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Westfield Warringah Mall

Stage 1 Retail: Section 96 application

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Architectural Design Statement

This application seeks to amend Development Approval DA2008/1741, the changes can be summarised as follows:

1. **Retail Plan Rationalising**
2. **Palm Tree car park modifications**
3. **Star Fish car park revisions**

As this statement will establish, the modifications sought are a marked improvement on the Development Approval, in that a superior solution is to be achieved without changing the Gross Leasable Area (GLA), stormwater augmentation, or the number of car parking spaces to be provided.

1. Retail Plan Rationalisation

The changes sought to the retail plan will bring the centre up to date with current and future retail requirements, whilst lessening the impact on the existing complex with greater retention of existing structures.

The Myer tenancy has been right sized, with the tenancies around its entrance reconfigured to incorporate Mini Major tenancies in order to accommodate the current retail market, and the Myer loading dock and its access entry is also to be modified to reflect the proposed retail changes. In addition to this, the Ground Level of the Parallel Mall has been widened from 9m to 10m to reflect best practice retail design.

The above alterations result in a reduction of the Star Fish car park area, and subsequent loss of cars. However these losses have been accommodated for in other areas and via efficiency improvements, which will be elaborated on further in this statement.

As illustrated on the architectural drawings, it is proposed that the approved diagonal Cross Mall from the new Parallel Mall to existing David Jones entry is to be deleted, and that the southern diagonal Cross Mall from the existing Myer entry to the Centre Court has been reconfigured to integrate with the existing north (Myer) Cross Mall.

These alterations provided the opportunity to improve the performance of the skylight design in regards to natural ventilation and day lighting. A number of studies have been conducted in order to arrive at the proposed skylight form, and it is noted that this form enjoys a stronger relationship to the centre's existing skylights than that of the approved.

Some improvements to the approved access and Vertical Transport are proposed to both the Star Fish and Palm Tree car parks. These include minor alterations at Star Fish, and the Palm Tree car park travelators and lift shifted to be within the existing mall entry.

The net effect of the proposed rationalisation of the Retail Plan is a stronger solution than that of the approval that accommodates current and future retail requirements, with less demolition, improved access, and enjoys superior skylight performance. All without any change to the approved Gross Leasable Area (GLA), and wholly contained within the centre and thus, negligible effects on the surrounding context.

2. Palm Tree Car Park Modifications

This application seeks to modify the approved multi-deck Palm Tree car park in order to provide for future expansion and update the landscaping and elevations accordingly. The opportunity offered by these alterations was taken to elaborate and enrich the car park façades, resulting in an urban experience that is of substantial improvement over the development approval.

In provisioning for future expansion, it is proposed to consolidate the car park circulation ramps away from Cross and Green streets, and to provide an exit speed ramp to complement the entry speed ramp. The opportunity to improve the address point of the redevelopment was taken to increase the Green street setback, and offer greater soft landscaping than that of the approval.

It is noted that the above modifications have aided construction rationalisation, increased car parking efficiency (making up for some of car spaces reduced in rationalising the Retail Plan), and provided some welcome improvements to the car park access and internal arrangements. The details of which can be reviewed via the *Stage 1 s96 Application Traffic Review* conducted by *GTA Consultants* (submitted with this application), which provides a detailed assessment of the proposed alterations sought in regards to Traffic Management.

In revising the façade, the approved defining 'corner drum' element has been improved in form and detail. The form has been augmented to relate to the revised external car park ramps, and the detail elaborated from a singular expression, towards a composition and layering of "porous" veils. The geometry of these layered veils capture and imply movement across and throughout the façade, offering a far more dramatic defining corner element than that of the approval.

In addition, a green façade has been added to the Cross street elevation where it is proposed to provide an additional speed ramp to. It is envisaged that the green façade will be comprised of climbing plants on a tensioned cable substrate, which will span from the garden bed to the inclined speed ramp (please refer to the Landscape Architect's documentation for details). This green wall will aid the other landscaping in providing a softer and more varied Cross street elevation than that of the approval.

The body form of the car park remains much the same to that of the approval, as does the intent of the continuous 'porous' façade, which provides subtle articulation and natural ventilation. It is in the detail and materiality of how this is achieved that revisions are proposed in order to address construction and durability issues. The vertically mounted battens will now span from the Ground Mezzanine slab to the up-stand of Level 2 (instead of floor to floor), with the subtle articulation maintained by undulating the battens horizontally away from the body form of the car park. Finally, to address durability concerns, the approved recycled material of the vertical battens will be substituted for a pre-finished metal, which will be consistent with the approval. The result of these revisions is that the approved intent of the cladding to the body form of the car park remains largely unchanged, and that these revisions are a result of progressive elaboration through design development.

The net effect of the proposed Palm Tree car park modifications to the immediate local context, and indeed the viewer (in and around Cross street), is of great improvement on the approval. Indeed, the building form and design intent remain largely the same. However, it is in the revised details that greater depth and richness is achieved; through the deeper and softer Green street setback, a green façade for which Cross street to enjoy, and ultimately, the corner 'veil' which dramatically defines the corner, and offers a dynamic address point to the redevelopment.

3. Star Fish Car Park Revisions

It is sought to modify the approved alterations and additions to the Star Fish car park, to improve the efficiency, as well as accommodating the rationalising of the Retail Plan. These changes achieve a marked improvement on the Development Approval with negligible affects to neighbouring properties.

In an effort to increase the efficiency of the car park and rationalise the construction, it is proposed to relocate the approved speed ramp (Ground to Level 01 mezzanine) from its internal location to be external of the car park within the median of the west access road. The result of which is significant gains in car parking spaces, traffic management and safety. A detailed assessment of the proposed alterations sought in regards to Traffic Management can be reviewed in the *Stage 1 s96 Application Traffic Review* as previously mentioned.

As part of the proposed speed ramp relocation, the opportunity has been taken to address the landscaping of the access road. The result being an increase in soft landscaping over the existing conditions, and new trees in-lieu of the trees that are to be removed (a number of which are in poor condition and health). To review the proposed landscaping in detail, please refer to the Landscape Architects documentation submitted with this application. It is noted that there are no approved landscape works in this location, and as such these proposed works are a marked improvement over the approval, and indeed the existing conditions.

The outcome of accommodating the modifications to the Retail Plan is a reduction in car park area, however the development maintains the required amount of car parking spaces as well as a surplus for a future stage via the above mentioned improved efficiencies in the rooftop, Star Fish and Palm Tree car parks.

In regards to neighbouring properties, the affects to the adjacent "*Lifestyle Working*" commercial office complex are considered to be negligible given that there will be some distance between its east façade and the proposed speed ramp location. Further to this, it is noted that there is significant visual screening provided by the existing trees (please refer to the Landscape Architect's documentation for details) on the western verge of the access road. In addition, the adjacent commercial complex will enjoy the affects afforded by the provisioning of new landscaping works to the access road median associated with the speed ramp. The proposed position of the speed ramp is setback from the property boundary, comfortably more than the required variable boundary setback as suggested in the *Warringah Mall Development Control Plan*.

It is considered that the proposed revisions to the approved Star Fish car park alterations and additions provide important efficiency improvements and spatial accommodation whilst without adversely affecting neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

As this statement has established, the modifications sought in this section 96 application, are a significant improvement on the Development Approval. The net result of the changes provides a best practice retail solution that will deliver superior skylight performance, increased car park efficiency, and improved access. All of this is to be achieved with less demolition, with no affect to the Gross Leasable Area (GLA), stormwater augmentation, or the number of car parking spaces to be provided. Further, the redevelopments interface with the local context has been improved with greater landscaping, refined facades, and provisioned with a dynamic address point.