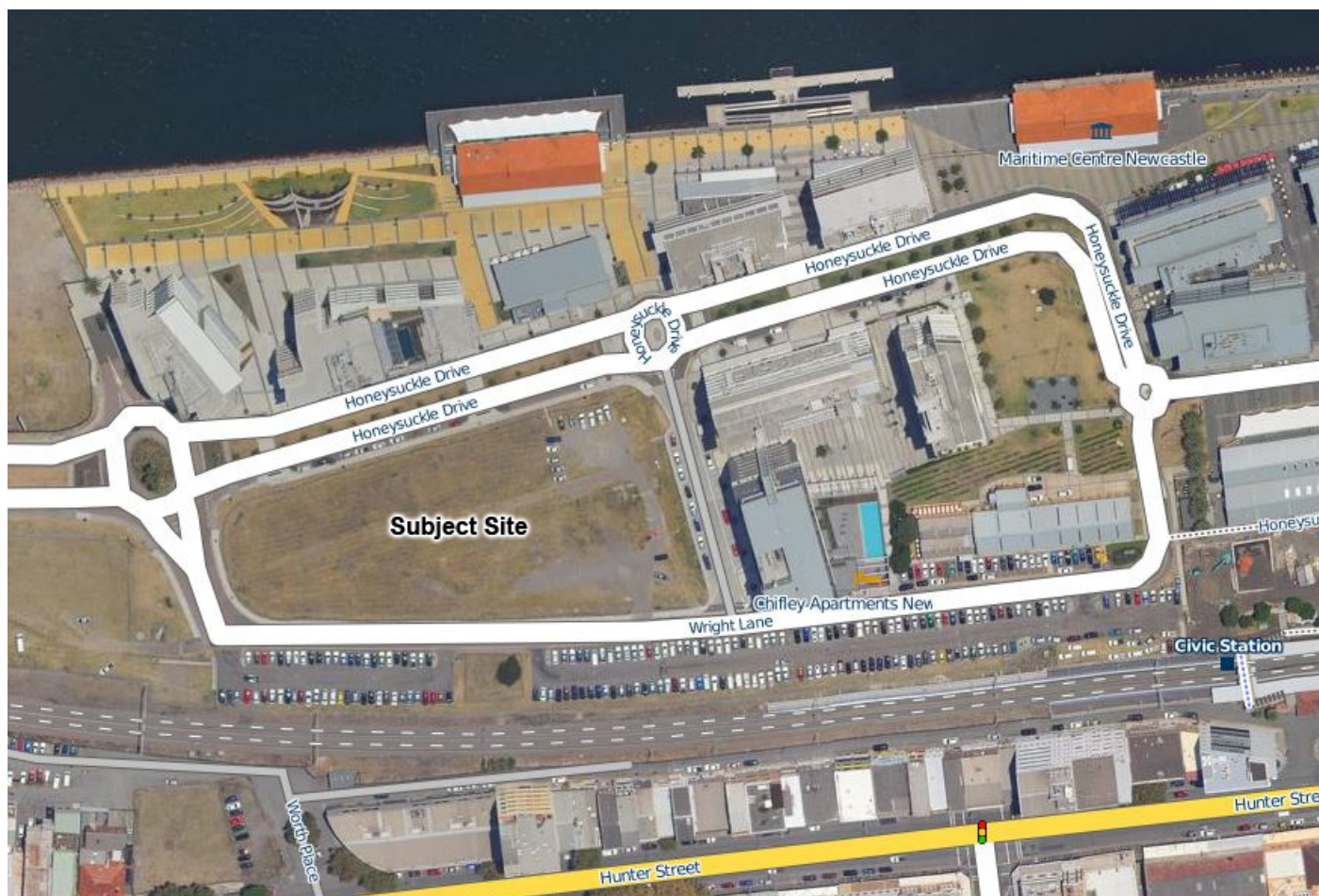


Figure 1 : Aerial photograph of the

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Honeysuckle Central project began the assessment phase back in March 2008 when the Director General formed the opinion that the proposal constituted a Major Project to be assessed under part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979). The Environmental Assessment was lodged with the Department on the 23rd of December 2008. The Minister determined the application by issuing a conditional approval on the 28th of September 2009.

Issues considered in the original assessment of the application by the DoP included:

- Statutory provisions including permissibility, Floor Space Ratio and height controls
- Public interest/benefit considerations relating to the employment generation of the proposal, the realisation of the Honeysuckle development precinct objectives and activation of Honeysuckle Drive
- Sustainability considerations noting the positive 5 star Green Star rating achievement of the design
- Access, Parking and Traffic considerations
- Urban design outcomes in terms of visual impact and design merit as well as public domain and crime prevention considerations
- Heritage considerations in respect to a number of listed heritage items located nearby the site
- Mine subsidence

Condition B6 of the approval required the proponent to revise the design to address:

- The design of the northern facades including building identity features.
- The design treatment of the southern facade to reduce visual bulk dominance.
- Details of the deep soil planting, any reduction in paving or hard surfaces and location of shade trees to be planted along Honeysuckle Drive subject to accessibility requirements still being satisfied.

Since approval the proponents have been reviewing the commercial aspects of the development and have recently revised the design in light of this condition. On February 4 amended design plans were submitted to Newcastle City Council with a formal presentation made on February 16 to the Newcastle Urban Design Consultative Group.

Newcastle City Council has since responded to the amended design via their Urban Design Consultative Group advising that it had been conditionally supported.

1.3 THE PROPOSAL

1.3.1 APPROVED DEVELOPMENT

The original proposal approved, as generally described by the Department, was the construction of a single building containing 3 x 8 storey towers connected via a podium design 3 storey carpark. The features also included:

- 21,370m² of GFA representing a Floor Space Ratio of 2.5:1
- A height of 32m
- At the ground floor level, commercial services or retail uses
- Three separate access arrangements to each of the 'towers' from Wright Lane
- Subdivision of the site into three lots effectively creating a separate lot in line with each of the towers.

The development was valued at the time of lodgement in 2008 at approximately \$55m. It will house 800 employees and create 300 jobs during construction.

1.3.2 PROPOSED AMENDMENT

As a result of complying with condition B6 and through the consultation process with Newcastle City Council (NCC), there have been some changes to the Northern Honeysuckle Drive Elevation, the Southern Wright Lane Elevation and to the landscaping Masterplan.

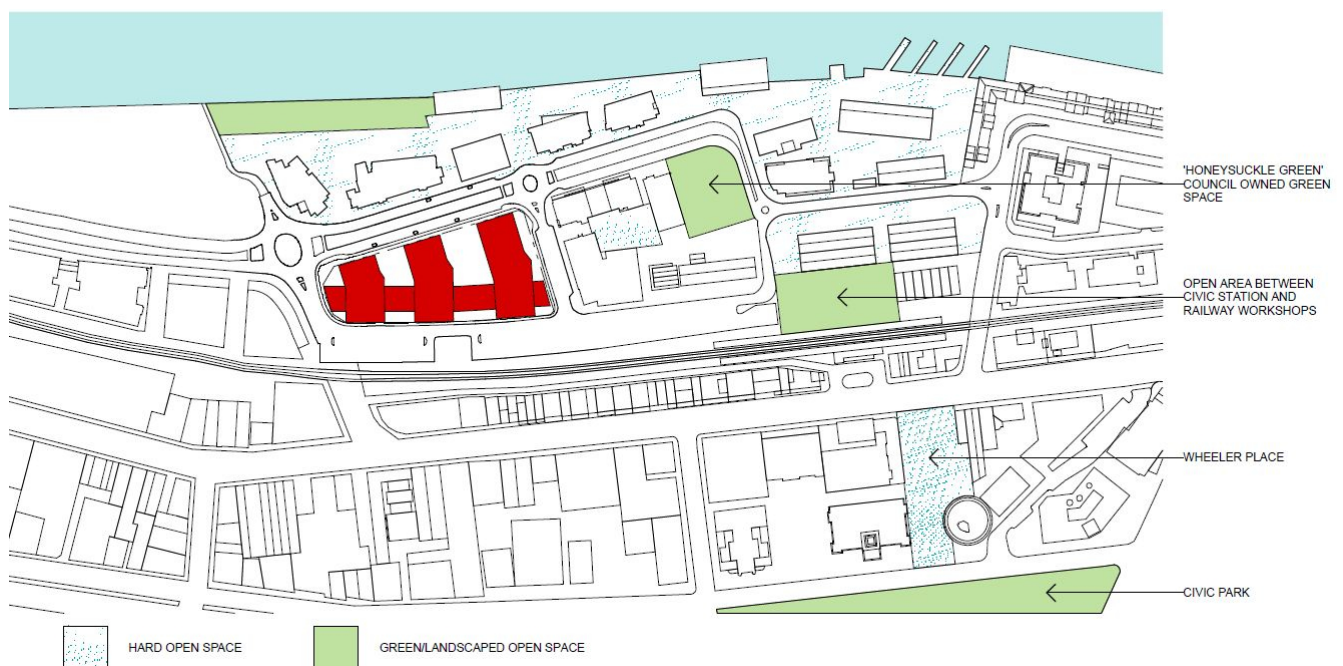
It is proposed that condition A3 of the consent, which lists the approved plans, be amended by replacing the relevant approved plans with those plans containing the proposed modification. Those amended set of plans are provided as enclosures to this report. Condition A3 currently reads as follows:

A3 Development in accordance with plans

The development will be undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Assessment dated 23 January 2008 prepared by Urbis Planning Consultants including all appendices, and the following drawings prepared by Suturs Architects:

Drawing No.	Revision	Name of Plan	Date
DA04	G	Ground Floor Plan / Site Plan	01/10/2008
DA05	G	Basement Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA06	G	Level 1 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA07	G	Level 2 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA08	G	Level 3 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA09	G	Level 4 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA10	G	Level 5 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA11	G	Level 6 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA12	G	Level 7 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DA13	G	Roof Plan	01/10/2008

It is proposed to amend this condition as follows:



A3 Development in accordance with plans

The development will be undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Assessment dated 23 January 2008 prepared by Urbis Planning Consultants including all appendices, and the following drawings prepared by Suters Architects:

Drawing No.	Revision	Name of Plan	Date
DD01	C	Ground Floor Plan / Site Plan	01/10/2008
DD02	A	Basement Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD03	A	Level 1 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD04	A	Level 2 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD05	A	Level 3 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD06	A	Level 4 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD07	A	Level 5 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD08	A	Level 6 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD09	A	Level 7 Floor Plan	01/10/2008
DD10	A	Roof Plan	01/10/2008
DD11	A	North/South Elevations	01/10/2008
DD12	A	East/West Elevations	01/10/2008
DD16	A	Sections	01/10/2008
DD17	A	Sections	01/10/2008
DD18	A	Sections	01/10/2008
DD23	A	3D Imagery	01/10/2008

Landscaping of the development will be undertaken in accordance with the Landscape Masterplans dated March 2011 prepared by Terras Landscape Architects.

1.3.3 AMENDMENT DETAILS

The modifications to each plan is illustrated on the plan set at appendix 2 and detailed in the Suters EA Modifications Report at Appendix 1.

1.4 AMENDMENT IMPLICATIONS

The amendments to the design, especially the removal of the two access ramps has had a number of other implications in terms of the design. These are detailed below.

1.4.1 BUILDING FOOTPRINT

There has been a reduction in the total building footprint from 3,826m² on the approved plans down to 3,379m² on the proposed new plans. This is a moderate decrease in building footprint of some 12%.

It should also be noted that in order to provide a level of articulation in the design, the upper levels project over the ground plain and increase this projection as they rise to the upper most level.

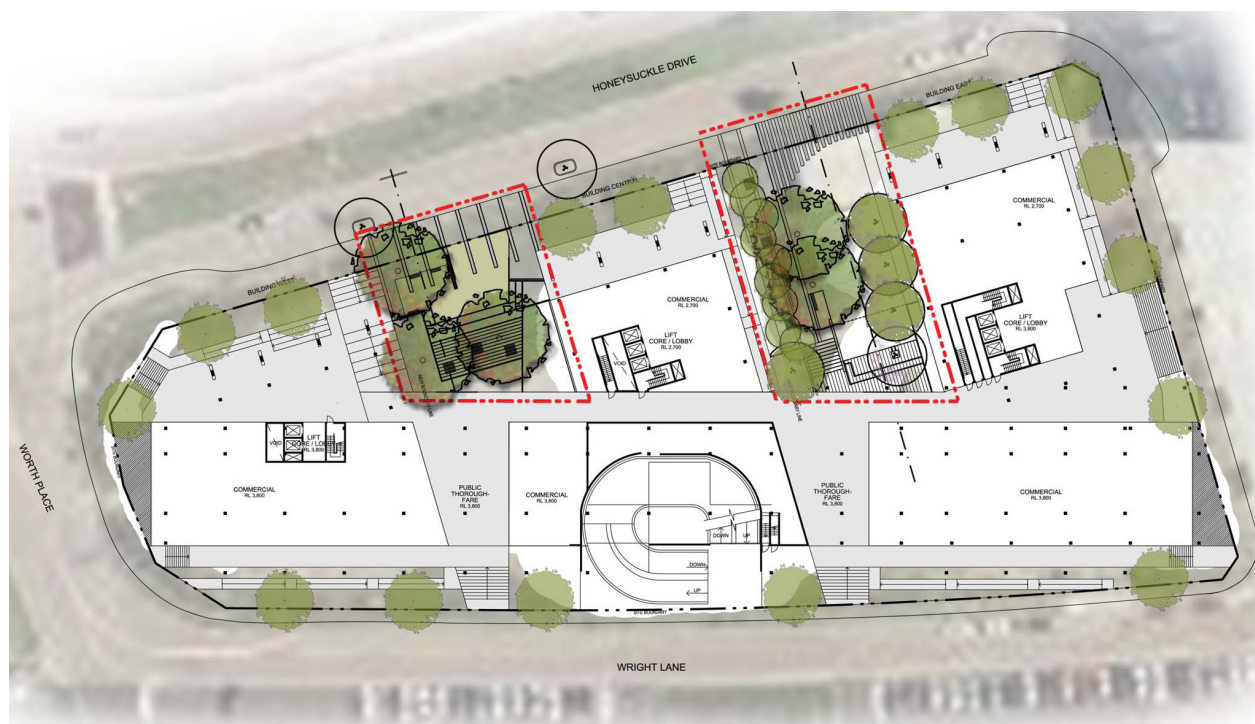
1.4.2 LANDSCAPING

The area dedicated to soft and hard landscaping has also increased from 4,722m² to 5,169m².

There have also been changes in the type of landscaping proposed as required by Condition B6 with an increase in the amount of deep soil zones and a corresponding decrease in hardstand areas as illustrated below.

TABLE 1 - LANDSCAPING DETAILS

	Approved	Proposed
Hardstand	3,041m ²	2,983m ²
Deep Soil Zones	773m ²	1,281m ²
Other Landscaping Zones	908m ²	905m ²



1.4.3 TOTAL BUILDING PLAN AREA

The total Building Plan Area includes all areas of the building (including carparking areas) and it has also reduced from 39,744m² down to 38,993m². This represents a decrease of 751m² or 2%.

TABLE 2 – BUILDING PLAN AREAS

Level	Approved	Proposed
G	3,826m ²	3,379m ²
B	3,762m ²	3,572m ²
1	3,197m ²	3,175m ²
2	5,465m ²	5,538m ²
3	5,496m ²	5,570m ²
4	4,448m ²	4,374m ²
5	4,467m ²	4,411m ²
6	4,517m ²	4,444m ²
7	4,602m ²	4,530m ²
TOTAL	39,744m ²	38,993m ²

1.4.4 GROSS FLOOR AREA

While the building footprint has decreased, the amount of site landscaping increased and the total floor area decreased, the actual Gross Floor Area of the development has increased from 21,370m² to 22,455m².

TABLE 3 – GROSS FLOOR AREAS

	WEST			CENTRAL			EAST		
	West FECA	West FECA + UCA	West UCA	Central FECA	Central FECA + UCA	Central UCA	East FECA	East FECA + UCA	Ease UCA
Ground	591	591	0	730	730	0	1,334	1,334	0
Level 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Level 2	381	381	0	623	675	52	997	1,053	56
Level 3	397	397	0	642	694	52	1,014	1,070	56
Level 4	917	963	46	1,307	1,362	55	1,632	1,688	56
Level 5	934	980	46	1,329	1,384	55	1,649	1,705	56
Level 6	952	998	46	1,346	1,401	55	1,665	1,721	56
Level 7	969	1,015	46	1,363	1,418	55	1,683	1,739	56
TOTAL	5,141	5,325	184	7,340	7,664	324	9,974	10,310	336
Total FECA								22,455	
Total UCA								844	
Total (FECA + UCA)								23,299	
FECA Difference (from last GFA calculation)								1,085	
PREVIOUS FSR:									
Total Site Area								8,548	
FSR								2.5:1	
Max GFA (FECA)								21,370	
CURRENT FSR:									
Total Site Area								8,548	
FSR								2.63:1	
Max GFR (FECA)								22,455	

FECA = Fully Enclosed Covered Area (FGA as per NCC LEP)

UCA = Unenclosed Covered Area

This effectively means that the Floor Space Ratio has also increased from 2.5:1 to 2.63:1

The reason for the increase in GFA is:

- Increased available area at the ground floor level for commercial/retail space due to the deletion of the access ramps to the eastern and western towers, and
- Efficiencies in building design by reducing the areas required for such things as building amenities and lift space.

1.4.5 BUILDING HEIGHT

The building height has not changed and remains at 32m.

1.4.6 CARPARKING

Total carparking area has increased from the provision of 360 spaces to 443 spaces.

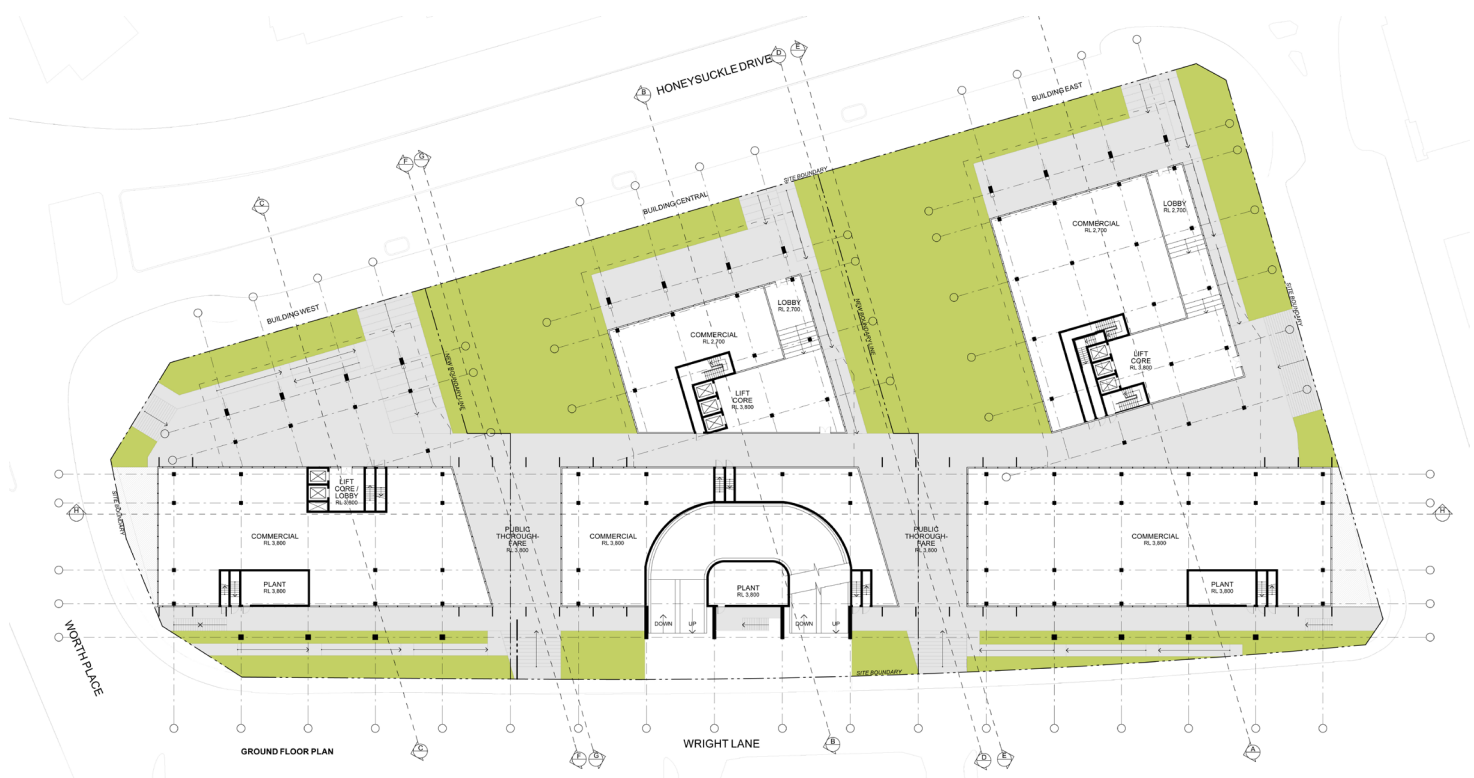
TABLE 4 - CARPARKING

Level	Approved	Proposed
B	113	116
1	80	108 (including stacked)
2	80	108 (including stacked)
3	87	111
TOTAL	360	443

1.5 REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

The reasons for the modification are simply due to the redesign process required by condition B6 of the consent. At the ground level the two carpark accesses have been deleted in order to improve the urban design of the building from the southern elevation and the landscaping areas have been increased so as to allow for more area on site to be available for deep soil plantings. This has resulted in:

- Increased area of overall landscaping and as well as an increase in the area on site available for soft landscaping and deep soil plantings
- The removal of the access ramps into the east and western towers has increased opportunity for ground floor commercial/retail space. This has allowed a design that now enables the development to activate the streetscape on all frontages providing a significant improvement
- The original approval specifically did not include approval of the elevations or the landscaping, and this modification seeks to include those elements into the consent and at the same time address the specific concerns raised by consent via condition B6.



2. STATUTORY PROCESS

This section of the report details the statutory process in respect to the preparation and assessment of the application for modification.

2.1 MODIFICATION OF MINISTER'S APPROVAL

This application to modify approval MP 08-0043 has been lodged under Section 75W of the Act with the Director General of the Department of Planning. Under this section of the Act the Minister has the power to vary conditions. It is noted that Section 75W(2) states that the Minister's approval for a modification is not required if the project, as modified, would be consistent with the original approval. In this instance a modification to a condition is required and a formal application to modify the approval is necessary. The power to grant consent to the modification lies with the Minister.

2.2 DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REQUIREMENTS

Under Section 75W(2) the proponent must lodge the application to modify the Minister's approval with the Director General who may then in turn notify the proponent to address certain Environmental Assessment Requirements. In this instance the proposed modifications are triggered by the consent and have been discussed with officers from the Department of Planning, who have advised of their requirements in respect to this application.

Following further assessment of this report and the accompanying plans it may be necessary to issue the proponent with DGR's to allow sufficient information for the Minister to make a determination.

2.3 CONSULTATION

Section 75W does not contain provisions requiring applications for modification to be publicly exhibited.

Under Section 75X(2)(f) and Clause 8G of the Regulations the Department must place a copy of the application on the Department's website.

In terms of consultation with Newcastle City Council, this is implicit via condition B6 and the proponent has already undertaken this process. A copy of Newcastle City Council's response to the proposed modification is attached at Appendix 4.



3. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

This section addresses what are considered to be the relevant issues for consideration in the assessment of this application for modification.

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT

In considering the Environmental Assessment, the Director General's Assessment Report made specific reference to the objects of the Act which are detailed under Section 5 as follows:

The objects of this Act are:

(a) to encourage:

- (i) the proper management, development and conservation of natural and artificial resources, including agricultural land, natural areas, forests, minerals, water, cities, towns and villages for the purpose of promoting the social and economic welfare of the community and a better environment,*
- (ii) the promotion and co-ordination of the orderly and economic use and development of land,*
- (iii) the protection, provision and co-ordination of communication and utility services,*
- (iv) the provision of land for public purposes,*
- (v) the provision and co-ordination of community services and facilities, and*
- (vi) the protection of the environment, including the protection and conservation of native animals and plants, including threatened species, populations and ecological communities, and their habitats, and*
- (vii) ecologically sustainable development, and*
- (viii) the provision and maintenance of affordable housing, and*

(b) to promote the sharing of the responsibility for environmental planning between the different levels of government in the State, and

(c) to provide increased opportunity for public involvement and participation in environmental planning and assessment.

The report noted that “*of particular relevance to the assessment of the subject application is consideration of the Objects under Section 5(a) (i), (ii) and (vii) are significant factors in the determination of the application. The proposal does not raise significant issues with (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (viii).*”

No aspects of the modified proposal would change this view.

3.2 ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

An ESD report accompanied the original EA which proposed a number of strategies to meet a 4.5 star NABHERS rating and a 5 star Green star rating. The assessment report by the Department also addressed the principles of ESD. Nothing in respect to the proposed modification would alter the assessment and conclusion in respect to ESD as outlined in the Department's original report. Furthermore, meeting these requirements is stated in the proponent's Statement of Commitments.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

The following Environmental Planning Instruments (EPI's) are relevant to this proposal:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Developments) 2005
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007
- State Environmental Planning Policy 55 (Remediation of Land)
- State Environmental Planning Policy 71 (Coastal protection)
- Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008

Also of relevance to the assessment of the project was the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS).

The EA for the project was assessed against each of these EPI's and the LHRS; the only matters of relevance to the application for modification are the Newcastle City centre LEP 2008, SEPP (Infrastructure) and SEPP 71.

3.3.1 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY 71 (COASTAL PROTECTION)

It is noted that the Major Project Assessment Report prepared by the Department in consideration of the original EA addressed the Policy, stating that the project is consistent with Clause 8 of SEPP 71. Nothing in the proposed design modification would reasonably change this view as the end result is a better design outcome. The modification is considered to still achieve a principle embraced by the policy, namely to improve development within coastal areas. It is worthwhile also making the point that Clause 8 specifically refers to "development applications"; this matter not being a development application (Under Part 4 of the Act) effectively means that this provision is irrelevant. However as pointed out above Section 75J(3) states that the Minister may still take into consideration the provisions of any EPI, and this provision would be relevant in that regard.

3.3.2 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (INFRASTRUCTURE) 2007

As stated above SEPP's, being environmental planning instruments, don't strictly apply to Part 3A matters but the Minister is obliged to take them into consideration. In respect to the SEPP (Infrastructure) the original EA was referred to the RTA and considered by the Regional Development Committee. Given the proposed modification will result in a very minor increase in traffic generation and that the Traffic Report at Appendix 5 concludes that the original assessment took a development of this approximate size into consideration, the Minister may reasonably determine that such referral of this application is not warranted.





3.3.3 NEWCASTLE CITY CENTRE LEP 2008

Section 75R(3) states that LEP's do not apply to or in respect of an approved project, however Section 75J(3) states that the Minister may still take into consideration the provisions of any EPI. The issue of relevance in the determination of the application for modification in this case is Clause 23 of the Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008 (NCCLEP 2008) which has a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) development standard of 2.5:1.

While the initial approval complied with this development standard, the proposed modification achieves a FSR of 2.63:1. This represents a 5% variation to this development standard. While Clause 23 of the NCCLEP 2008 does not prohibit the development in respect to this application for modification by way of the provisions contained in S75R(3), it remains a relevant issue for the Minister to consider.

In consideration of this issue the following points are submitted:

- The underlying objective of the FSR is to control size, bulk and scale of developments (Newcastle DCP – Urban Housing 5.2). The modified design when compared to the approved design will deliver a building that is smaller in size, bulk and scale. As outlined in section 1.5 of this report:
- The footprint of the building has reduced by some 447m² or 12%.
- The total floor plan area has reduced by 751m² or 2%.
- Building height has remained the same.
- Landscaping of the site has increased by 477m² or 9%.

Consequently there is effectively an overall improvement in terms of design in respect to the size, bulk and scale considerations because the proponent is effectively proposing a smaller building envelope with increased landscaping.

- The amended design has resulted in a far superior design outcome especially at ground level. The approved plan effectively 'backed' onto Wright Lane with three separate access ramps into each of the towers dominating the streetscape. The modified proposal has eliminated two of these from the eastern and western towers. This effectively allows the development to activate and integrate with the public domain around its entire perimeter.
- Further to the previous point, instead of a large part of the streetscape being dominated by 'dead' spaces (ie access ramps), these have now been replaced with active spaces in the form of commercial/retail area.

- The provision of more active spaces as outlined in the previous point also results in a 'safer' development, reducing potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflict. The modified design is superior as it allows improved surveillance around the entire perimeter of the building.
- The reduced building footprint has allowed the landscaped area of the site to be increased which allows a better interface between the development and the public domain. In particular the design improves the overall street-scape presentation in the locality.
- The modified design has superior building efficiency. The modified proposal delivers a higher FSR; achieving this without increasing height and reducing the building footprint and plan area. The increase in ground floor commercial/retail floor area will add significantly to the buildings economic sustainability and the vibrancy of the neighbourhood.
- Finally, the design modifications have been driven by the approval itself. Condition 6B required the proponent to revise the design to improve northern and southern elevations and site landscaping. This has been undertaken and in the process design efficiencies have been achieved that have allowed greater floor area to be created without increasing the building envelope as pointed out in 1 above. Landscaped area has also been increased, as has the buildings' relationship with the public domain.

While there have been minor alterations made to the floor plans from level 1 up, the primary reason for the increase in GFA is due to the deletion of the two access ramps. This has enabled larger areas of commercial/retail space to be created at the ground level. This is a much better use of this space and as outlined above; results in a better design outcome.

3.3.4 LOWER HUNTER REGIONAL STRATEGY

The original proposal was assessed and found to meet the objectives of the strategy through the provision of 800 full time jobs post construction and 300 jobs during construction. Nothing in the modified design will change this.

3.3.5 NEWCASTLE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2005

The assessment by the Department of the EA found that the project was consistent with the provisions of this DCP. Given the design of the proposed building is effectively the same and if anything the building envelope has reduced in size, the modified design also remains consistent with the provisions of this DCP.

3.3.6 NEWCASTLE CITY PLAN

Part of the vision of this plan is for the Honeysuckle development precinct to serve as the main area for major new office investment in Newcastle. The project is and remains consistent with this plan.

3.4 BUILT FORM / DESIGN / VISUAL IMPACTS

The original assessment report prepared by the Department addressed these considerations and raised some issues. In particular the report noted concerns regarding the design raised by Newcastle City Council. The Department report concluded by stating that:

"the proposal meets the requirements for design excellence with a high standard of building design and materials that contributes positively to the overall architectural quality of the city and is appropriate in the context of the scale of the surrounding developments within the Honeysuckle area, subject design refinements through conditions."

This was subsequently addressed via condition B6 of the EA approval.

3.5 CONDITION B6

In order to approve the modification as proposed, the Minister must be satisfied that the proposal satisfies condition B6 of the approval, as this condition triggered the design changes requiring the consent modification.

Condition B6 required the preparation of modified plans in consultation with Newcastle City Council addressing:

- The design of the northern facades including building identity features.
- The design treatment of the southern facade to reduce visual bulk dominance.
- Details of the deep soil planting, any reduction in paving or hard surfaces and location of shade trees to be planted along Honeysuckle Drive subject to accessibility requirements still being satisfied.

The modified plans at Appendix 1 have sought to satisfy the intent of this condition. A report has also been prepared by Suters architects to accompany their plan which outlines compliance with this condition at Appendix 1. In summary the Suters report puts its case as follows:

3.5.1 NORTHERN ELEVATION AMENDMENTS

The design team has interpreted 'building identification features' as referencing the splayed northern facades to the three building elements along Honeysuckle Drive. The intention for these facades was to present an alternative to the current building form: a consistent walled outcome along Honeysuckle Drive. The original design addressed this issue through the introduction of splayed facades and large landscaped spaces between the buildings, while maintaining the current building alignment to break down the 'block' nature of the streetscape.

The new design introduces further articulation to the splayed glass facades by introducing slab projections to each floor, staggering and splitting the walls and introducing colour panel break-ups. As the Suters report states "These articulation devices will provide a number of recessed elements breaking up flat glazed walls by adding light and shade to the facades and reducing their apparent height over the streetscape. The position of the recessed elements is different for each building and therefore provides variety to the building presentation along Honeysuckle Drive."

These modifications will create a certain identity for the development that differentiates it from its neighbours, while still making a harmonious and complementary contribution to Honeysuckle's public domain.

3.5.2 SOUTHERN ELEVATION AMENDMENTS

To maintain a level of consistency in the design the review of the southern façade has concentrated on the office/ramp portion of the three towers. The significant design change to these areas is the removal of the access ramps to the east and west towers.

Access Ramps - The removal of two ramps allows for a larger area of retail / commercial spaces at the ground level effectively opening up the ground floor area from the northern elevation through to the southern elevation for both the eastern and western towers. As the Suters report points out "*Both end tenancies and the adjacent streetscapes will*



benefit by a significant increase to the amount of facade activation by way of glazing as opposed to carpark ramps and screens."

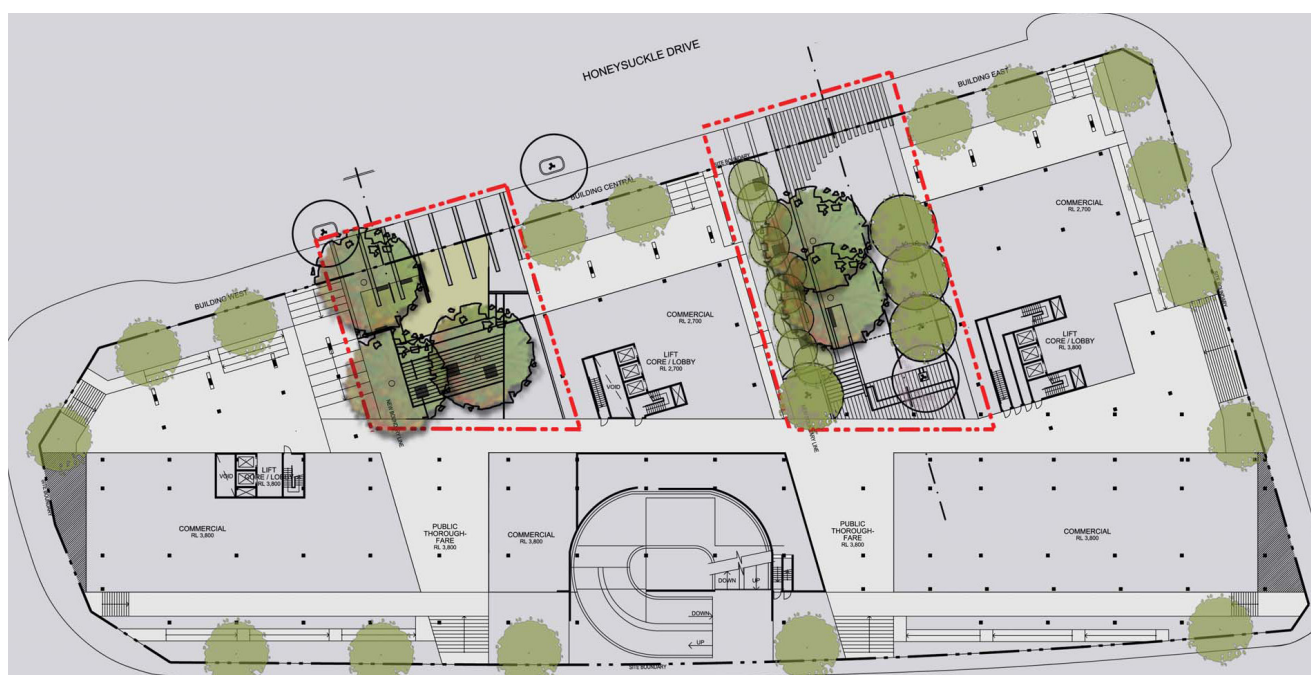
It is also proposed to replace the screening with articulated screens. The space immediately behind the refined screens is proposed to be used for a number of functional elements such as tandem car spaces, mechanical plant and bicycle storage.

Glass Facades - As has been proposed for the northern elevations, articulation to the glass facades is provided by way of removal of the deck spaces, removal of slab projections, the introduction of angled walls and introducing colour panel break-ups. These elements combined have changed the composition of the facade and eliminated the visual bulk and dominance. These facade changes provide recessed elements adding light & shade to the facade composition. The east and west facades of all buildings wrap glass down the sides to a suspended level to echo the Honeysuckle drive frontage and provide a threshold to the glass volume and subsequently reduce its apparent bulk.

3.5.3 LANDSCAPING

Terras Landscape Architecture has been introduced into the project team so as to provide the necessary skill to the landscape design process. The layout of the development has enabled two "pocket parks" to be created with direct access off Honeysuckle Drive. These pocket parks, with large areas for deep soil planting to occur, will be generously landscaped with attractive gardens, well-maintained lawns and large, deciduous shade trees (e.g. *Liriodendron tulipifera* [Tulip Tree] and *Platanus* spp. [Plane Tree]).

As detailed in the Suters EA report, the aim of this design is "to create an open landscape fronting Honeysuckle Drive that gradually dissolves into smaller, more intimate spaces as people move further into the site. Lawn areas will give way to more formal sitting areas enabling level changes to occur allowing pedestrians to reach the podium levels of the development. Lighting effects will be used to address security issues and to create a night-time ambience extending the use of the courtyards into the evenings."



As required by Condition B6, adequate space and deep soils have also been provided on the southern side of the development. This will enable for the planting of palms and additional shade tolerant trees and shrubs as a means of improving the urban qualities of Wright Lane and to reduce the apparent scale of the development especially when viewed from the railway line and car parking areas.

3.5.4 CONSIDERATION BY NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

The amended design plans have been submitted to Newcastle City Council with a formal presentation made on February 16 to the Newcastle Urban Design Consultative Group (UDCG). The minutes of the Groups considerations of the modified design are presented at appendix 4. The recommendation of the Newcastle UDCG was as follows:

The Group was of the view that, subject to the sourcing of suitably large scale super-advanced feature trees, the landscape master plan addressed the issues previously raised by the Group, and offered an attractive contribution to Honeysuckle drive (sic) and the development's occupants.

The opportunity outlined by the proponent of removing two of the three visually dominant vehicle ramps facing Wright Lane assisted in the building's presentation as viewed from the south, and was supported by the Group.

While the general design direction in regard to the eastern, northern and western facades was considered by the Group to be a positive development, some further refinements were suggested for the design development process which should assist in providing more individual building identity and visual interest. Selection of appropriate finishes and colours, as well as the selection of glazing were also crucial to the success of the proposal.

Consequently while the Newcastle City Council representative body have conditionally supported the revised masterplan, they have recommended further refinements. In response to the issues raised by the UDCG, the Managing Principal of Suters Architects, David Rose, has responded as follows:

UDCG Comment

"While the Group preferred the appearance of the 'crisp' insertions of the earlier façade version which included recessed decks, the more subtle corner 'depressions' in the façades of the preferred option did go some way toward relieving what would otherwise be a fairly bland and repetitious façade treatment. The Group was not convinced that this treatment would be successful and recommended that the applicant look at other options to reinforce the proposed contrasting elements in the façade, and to possibly introduce some variety in the treatment of each of the three entries."

Response

We believe that these comments (of the UDCG) are somewhat subjective and without a full appreciation for the design framework which has informed the architect's proposal. The fundamental design approach for this large site within the Honeysuckle precinct is to present a "family" of buildings which are linked in appearance and yet quite separate and individual building entities.

On a macro scale the introduction of the pocket parks provides extensive landscaped voids between each of the 3 buildings. The limiting of the width of each building, the different overall size of each building and the individual fenestration treatment of each building, within the "family" design framework, provides a significant contribution to the presentation of an individual identity of each building: and as such we believe this meets the intent of this particular condition of approval.

Furthermore on a micro scale the detailing of the articulated forms created by the splaying of each building's facade will add to the individual identity of each building. The combination of splayed and recessed glazed elements with protruding window transoms and projecting floor elements, in conjunction with the large landscaped voids presents a dynamic built form along the Honeysuckle Drive frontage. The profiled facade form at the above ground level is different for each building; as well it is punctuated with a coloured glazed ribbon to the splayed portion of the fenestration for the upper levels of each of the buildings. This glazing is to be a different colour for each building and is to be repeated at ground level to herald entry nodes and identify detailed treatment for the entire building height. We consider that this further enhances the presentation of each building as an individual identity. As such we are of the opinion this further satisfies the intent of this particular condition of approval.

The combination of the macro and the micro design approaches provide the basis for a strong design outcome, of three buildings with their own unique identity, unified by common themes of shape and form to create a "family" of buildings.

UDCG Comment

"Further, the Group noted that the material quality and finish of the exposed floor slab would be important to the overall presentation of the building. The architects indicated that at this stage the detailing and finish of the protrusion had not been finalized. The Group suggested that if these elements were to be the exposed concrete floor slab, then the quality of the formwork and concrete would be critical to the finish of the building.

The Group noted that the design had not yet developed to a stage at which a materials and colours board was available. It was suggested that as part of the design development process, this should be made available. It was also suggested that as the building facades are almost entirely glazed, the glass should not be excessively dark or highly reflective."

Response

We believe that as the detailing is refined for the buildings, including finalisation of material and colour selections, the integrity of the buildings will be defined and enhanced. In our opinion the superiority of the building's finishes will present a quality built outcome which is a complimentary response to the distinctive built environment already existing in the Honeysuckle precinct.

Environmental Amenity

The Departments assessment report addressed issues related to solar access, acoustic privacy, visual privacy, view loss and water quality, storm water and flooding. In summary it concluded that it was:

"satisfied the location, design and ESD measures of the buildings exhibit the necessary requirements for a safe and sustainable development and an acceptable amenity of the building occupants to be delivered."

Nothing in the proposed modified design will change the assessment of these issues.

Heritage

A Heritage Impact Statement was prepared and submitted in support of the EA for the original project. It addressed the proposals potential impact on several heritage listed items in the vicinity of the site as well as archaeological considerations. In summary the Departments assessment concluded:

"The Heritage Impact Statement details the necessary research framework and procedures to be enacted should items of heritage significance occur during the excavation phase of the development, with the excavation methodology detailed in the statement of commitments.

A condition has also been included in the terms of the approval that details the process to be followed should historical archaeological or aboriginal relics be discovered during the excavation process."

From an archaeological perspective the entire site was always going to be disturbed through either building or landscape construction works. Furthermore the building footprint and hence footings have actually reduced in area so the potential for impact on archaeological considerations should have reduced.

In terms of nearby heritage items the design of the development has been improved and the bulk of the building reduced, otherwise the development is largely the same proposal with three towers at 32m in height. Consequently the modification will not adversely impact on nearby heritage items.

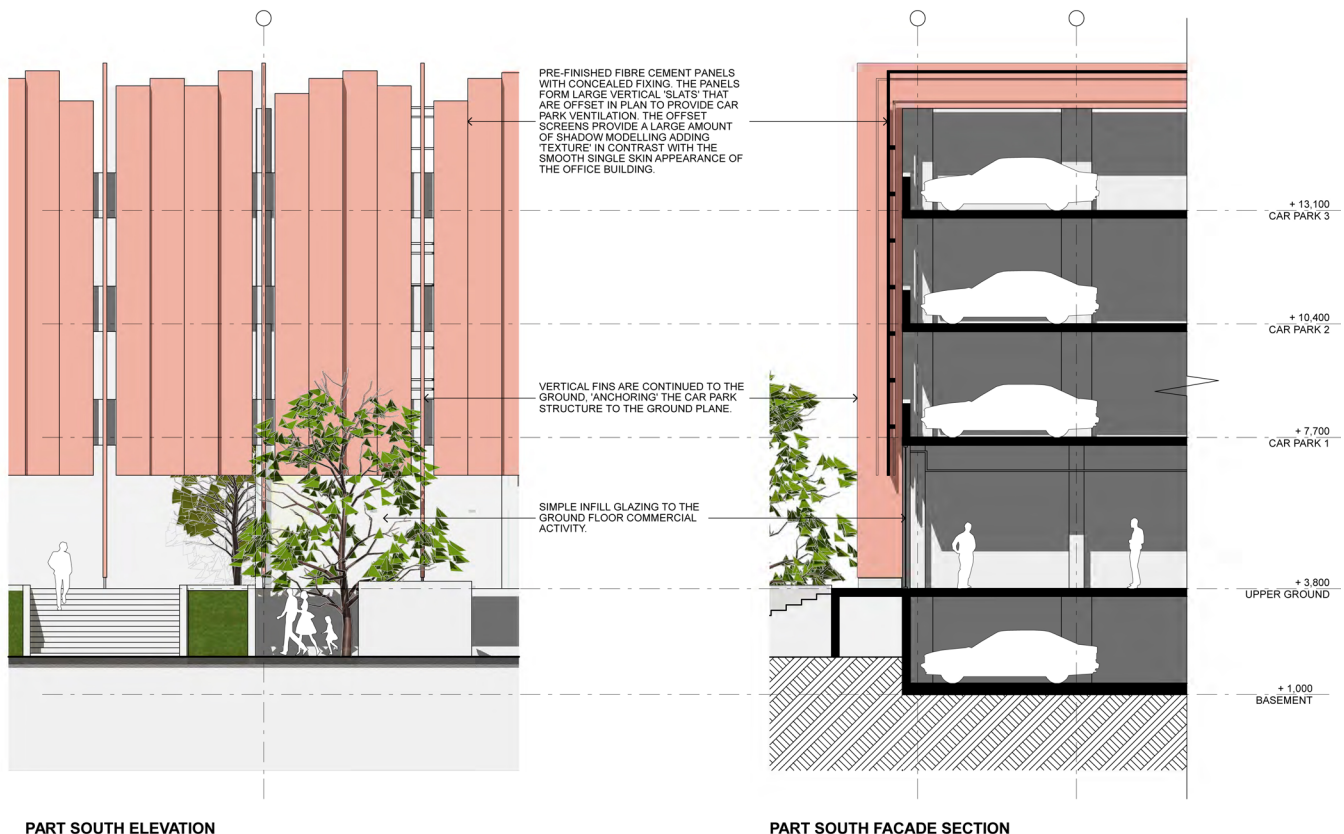
3.6 ACCESS, PARKING AND TRAFFIC

The modified proposal has resulted in an increase in GFA and carparking spaces, so there are implications in respect to these considerations. Mr Sean Morgan of Better Transport Futures has undertaken a review of the modified project and his advice is contained at Appendix 3.

3.6.1 ACCESS

There is a significant improvement in site/development access as a result of the proposed modifications. It is understood that Newcastle City Council had concerns regarding the three proposed access points to each of the towers as approved in the original application off Wright Lane. Under the modified proposal this is reduced back to one access point to the central tower. This will reduce the potential for traffic conflict and traffic/pedestrian conflict in Wright Lane.

3.6.2 CARPARKING



Because there is an increase in the GFA, the carparking requirement will have a corresponding increase. The original plans proposed the provision of the 356 carparking spaces where as the modified proposal proposes 443 spaces.

Under the provisions of the NCCLEP 2008 there is a requirement for 1 space per 60m². Based on a revised GFA of 22,455m² the development needs to provide 374 spaces. This effectively means that there is an excess of 69 spaces. Of the total number of carparking spaces provided, 45 qualify as stacked parking. The Newcastle DCP allows stacked parking on merit. In this case there is an excess of carparking by some 69 spaces, so the stacked parking is considered to have merit.

3.6.3 BICYCLES

The Newcastle City Council DCP requires bicycle storage to be provided at the rate of one (1) space per 200m² of GFA. The consent currently has a requirement for 107 bicycle storage spaces so based on a GFA of 22,455m² this requirement will need to be increased to 112 bicycle storage spaces.

3.6.4 TRAFFIC IMPACTS

A review of the modified plans has been undertaken by Better Transport Futures with their report attached at Appendix 3. In summary they have concluded that from a traffic perspective the project remains substantially the same with only a very minor increase in traffic generation. This review notes that the original traffic report assessed a traffic generation based on a 22,000m² commercial building. The modified plans represent a 455m² or 2% increase which they consider the local road network to be able to comfortably accommodate. The review is also supportive of the proposed new access arrangements.

3.6.5 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The modified design has a number of improvements in respect to pedestrian activity in, around and through the site. The provision of two pocket parks on the Honeysuckle Drive frontage will significantly improve pedestrian amenity within the neighbourhood. The removal of the two access ramps off Wright Lane will also improve pedestrian safety and access into the site. Otherwise the development remains relatively unchanged from a pedestrian perspective.

3.6.6 PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS

A bus service operates along Honeysuckle Drive and this will not be affected by the proposed modifications.

3.7 PUBLIC DOMAIN, ACTIVATION AND SAFETY

In respect to these issues the summary of the Department's assessment concluded:

"Subject to conditions the Department is satisfied that the safety of the building components and landscaped area has been addressed via the security measures to be implemented and (the) design of the public domain area".

Further the assessment noted that in terms of landscaping the proposal complied with the minimum requirements of the Newcastle DCP 2005 where a minimum of 15% of the site is to be landscaped. In this respect the approved plans contained an area of 55% and the modified plans have increased this further to 60%.

Opening the Wright Lane frontage up with glass facades at the ground level will also increase passive surveillance and therefore increase safety.

3.8 MINE WORKINGS AND RISK OF SUBSIDENCE

The site is subject to mine subsidence and as a consequence a geotechnical assessment was submitted with the original application. Further the Department concluded that subject to further detailed geotechnical investigation, which were subsequently condition in the EA approval, that it was satisfied "suitable site remediation can occur and design and construction procedures can be implemented to ensure the stability of the land and structures and therefore the safety of the development will occur".

The Department should be confident that if anything, any risk is further reduced as a result of the proposed modification because the building footprint is reduced.





4. CONCLUSION

This Section 75W Planning Assessment Report was commissioned by the owners of the Honeysuckle Central site, the Honeysuckle Central Unit Trust. The purpose of the report is to address the relevant planning considerations in respect to proposed modifications to the approved plans. Consequently the report supports an application made under Section 75W of the Act to modify the consent.

The specific modification relates to condition A3 which lists the approved plans so as to reference the newly modified plans.

The modification application has been triggered by the consent itself, and in particular condition B6 which required that the design of the northern and southern elevations as well as the landscape Masterplan be reviewed in consultation with Newcastle City Council. That process resulted in modifications to the design that required the plan details within condition A3 to be amended.

Consultation has also occurred with Newcastle Council's Urban Design Consultative Group who has conditionally supported the modified design.

While the initial design prepared by the architects was widely supported, the modified proposal presents a much improved design outcome. Design modifications have been made to the northern Honeysuckle Drive frontage that will significantly improve streetscape appearance. At the Wright Lane frontage on the southern side of the development site, two of the three approved access ramps have been removed opening up this side of the development site and activating with the streetscape.

While there has been a reduction in building footprint and a corresponding increase in landscaped area and a decreased building footprint, the Gross Floor Area actually is increased from the limit imposed by the Newcastle City Centre LEP 2008 of 2.5:1 to 2.63:1. Given that the size, bulk and scale of the development have actually reduced it is considered that this variation can be supported. This is considered to be the only issue of significance in the assessment of this application. All other relevant issues considered in the original assessment report prepared by the Department of Planning have either not changed or, in most cases, the outcome has slightly improved.

On that basis it is considered that the Minister can support the modified plans and approve the Section 75W modification application.



APPENDIX 1

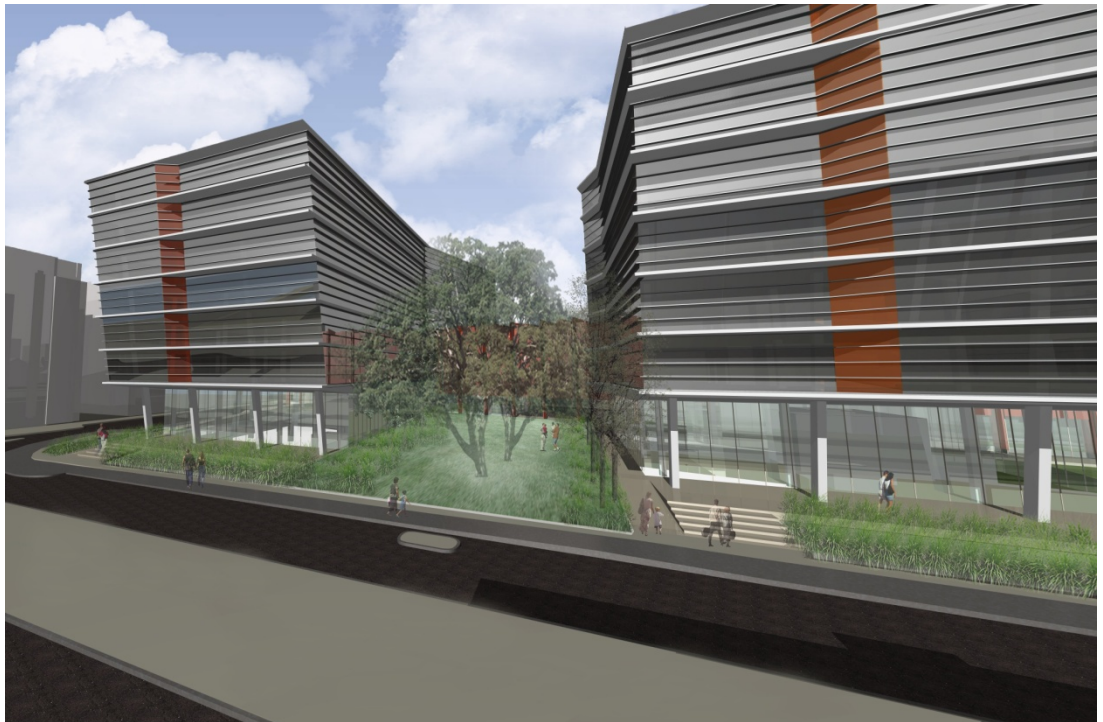
SUTERS DESIGN MODIFICATION REPORT



Sydney
Newcastle
Melbourne
Brisbane

suters

'Honeysuckle Central'
Lot 25 Honeysuckle Drive, Newcastle
EA Modifications



Contacts

For further information or clarification of information contained within this document please contact the following:

David Rose - NSW Managing Principal
Email: D.Rose@sutersarchitects.com.au

Michael McPherson - Senior Associate
Email: m.mcpherson@sutersarchitects.com.au

Suters Architects Pty Ltd
16 Telford Street, Newcastle NSW 2300,
PO Box 1109 Newcastle NSW 2300
DX 7933 Newcastle NSW
T 02 4926 5222 - F 02 4926 5251
CEO Robert Macindoe - NSW ARBN 4699
www.sutersarchitects.com.au

Control

Form:	AF-15n Issue A			
File:	n22176_e02_modified EA_REV2.docx			
Issue	Description	Date	Check	Authorised
A	Modified EA	04.03.2011	KD	DR

Contents

1	Overview	1
1.1	Honeysuckle Drive (Northern) Elevation.....	1
1.2	Southern Elevation.....	1
1.3	Landscaping.....	2
2	Design Modifications.....	3
3	Conclusion	8

1

Overview

In 2008 Suturs prepared a Major Project application on behalf of a development consortium for a new commercial development for Lot 25, Honeysuckle Drive. The proposal underwent several consultation sessions with the UDCG, DoP and HDC during the preparation of the application. In 2009 the project was subject to review by the DoP and was subsequently and conditionally approved in September 2009. These conditions included a number of broad 'aesthetic specific' comments. Since then the site has changed ownership and is now under the direct control of the Buildev Group who is now in a contractual arrangement with HDC to deliver the project.

In order to undertake design development, documentation and construction, the project team have addressed a number of conditions which are outlined in the Conditions of Approval and expanded upon as follows:

1.1 Honeysuckle Drive (Northern) Elevation

Design of the northern facades including any individual building identity features

The design team has interpreted 'building identification features' as referencing the splayed northern facades to the three building elements along Honeysuckle Drive. We consider our initial urban design approach as providing an appropriate Urban Design response for an infill site to the Honeysuckle Drive streetscape and this has been supported by the feedback we have received from HDC. Our intention for these facades was to present an alternative to the current building form: a consistent walled outcome along the current Honeysuckle Drive. We've proposed this through the introduction of splayed facades and large landscaped spaces between the buildings, while maintaining the current building alignment it also breaks down the block nature of the streetscape.

We have introduced further articulation to these splayed glass facades by introducing slab projections to each floor, staggering and splitting the walls and introducing colour panel break-ups. These articulation devices will provide a number of recessed elements breaking up flat glazed walls by adding light and shade to the facades and reducing their apparent height over the streetscape. The position of the recessed elements is different for each building and therefore provides variety to the building presentation along Honeysuckle Drive.

We believe that in conjunction with item 1.2 below the northern facade treatments are an improvement to the Honeysuckle Drive streetscape presentation of the buildings and will ensure our original design intent for a 'family' of buildings will not be compromised, thereby satisfying the conditions of approval.

1.2 Southern Elevation

Details of treatment of the southern facade to reduce visual bulk and dominance.

Similarly to the northern façade, the design team has reviewed the southern façade and concentrated on the office/ramp portion of the three buildings. We have delivered a significant design change to these areas through the removal of the east and west ramps and a refinement of the elevation treatment.

A. Removal of carpark ramps

The removal of two ramps will allow for an open ground level with the upper floors suspended on columns and providing a significant change to the ground floor retail / commercial spaces. Both end tenancies and the adjacent streetscapes will benefit by a significant increase to the amount of facade activation by way of glazing as opposed to carpark ramps and screens.

In addition, the removal of two of the carpark entry ramps and the replacement of large monolithic screening with articulated screens is proposed. The space immediately behind the refined screens

is proposed to be used for a number of functional elements such as tandem car spaces, mechanical plant, bicycle storage and if necessary fire egress stairs.

The functionality for the carpark has not been compromised by this improvement with the basement to be accessed by a separate ramp to the upper levels.

B. Glass Facades

As has been proposed for the northern elevations, articulation to the glass facades is provided by way of removal of the deck spaces, removal of slab projections, the introduction of angled walls and introducing colour panel break-ups. These elements combined have changed the composition of the facade and eliminated the visual bulk and dominance. These facade changes provide recessed elements adding light & shade to the facade composition. The east and west facades of the all buildings wrap glass down the sides to a suspended level to echo the Honeysuckle drive frontage and provide a threshold to the glass volume and subsequently reduce its apparent bulk.

1.3 Landscaping

Details of increased deep soil planting, any reduction in paving or hard surfaces and location of shade trees to be planted along Honeysuckle Drive subject to accessibility requirements being satisfied.

In conjunction with Suters, Terras Landscape Architecture have undertaken a review and improvement of the landscaping design. Our collective review of the approved landscape plan and proposed improvements are as follows:

The layout of the development has allowed for two, well-sized “pocket parks” to be created with direct access off Honeysuckle Drive for the benefit of the development’s occupants and the general public. These pocket parks, with large areas for deep soil planting to occur, will be generously landscaped with attractive gardens, well-maintained lawns and large, deciduous shade trees (e.g. *Liriodendron tulipifera* [Tulip Tree] and *Platanus* spp. [Plane Tree]) offering an escape from the hard-paved, urban environment that has been allowed to form within the existing Honeysuckle precinct.

The aim of this design is to create an open landscape fronting Honeysuckle Drive that gradually dissolves into smaller, more intimate spaces as people move further into the site. Lawn areas will give way to more formal sitting areas enabling level changes to occur allowing pedestrians to reach the podium levels of the development. Lighting effects will be used to address security issues and to create a night-time ambience extending the use of the courtyards into the evenings.

Adequate space and deep soils have also been provided on the southern side of the development. This will enable for the planting of palms and additional shade tolerant trees and shrubs as a means of improving the urban qualities of Wright Lane and to reduce the apparent scale of the development especially when viewed from the railway line and car parking areas.

Landscape strategies have been developed in conjunction with items 1.1 and 1.2 above.

2 Design Modifications

The following table describes each of the individual modifications on each drawing sheet. To be read in conjunction with the issued drawings.

Original EA Drawing	Modified EA Drawing	Drawing Name	Modification
DA00	DD00	Cover Sheet / Location Plan	— Table of Areas adjusted to suit building modifications.
DA01	n/a	Site Analysis - Macro	— No Change
DA02	n/a	Site Analysis - Macro	— No Change
DA03	n/a	Site Analysis - Micro	— No Change
DA04	DD04	Ground Floor Plan / Site Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Vehicle ramps at south of West and East buildings removed; — New commercial spaces introduced in West and East buildings in lieu of ramps activating streetfronts; — Public thoroughfares from north to south enlarged and re-aligned; — Realignment of building east car park spine; — Lift/fire stair cores and plant spaces rearranged to suit building changes; — Changes to stair and pedestrian ramp arrangements; — Modification to commercial spaces and lift foyers in all buildings. Entry points changed to suit new pedestrian approach paths; — New property boundaries adjusted; — Changes to extent of landscape areas.
DA05	DD05	Basement Floor Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Realignment of building east car park spine; — Vehicle ramps at West and East buildings removed; — Additional carparking spaces introduced in lieu of ramps; — Accessible car spaces reviewed in line with current Australian Standards; — Basement parking under East building re-aligned; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA06	DD06	Level 1 Floor Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Realignment of building east car park

Original EA Drawing	Modified EA Drawing	Drawing Name	Modification
			spine; — Vehicle ramps at West and East buildings removed; — Additional carparking spaces introduced in lieu of ramps; — Accessible car spaces reviewed in line with current Australian Standards; — Basement parking under East building re-aligned; — Screening around central vehicle ramp and stacked carspaces adjusted to suit facade changes; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA07	DD07	Level 2 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Realignment of building east car park spine; — Vehicle ramps at West and East buildings removed; — Additional carparking spaces introduced in lieu of ramps; — Screening around central vehicle ramp and stacked carspaces adjusted to suit facade changes; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings altered; — Slab projections introduced at northern facades of all buildings; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA08	DD08	Level 3 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Realignment of building east car park spine; — Vehicle ramps at West and East buildings removed; — Additional carparking spaces introduced in lieu of ramps; — Screening around central vehicle ramp and stacked carspaces adjusted to suit facade changes; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings altered; — Slab projections introduced at northern facades of all buildings; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA09	DD09	Level 4 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings

Original EA Drawing	Modified EA Drawing	Drawing Name	Modification
			altered; — Slab projections introduced at north facades of all buildings; — Southern decks and slab projections removed. Glass facade articulation break-up altered; — Integrated roof decks removed; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA10	DD10	Level 5 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings altered; — Slab projections introduced at northern facades of all buildings; — Southern decks and slab projections removed. Glass facade articulation break-up altered; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA11	DD11	Level 6 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings altered; — Slab projections introduced at northern facades of all buildings; — Southern decks and slab projections removed. Glass facade articulation break-up altered; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA12	DD12	Level 7 Floor Plan	— Lift/fire stair cores re-arranged; — Splayed northern facades to all buildings altered; — Slab projections introduced at northern facades of all buildings; — Southern decks and slab projections removed. Glass facade articulation break-up altered; — Winter garden placement adjusted in all buildings; — New property boundaries adjusted.
DA13	DD13	Roof Plan	— Plant areas changed to suit re-arranged lift cores; — New property boundaries adjusted. — Roof slab projections at the north and south changed to suit altered facade treatments.

Original EA Drawing	Modified EA Drawing	Drawing Name	Modification
DA14	DD14	North / South Elevations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered via slab projections, staggering of glazed walls and introduction of colour panels to provide additional facade articulation; — Modification to commercial spaces and lift foyers in all buildings on the ground floor. Entry points changed to suit new pedestrian approach paths; — Southern facades on all buildings altered in lieu of the removal of carpark ramps, slab projections and decks. The introduction of angled walls provide additional facade articulation; — Public thorough fares and cross linkages adjusted; — Additional commercial spaces at the southern boundary provides additional street activation; — Plant areas on roof changed to suit re-arranged lift cores.
DA15	DD15	East / West Elevations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Southern facade articulation changed (refer to comments on DA14/DD14); — Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered (refer to comments on DA14/DD14) — Stair and ramp pedestrian access altered; — Plant areas on roof changed to suit re-arranged lift cores.
DA16	DD16	Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Southern facade articulation changed (refer to comments on DA14/DD14); — Carpark ramps removed on East & West buildings; — Lift/fire stair cores altered; — Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered (refer to comments on DA14/DD14) — Plant areas on roof changed to suit re-arranged lift cores.
DA17	DD17	Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Southern facade articulation changed (refer to comments on DA14/DD14); — Carpark ramps removed on East & West buildings; — Lift/fire stair cores altered; — Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered (refer to comments on DA14/DD14) — Public thorough fares and cross linkages adjusted; — Plant areas on roof changed to suit re-arranged lift cores.
DA18	DD18	Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Southern facade articulation changed

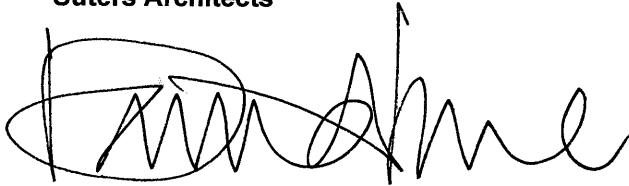
Original EA Drawing	Modified EA Drawing	Drawing Name	Modification
			(refer to comments on DA14/DD14); — Carpark ramps removed on East & West buildings; — Lift/fire stair cores altered; — Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered (refer to comments on DA14/DD14) — Public thorough fares and cross linkages adjusted; — Commercial spaces on the ground floor adjusted; — Plant areas on roof changed to suit re-arranged lift cores.
DA19	DD19	Detailed Part Elevations	— No Change
DA20	n/a	Shadow Diagrams	— No Change
DA21	n/a	Shadow Diagrams	— No Change
DA22	n/a	Shadow Diagrams	— No Change
DA23	n/a	View Analysis	— No Change
DA24	n/a	View Analysis	— No Change
DA25	DD25	3D Imagery	— Splayed northern facades on all buildings altered via slab projections, staggering of glazed walls and introduction of colour panels to provide additional facade articulation; — Modification to commercial spaces and lift foyers in all buildings on the ground floor. Entry points changed to suit new pedestrian approach paths; — Southern facades on all buildings altered in lieu of the removal of carpark ramps, slab projections and decks. The introduction of angled walls provide additional facade articulation; — Public thorough fares and cross linkages adjusted; — Additional commercial spaces at the southern boundary provides additional street activation; — Landscape and hardstand areas adjusted to suit new landscape plan.
DA26	n/a	Colour Board	— No Change

3

Conclusion

The above description and attached drawings illustrate the design changes carried out by Suters to meet the Department of Planning's consent. We believe that all changes satisfy the intent of the consent condition complying with the general guidelines for content of height, mass and density while maintaining our original design framework and building concept integrity for a family of buildings.

Suters Architects

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Rose', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

David Rose
NSW Managing Principal
Registered Architect - NSW ARBN 4882
Email D.Rose@sutersarchitects.com.au



APPENDIX 2

NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL URBAN DESIGN
CONSULTATIVE GROUP MINUTES
16 FEBRUARY 2011





URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING

ITEM No. 3

Date of Panel Assessment:	16 February 2010
Address of Project:	Lot 25 DP 1096520 Honeysuckle Drive
Name of Project (if applicable):	Mixed Use Retail and Commercial Development
DA Number of Pre-DA?	DA 08/X003
No. of Buildings:	Three buildings which are inter-connected
No. of Units:	Nil
Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	No Member of the Group declared any interest
Attendees:	Mark Daniels (Buildev), Michael McPherson and David Rose (Suters) Philip Williams (Terras Landscape)

This report is based on the ten Design Quality Principles set out in State Environmental Planning Policy No.65 which must be addressed in considering residential flat development in NSW. It is also an appropriate format for applications which do not include residential flats.

Generally

1. Context

The Group was advised that the proposal had been approved under Part 3A of the EP&A Act 1979 following a submission by Newcastle City Council of 25 October 2009 that Council did not object to the proposal, but requested the Minister to consider specific issues raised by the Urban Design Consultative Group at its meeting of 18 March 2009.

The conditional consent granted by the Minister required that, prior to the issuing of a Construction Certificate, the Proponent shall submit to the Department of Planning for approval revised architectural plans and a revised landscape master plan developed in consultation with Council to address the following:



- Design of the northern facades including individual building identity features.
- Details of the treatment of the southern facades to reduce visual bulk and dominance
- Details of increased deep soil planting, any reduction in paving or hard surfaces and location of shade trees to be planted along Honeysuckle Drive subject to accessibility requirements still being satisfied.

Should after a reasonable period of time, no agreement be reached (between) the Proponent and Council on the revisions above, the revised architectural and revised landscape master plan are to be submitted for determination by the Director General.

2. Scale

The scale of the proposal is largely unchanged, with the exception of the removal of two of the three proposed vehicle access ramps from Wright Lane. This change has resulted in a reduction of scale and bulk of the podium element as viewed from the south.

3. Built Form

The reduction in the number of vehicle ramps from three to one, has assisted in reducing some of the visual bulk of the southern façade of the building.

The proponents presented several options that they had considered in respect to the treatment of the building's overall exterior, which included several options that introduced small recessed decks into the northern facades of the buildings. The Group was of a view that the decks as illustrated did add visual interest and depth to the facades. However, the developer had decided that the decks would not be attractive to prospective tenants, and hence the architects had explored further options, and their preferred one was tabled at the meeting.

The revised option presented included an exposed floor slab which generally protruded some 300mm clear for the glazing, excepting in some areas in the northern corners of each of the three buildings, at which point the glazing was recessed to allow the slab to protrude some 1 – 1.2 metres beyond the glazed wall. These recessed elements generally corresponded with the entries to each of the buildings, and were said by the architects to assist with way finding for visitors to the buildings. In addition to the expressed floor slabs, the fenestration was broken into a number of horizontal bands, each separated by an enlarged horizontal window mullion which was described as protruding some 300mm in front of the glazing.



While the Group preferred the appearance of the 'crisp' insertions of the earlier façade version which included recessed decks, the more subtle corner 'depressions' in the façades of the preferred option did go some way toward relieving what would otherwise be a fairly bland and repetitious façade treatment. The Group was not convinced that this treatment would be successful and recommended that the applicant to look at other options to reinforce the proposed contrasting elements in the façade, and to possibly introduce some variety in the treatment of each of the three entries. Further, the Group noted that the material quality and finish of the exposed floor slab would be important to the overall presentation of the building. The architects indicated that at this stage the detailing and finish of the protrusion had not been finalized. The Group suggested that if these elements were to be the exposed concrete floor slab, then the quality of the formwork and concrete would be critical to the finish of the building.

The Group noted that the design had not yet developed to a stage at which a materials and colours board was available. It was suggested that as part of the design development process, this should be made available. It was also suggested that as the building facades are almost entirely glazed, the glass should not be excessively dark or highly reflective.

4. Density

The Group did not consider this issue, as it does not fall within the parameters of subject the conditions of consent.

5. Resource, Energy and Water Efficiency

It was noted that the environmental engineers had advised the proponent that because of shading of adjacent buildings as well as some shading provided by the window mullions, there was not a significant appreciable benefit in applying additional screening devices to the eastern and western facades of the building. It was also noted that the glazing was proposed to be a single skin performance glass. The Group noted this advice, but observed that external shading on exposed facades would also assist in glare reduction for building users, as well as providing additional visual interest to the building's exterior.

6. Landscape

Philip Williams of Terras presented a revised landscape master plan which essentially addressed the issues that the Group had previously raised at its meeting of 19 March 2009.



Additional opportunities of deep soil planting had been identified in the area facing onto Honeysuckle Drive, had also arisen due to the deletion of two of the motor vehicle entry ramps from the southern side of the development. The Group supported the Master Plan and its integration with the overall precinct, and was of the view that the spaces proposed were significantly more attractive and useable than achieved in the previous proposal.

One aspect that is crucial to a positive outcome for the landscape of the area is that the trees should achieve a reasonably large scale not too far into the future. The primary feature trees are proposed to be *Delonix regia* – Poinciana, which are an exotic species generally grown in more tropical climates. While the landscape architect showed the Group photographs of a magnificent Poinciana tree in Gibson Street Newcastle – only a Kilometre or so away from the subject site - this tree is something of a rarity at these latitudes. The landscape architect outlined that the aspect of the proposed courtyard, which was protected from southerly winds and open to the north, was an ideal one for the tree's growth, and there was also opportunity to optimize the soil and growing conditions.

The Landscape Architect concurred with the Group's observation that Poinciana's are a slow growing species – especially at the southern extent of their range – and therefore it would be necessary to source super advanced trees if this species is to be used as a centerpiece in this application.

Similarly, it is important that the *Jacaranda Mimosifolia* specimens proposed as major shade trees (in summer) should also be sourced as super advanced stock.

The Group was of the view that, if it eventuates that at the time of the construction of the landscape suitably advanced shade trees are not available, then alternate advanced sized species should be substituted (subject to approval). It was suggested by the Group that efforts be made by the developer to locate suitably super-advanced Poinciana and Jacaranda trees as soon as possible.

7. Amenity

The Group did not consider this issue, as it does not fall within the parameters of subject the conditions of consent.

8. Safety and Security

No concerns were raised.



9. Social Dimensions

The Group did not consider this issue, as it does not fall within the parameters of subject the conditions of consent.

10. Aesthetics

Addressed under 'built form'

Recommendation:

The Group was of the view that, subject to the sourcing of suitably large scale super-advanced feature trees, the landscape master plan addressed the issues previously raised by the Group, and offered an attractive contribution to Honeysuckle drive and the development's occupants.

The opportunity outlined by the proponent of removing two of the three visually dominant vehicle ramps facing Wright Lane assisted in the building's presentation as viewed from the south, and was supported by the Group.

While the general design direction in regard to the eastern, northern and western facades was considered by the Group to be a positive development, some further refinements were suggested for the design development process which should assist in providing more individual building identity and visual interest. Selection of appropriate finishes and colours, as well as the selection of glazing were also crucial to the success of the proposal.

APPENDIX 3

TRAFFIC AND CARPARKING ASSESSMENT

10 March, 2011

P0560 Buildev Honeysuckle Central S75W Letter Rev02

Buildev Development (NSW) Pty Ltd
C/- Insite Planning
2/17 Grainger Street
Lambton NSW

Attn: Stephen Leathley

Dear Stephen,

Proposed S75W application for Honeysuckle Central Development, Newcastle NSW

We have now completed our review of the revised plans for the above project and provide the following summary of our work. Our scope of work included:

- Assess requirement for any additional parking spaces as a result in the change in the floor area and compare parking supply
- Assess the access implications following the removal of the eastern and western ramps in favour of a single central access ramp
- Assess traffic implications of the change in floor area and the change of circulation due to the shift to one central ramp
- Review pedestrian issues

From a review of the plans provided by Suters Architects our findings are:

1. Assess parking provision as a result in the change in the floor area

A summary of the floor area and associated parking requirements is provided below:

The development was approved with approximately 21,370 m² (GFA) of commercial development. It will front Honeysuckle Drive with all vehicle access via Wright Lane to the rear of the site. The development was approved with the provision of 360 parking spaces.

The current application for the development has approximately 22,455 m² (GFA) of commercial space with all vehicle access via a single access point off Wright Lane to the rear of the site. Applying the Council DCP rate of 1 space per 60 m² the parking requirement for the proposed development will be 375 spaces.

The proposal for the S75W application is for one car park to be provided across all three buildings utilising right of ways through the buildings. The car park will be located over 4 levels, basement, and levels one two and three.

Table 1 – Floor Area v parking Provision Summary

Item	West Building	Central Building	East Building	Total
Approved Area (GFA)	5006 m ²	6734 m ²	9629 m ²	21,370 m ²
Proposed Area(GFA)	5141 m ²	7340	9974	22,455 m ²
Council requirement (Approved DA)	84	112	160	356
Approved Supply				360
New Requirement (Current Application)	86	123	166	375

The proposed parking provision is shown below compared with the approved supply.

Table 2 – Proposed parking Provision Summary

LEVEL	APPROVED	PROPOSED
B	113	116
1	80	108 (including stacked)
2	80	108 (including stacked)
3	87	111
TOTAL	360	443

There will be 53 horizontally stacked parking spaces providing 126 car spaces within the car park. These spaces will be allocated together with the front spaces to ensure these spaces can operate in an efficient manner. The provision of these stacked spaces enables the development to provide 63 additional spaces. Given that the parking provision is for tenant based employees the parking will be allocated and reserved and as such will be self managed. This gives a total of 443 parking bays. It can be seen that the total parking provision on site exceeds the requirements of the DCP (375 spaces) and will ensure that there will be no off-site parking impacts created by the proposed S75W changes to the floor areas.

2. Assess the access implications with the removal of the western and eastern ramps in favour of a single central ramp.

The approved development allowed for all vehicle access to the subject site via three new access points on Wright Lane. There will be no vehicle access off Honeysuckle Drive. The proposed application allows for a single central ramp which allows all vehicles to access and egress the site through a single access point on Wright Lane. Wright Lane is a one way roadway with low traffic speeds and volumes. This single access point is considered suitable for the development.

The access to the car park through the central access ramp has been reviewed against the details provided within AS2890.1. AS2890.1 recommends a maximum lane capacity at the entry point of 400 vehicles per lane per hour where the entry point includes a card reader. Allowing for a maximum parking supply of 443 and given the broad range of start times for various commercial end users the proposed single lane access is considered suitable for the end users.

3. Assess traffic implications of the change in floor area

With regards to the traffic impacts of the proposed current amendments, it can be seen that the impact will be negligible. The approved DA had a total commercial floor area of 21,370 m² with a similar mix to the proposed S75W. The total commercial floor area for the current application is 22,455m² an increase of only 5% of the approved DA. This could represent an increase of 22 vehicle movements during the afternoon/evening peak (based on the RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments) however this rate does not allow for recognition of the City based location of this site which is reflected in the Council parking requirements. This discounted rate equates to an additional traffic volume of 18 vehicle movements during the afternoon peak.

A review of the previous study work for the Honeysuckle Precinct shows that the subject site falls within the previous assumptions for the site. The site has been identified for commercial development, with an element of retail within the overall floor area. The study completed by Mark Waugh Pty Ltd assumed a commercial floor area of some 22,000 m² for the subject site. This compares with the plans that indicates a total of 22,455 m² that is currently proposed to be provided within this development.

This potential increase in traffic volumes will have a negligible impact on Honeysuckle Drive.

Given the nature of the access onto Wright Lane and the operation of this laneway itself, together with the proposed reduction to a single access point it is considered that the impacts will be negligible over and above the approved DA and as such will be acceptable.

4. Pedestrian Issues

Pedestrians access will remain as per the approved DA, with the main route for pedestrian access being via Honeysuckle Drive along the northern edge of the site. Secondary pedestrian access is via Wright Lane. It can be seen that the pedestrian access will be improved with the proposed changes due to the reduction in the number of access points from 3 to 1. This reduces the number of potential conflict points and offers an improved environment for pedestrians.

Conclusion

From our study work, it is concluded that the proposed changes will have a negligible impact over and above that associated with the approved DA on the site. The proposed parking provision is in excess of the Council DCP to ensure that there will be no on-street demand for parking created by the development. The single point of entry will operate in a satisfactory manner with acceptable delays for road users as well as users associated with the subject development. The changes to the floor areas will have a negligible impact over and above the approved DA for the site with the overall floor area being some 455 m² greater than that originally area (22,000 m²) designated for the site

Please feel free to contact me directly on 4952 5592 should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely



Sean Morgan
Senior Engineer