TIME&
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SUBJECT

Planning Assessment Report

DATE

17 August 2026

PROJECT

# NORTHCOTE VILLAGE
# 25 SEPARATION STREET, NORTHCOTE



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PREPARED FOR

T&P Northcote Development Pty Ltd

PREPARED BY

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared on behalf of T & P Northcote Development Pty Ltd (the permit applicant) in support of a Planning Permit application to redevelop part of the Northcote Plaza Shopping Centre, known as 25 Separation Street, Northcote (the subject site).

The application is made via the pathway available through Clause 53.23 of the Darebin Planning Scheme (Significant Residential Development with Affordable Housing). This application is made to the Minister for Planning, care of the Development Facilitation Program.

The application consists of a staged, mixed-use development of 3 residential buildings up to 24 storey high, with podium structures between 3 to 5 levels, including a full line supermarket, 670 apartments; and other retail / specialty use spaces.

The proposal is to be delivered in two stages:

- Stage 1 will include the delivery of the new full line supermarket and associated loading and basement car park, and podium parking servicing the eastern residential towers. Stage 1 will deliver the new podium residential parking access to Separation Street (and streetscape upgrades) with the retail loading and basement parking accessed from the Council car park.
- Stage 2 will be the remaining western portion of the site, which will be developed for a residential tower, with podium car parking, accessed from a shared access via Stage 1.

The proposal's design has evolved as a direct response to the site's context, the objectives of both the State and Local Planning Policy and other built form objectives contained within Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14 in the Darebin Planning Scheme.

The application proposes a high density, mixed-use development outcome comprising a new public realm, community facilities including a new public open space parklet, a range of apartment types / sizes, retail and shopping facilities including the provision of a new full line supermarket.

The proposed development represents an opportunity to contribute a high quality development in this designated major activity centre within this well sought after inner city location. Further, it will facilitate the provision of a diversity of affordable housing in line with the intent and objective of Clause 53.23 of the Darebin Planning Scheme.

The high quality architectural response and appropriateness of the built form is borne through the collaborative approach between the project team, the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) and the Department's Development Facilitation Program (DFP) team.

***DAREBIN PLANNING SCHEME***

The site is affected by the following planning controls and permit triggers:

| **Control** | **Permit Trigger** |
|---|---|
| Commercial 1 Zone (Clause 34) | Use of the subject site for accommodation as the ground floor residential entries are greater than 2 metres<br><br>Retail Premises and Shop are Section 1 permit not required uses<br><br>A permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works |
| Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14 | A permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works |
| Development Plan Overlay | Schedule 1 sets out the summary of costs applicable |
| Clause 52-06 – Car Parking | A permit is required to increase the number of car parking spaces required for commercial uses under Clause 52.06-5 |
| Clause 52.34 – Bicycle Parking | The provision of 795 bicycle spaces significantly exceeds the minimum requirements under Clause 52.34 and a permit is not required |

***ASSESSMENT SUMMARY***

This report demonstrates that the proposal is an acceptable and appropriate response for the site given the:

- Level of consistency with the statutory and strategic frameworks of the Darebin Planning Scheme.
- Quality architectural response that has responded to its local context, built form considerations, equitable development and sustainable responses.
- High level of compliance to building height, setbacks and design requirements set by DDO14.
- High level of compliance with the Better Apartments Design Standards (BADS) ensuring an acceptable internal amenity for future residents.
- Landscape and public realm response which softens the façade appearance at a level commensurate with the site's inner-city location, interface to All Nations Park and offers a net community benefit through significant public realm improvements and the provision of a new public open space parklet.
- Suitable provision of on-site car parking and bicycle facilities.
- Achievement of best practice ESD requirements.

## SITE AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDS

### *SITE*

The subject site is a substantial landholding that forms part of the Northcote Plaza Shopping Centre, located within the Northcote Major Activity Centre around 5 kilometres north of Melbourne's CBD.

More specifically, the subject site is located about 200 metres east of the intersection of High and Separation Streets, Northcote, and is generally known as being the southern part of the freestanding Northcote Plaza Shopping Centre which was developed in the early 1980s on the site of the former Northcote Brickworks.

The lots forming the site are formally described as:

- Lot 1 on LP 24227;
- Lot 100 on PS27953;
- Lot 101 on PS27953;
- Lot 102 on PS27593;
- Part Lot 79 on PS27953 being common property; and
- Part common property on PS27593.

None of the titles is affected by a restrictive covenant/s. However, some titles include registered caveats and agreements relating to the creation of easements that affect the site, including carriageway easements. Subject to authority approvals, these relocations or realignments can be addressed through the subdivision process at the relevant time.

The planning unit is two separate parcels, being the larger / southern part of the site located adjacent to the Separation Street frontage and the smaller / northern parcel located to the northern side of the western Plaza entry.

The larger / southern part of the site is irregular in shape and has extensive frontage to Separation Street of approximately 150 metres, a depth of approximately 91 metres on the west side, and a depth of approximately 142 metres on the east side. It has an overall area of 13,512 square metres. It currently includes a supermarket, a restricted retail tenancy, motor repairs premises, internal retail areas and a loading bay at the Separation Street frontage.

Vehicle access to the site is currently available via the Council owned car park abutting the eastern side of the site. A number of trees exist in the south-eastern part of the parcel.

Easements in the form of carriageway and electrical easements exist within common property along the western part of the parcel.

The smaller / northern part of the site forms part of the existing shopping centre car park. It comprises 1,214 square metres and includes approximately 45 car parking spaces.

***SURROUNDING CONTEXT***

The subject site forms part of the Northcote Major Activity Centre. In addition to retail and commercial uses, the Activity Centre benefits from a range of infrastructure, open space (All Nations Park), educational and community services (Town Hall and Library).

In terms of the site's immediate surrounds:

- Northcote Central is located to the west of the site, on the north-east corner of High Street and Separation Street. Robbs Parade extends along the northern side of Northcote Central and a residential area is situated on the north side of Robbs Parade
- To the east of the site is a Council owned car park, Breavington Way and the All Nations Park
- To the north of the subject site is the remainder of the Northcote Shopping Plaza which includes a 12 storey apartment building. The central point of access and egress to the apartment building is the Piazza which fronts the carriageway easement (Breavington Way) on the west side of All Nations Park
- On the southern side of Separation Street is the Northcote library and Santa Maria College, and residential areas more broadly

Public transport is easily accessible from the site and includes trams along High Street (Route 86), the Northcote Railway Station which is located approximately 500 metres to the west and Bus Routes 508 and 552.

***EXISTING PLANNING PERMIT***

On 18 May 2025, the City of Darebin issued a Planning Permit (D/474/2020) at the direction of the VCAT for the development of the southern portion of Northcote Plaza, subject to a number of conditions.

The existing permit allows for the redevelopment of the subject site for the purposes of a mixed-use development, including:

- A refurbished and redeveloped retail offering at the lower levels, including a total of 7,649 square metres of general mixed retail use, including a major supermarket tenant and a number of smaller mini-major tenants, plus specialty retail.
- 587 residential apartments, provided in a number of towers above the main retail/mixed use areas.
- A standalone office tower located in the car parking area, at the western entry to the Plaza, providing 3,100 square metres of office floor area.
- Vehicle access from Separation Street for a multi-level basement car parking, providing residential and retail parking.
- Vehicle access from the Council car park (via Breavington Way) serving a mixed loading dock, serving separate supermarket, mixed retail and residential loading docks.
- A widening of Separation Street to provide for additional turn lanes, and upgrades to the public realm and streetscape along the boundary of the site.
- 696 car parking spaces, including 190 public/retail spaces, 31 commercial staff spaces and 475 residential spaces.
- 749 bike spaces, provided as a mixture of residential, commercial staff and visitor spaces.

On 25 February 2025, the City of Darebin issued an extension of time which extended the commencement date of the planning permit to 18 May 2027.

On 28 May 2025, the City of Darebin issued amended Planning Permit (D/474/2020/A) at the direction of VCAT allowing:

- Removal of smaller retail tenancies and substation with larger supermarket (resulting in the provision two full line supermarkets).
- Removal of the bottle shop.
- Remix of unit typologies.
- Variations in built form and setbacks.
- Reduction in car parking and bicycle provision.
- Extensive internal layout changes.

## PROPOSAL

### *OVERVIEW*

This proposal seeks approval from the Minister for Planning for a high density, mixed-use development outcome comprising a new public realm, community facilities including a new public open space parklet, a range of apartment types / styles, retail and shopping facilities including the provision of a new full line supermarket.

The application consists of a staged, mixed-use development of 3 residential buildings up to 24 storey high, with podium structures of between 3 to 5 levels, including a full line supermarket, 670 apartments; and other retail / specialty use spaces.

The proposal's key details are as follows:

| **Design Element** | **Proposal** |
|---|---|
| Total NSA – Stage 1 | 32,481 square metres |
| Total NSA – Stage 2 | 14,062 square metres |
| Total Building Height | 24 storeys |
| Podium Heights | 3-5 storeys |
| Number of Apartments | 670 |
| Podium Setbacks | 0 metres |
| Tower Setbacks | 3.75 – 9.9 metres |
| Tower Separation | 20 – 32 metres |
| Car Parking – Commercial Uses | 180 spaces |
| Car Parking – Residential Uses | 356 spaces |
| Car Share | 2 spaces |
| Bicycle Parking | 798 spaces |
| Internal Communal Space – Stage 1 | 1,422 square metres |
| Internal Communal Space – Stage 2 | 557 square metres |
| External Communal Space – Stage 1 | 4,118 square metres |
| External Communal Space – Stage 2 | 1,447 square metres |
| Green Star Score | 4 Star |
| NatHERS average | 7.5 Star |

### *DWELLING DIVERSITY*

The proposed development will provide for a diversity of dwelling types including:

- 64 x studio.
- 246 x 1 bedroom.
- 318 x 2 bedroom.
- 42 x 3 bedroom.

It is evident from this mix that the proposed development will cater to a broad spectrum of the market, contributing positively to Darebin's overall housing diversity.

### *CARPARKING AND LOADING*

Access to the retail basement car park will be provided by a new two-way access way, which is accessed via the Council car park to the east of the subject site.

Residents of the development will access their podium parking levels via a new access proposed along Separation Street. This access will be delivered in Stage 1 and will also facilitate the future Stage 2 access.

### *CLAUSE 53.23 PATHWAY*

Clause 72.01 of the Darebin Planning Scheme has the effect of making the Minister for Planning the Responsible Authority for applications eligible to be assessed under the Clause 53.23 pathway.

The Clause 53.23 pathway offers eligible applications a specialised assessment pathway aimed at facilitating the development of residential projects that include affordable housing needs.

In this respect, we confirm that the development has been issued a Confirmation Letter (Ref PPA-1199) outlining the Project's eligibility under the Clause 53.23 pathway.

## DAREBIN PLANNING SCHEME

A summary of the key controls and policies is provided below.

### *COMMERCIAL 1 ZONE*

The subject site is affected by the Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z) pursuant to the provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme. The purpose of the C1Z is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To create vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses.
- To provide for residential uses at densities complementary to the role and scale of the commercial centre.

Pursuant to Clause 34.01, the following applies:

- Use of the subject site for accommodation as the ground floor residential entries are greater than 2 metres.
- Retail Premises and Shop are Section 1 permit not required uses.
- A permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works.

### *OVERLAYS*

#### *Design and Development Overlay Schedule 14*

The subject site is affected by the Design and Development Overlay Schedule 14.

The purpose of the Design and Development Overlay is:

- To implement the Municipal Strategic Statement and the Planning Policy Framework
- To identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development.

Pursuant to the requirements set out at Clause 43.02-2, the following applies:

- A permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works.

Schedule 14 of the Design and Development Overlay applies to Northcote Major Activity Centre.

The subject site is located within Precinct A2 Central Northcote.

The Schedule includes a range of site-specific design outcomes that apply to Precinct A2 Central Northcote.

***Development Contributions Plan Overlay***

The purpose of the Development Contributions Plan Overlay is to identify areas which require the preparation of a development contributions plan for the purpose of levying contributions for the provision of works, services and facilities before development can commence.

Schedule 1 sets out the summary of costs applicable.

***GENERAL AND PARTICULAR PROVISIONS***

The following general and particular provisions are related to the proposal:

- Clause 52.06 – Car Parking.
- Clause 52.34 – Bicycle Facilities.
- Clause 53.23 – Significant Residential Development with Affordable Housing.
- Clause 58 – Apartment Developments.
- Clause 65 – Decision Guidelines.

***PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK***

The State policies of greatest relevance to the application are:

- Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement.
- Clause 11.01.1R – Settlement – Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Clause 11.03-1S – Activity Centres and Precincts.
- Clause 11.03-1R – Activity Centres – Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Clause 15.01-1S – Urban Design.
- Clause 15.01-1R – Urban Design – Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Clause 15.01-2S – Building Design.
- Clause 15.01-4S – Healthy Neighbourhoods.
- Clause 15.01-5S – Neighbourhood Character.
- Clause 16 – Housing Supply.
- Clause 17 – Economic Development.
- Clause 18 – Transport.

Broadly speaking, the themes emerging from these policies are:

- The desirability and benefits of integrating land use and transport and developing 20-minute neighbourhoods.
- The desirability and benefits of consolidating development in activity centres.
- The value in underpinning existing investment in infrastructure.
- The continuing demand for good quality housing which meets the many and different needs of the community.
- Aspirations for high standards of urban design, building design and amenity, including in the public realm.
- Provision of choices for people in many aspects of their life, as well as health, wellbeing and safety.
- The need to manage relationships between different land uses so as to underpin and sustain economic activity and maintain reasonable standards of amenity.
- The drive for increased energy efficiencies and the protection of the environment from various pollutants.

These policies variously reference the current metropolitan Planning Strategy titled Plan Melbourne 2017-2050: Metropolitan Planning Strategy.

Policy 1.2.1 of Plan Melbourne is about supporting the development of a network of activity centres linked by transport. Within this policy it is explained that:

> *"Plans for metropolitan activity centres will need to accommodate significant growth and infrastructure, while increasing amenity and connectivity for a regional catchment.*
>
> *All activity centres have the capacity to continue to grow and diversify the range of activities they offer…*
>
> *Diversification will give communities access to a wide range of goods and services, provide local employment and support for local economies and the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods. In many activity centres this growth will include housing, particularly at higher densities.*
>
> *To capture and to accommodate future growth opportunities activity centres will need greater flexibility in planning controls than surrounding residential areas…"*

The local policies from the Municipal Strategic Statement that are of most relevance to the application are:

- Clause 02.01 – Context.
- Clause 02.02 – Vision.
- Clause 02.03 – Strategic directions.
- Clause 02.03-1 – Settlement.
- Clause 02.03-4 – Built environment and heritage.
- Clause 02.03-5 – Housing.
- Clause 02.03-6 – Economic Development.
- Clause 02.03-7 – Transport.
- Clause 02.04 – Strategic Framework plans.

These build on the strategic policies set out in the Planning Policy Framework.

## ASSESSMENT

The following sections of this report provide an assessment of the proposal against the relevant statutory and strategic provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme having regard to the site's physical context.

This assessment focuses on the appropriateness of the following key matters:

- Strategic Considerations.
- Built Form and Design Response.
- Response to OVGA pre-application feedback.
- Amenity Considerations.
- Other Considerations.

Each of these matters is dealt with in turn below.

### *STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS*

There is unequivocally strong support within Planning Policy Framework and the applicable planning controls for the redevelopment of the subject site with a high density, bona fide mixed use development outcome as proposed.

At a State level, the key policy influences applicable to the proposal primarily relate to matters including urban consolidation, provision for housing diversity (including affordable housing), urban design and the aggregation of retail and commercial facilities that provide 'net community benefit in relation to their viability, accessibility and efficient use of infrastructure'.

The subject site is strategically located within the Northcote Major Activity Centre which benefits from a wide range of retail and employment opportunities, public transport options, community facilities and services and public open space. The Activity Centre is identified within Plan Melbourne as one of the Major Activity Centres, which are recognised as providing a suburban focal point for services, employment, housing, public transport and social interaction.

In terms of the State Planning Policies within the Darebin Planning Scheme, the proposal satisfies and advances applicable policies, including by:

- Providing an opportunity for the redevelopment of a presently underutilised site within a strategic location that will support urban consolidation.
- Delivering a variety of housing types in the form of higher density residential apartments and affordable housing options, which will contribute to housing supply and diversity within the existing activity centre.
- Significantly contributing to and strengthening the economic base of the Northcote Activity Centre and the Northcote Plaza more generally whilst providing additional local employment opportunities, through substantial retail upgrades.
- Promoting high-quality urban design that responds to and integrates with the physical context of the site, both in an architectural and public realm / landscaping sense.
- Fulfilling State policy that encourages the establishment of 20-minute neighbourhoods, whereby people can live, work, shop and meet other needs within a 20-minute walking, cycling or public transport journey.
- Providing new housing in a location that offers good access to jobs, services and transport.
- Providing additional retail facilities within the existing activity centre to meet the community's needs.

The proposal also responds positively to the applicable provisions set out in the Municipal Strategic Statement and Local Planning Policy Framework. Notably, the site is recognised as being within a 'Substantial Housing Change Area' and it is a 'Strategic Opportunity Site' given it is in excess of 1,000 square metres in size, it is within a zone that permits residential use, it is not within a Heritage Overlay or minimal change area and it is within 500 metres of a train station, 400 metres of a tram route and within a designated activity centre. Policy encourages housing development at increased densities within both Substantial Change Areas and Strategic Opportunity Sites, and to avoid underdevelopment of sites.

Furthermore:

- The proposal will assist in addressing the anticipated population growth within the municipality by providing a meaningful housing provision including a variety of dwelling typologies.
- Being a strategic opportunity site, the proposal provides significant housing with excellent access to urban and social infrastructure and encouraging public transport.
- The proposal will cater for the diverse housing needs of the existing and future population by providing a variety of dwelling types and typologies.
- The proposal will contribute to the economic diversity of the Northcote Activity Centre and will revitalise the wider Northcote Plaza precinct and existing street frontages.
- The proposed development is well-designed and seeks to provide a high-quality built form and public realm outcome that reflects the site's role within the Activity Centre and its nomination as 'an area of urban intensification'.
- The proposal seeks to revitalise the public realm to the benefit of the broader community including significant public street upgrades and landscaping along Breavington Way and Separation Street in addition to the provision of a new public open space parklet in place of at-grade carparking the northwest of the subject site. Significantly, the currently approved office tower close to the termination of Robbs Parade which was strongly opposed by resident objectors, is now to be replaced with the previously mentioned parklet.
- The proposed development has been carefully sited and designed to enhance the ground level plane and public realm, creating human scale spaces that promote interaction whilst consolidating the taller building forms in locations where off-site amenity impacts are minimized.
- The siting of the proposed buildings protects the key public views and vistas from the All Nations Park Hilltop as supported by the OVGA.
- The proposal will support and encourage pedestrian based activity in and around the High Street and Separation Street pedestrian spine.
- The proposed development features a high standard of internal amenity for future residents, including the provision of private open space and access to communal open space.
- The proposed development will not affect the amenity of nearby residential or other sensitive properties.
- The proposed development promotes alternative forms of travel such as cycling, walking and public transport, to minimise traffic congestion and parking demand.
- The proposal incorporates ESD features to reduce the environmental impact of the building both in operation and construction.
- Achieves a 4-Star Green Star score and commits to an average 7.5 Star NatHERS rating.

The proposed development of the land for the purposes of accommodation and mixed-use development comprising dwellings and retail will produce a planning outcome that is encouraged and supported by the Commercial 1 Zone, which amongst other things, seeks to 'create vibrant mixed use commercial centres for retail, office, business, entertainment and community uses'.

For the above reasons, the proposal is clearly supported by the applicable Planning Policy Framework and the Commercial 1 Zone.

***BUILT FORM AND DESIGN RESPONSE***

The built form considerations associated with the proposal are informed by:

- Urban Design Principles (Clause 15.01-2S).
- Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 14.
- Apartment Developments (Clause 58).

***Urban Design Principles (Clause 15.01-2S)***

The proposal responds in a positive manner to the strategic guidelines outlined in Clause 15.01-2S and the following is noted:

- Higher density development outcomes are proposed in line with the strategic intent and expected future vision for the site and Northcote Major Activity Centre more generally.
- The general site planning including the spatial arrangement of buildings responds to its context as envisaged by DDO14.
- The design response has also considered the spatial arrangement of the buildings near site boundaries providing an equitable response despite the unlikely potential for higher density development on abutting land at each interface, noting that:
    - The car park to the east has a long-term lease and is zoned for Public Park and Recreation purposes.
    - The land to the north is within a fragmented subdivision, including common property that approximately 80 lots have entitlement and liability to.
    - The land to the east is used as common property / vehicle access.
- The scale and massing of the proposed development maintain view lines from All Nations Park towards the Central Business District to an extent acceptable by the OVGA.
- A high-quality public realm outcome is proposed that includes various landscaped through linkages, publicly accessible spaces, and public realm upgrades including the provision of the public open space parklet.
- Detrimental impacts to adjoining properties and the public realm are minimised, and to this end, the proposal has been designed to minimise shadowing of the library forecourt and All Nations Park on 22 September.
- An active frontage is provided along Separation Street which is an improved outcome from the existing conditions which currently include back of house / loading facilities, services and an at grade car park.
- The siting of the buildings has been designed to ensure that as far as practical, active frontages are achieved along each edge as well as through the proposed pedestrian links.
- Dwellings are orientated towards both Separation Street, All Nations Park and the proposed public spaces which will improve passive surveillance of these areas and increase the perception of safety in and around the site.

- Dwellings are orientated towards both Separation Street, All Nations Park and the proposed public spaces which will improve passive surveillance of these areas and increase the perception of safety in and around the site.
- Resident vehicle access to the site will be provided via safe and convenient point along Separation Street, well removed from the existing plaza access. A porte cochere provides a convenient drop off-pick up zone.
- Retail and loading vehicle access points to the site will be provided from the Council car park.
- The provision of building services, including stairwells and lift overruns have been considered in the design of the buildings and are appropriately integrated.

***Design and Development Overlay Schedule 14***

Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14 applies to the subject site (Northcote Major Activity Centre) and the site is located in Precinct A2 (Central Northcote).

- The proposal advances key built form outcomes as set out in the 'High Street Precinct Guidelines, 2005', including the provision of active frontages and improved linkages through the site, and a respectful built form interfaces to the east that is reflective of the overall policy aspirations for the site.
- The proposal advances the relevant policy objectives to avoid underdevelopment.
- The proposal also responds in a positive manner to other key design objectives including the provision of a mix of uses, a variety of housing types and forms, excellent ESD outcomes, significant economic benefits through upgrade retail facilities, excellent on-site amenity for residents, improved pedestrian access, and solar access and weather protection as appropriate.
- Views from All Nations Park to the Melbourne Central Business District are largely maintained to a level acceptable by the OVGA.
- The sense of broad views to the horizon and openness of All Nations Park will also be maintained.
- The proposal seeks to introduce a true mix of uses including high quality public spaces, flexible unit floor layouts and a high level of on-site amenity for residents of the buildings.
- Car parking is private, concealed and separated from pedestrian movements to the extent possible.
- Acoustic outcomes have been addressed, detail of which is provided in the accompanying submission prepared by Acoustic Logic Pty Ltd.

Further the proposal successfully addresses and responds to the specific requirements specified for Precinct A2 (Central Northcote):

- It provides integrated pedestrian connections including linking the site, the broader Northcote Plaza Shopping Centre, All Nations Park, Separation Street and Robbs Parade with a new, high quality urban realm.
- It provides outwardly focussed development and active frontages to Separation Street, various parts of the plaza and the car park to the east.
- It improves passive surveillance and safety as well as providing functional and useable spaces.
- It significantly enhances existing, underwhelming and non-descript interfaces to Separation Street, the Council car park and the common property access to the west of the site.
- It provides for a high quality, contemporary building design that responds to its context and Northcote' built form heritage fabric.

For 'Buildings on the Northcote Central & Northcote Plaza sites' the design outcomes within Table 1 to Schedule 14 are successfully addressed. To that end:

- The proposal includes an interface to its east side adjacent to the car park, which:
    - At its northern end provides a transitional development outcome to the nearby apartment building to the north. Further the 24-storey height is generally consistent with the current approval.
    - Transitions down in height to the 3-5 storey element near the southern end of site.
- This interface response satisfies the intent of DDO14 which aims to ensure development maintains an appropriate relationship with the All Nations Park. To that end, it is noted that the western park edge is located in excess of 60 metres from the site comprising a commercial shopping centre car park.
- The buildings are well modulated and articulated, include breaks between buildings and form part of a highly landscaped development outcome, ensuring that the building height and bulk are not overwhelming. Moreover, the high quality design significant upgrade compared to existing conditions and improved passive surveillance represents a positive outcome for All Nations Park.
- The shadow diagrams submitted with the application demonstrate that the amenity of the park will not be affected.
- Solar access to the southern footpath along Separation Street is generally maintained on 22 September. Notably the library forecourt is not impacted.

For the above reasons, the proposal results in an appropriate response to Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14.

***Apartment Development (Clause 58)***

A detailed assessment against the objectives and standards of Clause 58 Apartment Development of the Darebin Planning Scheme is provided in the architectural drawings which accompany the application material. In addition, a full BADS assessment has been prepared by Time & Place.

A summary of these assessments in support of the development is as follows:

- 84.1% and 78.4% of the proposed apartments in Stage 1 and Stage 2 respectively achieve the functional and adaptable requirements for accessibility and bathroom design, well and above the minimum 50% as required by Standard D18.
- Consistent with Standard D19 relating to Building entry and circulation objectives, all pedestrian entries to the proposed development are easily accessible and clearly visible from Separation Street and the realigned Breavington Way. Each dwelling has their own individual entry, accessed via common corridors to each floor. Common corridors within the towers are provided with sources of natural light and natural ventilation.
- In relation to the development's provision of Private open space, all apartments are provided with balconies that comply with Standard D20. Future residents will also enjoy easy and convenient access to the podium roof top communal open space and All Nations Park.
- All apartments comply with the total storage requirements of Standard D21, with the majority providing this internal to the apartments. Where additional storage volume is required, supplementary external storage cages are provided within podium back of house areas.
- All dwellings comply with functional bedroom and living area layout requirements of Standard D26.
- All dwellings comply with the maximum allowable 9 metre room depth required by Standard D27, noting that measurement has been made to edge of covered balcony as per the relevant Design Guidelines ensuring appropriate daylight penetration into the depth of the units. The rooms combine the living area, dining area and kitchen, with the latter located furthest from the window.

- All habitable rooms have a window in an external wall of the building compliant with Standard D28.
- 45.1% and 45% of the proposed apartments in Stage 1 and Stage 2 respectively achieve effective cross ventilation, above the minimum 40% as required by Standard D29.
- In relation to the development's Communal Open Space, Stage 1 is provided with 1,422 square metres of internal and 4,118 square metres of external space is provided, whilst Stage 2 is provided with 557 square metres of internal and 1,447 square metres. This is well in excess of the 250 square metre requirements of Standard D7.
- Wardle has instructed us that between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on 21 June, appropriate levels of sunlight is provided to the 250 square metre of communal open space located on the podium rooftop satisfying Standard D8.

***RESPONSE TO OVGA PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK***

As part of the proposal's pre-application review process with the DFP, a briefing and review was undertaken with the OVGA. In total there were 4 OVGA workshops.

A summary of the key design changes can be described as following:

- Greater consideration of the wider strategic impact of the subject site's redevelopment as an agent of positive change for the Northcote Major Activity Centre from a built form, traffic and pedestrian connectivity perspective – setting up future projects for success.
- Central to this vision is the restoration of urban connectivity between High Street and All Nations Park. By extending the established local street network through the site, the plan replaces the current island development with a series of green links. These pedestrian focused corridors effectively extend the amenity of All Nations Park into the heart of the new precinct and to High Street beyond.
- Along the eastern boundary, the masterplan proposes transforming the existing surface car park into a formal extension of All Nations Park and proposes a re-alignment of Breavington Way to create a new tree lined pedestrian street.
- Termination of the existing Coles supermarket lease to remove this constraint from the master planning of the subject site's redevelopment and to focus the new retail offer to a full line supermarket within Stage 1.
- A greater focus on the ground plane including a realignment of built form to Separation Street and creation of a new tree lined pedestrian street activated by retail frontage to the Council car park forming the development's primary civic address.
- A greater focus on the landscaping opportunities around the subject site including the provision of a double row of trees against main pedestrian paths, mounding to reference All Nations Park and encouragement to the provision of a new urban parklet in the northwest corner of the site. This latter space will provide a new public entry experience to the existing Northcote Plaza and strengthen pedestrian connections to High Street via Robbs Parade.
- Support to the proposed extent of retention of the CBD skyline from All Nations Park.
- Support to the proposed height and spacing between towers.
- Realignment of the internal pedestrian linkage connecting All Nations Park to the new supermarket and the existing Northcote Plaza.
- Residential lobbies addressing the street on all key frontages with strong connection to green spaces.
- Consideration to the interim condition of Stage 1, prior to the completion of Stage 2, in particular to the exposed western façade of Stage 1.
- The establishment of Design Principles within the Warde plans / urban design response with stated outcomes or metrics that can be used as a guide for design development and protect the design intent through project delivery.

***AMENITY CONSIDERATIONS***

From an external amenity perspective, the site abuts a Council car park to the east, Northcote Central to the west, the remainder of Northcote Plaza to the north and Separation Street to the south. Accordingly, there are no sensitive land uses which directly abut the subject site.

In addition to the amenity considerations in DDO14 as previously addressed, the site is well removed from residential properties and the development has been designed to ensure that September shadows do not affect the properties on the southern side of Separation Street.

Furthermore:

- The proposal is for a bona fide mixed-use development that will provide excellent amenity and facilities for future residents. It will be a benchmark development outcome in response to State Policy that encourages development of 20-minute neighbourhoods, insofar as the facilities, services and transport options that will be available for residents and workers.
- Residents will have excellent access to public transport and other social infrastructure given the site's locational attributes.
- Facilities including a new open space parklet, retail facilities, public spaces that will facilitate public / communal gatherings, seating, play spaces and gardens will further add to the amenity for residents and workers.
- The wind implications of the proposal in relation to the public realm have been considered and assessed by RWDI Australia Pty Ltd as being appropriate.
- Any potential overlooking issues between buildings have been addressed through the provision of separation between buildings that range from 20 – 32 metres.
- Dwellings will receive good access to natural light.
- All dwellings receive appropriate ventilation.
- A significant provision of bicycle spaces has been provided for residents, workers and visitors.
- External resident storage spaces have been provided as appropriate
- Each dwelling accommodates private open space in the form of balconies that are accessible from living spaces.
- Residents will have access to communal areas the main focus of which is podium roof top gardens and facilities.
- The dwellings will feature functional and adaptable layouts.

## *OTHER CONSIDERATIONS*

### *Daylight Access*

To determine each dwelling's access to daylight, IGS was engaged to undertake a daylight simulation to assess the development's compliance with Green Star Light Quality requirements for daylight access within occupied spaces.

The Executive Summary of this report states the following:

> *"The Green Star Light Quality Credit requires maximising daylight availability to occupied areas. This is achieved where at least 80% of bedrooms receive a daylight factor greater than 0.5% across at least 90% of the floor area with each room. In addition, at least 80% of living spaces must achieve a daylight factor of at least 1% across 90% of the floor area, and more than 33% of non-residential areas must achieve a daylight factor of at least 2% across 90% of the floor area.*
>
> *The daylight modelling results demonstrate compliance with these requirements. More than 80% of bedrooms achieve a daylight factor of at least 0.5% across 90% of their floor area. Similarly, more than 80% of living spaces achieve a daylight factor of at least 1% across 90% of the floor area. Furthermore, more than 33% of non-residential areas achieve a daylight factor of at least 2% across 90% of the floor area.*
>
> *Overall, the results confirm that the development meets the Green Star Light Quality Credit requirements by ensuring strong daylight access to occupied spaces."*

### *Acoustics*

In accordance with the requirements of Standard D16 of BADS, an acoustic noise assessment has been prepared by Acoustic Logic Pty Ltd to identify the proposal's response and requirements for acoustic amelioration to dwellings.

This report concludes by stating that provided the acoustic recommendations as outlined in their report dealing with glazing, external wall construction and roof construction are implemented, that compliance with relevant assessment criteria will be met.

In addition, a high-level review of the mechanical plant and equipment has been undertaken to ensure compliance with EPA Noise Protocol Part 1. It is noted that the mechanical plant and equipment design have not yet been finalised and shall be reviewed by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant during the detailed design stage to ensure EPA Noise Protocol Part 1 compliance is achieved.

Finally, for the truck movement and loading dock serving the proposed supermarket, compliance with EPA Noise Protocol Part 1 will be achieved provided the recommended acoustic treatment is implemented.

### *Wind*

A wind assessment report has been prepared by RWDI Australia Pty Ltd.

The findings of the pedestrian wind study recommend a number of minor in-principle wind mitigation measures addressing the ground floor, podium rooftop, private balconies and rooftop gardens that can be addressed via planning permit conditions.

Subject to these being addressed, the report concludes that adverse wind conditions are resolved.

***Traffic and Carparking***

In support of the proposal's car parking, loading and traffic generation components, a Traffic Engineering Assessment report has been prepared by Traffix.

A summary of this assessment in support of the development is as follows:

- The proposed development has a statutory car parking requirement to provide not more than 1,473 car spaces under Clause 52.06-5 of the Planning Scheme, split as 133 retail parking spaces and 1,340 residential spaces.
- The residential parking provisions do not exceed the maximums, and therefore a permit is not sought in relation to the residential parking.
- The retail parking provisions are proposed in excess of the maximum provisions, and this is considered acceptable on the basis that:
    - Once considering the loss of existing parking on the land and in the precinct as a result of the works, the overall provision is not considered excessive;
    - The likely parking demands associated with the proposed use align withthe proposed provision, and generous sustainable transport offerings will not adversely affect a desire to reduce car usage; and
    - The proposed nature of the retail parking is such that it will operate as publicly available parking that can support the precinct and future development scenarios in the area.
- Bicycle parking is provided well in excess of the requirements set out at Clause 52.34 of the Planning Scheme, and in line with the existing permit provisions and rates.
- The on-site loading areas have been designed to meet the objectives of Clause 65.01 of the Planning Scheme.
- The design of the proposal, including the car parking layout and access arrangements, bicycle parking and access, and loading arrangements accord with the requirements of the Planning Scheme and the AS2890 Series (where relevant) and current practice and/or can be made to comply through conditions of permit.
- The level of traffic generated as a result of this proposal is acceptable and, once distributed to the multiple access routes, will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding road network.
- The level of traffic generated by the proposal is comparable, and in fact less, than that currently approved for the site, and whilst there will be some redistribution of traffic, it is not to the level that it requires further mitigating works (i.e. signals) to manage the traffic demands.
- With the exception of the proposed works to Separation Street (to widen along the frontage and provide for the proposed turn lane into the site), there are no further mitigating works required to support the proposal and signalisation of the intersection of Separation Street/Breavington Way is not required to support the proposal.
- There are no traffic engineering reasons why a planning permit for the proposed mixed-use development at Northcote Village, should be refused, subject to appropriate conditions.

***Waste Management***

A Waste Management Plan (WMP) has been prepared by Traffix Group in support of the proposal. The WSP notes the following with regard to the proposal:

- A dual chute system for residents is provided at each residential level which will terminate into a chute discharge/termination area at podium level. Garbage and commingled recycling will be accommodated within the chutes.
- The development provides individual waste rooms for residential component for each building at lower ground level.
- A separate waste storage room is provided for commercial waste at Basement Level 1.
- A dedicated waste storage area is provided for the retail tenancy in Stage 2.
- Residential waste collection is to occur within the respective podium level car park by a private contractor utilising a mini-Hino rear loaded waste vehicle.
- Smaller commercial mobile garbage bins will be collected by private contactors via rear lift waste trucks.
- The supermarket cardboard compactor will be collected by a private contractor via a hook-lift waste truck.

***Sustainability Management Plan (SMP)***

A Sustainability Management Plan (SMP) has been prepared by IGS in support of the proposed building.

This report confirms that the proposed development demonstrates high sustainability credentials in line with the objectives identified within the Darebin Planning Scheme and achieves the 4 Star Green Star, 5 Star NABERS Energy and 7 Star average NatHERS thermal rating performance across all apartments as set by the OVGA.

In summary, the SMP details the following key ESD initiatives targeted by the project:

- A 4-Star Green Star certified rating demonstrating Best Practice in sustainable design.
- Residential dwellings designed to achieve a minimum NatHERS rating of 6.5 Stars and an average NatHERS rating of 7.5 Stars, providing a strong thermal performance outcome across the development.
- A minimum 25 kW solar PV system provided on site.
- A Construction Waste Management Plan to be prepared and implemented, targeting a minimum 90% reuse or recycling of demolition and construction waste.
- An 80kL rainwater harvesting system is provided to service the broader Northcote Village development, including Stage 1 and Stage 2, for podium level toilet flushing and landscape irrigation.
- A significant reduction in urban heat island effect, with more than 75% reduction targeted.

***Stormwater Management***

A Stormwater Management Plan has been prepared by Webber Design which provides the following summary:

> *"The stormwater drainage strategy, at high level, is to drain treated stormwater catchment for each building (as per catchment area in Appendix B) to the legal point of discharge(s) via on-site detention tank(s). The on-site detention tank functions as a temporary stormwater storage for 10-year ARI which will control the flow to the LPD via an orifice. In regards to the overland flow path, the strategy is to follow the contour of the existing site as well adhering to the flood management strategy. Refer to Appendix B for further details on the drainage strategy for the site.*
>
> *According to Melbourne Water flood advice, there is no defined flood level for the site for 1%AEP storm event. Although there is no applicable flood level for the site, the building levels should still be protected from the localised overland flow from the adjacent streets/site. It is recommended for building levels to be at least 300mm above the adjacent invert of kerbs and minimum 150mm structural step or hob should be allowed between all external and internal areas within the site. In general, it will need to also adhere to council's recommended floor levels. Any waterproofing to door thresholds for instance will need to be provided as per relevant requirement by others."*

***Arborist Report***

An Arborist Report has been prepared by John Patrick Landscape Architects Pty Ltd.

The main findings of this report include the following:

- 32 trees are proposed to be removed of which only Tree 34 is considered of High Arboricultural Value and 8 are considered of Medium Arboricultural Value. The remaining 23 trees are of Low Arboricultural Value.
- Trees 2, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 30, 32, 33, 34 and 39 would be expected to require a permit to remove in accordance with the Local Law based on their size.
- It is proposed to plant a considerable number of new trees as part of the development. If proper consideration is given to providing good growing conditions with adequate space above and below ground and trees species are selected to provide shade and screening where appropriate, then the development will add to the landscape and vibrancy of the area.
- If considerations is given to trees and the overall landscape around the development, it is expected to provide greater canopy cover than what exists presently, if trees can reach their full mature potential.

## CONCLUSION

The proposed development at Northcote Plaza is a positive planning outcome for the site, one that will make a significant architectural contribution to the precinct and be a catalyst of further positive change to the wider Northcote Major Activity Centre.

Overall, the proposal warrants favourable consideration for the following reasons:

- The proposal is strategically supported by the Planning Policy Framework, providing a well-designed mixed-use development on currently underutilised land within the Northcote Major Activity Centre.
- The proposal responds positively to the applicable provisions relating to land in the Northcote Activity Centre as set out by the Planning Policy Framework and Clause 43.02 (Schedule 14) of the Darebin Planning Scheme.
- The scale, form, height and materiality of the proposal provides an addition that is reflective of the strategic importance of the site.
- The design is well resolved and results a high quality architectural and landscape design outcomes, including publicly accessible spaces and through linkages.
- The development provides for a much-needed upgrade to retail facilities within Northcote Plaza, this enhancing the economic viability of the centre.
- The development provides for a meaningful supply of dwelling stock, consistent with the Darebin Housing Strategy.
- Will cater for a significant provision of housing and dwelling diversity in response to the outcomes of the State Government's Housing Statement. This includes a total of 670 units ranging from efficient studio apartments to 3 bedroom apartments.
- Provides a highly compliant response to Clause 58 ensuring to deliver a high level of internal amenity for future residents.
- Whilst there are limited sensitive interfaces on adjoining sites, the building design provides an appropriate response to ensure there are no unreasonable amenity impacts.
- Provides for a high quality landscaping response at street level and within the public / communal open spaces.
- Responds favourably to car parking, traffic, waste, daylight access, wind, acoustic and environmental sustainable design considerations as outlined by the consultant reports lodged in support of the application.