URBAN DESIGN REPORT IN SUPPORT OF A PLANNING PROPOSAL
FOR NO. 353-355 WATERLOO ROAD AND NO. 87 NORFOLK ROAD, GREENACRE
13 / 04 / 2018
GMU implements and maintains an internal quality assurance system.

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<th>Issue</th>
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1.1 INTRODUCTION

GM Urban Design and Architecture (GMU) have been appointed by Henroth Group to undertake an urban design study to investigate the possible transformation of Chullora Marketplace from a stand-alone shopping centre into a vibrant mixed-used local centre. The subject site consists of No. 353-355 Waterloo Road and No. 87 Norfolk Road, Greenacre.

The main purpose of this study is to consider the site opportunities given its designation as a Local Centre as per the LEP 2015 and the Draft South District Plan 2016. Its proximity to a wide range of amenities and the Hume Highway Corridor also contribute to the site’s ability to become much more than a stand-alone shopping centre. The study has also considered and tested appropriate built form principles and potential heights to achieve a high-quality urban design outcome that is mindful of its context but also reflects its maximum potential under the current permissible FSR of 1:1.

In formulating the opinions expressed in this report, GMU has conducted extensive review and analysis of the site’s immediate and broader context and applicable controls to determine the likely height increase on the site whilst complying with the density control and providing a sympathetic scale transition to surrounding lower-scale residential neighbourhoods.

This study has considered the broader planning framework for the surrounding local centre area and centres hierarchy and the intent of the applicable and draft controls in relation to the general and immediate context. This urban design report will form part of the supporting documentation included as part of the planning proposal for the site.

Methodology

In undertaking this study and arriving at the views and conclusions expressed in this report, GMU has undertaken the following methodology:

- Visited the site and its immediate and broader context.
- Reviewed the revised South District Plan.
- Reviewed the current and draft controls for the subject site and its immediate context as well as centres hierarchy.
- Reviewed Planning Proposals and recent approvals or DAs under assessment in the vicinity of the subject site.
- Researched and reviewed previous studies done for the precinct including:
  - Hume Highway Corridor Strategy 2004 (adopted by Council)
  - Strategic Directions for Future Residential Development of the City of Bankstown 2009
  - North East Local Area Plan Issues Paper 2013
  - North East Local Area Plan 2016 (adopted by Council)
  - Planning Proposal - North Central, North East, South East & South West Local Areas by the new City of Canterbury Bankstown
- Considered the site and block from various vantage points including approaching by car and public transport and its visibility from Waterloo Road and Norfolk Road.
- Tested a number of building envelope options to arrive at a preferred master plan and better urban design outcome as well as having minimal impact to neighbouring residential development.
- Met with Council’s staff for pre-lodgement meetings to understand their views, issues and opinions and to seek their preliminary feedback on the Planning Proposal.

The findings of GMU’s review of the current and draft controls and strategies will be discussed on the following pages.
The draft South District Plan identifies Chullora, where the subject site is, as one of the local centres within the area, along with Punchbowl and Greenacre. The key opportunities for the site aim to:

- Reinvigorate and respond to the population growth.
- Enhance liveability by creating a great place to live and work as well as increasing housing choice.
- Help reduce the need to travel by car by co-locating residential, health, employment and education facilities.
- Be consistent with Planning Priority S6 which seeks to provide high-quality public spaces and residential development within walking distance of the centre.

The draft LEP maps attached to Council’s Planning Proposal for the North-East Local Area Plan (NELAP) show the intended uplift around Greenacre and Punchbowl Centres.

The NELAP recommends Medium to High Density residential developments in and around these two centres to support their future growth as well as to meet the population growth target. It suggests a maximum of 6-storey developments around Greenacre and 8 storeys around Punchbowl Station.

However, Chullora as one of the 3 local centres within the local plan area has not been given consideration for future uplift to support the overarching vision for the area. It is GMU’s opinion that the subject site also has the opportunity to support 6-storey mixed-use development on the site catering for the future population growth of the area and because it is in single ownership, it enables near-term coordinated development for the whole site.

A review of other relevant planning strategies is conducted overleaf.
1.3 REVIEW OF OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING STRATEGIES

Other relevant planning strategies include Hume Highway Corridor Strategy 2004, Residential Development Strategy 2009, North-East Local Area Plan Issues Paper 2013 and North-East Local Area Plan 2016. The key findings in these documents point out the potential for Chullora’s growth from a transport and housing targets point of view, while others look more critically at some of the existing constraints.

Hume Highway Corridor Strategy 2004

The Hume Highway Corridor Strategy identified the following opportunities in relation to the subject site, which was identified as part of the study area. The Corridor Strategy aimed to:

- Develop 3 town centres including Bass Hill, Yagoona and Chullora as a focus for retail activity and good access to public transport.
- Investigate opportunities for new housing to support the 3 town centres.
- Investigate a high frequency regional bus corridor along Hume Highway with dedicated bus lanes connecting key centres such as Bankstown CBD, Yagoona, Bass Hill and Chullora.
- Investigate options to promote medium-density housing within a 400m catchment of Chullora Town Centre to support the viability of regional bus corridor as part of Stage 2 for Chullora Technology Park and Greenacre Motor Alley precincts.
- Negotiate with Strathfield Council to create/connect a cycleway to Waterloo Road.
- Consolidate town centre activities around Chullora Marketplace.

Residential Development Strategy 2009

The Residential Development Strategy set out a Vision by 2031 for the local area. It proposed 16,000 new dwellings around 13 centres which considered to have good access to public transport, good connections between centres and reduce trips and minimise cost of new infrastructure. Although Chullora Marketplace has good access and connections to public transport and other local centres, it fell out of the consideration for major uplift to accommodate new dwellings.

North-East Local Area Plan Issues Paper 2013

The Issues Paper considered Chullora Marketplace having the potential for modest growth which was not reviewed for the Residential Development Strategy. It identified a number of constraints and opportunities for any future redevelopment on the site. They are:

Constraints -
- Lack of a pedestrian crossing at the main entry.
- Access constraint - minimal public transport.
- High traffic volume generated by the Malek Fahd Islamic School.
- Unlikely to be substantially redeveloped in the short-medium terms.
- Heritage (sensitive with regard to excavation)
- Part of Biodiversity corridor, but not classified as biodiversity land.

Opportunities -
- Shopping centre under single ownership for further improvement and commercial growth as a mixed use shopping centre precinct.

The Issues Paper also identified that the provision of open space is well below the benchmark standard set by 2031. The site may have the opportunity to contribute to additional public open space catering for the population growth.

North-East Local Area Plan 2016

The Residential Development Strategy set out a Vision by 2031 for the local area. It identified Chullora Marketplace Precinct as being:

- Major employment precinct along the Hume Highway Enterprise Corridor.
- A suburban neighbourhood in keeping with the amenity and infrastructure capacity of this precinct.
- A neighbourhood centre with a height of 2-3 storeys.

It is GMU’s opinion that the potential of the subject site as a large local centre precinct under single ownership has been overlooked, given the site’s strategic location in proximity to the Hume Highway enterprise corridor and surrounding amenities. Its area size, significant job opportunities and ability to accommodate a variety of housing choices including affordable housing for key workers are the hallmarks of successful local centres in this and nearby LGAs. Its ability to provide much needed civic open space through the revitalisation of the centre adds to the many reasons why Chullora should be allowed to fulfil its role as a local centre.
1.4 CURRENT PLANNING CONTROLS

The current applicable controls under Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2015 for the subject site are:

**No. 355 Waterloo Road (Chullora Marketplace)**
- Zoning - B2 Local Centre
- HOB - 11m above the existing ground level (2 storey with attic or potential 3 storeys)
- FSR - 1.0:1
- Heritage - Archaeological site

**No. 353 Waterloo Road & No. 87 Norfolk Road (single storey house)**
- Zoning - R2 Low Density Residential
- HOB - 9m above the existing ground level
- FSR - 0.5:1

The site is located in close proximity to a number of employment hubs and amenities, which include:
- Chullora Technology Park/Intermodal Terminal-major employment hub
- Hume Highway Enterprise Corridor
- A number of local schools
- Lockwood Park and Norfolk Reserve

To understand the built form outcome predicted by the current applicable controls, GMU has tested 2 compliant built form options. This testing suggests that the current controls will not facilitate the future growth of the shopping centre to a true local centre (as per existing B2 zoning) facing the main street or one that is consistent with Planning Priority S6 in the South District Plan. The existing controls provide limited opportunity for the site to achieve a good urban design outcome with tangible benefits to the local community whilst achieving an economically viable source of employment and housing (Please refer to Chapter 2.2).

An increase in height has been tested to achieve a better urban design outcome with a large provision of publicly accessible open space as well as an identifiable profile for the local centre. The detailed built form testing will be discussed in the following sections of this report and the centre’s strategic proximity to job centres is discussed overleaf.

Figure 7. Current LEP controls (source: Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2015)
### 1.5 LOCAL CONTEXT, CENTRES HIERARCHY AND OPPORTUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centres</th>
<th>Draft South District Plan</th>
<th>Council’s 2031 vision</th>
<th>Permissible height</th>
<th>FSR</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chester Hill (Station)</td>
<td>Local Centre</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
<td>26m / 8st</td>
<td>3:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yagoona (Station)</td>
<td>Local Centre</td>
<td>Village Centre</td>
<td>26m / 8st</td>
<td>3:1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Punchbowl (Station)</td>
<td>Local Centre</td>
<td>Small Village Centre</td>
<td>26m / 8st (Proposed)</td>
<td>3:1 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punchbowl (Station)</td>
<td>Local Centre</td>
<td>Small Village Centre</td>
<td>26m / 8st (Proposed)</td>
<td>3:1 (Proposed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenacre</td>
<td>Local Centre</td>
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<td>20m / 6st (Proposed)</td>
<td>2.5:1 (Proposed)</td>
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<td>20m / 6st</td>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Local Centre</td>
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<td>14m / 4st</td>
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<td>Local Centre</td>
<td>Stand-alone</td>
<td>11m / 2-3st</td>
<td>1:1</td>
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Based on the table above, it is GMU’s opinion that Chullora Local Centre has been overlooked despite its good connectivity and proximity to employment hubs. It is even lower than Bass Hill, which arguably is also a stand-alone centre and yet it is considered as a small village centre.

The site is well connected to surrounding centres and Sydney CBD by the local road network and existing bus services. It is located in close proximity to a number of employment hubs and existing amenities. They are:

- Chullora Intermodal Terminal (approx. 400m walking distance)
- Enfield Intermodal (approx. 800m walking distance)
- Local parks including Norfolk Reserve and Lockwood Park
- Recreational facilities e.g. Strathfield Golf Club (approx. 1.6km)
- Greenacre town centre (1.5km)
- Local schools e.g. Chullora Public School and Malek Fahd Islamic School

Chullora Marketplace is strategically located close to public transport and existing amenities. The Hume Highway Corridor Strategy identifies Chullora as one of the 3 town centres as a focus for retail activities. The Strategy also suggests investigating opportunities for new housing that will support the existing town centres as well as a high frequency regional bus corridor with dedicated bus lanes connecting key centres such as the Bankstown CBD, Yagoona, Bass Hill and Chullora.

Benefiting from the site’s strategic location and its size, Chullora has the opportunity to create a great local centre precinct as a high-quality mixed-use development. The proposed development aims to transform the existing stand-alone, inwardly-oriented shopping precinct to be a true local centre that is well-integrated with the local community, providing an increased number of jobs, community facilities and increased housing choice. The proposed amendment seeks an increase in height only to better distribute the built form on site, opening areas for publicly accessible domain spaces.
2. BUILT FORM STRATEGY
2.1 SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSTRAINTS

The subject site
The subject site comprises Chullora Marketplace (No. 355 Waterloo Road) together with 2 small residential lots at No. 353 Waterloo Road and No. 87 Norfolk Road in Greenacre. It has a total area of approximately 5.763 hectares.

The site has its primary street frontage and pedestrian connection to Waterloo Road with 2 additional pedestrian links to the surrounding neighbourhoods at the rear through Norfolk Reserve (see Figure 10).

As per the section study shown in Figure 11, the rooftop of the existing shopping mall reaches a maximum height at RL 45.21m. The survey plan by Veris shows that the minaret within the Islamic School has a height up to RL 64.04m and the dome reaches a height of RL 55.35m, which are approx. 6 and 3 storeys higher than the existing shopping centre respectively.

It is understood that due to the potential vacancy by one of the major retail tenants located at the rear half of the shopping centre, there will be an opportunity to free up a total floor space area of at least 2000 sqm for future redevelopment at the south-eastern corner of the site.

Site Constraints
Based on the site visit and desktop research, GMU has identified the following issues with the existing stand-alone shopping centre development on the subject site:

- No sense of place as a local centre.
- Car-focused precinct development with large on-grade car parking fronting the street.
- Poor pedestrian environment in and around the precinct.
- Poor street presence with low activation levels to Waterloo Road.
- While the large mature trees along the street boundary are an asset with regards to the overall streetscape character, they represent an obstacle for redeveloping the edge of the street and increasing street activation.
- Sloping topography.
- Predominantly 1-2 storey development scale in the surrounding context.
- Viability as a traditional retail only is declining.
Photo 1. Existing shopping centre

Photo 2. Existing on-grade parking fronting Waterloo Road.

Photo 3. Existing mature trees and fences deactivate the public domain.

Photo 4. Existing high school and industrial development to the north of the site.

Photo 5. Existing residential dwellings to the south of the site along Waterloo Road.

Photo 6. Existing dwellings along Norfolk Road with site in the background.

Photo 7. Existing pedestrian connection through Norfolk Reserve to the rear of the centre.

Photo 8. Existing entry/exit at the intersection of Waterloo Road and Como Road.
2.2 COMPLIANT BUILDING ENVELOPE TESTING

To understand the site’s achievable built form outcome under the current permissible LEP controls, GMU has tested 2 compliant building envelope options. No rear development was considered under these options due to a number of constraints including commercial viability under the limited storey height and developable area.

Option 1 focuses on commercial/retail development on the site.

Pros
- The proposed building envelope complies with the permissible height and FSR control.
- Activation to the street is provided by a mix of commercial/retail and residential uses.
- Opportunity to provide community facilities is within the expanded shopping centre area.

Cons
- Increased provision of commercial/retail floor space might have commercial impacts on the surrounding centres.
- Inability to provide adequate setbacks to Waterloo Road for enhanced pedestrian experience.
- No opportunity to provide a civic/congregating place for the local community.
- Major interruption of the existing business operation during the construction stage that may threaten viability of the centre.
- Commercially unviable due to the prohibitive cost of the 2-3 storey basement parking.
- Major impacts on locality due to very large excavation (approx. 50 weeks and around 200,000 cubic meters of fill to be removed).
- Potential disruption of existing archaeology below grade.

Option 2 considers a residential-oriented development approach.

Pros
- The proposed building envelope complies with the permissible height and FSR control.
- Activation to the street is provided by a mix of commercial/retail and residential uses.
- Minimal interruption of the existing business operation during the construction stage.

Cons
- Low or no presence of the existing shopping centre to the main road would threaten viability of the centre.
- Inability to provide adequate setbacks to Waterloo Road for enhanced pedestrian experience.
- No opportunity to provide a civic/congregating place for the local community.
- Commercially unviable due to the prohibitive cost of the 2-3 storey basement parking.
- Major interruption of business during construction phase due to required excavation.
- Major impacts on locality due to very large excavation (approx. 50 weeks and around 200,000 cubic meters of fill to be removed).
- Potential disruption of existing archaeology below grade.

The test concluded that the current controls do not provide sufficient incentives to encourage any revitalisation or major redevelopment of the subject precinct. The urban design principles for an alternative approach on the site are discussed in the next section of the report.

Option 1 - Commercial/retail oriented

Option 2 - Residential oriented
2.3 SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Based on the site and context analysis discussed in the previous sections as well as the testing of the compliant options on site, GMU identified various internal and external factors that may inform an alternative bulk and scale. Traffic circulation, land uses, landscaping and scale transition have also been considered in the formulation of urban design principles for the precinct.

The main opportunities and key design principles are:

- Enhance the identity and vitality of the site through a proposed mixed-use development with well-considered built form and scale.
- Provide a sustainable development on site with minimal interruption to the existing operational requirements of Chullora Marketplace.
- Concentrate higher scale development towards the middle of the centre, mitigating any potential visual and amenity issues to the surrounding dwellings.
- Provide scale transition on site, responding to the existing lower scale context.
- Provide landscaped buffer to both the southern and northern side boundaries, mitigating any amenity and visual impacts to the neighbouring residential properties.
- Provide a large centralised civic space with active frontages as a new congregating space for the local community, creating a 'sense of place' for the centre.
- Incorporate the existing on-grade parking into the built form design, transforming the car-dominated environment into a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Sleeve the majority of parking with residential and/or retail uses to minimise excavation.
- Provision of potential community facilities within the proposed built form and upgrade existing facilities at Norfolk Reserve.
- Provide service vehicle access through the podium level in south-east corner sleeved by residential and childcare uses to improve amenity for adjoining development.
- Provide a new residential entry point to the rear residential development via Norfolk Road, for passenger vehicles only.
- Provide an opportunity to formalise and improve the existing pedestrian links through Norfolk Reserve and Norfolk Road to the Shopping Centre.
- Provide improved activation and passive surveillance to the reserve and rear of the centre.

Figure 14. Design Principles and Height Strategy (source: GMU)
2.4 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT PLANS

Derived from the key design principles and opportunities identified in the previous section, GMU explored and tested 2 preliminary concept plans for the area fronting Waterloo Road and 1 concept option for the rear development.

Concept Option 1

Option 1 proposes quality mixed-used development with a provision of a large consolidated civic open space, creating a ‘sense of place’ as well as enhancing the site’s accessibility and street presence. It’s main characteristics include:

Pro
• Street front setbacks and new civic space provide a pedestrian friendly environment with improved street amenities i.e. new landscaping and a wider pedestrian verge.
• A new loop street providing drop-off service to plaza and on-street parking for short visits.
• New podium design attaching to the existing shopping centre, providing efficient parking layout and direct and all weather accesses to the centre.
• Increased residential development to stimulate local economic growth opportunities and housing choice.
• Minimal alteration and disruption to the existing shopping centre layout. Service vehicle route located along the edge of the site without interrupting the main development area.
• Large landscape buffer along the southern edge, mitigating the potential impacts on surrounding neighbours.
• Well-designed architectural solution to achieve a desired fine-grain urban form along Waterloo Road.
• Increased height with a compliant/permissible FSR control.
• Potential areas for community use.

Con
• Potential blank facades at podium level facing the northern and southern boundaries; however, this can be mitigated by utilising high quality materials, facade articulation and suitable uses.
Concept Option 2

This option explores a north-south boulevard with a reduced pedestrian street. Its main characteristics include:

Pros:
- A new pedestrian street associated with a new piazza at the eastern end, providing an enhanced walking experience from the street to the shopping centre.
- A new internal road provides direct street address to the residential development and chance parking to the ground floor retail and shopping centre.
- Residential-focused development along Waterloo Road.
- Provision of landscape buffer to mitigate potential amenity impacts on neighbouring properties.

Cons:
- Some alterations to the existing shopping layout to allow the construction of basement parking and residential component above.
- Potential interruption of the existing business operation during the construction stage.

Due to the increased number of opportunities, Option 1 was chosen as the preferred concept master plan which was presented to Council during the pre-lodgement meeting. Option 1 was considered to be superior due to the provision of a larger consolidated civic space with better traffic circulation on site.
Concept Option for south-east development

The concept for the south-eastern portion of the site relies on the provision of an independent access from Norfolk Road due to the constrained access to/from Waterloo Road. The existing long-term leases of ALDI and its loading dock prevent the consolidation of the south-eastern corner to the new development in the west of the centre. The new access will create a direct street address to support the residential development at this location with an independent vehicular and pedestrian entry only from Norfolk Road whilst any servicing or residential waste management will be accessed only from Waterloo Road.

This option provides an alternative use for the space currently occupied by the major tenant should it vacate the space. The key design elements are:

- Relocate the existing mini-major retail to create an appropriate space for the residential development.
- Create a direct residential street address from Norfolk Road for passenger vehicles only.
- Incorporate the loading area and retail heavy vehicle path within the podium design, sleeved by residential apartments and childcare.
- Create a green roof on top of the relocated mini-major retail, improving the amenity for future occupants.
- Orient the residential component above the podium in a north-south direction, maximising outlook to Norfolk Reserve, the internal communal open space and the proposed green roof as well as the new development to the west.
- Provide sufficient communal open space and deep soil zone on site.
- Provide a formalised pedestrian link through Norfolk Reserve to the rear of the shopping centre and new civic space.
- Create a new pedestrian corridor encapsulated in the shopping centre envelope.
- Create 2 arrival points at both ends of the new pedestrian corridor to create a sense of arrival as well as reducing the long walking distance to the main shopping area.
- Activate the new corridor with direct entries to the new retail tenancy and glass walls for passive surveillance.

Figure 21. Proposed rear development
3. THE MASTER PLAN
3.1 VISION

The proposed master plan option aims to establish a true local centre that is well-integrated with the existing context and provides a ‘sense of community’ for future residents.

The mixed use approach with residential above commercial/retail and parking within the podium levels will bring increased vitality to the local community.

The proposed increased height of up to 6 storeys will strengthen the local centre identity as being more than a shopping centre precinct with the density and scale expected around centre areas and in line with the other local centres nearby. We consider that the proposed preferred master plan will successfully transform this traditional stand-alone shopping centre into a more vibrant and integrated precinct for the local community. The proposed development will achieve an estimated FSR under the maximum permissible FSR control of 1:1 for the site.

The proposal is composed of two main components - the northern section facing Waterloo Road and the south-eastern section overlooking the reserve. The south-eastern portion of the redevelopment provides a viable use for the space should a major tenant vacate. It opens opportunities to enhance natural surveillance and connectivity to Norfolk Reserve and provide additional surveillance and overlooking to the park. Through a VPA, this can be coupled with improvements to the existing playground for an overall upgrade of the reserve's traditional equipment, safety and security.

Based on GMU’s preliminary testing, the proposed master plan will not have adverse impacts to the existing context and neighbouring residential properties. It will provide a consistent street front setback and street wall height to ensure a continuous and improved pedestrian environment along Waterloo Road. It will provide large side setbacks with a landscape buffer to the residential development to the south to ensure high-quality amenity and outlook for the existing and future residents.

Based on the above, GMU considers that the proposed master plan has the potential to be a catalyst for the revitalisation of the centre and the surrounding local community. It has the opportunity to achieve a height equivalent to that envisaged for other nearby centres in Council's Planning Proposal for the North-East Local Area Plan without surpassing the maximum allowable FSR control on the site.
3.2 PREFERRED CONCEPT MASTER PLAN

Based on the preliminary built form testing and the discussions held with Council during several pre-DA meetings, GMU has further developed Option 1 as the preferred concept master plan for the subject development. It provides a greater sense of community with improved traffic conditions and minimal interruption to the business operation of the centre during the construction stage. The proposed master plan will achieve a total GFA of approx. 5.3 hectares and an FSR of 0.92:1. Please refer to Appendix A for a detailed estimated yield.

Note: The vision images are indicative only. They illustrate the type of redevelopment that could be contemplated on site under the proposed Planning Proposal. Built forms represent building envelopes and not actual buildings.

Key design elements of the preferred concept master plan are:

- 3 storey street wall height along Waterloo Road with punctuated 4 storey markers built form at either entry to the plaza.
- 2 storey street wall height defining the new civic open space on the site.
- Maximum 5/6 storeys towards the centre of the site.
- A large civic open space with activated edges by retail/commercial uses, connecting the shopping centre to the street.
- A new one-way loop street providing drop-off service and on-street parking for short visits.
- Incorporated on-grade parking into the proposed podium and below grade (including under proposed plaza).
- Service vehicle route retained along the edge of the site avoids disruptions to the main development area.
- Large landscape buffer along the southern edge, mitigating any potential impacts on surrounding neighbours.
- High quality facade treatments to improve side boundary outlook to neighbours.
- South-east development accessed from Norfolk Road.
- A formalised pedestrian link from Norfolk Reserve through the centre to Waterloo Road.
- Service vehicles diverted under south-east podium to reduce impacts on neighbours to the south.

Figure 24. Preferred master plan option

Figure 25. Bird’s eye view of the proposed development