



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	73 Mary Street St Peters
Proposal:	A mixed use redevelopment of the site including partial demolition of existing buildings, retention of a number of buildings, construction of 3 new buildings, to carry out alterations and additions to existing buildings providing retail spaces, artist studios and residential accommodation (Build-to-Rent) with associated landscape works.
Application No.:	PDA/2021/0215
Meeting Date:	13 July 2021
Previous Meeting Date:	20 April 2021, Planning Proposal stages in 2015 and 2017.
Panel Members:	Jocelyn Jackson – Chair, Tony Caro, and Garth Paterson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia, Niall Macken, Rachel Josey, Kaitlin Zieme, and Ruba Osman
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant’s representatives to address the panel:	Architect for the proposal – Ramin Jahroumi, Cox, Urban Planner – Andrew Duggan, Ethos Urban, and Landscape Architect – Julia Manrique, McGregor Coxall

Background:

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

Discussion & Recommendations:

Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

“Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context is the key natural and built features of an area, their relationship and the character they create when combined. It also includes social, economic, health and environmental conditions.

Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of an area’s existing or future character. Well designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area including the adjacent sites, streetscape and neighbourhood. Consideration of local context is important for all sites, including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change.”

1. The Panel notes that the applicant has considered Council's recommendations regarding massing and density distribution, and this has resulted in adjustments to the heights and floor space ratio of the proposal.
2. The Panel considers reduction in height of Building A (addressing Edith Street) balanced by an increase in Building C height to have potential positive design quality benefits, however in this instance it is considered to be beyond the Panel's scope to comment in further detail on compliance with the site DCP controls.
3. The Panel is not convinced with the applicant's rationale for demolition of Building 8, and recommends Building 8 should be retained. A basement structure, subject to technical advice from a structural engineer, could be located under the existing fabric of Building 8, or an additional new partial basement elsewhere on the site could be investigated to enable the retention of Building 8.

Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

“Good design achieves a scale, bulk and height appropriate to the existing or desired future character of the street and surrounding buildings.

Good design also achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type, articulation and the manipulation of building elements. Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook. “

1. The applicant should provide fully dimensioned building separation distances on the architectural drawings, particularly the separation distances between Buildings A, B and C. It is the Panel's preference that all building separation distances are consistent with the guidance offered within the NSW Apartment Design Guide – Part 2F Building Separation.
2. The Panel also notes that the NSW ADG offers specific guidance for measuring separation distances from any gallery access circulation areas, such as provided for Buildings A and B. The ADG states that gallery access circulation areas should be treated as habitable space, and separation distances should be measured from the exterior edge of the circulation space.
3. The Panel is concerned about the proximity of communal terraces for Buildings A and B to the adjoining low density dwelling houses. It recommends that usable communal area be pulled back from the south eastern parapet to minimise potential acoustic and visual privacy issues with the adjoining low density dwelling houses.

Principle 3 – Density

“Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents and each apartment, resulting in a density appropriate to the site and its context. Appropriate densities are consistent with the area's existing or projected population.

Appropriate densities can be sustained by existing or proposed infrastructure, public transport, access to jobs, community facilities and the environment.”

-

Principle 4 – Sustainability

“Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Good sustainable design includes use of natural cross ventilation and sunlight for the amenity and liveability of residents and passive thermal design for ventilation, heating and cooling reducing reliance on technology and operation costs. Other elements include recycling and reuse of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials, and deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.”

-

Principle 5 – Landscape

“Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in attractive developments with good amenity. A positive image and contextual fit of well designed developments is achieved by contributing to the landscape character of the streetscape and neighbourhood

Good landscape design enhances the development's environmental performance by retaining positive natural features which contribute to the local context, co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy, habitat

values, and preserving green networks. Good landscape design optimises usability, privacy and opportunities for social interaction, equitable access, respect for neighbours' amenity, provides for practical establishment and long term management."

1. The Panel appreciate the efforts that the team are endeavouring to craft and create a cohesive and meaningful public realm landscape that offers a variety of different scaled open spaces and recreation opportunities throughout the site.
2. The Panel would suggest the proponent explore all opportunities throughout the site to increase the deep soil areas in order to achieve large volumetric areas of contiguous planting zones for important new urban canopy trees.
3. The Panel suggest that a considered reconfiguration of the proposed basement design that includes 100% deep soil opportunity in the "Commons" and as noted in Principle #1 retention of building 8.
4. Future opportunities should be explored in the landscape courtyards between the proposed buildings A & B that creates large below grade soil vaults rather than a reliance on above grade planter boxes that are limited in soil volume and can crowd the already narrow space with retaining walls.
5. The proponent was encouraged to explore the celebration of the previous sites use (Taubmans Paints) with innovative reuse of site won materials including bricks, recycled timbers and steel trusses.
6. The Panel encourages the design team to explore the use of a sophisticated interpretation of colour in the landscape through seasonal changes in the proposed planting palette throughout the site.
7. A site of this size and opportunity should explore best practice thinking in terms of rainwater recycling and retention throughout the site (WSUD)

Principle 6 – Amenity

"Good design positively influences internal and external amenity for residents and neighbours. Achieving good amenity contributes to positive living environments and resident well being.

Good amenity combines appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility."

1. The Panel raised concern for compliance and amenity of the majority of second bedrooms of apartments within Building A and B. The second bedrooms are configured with gallery access and rely on these common circulation corridors for access to natural light and ventilation, which potentially creates visual and acoustic privacy issues in these apartments.
2. While the Panel appreciates the applicant's design response with regards to the treatment of the 'void spaces' within the gallery access circulation area, the Panel is not convinced as such treatments are unlikely to resolve issues due to adjacencies. The Panel considers that alternative planning and configuration strategies for the apartment layouts should be investigated, and better consistency with the NSW ADG should be considered with any alternative strategies.
3. The Panel discussed effective natural cross ventilation within the mid-block 2 bedroom apartments within Building C. The applicant should seek independent expert technical advice, to confirm if compliant natural cross ventilation is achieved within these apartments.
4. The applicant is encouraged to ensure all apartments are provided with adequate internal and external storage areas, consistent with the guidance offered within Part 4G of the NSW ADG.

Principle 7 – Safety

"Good design optimises safety and security, within the development and the public domain. It provides for quality public and private spaces that are clearly defined and fit for the intended purpose. Opportunities to maximise passive surveillance of public and communal areas promote safety.

"A positive relationship between public and private spaces is achieved through clearly defined secure access points and well lit and visible areas that are easily maintained and appropriate to the location and purpose."

-

Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

Good design achieves a mix of apartment sizes, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets.

Well designed apartment developments respond to social context by providing housing and facilities to suit the existing and future social mix. Good design involves practical and flexible features, including different types of communal spaces for a broad range of people, providing opportunities for social interaction amongst residents.

-

Principle 9 - Aesthetics

Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structure. Good design uses a variety of materials, colours and textures.

The visual appearance of well designed apartment development responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.

1. The applicant should confirm location of AC condenser units and other mechanical equipment on the architectural drawings. The Panel considers these should not be located within balconies or anywhere visually apparent from the surrounding public domain.
2. The Panel suggests that to promote genuine architectural diversity architectural across the site at least two of the eight proposed buildings should be designed by different architectural practices.

Non – SEPP 65 matters – General Discussion

-

Amendments

See **Discussion & Recommendations** for details

Conclusion

The Panel thanks the applicant for seeking feedback at a second Pre DA meeting, and is generally supportive of the applicant's vision for the proposal.

In order to achieve the Panel's support the proposal should be further refined to establish greater consistency with the NSW Apartment Design Guide and the recommendations within this AEDRP Report.