



MR S. O'CONNOR: Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people. I would also like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be here today. Welcome to the meeting today. It's the St George  
5 Community Housing Sustainability Limited is the applicant seeking approval for the construction and operation of an 18-storey social and affordable housing development at 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern. My name is Steve O'Connor. I'm the chair of this IPC panel.

10 Joining me is my fellow commissioner Wendy Lewin on my right as well as Olivia Hirst and David Wade from the Secretariat on my left. In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a full transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. This meeting is one part of the Commission's decision-  
15 making process. It is taking place at the preliminary stage of the process and will form one of several sources of information upon which the commission will base its decision.

20 It is important for the commissioners to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues whenever we consider it appropriate. If you're asked a question and are not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and provide any additional information in writing which we will subsequently put on our website. I request that all members here today introduce themselves before speaking for the first time and for all members to ensure that they do not speak over the top of each  
25 other to ensure the accuracy of the transcript. Having said that, we can begin. So over to you.

MR A. BROOKS: Thank you. My name is Andrew Brooks from St George Community Housing and I would just like to talk a little bit about St George. We're  
30 a Tier 1 community housing provider established 30 years ago and we operate solely in New South Wales. We own and manage over 6500 properties throughout the state that provide home to over 11,000 people. We're currently working with the City of Sydney on a number of sites that we're hoping to develop into over 500 social and affordable housing units.

35 This project at Gibbons Street represents the largest project in our almost 1000-unit development pipeline and we're very keen to commence construction because this project forms a significant part of our social and affordable housing fund which is a contract we have with New South Wales Department of Family and Community  
40 Services – the FACS program – which is part of their future directions program about delivering more social and affordable housing in the state.

45 So this delivers 160 of those units in the SAHF program and our contractual requirement is that we need to have these completed by the end of 2020. So in anticipation of working towards what we hope is a consent for this project, we have been working with the Tier 1 contractor so that we can commence works within four

weeks of an approval. A lot of work has gone into this project at Gibbons Street because fundamentally, we designed this as a place to be lived in.

5 We commit to an in perpetuity delivery of social and affordable housing within the City of Sydney and therefore as custodians of buildings for a long period of time, we take a lot of time to select materials and amenities within the buildings to ensure the people who live there for however long – short- or long-term – that they have a pleasant life and can enjoy living in a set of apartments that provide community facilities as well as are able to maintain and manage their properties because most of  
10 our tenants do have some significant physical and mental incapacities.

So one of the big features that we have at St George is we invest a lot in environmental sustainability. We think that by providing well-insulated, well-ventilated and modern apartments, we design to 7/8-style NatHERS standard. That  
15 delivers a \$500 a year saving on electricity bills for tenants and this is probably the second-highest outgoing for tenants after their rent. Keeping those costs under control is quite essential for ongoing quality of life. So that's an area that we invest heavily in with the Office of Environment and Heritage through their EEP program and also our financier the Clean Energy Finance Corporation who is again very  
20 interested in seeing ESD outcomes.

But we then put that through to the rest of our portfolio because it's not just about one building or one ..... it's about retrofitting our existing properties and all our other new builds so we commit to a standard that we want to see throughout the portfolio.  
25 We advance on this project through the Design Excellence Program with New South Wales Government architects in the middle of 2018 and the rest of the team will talk a little bit more in detail about that process, but from our perspective as an end building owner, we found it very collaborative and actually added to the amenity outcomes of the building.

30 So it was a very constructive process during 2018 and we think that the building benefited from the involvement of New South Wales architects and also the involvement from the City of Sydney and from the Department of Planning as the consent authority. So we would certainly commend it as a route forwards and if we  
35 had another building such as this, then we would certainly commit to that outcome. I think that's as much as I would like to say at this moment. I would like to hand over there to Michael and then to Nick.

MR M. WOODLAND: Okay. Thanks, Andrew. My name is Michael Woodland.  
40 I'm from Keylan Consulting, the town planner working on this project, along with Rebecca from my office. I will just say a few words. First, I would like to thank the Commission today for the opportunity to present to you. Firstly, I would like to say we support the department's recommendation to approve the application.

45 We've reviewed the assessment report in detail and we consider it critically analyses the multitude of technical urban design plan architectural issues in a very comprehensive manner. We think it balances the built form considerations along

with the ongoing function of this building which Andrew spoke about just then. We also generally support the draft conditions of consent, subject to some amendments. We have tabled a letter the other day to the Commission. We're happy to talk about that in detail at a later point today if that's acceptable to the Commission.

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MR O'CONNOR: That would be useful, yes.

MR WOODLAND: Fundamentally, though, it's around timing of the construction of some of the detailed conditions. As Andrew said, this is a unique project, not only in terms of its design but its critical role this will play in providing significant social and community benefits to current and future generations. As you're aware, this site was sold by the City of Sydney as surplus land for the purposes of affordable housing. As Andrew spoke about, this proposal seeks 160 affordable and social housing apartments with supporting retail and commercial users managed by St George. I want to point out a couple of things in the department's report and then I will hand it over to Nick to talk about the actual design of the building which we think is important.

Page 11 of the department's report makes the note which we also agree with – is that this in itself – we exceed the government's requirements for affordable housing projects required under the Affordable Housing SEPP which only requires a minimum of 10 years. All of these apartments will be provided in perpetuity. The application, as Andrew said today, has been the result of over 12 months of work which has included extensive consultation with the department, council, design panel, other agencies, as well as our own community engagement. We've taken an evidence-based approach to all aspects of this proposal which is evident in our EIS and also in our attachments.

We've also amended the proposal as a result of the significant design excellence process we've been through our response to submissions of which we note there has been only seven public submissions. There has been a number of agency submissions and also the council's submission, council, ironically, being the objection to the proposal which brought us here today. We've carefully reviewed all of the issues in the submission; that's in our documentation. Just at its highest level, we think this proposal directly responds to one of the most critical planning issues facing New South Wales at this point and that's housing affordability.

If you look at every planning strategy by the government and by council, housing affordability – in fact it's now one of the objects of the Act – is first and foremost. And this will deliver affordable and social housing in a very – in an area that's in very close proximity to a transport node being Redfern Station and in accordance with the government's own urban design principles for the regeneration of Redfern. The department identified four key issues: design excellence, amenity to adjoining properties, residential amenity to future occupants and also traffic parking and access.

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In terms of design excellence, as I said, we've been through a rigorous process. We've met with the panel on five occasions. We've also independently met with the council on over seven occasions. Nick will address this in his presentation. In terms of amenity, you will read a lot about amenity issues for the future residents. Nick  
5 will also talk about that in terms of some of the innovations that we've promoted through this development. So I think now unless the panel has any questions of me we could – I will forward it to Nick which will go through a short presentation and we will talk through the building, the evolution of the design and how we've addressed some of the issues that have been raised.

10 MR O'CONNOR: That'd be very good. Thank you.

MR N. BYRNE: My name is Nick Byrne from DKO Architecture. I'm the project architect on this building as well. So hopefully this works – so as part of the process,  
15 I think we were – just a little bit of history on this as well – we were one of the first projects to actually undertake the Design Review Panel Process with the government architects. And what you can see from this is that there has been a fairly steady progression of the design as well. We've always been interested in probably breaking the mass of the towers down to a three-tower scheme as well. So we're just  
20 concerned at the fairly blocky massing of the buildings along Gibbons Street and particularly also along Regent Street as well. So this was probably the progression.

There was an additional meeting that we had post the 12 December meeting, but what is really clear is there is actually an embrace of the actual process as well and  
25 understanding what the government architects and the value add that they've actually added to the process as well. As you're aware, the site sits in this zone through here. It's probably fair to say this area through here is probably developed a lot quicker and it's partially because it's closer to the station link that sits up through here. It's undergoing a fairly rapid change though. And in terms of the planning controls that  
30 sit around the site, we've got effectively a three-storey podium which we will talk about in a little bit more detail at the end of the presentation and then an 18-storey component of built form.

The three-storey podium is four metres set back from the boundaries on both Marian  
35 and also on Gibbons Street as well. The site is very constrained really from an outlook and amenity point of view. It's a tough site. It has Gibbons Street to the west which obviously there is a road noise issue through there and also the station as well and then north of the site there are a series of 18-storey buildings which exhibit the same planning controls as what we're dealing with. So solar access is obviously  
40 tough as well. We do benefit from the park that sits on the other side of Gibbons Street so that we do get some solar access from that particular component of the site.

And then further south and east of the site, there is a SEARs that sits in through here and there's also an application currently with council. Probably one of the other key  
45 components that we've been dealing with is the activation of William Lane as it sits through here and runs down to Margaret Street. And probably the final thing is the wind in this area is a tough constraint and it has really been one of the driving factors

5 behind the design so it's just probably that westerly winter breeze – just how we mitigate that particular component as well. As part of any process that we look at – and these are just some of the slides from the DRP – we're interested in the context. So we're just understanding the fact that it is a – it always has been a meeting place and this is pre-settlement times for the Gadigal, the Bidjigal and the Wangal. And we've used that as part of the emphasis on public art in the scheme as well.

10 It has always been a transport hub with the 1876 Eveleigh Train Station and it has always been connected to the city, but probably the other thing that's interesting – and obviously we all know this – but just the age and nature of the housing that sits there at the minute and how that's actually going to evolve over time and probably some of the lessons that we can learn from that. From a streetscape point of view as well, it's very varied and diverse, but probably most importantly, as Andrew and Michael have alluded to, we're just concerned at setting a new benchmark and that's not just from a straight built form point of view, but obviously a community point of view, so it includes many communal aspects as well.

20 We've done an extensive streetscape study, so there's obviously – there's a predominance of brick, there's diversity, there's depth, but it's probably fair to say it's very eclectic so it's probably thinking about that in terms of the way it affects our scheme. Just in terms of the podiums and the podium treatment and how that has actually been resolved, we've got setbacks to Gibbons Street and also to Marian Street and these have been increased over the process of dealing with the city as well, then starting to delineate that with a vertical breakup and then varying the heights of that as well. So it's trying to get that fine-grain element at the base of the building.

30 From a tower point of view, as I discussed at the introduction, we were always keen to get that three-tower form and that was really again trying to have a really nice breakup of built form and a nice proportion to what is otherwise probably a difficult proportion to deal with – 18 storeys wide so we've got a one to one proportion. So we've broken it up into three, started to chamfer the edges and the corners to get better views back to the city, incorporating an active edge at the base of the building and then open spaces. And probably one of the things that's not shown on this is – and it's critical to the design – is the curved edges and the chamfered edges of the building. It's really starting to deal with the wind effects of the building as well and the amenity at the street level but also importantly the amenity of the people that sit in the building or on balconies.

40 So it's starting to decelerate that window as it comes from the west, in particular. Community is an important part of the building, and as Andrew alluded to, this will be social and affordable housing as a tenure blind scenario, so that will be scattered throughout the entire building, but starting at the ground level, we're incorporating a community hub which, effectively, is a – it's a zone for the residents to actually meet. It could also be for the public to meet through there, and it's effectively an assimilation and education process that could be incorporated into the building. We have a bike hub at the ground that will be managed by SGCH as well, so there's talk about that in the report as well.

So it is, in effect, something that will be carefully managed, and we feel that providing a rate of about 100 or so bike spaces is adequate for a building of this scale. And then as you move up the building, you have podium communal open space and rooftop communal open space, but probably just acknowledging that – and  
5 it's an often forgotten component of communal open space, really thinking about the occupants as well and including kids play areas and rooftop gardens that can be used for different events and so on. So it's just important to acknowledge the fact that we've really embraced the community in this building as well. In terms of the materials, again, in line with the contextual analysis, we're suggesting brickwork at  
10 the base of the building.

There is communal art proposed to sit on the soffit through here. It's also at the ground level, in terms of the paving, and there is a component of details in the brickwork that deals with the communal art. In terms of the materiality, brick at the  
15 base, precast up the building and, again, that is really about a longevity of – and maintenance-free period of the building. So just making sure we understand those constraints as well. In terms of the ADG setbacks, and it is exhaustively discussed in the report, so – and it's dealt with very well, but just in terms of the way that the setbacks have been applied on our site and also, probably importantly, the adjacent  
20 sites, it's fair to say when you get a smaller site like 88 – 80 to 88 Regent Street, becomes more difficult.

So they push the setbacks through here, and also on the SEARs, but, really, what we've done is that it is a difficulty and it is a – it is part of the uniqueness of the site that we have to look at these compliances and where – we've effectively applied the performance provisions of the ADG and examined each of the openings and the acoustic and visual privacy, how it applies as it runs up the building as well and, again, you can see most of the sites through here do a similar sort of thing. And then, importantly, at the top level – and just as an important point, if you apply this setback  
30 to the top level of the building, it will effectively render the development not entirely feasible. It cuts off so much from nine to 17, in particular.

And then in terms of the SEPP 1 variation, as Michael has alluded to, there is a slight breach through here that set – effectively sets back four metres from both Gibbons  
35 Street and Marian Street, but I suppose one of the key things that we've dealt with and one of the obvious issues is when you push the building out to the boundary edges, you have to deal with the wind mitigation, and we've done exhaustive wind modelling to actually deal with that as well.

So, hand on our heart, we can say that the wind modelling works well. There's a lot of discussion about the revision of natural ventilation in the building as well, and what we're providing is a – effectively, a hybrid system. It has a solar panel or a solar array on the roof. It pumps air down the building and then into each of the apartments, providing the adequate amount of natural ventilation into each of the  
45 apartment without the need for windows to be open and providing, obviously, acoustic amenity to the apartments as well, and that's it. Thank you.

MR O'CONNOR: Thank you. Thank you, Nick. Anyone else that needs to make any comments to the opening statement or you're just here to back up when the questions get to your – is that the story?

5 MR WOODLAND: I think that's probably the story, yes.

MR O'CONNOR: Okay. Defer. Fine. Thank you very much for that presentation. I'm quite interested in the wind issues. You raised it on several occasions. Can you just talk us through a bit more about what you've done to try and combat that issue?  
10 I know I don't understand a lot about how you treat wind issue. So starting from a low base.

MR BYRNE: So wind – predominantly, the westerly is the problem. It's obviously cool and it has the – it has enough velocity to - - -

15 MR O'CONNOR: And it's coming straight across the park, so it's a good - - -

MR BYRNE: It's coming across the park. So it has got no buildings to - - -

20 MR O'CONNOR: Yes.

MR BYRNE: - - - protect it. So, really, first things first, the way to deal with wind acceleration and – is to, effectively, curve the corners of the building as well to decelerate it as it goes around the corner or to protect it – particularly move it around  
25 the building, as such. So that was probably item number 1, and then no matter what you do, the wind is going to hit the building and, effectively, go down to the street level, so it's protecting the amenity at street level by providing a continuous awning that runs from – pretty much, from the laneway that sits through here, all the way round to – sorry, I just can't move the mouse – the laneway that sits through here all  
30 the way round to Marian Street as well. So that's item number 2. There's - - -

MR O'CONNOR: So just on that item number 2, so you're saying the awning stops the wind buffeting people on the ground level.

35 MR BYRNE: On the ground level.

MR O'CONNOR: Right.

MR BYRNE: Yes. So hitting the building, no matter what we do - - -  
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MR O'CONNOR: And then it runs down the building, does it?

MR BYRNE: It does - - -

45 MS W. LEWIN: There's a downdraft, yes.

MR BYRNE: - - - run down the building. So it's stopping the wind hitting people at street level.

MR O'CONNOR: Okay.

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MR BYRNE: I mean, we've all walked through Redfern and it is a tough environment through there, particularly that through-site link to the station. So it's probably just protecting the people at street level. Then there's additional means of protecting even this laneway through here, on the – if I can get there. The laneway, there's a gate through here with 50 per cent porosity to make sure that there's amenity to the people that are using that laneway which is the, you know, the people that are going to be loading, garbage truck drivers, that sort of thing through there. And then up at these levels as well, it's again thinking about how we can stop the downdraft, effectively, in these zones and, also, the downdraft in these zones. So there're additional screens that deal with that, and it's fair to say we've modelled the building, I think, twice now and dealt with each one of those components in there.

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MR O'CONNOR: And so the vegetation, how does it withstand those wind factors?

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MR BYRNE: There are screens that sit externally to that as well, and we've specifically provided vegetation that can withstand that particular wind resistance.

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MR O'CONNOR: Because that's one of council's concerns, isn't it? That the vegetation won't have deep soil areas and might have difficulty surviving in that environment.

MS K. GRAY: Can I make one point.

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MR O'CONNOR: Just say who you are, please.

MS GRAY: My name is Kim Gray. I'm from St George Community Housing.

MR O'CONNOR: Thanks, Kim.

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MS GRAY: Just in terms of the wind, we worked extensively with the wind consultant from the beginning, so a lot of the considerations, we incorporated in the design from the outset some of the factors that Nick has suggested. One of the things to note is that landscaping is – helps to adhere with a comfort level. So, "If I'm a user on level 3, will I feel comfortable in that space for the period of time that I'm expected to be there?" So the building elements like the gates, like the curving of the balconies, the orientation of the units, they are the – and the provision of the awning, they are the components that deal with wind – pedestrian safety. So, "Am I going to be safe when I'm walking along the street?" And then landscaping is used as an additional component to make those spaces feel comfortable when I use them, not safe, if that makes sense.

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5 MR O'CONNOR: Okay. And you've mentioned the laneway, the area that is – there's gates on either side. Was any consideration given – the fact that William Lane truncates a sort of cul de sac to allowing public access along there or were there security issues or – can you just talk us through what might have been the concerns there.

10 MR BYRNE: We were concerned about the safety through there, yes, and this particular development on 13 to 23 has run the laneway through as well, so it won't truncate at our site. It will run through, and it has always been the intention to run through as well.

MR O'CONNOR: Right.

15 MR BYRNE: There has been discussions with the government architects about keeping that as a public laneway, but we were just concerned about passive surveillance at ground level adjacent to the loading dock, etcetera.

20 MR WOODLAND: Yes. I think it's worth to point out also that this building has no basement.

MS LEWIN: Yes.

25 MR WOODLAND: So that creates its own challenges in terms of loading and unloading and the functionality of the building. So that issue was raised a number of times during the Design Excellence Process and in discussion with council, and we believe this is the ultimate scenario that will allow the load and unloading to be undertaken and also alieve those security issues.

30 MR O'CONNOR: That lack of a basement must be a plus, though, in terms of cost – construction, etcetera, without excavation, etcetera, so - - -

MR WOODLAND: It is certainly isn't from that perspective but in terms of designing the back of house requirements at the ground level - - -

35 MR O'CONNOR: Yes. Sure.

40 MR WOODLAND: - - - whilst still trying to activate these edges was difficult and it has been – I think Nick has done a fantastic job – and Kell – in doing that, but you're right. Obviously, there is cost savings in that regard.

MR O'CONNOR: Okay. Wendy, do you have a question or two?

45 MS LEWIN: Yes. Just a few. I think Andrew mentioned that a number of the occupants might have some – physically or perhaps mentally – are not challenged but they have some difficulties and I wonder how that might have been factored into parking, transport, provision of – do they have special needs is the question, really,

and in the way that you would organise transport, pick-up, drop-off, circulation at ground level – in your experience, has there ever been a need for - - -

MR BROOKS: So - - -

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MS LEWIN: - - - a particular off-street provision?

MR BROOKS: We operate a number of buildings and a lot of them are built to standard council provisions in terms of car parking. The Affordable Housing SEPP actually provides a reduction because it recognises that people in our cohort are not high car owners and that continues to be the case, and particularly in a location such as this, very close to Redfern Station. We took an early decision that we were going to have no cars in support of the residential accommodation or the commercial accommodation, primarily because there's very good access to a lot of GoGets and we also felt that the bike system and the bike ..... is also more of an encouragement to those tenants who want to take up a healthy lifestyle, but we – that's primarily why we operated the bike hub.

We will have a presence in the building – about 20-25 staff – and they're there as – not as admin people but as allocations officers – as support coordinators. So we aren't a primary support provider but we work with about 100 agencies across the city to connect with people with the required level of supports, whether that's mobility or whether it's training, and that's precisely what the hub is there for. It's there to run a series of classes and – education and recreational classes that, because we've got that presence on site, we know we will be able to operate it at a very local level, not just for the people in the building but for the rest of the community in Redfern. So we want to try and create that open building but also provide a safe and secure environment for our customers.

So we – in undertaking the allocations for the project, initially and throughout its life, we will be very careful to ensure that we allocate to people whose needs are met by the building. I think we've got – is it 15 per cent adaptable dwellings throughout the building? We design to a suitable liveable standard anyway throughout all the apartments, but adaptables we generally try and locate on ground or close to the ground floor for travel distances, but again, analysing our population of around about 11,000 people, we don't have 15 per cent who require adaptables, but we have that as a minimum benchmark in all our schemes because, from time to time, there might be a greater number of people requiring that kind of a facility.

MS LEWIN: Sure. With the ventilation system, would you be able to go into a little more detail, please.

MR BYRNE: Sure. Sure. Effectively, what we've got is we've got a net system in terms of a solar array that sits on the roof. It has two fans that are powered off that as well. There are two fans for the point of view that if one is inoperable, that you've actually always got that back-up as well. It pumps the air down the building in two shafts and then disseminates that into each of the apartments itself, and obviously

that comes with cost and complexity as well, with fire dampers – all those sort of things – as it goes through each of the fire compartments as well.

5 We have analysed also the need to user-operate that and, with the amount of air that's going in there, it's not required to do that at all. We don't need to do that. We basically just pump the air in the buildings as such and that is the system and it does it to every singable habitable room as well, so it's not just pumped into the living area. It's done to the bedrooms as well.

10 MS LEWIN: So does it have a central shaft or - - -

MR BYRNE: It does. It does. It has central - - -

MS LEWIN: And it feeds off?

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MR BYRNE: Yes. It feeds off at each of the corridor levels.

MS LEWIN: Okay. And the leakage that you - - -

20 MR BYRNE: Is by means of a trickle vent.

MS LEWIN: Right.

MR BYRNE: Yes.

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MS LEWIN: And that has got some ability to mitigate noise as well .....

MR BYRNE: Yes. Yes. Yes.

30 MS LEWIN: All right.

MR BYRNE: Well, there's two ways for the air to get out of the building or out of each of the apartments. It's through a trickle vent or – and to be honest with you, we put a trickle event in every single apartment anyway, just from a straight  
35 condensation build-up, and then the second way is there are always paths from – you know, by virtue of the fact that you've got a rangehood – you've got a bathroom exhaust for the air to get back out of the building as well.

MS LEWIN: There's always, however, a permanent ability for the - - -  
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MR BYRNE: Yes. For it to move through.

MS LEWIN: For it to flush out.

45 MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: Yes.

MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: Okay.

5 MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: All right. Do you have documents that you could send us on the - - -

MR BYRNE: Yes.

10 MS LEWIN: - - - wind analysis as well as the ventilation system?

MR BYRNE: Yes.

15 MS LEWIN: That would be great. Thank you.

MR O'CONNOR: Just a supplementary question - - -

MS LEWIN: Yes.

20 MR O'CONNOR: - - - on the ventilation system. I understand it's solar powered. What if there's a problem with power supply. Is there a mains back-up?

MR BYRNE: It's a net - - -

25 MR O'CONNOR: Is there a battery storage system or - - -

MR BYRNE: Yes. It's a net system as it currently operates. So, effectively, at night, it is running off our mains as well. So there's always that contingency there as well.

30 MR O'CONNOR: Right.

MR BYRNE: Obviously, over time, when batteries get better, we would look at that but, at this point in time, the studies that we've done doesn't warrant it.

35 MS LEWIN: Where is your battery store by the way?

MR BYRNE: We don't have one.

40 MS LEWIN: You don't have one?

MR BYRNE: No.

45 MS LEWIN: Would you?

MR BYRNE: We could. It's just the fact that our studies that we've done today doesn't warrant it at this stage. There is room on the roof, for argument's sake, to actually put that there if needs be, but we have done the study of it as well.

5 MS GRAY: We did some modelling and were advised by Northrop that the amount of area that we would need to use for the battery would, basically, obviously, take out some of the PV panels and the net generation that we – in terms of what it generates to power the fan and the common areas – the need is just simply not there. So it just felt like we're providing a battery really for no benefit. Once – if the – it's  
10 connected to the common power, so SGCH will pick up and pay for any excess that's not being provisioned for by the PVs. It's not going to be then disseminated out to individual tenants for their bills. It's part of our - - -

MR BYRNE: Base building.

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MS GRAY: - - - operating costs for a common property.

MS LEWIN: Okay. Thank you. Your façade studies – we were wondering whether it might be possible to have a site plan that shows your proposal within the context of  
20 what is being considered adjacent. You have your view corridor studies with the plans of each level for the adjacent - - -

MR BYRNE: More like that.

25 MS LEWIN: Yes. Yes. However, with the detailed plan arrangement.

MR BYRNE: Okay.

MS LEWIN: You have it in the report, I think, and - - -

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MR BYRNE: Yes. Okay.

MS LEWIN: - - - it would be very helpful for us to understand how your façade has developed in relation to that habitable rooms and amenity, privacy, acoustic and so  
35 on in relation to the other developments.

MR BYRNE: Yes. Yes. That's fine.

MS LEWIN: And also the street structures and the other pedestrian areas would –  
40 and servicing.

MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: That would be great.

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MR BYRNE: So that plan with adjacency and detail shown inside it.

MS LEWIN: Yes. Yes. It's certainly here in with your new studies. No. It's in here.

MR BYRNE: Page – for instance, page 34.

5 MS LEWIN: Let's have a look. So many documents. 34.

MR BYRNE: That sort of plan there, Wendy.

10 MS LEWIN: Yes. Yes. Yes.

MR BYRNE: But in larger – obviously, a larger scale.

MS LEWIN: Yes. Yes. With the – all the adjacent - - -

15 MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: That would be great.

20 MR BYRNE: Yes.

MS LEWIN: Thanks.

MR BROOKS: For clarity, is that adjacent as existing and the proposed

25 development - - -

MS LEWIN: And proposed.

MR O'CONNOR: Exactly.

30 MS LEWIN: Yes.

MR BROOKS: Yes.

35 MS LEWIN: And we would prefer to be considering, as you would be, as well, I would imagine, the proposal in the context of everyone's desires. The community hub is some – is a provision that you would be responsible for in perpetuity, too?

MR BROOKS: Yes. Yes.

40 MS LEWIN: Okay.

MR BROOKS: The office and community hub will be occupied and managed by St George, as will the bike ..... we see the bike has been a potential social enterprise, as well, for residents in the building. So, rather than just being a storage, we would like to activate that with a small repairs area and ..... for the residents to manage that. And so we look at the social enterprises within the ..... locations that we manage for

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the presence on the ground, because we see that as a very positive contribution that the building can make, rather than just being a place where people live.

5 MR O'CONNOR: I think you've probably answered this question just – that I was going just in the comments you've made, Andrew. I was going to ask, have you just taken the opportunity, because you're building this complex, to place some staff in some accommodation you will provide or is that directly related to the 160 units above, the provision of that staff? And it sounds like it's the latter.

10 MR BROOKS: It's absolutely the latter. And we have another site in Greensquare and also on City Road. So we see this as being a sort of central hub in the city of Sydney where we can offer those management services. We also operate in the existing housing estate in Redfern-Moorehead Street, which is one of our more challenging properties. So the more access we have to service providers and our  
15 tenants, the better. So on a scale of this, anything really more than a 100 units, even more than 80 units, we want to have a presence in the building, not as a sort of back office for a bunch of accountants or anything like that.

20 Absolutely for frontline staff who will deal with ..... person located here, because it's going to take quite a lot of our own maintenance. And we've alluded to in the past that establishing a building is a challenge, but running it for a long time and making sure that we control those maintenance costs is probably an even bigger challenge. So hence we go for these unpainted exteriors, brick and ..... concrete. We put a flooring system down that's not carpet, because we get a lot of tenants who cannot  
25 ..... occupational therapy issues about allergies. So we go for a flooring system that lasts for 35 years in residential use, which just limits the amount of chairs we have on carpets and repairs and maintenance .....

30 MR O'CONNOR: Thank you. And another question that arises from a number of the objections, which I think you've also partly answered with that response, there were concerns raised about the fact that this is 100 per cent social and affordable housing and it would be better if it was a mixed development. So – but, obviously, there's economies and benefits to you as a provider being able to provide that extra level of service and training and upkeep, etcetera. Is that the response to that  
35 question?

MR BROOKS: To an extent. I mean, it starts with the allegations. So we have to be very careful about how we allocate our projects for a building of this number of units. We've had experience in the past where we've had a lot of young single men  
40 in a single location. It doesn't work. It produces the inevitable outcome. So you have to be very careful about making sure that the allocations in a building of this scale match the community within which it exists. So there will be allocations prioritised for single older women, because we know there's that demand in this locality. And it varies from community to community.

45 So we don't have a single sort of cookie-cutter one size fits all. We do know that ones and two bed apartments are the highest demand, though, in the cohorts that we

serve. And, again, we just have that site present to make sure that we can address issues before they become issues. So I think it's a case of when you look at this building, it doesn't look like a traditional concept of social and affordable housing. It's meant not to. It's meant to look like a privately managed block of apartments.

5

And our experience is that when you give people a really good piece of real estate, they will look out for it. If it's well maintained, they will look after their piece. And that's part of the sort of underlying training issues that we try and instil in all of our tenants, so that we don't become a neighbour that nobody wants to know. We actually want to be a front door that people in the Redfern community want to come through and learn life skills, as well as the tenants in the building. So we're absolutely out to be the best neighbour in Redfern.

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MR O'CONNOR: Thank you. The question of bicycle parking was one of the concerns that council raised in its objections. It's code recalls for 160 bicycle parking spaces to be available for a 160 unit development. You've argued, by reference to existing usage of tenants, etcetera in other developments you have, that in reality it's a lot lower than that. But you then go on to promote this sharing scheme. And you've talked a little about that. Can you just tell us a bit more about why you think 80 bicycle parking spaces is adequate for 160 units.

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20

MR BROOKS: So we find that people in apartment units don't generally own – or there's not a high ownership of bikes. And we looked at all our existing high rise properties in the portfolio and really came up with this is the right number for this location, bearing in mind we're, again, so close to the transport ..... we also had a chance to look around a number of the recently built buildings in this locality.

25

And we kind of saw a lot of empty bike stations – very empty. And we didn't want to provide a sort of mausoleum for bikes where 20 bikes were there. We wanted to have – absolutely have something that was actively used and actively managed. And hence that bike management philosophy came out of the research we've done, both locally and in the portfolio.

30

And then what else can we do to make this actually a better take up for a healthy life? And so we said, look, if there are residual spaces that aren't taken up by the tenants, then we will operate, if you like, a bike management library and up until, say, midday that's available for residents in the building. Thereafter we will make it available on a web or an app for local people in the Redfern community.

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Now, that has got to bed down and no doubt there will be some tweaks that we will need as we get into operation there. We don't want to be a bike litterer, if you like, in terms of all these bikes that get left around. So, again, having people based in the building, we've got opportunities to go and collect bikes, rather than let them just waste away around the city. So that's the concept behind the bikes ..... but in terms of how we quantified it and then how we're going to actively manage it, rather than just say, "We've got a bike store for 160 bikes, but, guess what, there's only ever 40 bikes in it" - - -

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45

MR O'CONNOR: Yes.

MR BROOKS: - - - and a big wasted space.

5 MR BYRNE: And that goes to the location, as well, sitting right at the front door. The idea is that you come into the lobby and you will see that activity in the bike store, as well. So it's sitting in a front of house area; it's not tucked away in the basement. So we've actively tried to promote the usability of that space as well.

10 MR BROOKS: Do you have that visual, that 3D visual?

MR BYRNE: I don't, no.

MR BROOKS: It's not there, is it?

15

MR BYRNE: No.

MR O'CONNOR: So just on that same issue, if this scheme is as successful as you hope it is and you find there is a need for more bike parking, is there a plan B? Is there a potential to be able to incorporate more bikes in that space by vertical - - -

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MR BYRNE: It - - -

MR O'CONNOR: - - - means or - - -

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MR BYRNE: It already is vertically – they are vertically stacked already.

MR O'CONNOR: Yes, I saw the image that you showed that's - - -

30 MR BYRNE: Yes, it is vertically stacked already.

MR O'CONNOR: Yes.

MR BYRNE: I mean, the only – and, obviously, the other constraint that we have here is we don't have a basement, so we don't have those leftover areas to go and plan bike parking in. So it's a tough one in terms of the amount of back-of-house space that we've got versus the remaining amount of residual, you know, retail, commercial and office space that we have.

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40 MR BROOKS: We would have to look – if it came to that, we would have to look at areas like the community hub or community ..... elsewhere in the building to see if we could – it would be a nice problem to have.

MR O'CONNOR: Yes, certainly would. Yes. And just mentioning the community hub and other community spaces, there is a meeting room, isn't there, on level 3 - - -

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MR BROOKS: Yes.

MR O'CONNOR: - - - next to the open-space area? Just talk about the different use that will be put to, and how do you distinguish between when you're down in the hub and when you're having some - - -

5 MR BROOKS: Well, the - - -

MR O'CONNOR: Something occurring in that room.

10 MR BROOKS: The ground floor hub is mainly where external service providers will come in and run computer courses, language classes. One of the popular ones we have at the moment in Hurstville and Riverwood is Chinese dance and choirs. So that's where the ground floor space is primarily focused. This is more for residents in the building to use as a quiet space. So we will have a lot of young families. It's a covered space or an enclosed space where mums and dads can sit and watch their  
15 kids playing in the play area. It's a quiet introspection space. We can use it for in-house events for people to use, either this or the level 17 space. It will be managed. It won't be available after – I think it's 9 o'clock in the evenings we lock this space at.

20 MS GRAY: The condition says 10 pm - - -

MR BROOKS: 10 pm.

25 MR BYRNE: - - - for the outdoor space.

MR BROOKS: The outdoor space. So we don't want to encourage negative use of these spaces, for obvious reasons. And what we do when we open a new building is we have typically a small booklet which tells people essentially how to use the facilities in their unit but also what the house rules are around public spaces, like,  
30 community spaces. So this will be equipped with soft furnishings and chairs and tables and that ..... And it could be used if we have overflow for competing requirements for the downstairs community hub for overflow classes in need. So we want to keep it quite flexible - - -

35 MR O'CONNOR: Right.

MR BROOKS: - - - so that it doesn't just become a sort of inside/space.

40 MR O'CONNOR: And the same question in relation to the open-space area. So you've got that level 3 open-space – private open-space area, and you've got the – is it rooftop or almost rooftop?

MR BROOKS: Almost rooftop. The other one .....

45 MR O'CONNOR: And what's the differentiation about how people might use those two spaces or - - -

MR BROOKS: I think the lower space is very much more for young families. This is more of a – you will go there if the ground floor space is a bit too crowded. It's just a - - -

5 MR O'CONNOR: Overflow.

MR BROOKS: Yes.

10 MR BROOKS: An overflow, sort of, quieter space.

MR BYRNE: Both of them are active zones, though. So they've got barbecues, those sort of facilities there. But I suppose with this particular zone, we're really conscious of the wind again. So - - -

15 MR O'CONNOR: I was going to say your vegetation will struggle.

MR BYRNE: So what we've done is tried to semi-enclose it as well. So we haven't just opened it to the sky and left it that way. We've enclosed it partially on the rooftop edge and then in terms of the parapets as well.

20 MR BROOKS: Since these drawings we've actually brought all the planters in off the parapet edges about a metre. I think there's about 1300 ..... because we didn't want them to be – well, as soon as they become a potential climbing point, then they're an axis below the parapets. And then we didn't want to start having screens up because it then just creates more of a sense of enclosure. So by bringing the  
25 planters in by 1300 we still retain the quality of the soft landscaping, but we just deal out a management issue or potential management issue.

MR O'CONNOR: Okay.

30 MS LEWIN: The wind is seasonal, isn't it? I mean, there are seasonal issues with it.

MR BYRNE: Yes. Yes.

35 MR O'CONNOR: And is there a possibility that the screens can be operable so that there is a much more - - -

MR BYRNE: I will have to take that on notice. I'm not sure.

40 MS LEWIN: There's connectivity in it and access. Would it be possible also to have some drawings with a – the plans and sections at least, with a bar scale?

MR BYRNE: Yes.

45 MS LEWIN: Thanks.

MR O'CONNOR: And just while that slide is on the wall, the two lifts – is there a third lift, a service lift to the left there? That's just a space, is it?

5 MR BYRNE: No, that's the ventilation shaft.

MR O'CONNOR: That's the ventilation shaft.

MR BYRNE: Yes.

10 MR O'CONNOR: Right. And, again, I'm not familiar with what the requirements are, but two lifts to serve 160 apartments, that has been - - -

MR BYRNE: Yes, in an 18-storey building, we've tested that. Yes.

15 MR O'CONNOR: Yes. Okay. You've got other questions, Wendy?

MS LEWIN: No, I think that's it.

MR O'CONNOR: Okay.

20 MS LEWIN: No.

MR O'CONNOR: David?

25 MS LEWIN: That's it, thanks.

MR O'CONNOR: No. Any questions of us about the process from here or - - -

MR BROOKS: No.

30 MR O'CONNOR: Okay.

MR BROOKS: I don't think so.

35 MR BYRNE: I don't think so.

MR O'CONNOR: All right. I might draw it to a close. Thank you, Caitlin. That finishes the session.

40 MR BROOKS: Thank you,

MR BYRNE: Thank you.

MR O'CONNOR: Thank you for your time, coming in and telling us all about this

45 exciting project.

**RECORDING SUSPENDED**

**[11.51 am]**

**RECORDING RESUMED**

**[11.52 am]**

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MR O'CONNOR: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR WOODLAND: Okay. Look, I thought it would be probably worthwhile just to go through some of our comments on the conditions. As I said at the outset, we are absolutely supportive of the department's report and recommendation, first and foremost; however, there's a number of conditions for a number of reasons we would like to see amended. Going from the – they're really in a couple of themes. The first theme is that we think there's a few minor errors, and then the other one is  
15 around timing, and Kim may talk to that in terms of the construction timing. We want some more flexibility in relation to that. And thirdly is around there's some conditions there that we think may be problematic in terms of our ability to comply. So I don't know, Mr Chair, if it's worthwhile just going through the conditions - - -

20 MR O'CONNOR: Yes, please.

MR WOODLAND: - - - that we've got. And anyone else, Kim or Rebecka or Nick, just jump in. So the first one, we just think that's an error.

25 MR O'CONNOR: Yes.

MR WOODLAND: So that's pretty straightforward. The second one, B7, relates to – we also think this is potentially an error. We've already committed to the amount  
30 of floor space in the plans. We think by having that specific notation there may cause problems for a certifier. We're not trying to amend the floor space, but we think it has already been detailed. So we think that, just from our experience, may cause issues for the certifier. As Andrew said at the outset, the delivery of this project is critical in terms of funding and so forth. So we're really trying to have this as streamlined as possible.

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In terms of B9, it's relating to we want a little bit more flexibility about the type of construction certificate, because a lot of the way these conditions are worded, it's any construction certificate. So we would seek that to be in relation to public domain works. Just tell me if I'm going too fast.

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MR O'CONNOR: No, that's fine.

MR WOODLAND: And jump in as well, Rebecka. B12, this is an interesting  
45 condition. The department supported our report, our acoustic report which supports the proposal; however, we feel that this is a standard condition which has kind of snuck in which talks about having to comply with the interim guidelines. We would prefer that the conditions say it comply with the acoustic report prepared in support

of the application which has been supported by the department. We just think that's an oversight by the department.

5 Condition B22. Again, this one here, this relates to – some of the conditions require approval from the council. Now, we have consulted with the council many times through this application, and we're happy with that process, but we believe fundamentally that the approval should go back to the secretary rather than the council. We're happy to consult with the council, of course. We think ultimately these conditions should be at the determination of the Department of Planning as the consent authority, not the council.  
10

We've found through our own experience it problematic when conditions require us as the applicant to go off to another body, not being the consent authority to give approval. It provides uncertainty and potential delays. Happy to continue to talk to the council, but we think it's more appropriate to be to the approval of the secretary. Condition number 25 is a similar issue. Again, we would rather it be the relevant construction certificate, and we're happy to consult with the council, but not be approved by the council. Condition 20 – condition B27 around flooding. I don't know. Kim, do you want to talk to this one particularly?  
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MS GRAY: Yes, definitely.

MR WOODLAND: Please.

25 MS GRAY: Since we've lodged our application, we've started talking to Ausgrid around the location of the substation on ground floor, and in the last iteration of plans that you're now seeing, you see a revised location of that substation as a result of those conversations. The issue we've got is that Ausgrid have asked us to relocate the substation to an area which is – the level is slightly below the flood level, so we've kind of got – it would create a non-compliance for us in terms of trying to satisfy Ausgrid's asks for us, but the condition is so specific around the flood level detail in parts B to E that it would cause a – we would basically have to come back and ask for a modification to address that. So what we would prefer is if the condition just said compliance with the flooding report, and then we can absolutely work within that. There's a cooling area down on the corner at the end of William Lane. So the whole site is not flood-affected, is kind of what I'm trying to say, and by putting very specific flood level detail in this condition, it makes it hard to comply with the chamber substation floor level.  
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40 MR WOODLAND: Okay. We will move onto condition B36. I think that's just – there's a reference to an old BASIX certificate, which will have to be have to be amended through amended plans in the RTS, so we're just asking for that to be amended to say the approved BASIC certificate, and again, showing the relevant construction certificate.  
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MR O'CONNOR: Yes.

MR WOODLAND: Condition B48, this is around waste storage design. Again, we're concerned about anything going back to council for approval. We think it will create uncertainty if we need to seek council's endorsement yet again. We believe that that condition is actually unnecessary and recommend it be deleted. I'm really  
5 into the rats and mice stuff here. B – condition C38, this one here, again, it's around certainty. If you read the condition, it talks about things going to – referred to and agreed to by the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee of council prior to any work commencing on site.

10 Now, we're not anticipating that there would be any issues for this community, but that is a significant risk and unknown for us, because any construction – any work cannot commence until this committee determines that that's acceptable. So, again, we're recommending that it be – our work be developed in accordance with – in  
15 consultation with this committee and, again, approved by the secretary. So again, we're happy to do the work, but that is an extreme unknown for us in terms of potential timing.

Condition C41 is – we believe is just a typo in that. So we think that could be amended. Now, condition D2 is around construction hours. I don't know whether,  
20 Kim, you want to talk to that one. We're seeking for further hours than what the department have put down as their standard construction hours. Look, there are only four half an hour each side of the day. However, over the construction period of the building, that does add up to significant time.

25 MS GRAY: We've got some loading limitations on Gibbons Street which we've been talking with Council and RMS about. Because it's a clearway, basically, we can only use it between 10 and 3, and so that has placed pressure on our construction program, and we thought that it would be great, if it's possible, to have the  
30 opportunity to have a set-up period of half an hour before and afterwards. That's really what it was about. And I think we asked for it to – you know, that no noise works would happen during that time but simply that we could just get ourselves started, was the request.

MR WOODLAND: Yes, so we're happy to limit it to not noisy work. It's just  
35 getting people on-site to get that preparatory work started, because over the entire construction period that does add up to a fair few hours. Condition E2, we've already really talked about that, about the specific - - -

MR O'CONNOR: Yes.  
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MR WOODLAND: - - - figure on there, which is very specific. We think it's  
45 already covered in A2. E4, again, we're not – we're contesting about the timing about the – we would prefer it to be a relevant occupation certificate rather than the occupation certificate. E5, again, similar issue. Happy to do these things, but we just wanted it to be the relevant occupation certificate, in the event that there may be multiple occupation certificates. E – what are we up to now? E9, similar - - -

MR O'CONNOR: Same thing.

MR WOODLAND: Similar issue. And similar issue, really, again, in E19. But  
5 also in addition to that issue I was talking about, we think it's more appropriate that  
be approved by the Secretary, in consultation with the council. We've had many  
discussions with council on all of these issues and we feel that's appropriate that it be  
done through the Secretary. Same with E20.

MR O'CONNOR: Probably E36 as well.  
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MR WOODLAND: I would say that's the same issue again. E39, again, similar  
issue around the relevant occupation certificate. F12, we just wanted to add that be  
restricted to St George employees, in terms of the - - -

MR O'CONNOR: Yes.  
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MR WOODLAND: - - - use of the community space. So, again, in the scheme of  
things, relatively minor changes, but we think important changes, in terms of being  
able to ensure the delivery of this project. I can't emphasise that enough. And trying  
20 to avoid any unnecessary delays, maybe through going to a third party for an  
approval.

MR O'CONNOR: Yes. No, I understand. Thanks again, Caitlin. I think we're  
finished now.  
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MR WOODLAND: Thank you.

**RECORDING CONCLUDED**

**[12.02 pm]**