



10th of September 2020

The General Manager  
Northern Beaches Council  
725 Pittwater Road,  
Dee Why NSW 2099

RE: **SEPP 65 DESIGN QUALITY PRINCIPLES STATEMENT**  
Proposed Mixed Use Development  
1 Bilambee Avenue, Bilgola Plateau NSW 2107

Dear Sir / Madame,

In accordance with the design quality principles outlined in Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development (SEPP 65), we are pleased to provide this Design Quality Principles Statement.

SEPP 65 Design Quality Principles provide an appropriate methodology for assessment of the residential component of the development. The design quality principles do not generate design solutions but provide a guide to achieving good design and the means of evaluating the merit of the proposed solutions. The proposal is defined as comprising three (3) storeys and more than four (4) dwellings and hence the application of SEPP 65 is triggered.

An assessment of the proposal in accordance with the SEPP 65 principles is provided below.

## **PRINCIPLE 1 \_ Context and Neighbourhood Character**

*Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context is the key natural and built features of an area, their relationship and character they create when combined. It also includes social, economic, health and environmental conditions.*

*Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of an areas existing or future character. Well-designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area including the adjacent sites, streetscape and neighbourhood.*

*Consideration of local context is important for all sites, including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change.*

### **Comment:**

The subject site occupies the 'bookend' of an existing and well-established local neighbourhood centre that provides an array of services and amenities for the local community. This neighbourhood centre is an island site, bounded by Bilambee Lane to the north, Plateau Road to the south, Bilkurra Avenue to the east, and Bilambee Avenue and Bilga Avenue to the west, with the subject site having interfaces to all the above public thoroughfares



apart from Bilga Avenue. The existing character of the neighbourhood centre is of multi-storey mixed use developments having retail or commercial uses on ground and residential units on the levels above.

The proposal responds to the site's immediate context and sympathetically contributes to the larger neighbourhood context by improving its existing land use, being a disused service station, delivering an enhanced architectural response that is similar in character with the existing mixed use developments, maintaining and strengthening relationships with the local neighbourhood.

The proposal being a mixed use development comprising retail, commercial and residential units is contextually, socially, economically and environmentally appropriate. The proposal responds positively to the opportunities and constraints of the site, and reinforces the identity of the neighbourhood centre. It creates opportunities for future economic growth and also greater social cohesion between the existing community and future residents.

## **PRINCIPLE 2 \_ Built Form and Scale**

*Good design achieves a scale, bulk and height appropriate to the existing or desired future character of the street and surrounding buildings.*

*Good design also achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the buildings purpose in terms of building alignment, proportions, building type, articulation and the manipulation of building elements.*

*Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas and provides internal amenity and outlook.*

### **Comment:**

The proposal is appropriate when consideration is given to the existing and future streetscape character as well as neighbourhood centre character. It will provide a three (3) storey built form on the site. The proposal is articulated by a dominant two storey podium presentation which is consistent with the scale of the neighbouring buildings, and a third storey which has been carefully designed with a setback from the street frontages and is articulated to be subservient to the overall scale and proportions of the proposal.

The built form proposed defines the public domain with its overall site massing, alignment, orientation, and articulation, and positively contributes to the existing and future streetscape character by presenting a coherent built form and scale.

## **PRINCIPLE 3 \_ Density**

*Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents and each apartment, resulting in density appropriate for the site and its context.*

*Appropriate densities are consistent with the areas existing or projected population. Appropriate densities can be sustained by existing or proposed infrastructure, public transport, access to jobs, community facilities and the environment.*

### **Comment:**

As Sydney's population continues to grow and in line with State Planning policies, the proposal provides the opportunity to increase the site's density and contribute to Sydney's growing demand for housing. This opportunity is strengthened by the site's immediate access to public transport, and further through its increased retail and commercial offering, opportunity for employment to the local community and beyond.

The proposal will provide new retail and commercial uses, as well as high quality residential units in an accessible and well connected area.



The proposal achieves a high level of amenity for neighbouring residents, future occupants, business owners and visitors to the site. The proposal results in an appropriate density that will continue to service the local community and provide much needed housing choice within the local area.

The proposal is not out of character with the existing adjoining mixed use buildings, context, and shall contribute positively to the existing neighbourhood centre.

#### **PRINCIPLE 4 \_ Sustainability**

*Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes.*

*Good sustainable design includes use of natural cross ventilation and sunlight for the amenity and liveability of residents and passive thermal design for ventilation, heating and cooling reduces reliance on technology and operation costs. Other elements include recycling and reuse of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials and deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.*

##### **Comment:**

The site's orientation to sunlight and prevailing winds have been carefully considered in the overall planning of the proposal. This results in 75% of the proposed units meeting the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) solar access design criteria and 87.5% of the proposed units meeting the ADG cross ventilation design criteria. The proposal has been designed for and successfully provides a high level of amenity and liveability for its future occupants.

The proposal utilizes carefully selected materials for their inherent thermal qualities. Coupled with passive design principles to manage thermal gains and losses, the proposal reduces its reliance on active heating and cooling. This in turn reduces the overall ongoing operational costs, contributing to a positive economic and social outcome for future occupants and business owners of any future stratum.

The proposal has been assessed against the Water, Thermal and Energy performances of both BASIX and Section J, **and satisfactorily meet the required targets.**

The proposal also provides waste and recycling storage facilities for ongoing waste management with the objective of reducing landfill contributions. No deep soil areas have been provided, with the ground floor completely occupied in a business zone, however an abundance of landscaping elements have been provided throughout the proposal, including planter beds and green walls to private balconies.

#### **PRINCIPLE 5 \_ Landscape**

*Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in attractive developments with good amenity. A positive image and contextual fit of well-designed developments is achieved by contributing to the landscape character of the streetscape and neighbourhood.*

*Good landscape design enhances the developments environmental performance by retaining positive natural features which contribute to the local context, co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy, habitat values and preserving green networks.*

*Good landscape design optimises useability, privacy and opportunities for social interaction, equitable access, respect for neighbour's amenity and provides for practical establishment and long-term management.*

##### **Comment:**

Existing vegetation on the subject site is limited to planters located along the edges of the site with a varied mix of plant species. The proposal seeks to enhance landscaping on site through the use of green walls and deep



integrated planter beds. These elements provide good amenity for future occupants whilst also serving to lift and soften the building's presentation.

Another way the proposal seeks to enhance its landscaping is by designing the ground floor uses to integrate seamlessly with adjacent public open spaces, which are buffered from the surrounding vehicular thoroughfares with kerbside planting strips, sufficient in width to support planting of significant street trees.

This integration of landscaping and building design facilitates greater social cohesion within the local community and contributes positively to the immediate streetscape character.

## **PRINCIPLE 6 \_ Amenity**

*Good design positively influences internal and external amenity for residents and neighbours. Achieving good amenity contributes to positive living environments and resident's wellbeing.*

*Good amenity combines appropriate room dimensions and shape, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.*

### **Comment:**

The proposal provides high levels of amenity to future occupants. This is achieved through the design, orientation and planning of each residential unit. A combination of well-proportioned rooms with high ceilings, ample access to daylight and natural ventilation, the provision of large private open spaces which act as extensions to living areas, as well as ample storage, both internal and within the basement, all contribute to the amenity for each unit.

Careful consideration has been given to each habitable room, maximising natural light and providing outlook opportunities without compromising visual and acoustic amenity of neighbouring residents.

The proposed ground floor uses, which will increase availability of local services, also contributes positively to the amenity of both future occupants and the larger local community.

The proposal also provides for high levels of access for both future occupants as well as visitors. A lift is provided for access to all levels of the proposal, and the way in which occupants and visitors might access all areas of the proposal is clearly defined and highly visible.

## **PRINCIPLE 7 \_ Safety**

*Good design optimises safety and security within the development and the public domain. It provides for quality public and private spaces that are clearly defined and fit for the intended purpose. Opportunities to maximise passive surveillance of public and communal areas promote safety.*

*A positive relationship between public and private spaces is achieved through clearly defined secure access points and well-lit and visible areas that are easily maintained and appropriate to the location and purpose.*

### **Comment:**

Principles of 'Safe by Design' and 'Safety In Design' were considered and incorporated into the spatial planning and configuration of the proposal. On ground level, pedestrian access to retail and common residential entries on Bilambee Avenue and Bilkurra Avenue respectively are deliberately separated from the vehicular entry point on Bilambee Lane, to avoid any risk of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. The removal of redundant vehicular crossovers from Bilambee Avenue and Bilkurra Avenue make for a cohesive public domain and improves the safety of pedestrians.



Pedestrian entries are clearly visible and clearly defined, to prevent unintended entry. Entries shall also be designed with appropriate lighting to ensure security through out night time periods. Secure access to the common residential areas shall incorporate CCTV cameras.

Passive surveillance of the public domain shall be provided from the residential units.

## **PRINCIPLE 8 \_ Housing Diversity and Social Interaction**

*Good design achieves a mix of apartment sizes, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets.*

*Well-designed apartment developments respond to social context by providing housing and facilities to suit the existing and future social mix.*

*Good design involves practical and flexible features, including different types of communal space for a broad range of people and providing opportunities for social interaction among residents.*

### **Comment:**

Eight (8) large sizing residential units are proposed in total, comprising a mix of two (2) and three (3) bedroom units, provide housing diversity within an established area of predominantly single family detached houses. The proposed unit mix accommodates varying demographics and different living needs, as well as the growing need for housing choice in the local community.

Two (2) units have been designed to satisfy Silver Level design criterias under the Livable Housing Australia Design Guideline. These units shall cater for young families, occupants with injuries or a disability, and the elderly by providing homes that are easier to access, navigate and live in.

Additionally, two (2) commercial or retail tenancies are proposed that can accommodate a variety of uses. They provide active public domain frontages that encourage opportunities for social interaction between future occupants as well as the local community.

## **PRINCIPLE 9 \_ Aesthetics**

*Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structures. Good design uses a variety of material, colours and textures.*

*The visual appearance of a well-designed apartment development responds to the existing and future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.*

### **Comment:**

Architecturally the proposal responds positively to the existing context and provides a potential catalyst and benchmark for future development, particularly those sites immediately adjacent to the proposal.

The architecture of the proposal reinforces its mixed-use typology through overall building mass and planning. The continuous Bilambee Avenue and Bilkurra Avenue frontage emphasizes the development's corner significance and arrival to the neighbourhood centre. Its built form is well proportioned to emphasize a two (2) storey podium presentation which is consistent in character to the existing neighbouring shops. Facades are carefully balanced with solid surfaces and openings. A material palette with contrasting surfaces, colours and visual weights further enhance this balance and are chosen to compliment materials and colours found within the immediate context of the site.



Internal areas are not built to the lot boundaries, rather an articulation zone is designed into the building skin allowing greater composition of materials to achieve a building façade reflective of uses it encloses, whilst presenting a coherent and holistic building language for such a significant site.

As mentioned above, the proposal presents to the public domain as a predominately two storey structure. Whilst a third storey is proposed, it is clearly recessive in nature and articulated through form and considered material choice so as to be submissive but also complimentary to the predominate two storey architectural building composition.

I David Benson, a registered architect, can confirm that I have directed the design team for the proposed mixed use development located at 1 Bilambee Avenue, Bilgola Plateau.

The design team is familiar with, and has worked to achieve the design quality principles set out in Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design for Quality of Residential Flat Development.

The proposal provides for a development that is consistent with the objectives, guidelines and controls of the Apartment Design Guide and is consistent with the objectives of achieving a high quality built environment as described in Pittwater DCP 2011.

The development gives effect to the objects of Part 1.3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 in promoting social and economic welfare of the community, sustainability, the orderly and economic use and development of land and promoting good design and amenity of the built environment.

It is clear that the public interest would be best served by Council using its discretionary power to grant consent of the proposed development in this instance.

Yours Sincerely,

**David Benson**

Director

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