PLANNING SCHEME POLICIES
POLICY 17

SITE ANALYSIS

Gold Coast City Council

POLICY 17 SITE ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 1 POLICY PURPOSE

- To promote good design of the built environment by influencing the design of development to complement neighbourhood character and minimise negative impacts on the amenity and environment of local areas;
- To facilitate efficient assessment of development applications.

CHAPTER 2 WHAT IS A SITE ANALYSIS?

Every development site is unique in terms of its characteristics, design opportunities and constraints.

A Site Analysis identifies:

- the key influences on the design of the site; and
- how the proposed uses and built form will relate to each other and to the immediate surroundings.

A Site Analysis is a two (2) phase process:

1.0 SITE SURVEY

This is the stage of the process where the site conditions are recorded, such as the existing flora and fauna, topography, drainage corridors, neighbourhood character and slope etc.

1.1 Analysis

This stage of the process requires sifting through the relevant site survey information and making decisions about the existing site conditions, eg. what to retain through development, such as significant vegetation, views, landmarks slopes etc, and/or what site conditions may be compromised through development, eg. areas where slope and topography can be altered, vegetation that can be removed and replaced through development.

This information is then used to develop strategies and options for development on the site.

CHAPTER 3 WHEN IS A SITE ANALYSIS REQUIRED?

All development proposals must begin the process with a site analysis, which should be completed before a development is designed and submitted as part of a development application.

Development proposals include applications:

- required under the Planning Scheme; and
- for building works, where no application is required under the Planning Scheme.

Exemptions:

No Site Analysis is required to be submitted with applications for building works for detached dwellings, outbuildings and for fit outs, where the building coordinator considers that a Site Analysis is unnecessary. However, applicants are encouraged to submit a Site Analysis, having regard to the purpose of this policy.

CHAPTER 4 HOW DO YOU PREPARE A SITE ANALYSIS?

Site Analysis is not a standard exercise. Thus, a major land subdivision would not require the same information as a proposal to construct an extension to a shop. A variety of simplified Site Analysis examples are attached to this policy.

Common sense and experience with site development works should determine the extent of information required in a Site Analysis. In many instances, it will be a simple freehand sketch of the characteristics of the subject site and its surrounds, eg for a small factory or duplex development. Sometimes, substantial detail of existing conditions, conveyed both graphically and in written report form, will be necessary, eg. for a large townhouse site, shopping centre or major residential subdivision.

Some of the elements that need to be addressed in a Site Analysis are listed below.

Note: ***Not all Site Analyses may include the elements listed below, or may need to address such in a very detailed manner. The extent to which detail is required by a Site Analysis is site-and-application specific.***

1.0 SITE SURVEY (DATA COLLECTION ON EXISTING CONDITIONS)

a) document the site in terms of:
- contours and pertinent spot levels (in some cases, a detailed Slope Analysis);
- type, size, condition and location of existing vegetation and/or any fauna and/or any fauna of relevance on the site (in some cases, a detailed Flora and fauna Survey);
- buildings (and any which could be retained);
- views to and from the site (in some cases, a detailed Visual Analysis);
- access and connection points;
- drainage and services (this may be a detailed analysis of Stormwater Drainage and survey of other above and below ground infrastructure elements;
- orientation, aspect, microclimate and noise sources;
- where relevant, any contaminated soils and filled areas (in some cases, a Geotechnical Survey Report);
- fences, boundaries, easements and any road realignment lines;
- features of environmental, cultural or heritage significance; and
- any other notable features;

b) the surrounds in terms of:

- the use(s) on adjacent and opposite properties and location of buildings thereon;
- pedestrian and traffic circulation patterns (in some cases, a detailed Road and Traffic survey;
- where residential use adjoins the site, abutting secluded private open spaces and habitable room windows which have outlooks towards the site, particularly those within nine metres of the site;
- views and solar access enjoyed by adjacent residents;
- major trees on adjacent properties, particularly those within nine metres of the site. In some cases, this may include identifying ecological corridors and open space linkages within a 2km radius of the site;
- characteristics of any adjacent public open space or recreation areas;
- street frontage features, such as poles, street trees, kerb crossovers, bus stops and services;
- the built form and character of adjacent and nearby development, including characteristic fencing and garden styles and/or character and heritage survey of the neighbourhood;
- direction and distances to local shops, schools, public transport, parks and community facilities;
- the difference in levels between the subject land and adjacent properties.

Note: Photographs of the subject site and surrounds are helpful for assessment of development applications, and very much appreciated by Council officers.

1.1 Site Analysis

After the data collection of the existing conditions of the site, the information needs to be assessed as to whether a particular element is a constraint to the development of the site, or is a positive opportunity to be used in the site design.

All assessment of the existing elements of the site need to be undertaken with regard to Council policy and requirements of the Planning Scheme and any relevant State Government requirements. Additionally, these elements need to be considered in terms of their contribution to the development use on the site.

In some cases, this is an easy process. For a small development, it may be a simple decision of the removal or retention of vegetation on the site, retaining the 'good' views into and out of the site, and making decisions about appropriate aspect for the location of entertaining areas or balconies.
In large developments, such as a residential subdivision or high density development, decisions need to be made about areas and elements on the site that need to be retained or altered, such as what vegetation, views or landmarks need to be retained and what areas are suitable for changes to ground level and/or building pads. These decisions can be complex in some situations, and discussions with Council may be necessary through pre-lodgement meetings to negotiate the best outcomes for the site, prior to developing design options. Design options are based on the site survey information and documentation of the potentials and constraints on the site, often documented in a graphic form as a "Site Potential and Constraints Plan".

HOW A SITE ANALYSIS FITS INTO THE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN OF THE SITE

FIGURE 1: FACTORY SITE DEVELOPMENT - TYPICAL ANALYSIS

Note: Propose to screen existing housing by fencing and vegetation

- Residential character / streetscape
  - Brick/tile one(1) storey
  - minimum street tree planting

N

Not to Scale

FIGURE 2: SMALLER DEVELOPMENT TYPICAL SITE ANALYSIS

Notes:

Proposed – to retain significant trees
These provide a structure and amenity to site

– Site exposed to neighbour views – propose to builder with landscaping to provide privacy to site & amenity to adjacent blocks.

FIGURE 3: LARGER DEVELOPMENT - TYPICAL SITE ANALYSIS

LEGEND

1 Significant Stand of Hoop Pines

2 High Voltage Power Lines

3 Flowing Creek Wildlife corridor/ Open space link

4 Existing Passive open space

5 Open cleared area

6 Line of elevated land - Green backdrop and edge to site

7 Significant Creek Vegetation

8 Land fill with Builder's rubble

9 Designated Road re alignment

Ridgeline

Drainage

Contours

Existing vegetation

Site Access

Site feature/Landmark

Major road

Secondary road

Major intersection