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The General Manager
Inner West Council
PO Box 14
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Attention: Strategic Planning Department

RE: PLANNING PROPOSAL TO AMEND MARRICKVILLE LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2011 FOR ADDITIONAL BUILDING HEIGHT, ADDITIONAL FLOOR SPACE RATIO AND ADDITIONAL PERMITTED USE FOR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION 3 MYRTLE STREET AND 3-5 CARRINGTON ROAD, MARRICKVILLE

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter has been prepared by Willowtree Planning Pty Ltd on behalf of Qualitas, and forms an appendix to the Planning Proposal for the amendment of *Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011* (MLEP2011) to include additional building height, additional floor space ratio (FSR) and an Additional Permitted Use (APU) for Residential Accommodation on the site. The land subject to this Planning Proposal is described as 3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville (Lot 3 & 4 DP 774207).

The proposed rezoning intends to facilitate the future development of the site for an industrial-led creative cooperative, comprising flexible industrial and warehouse space and a range of Build To Rent (BTR) 'live-work' dwellings. Building heights up to 42m (9 storeys) and a 4.65:1 FSR are required to support the creation of a creative cooperative on the site.

The mix of land uses sought to be incorporated within the site are partly permitted but partly prohibited in the relevant *IN2 Light Industrial* zone pursuant to MLEP2011. While *Light Industry* and *Warehouse or Distribution Centres* are permitted with consent, Residential Accommodation is prohibited. Accordingly, an APU is proposed for Residential Accommodation (specifically 'Creative BTR') in order to realise the envisaged 'live-work' concept for creatives.

To demonstrate that the proposal satisfies the strategic merit test and has site-specific merit, an assessment has been carried out in accordance with Step 2 of the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) *A Guide to Preparing Local Environmental Plans*. It is noted that whilst not required for the purpose of submitting the Planning Proposal to Council, the merit test is considered relevant for the purpose of providing additional strategic justification for the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Wilson", written over a white background.

Chris Wilson
Managing Director
Willowtree Planning

STRATEGIC MERIT TEST

Amendment to Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011 for Additional Building Height, Additional Floor Space Ratio and Additional Permitted Use for Residential Accommodation
3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

Table 1. Strategic Merit Test

Merit Criteria	Merit Assessment
<p>The Planning Panel or Commission will undertake an assessment to determine whether the proposal:</p> <p>a) has strategic merit as it is:</p>	<p>The Planning Panel or Commission will undertake an assessment to determine whether the proposal:</p>
<p>Consistent with the relevant regional plan outside of the Greater Sydney Region, the relevant district plan within the Greater Sydney Region, or corridor/precinct plans applying to the site, including any draft regional, district or corridor/precinct plans released for public comment; or</p>	<p>The proposed rezoning is consistent with the Greater Sydney Region Plan and Eastern City District Plan.</p> <p>In particular, the site and proposed industrial-led creative cooperative are consistent with the Region Plan and District Plan and deliver on a number of the Plans' objectives, particularly as they relate to the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal and transit corridor, the provision of new and diverse housing supply in the right locations, the creation of the 30 minute city through the suitable location of housing, jobs, services and infrastructure, the maintenance and management of employment lands, targeting priority sectors (namely creative industries), and supporting the growth of creative industries through the provision of suitably-designed and located facilities offering flexible live-work opportunities.</p> <p>The supply of urban services and employment lands would <i>not</i> be eroded as a result of the proposal. The maintenance of the IN2 Light Industrial zoning over the site would retain the numeric area of employment land in Marrickville and increase employment densities. The envisioned industrial-led creative cooperative, whilst introducing a residential component to the site, would dually provide opportunity for higher employment densities <i>and</i> more diverse industries to be supported. The proposal therefore offers an innovative solution to retaining and managing employment lands in accordance with the Region Plan and District Plan.</p> <p>The proposed range of flexible industrial/warehouse spaces and live-work dwellings would generate new employment opportunities, specifically meet the unique working and living requirements of creatives, augment the amenity of the site and immediate neighbourhood, and align with the transitioning 'creative' role of the Inner West's employment precincts. It is noteworthy that creative industries are expressly identified by the Plans as one of five priority sectors targeted for growth.</p> <p>Through the delivery of 175-225 dwellings, the proposal would also contribute to meeting supply targets, placing downward pressure on prices to improve affordability, and diversifying housing choice. Hybrid 'live-work' dwellings in a range of unit</p>

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	<p>sizes and delivered as BTR would assist in accommodating a variety of price-points and meeting the needs of Sydney's diverse and growing population, including the specific housing needs of the Inner West's growing creative community.</p> <p>The proposed introduction of BTR specifically aligns with Objective 11 of the Region Plan which outlines a number of mechanisms to promote housing diversity and affordability for low and moderate income earners (such as creatives), including innovative rental models within purpose-designed rental buildings ('build to rent') close to public transport and centres. By safeguarding against the Strata Titling of individual units, the proposed BTR scheme would secure the live-work dwellings in perpetuity and avoid the future dilution and gentrification of the rental accommodation or light industrial space by market housing.</p> <p>Being generally 20% cheaper to construct compared to traditional residential flat buildings, BTR facilitates rents that are below the current market in the area (on average). Additionally, there may be opportunity to deliver 15% affordable units.</p> <p>As well as targeting affordability, the BTR would include units aimed at the creative sector, supportive of ageing-in-place, and accommodating of those who are differently-abled.</p> <p>More detailed review and assessment of the proposed rezoning in light of the Greater Sydney Region Plan and Eastern City District Plan are provided in Section 4.1.1.3 and 4.1.1.4 of the Planning Proposal Report.</p> <p>Additionally, the <i>Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy</i> provides a framework for the renewal of the corridor.</p> <p>For the subject site specifically, the Strategy recognises the potential for taller buildings to be delivered, particularly if a part-developer-funded second entrance is provided to Marrickville Station from Riverdale Avenue and public open space is provided on the site. The revised Strategy proposes that the height limit could potentially be increased to 12-15 storeys given the low topography of the site, proximity to the rail line and potential future high rise development at the northern end of the Carrington Road precinct.</p>

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3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>Generally following the vision established under the Corridor Strategy, the proposal incorporates high rise development inclusive of a mix of light industrial, creative and live-work uses. Whilst the Strategy identifies a maximum building height of 12-15 storeys, the height proposed for the site under this Planning Proposal has been reduced to nine (9) storeys in order to optimise solar amenity, provide a more effective height and façade transition, achieve consistency with the 5-10 storey built form character of mixed use development in emerging metro corridors and transit-oriented local centres, and ultimately produce a functional, highly-amenable and good quality urban design outcome.</p> <p>Consistent with the Strategy, the future delivery of an over-rail link (vehicular or pedestrian) would be safeguarded whilst new publicly-accessible open space would be provided on either side of the existing channel/future street.</p> <p>As detailed in Part D of the Planning Proposal Report, the proposal is also consistent with other applicable State, regional and local strategic plans, including the NSW State Priorities, Directions for a Greater Sydney, <i>Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+</i>, and the strategic objectives for Sydney Metro.</p> <p>Of key relevance, <i>Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+</i> developed by Create NSW identifies strong demand for flexible, affordable, fit-for-purpose and sustainable space, arising from the rapid growth of the cultural sector, the increasingly important role of creative industries in NSW' economy, and the ongoing transitioning of the economy. In response, the proposal incorporates a range of formal and informal, flexible and purpose-built, spaces of varying scales to accommodate a wide range of creative industry sectors and associated activities. The dedication of affordable industrial/warehouse space, securement of BTR live-work dwellings, and potential to deliver 15% affordable units, would improve access to affordable space for the creative community.</p> <p>Meeting the needs of the creative community also requires housing to be made available in close proximity to creative industrial areas, and in other cases for workspaces and homes to be more closely fused. BTR live-work models respond to the functional requirements arising from the nature of</p>

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3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>creative sector activities and also from affordability pressures.</p> <p>Overall, consistent with strategic policy for urban renewal and transit corridors generally, and Sydenham to Bankstown specifically, the proposal would create opportunities for new jobs, diverse new housing, and an activated public domain, combining to revitalise strategically-located land in immediate proximity of major public transport.</p>
<p>Consistent with a relevant local strategy that has been endorsed by the Department; or</p>	<p>The proposed rezoning is consistent with local strategic plans, including <i>Our Inner West 2036</i> (being the Inner West's Community Strategic Plan), Inner West Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), the draft <i>Inner West Employment and Retail Lands Strategy</i> and <i>Our Inner West Housing Strategy</i>.</p> <p>Of particular relevance to the proposal, creativity is acknowledged by the Community Strategic Plan as generating <i>socio-economic growth and development, linking together the economy (creative industries), places (creative spaces) and people (creative talent), making a 'creative ecosystem' that reflects the relationship between creativity and place.</i></p> <p>The proposed creative cooperative would resemble a 'micro creative ecosystem' bringing together the economy, places and people through the provision of diverse creative spaces designed to meet the unique working and living needs of creative talent and thereby accommodating and supporting the growth of creative industries in the Inner West.</p> <p>To translate the vision to action, the Plan focuses on five (5) Strategic Directions, being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>An ecologically sustainable Inner West</i> ▪ <i>Unique, liveable, networked neighbourhoods</i> ▪ <i>Creative communities and a strong economy</i> ▪ <i>Caring, happy, healthy communities</i> ▪ <i>Progressive social leadership</i> <p>Underpinning these Strategic Directions, Inner West is envisioned as <i>the creative and cultural engine room of Sydney – bringing a wealth of experience and employment to the city. We are home to artists, musicians, writers, studios, galleries, creative industries, artist-run initiatives, academics, theatres</i></p>

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 3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p><i>and festivals. We are an incubator for new ideas, at the forefront of using new technologies to support and grow a diverse and thriving local economy.</i></p> <p>Further to the above, the Outcomes and Strategies articulated by the Plan seek to position Inner West as a place of excellence for creative industries and services, support diverse creative industries, create additional opportunities for cultural participation, help businesses to grow and innovate, encourage the establishment of new enterprises, facilitate the availability of affordable spaces for creative industries and services, strengthen economic viability and connections, support local and diverse job creation, and protect industrial and employment lands.</p> <p>Yet at present, the Plan acknowledges that <i>rising costs and the decreasing availability of commercial space of a suitable size limit opportunities for creative communities to find or maintain workspaces, from small studios to large scale warehouses. This may force them to seek accommodation elsewhere.</i></p> <p>In accordance with the Plan, the proposal would directly underpin the rise of the creative industries in the Inner West through the provision of an industrial-led creative cooperative that is purpose-built to reflect and respond to the needs of a wide variety of creative sectors. The cooperative incorporates a wide range of work spaces and hybrid live-work options (including BTR live-work dwellings) to accommodate individuals, start-ups and enterprises pursuing a diversity of creative activities. In this, the proposal would foster the establishment and growth of businesses, creation of new job opportunities and strength of the local economy. As described through the Planning Proposal report, whilst retaining the supply of industrial-zoned land, the proposal would enable the realisation of these benefits for the creative industries and local economy more broadly.</p> <p>More generally, the proposal would also contribute to the sustainability, liveability, connectedness and wellbeing of the Inner West’s neighbourhoods and communities. The proposal would deliver new working and living opportunities for the creative sector in a sustainable, high-density built form offering the benefits of co-location, flexible live-work options, creative clustering and collaboration,</p>

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 3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>affordability, a high quality public interface, and proximity to public transport and the services of local centres.</p> <p>Further, the LSPS outlines a vision of the Inner West as <i>a place of creative, connected, sustainable and productive neighbourhoods – as vibrant, innovative and diverse as our community.</i></p> <p>Underpinning this vision, the LSPS identifies the cultural production and creative industries as essential components of the area’s livability, economy and distinctive identity. The creative industries are estimated to generate over 6,400 local jobs and employ approximately 13,000 local residents.</p> <p>The proposal would assist in realising the LSPS vision through an innovative hybrid model combining affordable BTR business space and residential accommodation specifically designed to meet the diverse working and living needs of creatives. This would assist in reinforcing and growing the creative community in the Inner West and augmenting the productivity of employment lands within a recognised creative industries cluster.</p> <p>Further, the LSPS recognises the importance of retaining and managing the Inner West’s industrial and urban services land so that they continue stimulating local jobs, enterprise formation and retain local spending. In line with the LSPS and Council’s priorities, the proposal would retain the industrial zoning whilst supporting a higher density of employment uses on the site and delivering new employment floor space that is better configured to meet contemporary working needs. As such, the proposal would achieve the LSPS aims of stimulating local jobs and fostering local businesses within its existing employment precincts. In particular, the proposal would better equip the site to serve the creative industries, which are identified by the LSPS as a targeted industry sector.</p> <p>The need for such an innovative approach is also recognised in the LSPS where it states that the current planning framework does not reflect the diversity of the creative sector or its requirements. In response, the LSPS states that Council intends to play a key role in protecting and preserving appropriate spaces for a diverse array of creative industries and cultural producers.</p>

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 3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>Assisting Council in its mandate, the proposed creative cooperative with BTR hybrid working and living spaces, offers new possibilities for adapting to the currently-unmet requirements for a diverse array of creatives. Overall, the proposal would promote the liveability, economic productivity and distinctive identity of Marrickville.</p> <p>In summary of the above paragraphs, the proposal delivers on key LSPS objectives relating to the maintenance of industrial zones whilst supporting their increased productivity, accommodating affordable entry points for a range of industries, and growing Inner West as a leading creative and cultural hub.</p> <p>Likewise, the proposal dually supports the visions, principles and priorities of the draft <i>Inner West Employment and Retail Lands Strategy</i> and <i>Our Inner West Housing Strategy</i>. The proposal would protect the supply of industrial land and deliver new facilities to accommodate a higher density of employment tailored to the specific needs of a targeted industry, being the creative industries sector. The proposed creative cooperative would assist in redressing the supply and affordability of industrial space, the quality and suitability of that space for accommodating start-ups and small enterprises, security of tenure and associated stability for business establishment and development, and would foster synergies between creative industries and manufacturing industrial activities.</p> <p>At the same time, through the inclusion of BTR, the proposal would inject new, diverse and affordable housing supply within a sensitive infill development designed to complement the heritage values and 'creative' character of the established context. The proposal would therefore create new living opportunities within immediate access to work, activities and public transport, that are critically tailored to address the needs of creatives whom have increasingly struggled to access the local housing market. The proposed BTR development would start to close the affordability gap between housing need and provision.</p> <p>Accordingly, the creative cooperative represents an innovative model reconciling the practical, affordability and accessibility needs of the creative</p>

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3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	sector, as they relate to both employment space and housing.
Responding to a change in circumstances, such as the investment in new infrastructure or changing demographic trends that have not been recognized by existing planning controls.	<p>The site falls within the catchment for the new Sydney Metro, with a station to be located within 400m walking distance of the site. Additionally, the delivery of planned pedestrian and cycling infrastructure would increase permeability in the local area, decrease distances to public transport nodes, and promote an improved walking and cycling experience.</p> <p>Accordingly, in the future the site will benefit from enhanced accessibility by active transport links and public transport. Given this significantly augmented accessibility, the site is ideally located for new, higher-density, hybrid industrial, creative and residential uses.</p> <p>The site is also located within the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal corridor designated for transit-oriented development.</p> <p>Consistent with strategic policy for urban renewal and transit corridors generally, and Sydenham to Bankstown specifically, the proposal would create opportunities for new jobs, diverse new housing, and an activated public domain, combining to revitalise strategically-located land in immediate proximity of major public transport.</p> <p>Other objectives and strategies focus on the shifting role, but continuing importance, of employment lands in Sydney generally and the Inner West specifically.</p> <p>This 'shift' may be observed in the immediate site context, which exhibits a unique interface of creative industries and manufacturing, with a critical mass of enterprises with functions and products that 'bridge' across both sectors.</p> <p>The site therefore provides a unique opportunity to transition between surrounding industrial, creative and residential land uses. In particular, Marrickville already comprises a clustering of creative uses, which is sought to be further supported by State, regional, district and local level policy.</p> <p>Meeting the needs of the creative community requires housing to be made available in close proximity to creative industrial areas, and in other</p>

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Amendment to Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011 for Additional Building Height, Additional Floor Space Ratio and Additional Permitted Use for Residential Accommodation
3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>cases for workspaces and homes to be more closely fused. Live-work models respond to the functional requirements arising from the nature of creative sector activities and also from affordability pressures.</p> <p>The proposed APU for residential accommodation (specifically 'creative BTR') would facilitate the delivery of BTR hybrid live-work dwellings specifically tailored to the unique needs of creatives. Accordingly, the APU would assist in accommodating the living <i>and</i> working needs of the local and growing creative sector, in-line with Strategic Planning objectives.</p> <p>The APU therefore performs a role that is complementary to the transitioning role of employment lands in the Inner West and growth of the creative industrial sector, and as such the site is highly suitable for the APU. Likewise, the light industrial zoning of the site creates a unique opportunity to provide such a complementary use without eroding the supply of IN2 land.</p> <p>Overall, the provision of an industrial-led creative cooperative on the site reflects the desired future character established through key strategic plans.</p> <p>As detailed in the Economic Impact Assessment (Appendix 5), the proposed creative cooperative on the site reflects the need for employment floorspace (in particular creative floorspace) and live-work opportunities that has been identified through economic research and property market analysis.</p>
<p>The Planning Panel or Commission will undertake an assessment to determine whether the proposal:</p> <p>b) having met the strategic merit test, has site-specific merit, having regard to:</p>	
<p>The natural environment (including known significant environmental values, resources or hazards)</p>	<p>The site is not identified in proximity of any area of biodiversity and accordingly the proposal would not exhibit any adverse impact on the natural environment or other resources. Rather the proposal relates to a site that has been historically developed, is highly disturbed, comprises limited existing vegetation, and forms part of an established urban area.</p> <p>The site's redevelopment would create opportunities for development designed in accordance with the principles of Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD), new publicly-accessible open</p>

STRATEGIC MERIT TEST

Amendment to Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011 for Additional Building Height, Additional Floor Space Ratio and Additional Permitted Use for Residential Accommodation

3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>spaces, the co-location of jobs and housing, and the promotion of active transport use.</p> <p>The 'greening' of the street frontage and canal corridor would contribute to the fine grain and human scale of the streetscape and boost tree canopy cover. Terrace and rooftop gardens would also contribute to the urban tree canopy, positively contributing to microclimate, biodiversity and habitat, whilst optimising opportunities for social interaction amongst residents and workers.</p>
<p>The existing uses, approved uses and likely future uses of land in the vicinity of the land subject to a proposal</p>	<p>The concept design has been informed by detailed site analysis and consideration of the surrounding context in order to provide an optimal development outcome that capitalises on the strategic potential of the land, uplifts the surrounding public domain and provides a high level of amenity.</p> <p>The site context exhibits a transitional character, being situated at the interface of industrial and residential areas and also directly adjoining rail infrastructure. New high-density mixed-use development with building heights up to 10 storeys is situated within 400m walking distance of the site (toward Marrickville train station and local centre).</p> <p>Accordingly a transition to greater built form densities and greater land use intensities may already be observed in the nearby area.</p> <p>Additionally, urban renewal is a common objective for land along railway lines and in proximity to train stations. Renewal, inclusive of higher density built form and mixed uses, is particularly promoted in strategic plans in association with Sydney Metro and other major government infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The proposed building height, density and hybrid of industrial and residential uses, would therefore integrate with new and emerging development in close proximity to the site, reflects strategic objectives for development along railway lines, and leverages new infrastructure investment (namely the Sydney Metro station at Marrickville).</p> <p>The stepped design of the concept development would concentrate the highest elements in the centre of the site and adjacent to the railway line. Lower building elements and open space would be provided adjacent to the existing residential property to the north-west and the street frontage. The</p>

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3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>design of the built form would therefore provide an effective height transition and protect the amenity of existing residential development in the vicinity, existing and proposed open spaces and the new residential dwellings to be provided on the site.</p> <p>In summary, the proposal would introduce a transitional development that complements the range of surrounding land uses, integrates with the variety of built form densities in the general area, responds to the strategic location of the site and leverages new infrastructure investment (namely Sydney Metro).</p> <p>The proposed height, FSR and range of land uses also reflect strategic directions for urban renewal and transit corridors, development in the vicinity of new transit nodes, the transitioning role of employment lands, and the growth of creative industries.</p>
<p>The services and infrastructure that are or will be available to meet the demands arising from the proposal and any proposed financial arrangements for infrastructure provision.</p>	<p>The site is serviced by existing infrastructure that is capable of servicing higher density light industrial, creative and residential development. In particular the site is highly accessible by public transport, being within 400m walking distance of Marrickville train station. Bus stops situated along Illawarra Road and Marrickville Road provide connections to Kingsgrove, Sydney CBD, Dulwich Hill and Burwood, via surrounding suburbs. The area is also serviced by major road infrastructure.</p> <p>Resulting from the proximity of the site to public transport, active transport networks and services, the site has been awarded a walkscore of 89 (very walkable, most errands can be accomplished on foot) and a transit score of 80 (excellent transit, transit is convenient for most trips).</p> <p>Importantly, in the future the accessibility and walkability of the site will be further enhanced through the delivery of Sydney Metro at Marrickville, within approximately 400m walking distance of the site.</p> <p>As detailed in the Transport Impact Assessment (Appendix 4), given the strategic location of the site in proximity to existing and planned public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, sustainable transport would be promoted. Additionally, the live/work nature of the proposal would reduce the reliance of vehicle trips presenting</p>

STRATEGIC MERIT TEST

Amendment to Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011 for Additional Building Height, Additional Floor Space Ratio and Additional Permitted Use for Residential Accommodation
3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

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	<p>an opportunity to reduce car ownership of future occupants. To further achieve sustainable transport objectives, it is recommended that a green travel plan is prepared for the future development to promote alternative travel modes available near the site and its intentions of reducing car ownership of future tenants.</p> <p>Accounting for the estimated traffic generation volumes associated with the proposed development, preliminary intersection modelling demonstrates the development would have minimal impact on the operation and capacity of the surrounding road network.</p> <p>In any case, it is recommended that the optimal continued functioning of the Myrtle Street/Carrington Road intersection is supported through the introduction of a 'No Stopping' restriction on the east side of Carrington Road within the intersection and at least 10m to the south.</p> <p>No other infrastructure upgrades are recommended as being required for the future development.</p>

STRATEGIC MERIT TEST

Amendment to Marrickville Local Environmental Plan 2011 for Additional Building Height, Additional Floor Space Ratio and Additional Permitted Use for Residential Accommodation
3 Myrtle Street and 3-5 Carrington Road, Marrickville

The above assessment demonstrates that that the proposed rezoning for additional building height, additional FSR and an APU for residential accommodation (specifically 'creative BTR'), to support an industrial-led creative cooperative on the site, exhibits strategic merit and site-specific merit.

The proposal is consistent with key strategic plans for the site, corridor, district and Greater Sydney.

Importantly, the proposal maintains the use of the site for light industrial and warehouse uses whilst enabling higher employment densities and greater flexibility in response to the changing nature of industry and growing demand from creative sectors. The cooperative specifically responds to rising demand for co-located live-work spaces that meet the needs of creative industries, yet are not yet formally recognized by current Planning controls. Similarly, the proposal would leverage new investment in Sydney Metro West and assist in the revitalisation of the area.

The future provision of higher-density, hybrid industrial, creative and residential development would be compatible with the natural environment, surrounding land uses and built form (existing and future), and infrastructure (existing and future).

It is therefore recommended that the Planning Proposal is supported by Council and that the necessary steps are pursued to enable it to proceed to Gateway Determination under Section 3.34 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Yours faithfully,



Chris Wilson
Managing Director
Willowtree Planning