

Strategic Planning referral comments

Application PLN17/0920 – Channel 9 site

171 Stawell Street, Richmond

Scope of our comments

We have contained our views to general commentary about the development plan and about the affordable housing component. We also address accessibility issues.

We make no comments about the proposed building heights, siting or parking etc.

The numbers used are based on the information supplied in the town planning report prepared by Contour.

Original development plan

The planning report notes that the original development (approved under Amendment C104) plan included:

- Up to 550 dwellings
- 400 m² of community facility (meeting rooms)
- 5% affordable housing = 27 dwellings

The report advises that 202 of the 550 dwellings have been constructed so far. The meeting rooms have also been completed. None of the 202 dwellings completed thus far have been for affordable housing.

Based on the original approval, Council was anticipating the construction of a further 348 dwellings on the site.

Council was also anticipating that 27 of the 550 dwellings would be provided as affordable housing based on the calculation $550 \times 5\% = 27.5$ (rounded to 27).

Revised development plan

The revised development plan contemplates an additional:

138 retirement living apartments;
24 townhouses;
16 affordable housing apartments;
162 apartments PLUS

144 bed residential aged care facility.

Housing diversity

While not specifically a requirement of the development plan, it is pleasing to see that there appears to be a good variety of apartment sizes provided. 1, 2,3 and 4 bedroom apartments are proposed. It

would be good, however, if the Contour report could provide a summary of the total dwellings and the bedroom split to assist in reviewing the diversity of dwellings.

The integration of retirement living and aged care is welcome – the housing strategy identifies housing for older people as a particular need in Yarra and providing it on a large site such as this will deliver substantial gains for this type of housing

Affordable housing calculation

In order to calculate the 5% component of affordable housing on the revised figures, we have added the 202 dwellings already completed with the 162 apartments proposed as follows:

202 apartments completed
162 apartments proposed
364 apartments total

5% of 364 is 18.2 or rounded to **18**.

Schedule 5 to Clause 43.04 sets out the details of what the development plan should contain. In relation to affordable and accessible housing it states that:

By completion of the development of all the land provision (sic) of affordable housing representing 5% of the total number of apartment dwellings to be developed. (author's emphasis).

As the planning scheme uses the term *apartment dwellings*, we have not included the 144-bed aged care facility in the 5% affordable housing calculation because an aged care facility is not an apartment dwelling.

The revised calculation of affordable housing for this site requires 18 affordable housing units be provided. This proposal offers 16, or 4.39% of the total number of dwellings.

The affordable housing that is being offered is essentially key worker housing for women which is to be applauded. The arrangement with Women's Housing Limited to buy the units and operate them in perpetuity is also to be applauded.

We note however, that when Council adopted Amendment C104 which included the requirements of the original development plan, it delivered 27 affordable housing units. This revised proposal delivers 11 fewer than that, yet the site's yield (and building height) would increase significantly if the revised proposal were approved. Council's affordable housing policy expects that *at least* 5% affordable housing will be provided on larger sites and the Council is keen to see affordable housing delivered. The draft housing strategy highlights the great need for affordable housing in Yarra. There needs to be at least two more affordable housing units provided in this proposal.

Accessible housing

It also requires that the dwellings be either adaptable or fully accessible for wheelchairs. The Contour report makes no reference to accessible housing. We are not sure if the existing development has made provision for this or whether the 162 apartments proposed are to be accessible. 138 of the apartments are for retirement living so we assume that they would be wheelchair accessible or adaptable but would like confirmation of this in writing from the

proponent. We would also like confirmation that all the accommodation proposed including the affordable housing component, the townhouses etc meet the accessible housing requirement.

Summary

- This proposal offers 16 units for affordable housing but should offer at least 18. Council should not support the revised development plan as proposed as it does not meet the requirement for 5% affordable housing.
- The town planning report should be updated with a table outlining the breakdown of apartments of various bedroom sizes.
- The town planning report should also be updated to address wheelchair accessibility issues.

Prepared by Amanda Haycox
Strategic Planner
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