



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	425 New Canterbury Road Dulwich Hill
Proposal:	An adaptive reuse proposal for shop top housing with 5 apartments above retail spaces.
Application No.:	PDA/2021/0224
Meeting Date:	7 September 2021
Previous Meeting Date:	None
Panel Members:	Peter Ireland – chair; Jocelyn Jackson; and Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia, Niall Macken, Keeley Samways, and Martin Amy
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Tony Owen – Architect for the proposal, and Daniel McNamara – Urban Planner.

Background:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference.
2. As a proposal subject to the State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development (SEPP 65), the Panel's comments have been structured against the 9 Design Quality Principles set out in the SEPP 65 NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG).

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 encourages the applicant to document the proposal in its immediate context including plans, elevations, streetscape elevations, sections and 3D massing. The Panel is keen to see a proposal that successfully establishes its relationships with the surrounding buildings, including the adjoining property to the north east.

2. The architectural drawings should include a streetscape analysis identifying the predominant character and built form pattern of the buildings within the New Canterbury Road streetscape. The Panel understands that the subject site is within a Heritage Conservation Area, and an appropriate design consideration should be given to its primary façades addressing New Canterbury Road and Lewisham Street.
3. The Panel recommends further design resolution for the street corner to emphasise the prominent urban location. The Panel discussed the street corner acts as a logical meeting point, and should be well-defined with appropriate architectural treatment and landscape refinement (on ground level). This may not necessarily be green landscaping but could be of community benefit such as a seat or bench.

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 Panel notes that the proposal benefits from an existing right-of-way (as described by the applicant at the AEDRP meeting) along its north eastern boundary, and that this existing right-of-way allows provision of the existing windows along the north eastern boundary to the adjoining lot.
2. Further to retention of the existing windows to the north eastern boundary, the applicant has added new skylights along this boundary, to facilitate direct solar access to the habitable areas at mid-winter.
3. The Panel expressed concern as the proposal relies heavily on the ‘existing right-of-way’ on the adjoining property to achieve its solar amenity and natural cross ventilation requirements. The Panel considers the DA documentation should include testing of future development scenarios for the adjoining property along the north eastern boundary. Testing should ensure that future development on this neighbouring property does not compromise the residential amenity, solar access and natural cross ventilation achieved within the apartments on the subject site and be compliant with BCA requirements.
4. The DA set of architectural drawings (including all proposed plans, elevations and sections) should clearly describe parts of the building proposed to be retained, demolished or added, to confirm the extent to which adaptive reuse is considered within the proposal.
5. The Panel discussed, that given the degree of modifications proposed to the existing building, it might be better to consider demolition of the existing building to ground level and creation of a new building, as this strategy would alleviate the potential limitations for construction, building configuration and architectural design issues within the proposal.

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.”

1. Density was not specifically discussed, however the Panel would expect that the design achieves a high level of residential amenity within each apartment. A small excess in FSR was noted through the retention of existing building envelope but given the site constraints was not considered a major issue – and could be addressed with a new building approach.

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.”

1. The Panel would expect that key targets established within the NSW ADG for solar access and cross ventilations should be met by the proposal. Similarly, the Panel would encourage further sustainability targets for water, energy and waste efficiency.
2. The applicant is encouraged to include an appropriate rooftop photovoltaic system for environmental benefits.
3. Provision of rainwater tank for should be considered to allow collection, storage and reuse within the subject site.
4. The Panel encourages the applicant to consider provision of ceiling fans within all habitable areas of the apartments, for environmental benefits and minimising a/c energy use. The floor-to-ceiling and floor-to-floor heights should be resolved, to allow use of ceiling fans for effective cooling and heat distribution within the apartments.
5. The Panel appreciates provision of north-facing skylights and openings to the habitable areas are a result of a south facing allotment. This strategy relies on there being only secondary light source to habitable rooms. and recommends effective measures for shading and solar management through operable devices, particularly for solar management during summer months. Consideration must be given to how these could be controlled and maintained.

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 applicant is encouraged to develop a detailed landscape design with a suitably qualified landscape architect, to consider provision of green walls, planters, pot plants and greening elements particularly to rooftop courtyards
2. Scope for some robust planting to the ground floor corner on Canterbury Road would also be recommended.

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 recommends further resolution of the ground floor and basement layouts, to ensure compliance with the relevant accessible requirements for the lift-car, entry foyers and all common areas within the proposal.

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.”

1. The Panel discussed the ground floor configuration and the need for further resolution to avoid potential CPTED issues. Particularly the recessed pedestrian entry from the New Canterbury Road alignment.
2. The residential pedestrian entry from ground floor needs further resolution to create a safer, amenable and a more formalised entry foyer for the proposal.

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.”

No discussion

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 Panel discussed the potential removal, relocation or reconfiguration of the existing telecommunication infrastructure elements located along the parapet and on the rooftop of the existing building. The Panel considers this to be a critical issue that needs to be addressed to create a successful architectural expression for the proposal.
2. The Panel discussed the character of the inspiration or the precedent images provided by the applicant. The creation of wide “free standing’ brick piers needed further development, in regard to reinforcing the strength of the corner location, having a sense of mass/depth at the upper level and how this typology is integrated into a streetscape of cornices and horizontal parapets.
3. The Panel discussed the appropriateness and practicality of the timber screens to the facade due to; fire rating, the associated costs, and long term maintenance issues.
4. The Panel discussed the proximity of the new skylight openings to the northern boundary and the associated fire separation and water-related (e.g. ponding) issues along the building interface. The applicant should provide details in form of 1:20 sections indicating primary façade type, building edges, junctions, rainwater drainage, downpipes, and similar details.
5. The formal DA drawings should include details of the design intent for key façade types in form of 1:20 sections indicating primary façade types, balustrade fixings, balcony edges, balcony soffits, junctions, rainwater drainage including any downpipes, and similar details within the proposal.
6. The formal DA drawings should confirm proposed locations for AC condenser units and other mechanical equipment. The Panel notes these should not be located within balconies (unless appropriately designed to be enclosed and screened from view) or anywhere visually apparent from the surrounding public domain.

Non-SEPP 65 matters

1. The formal DA documentation should include a structural engineering report on the feasibility of the retention of the existing brickwork elements as proposed.

Conclusion

The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel would like to thank the applicant for seeking early feedback at the Pre-DA stage.

With consideration of the recommendations made in this report, the Panel is of the view that the proposal, subject to its further development, could be capable of delivering an acceptable level of design quality.

The Panel would like a second opportunity to review the proposal again during the formal DA stage.