

Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	50 Fort Street Petersham
Proposal:	Alterations and additions to the existing mixed use building, including increasing the height from a 3 to 5 storey building, associated landscaping & car parking.
Application No.:	PDA/2023/0259
Meeting Date:	19 December 2023
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Russell Olsson – chair; Diane Jones
Apologies:	Michael Harrison
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia; Sean Wilson; Niall Macken
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Shaun Carter & Ben Peake (Carter Williamson) – Architects for the project

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference. The Panel thanks the applicant for considering a Pre DA meeting and allowing this early discussion. The Panel appreciates that a comprehensive set of architectural drawings, 3D drawings and photomontages have been provided as part of the Pre DA submission, including detailed urban design analysis and well-considered considerations for Designing with Country.
2. The Panel was informed at the de-briefing session that the proposal exceeds the maximum permissible LEP height control of 9.5m. The existing building has a floor space ratio of 0.92:1 and the proposal reaches approximately 1.45:1, while the maximum permissible floor space ratio control of 0.85:1 applies to the site. Exceeding the LEP provisions for height of building and FSR has consequences for the building within its context. The existing built form context is consistently 2 and 3 storeys in height. The proposal for a 4 storey and part 5 storey building is out of scale with its context. While a minor exceedance of the 9.5m height limit may be considered acceptable, the Panel is of the view that the height should be reduced by one storey to more closely align with the existing streetscape built form and character.
3. Ground floor configuration was discussed at the meeting, and the Panel considers that the proposed continuous footpath crossing for access to 4 car spaces and a shared area is not

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conducive to good pedestrian amenity and streetscape appearance. This approach also results in the loss of one on-street parking space and existing on-site vegetation. It is noted that there is little existing on-site parking on the subject site or on other apartment buildings in the street. The Panel recommends reconfiguration of the at-grade carpark to minimise the width of footpath crossings and loss of on-street parking spaces. This may require a reduction in parking spaces, which would be more in line with parking numbers on the subject site and other sites in the street.

4. The Panel discussed the ground floor built form interface with the neighbouring property to the northern boundary, and recommends addition of landscaped edges along the northern, eastern and western edges of the site to improve privacy and outlook of the ground floor unit 1.
5. The living room in Unit 1 is overlooked by the upper floor windows in the 3 storey apartments to the north. A device such as a pergola should be introduced to maintain privacy.
6. The proposal contains balconies to Units 4 and 6 and a balcony and terrace to Penthouse 2 that have the potential to overlook neighbouring yards to the east and west. Existing and proposed landscaping should be demonstrated to resolve privacy issues in future submissions.
7. The Panel suggests the balustrades ~~should avoid open type treatment alternatively~~ incorporate solid elements to create an architectural expression more consistent with the solid-to-void ratio of the existing buildings within the streetscape. A composite treatment should be considered, for example part-solid and part-open treatment, to create a balance between outlook and privacy for the residents.
8. Although it was not discussed at the meeting, the Panel recognises that the adaptive reuse proposition offers overall sustainability benefits. Further incorporation of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles are encouraged to create high performance, energy, and resource efficient building. Use of ceiling fans should be considered as a low energy alternative/augmentation to A/C/ mechanical systems. Provision of a rooftop photovoltaic system should be incorporated with details confirmed on architectural drawings and 3D views. The applicant should allow water capture and reuse for landscape irrigation.
9. The Panel acknowledges its independent and advisory only role and recommends a further review of this proposal as part of the next formal development application stage.