

# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	615 King Street Newtown
Proposal:	Partial demolition, alterations and additions for a shop top housing development comprising a ground floor commercial tenancy and 4 residential apartments above
Application No.:	DA/2023/0289
Meeting Date:	13 June 2023
Previous Meeting Date:	25 January 2022 (Pre DA)
Panel Members:	Matthew Pullinger (chair); Russell Olsson; and Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia; Sean Wilson; and Sinclair Croft
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Nizam Uddin (CCG Architects) – Architect for the project; Liam Hogan (CCG Architects) – Heritage Advisor for the Project

### Background:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference.

### Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel notes that the subject site is located within a Heritage Conservation Area, and the applicant's strategy of retaining the existing building fabric, primary facade and restoring the

Level 1 arch addressing King Street is considered a positive aspect of the proposal, noting that further evidence should be sought of the traditional form of the arched opening to confirm details and to clarify whether it originally presented as a glazed window or open balcony.

2. A maximum floor space ratio of 1.5:1 applies to the subject site and the proposal seeks a significantly higher floor space ratio of 1.94:1. Overall, the Panel notes that the design strategy is problematic as the proposal seeks to configure considerable floor space and building height on a small, isolated lot. As a consequence, the Panel is concerned that the proposal results in inadequate internal residential amenity within the apartments. And additionally, there are potential overshadowing impacts on the adjoining property to the south, which are not yet satisfactorily verified for consistency with Parts 3B-2 and 4A of the NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG).
3. The Panel notes fundamental residential amenity concerns with the proposal including:
  - a. Lack of amenable communal open space, contrary to the guidance offered within the ADG Part 3D Communal and public open space.
  - b. Constrained living room and bedroom sizes, below the targets provided within Part 4D Apartment size and layout of the ADG. The Panel also notes that the floor plans provided by the applicant do not include furniture layouts for review of residential amenity achieved within the apartments.
  - c. Natural cross ventilation below the 60% target within Part 4B Natural ventilation of the ADG.
  - d. Limited residential amenity will be achieved within the eastern apartment located on Level 1 since the retained existing façade will obstruct outlook and access to good daylight and natural ventilation.
  - e. Potential overlooking concerns from the Level 2 apartment onto the Level 1 balcony of the eastern apartment below.
  - f. Constrained and poorly planned internal layouts with bathrooms under staircases and bathroom doors opening directly into living areas.
  - g. Lack of internal apartment storage, contrary to the guidance offered within Part 4G Apartment storage of the ADG.
4. The Panel has not exhaustively commented on all architectural and landscape design issues noting these are lower-order issues in comparison to the more fundamental residential amenity issues listed above.
5. It is also the Panel's view that the proposal, in its current form and configuration, can not be supported as it does not meet the minimum acceptable threshold for residential amenity and design quality expected for a residential apartment development within the Inner West local government area.
6. The Panel recommends a significant redesign of the scheme to resolve fundamental amenity concerns and to achieve closer consistency with the ADG. The applicant may develop an alternative building configuration strategy with fewer apartments achieving greater internal amenity on the subject site, and with better managed (and better understood) offsite impacts of overshadowing. Further, the internal spatial planning and architectural expression need more careful consideration.
7. Alternatively, the applicant is encouraged to advance a redevelopment strategy based on lot amalgamation with the adjoining property to the north – 613 King Street Newtown. In the Panel's view this may prove to be the only basis to achieve the anticipated floor space ratio and height of building controls whilst also establishing consistency with the ADG, and would enable resolution of a more cohesive street elevation that better responds to the original building facades on the two adjacent buildings.
8. If retention or re-construction of the original first floor arch is proposed, it should be based on sound historical research to identify whether the arch was glazed or open as a balcony.
9. Future discussions with Council and with the Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel are strongly encouraged to occur at an early Pre-DA stage.