



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SYDNEY

The Secretary,
Urban Systems Corporation
Proprietary Limited,
117 Harrington Street, SYDNEY 2000

18th June, 1970.

REFERENCE: 1468/70 EW/TY

CROSS FILE

"PLOT
RATIO"

Dear Sir,

I have to inform you that the Council at its meeting held on the 1st June, 1970, gave consideration to a development application submitted in respect of the site of Premises Nos. 208/218 Riley Street and No. 53 Lower Campbell Street, Surry Hills, and also a Report by the City Building Surveyor dated the 18th May, 1970, embodying a letter dated the 23rd April, 1970, from the Secretary, The State Planning Authority of New South Wales, concerning the question of the formulation of a policy for residential density control within the City of Sydney.

Arising from such consideration the Council granted its consent to the development application subject to the conditions recommended by the City Building Surveyor, and also decided that the general question of the formulation of a policy for residential density control within the City of Sydney be referred to the Firm of Joint Consultants appointed by the Council on the 4th May, 1970, in connection with the preparation of a Strategic Master Plan for the City of Sydney, for an expression of opinion.

I am forwarding herewith a copy of the abovementioned Report by the City Building Surveyor, together with a copy of the Report dated 22nd April, 1970, referred to therein, and it would be appreciated if you would give this matter your early attention.

Xerox 4 copies.

Yours faithfully,

Xerox for WDS
MSJ

Encl: GB. 22.6.70

J. Luscombe

J. H. LUSCOMBE
Town Clerk

file original on 7078 A1

✓ file Xerox copies (2) on action planning files.

ITEM NO. 10C ON AGENDA PAPER

T.C. 4431/69
D.A. 777/69

City Building Surveyor's Department
18th May, 1970.

- (a) Site of Premises: Nos. 208/218 Riley Street and No. 53 Lower Campbell Street, Surry Hills - Development Application,
(b) Residential density control for City - Question of formulation of policy.
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THE TOWN CLERK:

At the meeting of the Works Committee on the 11th May, 1970, consideration was again given to the application submitted by A. Davis, with the authority of A. Saliba and other owners, for permission to erect on the site of premises, Nos. 208/218 Riley Street and No. 53 Lower Campbell Street, Surry Hills, a seventeen-storeyed building for use partly as residential flats and partly as a motel with provision for "off-street" car parking facilities.

During discussion on the matter Alderman Arnold referred to the verbal statement made by the Chairman of The State Planning Authority of New South Wales, which appeared in the report of the City Building Surveyor dated 22nd April, 1970, regarding the number of persons per acre and suggested that this statement should be clarified with the Authority.

The City Building Surveyor stated that he was of the understanding that a letter had been received from The State Planning Authority of New South Wales with regard to the general question of residential density control within the City of Sydney.

The Committee decided that consideration of the application be deferred to enable the Council's officers to obtain clarification from The State Planning Authority of New South Wales with regard to the question of residential density in respect of the specific application and to submit a further report in this regard, together with a copy of the letter from the Authority, as a matter of urgency.

In this regard, The Secretary, State Planning Authority of New South Wales, advised by letter of 23rd April, 1970, as follows:-

"At a discussion at the Authority's office on Monday, 23rd March, 1970, between representatives of the Council and the Authority, it was agreed that the Authority would write to the Council concerning the need to formulate a residential density control policy for the City. The Council's representatives were Aldermen Briger, Harris, Port and Shehadie and the City Building Surveyor, Mr. Doran.

2. The need for such a policy has been highlighted as a result of development consent issued by the Council on 27th June, 1969, in respect of a proposal to erect a multi-storey residential flat building on Nos. 194/198 Goulburn Street, Sydney.

3. The area (just over 5,000 square feet) of this site, which is to be zoned as County Centre in the City of Sydney Planning Scheme, is relatively small and the proposed development envisages a density of approximately 1,200 to 1,400 persons to the acre and a floor space ratio of 12:1.

4. When the proposal was submitted to the Minister for Local Government for consideration under the provisions of the Height of Buildings Act, 1912-1967, he declined to give approval and indicated that a residential density such as that proposed was unacceptable, being far too high to enable a reasonable standard of environment to be obtained; particularly on such a restricted site, which is surrounded by buildings.

5. The purpose of residential density control is to strike a balance between the quantity of residential building (people) in an area, and the space available for movement and for ancillary uses such as local open spaces school sites, etc. which are needed to serve a residential area. Above certain levels of density it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to secure a reasonable standard of environment unless there are special considerations of location or size of site which otherwise enable a satisfactory environment to be created.

6. In general terms, the maximum residential densities proposed for Residential zones in the City of Sydney Planning Scheme is a floor space ratio of 2:1 (which is about 140-170 persons per acre depending on the type of housing), and this is also the order of bonus proposed where residential use is incorporated in mixed commercial/residential schemes in other zones. This is about the maximum satisfactory level of net residential density where piecemeal development of small sites is involved over an area of some size.

7. Exceptions are proposed to be made for limited areas (mostly on high ground) at Kings Cross where in the Residential 2(c) zone a residential density of 4:1 is possible, with up to 6:1 if the site is large (over 60,000 sq. ft.).

8. With regard to the Woolloomooloo Redevelopment Area, the Council was advised to adopt a maximum residential density of 2:1 for the Area generally, because much of the area was low lying, but that residential densities up to 1:1 would be reasonable (subject to good design) on sites close to large permanent open spaces such as The Domain. A density of 4:1 was recommended in the Residential zone on the high scarp of Victoria Street.

9. In the County Centre zone, where the general density standard of base ratio plus bonuses may rise to 10:1 or 12:1, there is a need to clarify policy.

10. In applying residential density standards, consideration needs to be given to the result if the whole area is fully developed at the particular density standard. Any exceptions to the rule need to be justified on grounds of the site possessing special attributes which make a good standard of environment possible. There is no justification for raising the general maximum density of 2:1, but there are two circumstances where higher densities than this can produce a high standard of environment (without which there is a danger of eventual degeneration into slums). They are:-

- (a) Where the sites adjoin a substantial public open space which provides a ready-made environment.
- (b) Where the site is a large one which enables flexibility of design - especially for high buildings with reduced site cover, undercover parking and access roads (at a different level from the landscaped areas which provide the environment around the buildings).

11. A suitable policy basis for residential density in the circumstances would be:-

A maximum floor space ratio of 2:1 for all residential development except :-

- (i) The Kings Cross area (Residential 2(c) zone) where 4:1 plus a bonus of 2:1 for sites of over 60,000 sq. ft. has been recommended.

(ii) Where the site adjoins substantial public open space - in which case higher densities are possible , subject to good design.

(iii) Where the site is large, i.e. at least 60,000 sq. ft. in size.

12. This policy could apply, if the Council thought it desirable both to Residential zones and to other zones (such as the County Centre) where residential use is permissible. The need to encourage site amalgamation in high density Residential zones is just as desirable as it is in other zones such as the County Centre. One of the main criticisms of existing home unit development arises where it takes place on sites of too limited size with insufficiently wide frontages.

13. Further study, in the future, of techniques for controlling residential densities may suggest more sophisticated refinements likely to ensure a better result. In the meantime, however, it is important to the longer term future of residential accommodation in the City that the quality of environment is not prejudiced, and therefore, that residential densities be set at a level which will enable that objective to be achieved. This is an aspect upon which the Council, will, no doubt, expect advice from the consultants it employs on the Strategic Plan for the development of the City.

14. In the meantime, it is necessary to deal with current proposals for residential buildings with a very high density. As mentioned earlier, the Minister has rejected the proposal for Nos. 194/198 Goulburn Street because of the excessive density. The need for a firm policy to be evolved is readily apparent and it is now requested that the Council consider this most important matter of evolving a residential density control policy.

15. It will be appreciated if the Council can give the matter early attention and then inform the Authority of its views.

16. At the meeting on 23rd March , 1970, the question of block development was also briefly discussed. This is a matter which the Authority's Chairman proposes to raise at the meeting this afternoon between representatives of the Council and the Authority."

COMMENT

A separate report has been made concerning premises Nos. 194/198 Goulburn Street, which premises are mentioned in the above letter from The State Planning Authority. (See Item No. 10D on Agenda).

It is assumed that references to residential density refer to residential flats as distinct from private hotels, motels or hotels catering for short term tenancies. This assumption is borne out by the State Planning Authority's previous recommendation of April, 1969 that hotels of international standard might have an index of 12 to 1 regardless of zoning.

Since the matter of floor space index was introduced by the Minister's Scheme, there has been no suggestion that the use of the building should enter into consideration. Floor space index control has therefore been in operation for approximately six years without this factor being previously introduced. There is no question but that the use of the building has an effect on the resultant population density but it is considered that further controls should not be introduced in the

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manner proposed until sufficient research is carried out in connection with the Strategic Master Plan.

With regard to the suggestion that a limit of 2 to 1 be placed on the residential content of buildings within the County Centre, it is considered that this is equivalent to a complete ban, even with higher densities adjacent to open spaces. In 1963 regulations governing the erection of residential flats within the County Centre were relaxed with regard to floor area, site coverage and boundary setbacks with a view to encouragement of this type of development. The intended effect was to permit, in the County Centre, residential flat buildings of equivalent bulk to office buildings. This attitude was accepted by the State Parliament of the day, as an amendment to the Local Government Act was required to give effect to the intention.

Since that time only two residential flat buildings have been erected, Park Regis in Park Street and the R.S.L. building in Elizabeth Street. More than half of the Park Regis building and the whole of the R.S.L. building is in use as a motel. Several other applications have been received for the erection of flats adjacent to Hyde Park but have been altered to office or motel buildings prior to erection. The reasons given for the changes of use have always been that the proposals could not be justified economically even at a floor space index of 12 to 1. For this reason it is considered that a limit of 2 to 1 is equivalent to a prohibition.

The question of a satisfactory residential environment is very complex and the suggestion that it can be controlled by density limitations only is considered incorrect. It could never be envisaged that a suburban environment could be created in the County Centre and yet this is what is suggested. Due to the continuous demand for office accommodation, there will never be a great amount of residential flat accommodation in the County Centre in proportion to other types of use, even at equivalent floor space indices, so it is considered that, taking the County Centre as a whole, the Residential density will be considered lower than 140-170 persons per acre, the stated desirable density. I consider that density considerations for the County Centre should be applied to large areas, and not to individual sites or even whole blocks, as the smaller areas would not give a true picture.

With regard to this particular application, it is considered that the area as a whole will not develop as permanent residential flat accommodation and that in the circumstances, the applicant's suggestion to convert portion of the building to motel use and leave a resultant permanent residential density of the order of 600 persons per acre is reasonable.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that -

- (a) With regard to this particular application, approval be granted subject to the conditions as previously recommended. (See attached report.)
- (b) With regard to the general question of residential density, as outlined in the letter of 23rd April, 1970 from the State Planning Authority, the Authority be advised that at this stage, the Council could not agree to the adoption of principles suggested for the following reasons:-
 - (i) A reduction in density does not necessarily create the environment desired.

- (ii) A limit of 2 to 1 in the County Centre would amount to a complete prohibition due to economic considerations.
- (iii) Insufficient information is at hand to make a final decision on such an important matter.

The Authority might also be advised that the whole question will be considered during formulation of the Strategic Master Plan for Sydney, and that in the interim, each case will be treated on its merits, having in mind that the resultant density of permanent residential occupancy in any development is a matter that should receive consideration.

(Sgd.) J. J. DORAN,
City Building Surveyor

NOTE: New plans incorporating previous amendments and slides of the subject premises are forwarded herewith for the information of the Works Committee.

AD

T.C.4431/69
D.A. 777/69

22nd April, 1970.

SITE OF PREMISES NOS.202/219 RILEY STREET AND NO.53 LOWER
CAMPBELL STREET, SURRY HILLS - DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION.

THE TOWN CLERK

Past History:

Council on the 9th February, 1970, resolved:-

"That consideration of the application submitted by A.Davis, with the authority of A. Saliba and other Owners, for permission to erect on the abovementioned site a seventeen-storeyed building for use as residential flats, with provision for "off-street car parking facilities, has been deferred for a further report by the Council's officers, following discussion with the applicant, with regard to the following matters:-

- (i) the design of the proposed building being improved with a view to achieving a more pleasing architectural and aesthetic effect and in this regard comments of the Council's Principal Architect, as set out in the report of the City Building Surveyor dated 14th January, 1970, be brought to the attention of the applicant;
- (ii) the questions of including additional two-bedroom flats in the proposed development in place of bed-sitting room type flats and increasing the sizes of the flats;
- (iii) the provision of increased "off-street" car parking facilities for use by the occupants of the building having regard to the already congest^{ed} parking conditions in streets in the immediate area;
- (iv) the general question of service facilities including, inter alia, arrangements for garbage disposal and/or collection and provision of "off-street" space for garbage receptacles.

Present Consideration:

I have to report as follows, in respect of the four (4) items:-

- (i) This item is covered by my report dated the 3rd April, 1970, in which it was reported that the matter had been discussed with the State Planning Authority and the applicant had submitted revised plans, perspective and slides which appeared to overcome previous objections.
- (ii) In the scheme originally submitted it was proposed to have a total of one hundred and fifty (150) flats, comprising thirty (30) two bedroom flats, seventy five (75) one bedroom flats and forty five (45) bed sitting room flats. In the revised scheme, forty (40) two bedroom flats and twenty four (24) one bedroom flats are proposed. Bed sitting room flats are eliminated. The scheme also includes forty eight (48) one bedroom motel units and twenty four (24) bed sitting room motel units. The motel units do not provide kitchens. Meals will be available in the ground floor restaurant.

The Chairman of The State Planning Authority has advised this department verbally that during preliminary discussions he had with the Applicant, he stated that he felt the number of persons per acre would be too large and the Applicant suggested that replacement of some of the flats with motel-type accommodation could be a help.

(iii) and (iv) In respect of items (iii) and (iv) the Applicant states, in part:-

- "(1) Further on site excavation will be implemented for the introduction of an additional basement car parking floor to raise the total number of car parking to one hundred & six cars(106)
- (ii) Immediately adjacent to the double flu incinerator is to be erected a fireproof and ventilated incinerator Service Room of a minimum of 10ft x 10ft to accommodate ash handling bins
- (iii) On the Eastern side of the Building Ground Floor level immediately adjacent to the entry ramp is to be erected a face brick wall Reinforced Concrete Cupboard Service Bin Store.

In conclusion this is to be taken as written confirmation of my verbal assurances to Mr. Doran that these items made subject to approval by Council would be incorporated in the final drawing submitted."

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the application be granted under Part XIIIA of the Local Government Act, 1919, as amended, subject to:-

- (i) the hours during which demolition and building work is carried out being restricted to between 7.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, 7.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. Saturdays, with not any work being carried out on Sundays;
- (ii) the parking spaces being outlined in paint on the pavement;
- (iii) the provision of an additional basement for off-street car parking, to provide a total car parking in the building for one hundred and six (106) cars;
- (iv) the incinerator being erected in accordance with the requirements of the City Building Surveyor and City Health Officer;

as unrestricted consent would be likely to cause injury to the amenity of the neighbourhood, including injury due to the emission of noise outside normal business hours and by the creation of traffic hazard and congestion.

J. J. DORAN
CITY BUILDING SURVEYOR.

EXTRACT FROM REPORT BY CITY BUILDING SURVEYOR, DATED 27th
FEBRUARY, 1970, ATTACHED.

Present Consideration

The Applicant by letter dated the 12th February, 1970, to this Department, states:-

"Further to my interview and telephone communications with you I have instructed my Architect to draw up an amended plan that should meet with the requirements of the various authorities and your committee. I expect to have them to your office not later than Tuesday next, 17th Inst. The building will contain a Motel Restaurant for 100 people, Laundromat and superior Residential Units. Motel of six (6) floors, each consisting of:-

3 - one bedroom apartments of 420 sq.ft. each and 4 - Bed-Sitters of 320 sq.ft. Total Motel units 72. A separate lift confined to the Motel section also Reception and Lounge.

The Residential section will occupy 9 floors, each floor containing six (6) x 2 Bedroom Units of 520 Sq.Ft. and four (4) x 1 Bedroom units of 380 Sq.Ft. Total 90 Residential Units. Two (2) lifts for the residential section only. Car parking for at least 86 cars.

You will observe that all rooms in the Motel and Residential Section are much larger in size than the code set down by the Council of the City of Sydney.

" The building is being designed as prestige edifice with excellent treatment of the outside and well landscaped, a much better building than any in the surrounding area. A magnificent view of the Sydney Harbour and Botany Bay will be obtained from the 5th floor and upper floors. The zoning is 10 to 1 Ratio and I would like to retain this Ratio.

Thanking you for past considerations and looking forward to a favourable reply."

and by further letter dated the 24th February, 1970, states in part:-

" The plans have been further amended as requested by the State Planning Authority to include a lesser number of permanent residents, with remainder of space allocated to motel type units."

The plans have been further amended to provide for an internal incinerator and garbage flue with a garbage can storage area incorporating a dwarf wall and concrete slab.

The amended proposal complies with the zonings under both Planning Schemes and with the floor area ratio and height regulations under the Minister's Scheme.

The Principal Architect, commenting on the aesthetic aspect of the proposal, states:-

"The concept as presented in the perspective and described in the Schedule is aesthetically satisfactory. It is suggested that the aluminium windows be clear anodised."

The amended proposal differs from the original proposal as follows:-

- (1) Three (3) basements in lieu of two (2) basements.
- (2) Parking for a total of eighty-six (86) cars in lieu of seventy-seven (77) cars.
- (3) Part of ground floor for use as a restaurant and private hotel office in lieu of laundromat, two (2) shops, plant and toilet facilities.

- (4) Garbage flue, incinerator and garbage can store now provided.
- (5) Second to eighth floors for use for a total of seventy-seven (77) private hotel rooms and suites and ninth to sixteenth floor for use as forty (40) two-bedroom and twenty-four (24) one bedroom flats in lieu of second to sixteenth floor for use as thirty (3) two-bedroom flats, seventy-five (75) one-bedroom flats and forty-five (45) bed-sitting room flats.
- (6) The Architect is Mr. W.E.Beck.

Council's Parking Code requires parking space for ninety (90) cars to be provided. Parking for eighty-six (86) cars is provided on three basement levels, part of the ground floor and the whole of the first floor and is considered reasonable. The two-bedroom flats have floor areas between 400 and 500 sq.ft. and the one-bedroom flats between 320 and 370 sq.ft. These areas exceed Council's desired minimum areas.