



**TOWER 2, LEVEL 23
DARLING PARK, 201 SUSSEX ST
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

URBIS.COM.AU
Urbis Pty Ltd
ABN 50 105 256 228

28 February 2017

Ms Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
320 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Carolyn,

SUBMISSION | ARNCLIFFE & BANKSIA PRECINCTS, REZONING PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

Urbis acts on behalf of Podia Property Pty Ltd (AIDOP No.1 Pty Ltd) who have recently entered into a Contract for Sale to purchase 96-102 Princes Highway, Arncliffe from Combined Projects (Kyle Street) Pty Ltd, with settlement to occur later this year. I confirm our client is legally authorised to provide this submission.

The site is a large and unique corner property, centrally located within the Arncliffe town centre, less than 200 metres from the train station. A fantastic opportunity exists to create an exemplary and iconic building in this location to serve as a focal point and gateway marker for the Arncliffe Town Centre.

We have reviewed the material supporting the Department of Planning and Environment's Priority Precinct designation and the accompanying Planning Proposal. We wish to make a submission for consideration during the public exhibition period.

This submission letter has been prepared in support of the policy direction for the Arncliffe station precinct in general, but requests some minor variations to the exhibited Planning Proposal as it applies to the subject site.

This submission is to be read in conjunction with the **Design Study** prepared by **Archer Office Architects**, which accompanies this letter.

RECAP OF KEY POLICY DIRECTIONS

We have reviewed the draft Land Use and Infrastructure Strategy and the draft Planning Proposal as it applies to the site, and summarise the three key policy directions of relevance:

- *Create vibrant and connected town centres* – to achieve this, the policy controls must encourage a mix of uses and built form controls to encourage redevelopment
- *Provide more homes and housing choice* – to do this the strategy must provide for additional apartments in these precincts and ensure the apartment achieve a mix of types.

- *Revitalise Princes Highway Corridor* – to achieve this the planning controls must incentivise redevelopment and encourage design excellence to deliver improved public domain as well as quality apartment amenity.

These broad strategic directions and objectives have informed specific policies which apply to the study area. The following section outlines our views on these matters.

SUPPORTED DRAFT POLICIES

We wish to confirm our support for the following policies:

- Proposed **Zoning** of the subject site to B4 Mixed Use – we consider that this is critical to achieve the desired land use outcomes along the Princes Highway corridor.
- Increased **Building Height** to 31m – this will create a consistent street wall building profile defining the centre, however we consider the site has potential for slightly higher height which is discussed below.
- Proposed DCP **6m highway setback control** – provided its applied consistently along the corridor.
- The proposal to incorporate an **active frontage map in the DCP** as opposed to the LEP.
- Proposed **road intersection upgrades** to the existing signalised intersection at Princes Highway / Burrows Street intersection which would allow movements from Kyle Street. As well as the upgrade to Kyle Street / West Botany Street intersection to allow left turn from Kyle Street onto West Botany Street.

REQUESTED CHANGES TO DRAFT POLICIES

We request the following changes:

1. The proposed **FSR** of the subject site of 2.5:1 increase to 3:1.
2. The proposed **Building Height** of the subject site increase from 31m to 37m
3. The draft Design Excellence provisions for Rockdale LEP include a 10% bonus building height or FSR award.

Our justification for these modest amendments are outlined below.

FSR

a) The site can accommodate a 3:1 FSR within the proposed height LEP control.

- The Design Study prepared by Archer Office demonstrates that given the site shape and context, it can comfortably accommodate a small increase in density from 2.5:1 to 3:1. This can be achieved within the 31m planned height control without creating any material environmental or urban design impacts.

- The site is located within the Arncliffe Centre core, close to the Arncliffe rail station (less than 200 metres) and retail centre (less than 200 metres). Consequently, placing additional density on this site will help achieve the existing B4 Mixed Use zone objective that seeks to; '*maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling*'.

It is logical and acceptable urban design practice that sites beyond a 10 minute walk to the station and retail centre have lower densities as the propensity for people to use public transport reduces.

b) The site is capable of achieving the required SEPP 65 residential amenity levels.

- The attached Design Study has identified that the additional density is achieved whilst still maintaining appropriate envelope depths of around 20 metres, meaning residential apartments can easily be arranged in a typical double-loaded floorplan layout (as shown in the accompanying Design Study by Archer Office).
- The proposed generous communal open space within the site masterplan can still be achieved under the higher density option (refer to Archer Office report).
- The site shape and orientation supports a concept that can achieve the required solar and natural cross ventilation target outcomes sought under the Department of Planning and Environment's Apartment Design Guidelines.

c) The additional off-site environmental impacts are negligible

- Shadowing impacts for the additional FSR are extremely minor in nature as seen in the attached Design Report.

d) A 3:1 FSR will not undermine growth capacity in centre

- The yield arising from the requested additional density equates to a modest increase in dwelling numbers of approximately 15 apartments.
 - In the context of the Arncliffe area, the precinct is projected to add some 1,800 apartments by 2026, rising to 4,000 by 2036. The additional 15 apartments is considered minor and well within the tolerances of the market and capacity forecasts.
 - Furthermore, many of the sites within the Arncliffe precinct will not be developed within the above timeframe due to fragmented or difficult ownership arrangements or site specific challenges such as single street frontages making it difficult to deliver a successful mixture of retail and residential uses.
- The proposed density will have a negligible impact on traffic generation and associated traffic infrastructure due to the fact that:
 - i. The sites proximity to the Arncliffe train station provides building residents with alternative modes of transport; and
 - ii. The additional apartment yield resulting from a higher FSR will not directly translate into an equal number of additional cars, the proposed density will therefore have a negligible additional impact on traffic generation and associated traffic infrastructure.

Building Height

As outlined above, the case for a small increase in building height does not arise as a result of requesting an FSR increase to 3:1 (as demonstrated in the Archer Office Design Study), but rather from a spatial and urban design perspective in order to create a better-defined centre as outlined below.

Our justification for a small building height increase is below.

a) Strengthens the physical definition of Arncliffe Centre

- The Departments proposed controls seek to define the 'core' of the Arncliffe town centre on the western-side of Princes Highway, where the rail station is located. However, given Princes Highway is the primary linear transport passage through the centre, it is important that the urban form fronting Princess Highway signals the arrival point to the centre.
- The eastern side of Princes Highway is proposed to have a consistent 31m height limit along the entire 700m length of the centre, while the western edge has varied heights, including heights of between 42-70m signalling the town centre core.
- The controls in our view should permit a built form directly opposite Arncliffe town centre on the western side of Princes Highway to be viewed as a taller and more dense character compared to the remainder of the land that stretches beyond the Arncliffe town centre. The fact that the proposed road intersection changes will strengthen the cross movement of car and pedestrians from the site to the centre core, further confirms the need to define the arrival at the centre core on both sides of Princes Highway.
- Our proposed building height changes do not mirror the taller building heights proposed on the eastern edge, rather, they represent a more modest or subtle change. This coupled with the corner location of the site, will enable the future design to be distinctive, thus creating a complementary relationship with the urban forms and scales on the opposite side of the highway.

b) Building height transition site achieved

- The increased height will not create a discordant building height transition to adjacent properties along Princes highway nor to the planned future medium density neighbourhood to the east, which would only have a perceivable 3 storey building height difference.

c) Need to accommodate ground floor showroom space

- The proposed policies seek to allow for showroom uses to front Princes Highway for its entire length of 700m through the Arncliffe Centre. While it is accepted that this is a long-term strategy and vision, it has not been proven that there is significant market depth to take up such space in the short term, as evidenced by many recent completed residential buildings along Princes Highway which still have unleased ground floor space.
- Economically the additional floorspace sought provides scope for our clients to invest in a more substantial retail offering on ground floor. This will ensure that our client is able to deliver on the long-term vision despite market conditions and other challenges facing the viability of retail uses in this location.

d) Not impacted by aviation restrictions

- The additional building height proposed will not undermine the principles that have partly informed building heights given the OLS and Pans-Ops building height limits that exist.

Design Excellence

We support the proposal to insert a Design Excellence provision into the Rockdale LEP. The quality of the design of new development including the public domain interface is critical to ensuring the vision for both precincts are realised.

Clause 6.21(7) of the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 allows the consent authority to consider granting an additional amount of height or floor space of up to 10% of the maximum permissible to a development that is the result of a competitive design process. Since this initiative has been adopted, there are countless examples throughout the City of Sydney LEP of high quality urban design and architectural outcomes. Other council's such as Parramatta and Penrith also allow for bonuses.

The Department's Guideline for Design Competitions itself stipulates the potential 10% incentive for bonus height or FSR.

From our extensive experience in managing multiple design competitions across Sydney, the costs of undertaking these processes are significant, hence the bonus provisions not only incentivises the achievement of design excellence, but also covers the additional costs of the process.

We have not cited the specific drafting of the design excellence provisions for Rockdale LEP, but we strongly request that similar provisions are implemented for Banksia and Arncliffe centres.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, we wish to confirm support for the draft Strategy and Planning Proposal for the Banksia Arncliffe Precinct in a broad sense and as it applies to the subject property.

We have provided reasons to support our requested minor changes to the built form controls. In our view our requested amendments to the controls are modest in nature. However, we believe the changes will incentivise the redevelopment of the site to ensure an exemplary project is delivered in line with the desired urban character for the Arncliffe town centre.

Our client is committed to delivering a high-quality development on this site as they too believe the centre has great potential to become a more liveable and active place supporting a range of businesses and households.

As stated, we support the notion of inserting Design Excellence provisions into the LEP, such an initiative must come with an incentive of some kind, otherwise the intent of delivering on 'Design Excellence' will not be met and some potential innovative design and public domain opportunities may be missed.

The site is strategically located within 200 metres to the Arncliffe rail station. It differs from adjoining sites due to its large size, single ownership and corner location, avoiding the need to negotiate amalgamation and rear lane access solutions that the majority of Highway fronting properties need to resolve.



Our client is ready to advance a Development Application on this site which will positively contribute to the short-term housing supply goals for the centre. Furthermore, our client has a strong desire to deliver a land mark and exemplary project on this site and the requested amendments to the controls will assist in allowing our client to deliver on this objective.

We encourage the Department of Planning to undertake the final steps in this policy development process to provide certainty for the development industry to forward plan investment in these centres.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with the relevant officer to discuss this submission further if desired. I can be contacted on 8233 9955 or email; swhite@urbis.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen White".

Stephen White
Director