See attached submission

Regards

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Council Ref: A007083208

1 October 2026

Chief Executive Officer
Brisbane City Council
GPO Box 1434
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Sir / Madam,

SUBMISSION AGAINST DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION – A007083208
AT 11A – 19 CHESTER STREET AND 1 – 5 MORSE STREET, NEWSTEAD
DESCRIBED AS LOTS 112, 113, 114, 115, 122, 123 AND 124 RP9281, LOT 1 RP92566 AND Lot 125 RP93690

I lodge this submission objecting to the development application made by Property Projects Australia Pty Ltd on behalf of Graya Newstead 1 Landowner Pty Ltd over 11A–19 Chester Street and 1–5 Morse Street, Newstead.

The proposal comprises a 35-storey building containing 173 multiple dwellings and 1,264m^2 of commercial and retail gross floor area.

I support additional high-density housing in appropriate, well-serviced locations however the proposed 35-storey building is an excessive and unjustified response to this site and its surrounding context. The application does not present compelling strategic or site-specific justification for a development of this height and intensity, which would establish an unprecedented built-form scale and fundamentally alter the intended spatial distribution of height and intensity of Brisbane. The proposal therefore cannot be supported.

History

The site already benefits from a valid approval for two towers of 15–16 storeys, granted by Council through an Other Change application in December 2025 (Council Ref: A006807435).

The current application was properly made on 17 August 2026. On 4 September 2026, Council issued a letter advising that it would not issue an information request before public notification. The letter stated that the proposed building height of 35 storeys is a departure from the height anticipated for the site and surrounding area under the City Plan 2014, and that given the significance of the proposal, Council sought to obtain community feedback prior to progressing the application further.

In the letter, Council identified several matters that require further consideration and would form part of future discussions including - Community benefit; Podium design and built to boundary wall heights; Streetscape activation, CPTED issues and interface with Morse Street Park; Traffic impacts and carparking supply; Setbacks and site coverage; Deep planting, irrigation and landscaping; Refuse, servicing and stormwater management. These matters

should be formally documented by Council following public consultation to ensure a transparent assessment process.

Public notification closes on 1 October 2026. The number of objections already lodged demonstrates substantial community concern about the proposal's scale and impacts.

Assessment Benchmarks

As outlined in Section 5.3.3(5)(b) of City Plan 2014, an Impact Assessable application *"is to have regard to the whole of the planning scheme"*. On this basis, the relevant assessment benchmarks are the entire City Plan 2014.

The proposal relies on performance-based responses across the Fortitude Valley Neighbourhood Plan Code, Centre or Mixed Use Code and Multiple Dwelling Code. Its departures are extensive and include overall building height, podium height, setbacks, building separation, deep planting and podium parking. Considered together, these non-compliances demonstrate that the proposal's scale and form are not aligned with the planning framework.

The subject site is contained within the James Street Precinct (NPP-005) of the Fortitude Valley Neighbourhood Plan. We outline two of the key non-compliances below in the neighbourhood plan code that present the most concerning parts of the development. Notwithstanding, the development has a large number of non-compliances against the City Plan 2014.

	Acceptable Outcome	**Proposed Design**	**Extent of Non-Compliance**
Maximum building height (AO1.2)	8 storeys	35 storeys	27 storeys
Maximum podium height (AO1.3)	3 storeys	7 storeys	4 storeys

As can be seen in the table above, the proposal does not comply with AO1.2 of the Fortitude Valley Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal exceeds the maximum building height by 27 storeys. This is not a marginal variation. The proposed building is more than four times the eight-storey outcome and exceeds it by 27 storeys. The magnitude of the departure is unprecedented for this location and requires a compelling strategic and site-specific justification. None is demonstrated.

The existing approval for towers of up to 16 storeys already permits twice the planned height. Although that approval also exceeds the eight-storey outcome, it provides a substantially more measured response to the locality's character, intensity and transition than the current 35-storey proposal.

The seven-storey podium also exceeds the three-storey outcome in AO1.3 by four storeys. At more than twice the anticipated height, the podium would create a visually dominant and overbearing street edge to Chester Street, Morse Street and Morse Street Park. Its scale is inconsistent with both the planned outcome and the finer-grained podiums established nearby.

These two significant departures from the City Plan 2014 have been discussed in detail in the following sections.

Building Height – AO1.2

The proposed 35-storey building is 27 storeys above the prescribed eight-storey height and is unprecedented in this location. Although the existing neighbourhood plan is under review as part of the Fortitude Valley Sustainable Growth Precinct Plan, Council's published material

indicates that the greatest height uplift is being considered around Fortitude Valley Station and along parts of Wickham Street, Ann Street and Brunswick Street, not at this transitional site.

Approving this proposal would establish a new 35-storey benchmark before Council has completed the strategic work needed to determine where that scale should occur. It would pre-empt, rather than implement, the precinct-planning process and could alter the area's future built form trajectory through a site-specific approval unsupported by an adopted strategy. The proposal would extend CBD-scale development eastward into an area that performs a deliberate transition between intensive development to the west and character housing toward New Farm.

The lodgement material analyses height from Newstead toward the CBD but omits the eastern context toward Teneriffe and New Farm. This omission is material because pre-war dwellings in the character residential zone are about 220 metres away along Chester Street (refer **Figure 1** below). Without assessing that interface, the application does not demonstrate how the proposal manages the transition to lower-scale development or responds to the site's full context.

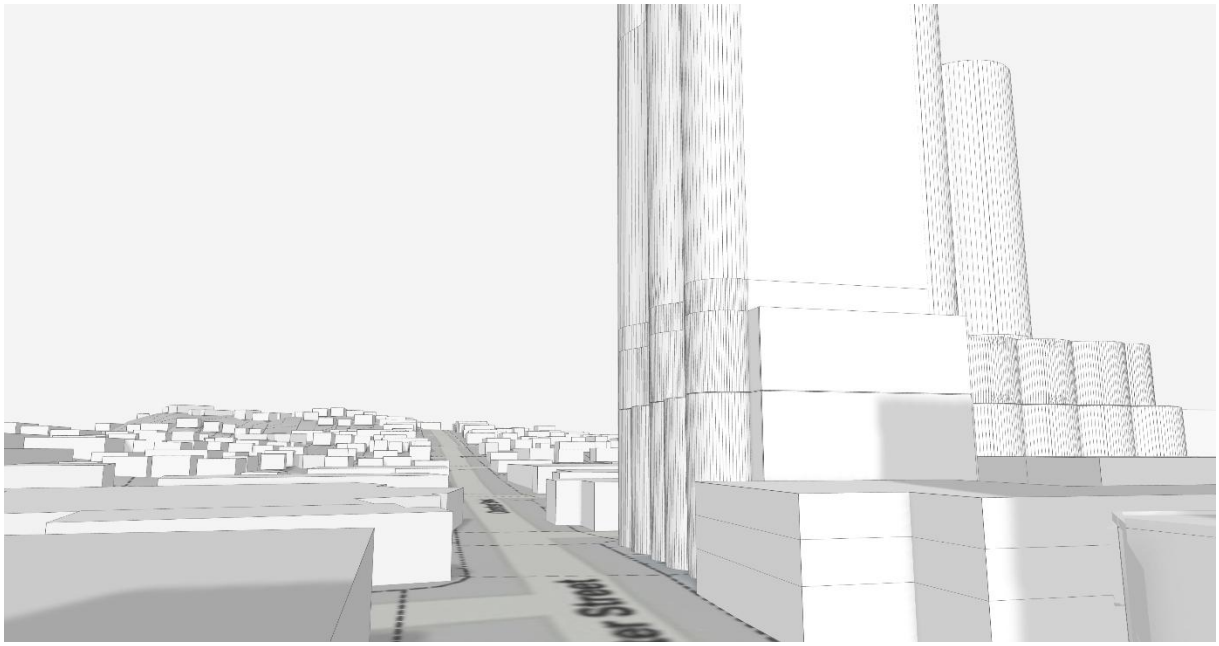

Figure 1 View down Chester Street from Ann Street (south-east) *– Character residential dwellings located south-east along Chester Street – approximately 220 metres away*

The lodgement materials identify the Fortitude Valley to Newstead area as accommodating buildings of 25-35 storeys, despite this not reflecting the existing built form pattern and before the draft precinct plan has even been released. The basis for nominating this height range is speculative and misleading. For example, references are made to an approved 34-storey tower at 57 Berwick Street. That application is in the early days of assessment, not approved. Council has recently issued an information request seeking a reduction in building height, noting the proposal significantly exceeds the scale anticipated for the site and precinct.

The nearest approved building of comparable height, the 33-storey 'Little Italy' development at 75 Longland Street, is located within the Newstead and Teneriffe Waterfront Neighbourhood Plan where substantially greater heights have already been contemplated and constructed. Likewise, the 27-30 storey towers along Ann Street are located within a different precinct closer to the CBD along a major road corridor. In the immediate locality, the most relevant approved or constructed development are the 19-storey Chester and Ella apartment buildings.

Against this context, the claim in the lodgement material that the proposal aligns with community expectations is difficult to substantiate. There are no existing or approved 35-storey buildings in the surrounding area, and the developments most relevant to the site's immediate context are substantially lower. The proposal would therefore not represent an incremental or contextually anticipated evolution of the established built form. It would introduce an entirely new scale of development without a demonstrated strategic planning basis or comparable local precedent, as illustrated in **Figure 2** below.



Figure 2 View from the corner of Commercial Road and Arthur Street looking south-west *– Existing towers illustrate a more intense built form along Ann Street toward the CBD with a lower residential interface toward Arthur Street*

The tower's excessive height is compounded by minimal boundary setbacks that do not satisfy AO3 or PO3 of the neighbourhood plan code. Although the tower steps down toward Morse Street Park, this transition does not commence until the 23rd storey being 15 storeys above the eight-storey height prescribed for the site. Above the podium, the tower is built to the ultimate front boundary of Chester Street and 1.8m–2m from Morse Street, reinforcing its visual dominance at street level and from farther away (refer **Figure 2** above). The tower is also set back only 3m from the north-western boundary, rather than the prescribed 10m, which would constrain the redevelopment potential of the adjoining site. The proposal therefore fails to satisfy PO3, particularly items (b) and (c), which require setbacks that prevent buildings from dominating streets and other spaces and avoid prejudicing the development of adjoining sites. By effectively continuing the podium setbacks through the tower, the design creates a monolithic built form and undermines the intended distinction between podium and tower elements.

The proposed building height would also cause substantial overshadowing of surrounding areas. In winter mornings, the shadow diagrams show impacts extending to James Street, including areas adjoining the James Street Market and other highly frequented and important pedestrian spaces. James Street is Brisbane's premier lifestyle, shopping and dining precinct, distinguished by its light, leafy and pedestrian-oriented character. The proposal will diminish that character through both its visual prominence and increased overshadowing. In winter afternoons, shadows also extend all the way to the remnant character housing on the southern side of Arthur Street, impacting residents' amenity. A comparative shadow analysis should be provided for the proposed 35-storey building, the approved 15–16-storey development and an eight-storey compliant built form to clearly show the additional shadowing impacts of the proposal.

The subject site is located within a well-established inner-city neighbourhood that is suitable for high-density residential development. However, support for increased housing density does not justify development of any height or scale, nor does it displace the need for a site-responsive built form that provides an appropriate transition to its surroundings. The emerging strategic direction of the Fortitude Valley Sustainable Growth Precinct Plan reinforces this.

The subject site is not positioned within the part of the precinct intended to accommodate the greatest concentration of building height and development intensity. That higher-order built form is more appropriately directed to the major road corridors and the area surrounding Fortitude Valley Station, where it can reinforce public transport accessibility, support the centre hierarchy and minimise abrupt interfaces with established lower density housing. By contrast, the subject site occupies a transitional location between more intensive development to the west along Ann Street and lower-scale character residential areas to the east. A 35-storey tower in this location would weaken that transition, extend CBD-scale development into a more sensitive interface and undermine the deliberate spatial distribution of height and intensity sought by the strategic intent of the City Plan 2014.

The applicant relies heavily on the proposed pedestrian connection and retail interface as community benefit supporting a 27-storey uplift. That benefit is not commensurate with the scale of the departure. A public route already exists from Chester Street through Morse Street and Morse Street Park to Fortitude Street. The proposed connection primarily directs pedestrians past the development's retail tenancies and residential lobby. It does not create a missing cross-block link or deliver additional parkland that genuinely has community benefit. A benefit of this limited nature cannot justify an unprecedented 35-storey outcome and its enduring built-form and amenity impacts. As illustrated in **Figure 3** below, the development would have an imposing podium form and monolithic tower when viewed from Fortitude Street as you approach the pedestrian connection.

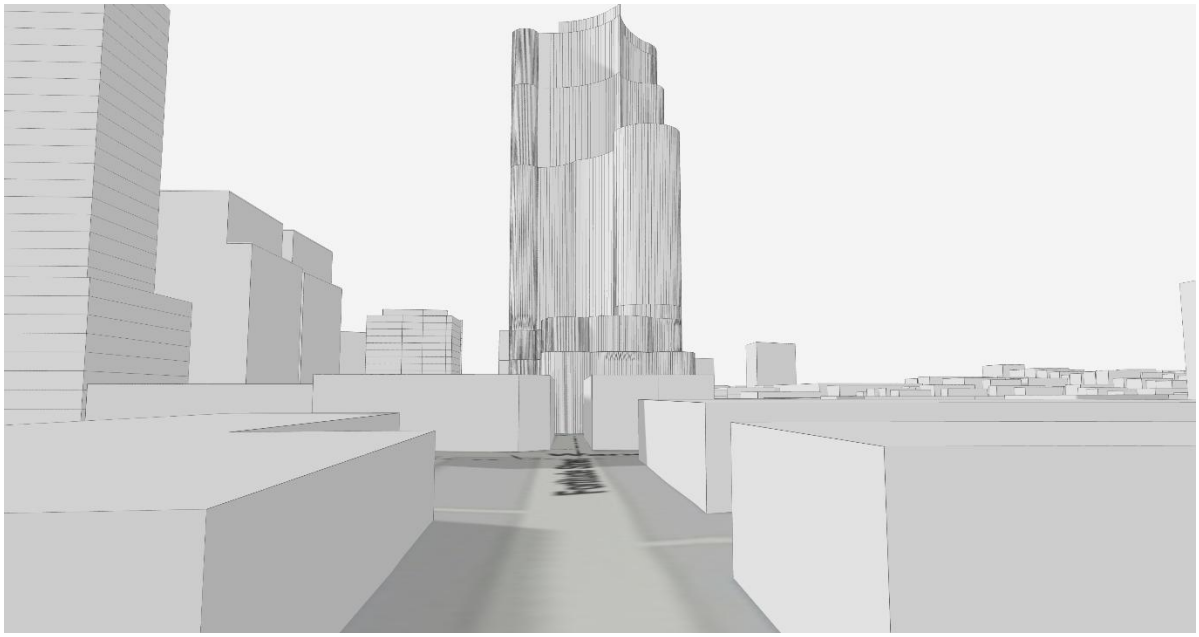

Figure 3 View along Fortitude Street looking north-east along proposed pedestrian connection *– A dominant podium form adjacent to Morse Park and a significantly higher tower than the existing built form*

Podium Height – AO1.3

The application describes the podium as six storeys; however, the architectural drawings indicate that it is seven storeys. It therefore exceeds the three-storey outcome prescribed by AO1.3 by four storeys and is materially taller than the podium forms established in the

surrounding area, which are generally limited to three or four storeys. This is not a minor numerical variation, it substantially impacts the scale of the building at street level and the Morse Park interface.

A seven-storey podium of this scale, on a site of this size, is unprecedented in this locality. Its height, length and proximity to the street frontages and Morse Park create a monolithic and visually dominant built form that is inconsistent with the finer-grained podium scale anticipated by the neighbourhood plan. The podium is not simply an architectural response to the site, it is a direct consequence of the height and density being pursued, including the amount of car parking required to service a 35-storey development. While locating car parking within a podium is not opposed in principle, the resulting podium height should not be treated as an unavoidable construction requirement or as justification for an otherwise inappropriate built form outcome. The design should instead respond to the planning intent and the established scale of the surrounding streetscape, which is three to four storey podium structures.

The podium does not provide an appropriate contextual response to the prevailing built form. Although the applicant refers to other podium structures nearby, none of the cited examples reach seven storeys or the proposed peak level of RL 31m AHD. The comparative analysis is also incomplete because it focuses on the Ann Street corridor and does not examine built form to the south-east, where development transitions towards lower-scale character housing (refer **Figure 4** below). This omission is significant. Even along Ann Street, a significant road corridor within a precinct intended to accommodate greater development intensity, podiums are generally lower than that proposed on the subject site. The examples relied upon by the applicant also employ lighter, more articulated subtropical design responses that have finer-grain detailing. By contrast, substantial multi-storey sections of the proposed podium comprise solid materiality, creating a very imposing street and park interface.

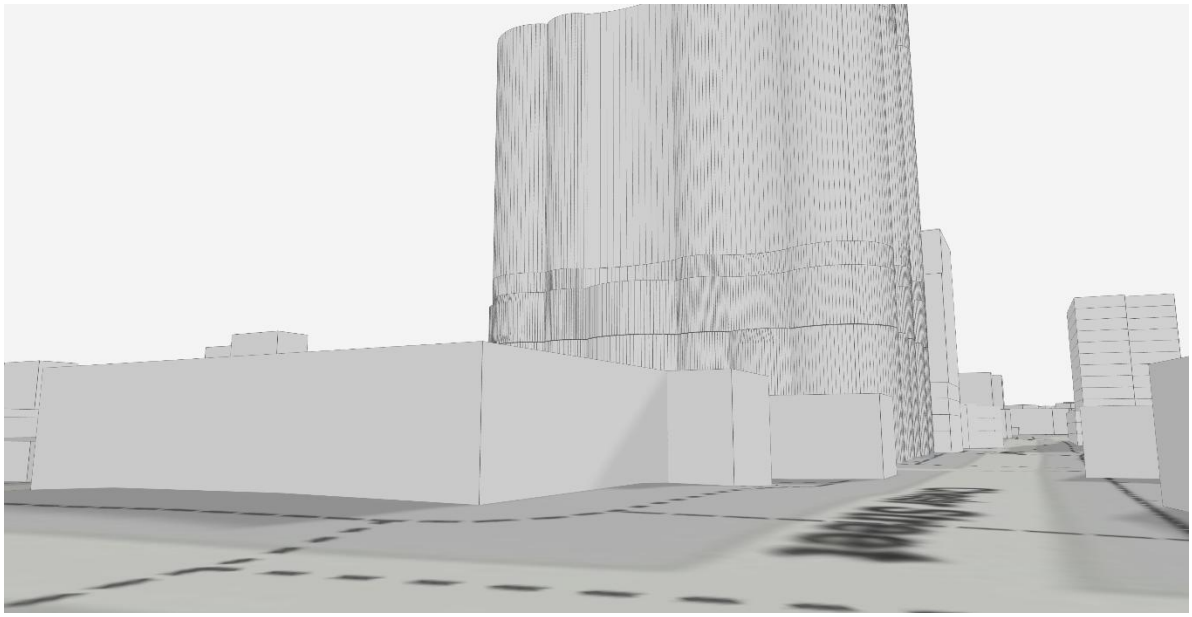

Figure 4 Street view at the corner of Chester and Doggett Streets looking north-west*– An imposing and monolithic podium form that is not contextually relevant and fails to recognise the lower built forms to the south-east of the site*

The podium is built to the boundary of Morse Street Park, a narrow and valued local open space. A seven-storey wall at that interface would materially increase enclosure, visual domination and the perceived privatisation of the park edge. The application does not adequately demonstrate that the park would retain a comfortable, clearly public and usable character.

Along Morse Street, the podium reaches its maximum height of RL 31m AHD and extends across the full street frontage with setbacks of only 0m–1.65m. Although the Centre or Mixed Use Code supports 0m front setbacks for podium forms, this is in the context of the three-storey podium anticipated for the site, not the proposed seven-storey structure. The combination of its height, limited setback and length creates a dominant and monolithic interface, enclosing Morse Street which has a narrow 14m wide road reserve. As illustrated in **Figure 5** below, the resulting podium form is grossly excessive and, when considered in the context of the site's transitional function down from Ann Street, will fundamentally alter the scale and character of the neighbourhood.

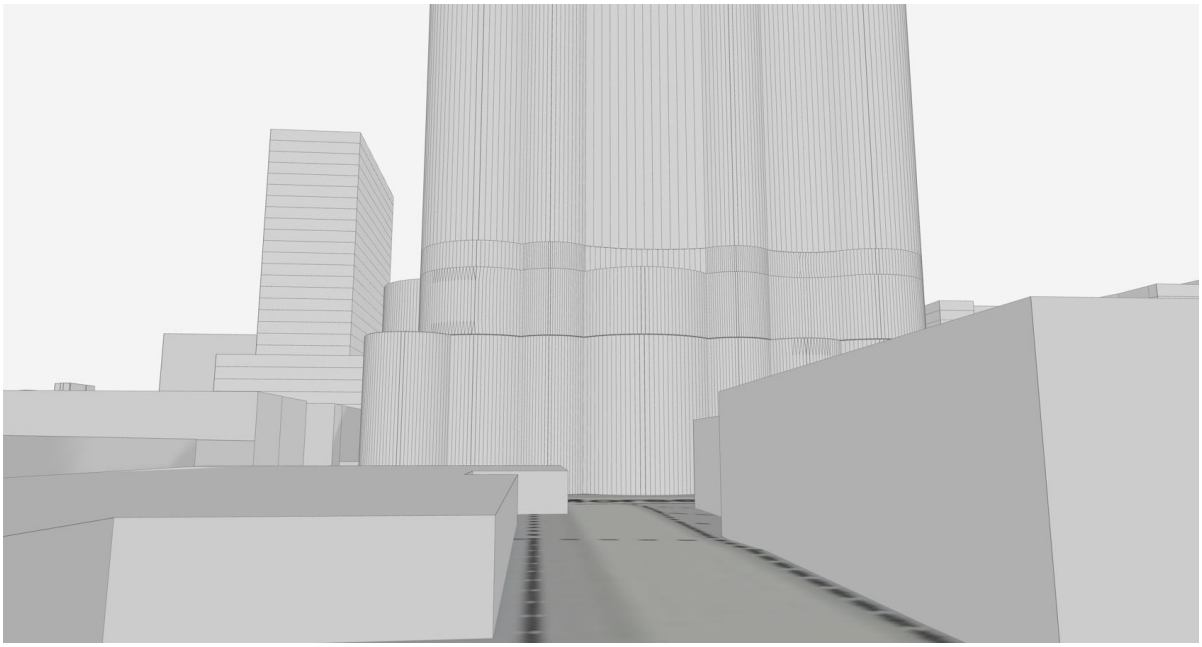

Figure 5 Street view from Doggett Street looking north-west to Morse Street *– A dominant podium form to Morse Street that will fundamentally alter the character of the local area adjacent to pre-war housing*

The podium component alone almost reaches the eight-storey maximum building height prescribed for the entire development under AO1.2. Although the podium incorporates some variation in its form, its overall height and mass is substantial. The combination of tall podium walls positioned directly adjacent to the street frontages, with the tower rising immediately above, intensifies the building's visual dominance. The resulting composition would present as an overly bulky and imposing element within Chester Street and Morse Street, rather than a human-scaled podium that reinforces the established streetscape. Accordingly, the proposed podium represents a significant departure from AO1.3 and does not demonstrate an appropriate built form response to the site or its surrounding context per PO1.

Failure to meet Strategic Outcomes

The proposal's failure is not limited to numerical non-compliance with the relevant codes. The proposed height, intensity and scale conflict with the strategic outcomes in the City Plan 2014 that direct where growth should occur, how neighbourhood identity is maintained and how development should respond to local context. The following are the key strategic outcomes that the development fails to address.

<u>Theme 2 – Brisbane's Outstanding Lifestyle</u>

- **Strategic Outcome 3.4.1(b)** seeks to preserve the City Centre and centres along transport corridors as Brisbane's dominant visual markers, while maintaining distinct neighbourhood identities. A 35-storey tower on this site would blur that hierarchy by

introducing CBD-scale height outside a major transport corridor. While the locality is suitable for high-density housing, development should reinforce its transitional role between the most intensive built form to the west and the lower-scale neighbourhoods to the east.

- **Strategic Outcome 3.4.1(i)** supports housing that is integrated into its community in a form appropriate to the locality. The issue is not whether more housing should occur, but whether this scale is justified here. The application does not demonstrate that it is established in a manner consistent with the community and neighbourhood.

Theme 5 – Brisbane's CityShape

- **Strategic Outcome 3.7.1(g)** requires growth in Suburban Living Areas to respond to local needs and carefully consider amenity and local values. The applicant's reliance on redevelopment sites not within the same sub-precinct does not address this site's transitional role. A 27-storey exceedance, together with a seven-storey high podium, is incompatible with an outcome requiring context and amenity impacts to be carefully managed.
- **Strategic Outcome 3.7.1(k)** directs growth to Growth Nodes on Selected Transport Corridors while maintaining surrounding character and using neighbourhood planning to guide future change. The current neighbourhood plan permits eight storeys, and Council's ongoing precinct review is considering where additional height should be concentrated. The available direction points to Fortitude Valley Train Station and major transport corridors, not this site or surrounding area. Approving 35 storeys here would pre-empt that process and distort the orderly spatial distribution of growth.

Fortitude Valley Neighbourhood Plan Code – Overall Outcomes

- **Overall Outcome 3(g)** requires development to transition carefully to lower-intensity residential neighbourhoods such as New Farm. Character residential land located in the New Farm and Teneriffe Hill Neighbourhood Plan lies only 220 metres to the south-east, yet the application ignores this interface and focuses instead on the more intensive development toward the CBD and Newstead. At 35 storeys, the proposal would introduce an unprecedented scale and fail to provide any meaningful transition toward New Farm.
- **Overall Outcome 3(j)** requires development to reflect community expectations and the intended precinct scale. The existing approval for 15–16 storeys already provides substantial uplift above the eight-storey outcome while recognising the site's transitional role, outside the Valley Gateway and Heart sub-precincts and away from major transport corridors and Fortitude Valley Station. A 35-storey building would more than double that approved scale, without any demonstrated community or economic need sufficient to justify such an exceptional departure.

Conclusion

The application should not be approved in its current form. The proposed 35-storey height is 27 storeys above the neighbourhood plan outcome, the seven-storey podium is more than twice the podium height of surrounding developments and its cumulative bulk, intensity and scale are unprecedented in this locality. These are fundamental departures from the City Plan 2014 and the application does not provide a strategic, contextual or community-benefit justification proportionate to the height and scale of the tower.

The proposal would establish a new development benchmark before Council has completed the Fortitude Valley Sustainable Growth Precinct Plan, undermine the intended height and intensity transition away from Ann Street and impose enduring visual and amenity impacts on Chester Street, Morse Street and the Morse Street Park.

Council should refuse the application, or require a substantial reduction in height, podium scale and overall intensity so the development responds to the strategic planning framework and the actual site context.

Kind Regards,

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