



23 October 2015
Our Ref: 9398A.1WG

planning consultants

The General Manager
The Hills Shire Council
PO Box 7064
BAULKHAM HILLS BC 2153

Dear Sir

**Submission on The Hills Corridor Strategy
Properties in Belvedere Avenue, Kathleen Avenue, Britannia Road and Showground Road**

DFP has been engaged by a resident group that owns properties in Belvedere Avenue, Kathleen Avenue, Britannia Road and Showground Road to review The Hills Corridor Strategy and if warranted, make a submission. The names and address of members of this resident group are attached at **Attachment 1** of this submission, however for the purposes of identification of the precinct, the following properties form the precinct group:

- 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 Belvedere Avenue
- 94, 96, 100, 102, 104, 106, 108, 110, 112, 114 and 116 Showground Road
- 2 and 4 Kathleen Avenue
- 79, 81, 83 and 85 Britannia Road

In preparing this submission, DFP has reviewed The Hills Corridor Strategy and the Norwest Rail Link Showground Station Structure Plan prepared by the NSW Department of Planning, dated September 2013.

Warwick Gosling of DFP has met with the executive of the resident group to discuss the implications of the corridor strategy on their properties.

For the reasons demonstrated in this submission, it is the conclusion of DFP that it is appropriate for land within this precinct to be zoned for residential apartment buildings generally ranging in height from 8 to 5 storeys with a 12 storey marker building located on the corner of Showground Road and Britannia Road which delineates the entry into the Showground precinct. A Site Analysis Plan is attached at **Attachment 2** whilst an envelope study is attached at **Attachment 3** which justifies the recommended built form.

1.0 The Site

The site is located approximately 400m from the new Showground Road Railway Station. The site is also approximately 740m from Castle High School, Castle Bowling Club and Castle Hill RSL and approximately 1.5km from Castle Towers and Castle Hill Town Centre.

The site comprises 32 properties on Showground Road, Britannia Road, Kathleen Avenue and Belvedere Avenue. Details of the individual properties are provided at **Attachment 1**. The site has a total area of approximately 3.13ha. The site has a 321m frontage to Showground Road,

156m frontage to Britannia Road, 76m frontage to Kathleen Avenue and a 333m frontage to Belvedere Avenue. A pedestrian pathway connects Belvedere Avenue to Showground Road and is located between 30 and 32 Belvedere Avenue and 116 and 118 Showground Road. A locality plan is shown at **Figure 1**.



Figure 1: Locality Plan

The properties within the site are predominantly 1 and 2 storey detached residential dwellings of varying ages. One property at 98 Showground Road is currently used as a Dental Practice. The properties have landscaped gardens, with numerous mature native and exotic trees planted throughout the site. The locality contains high quality and well maintained dwelling houses.

The surrounding neighbourhood is a low density residential area comprising a mix of one and two storey dwellings, with some non-residential uses along Showground Road including medical and dental practices. The Castle Hill Showground is located approximately 450 metres to the northwest of the site.

Photographs of the site are shown at **Figures 2 to 8**.



Figure 2: Dwelling on Showground Road



Figure 3: View south east along Showground Road



Figure 4: View north along Britannia Road



Figure 5: View west along Kathleen Avenue



Figure 6: View along Belvedere Avenue



Figure 7: Dwellings on Belvedere Avenue



Figure 8: Pedestrian Laneway connecting Belvedere Avenue to Showground Road

2.0 Existing and Proposed Planning Controls

The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2012

- Land Use Zoning – R2 Low Density Dwellings
- Height Limit – 9 metres

The existing highest and best use of land in this precinct under the current zoning is residential dwelling houses with the predominant built form being 2 storey dwelling houses with pitched roofs. Other land uses are permitted through other State Environmental Planning Instruments, however they are not relevant to this submission.

North West Rail Link Showground Road Station Structure Plan September 2013

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment and NSW Department of Transport prepared the Showground Road Station Structure Plan which was released in September 2013. It provided a vision for the Showground Road Station Locality which includes the subject site. This document provided a Structure Plan for the locality based on opportunities and constraint mapping.

This document identified that the subject site was not affected by any development constraints.

The site was identified as a short term opportunity site and accordingly the subject site was identified as being appropriate for medium density residential development. Medium density residential is defined in the Structure Plan as being residential apartments ranging in height from 3 to 6 storeys.

3.0 The Hills Corridor Strategy

The Hills Corridor Strategy has also undertaken an opportunity and constraints mapping exercise which has culminated in a residential density plan.

The Hills Corridor Strategy did not find any constraints to development on the subject site and did identify the pedestrian link that joins Kathleen Avenue to Showground Road which forms the north western boundary of the subject site.

The Hills Corridor Strategy identified the subject site and land within the Precinct on the north eastern side of Showground Road as being appropriate for townhouse/terrace development which has a density of 39 dwellings per hectare.

4.0 Opportunities and Constraints of the Site

DFP has prepared an Opportunities and Constraints plan which is located at **Attachment 2** to this submission. The opportunities of the site are considered to be as follows:

- Approximately 30% of the subject site is within a 400 metre radius of the proposed Showground Road Station.
- The site is bound by Showground Road, Britannia Road, Kathleen Avenue, Belvedere Avenue and the pedestrian path. Accordingly, the site does not have an interface with other residential properties, thus forming a logical large consolidated development site.
- There are only 2 land owners within the subject site that have not agreed to be part of the resident group. DFP have been advised that these land owners do not object but do not want to actively participate in this submission. Accordingly the land owners are motivated to seek the redevelopment of their land.
- The configuration of the subject site allows vehicular access to be obtained from roads other than Showground Road. Due to the topography of the land which slopes to the north, it would be logical for vehicular access to development to be obtained from Belvedere Avenue.
- The subject site occupies the eastern entry point into the Showground Station Precinct. Accordingly it is the opinion of DFP that it is appropriate to provide a marker building that delineates the entry into this Precinct. Therefore it is appropriate to consider planning for a tall slender marker building to be located on the intersection of Showground Road and Britannia Avenue.
- Due to the slope of the land, drainage of the site would be occur through Kathleen Avenue and Belvedere Avenue. The orientation of the block is favourable given its large north facing exposure.

5.0 Issues to Overcome

- Building height transitions from Showground Road to the periphery of the Precinct.
- Noise generation from Showground Road
- Vegetation on the site and street trees along Britannia Avenue and Belvedere Avenue.

6.0 Recommended Development Scenario

DFP has prepared an envelope study which is included at **Attachment 3** of this submission and is based on the following criteria:

- A 10 metre front setback to Showground Road, Britannia Avenue, Kathleen Avenue, Belvedere and the pedestrian path that links Kathleen Avenue to Showground Road. This setback would enable the widening and/or integration of that pedestrian connection to be incorporated onto the site. The 10 metre setback is consistent with the existing setback controls in the The Hills DCP – Residential Flat Buildings. This will assist in preserving mature trees within the existing front yards of the dwellings
- Buildings orientated predominantly north east, south west to allow solar access penetration.
- The depth of the site between Showground Road and Belvedere Avenue enables a maximum of 50 metre long platforms to be provided which would provide street addresses to apartments to both Showground Road and Belvedere Avenue.
- The building platforms have a maximum length of 50 metres, consistent with the maximum building length provided in The Hills DCP – Residential Flat Buildings.
- The maximum building width of 24 metres facilitates residential flat buildings with maximum glass line of 18 metres with balconies at each end.
- The building platform of 50 metres x 24 metres would allow 8 dwellings per floor with sufficient space for articulation to promote both solar access and cross ventilation.
- Due to the width of Showground Road, it was appropriate to provide higher buildings along this interface given that approximately 50% of the Showground Road frontage is within 400 metres of the railway station.
- A transition in height down to 5 storeys is considered appropriate along the Belvedere Avenue and Kathleen Avenue frontages to provide a height transition to other land on the periphery of the Precinct.
- The opportunity exists to provide a tall slender marker building on the intersection of Showground Road and Britannia Avenue. This marker building would provide an entry feature into the Showground Precinct that creates a sense of arrival into this exciting precinct.
- The height transitions with 5 storeys at the north and 8 storeys to the south promotes solar access opportunities by maximising north facing apartments.
- Building separation distances of 18 metres are proposed in accordance with the Apartment Design Guide for buildings ranging in height from 8 to 5 storeys.

This proposal provides the economic incentive to enable the existing large and high quality dwelling houses on the subject site to be redeveloped.

It is highly unlikely that a zoning that allows as its highest and best use townhouse development on the site would be economically viable due to the existing high cost of properties in this locality. There will need to be a significant incentive for dwelling on the site to be developed as existing residents living in high quality dwellings in the locality may be encouraged to remain

living in their dwellings, enjoying the convenient access to the railway station. It is highly unlikely that over the life of this plan, i.e. 20 years, that the economic cycle would result in it being economically viable for the subject site to be redeveloped for townhouse development.

By providing taller buildings with 18 metre separation distances, there are greater opportunities for ground level consolidated open space areas for the use of residents. It is especially important that large consolidated open space areas are provided on sites if Council is seeking to encourage younger families to move into apartments.

Smaller residential flat buildings, or indeed townhouse developments, do not provide the opportunities for large consolidated ground level open space as separation distances are smaller which results in larger site coverage.

In terms of converting the envelope study into a density control consistent with The Hills Corridor Strategy, it is anticipated that the envelope study would provide approximately 524 apartments based on 8 dwellings per floor with the exception of the marker building where a combination of 4, 6 and 8 apartments would be provided per floor.

Given that the subject site has an area of approximately 3.13 hectares, this would equate to a density of approximately 167 dwellings per hectare.

7.0 Conclusion

This submission has considered the various planning instruments and structure plans that have been exhibited and that affect the subject site. This submission demonstrates the reasons why the subject site is considered appropriate for residential apartments given that the various structure plans have identified that the site does not contain any development constraints.

The owners within this group, with the exception of 2, have all contributed to this study demonstrating their interest in seeing this site redeveloped. The residential group have no interest in selling their properties purely for townhouse development and would prefer to remain in their houses and enjoy the convenience of the station.

This submission includes a Site and Opportunities map (**Attachment 2**) and a building envelope study (**Attachment 3**) that demonstrates that the site is appropriate for a variety of apartment buildings ranging in height from 5 storeys to 12 storeys. The 12 storey building is a marker building located on the intersection of Showground Road and Britannia Avenue marking the entry into the Showground Precinct. The majority of buildings range in height from 8 to 5 storeys with the 8 storey buildings located along Showground Road which provide an acoustic buffer to units at the rear.

The stepping down of the buildings to the north assists in solar access, but also provides a transition to other residential properties on the periphery of the precinct.

The envelope study has demonstrated that the site can appropriately accommodate 525 units on the 3.13 hectare site. Accordingly it is requested that Council consider amending The Hills Corridor Strategy to nominate a dwelling density for the site of 167 dwellings per hectare.

DFP trusts the information contained in this submission assists Council in its consideration of the Showground Railway Station Precinct and should there be any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact Warwick Gosling on 9980 6933.



Yours faithfully
DFP PLANNING PTY LIMITED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Gosling'.

WARWICK GOSLING
DIRECTOR

wgosling@dfpplanning.com.au

- Encl. 1. List of Residents
 2. Site Analysis Plan
 3. Building Envelope Study

Reviewed: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'JH' or similar, written over a horizontal line.

Attachment 1 – List of Residents

Belvedere Avenue	
House Number	Name of Resident
30	Barbara and David Tomkinson
28	Paul and Jean Cripps
26	Gnu Yung Zhang
24	John and Maria Miskovich
22	Tom Fong
18	Simin and Frid Shahidi / Raymond Shahidi
16	Joe Abdo
14	John and Janne Ezzy
12	Frank Arico and Irene Bray
10	Lisa and Geoffrey Kemmis
8	Betty Cheung
6	Brian Koo
4	Jimmy Zhwang
Showground Road	
116	Tim and Katie Cook
114	Dr Maher Sarian and Silvana
112	Ms Roda Comito
110	David Lwin and San Kyaw / Zaw
108	Phil and Meikin Rees
106	Colette Lopez
104	Yongbai Yin
102	Boni and Josephine Fernandez
100	Fred and Milard Bahrami
98	
96	Phil Hanrahan
94 (87 Britannia on map)	Rachel Purches / Michael Purches / Barry Millner
Kathleen Avenue	
2	Tracy
4	Ari and Janetta Ripoll
Britannia Road	
85	Marilyn Ryan
83	Zhong Huang Cai and Xing Hua Zheng
81	Warwick and Maureen Talbot
79	Alan Saywer