



12 August 2020

Mr Justyn Ng  
Development Manager  
SH Gosford Residential  
3/8 Windmill St  
Millers Point NSW 2000

Dear Justyn,

**RE: Commercial in Confidence - Commentary on Laneway Design Solar Access for Mann St Development**

As discussed, please find below commentary of retail lanes, the proposed retail lane strategy and key elements to bring this experience to life.

**Background**

In 2018 St Hilliers engaged BellRinger Property Group to prepare a strategic retail positioning and place activation brief relation to the Mann Street Gosford Mixed Use Project. The redevelopment proposal for the Mann Street site was for a transformative mixed use retail and residential project for the Gosford CBD. Critical to achieving this is the retail and ground plane experience. As part of the project a retail laneway was proposed that has the opportunity to transform the retail experience within the Gosford CBD by delivering an innovative mixed-use retail precinct delivering improved convenience retail, dining options, urban realm and community facilities reflecting the culture of Gosford and the Central Coast.

**The Retail Laneway Positioning Strategy**

Critical to a successful retail node is having a point of difference, or “value proposition” that responds to the needs and aspiration of the local community. During our user group and online community engagement, that had in excess of 450 responses, we asked what retail and broader experiences the community of the central coast were seeking. There was a resounding appetite for more “urban” experiences such as laneways, small bars, bespoke independent retail, small format dining and after-hours activation. The retail and ground plane strategy for the Mann Street development was based on this response and the identification of experience gaps within not just Gosford but the broader Central Coast. The proposed laneway experience does not compete with the larger west facing tenancies of the project but rather complements them as the retail nodes are targeted at different audiences seeking different experiences.

**The Current Design Laneway Experience**

The current design of the laneway responds to this strategy. With a laneway width of 6.7 m (Melbourne laneways are 4-7 metres wide), enabling small narrower shopfronts, and smaller tenancies delivering a compact intimate urban experience. The sense of compression and “intimacy” created by this design is critical to this lane experience. The narrow lane enables the creation of

smaller tenancies providing opportunities for local start up retailers and food operators to deliver the desired urban experience. These smaller micro tenancies cannot be provided in wider more spacious areas. The layering of shopfronts, lighting, furniture and materials contributes to this “place experience”. In this situation the solar access consideration in this strategy is secondary, particularly as significant proportion of the visitation will be after-hours. When lane are wider than 7 metres the scale for the human experience starts to lack intimacy and compression, particularly in non-dining areas.

### **The Current Design’s Solar Access**

Under the current design and the solar studies undertaken the lane in June is receiving solar from 10am to 2pm with maximum 210sqm receiving solar access at 11am and midday receiving 199 sqm. While secondary for the desired lane experience, solar access is being received at daytime peak usage for F&B. Throughout Spring/Autumn there is ample sunlight being received and in Summer will at times necessitate the retailers to use their retractable awnings to enhance the desired urban lane experience through improved diversity in the fine grain of the lane. While solar access is secondary to the experience, some solar access in winter can be beneficial to F&B operators, but likewise in summer it can be a deterrent.

### **Australian Case Studies**

While each location has its unique site and location attributes the following case study examples of retail laneways with very limited solar access demonstrate that the key driver to the success of these lanes is the overarching experience from the curated mix of tenants and fine grain elements such as shopfront awnings, furniture etc rather than the quantum of solar access the lane receives. Solar access is secondary to the other layers of experience in a retail lane.

#### *Block Place Melbourne*

Block Place is a 40m long lane that connects the Bock Arcade with Little Collins Street. This lane at circa 4 metres wide and lack of setbacks of the buildings above results in the lane experiencing very little solar access. This lack of solar access does not detract from the high quality “place experience” despite the much cooler climate of Melbourne.



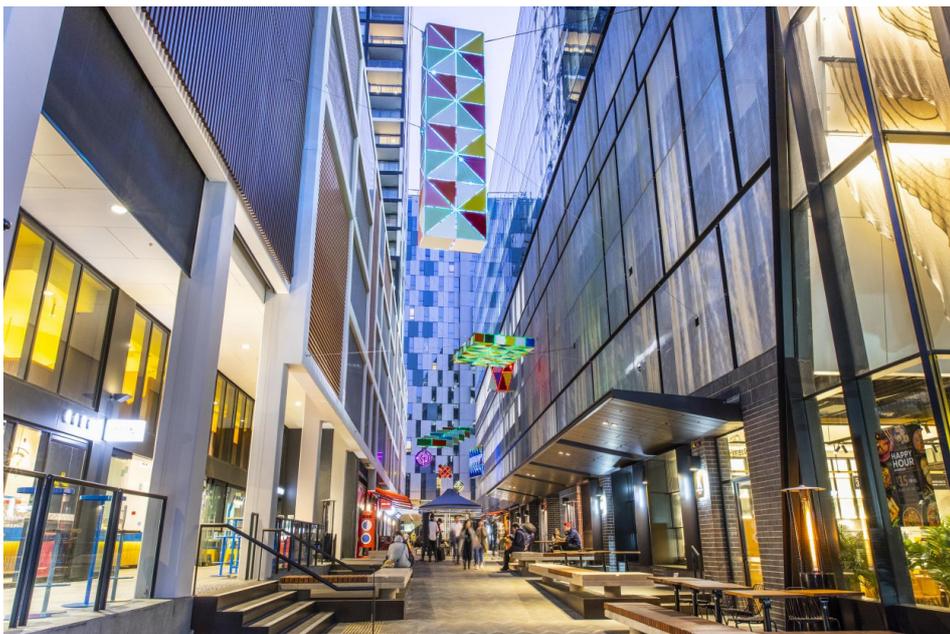
### *Centre Place Melbourne*

Centre Place, a 45m long lane, connects Degrave Street and Flinders Lane through to Collins Street. It is one of the most photographed laneways in Melbourne. Like Block Place, due to the surrounding buildings it receives very little to no sunlight yet this does not detract from the laneway experience. The lane is busy throughout all seasons and climatic conditions.



### *Steam Mill Lane – Darling Square Sydney*

Steam Mill lane is part of the recent Lend Lease Darling Square development in Haymarket. A 70 metre long lane, due to the lack of setback of the above high rise, the lane receives very little sunlight. The shopfronts and mix of retailers and dining options delivers the place experience rather than the quantum of sunlight.



Should you or any of your colleagues wish to discuss any aspects of this note please do not hesitate to contact me on 0448 409 275, or [sam.shepherd@bellringer.com.au](mailto:sam.shepherd@bellringer.com.au)

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Shepherd". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sam Shepherd  
Founder and Managing Director  
BellRinger Property Group