

**Four Towns
Planning**

Planning and property consultant

**WRITTEN REQUEST PURSUANT TO
CLAUSE 4.6 OF MANLY LOCAL
ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2013**

**VARIATION OF A DEVELOPMENT
STANDARD REGARDING THE HEIGHT OF
BUILDINGS AS DETAILED IN CLAUSE 4.3
OF MANLY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL
PLAN 2013**

**Alterations and Additions to Existing
Mixed-Use Building at 22 Central
Avenue, Manly NSW 2095**

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This report has been prepared to support a Development Application under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

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Report prepared for:

The Owners Corporation SP7114

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Introduction

This objection is made pursuant to the provisions of Clause 4.6 of Manly Local Environmental Plan 2013. In this regard, it is requested Council support a variation with respect to compliance with the maximum building height of a building as described in Clause 4.3 of the Manly Local Environmental Plan 2013 (MLEP 2013). It is noted that this request is made for the proposed alterations and additions at 22 Central Avenue, Manly.

The following assessment of the variation to Clause 4.3 – Building Height development standard, has taken into consideration the recent judgement contained within Merman Investments Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council [2021] NSWLEC 1582, Initial Action Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council [2018] NSWLEC 118, Baron Corporation Pty Limited v Council of the City of Sydney [2019] NSWLEC 61, and RebelMH Neutral Bay Pty Limited v North Sydney Council [2019] NSWCA 130.

Requirement	25m
Proposed	Proposed works under existing building height – 42.9m Existing building height to remain – 45.7m
Is the planning control in question a development standard?	Yes
Is the non-compliance with to the clause requirement a numerical/or performance based variation?	Numerical
If numerical enter a % variation to requirement	71.6%

The proposal must satisfy the objectives of Clause 4.3 – Height of Buildings, the underlying objectives of the particular zone, and the objectives of Clause 4.6 - Exceptions to Development Standards under the MLEP 2013. The proposal is consistent with surrounding developments and the proposed variation is compatible with the locality and complies with other relevant controls which determine the built form of the site.

A variation to the strict application of the Height of Building standard is considered appropriate for the subject site and is supportable for the following reasons:

- The objectives of the MLEP2013 Height of Building control are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The objectives of the MLEP2013 E1 Local Centre zone are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The compliance with the development standard is both unreasonable and unnecessary given the existing building height is retained and the works are below the existing roof line.
- There are sufficient environmental planning grounds to support the proposed variation.
- The proposal is consistent with the existing bulk and scale of the area.
- The proposal has no adverse impacts to views or view corridors.
- The proposal does not impact existing solar access to private and public places.
- The breach in building height will not be noticeable and will have no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties. The proposal will not result in a building of an unacceptable bulk and scale.

Clause 4.6 Variation Requirements

The grounds of objection are based upon the various tests of the recent judgements in the *NSW Land and Environment Court Case Merman Investments Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council [2021] NSWLEC 1582*, *Initial Action Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council [2018] NSWLEC 118*, *Baron Corporation Pty Limited v Council of the City of Sydney [2019] NSWLEC 61*, and *RebelMH Neutral Bay Pty Limited v North Sydney Council [2019] NSWCA 130* and review the following:

Compliance being unreasonable or unnecessary

1. Compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary because the objectives of the development standard are achieved notwithstanding non-compliance with the standard: *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [42] and [43]*.
2. The underlying objective or purpose of Clause 4.3(2) is not relevant to the development with the consequence that compliance is unnecessary. *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [45]*
3. The underlying objective or purpose would be defeated or thwarted if compliance was required with the consequence that compliance is unreasonable. *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [46]*
4. The development standard has been virtually abandoned or destroyed by the Council's own decisions in granting development consents that depart from the standard and hence compliance with the stand is unnecessary and unreasonable: *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [47]*.
5. The relevance of the zoning provisions of the land to which the development is proposed.

Sufficient environmental planning grounds

1. First, the environmental planning grounds advanced in the written request must be sufficient "to justify contravening the development standard"
2. Second, the written request must demonstrate that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard so as to enable the consent authority to be satisfied under cl 4.6(4)(a)(i) that the written request has adequately addressed this matter: see *Four2Five Pty Ltd v Ashfield Council [2015] NSWLEC 90 at [31]*

Is the proposed development in the public interest?

The Consent Authority must be satisfied that the proposed development will be in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of:

- a. the particular development standard;
- b. the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out.

Secretary's Concurrence

Under clause 4.6(5), in deciding whether to grant concurrence, the Secretary must consider the following matters:

- (a) *whether contravention of the development standard raises any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning, and*
- (b) *the public benefit of maintaining the development standard, and*
- (c) *any other matters required to be taken into consideration by the Secretary before granting concurrence.*

General Provisions Relating to Clause 4.6 which will be applicable to Clause 4.3(2) Height of Building

4.6 Exceptions to development standards

- (1) *The objectives of this clause are as follows—*
- (a) *to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying certain development standards to particular development,*
 - (b) *to achieve better outcomes for and from development by allowing flexibility in particular circumstances.*
- (2) *Development consent may, subject to this clause, be granted for development even though the development would contravene a development standard imposed by this or any other environmental planning instrument. However, this clause does not apply to a development standard that is expressly excluded from the operation of this clause.*
- (3) *Development consent must not be granted for development that contravenes a development standard unless the consent authority has considered a written request from the applicant that seeks to justify the contravention of the development standard by demonstrating—*
- (a) *that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of the case, and*
 - (b) *that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard.*
- (4) *Development consent must not be granted for development that contravenes a development standard unless—*
- (a) *the consent authority is satisfied that—*
 - (i) *the applicant's written request has adequately addressed the matters required to be demonstrated by subclause (3), and*
 - (ii) *the proposed development will be in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of the particular standard and the objectives for development within the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out, and*
 - (b) *the concurrence of the Planning Secretary has been obtained.*
- (5) *In deciding whether to grant concurrence, the Planning Secretary must consider—*
- (a) *whether contravention of the development standard raises any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning, and*
 - (b) *the public benefit of maintaining the development standard, and*
 - (c) *any other matters required to be taken into consideration by the Planning Secretary before granting concurrence.*
- (6) *Development consent must not be granted under this clause for a subdivision of land in Zone RU1 Primary Production, Zone RU2 Rural Landscape, Zone RU3 Forestry, Zone RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, Zone RU6 Transition, Zone R5 Large Lot Residential, Zone E2 Environmental Conservation, Zone E3 Environmental Management or Zone E4 Environmental Living if—*
- (a) *the subdivision will result in 2 or more lots of less than the minimum area specified for such lots by a development standard, or*
 - (b) *the subdivision will result in at least one lot that is less than 90% of the minimum area specified for such a lot by a development standard.*
- Note—** *When this Plan was made it did not include all of these zones.*
- (7) *After determining a development application made pursuant to this clause, the consent authority must keep a record of its assessment of the factors required to be addressed in the applicant's written request referred to in subclause (3).*
- (8) *This clause does not allow development consent to be granted for development that would contravene any of the following—*
- (a) *a development standard for complying development,*

- (b) a development standard that arises, under the regulations under the Act, in connection with a commitment set out in a BASIX certificate for a building to which State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 applies or for the land on which such a building is situated,*
- (c) clause 5.4.*

Comment: As detailed previously in this request, Clause 4.6 of MLEP2013 is applicable to enable a variation to the Height of Building to permit Northern Beaches Council power to grant development consent to the subject development.

This proposal involves a departure from the Height of Building control of MLEP2013, a formal variation to this standard is required under *Clause 4.6 – Exceptions to Development Standards*. This provision allows consent to be granted for a development even though it would contravene a development standard imposed by this or any other planning instrument.

The provisions of Clause 4.6, which the consent authority must have regard to in determining whether a development that contravenes a development standard should be supported, includes the following:

- *That compliance with the development standard is unreasonable and unnecessary in the circumstances of the case; Cl 4.6 (3)(a)*
- *That there is sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard; Cl 4.6 (3) (b)*
- *The proposed development will be in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of the particular standard and the objectives for development within the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out: Cl 4.6 (4)(a)(ii)*
- *The public benefit of maintaining the development standard, and Cl 4.6 (5)(b)*
- *Any other matters required to be taken into consideration by the Planning Secretary before granting concurrence Cl 4.6 (5)(c)*

4.3 Height of buildings

(1) The objectives of this clause are as follows—

- (a) to provide for building heights and roof forms that are consistent with the topographic landscape, prevailing building height and desired future streetscape character in the locality,*
- (b) to control the bulk and scale of buildings,*
- (c) to minimise disruption to the following—*
 - (i) views to nearby residential development from public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),*
 - (ii) views from nearby residential development to public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),*
 - (iii) views between public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),*
- (d) to provide solar access to public and private open spaces and maintain adequate sunlight access to private open spaces and to habitable rooms of adjacent dwellings,*
- (e) to ensure the height and bulk of any proposed building or structure in a recreation or environmental protection zone has regard to existing vegetation and topography and any other aspect that might conflict with bushland and surrounding land uses.*

(2) The height of a building on any land is not to exceed the maximum height shown for the land on the Height of Buildings Map.

Comment: It is acknowledged that the proposed development does not comply with clause 4.3 (2) and accordingly there is a requirement to submit a Clause 4.6 Variation. This Clause 4.6 seeks an exemption to the development standard as prescribed under the MLEP2013 and demonstrates that compliance with the provisions of clause 4.3 (2) is both unreasonable and unnecessary. The proposed development meets the required steps that are set out in the relevant NSW Land and Environment Court decisions to justify that the standard can be varied to achieve the subject proposal.

The development standard in Clause 4.3 (2) of the MLEP2013, is amendable to variation. The purpose of this Clause 4.6 is to vary the Height of Building as a building height referable to the building to give Council the power to grant development consent to the non-compliant purposes. This proposition is reinforced by the following:

Clause 4.3 (2) states:

(2) The height of a building on any land is not to exceed the maximum height shown for the land on the Height of Buildings Map.

The Height of Building Map sets a maximum Height of Building control of 13m. For the purpose of calculating Height of Building, the MLEP2013 provides the following definition:

Building height is defined as follows:

building height (or height of building) means—

(a) in relation to the height of a building in metres—the vertical distance from ground level (existing) to the highest point of the building, or

(b) in relation to the RL of a building—the vertical distance from the Australian Height Datum to the highest point of the building,

including plant and lift overruns, but excluding communication devices, antennae, satellite dishes, masts, flagpoles, chimneys, flues and the like.

ground level (existing) means the existing level of a site at any point.

It is noted that Northern Beaches Council now refers to the leading case authority which considers the definition of “ground level (existing) *Merman Investments Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council* [2021] NSWLEC 1582, which insists that the ground level (existing) is measured from the **excavated** ground level (within the footprint of the existing building) to the highest point of the proposal directly above. It is noted that the Court accepted (at [74]) that there is an ‘environmental planning ground’ that may justify the contravention of the height standard under ‘clause 4.6’ when the prior excavation of the site (within the footprint of the existing building) distorts the maximum building height plane. This falls hand in hand with the original leading case *Bettar v Council of the City of Sydney* [2014] NSWLEC 1070.

The Height of Building in clause 4.3(2) of the MLEP2013 is a development standard in accordance with the definition set out below:

Development standards’ is defined in section 1.4 of the EP&A Act 1979 as:

development standards means provisions of an environmental planning instrument or the regulations in relation to the carrying out of development, being provisions by or under which **requirements are specified or standards are fixed** in respect of any aspect of that development,

including, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, requirements or standards in respect of:

(c) the character, location, siting, bulk, scale, shape, size, height, density, design or external appearance of a building or work,

Despite the variation to the Height of Building control which occurs due to the existing building, the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with the desired future character of the locality. The proposal has been strategically designed to minimise the impact and bulk and scale of the project. The project architects have designed a new compliant balcony balustrade noting the existing non-compliant design and the existing bulk and scale of the area; therefore, the proposal will not result in any unreasonable visual impact on the Manly streetscape and locality.

The proposed development will not result in any unreasonable impacts on adjoining properties in terms of views, privacy or overshadowing noting the building height remains as existing. Therefore, this written submission is considered to be compliant with the Statutory Provisions prescribed both under MLEP2013 and the provisions of Clause 4.6 which permit a variation to a development standard.

Objection to Development Standard – Height of Building (Clause 4.3(2))

Compliance being unreasonable or unnecessary

1. Compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary because the objectives of the development standard are achieved notwithstanding non-compliance with the stand: *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [42] and [43]*.

Comment: Clause 4.6(3)(a) of the MLEP2013 states that the proposed variation to the development standard must demonstrate that compliance with the development standard is *‘unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of the case’*.

In determining a merits-based assessment for the Height of Building of the development due consideration has been given to the above objectives and the planning principles set by the Land and Environment Court of NSW, Planning Principle – *Veloshin v Randwick Council [2007] NSWLEC 428*.

It is acknowledged that the purpose of Clause 4.6 is to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying certain development standards. In this regard the Height of Building of the site should be assessed on a greater numerical figure, noting the sites constraints and the unique nature of the locality in a varying degree of development types. The proposed works do not alter the existing building height and are located under the roof line which is maintained, therefore it is submitted that the development is reasonable despite the variation to the development standard. Given the proposed application is consistent with similar approvals granted in the area, Council’s assessment should be focused on this numerical allowance as opposed to the variation to the specific standard. By providing flexibility in this regard, the subject proposal is capable of achieving a better development and design outcome which adequately caters for residential needs within the Northern Beaches LGA in particularly the Manly precinct. As noted under the review of Clause 4.3 within the Statement of Environmental Effects, the proposal is consistent with the objectives of Clause 4.3, as outlined below:

- The objectives of the MLEP2013 Height of Building control are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The objectives of the MLEP2013 E1 Local Centre zone are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.

- The compliance with the development standard is both unreasonable and unnecessary given the existing building height is retained and the works are below the existing roof line.
- There are sufficient environmental planning grounds to support the proposed variation.
- The proposal is consistent with the existing bulk and scale of the area.
- The proposal has no adverse impacts to views or view corridors.
- The proposal does not impact existing solar access to private and public places.
- The breach in building height will not be noticeable and will have no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties. The proposal will not result in a building of an unacceptable bulk and scale.

As outlined above, the proposed development is consistent with the underlying objectives of the Height of Building standard, notwithstanding the proposed variation. Given the modified state of the site, through this application the permissible Height of Building control does not align with the existing height on the site, nor several built form controls of the MDCP. This essentially limits any redevelopment potential of the site without varying Council's standard.

The underlying objective or purpose of Clause 4.3 is not relevant to the development with the consequence that compliance is unnecessary. *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [45]*

Comment: The proposal is for alterations and additions to the existing mixed-use development on the residential component of the building which does not change the existing maximum building height for the site. It is important to acknowledge that the building existing is over the 25m maximum height allowance and that the proposed works are below that existing on the site. There is no further variation to that existing.

The proposal includes demolition works to delete the existing concrete balustrades and replace them with glass balustrades. The maximum building height for the proposed works is 42.9m (71,6% variation) which is above the maximum building height of 25m. It is noted that the building height breach is existing and not impacted by the proposed alterations and additions.

The proposal does not increase the building footprint, nor does it extend the building height as existing. The proposal is supported and in our opinion is consistent with the objectives of the Clause, as outlined below:

(a) to provide for building heights and roof forms that are consistent with the topographic landscape, prevailing building height and desired future streetscape character in the locality

Comment: The proposed development retains the existing building height, bulk and scale and is therefore consistent as existing with the prevailing heights and roof forms. It is noted that notwithstanding the existing breach to the building height, this application and proposed works to the balcony balustrades are below the existing maximum building height for the building, therefore the works are considered to be inconsequential to that existing and purely relate to the replacement of balustrades on the balconies. It is noted that notwithstanding the existing breach to the building height, other properties within the Manly LGA have similar breaches, and the approval would not result in significant impacts to the bulk and scale of Manly. It is important for Council to acknowledge the existing streetscape and built form of 22 Central Avenue, as existing. The proposed works relate to cosmetic alterations and additions that are consistent with the desired future streetscape of the locality.

(b) to control the bulk and scale of buildings,

Comment: The proposal has been strategically designed by the project architect to be the replacement of the existing concrete balustrade with a new glass balustrade only. It is noted that the existing concrete balustrade does not comply with the Building Code of Australia, therefore the proposal is required to ensure compliant balconies for the site. The proposal will not have an adverse visual impact and will not disrupt views, privacy or have amenity impacts to neighbouring properties. It is therefore considered that the bulk and scale of the existing building is retained.

The excerpt below of the eastern elevation shows the proposed works and the existing building height of the entire building. The proposal has been strategically designed to maintain the existing bulk and scale of the streetscape. The excerpt below shows the proposed balustrades in blue which are below the existing building height.



(c) to minimise disruption to the following—

- (i) views to nearby residential development from public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),
- (ii) views from nearby residential development to public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),
- (iii) views between public spaces (including the harbour and foreshores),

Comment: The proposal relates to alterations and additions externally in the form of replacing the existing concrete balustrade. The proposal will have no impact to views from both adjoining properties and public spaces.

(d) to provide solar access to public and private open spaces and maintain adequate sunlight access to private open spaces and to habitable rooms of adjacent dwellings,

Comment: The proposal relates to alterations and additions externally in the form of replacing the existing concrete balustrade. The proposal will have no impact to solar access from both adjoining properties and public spaces.

(e) to ensure the height and bulk of any proposed building or structure in a recreation or environmental protection zone has regard to existing vegetation and topography and any other aspect that might conflict with bushland and surrounding land uses.

Comment: Not applicable – the site is not located within a recreation or environmental protection zone.

It is our professional opinion that the building by virtue of its height, bulk and scale, is consistent with the locality and desired character of the area. We have formed the considered opinion that the project is a sympathetic design and development with no impact to existing bulk and scale and is consistent with the existing and future character of the area. The proposal is not offensive, or unsympathetic in a streetscape context nor the context from Manly, and therefore the variation can be supported by Northern Beaches Council.

2. The underlying objective or purpose would be defeated or thwarted if compliance was required with the consequence that compliance is unreasonable. *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [46]*

Comment: It would indeed be unreasonable for Council to refuse the development that is proposed by way of a variation as the proposal does not have any adverse impacts on the immediate amenity of the area. The development has been designed with the necessary sensitivity to complement existing buildings and the natural landform of the area. There is no adverse visual impact associated with the form and structures proposed.

3. The development standard has been virtually abandoned or destroyed by the Council’s own decisions in granting development consents that depart from the standard and hence compliance with the stand is unnecessary and unreasonable: *Wehbe v Pittwater Council at [47]*.

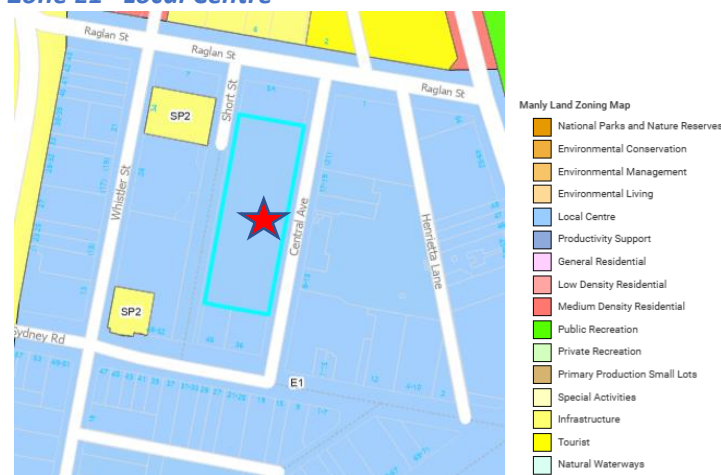
Comment: Whilst the proposal seeks a variation to Councils numerical Height of Building standard, it is consistent with the relevant objectives (as outlined previously in this report).

A review of other developments within the immediate area and approvals granted show that the development standard for Height of Buildings has been virtually abandoned or destroyed by Council’s own decisions in granting development consents, hence compliance with this development standard is unnecessary and unreasonable.

4. The relevance of the zoning provisions of the land to which the development is proposed.

Zoning Map

Zone E1 Local Centre



1 Objectives of zone

- *To provide a range of retail, business and community uses that serve the needs of people who live in, work in or visit the area.*
- *To encourage investment in local commercial development that generates employment opportunities and economic growth.*
- *To enable residential development that contributes to a vibrant and active local centre and is consistent with the Council's strategic planning for residential development in the area.*
- *To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings.*
- *To minimise conflict between land uses in the zone and adjoining zones and ensure amenity for the people who live in the local centre in relation to noise, odour, delivery of materials and use of machinery.*
- *To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces.*
- *To create urban form that relates favourably in scale and in architectural and landscape treatment to neighbouring land uses and to the natural environment.*

2 Permitted without consent

Home-based child care; Home businesses; Home occupations

3 Permitted with consent

Amusement centres; Boarding houses; Car parks; Centre-based child care facilities; Commercial premises; Community facilities; Creative industries; Early education and care facilities; Electricity generating works; Entertainment facilities; Environmental protection works; Flood mitigation works; Function centres; Group homes; Home industries; Hostels; Hotel or motel accommodation; Information and education facilities; Local distribution premises; Medical centres; Oyster aquaculture; Passenger transport facilities; Places of public worship; Public administration buildings; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (indoor); Registered clubs; Respite day care centres; Roads; Service stations; Shop top housing; Signage; Tank-based aquaculture; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Veterinary hospitals; Waste or resource transfer stations

4 Prohibited

Any development not specified in item 2 or 3

Comment: The relevance of the zone objectives are assessed below:

Clause 4.6(4)(a)(ii) states that a request for exemption from a development standard must establish that the proposed variation is consistent with both the objectives of the zone and standard.

The site is zoned E1 Local Centre pursuant to MLEP2013. The proposed alterations and additions to the existing residential component of the existing mixed-use building are consistent with the objectives of the zone, as follows:

- The proposal invests in local residential development that generates employment and economic growth.
- The proposal maintains and enhances the existing urban form with the introduction of the glass balustrades that are consistent with the architecture of the building and will not detract from the streetscape and bulk and scale of the precinct.

Sufficient environmental planning grounds

1. First, the environmental planning grounds advanced in the written request must be sufficient “to justify contravening the development standard”

Comment: Sufficient environmental planning grounds exist to justify the height of buildings variation namely the retention of the existing building height noting that the proposal will not alter the existing variation on site. Further justification to support the proposed variation is provided below:

- The LEC planning principles on Height of Building relating to the height, bulk and scale, including compatibility between subject buildings and its surrounding context to ensure the proposal is compatible with its context. The planning principle seeks qualification of the following:

Planning principle: assessment of height and bulk

· The appropriateness of a proposal’s height and bulk is most usefully assessed against planning controls related to these attributes, such as maximum height, floor space ratio, site coverage and setbacks. The questions to be asked are:

Are the impacts consistent with impacts that may be reasonably expected under the controls? (For complying proposals this question relates to whether the massing has been distributed so as to reduce impacts, rather than to increase them. For non-complying proposals the question cannot be answered unless the difference between the impacts of a complying and a non-complying development is quantified.)

How does the proposal’s height and bulk relate to the height and bulk desired under the relevant controls?

· Where the planning controls are aimed at preserving the existing character of an area, additional questions to be asked are:

Does the area have a predominant existing character and are the planning controls likely to maintain it?

Does the proposal fit into the existing character of the area?

· Where the planning controls are aimed at creating a new character, the existing character is of less relevance. The controls then indicate the nature of the new character desired. The question to be asked is:

Is the proposal consistent with the bulk and character intended by the planning controls?

· Where there is an absence of planning controls related to bulk and character, the assessment of a proposal should be based on whether the planning intent for the area appears to be the preservation of the existing character or the creation of a new one. In cases where even this question cannot be answered, reliance on subjective opinion cannot be avoided. The question then is:

Does the proposal look appropriate in its context?

Note: the above questions are not exhaustive; other questions may also be asked.

In addressing the above planning principals, the benefits of the proposal, represents a new balcony balustrade that is compliant with the Building Code of Australia, therefore ensuring safety to the building occupants and visitors.

From a planning perspective, there is sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the variation to the Height of Building development standard for the following reasons:

- The objectives of the MLEP2013 Height of Building control are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The objectives of the MLEP2013 E1 Local Centre zone are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.

- The compliance with the development standard is both unreasonable and unnecessary given the existing building height is retained and the works are below the existing roof line.
- There are sufficient environmental planning grounds to support the proposed variation.
- The proposal is consistent with the existing bulk and scale of the area.
- The proposal has no adverse impacts to views or view corridors.
- The proposal does not impact existing solar access to private and public places.
- The breach in building height will not be noticeable and will have no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties. The proposal will not result in a building of an unacceptable bulk and scale.

The non-compliance does not result in any unacceptable environmental consequences in terms of streetscape, or residential amenity. In this regard, I consider the proposal to be of a skilful design which responds appropriately to the constraints on the site and the existing bulk and scale. Such an outcome is achieved whilst realising the reasonable development potential of the land.

2. Second, the written request must demonstrate that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard so as to enable the consent authority to be satisfied under cl 4.6(4)(a)(i) that the written request has adequately addressed this matter: see *Four2Five Pty Ltd v Ashfield Council* [2015] NSWLEC 90 at [31]

Comment: This report demonstrates that there is sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard for Clause 4.3(2). The proposal has assessed the relevant impacts (if any) and has assessed the existing bulk, scale and mass of the building which will breach the development standard. This report finds that a merit assessment is applicable and determines that there is sufficient grounds to justify the breach to the Height of Buildings. The proposal has been skilfully designed and strategically located to not have an adverse impact to neighbouring properties. Therefore, the development as proposed is sufficiently justified to contravene the development standard.

Is the proposed development in the public interest?

The Consent Authority must be satisfied that the proposed development will be in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of:

- a. the particular development standard;
- b. the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out.

Comment: As demonstrated in this request, the proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the development standard and the objectives for development of the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out. The proposal is in the public's interest as there is very little public benefit in maintaining the development standard of Height of Building applicable to this site as the breach is existing. Additionally, the building improvements add significant amenity and safety benefits through a new compliant balcony balustrade. Council should encourage such developments via support of positive intention to upgrade sites within the Northern Beaches LGA.

Accordingly, the consent authority can be satisfied that the proposed development will be in the public interest if the standard is varied because it is consistent with the objectives of the standard and the objectives of the zone.

Secretary's Concurrence

Under clause 4.6(5), in deciding whether to grant concurrence, the Secretary must consider the following matters:

- (a) whether contravention of the development standard raises any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning, and*
- (b) the public benefit of maintaining the development standard, and*
- (c) any other matters required to be taken into consideration by the Secretary before granting concurrence.*

Comment: The contravention of the development standard will not result in any consequences for State or regional environmental planning.

There would be no public benefit in maintaining the development standard in this instance for the following reasons:

- The variation to the Height of Building development standard does not give rise to any adverse environmental impacts. As such, the maintenance of the development standard in this specific instance would not provide any public benefit and would hinder the orderly and economic development of the site.
- Maintaining the development standard, in the context of this site, would be inconsistent with the objectives of the zone, and the Act, as it would be inconsistent with the surrounding developments.
- The breach to the development standard is existing and not exacerbating through the proposal.

By Planning Circular dated 5th May 2020, the Secretary of the Department of Planning & Environment advised that consent authorities can assume the concurrence to clause 4.6 request except in the circumstances set out below:

- Lot size standards for rural dwellings;
- Variations exceeding 10%; and
- Variations to non-numerical development standards.

The circular also provides that concurrence can be assumed when an LPP is the consent authority where a variation exceeds 10% or is to a non-numerical standard, because of the greater scrutiny that the LPP process and determinations are subject to, compared with decisions made under delegation by Council staff.

Concurrence of the Secretary can therefore be assumed in this case. There are no other relevant matters required to be taken into account by the Secretary.

Summary and Conclusion

It is therefore submitted that Clause 4.6 is applicable to the subject development in respect to the variation to clause 4.3(2) Height of Building and this statement verifies that compliance with the provisions of clause 4.3(2) would be both unreasonable and unnecessary in the circumstances of this case. The development is consistent with the objectives of Clause 4.6 as per below:

- 1(a) to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying certain development standards to particular development,*

1(b) to achieve better outcomes for and from development by allowing flexibility in particular circumstances.

A variation to the strict application of Council's Height of Buildings development standard is considered appropriate for the site at 22 Central Avenue, Manly.

It is acknowledged that the purpose of Clause 4.6 is to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying certain development standards. In this regard the Height of Building of the site should be assessed on a greater numerical figure, noting the sites constraints and the unique nature of the locality in a varying degree of development types. Given the proposed application is consistent with similar approvals granted in the area, Council's assessment should be focused on this numerical allowance as opposed to the variation to the specific standard. By providing flexibility in this regard, the subject proposal is capable of achieving a better development and design outcome which adequately caters for residential needs within the Northern Beaches LGA in particular the Manly precinct. As noted under the review of Clause 4.3 within the Statement of Environmental Effects, the proposal is consistent with the objectives of Clause 4.3. From a planning perspective, there is sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the variation to the Height of Building development standard for the following reasons:

- The objectives of the MLEP2013 Height of Building control are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The objectives of the MLEP2013 E1 Local Centre zone are achieved notwithstanding the technical non-compliance.
- The compliance with the development standard is both unreasonable and unnecessary given the existing building height is retained and the works are below the existing roof line.
- There are sufficient environmental planning grounds to support the proposed variation.
- The proposal is consistent with the existing bulk and scale of the area.
- The proposal has no adverse impacts to views or view corridors.
- The proposal does not impact existing solar access to private and public places.
- The breach in building height will not be noticeable and will have no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties. The proposal will not result in a building of an unacceptable bulk and scale.

As outlined above, the proposed development is consistent with the underlying objectives of the Height of Building standard, notwithstanding the proposed variation. The permissible Height of Building control does not align with the permissible height on the site, nor several built form controls of the MDCP2013. This essentially limits any redevelopment potential of the site without varying Council's standards.

In addition to the above justification, the proposal is considered to meet the intent of Council's controls relating to Height of Building, the E1 Local Centre zone objectives and the desired future character of this precinct. It is therefore submitted that the non-compliance with the Height of Building Clause 4.3(2) is acceptable, and flexibility should be exercised by Council as a better outcome is achieved for the site and the immediate locality. It is noted the assessment has been undertaken in relation to the most recent court case *Merman Investments Pty Ltd v Woollahra Municipal Council* [2021] NSWLEC 1582. The variation under Clause 4.6 is to vary the Height of Building control to give Northern Beaches Council the power to grant development consent to the proposed development.