Attachment 6.3

Building configuration

Centre zone above ground car parking

11 February 2021
1. Purpose of report

On 27 October 2020, Council resolved (G20.1027.033) to make a number of refinements to the Major update 2 & 3 amendment package (the amendment) to better align with the endorsed policy intent and improve clarity for development assessment purposes.

This report provides analysis and recommendations to resolve the following item from the resolution.

- in the Centre zone, above ground parking is achievable for commercial development, but not residential development.

2. Introduction

The amendment introduces more specific requirements for the location and design of off-street parking as part of development applications. It seeks to improve amenity of the development and surrounding area, as well as encouraging a more activated and engaged street. The changes primarily focus on Multiple accommodation and High rise development.

The Scenario testing presented to Council in October 2020 identified potential inconsistencies with the proposed parking changes. A re-assessment was carried out for a development at 16-20 Seventh Avenue, Palm Beach (see Figure 1). The development, located in the Centre zone, included above ground car parking. The Scenario testing identified an inconsistency in the amendment, where commercial development could be provided above ground, however, residential development would be required to be At-grade or Below ground (e.g. Basement).

In order for this development to comply with the amendment, the first floor car parking area, comprised of 33 spaces would need to be provided as basement parking.

![Figure 1: Development approval at 16-20 Seventh Avenue Palm Beach](image)

The observation presented to Council questioned whether there should be a distinction for land uses that can use Above ground parking within the Centre zone. As the Centre zoned areas are generally the more intensive areas of the City, it should be questioned whether Above ground car parking can be permitted regardless of the land use.

Further inconsistencies arise for Mixed use development, where the commercial component of a development could be Above ground, while the residential component would be required Below ground. This has the potential to lead to inconsistent building form within the same street or locality.
3. Background

Above-ground parking refers to parking that is elevated above the ground floor of a building. It can extend over multiple floors. Above ground parking is generally more cost-effective than building Basement car parking. Car parking can otherwise be located in a Basement or At-grade, either open to the sky or in the undercroft of a building (refer to Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Possible car parking locations

Table 1, below, provides a summary of the policy position relating to Off-street parking under the current City Plan and proposed in the amendment for selected zones where the provisions will be most relevant, noting that this review is focused on the Centre zone. The following points provide a summary in relation to the Centre zone:

- Commercial and retail parking requirements are set out in the Centre zone code and the Commercial design code. No changes to commercial parking are proposed with the amendment.
- Parking requirements for residential developments are set out in the High rise accommodation code and Multiple accommodation code. These codes do not specify locational (Basement/At-grade/Above ground) requirements for parking under the current City Plan.

The amendment introduces more specific and prescriptive requirements for the location of car parking in High-rise and Multiple accommodation development. Off-street residential parking is to be provided below ground, or may be considered At-grade where Deep planting provides an attractive street interface. Variances apply to areas within the Light rail urban renewal overlay area (refer below).
- The current Light rail urban renewal overlay codes allows for Above ground car parking if it is integrated into the building or appropriately screened.

Under the amendment, parking requirements vary according to location within the Overlay area:

- In Primary and Secondary focus areas and Frame areas, parking only occurs above ground where it promotes street activation within the building base and is fully integrated into the built form; and
- In Transition areas, no Above ground parking is anticipated.

Table 1: Summary of parking requirements\(^1\) - current City Plan and the amendment for selected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Current City Plan</th>
<th>Proposed MU2&amp;3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre zone</td>
<td>Basement ✓</td>
<td>Basement ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood centre zone Residential zones</td>
<td>At-grade ✓</td>
<td>At-grade ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above-ground ✓</td>
<td>Above ground: Commercial ✓ Residential ✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light rail urban renewal area overlay</td>
<td>Basement ✓</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Primary focus, Secondary focus and Frame areas</td>
<td>At-grade ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above-ground ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light rail urban renewal area overlay</td>
<td>Basement ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Transition areas</td>
<td>At-grade ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above-ground ✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) This table provides a summary of requirements. Note that there may be further particular requirements that will determine if parking can be at Basement, At-grade or Above-ground.
Changed Off-street parking requirements under the amendment were introduced as part of the Community benefit bonus elements policy review. The review recommended that car parking is located underground or otherwise is not visible from the street through suitable sleeving or screening:

A positive public interface is also to be achieved where car parking and servicing is located underground, or is otherwise not visible from the street and adjoining sites through suitable sleeving or screening. The ground plane is ideally preserved for meaningful use by people (Community Benefits Bonus Elements Policy Review – Phase 2 – Summary report, Cardno, August 2017).

On 23 March 2018, Council resolved (G18.0323.027) to endorse these proposed changes for Off-street parking.

Numerous submissions were received during the First consultation phase, both in support and against the proposed changes to car parking requirements.

Several submissions supported restricting Above ground ‘podium’ car parking to address amenity concerns.

Other submissions objected to the Above ground parking provisions, noting that:

- Car parking provisions in the Commercial design code, High-rise accommodation design code and Multiple accommodation code were too prescriptive and do not allow for performance and design-based approaches; and
- Car parking provisions create unreasonable and unnecessary constraints for developers.

4. Analysis

While the current City Plan is silent on the permissibility of Above ground parking for residential development, the amendment introduces restrictions on where Above-ground parking is permitted. Scenario testing has identified a possible inconsistency between the regulation of car parking between residential and commercial uses in a Centre zone.

The Scenario testing presented to Council in October 2020 suggested that, as the Centre zoned areas include more intense uses, Above ground parking would be consistent with the zone, and the outcome should therefore be permitted regardless of what the land use is.

As part of this analysis, it is important to note that Centre zoned locations range from small, low key centres (such as Tugun) up to the most intense parts of the City (Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach) (Note that Southport CBD and Robina Key Regional Centre are not regulated under City Plan). The height designations range from 14m to Hx (no height designation) in the zone.

4.1 Intended Centre zone land use outcomes

Under the amendment, the Centre zone provides for ‘a concentration of mixed land uses based on their context, role and function that create vibrant economic centres with differing intensities of day and night time activity, including but not limited to, business, retail, professional, administrative, community, entertainment, cultural and residential activities’.

The Strategic framework notes ‘consolidated mixed use centres and specialist centres are protected as they maximise economic advantage, make the best use of infrastructure and enhance accessibility to goods, services, facilities and employment opportunities…Mixed use centres and specialist centres contain intensive residential activities usually in a mixed use building format.’

Reading City Plan, land uses within the zone make a contribution to services, facilities and employment to meet the needs of each catchment. It does note that residential activities are usually in a Mixed use building format.
4.2 Intended Centre zone street interface

The Centre zone code states that development should have ‘limited or no setback to the road frontage to promote street activation and create a positive and engaging interface with the street’.

Overall outcomes in the zone code note that the development should achieve a reasonable level of amenity expected for Mixed use format when considering factors such as noise, privacy, light, glare and odour.

For centres, the Strategic framework suggests that ‘Buildings are visually attractive, address the streets and are punctuated by meeting places including squares, open spaces and urban parks. Streets are lined with trees and may contain awnings for sun protection’.

4.3 Above ground parking considerations

Above ground car parking in centres is often linked to intense ‘podium’ style designs, however, this building typology is limited to the more intense urban locations in the City. Above ground car parking can also be accommodated where it is well setback, integrated within the built form through sleeving by active uses, or on a platform open to the sky. Examples of these are discussed further below.

Poorly designed Above-ground parking can result in amenity issues for the building and the surrounding street and limit street activation. The Urban Ground Guideline (City of Gold Coast, 2019) notes that Above ground parking is generally not desired, however where used, it should be appropriately designed so that it does not detract from the amenity of the building and surrounding area. Design considerations include:

- sleeving with active building uses to all street frontages;
- minimising impacts of entries and ramping;
- screening with high quality, modulated facades that visually mitigate impacts of vehicles and internal lighting;
- minimising At-ground parking and screened to be visually unobtrusive; and
- designing for adaptive re-use.

As noted above, the Centre zone includes clear provisions promoting an engaging interface with the street, to achieve activation.

An additional provision is provided in the Commercial design code, which works with the Centre zone code to ensure an appropriate outcome for Above ground parking for commercial development. This requires that car parking is to be fully integrated into the built form so it is not visible from the street.

This outcome would need to be extended to apply to residential uses, if Above ground parking for residential development is pursued.

Figures 3 to 9 below provide examples of above ground parking within the City and elsewhere. Figure 3 demonstrates a successful example of screening car parking with a high-quality artwork screen with active retail located on the ground level. In comparison, Figure 4 demonstrates a poor above ground parking outcome. The car parking area is not sleeved or screened, resulting in a poor amenity outcome, with limited street activation.

Figures 5-9 provide further examples of sleeving or screening of at-grade & above ground parking which provides a successful streetscape amenity outcome.

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Figure 3: Wintergarden Brisbane - Example of car parking above active retail with multiple layered artwork metal screen (Designer: Studio 505 and UAP) ³

Figure 4: Example of above ground car parking which results in poor streetscape amenity and limits street activation – Oasis, Broadbeach (Charles St frontage). ⁴


⁴ Source: Google Maps
Figure 5: Qube, Broadbeach – Example of a mixed use development with above ground of car parking in the building base using a single layer metal screen (Architects: DBI and MODE).  

Figure 6: Commercial development, Brisbane CBD : Example with above ground car parking sleeved with active office uses  (Architect: Hassell).

5 Source: https://bluesonbroadbeach.leisurecom.com/properties/qube-broadbeach.php
Figure 7: Scion Development, Southport – Example of at grade car parking sleeved by retail and residential lobby. (Architect: BDA Architects) 

Figure 8: Allegra Development at Southport – Example of at-grade and podium level car parking integrated into the architecture design and sleeved by an active retail frontage. (Architect: Hamilton Hayes Henderson Architects) 

7 Source: https://www.scionsouthport.com/

4.4 Consistency of terminology

At part of this review it was noted that the amendment uses some inconsistent terminology when referring to At-grade car parking, sometimes referring to this as ‘Ground level’ parking. Ground level is defined in City Plan (based on the State mandated definitions) as being the natural surface of the site prior to development (or as otherwise lawfully modified). As such, using this term may lead to issues of implementation in the future.

It is recommended ‘At-grade’ be consistently adopted.

4.5 Scope for change

The amendment is currently in the public consultation phase of the statutory amendment process under the Minister’s Guidelines and Rules (MGR). The MGR provides that, during this stage of the process, the amendment can only be changed to:

a) address issues raised in submissions;

b) amend a drafting error; or

c) address new or changed planning circumstances or information.

The Scenario testing presented to Council in October 2020 is considered to be new planning information. The Scenario testing included the following observation:

The High-rise code does not allow Car parking above ground level and specifies any parking on ground level must be screened by landscaping.

It is considered that development within the Centre zone is typically much more intense and it is anticipated that podium car parking may be utilised. However this is not the case under MU2&3.

There is also sufficient scope to address issues raised from submissions. Submissions address amenity concerns of Above ground parking, while other submissions have requested for more flexibility and design based solutions for car parking.

Council can make changes to address this observation and the consultation submissions under the MGR.

Further, any change that is ‘significantly different’ is required to undergo further public engagement for a minimum of 20 business days. This matter is discussed within the options section.

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9 Source: Google Maps
4.6 Options

Three options have been developed following a review of this matter:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>No change</strong> - Residential parking is not contemplated Above ground in the Centre zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Change to allow residential parking Above ground in the Centre zone (consistent with commercial uses)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3 | **Change to allow residential parking Above ground only when provided in a Mixed use development in the Centre zone**

Pure residential development to continue with parking At-grade or Below ground.

Note: Blue highlight indicates the recommended option.

Note the above options only relate to how Above ground parking is treated within the Centre zone – no changes to Basement or At-grade parking are within the reviewed scope, nor any changes to parking arrangements in other zones.

Figure 10 illustrates where parking is envisaged under the three options:

Figure 10: Options for Centre zone parking arrangements
**Option 1**
This option maintains the current position proposed under the amendment. Outside of the Light rail overlay area, no residential car parking is contemplated Above ground. For Mixed use development car parking, the residential component would be in the Below ground or At-grade, while the commercial/retail component could be provided Above ground.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below ground</th>
<th>At grade</th>
<th>Above ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 1:</strong> No change</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ commercial, x residential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Option 2**
Option 2 provides consistent controls for Above ground parking for all development in the Centre zone, regardless of the land use – commercial, residential, or mixed commercial and residential. Above ground car parking may be provided if:

- it promotes street activation within the building; and
- is fully integrated into the built form with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below ground</th>
<th>At grade</th>
<th>Above ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 2:</strong> Residential parking contemplated above ground</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ includes commercial, residential or mix of both (requires street activation and car parking fully integrated into built form)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Option 3**
Developments that are commercial or a mix of residential and commercial uses may provide for above ground car parking where:

- it promotes street activation within the building; and
- is fully integrated into the built form with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites.

Completely residential development would be required to provide At-grade or Below ground parking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Below ground</th>
<th>At grade</th>
<th>Above ground</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 3:</strong> Mixed use (residential/commercial) contemplated above ground</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ commercial and commercial/residential mixed use (requires street activation and car parking fully integrated into built form) x full residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full residential not contemplated above ground</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Advantages and disadvantages

To determine the Recommended Option, the following advantages and disadvantages were identified and assessed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Option</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. No change    | • Consistent with public submissions which consider Above-ground parking undesirable.  
• Strong provisions for street activation and amenity. | • Discrepancy/inconsistency between residential; commercial/retail; and mixed residential and commercial/retail parking.  
• Restricts development opportunities (feasibility and costs for below ground/at-grade parking).  
• Limits alternative design solutions to provide parking while also addressing amenity; street activation etc. |
| 2. Change to allow residential parking (including full residential and mixed residential and retail/commercial) above ground in the Centre zone (consistent with commercial uses) | • Consistency between commercial and residential use.  
• Greater range of development options  
• Allows for higher intensity uses | • Potential community concern about Above ground parking.  
• May attract more residential development, limiting commercial orientated use of zone. |
| 3. Change to allow residential parking Above ground only when provided in a Mixed use development in the Centre zone | • Promotes mixed land use intent of the zone.  
• Commercial/retail uses at street level promote good street activation.  
• More aligned with MU2&3 policy on residential parking. | • Potential community concern about Above ground parking.  
• Difficulty in application – determining what is an appropriate mix of commercial/retail and residential. |

After considering the advantages and disadvantages of the options, it is recommended that Option 2 be implemented. Amending the provisions would provide greater consistency across the Centre zone for car parking requirements, regardless of whether the development is commercial or residential. This can be seen in Figure 10.

It would also provide for design orientated solutions to car parking.

The proposed change does raise some potential issues. Major update 2 & 3 consultation has identified community opposition to above ground parking due to amenity concerns. However, the proposed amendments are considered to address amenity issues with provisions requiring that development provides appropriate screening or integration of parking, along with provisions for activation of the building on the street. Existing provisions are in place, including in the General development provisions code, with significant scope to address amenity matters for Above ground parking.

There is a possibility that Residential above ground parking in Centre zones could attract a greater proportion of residential development, rather than commercial and mixed uses intended for the zone. This is due to reduced
costs of providing Above ground parking compared to Basement parking requirements in other zones. However, this potential issue has not been substantiated.

This change is considered ‘significantly different’ and would require readvertising.

5. Stakeholder consultation

The following stakeholders have been engaged in the preparation of this report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and/or Title of the Stakeholder Consulted</th>
<th>Directorate or Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lily Chan Acting City Architect</td>
<td>Economy, Planning &amp; Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Sharpe Executive Coordinator Planning Assessment</td>
<td>Economy, Planning &amp; Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Brett Executive Coordinator Major Assessment</td>
<td>Economy, Planning &amp; Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Action/Recommendation

It is recommended the Major update 2 & 3 amendment package be changed as follows:

1. Changes to 9.3.9 High-rise accommodation code
   a. 9.3.9.2 (2) Overall outcomes

      (h) Car parking is located:

      (i) underground or at-grade, where generous deep planting and tall shade trees provide screening to adjoining sites and there is an attractive built form interface to the street(s);

      (ii) where development is located in the Centre zone, car parking may occur above ground only where the building promotes street activation and car parking is fully integrated into the built form, with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites;
b. Table 9.3.9-1: High-rise accommodation design code – for assessable development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car park areas and servicing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PO8</strong></td>
<td><strong>AO8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where development is located in the Centre zone, car parking only occurs above ground if:</td>
<td>No acceptable outcome provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) it is fully integrated into the built form with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) the building promotes street activation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PO98</strong></td>
<td><strong>AO98</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of the Centre zone, car parking areas are located:</td>
<td>No acceptable outcome provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) below ground; or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) at-grade, where:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) generous deep planting and tall shade trees provide screening to adjoining sites; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) there is an attractive built form interface to the street(s).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor’s note: Overlay codes may provide alternative car parking location provisions, which vary this outcome.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Changes to 9.3.13 - Multiple accommodation code

a. 9.3.13 (2) Overall outcomes

(f) Car parking is located:

(i) underground or at-grade, where generous deep planting and tall shade trees provide screening to adjoining sites and there is an attractive built form interface to the street(s); or

(ii) where development is located in the Centre zone, car parking may occur above ground only where the building promotes street activation and car parking is fully integrated into the built form, with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites;

b. Table 9.3.13-1: Multiple accommodation code – for assessable development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car park areas and servicing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PO6</strong></td>
<td><strong>AO6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where development is located in the Centre zone, car parking only occurs above ground if:</td>
<td>No acceptable outcome provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) it is fully integrated into the built form with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and adjoining sites; and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) the building promotes street activation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PO76</strong></td>
<td><strong>AO76</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of the Centre zone, car parking areas and associated structures are located:</td>
<td>No acceptable outcome provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Changes to Strategic framework
   a. 3.4.2 Element – Architecture and urban design

      Design principle 3 – Engaged
      (20) Where incorporating a tower building base, not within the light rail urban renewal area or the
          neighbourhood element area, it is designed to ensure it:
          (a) is setback from the street relevant to its context;
          (b) does not exceed 5 metres in height; and
          (c) locates car parking and servicing underground or:
             (i) at-grade where generous deep planting is provided to adjoining sites and there is an attractive
                 built form interface to the street(s); or
             (ii) for mixed use centres, above ground parking only occurs if it is fully integrated into the built
                 form, with high quality layered and permeable facades so it is not visible from the street and
                 adjoining sites, and the building promotes street activation.

   b. 3.5.4 Element – Mixed use centre and specialist centre form and function

      (11) Mixed use centres and specialist centres have a strong sense of enclosure at the street edge and little
          or no building setback to the street. Buildings are visually attractive, address the streets and are
          punctuated by meeting places including squares, open spaces and urban parks. Streets are lined with
          trees and may contain awnings for sun protection. They foster street life, pedestrian activity, and shared
          areas for cyclists and cars with car parking located behind the building or fully integrated into the built
          form so it is not visible from the street either behind or beside buildings.

4. Changes to terminology

   Change any references to ‘ground level’ car parking to ‘at-grade’ car parking for consistency.