SUBMISSION TO THE GREATER SYDNEY COMMISSION

WICKS ROAD SOUTH, MACQUARIE PARK

March 2017
WICKS ROAD SOUTH

A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE INNOVATION DISTRICT.

A LEADING EXAMPLE OF A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH TO THE DELIVERY OF A MIXED USE URBAN PLACE FOR PEOPLE.

A PLACE WHICH RESPONDS TO THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE, LIVEABLE, ECONOMICALLY RESILIENT BUT AFFORDABLE PLACES.

A COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT AND KEY COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS.

A CATALYST FOR THE DELIVERY OF NEW SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH WILL SUPPORT BOTH THE EXISTING AND NEW COMMUNITY AS IT GROWS INCLUDING KEY WORKER HOUSING, A SCHOOL, AND CITY SCALE OPEN SPACE.

A FINE GRAIN ROAD NETWORK TO ENABLE A PEOPLE FOCUSED HIERARCHY WHICH FOCUSES ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This submission to the Greater Sydney Commission (the Commission) has been prepared by Knight Frank Town Planning on behalf of seven landowners.

The submission recognises that the District Plans are the fundamental way that Sydney’s smart growth is being managed and that the District Plans are the link between the State Government’s Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Plan for Growing Sydney – and councils’ Local Environmental Plans.

The landowners have considered the Draft North District Plan (hereinafter referred to as the Plan) and agree with the aims and aspirations of the Plan as they relate to Macquarie Park area. This submission reflects the most recent submission made on behalf of the seven landowners to the Department of Planning & Environment and the City of Ryde on the strategic merit and benefits of a mixed use development outcome for Wicks Road South (herein also referred to as ‘the Site’). The proposal for the Site is considered to be entirely consistent with and will not compromise the wider strategic employment role of Macquarie Park and is of a scale able to make a positive and well planned contribution to an important mixed use locality within the North District in accordance with the aims and aspirations of the Plan.

Our client’s proposal for Wicks Road South is one that supports the vision of Macquarie Park (a Collaboration Area – Action P3) as a location where there is a desire to create a sense of place, grow jobs and diversify activity. In this regard we consider the accompanying concept masterplans have considerable strategic merit, and are entirely consistent with and will not compromise the wider strategic employment role of Macquarie Park.

The circa 6.0 ha site is situated within the southern periphery of the Macquarie Park employment corridor, a natural bookend to the Macquarie Park CBD. It is bounded by Wicks Road, Epping Road, and the recently re-zoned ‘Lachlan’s Line’, a high density residential and mixed-use site master planned by Urban Growth NSW – refer Figure 1 on page 6.

Wicks Road South has significant strategic potential and merit in terms of urban renewal, higher density mixed use development and the delivery of affordable housing. It is well placed being highly accessible to existing and future public transport nodes, a walkable (800m) distance to the existing heavy rail / future Sydney Metro stations at North Ryde and Macquarie Park and multiple bus routes that stop on the adjacent Epping Road (400m).

We note that the wider Macquarie Park corridor encompassing Wicks Road South is currently the subject of a joint planning investigation by the NSW Government and Ryde City Council.

This submission respectfully requests that the Commission support the confirmation of the site as a future mixed-use precinct to support the provision of additional housing in a key location. The precinct will have the potential to contribute to fulfilling the aspirations and proposals for Greater Sydney’s North District with an Urban renewal project which through the process of design led planning and the delivery of new infrastructure, streets, and the public domain would deliver significant community benefits;

- assisting in delivering State Government employment targets for Macquarie Park by expressly providing for a wider range of commercial and employment activities consistent with supporting the role of Macquarie Park as an area recognised in the Greater Sydney Commissions’ A Plan for Growing Sydney as performing very strongly and being particularly important for Sydney’s continued growth;
- creating a sense of place, growth in jobs and diversify activity through the introduction of a mix of land uses including residential with a key affordable housing component to create a vibrant, live-work precinct further enhancing Macquarie Park within the ‘Global Economic Corridor’ in accordance with the priorities of the Draft North District Plan; and
- making a positive contribution and be a leading example of meeting the stated indicators of a Sydney that is productive, liveable and sustainable as set out by the Greater Sydney Commission.
Wicks Road South would specifically support the following key priorities and actions of the draft District Plan:

**Productivity actions and priorities: Employment**
- Priority 2: Manage growth and change in strategic and district centres and, as relevant, local centres.
  
  Action P3: Create a sense of place, grow jobs and diversify activity in Macquarie Park.

**Liveability actions and priorities: Housing**
- Action L2: Identify the opportunities to create the capacity to deliver 20-year strategic housing supply targets.
- Action L3: Councils to increase housing capacity across the District.
- Liveability Priority 2: Deliver housing diversity.
- Liveability Priority 10: Support Innovative School planning and delivery.

**Sustainability actions and priorities: Sydney’s Green Grid**
- Priority 5: Align strategic planning to the vision for the Green Grid.

Accompanying this submission there is a vision document incorporating a selection of concept master plan options that could be applied to Wicks Road South. These have been prepared by Roberts Day Urban Designers and illustrate indicative built form outcomes and mixed use scenarios for the precinct.
2.0 THE SUBJECT SITE

Wicks Road South (the Site) comprises a triangular shaped precinct with two key road frontages, Wicks Road and Epping Road.

It is anticipated that the Eastern boundary of Wicks Road South adjoining the Lachlan’s Line precinct will form part of a linear open space and a finer-grained road network which will create a people focused hierarchy across the two sites.

Key characteristics of Wicks Road South include:

- Occupies a total area of approximately 6.0 hectares.
- The current built form typically comprises 1-2 level warehouse and ancillary office structures along Wicks Road with 1-3 level retail/office uses along Epping Road.
- The Site is within 500-600 metres (approx.) or a 10-15 minute walk of both North Ryde and Macquarie Park rail stations, well within the recognised walkable catchment of a heavy rail node (800m).
- The landform generally slopes away from the corner of the Site where Epping Road meets Wicks Road to the far north-eastern corner adjacent to the northern tip of Lachlan’s Line.

Lachlan’s Line (Residential / Mixed Use Priority Precinct)

Established residential area, North Ryde

Commercial/employment uses to north of precinct

Wicks Road South (the Site)

Figure 1: Site location and context (Base map source: NSW Government – Planning Viewer)
3.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT

This section of the submission provides details of the documents that currently form the strategic planning context for Wicks Road South:

- *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (December 2014) by NSW Government Planning & Environment
- *Draft North District Plan: Co-creating a Greater Sydney* (November 2016) by Greater Sydney Commission

**NSW Government Planning & Environment: A Plan for Growing Sydney**

Wicks Road South currently forms part of the Macquarie Park corridor, which is nominated as a ‘Strategic Centre’ within the NSW Government’s plan for the Sydney Metropolitan Area *A Plan for Growing Sydney* (December 2014) (hereafter referred to as the Plan).

It provides key directions and actions to increase amenity in the corridor as well as density for employment, education and residential uses near rail stations.

The Plan nominates the following priorities for the North District - Macquarie Park:

- Work with council to retain a commercial core in Macquarie Park for long-term employment growth.
- Work with council to concentrate capacity for additional mixed-use development around train stations, including retail, services and housing.
- Facilitate delivery of Herring Road, Macquarie Park Priority Precinct, and North Ryde Station Priority Precinct.
- Investigate potential future opportunities for housing in areas within walking distance of train stations.
- Support education and health-related land uses and infrastructure around Macquarie University and Macquarie University Private Hospital.
- Support the land use requirements of the Medical Technology knowledge hub.
- Investigate a potential light rail corridor from Parramatta to Macquarie Park via Carlingford.
- Investigate opportunities to deliver a finer-grain road network in Macquarie Park.
Greater Sydney Commission: Draft North District Plan

The Draft North District Plan (hereafter referred to as the ND Plan) proposes a 20-year vision for the North District. The ND Plan provides further detail on the means to enhance the District's productivity, sustainability and liveability in accordance with the NSW Government's A Plan for Growing Sydney.

Many elements discussed within the ND Plan are applicable to the holistic vision being proposed in this submission. Listed below are the key priorities and actions within the ND Plan that are supported by our client's proposal for a mixed use outcome for Wicks Road South.

Primarily our client's proposal for Wicks Road South is one that supports the vision of Macquarie Park as a sustainable higher amenity centre with significant employment growth supported by a broader range of land uses.

PRODUCTIVE: Employment

Productivity Priority 2: Manage growth and change in strategic and district centres and, as relevant, local centres.

The ND Plan details the nominated job targets for the District’s strategic and district centres to guide councils and NSW government agencies as to the likely and potential scale of employment growth and to inform land use and infrastructure planning.

The nominated job target range for Macquarie Park is detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016 Estimate</th>
<th>2036 Baseline Target</th>
<th>2036 Higher Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58,500</td>
<td>73,000</td>
<td>79,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extract the ND Plan 'Table 3-3: North District job target ranges for strategic and district centres (2016-2036)'

Action P3: Create a sense of place, grow jobs and diversify activity in Macquarie Park

Macquarie Park is identified as a Collaboration Area, a place where a significant productivity, liveability or sustainability outcome is better achieved through the collaboration of different levels of government and in some cases the private sector or landowners. The ND Plan outlines that planning for the Macquarie Park Collaboration Area will include considerations to:

- enable additional capacity for commercial floor space to maintain a commercial core
- improve urban amenity as the centre transitions from business park to a vibrant commercial centre, including reducing the impact of vehicle movements on pedestrian and cyclist accessibility
- deliver a finer grain road network to enhance pedestrian connections and provide new access points
- promote excellence in urban design by upgrading public areas
- deliver an innovation ecosystem in Macquarie Park, capitalising on the relationship with Macquarie University and nearby high-tech and medical corporations
- improve public transport connections to Parramatta and the District’s other strategic centres, including the Northern Beaches Hospital.

LIVEABLE: Housing

Planning has a central role in ensuring sufficient capacity is created to support the delivery of a minimum of 725,000 additional new dwellings over the next 20 years across Greater Sydney.

Action L2: Identify the opportunities to create the capacity to deliver 20-year strategic housing supply targets

It is noted that the investigation to identify opportunities to increase the capacity for
housing supply in in Macquarie Park investigation area is ongoing. It is also noted that it is indicated that the potential capacity generated in Macquarie Park will help address housing supply capacity over the medium term.

**Action L3: Councils to increase housing capacity across the District.**

For the Ryde Local Government Area it is stated that the Council will:

- monitor and support the delivery of Ryde’s five-year housing target of 7,600 recognising significant growth in the precinct at North Ryde and Herring Road
- progress priority precinct investigations at Macquarie Park with the Department of Planning and Environment
- work with the Commission and Transport for NSW to identify urban renewal opportunities that connect to Sydney Metro
- investigate local opportunities to address demand and diversity in and around local centres and infill areas.

**Liveability Priority 2: Deliver housing diversity**

Provide a mix of all the different types of housing people need.

**Liveability Priority 10: Support Innovative School planning and delivery**

Schools are critical infrastructure in growing communities and planning should support innovative approaches to design and location of new and expanded school facilities.

**SUSTAINABLE: Sydney’s Green Grid**

**Priority 5: Align strategic planning to the vision for the Green Grid**

The ND Plan builds on the concept of Sydney’s Green Grid, as articulated in A Plan for Growing Sydney.

With this in mind relevant planning authorities should consider opportunities to support the delivery of the North District Green Grid, including how land use zones can be applied, how new development is designed, or where voluntary planning agreements and agreements for dual use of open space and recreational facilities could contribute to delivering the Green Grid.
Macquarie Park Investigation Area

Under **Action L3**, the Ryde Local Government Area is tasked with progressing priority precinct investigations at Macquarie Park with the Department of Planning & Environment.

It is noted that the work being undertaken by the State Government together with the City of Ryde to investigate opportunities to revitalise Macquarie Park at the time of submission was still ongoing.

A map of the investigation area and surrounding precincts is below.

The following strategic principles and outcomes were endorsed by Government and Council and inform the ongoing study process.

**Access and Transport:**
- **Encourage walking and cycling**
- **Coordinate delivery of transport infrastructure to support development**

**Employment and Business:**
- **Support continued economic growth of the Macquarie Park Corridor**
- **Promote Macquarie Park as the premier employment centre and CBD for the north district**
- **Retain and enhance commercial and business opportunities**
- **A planning framework to facilitate sustainable long term economic growth**

**Infrastructure and Governance:**
- **Provide better connections within the network of open space by addressing gaps and improving linkages**
- **Ensure adequate social infrastructure**
- **Deliver a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery**

**Urban Structure and Design:**
- **Define well-connected urban centres within the Macquarie Park Corridor with distinct functions, uses and character**
- **Promote sustainable design by encouraging design excellence and built forms that respond to local context**

**Housing:**
- **Allow for housing in the immediate vicinity of existing residential and mixed use areas**
- **Explore the creation of a mixed use precinct close to Macquarie Park Station**

**Community and Place Making:**
- **Foster a sense of identity and community by creating living centres with more public spaces**
- **Improve the vibrancy and activity of streets and develop the night-time economy with a balanced and diverse range of activities**
4.0 STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE AND KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Wicks Road South presents a number of key strategic opportunities in terms of housing supply and local housing choices, social infrastructure and a modern approach to employment spaces.

They are strategic opportunities entirely consistent with the stated directions of the Greater Sydney Commission and Draft North District Plan. Each of the strategic opportunities is discussed in more detail below:

Housing Supply and Local Housing Choices

Residential development which will contribute to the North District Plan target of 97,000 dwellings for the North District on a site with a diversity of uses, which forms part of a priority area, and which will provide homes closer to jobs.

The Strategic Employment Review for Macquarie Park prepared by BIS Shrapnel considered the co-existence of residential and office land uses. It is noted that most survey respondents provided the following feedback in respect to the opportunity for mixed use development across Macquarie Park:

- Residential apartment (medium and high rise) development would be a positive for Macquarie Park. It would result in population growth (most likely amongst a younger/white collar workforce) and bring with it a greater range of associated services and facilities that are currently lacking across the Centre, such as hotels, shops, restaurants etc.

- Moreover, for those living within the area, the opportunity to work closer to home would be a great benefit. At present a significant proportion of the workforce within Macquarie Park has a long commute to work. By providing additional accommodation closer to the workplace, this also provides greater choice and availability for workers i.e. the introduction of residential apartments is a key ingredient in making the Macquarie Park Corridor an effective and attractive working precinct.

Wicks Road South is also well placed to provide and contribute to the local and subregional supply of affordable or key worker housing noting the proximity to Macquarie University; the Macquarie health cluster and the accessibility to public transport.

It is noted that earlier this year the City of Ryde adopted an affordable housing policy providing a comprehensive framework to advocate for, facilitate, provide and manage affordable housing in the Ryde Local Government Area (LGA) between now (2016) and 2031. This is cemented by the liveability proprieties of the Draft North District Plan for improving housing diversity and affordability.

Wicks Road South presents an excellent opportunity to explore the most appropriate mechanism to deliver affordable housing i.e. key worker housing to accommodate workers from the university and hospitals. The landowners will work with the Department of Planning & Environment and the City of Ryde to achieve suitable affordable housing outcomes commensurate with the scale and nature of the proposed development, in a way that does not place an excessive impost on the development.

Social Infrastructure

Being approximately 6 hectares the precinct has the scale to accommodate the delivery of new social infrastructure which will support both the existing and new community as it grows. Specifically it is understood based on previous discussions with Government that there is the demand and requirement for a new school in the Macquarie Park locality.

Wicks Road South has the potential and scale to accommodate such a school in a contemporary way as a vertical school as part of an integrated whole of precinct plan. A site for such a school within the precinct could be identified and confirmed within the current Macquarie Park precinct planning process. With no other whole of precinct approach of this scale elsewhere in Macquarie Park, the urban renewal of the Wicks Road South precinct is a highly significant and strategic opportunity for Government.

The S94 Contributions Plan adopted by the City of Ryde provides specific detail on public amenities and services that have been identified within the Macquarie Park. Those specific to Wicks Road South include:

- Stormwater Management Facilities,
- Regional cycleway routes (currently indicated along Epping Road and Wicks Road)
- Civic and Urban Improvements - public domain design and construction and public domain land acquisition.
- Open Space and Recreation Facilities - new parks acquisition and liner parks construction.
These are all achievable through the considered design of a site of this scale; however it is important to note that a revised demand assessment for new community infrastructure would be required in order to account for the proposed diversity of uses, and additional employment and residential densities contemplated by this proposal.

Employment - Innovation District:

It is noted that Macquarie Park is identified as a preferred location for business innovation for example medical technology and allied uses.

Wicks Road South site is an opportunity more generally for Government to work with industry to maximise the opportunity for the development of an ‘innovation district’ that provides for ‘focus sectors’ (hi-tech and creative industries) and ‘start up businesses’, that would support and compliment local and metropolitan employment such as the Macquarie Park Medical Technology Knowledge Hub.

The precinct could offer the potential for smaller, more affordable commercial tenancies and flexible workspaces that can accommodate ‘start up’ businesses in a more dynamic mixed use setting, compared to say the institutional style business and larger floorplates and that are prevalent in the commercial core areas (B3 and B7 zoned areas) of Macquarie Park.

By way of an example of a practical model of mixed use urban planning, the approach of developing a sector focused innovation district is being applied in a Renewal SA project in Adelaide and is proving to be very successful. Renewal SA is a South Australian State Government initiative. The project is described as a ‘Common ground for clever companies’ start-ups, business incubators and accelerators in an environment that has been purposely designed to attract investment and create a thriving jobs precinct alongside residential and community living’.

The implementation of the ‘innovation district’ model needs to be the subject of review and ongoing discussions with Government. Options include conventional or statutory responses such as zoning and limits on the extent of residential versus business through to exploring more innovative options as adopted by Renewal SA. The Wicks Road South precinct presents the ideal opportunity to explore leading edge solutions and examples on innovation and start up business hubs in partnership with Government being the Greater Sydney Commission, the Department of Planning & Environment and the City of Ryde.

By way of example, through Renewal SA, a range of options are available to investors once they have demonstrated that they meet the ‘Suitability Assessment’ which aligns with the vision as an innovation district supporting focus sectors. A proportion of which should always be available to start-ups, micro and small businesses (or businesses that have been a ‘going concern’ for less than 2 years from the date of the premises being made available for occupation).

For more information on the Renewal SA project - Tonsley please refer their web-site which details the approach to creating a mixed use district, increased employment opportunities alongside residential and community living.

It is noted that the Strategic Employment Review for Macquarie Park prepared by BIS Shrapnel surmises that allowing high density commercial development across the Macquarie Park precinct would see the stand-alone office workforce grow at a much faster rate potentially resulting in the Macquarie Park Corridor accommodating some 20% of the projected metropolitan workforce in 2065. The Wicks Road South proposal does not seek high density commercial development but rather a revising and broadening of the range of employment uses in a mixed use setting to better reflect and prepare the precinct for a changing role in how it might contribute to the employment and industry role of Macquarie Park.

There is an opportunity to take a more contemporary view on the employment offer in a mixed use setting within Wicks Road South, to increase employment densities from their current low base and to better manage the interface with the high density residential being developed at ‘Lachlan’s Line’.

The southern end of the Macquarie Park corridor has the potential to develop in much the same manner as the northern end centred on Herring Road. That is, as a viable mixed-use residential precinct with more concentrated commercial activity in combination with residential, such that, employment densities are increased. These sites provide natural bookends to the Macquarie Park CBD.

This is considered a more modern planning approach as over time there is the potential to reduce traffic generation and resultant capacity issues by having a readily accessible, transit orientated workforce whilst protecting the core from encroachment by non-employment uses.
In a practical sense, the employment offer could potentially comprise modern offices of various sizes so as not to be a barrier to start-up businesses, hi-tech and creative industries at the lower ground levels with limited retailing thereby providing a genuine and viable form of mixed-use development that retains and enhances the opportunities for local employment.

These types of employment offer and tenancies should complement and not compromise the commercial core areas of Macquarie Park (north of Wicks Road). We would also suggest there is merit in strengthening these centrally located core areas (zoned B3 & B7) by increasing the permitted commercial densities in these areas overtime.

In noting the proposed approach to supporting employment in the precinct it can be argued that this approach responds to the aims of the metropolitan strategy, the *Draft North District Plan* and the overarching conclusions of the BIS Shrapnel *Strategic Employment Review* (when considering the growth projections by industry sector between 2015 and 2065) in a way that also ensures that the City of Ryde’s LEP targets for employment are also satisfied.
5.0 MASTER PLAN CONCEPT

Accompanying this submission are a selection of concept master plan options which could be applied to Wicks Road South.

They have been prepared by Roberts Day Urban Designers and illustrate indicative built form outcomes and mixed use scenarios for the precinct.

Building on the significant body of work undertaken by Harvey Norman, Urbis and Allen Jack & Cottier Architects over the last several years, Roberts Day has undertaken a detailed strategic urban design analysis for a sustainable higher amenity centre with significant employment growth supported by a broader range of land uses on the landholding within its urban renewal context.

The evolved concept plan:
- Provides a holistic urban framework integrating with Lachlan’s Line, public transport and adjoining areas;
- Creates a city-scale parkland as the centre piece of the precinct with opportunities for informal sports and other activities;
- Anchors the parkland’s eastern edge with a vertical high school;
- Anchors the parkland’s western edge with cultural space;
- Creates a mid-rise frame to the parklands consistent in scale with Lachlan’s Line and offering a mix of uses including start-up spaces;
- Creates a network of streets and lanes for public life, activities and functions to unfold over time;
- Delivers housing diversity and affordability with 3,800 to 4,000 dwellings;
- Provides a variety of massing models for the precinct to be a model of Density Done Well.

The Wicks Road South precinct is critical in realising the above as it adjoins the Lachlan’s Line central park. By enabling the landowner group to progress a planning proposal for this landholding in parallel with Lachlan’s Line, a ‘set piece of city-making’ can be completed with significant public benefit.

The Robert’s Day submission provides greater detail on the strategic design positioning of the precinct within the context of the Macquarie Park corridor and North Ryde, as well as an overall urban design framework for the land and its immediate surrounds.
6.0 KEY URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Arising from the Roberts Day design analysis and concept strategy are a number of key urban design principles that can be adhered to in any future, more detailed land-use planning and in designing a ‘whole of precinct’ built form approach.

They are summarised below:

1. Facilitating mixed-use development built forms within a ‘master planned’ environment with high levels of residential amenity, separation to adjoining buildings and with dedicated purpose designed ‘flexible’ commercial/employment spaces.

2. Ensure high levels of permeability and connectivity in the road and pedestrian network, ensuring direct and ‘seamless’ connections with the adjacent Lachlan’s Line open space network, community infrastructure and key public transport nodes, i.e., North Ryde metro rail station and bus transit services along Epping and Wicks Road.

3. Through plan led design manage the interface between the Macquarie Park CBD ‘commercial core’ and employment activities to the north of Wicks Road, mitigating the potential for land-use conflict and ensure the built form provides an appropriate address to Wicks and Epping Road frontages.

4. Provide significant public benefit for any incoming resident population and also commercial users (employees) as discussed below.

Public Infrastructure and Community Benefit:

It is acknowledged that further more detailed investigations will be necessary to ascertain the demand for key community and public infrastructure that would arise from the development of the Site as envisaged by this concept.

The following list identifies potential opportunities to contribute to the public domain. The current concept also embodies much of this infrastructure.

- Extension of the ‘Central Park’ from Lachlan’s Line into Wicks Road South to develop a City-Scale Parkland.
- Vertical School and Cultural Space.
- Smart Places Loop and Start-Up Spaces.
- Continuation of ‘off-road’ pedestrian and cycle way connections through the precinct, providing direct and continuous access to and from nearby activity nodes including both rail stations.
- A ‘fine-grain’ permeable public road network, providing opportunities to disperse traffic from the precinct into the surrounding road network.
- Creation of urban or public spaces at the street level with active edges.
- Landscaping to continue and replicate planting and urban details prevalent in Lachlan’s Line.
- Road infrastructure and upgrades to ensure connectivity with Wicks Road/Epping Road.
- Designated community / employment floor areas at the lower ground floors to be available for public usage through Council and other local community interest groups.
7.0 SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT

In the Government Architect’s document ‘Better Placed’ under Principle 2: Sustainable, efficient and durable, it is expressed that ‘Sustainability is no longer an optional extra, but a fundamental aspect of functional, liveable design’.

It is recognised that design excellence in the built environment is the responsibility of all project participants, authorities and the community.

It is accepted that the implementation of a project of the scale of Wicks Road South ‘on the ground’ may happen many years after the urban design work is done. With this in mind it is considered essential that the strategic plan for the development of Wicks Road South is resilient, adaptable and flexible while providing the direction for its phases of implementation.

It is considered that this is a key opportunity to set a strong vision and clear goals by establishing an agreed vision through an understanding of what is collectively sought by the land owners in partnership with Government, both State and local and what the expected outcome could be if all stakeholders are focused on social, environmental and economic outcomes.

The current owners are unified in their approach and intent for this precinct and their desire to seek design excellence and sustainable development outcomes through the implementation of the principles and requirements for the urban design of cities and towns from the Government Architect’s document ‘Better Placed’.
8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This submission is made on behalf of a number of prominent landowners who own several holdings within the southern periphery of the Macquarie Park investigation area. Together their lands form a large strategically positioned precinct bounded by Wicks Road, Epping Road and Lachlan’s Line referred to as ‘Wicks Road South’.

Uniquely, this submission focuses on the benefits of a ‘whole of precinct’ scheme not constrained by current land ownership patterns. The landowners are committed to a whole of precinct design and planning approach in order to deliver an optimal scheme in terms of creating a new urban place.

Our client's desire to consider a mixed residential and employment outcome for Wicks Road South is entirely consistent with and reinforces many of the stated priorities for Macquarie Park as contained within the Metropolitan Strategy ‘A Plan for Growing Sydney’ (December, 2014), the Draft North District Plan (November 2016) and the terms of reference for the current Macquarie Park planning investigation.

The future character of Wicks Road South

Wicks Road South as a healthy and active innovation district will be a leading example of a contemporary approach to the delivery of a mixed use urban place for people. A place for people which responds to the need for sustainable, liveable, economically resilient but affordable places.

The key planning principles and outcomes for Wicks Road South include

- A mixed use innovation district that has a sense of place, supports the growth of jobs whilst also diversifying the activities available to its occupants;
- A leading example of a contemporary approach to mixed use urban places
- A place delivered through active collaboration with all levels of government
- A place that responds to the needs of Ryde Council LGA through its delivery of housing diversity and affordability.
- A catalyst for the delivery of new social infrastructure which will support both the existing and new community as it grows
- A leading example of the adoption of a fine grain road network to enable a people focused hierarchy which supports health and active living.

In summary, it is considered that a mixed use development outcome for the precinct has considerable strategic merit, is entirely consistent and will not compromise the wider strategic employment role of Macquarie Park and is of a scale to make a positive and well planned contribution to an important fringe mixed use locality.

In the preparation of the North District Plan we respectfully request the Commission confirm the role of Wicks Road South as a mixed use residential and increased employment precinct that supports the wider role of Macquarie Park.

The accompanying masterplan concept provides further justification for this particular land-use outcome and demonstrates an appropriate built form outcome can be realised complementing that achieved in Lachlan’s Line.

With endorsement from the Commission, the Department of Planning & Environment and the City of Ryde the landowners are ready to proceed with further background studies to inform the strategic planning of this proposal.