

5 March 2025

Our Ref: 25/70131
Our Contact: Harseerat Thind (02) 9562 1852

Lucinda Craig
Social and Diverse Housing Assessments
Development Assessment and Infrastructure
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Ms Craig,

RE: Request for Advice – Response to Submissions – Discovery Point Concept Plan – Modification 5 (MP10_0003 MOD 5)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Response to Submissions (RtS) for amendments to Modification 5 of the Part 3A Discovery Point Concept Plan, relating to Building 14 at Discovery Point, Wolli Creek (the site).

Bayside Council provided a submission on the originally exhibited Modification Report on 4 July 2023, which raised the following issues in relation to the modified proposal:

- Reduction in Non-Residential Floor Space – concerns around less service and employment opportunities.
- Need for Social Infrastructure – increase in residential population will place additional demand on existing and planned social infrastructure. Issues regarding delivery of community facilities, open space and recreation.
- Affordable Housing – recommended to retain Built-to-Rent (BTR) Housing for the lifetime of the development.
- Changes to the Building Envelope – demonstrate the relation to the nature of the building and public domain connection from the proposed additional Gross Floor Area (GFA).
- Transport Access – including concerns around poor intersection performance at Brodie Spark Drive and Princess Highway and focus on increased pedestrian priority. Provide increased bicycle parking provision to comply with the Bayside Development Control Plan 2022 (BDGP 2022). Issues related to waste collection and setting a minimum NABERS/Green Star standard.

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Advice on Response to Submissions

Council has reviewed the RtS and supporting documentation. Outlined within the Submissions Report, the amendments include:

1. Convert the majority of remaining unrealised GFA from non-residential to residential, by reducing the minimum non-residential GFA from 9,000m² to 5,042m².
2. Increase the maximum total GFA by 4,556m² from 142,685m² to 147,241m².
3. Amend the Statement of Commitments to reflect modifications to the approved floor space and include a new commitment for Building 14 to be delivered as Co-living housing and active ground floor uses.

Council understands that proposed changes mainly represent the amendments related to GFA and change of use from BTR to Co-living. Regarding the strategic context, it is noted that co-living housing is recognised as a housing typology that promotes a more diverse housing type and rental accommodation options for a range of occupants.

Notwithstanding, Council staff have undertaken a review of the RtS and supporting documents, and the concerns are detailed below:

1. Facilities for residents in Co-living

Part 3 Co-living housing of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 requires adequate bathroom, laundry and kitchen facilities for the use of each occupant under Section 69 (1) (f).

The proposed modification does not clearly demonstrate how the shared facilities have been adequately planned and designed to support the proposed 217 studio units. Co-living spaces, which are increasingly popular among young professionals and students, require thoughtful consideration of communal facilities to foster a balanced and functional living environment. Given the high density of the development, it is essential to ensure that sufficient shared amenities are provided, such as kitchens, social and recreational spaces, study or co-working areas, and outdoor spaces.

Currently, the Plans indicates that all shared facilities are located on the rooftop, but it lacks specific design details. This raises concerns about the adequacy and functionality of these spaces for the intended number of residents. The proposal should provide further justification regarding the quantity and type of shared facilities required to meet the needs of the residents, considering the Co-living model's unique characteristics. Additionally, design details should be provided to illustrate how these spaces will be organised and how they will function in practice. Floor Plans should include furniture layouts, and an explanation of how the facilities will accommodate the residents' daily activities, encourage social interaction, and promote a sense of community. Without this information, it is difficult to assess whether the proposed development will adequately support the needs of its residents.

Given the above, the architectural plans in the Design Report, prepared by Rothelowman (dated, 25 November 2024) must be amended to show the independent and shared kitchen facilities. The Applicant shall demonstrate the adequacy of all shared facilities in the various communal areas provided and use of the facilities by each occupant in the 217 Co-living studio units across 7 levels of the building.

2. Reduction in Non-Residential Floor Space

Council reiterates the concerns in relation to the decrease in non-residential GFA by 43.97% from 9,000m² to 5,042m². This is a significant departure from the non-residential GFA required in the concept approval. The proponent has not adequately provided justification for the removal of non-residential floor space and is inconsistent with key objectives of the zone and DCP controls for Wolli Creek. Given this is the last remaining building to be constructed within the precinct, the proposed reduction of GFA by over 40% will not be realised for this precinct and will have a negative impact on the economic viability of the precinct.

An objective of the Mixed-Use zone is to encourage a diversity of commercial uses that generate employment opportunities. Chapter 7 Section 7.6 of the BDCP 2022 sets a vision for an activity hub evolving around Wolli Creek Railway Station and along Brodie Spark Drive with ground floor retail rail interchange, street dining and cafes. Also, Discovery Point Place and Brodie Spark Drive are identified as Retail Street Frontage in Figure 85: Streetscape Character Map within the BDCP 2022.

Given this, Council suggests considering additional floor space to be used for commercial purposes on the ground floor of the building. Additional consideration should be given to controls in the BDCP 2022 Section 7.6.3 relating to street character.

The Applicant must provide detailed justification for the potential economic impacts from the loss of non-residential GFA on the site and the wider Wolli Creek Precinct. Council requests DPHI to be satisfied that the loss of non-residential GFA can be accommodated without adverse economic impacts to deliver Building 14 as envisaged in the Concept Approval.

3. Maximum GFA

The proposed total residential GFA 8,822m² for Building 14 will result in a net increase of 8,514m². This requires permitting additional maximum GFA beyond the originally remaining residential GFA of 308m² in the approved Concept Plan/DA approval. Concerns are raised regarding the significant increase in density due to the proposed maximum GFA. No detailed information has been provided to demonstrate the impacts on the precinct as a consequence of the density, such as traffic, noise, pedestrian management, and public domain.

The Applicant must provide detailed justification for the potential environmental and amenity impacts from the additional GFA on the site and the wider Wolli Creek Precinct. Council requests DPHI to be satisfied that the additional GFA can be accommodated without adverse visual impacts to deliver Building 14 as envisaged in the Concept Approval.

4. Parking and Transport

Section 4.3.2 Transport, traffic and parking of the Submissions Report states that the approved 36 car parking spaces allocated to Building 14 will not be utilised for the Co-living development.

The proposal to not allocate any parking to the future Co-living development is not acceptable and is pre-empting an assessment for the future Building 14 State Significant Development Application (SSDA). Dedicated car parking for Building 14 has already been constructed which should be allocated to this building as always intended by the Masterplan.

Further, the application includes amending the statement of commitments in Table 6 of the Submissions Report to specify that Building 14 will be delivered as Co-living Housing without providing a car, motorcycle or bicycle parking rate for Co-living Housing in the final statement of commitments.

The Parking Rates section for the Revised Final Statement of Commitments needs to be updated to specify parking rates for Co-living in accordance with Section 3.5 of the BDCP 2022.

5. Built Form

Station Legibility

Given the proposal's prominent location, it is crucial that the design integrates seamlessly with the Wolli Creek Train Station's entry and exit point, as well as the bus stops along Discovery Point Place. Wolli Creek is a highly active and busy interchange station, with large volumes of commuters passing through daily. As such, the design of the proposed building must be carefully considered to ensure that it supports the efficient movement of people in and out of the station while enhancing the overall commuter experience.

The proposal must clearly demonstrate how the building design will contribute to the legibility and accessibility of the train station, helping to guide commuters smoothly between the station and surrounding areas. This can be achieved by incorporating a higher and larger building opening, which would provide greater visual clarity and facilitate easier navigation. Additionally, the design should include appropriate signage.

Building Separation

Under Section 69 (2) (b) of Housing SEPP 2021 the proposal does not meet the minimum building separation requirement of 18 metres for buildings between 5 and 8 storeys, as specified for the distance between habitable rooms and balconies at both Building 1B (6 Discovery Point) and Building 1C (5 Brodie Spark Drive). Any modification to the building layout for Building 14 will need to demonstrate compliance with the separation distances required under the Housing SEPP 2021.

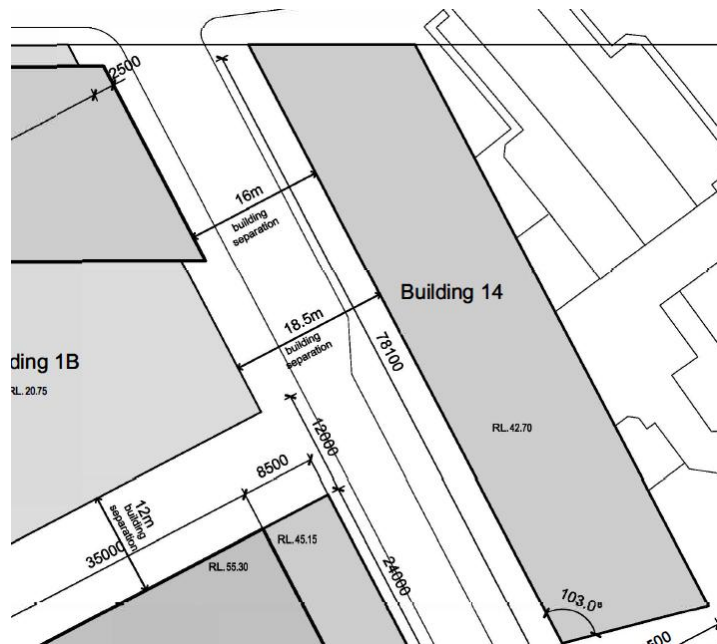


Figure 1: Building Separation, Source: Appendix D – Amended Concept Plan Drawing, Bates Smart (2024)

6. Development Contributions

The intended development is subject to the payment of contributions under Wolli Creek and Bonar Street Precincts Urban Renewal Area Contributions Plan 2019 (URA Plan 2019). The intended development will occur in Wolli Creek Precinct and will create demand for public facilities and services detailed in the works schedule of the URA Plan 2019. Based on the Concept Plan described in the RtS and Appendix C, the intended development should be levied under S7.11 of the Act for the proposed residential (Co-living units) and commercial tenancies. A standard condition containing the figure of the payable contributions amount will be required at the SSDA stage.

7. Social Infrastructure

Section 4.3.5 of the Submissions Report indicates that 217 people in Co-living Housing will only be a marginal increase in regard to existing communal facilities. Council reiterates its concerns regarding the pressure on existing and planned social infrastructure from the proposed additional density.

Regarding development contributions, the calculation of payable contributions is calculated as per the Wolli Creek and Bonar Street URA Contributions Plan 2019 (the Plan). Additional population to the precinct is required to pay an average per-person amount of contribution to Council for providing the new public facilities and augmenting the existing ones to serve the new population without impacting the quality of life of the existing population.

The mentioned facilities at Discovery Point community cannot be provided in place of infrastructure listed in the works schedule of Wolli Creek and Bonar Street URA Contributions Plan 2019. The Plan covers a wide range of infrastructure items, including Transport (new link roads, road widening, streetscape improvement, shared ways, etc) Open Space (parks embellishment, new parks, increasing the capacity of the existing reserves, etc), and Stormwater Management projects.

The Applicant's justification regarding the communal spaces provided as part of Building 14 is considered to be inaccurate, as the communal (as opposed to public) spaces cannot substitute the role of public facilities to be provided by Council for the broader community.

We trust that DPHI will carefully consider Council's advice when assessing the RtS for the proposed Modification Application, as well as Bayside Council's previous submission applicable to the site.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Harseerat Thind, Urban Planner on (02) 9562 1852 or via email: Harseerat.Thind@bayside.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Smith
Manager Strategic Planning