

# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	52 Jarrett Street Leichhardt
Proposal:	Partial demolition of existing structures and the construction of a three storey shop top housing/residential flat building development comprising one (1) commercial tenancy and four (4) residential units.
Application No.:	DA/2021/1027
Meeting Date:	30 November 2021
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Jon Johannsen – chair, Diane Jones and Tony Caro
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Bismark Opoku-Ware
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant’s representatives to address the panel:	Benson McCormack Architects – Architect 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:

#### 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.”*

The Panel noted the indication of an aesthetic based on reference to some of the nearby industrial or commercial buildings but recommends further resolution of the grid framing in response to other concerns raised below.

There was recognition by the Applicant that recent streetscape improvements undertaken by Council provide scope to improve this site in relation to its immediate environment.

## 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 recommends that the applicant should reinstate the original verandah, awning and posts, to regain the character of the existing corner building.
2. The Panel discussed options to achieve a more recessive second floor, particularly at the street corner (for the part above the retained building).
3. One suggested strategy is to remove the studio from Level 2 and consider a 2 bedroom up-and-over apartment within Levels 1 and 2. While this would only provide a master bedroom (for Unit 2) on Level 2 and possibly a study, the reduction will provide an opportunity for the built form to be further recessed from the corner alignment, thereby reducing its visual impact on the streetscape.
4. The Panel discussed that Unit 4 (studio apartment), if retained or in a modified layout, would benefit from further resolution. For example – the entry door can be shifted towards the western end of the corridor, which would allow a narrow bathroom abutting the lift-shaft. The kitchen could also be relocated to the northern wall of the lift shaft. The suggested strategy would entirely free-up the building perimeter to the west.
5. The Panel suggested that top level could be expressed in form of a mansard structure rising from the parapet line, and this could create a better relationship with the existing and retained building.
6. An alternative strategy offered by the Panel is to create a solid balustrade along the top level, integrated with planters, to allow introduction of some greenery (especially climbers) within the Rofe Street interface.

## 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.”*

No discussion

## 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 encourages the applicant to consider commitment to sustainability targets for water, energy and waste efficiency.
2. Provision of ceiling fans is strongly encouraged in all habitable areas. Floor-to-floor and floor-to-ceiling heights should be adjusted to allow the use of ceiling fans within the proposal.
3. Installation of p/v solar panels on the roof is also recommended for power to communal areas.

## 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*

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*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."*

While no deep soil or planting is indicated, the Panel would support inclusion of some planters that could complement the façade design and provide some visual relief to the proposed industrial aesthetic as noted above.

## **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."*

No discussion

## **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."*

With the carpark access and layout requiring vehicles to exit in reverse, the Panel recommends appropriate safety measures be indicated to warn pedestrians. It was noted that recent changes to Rofe Street that restrict traffic flow will assist vehicle movements.

## **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."*

While the range of unit types is limited, their designed layouts appear well considered for such a tight site. The retention of the corner building for potential retail activation and associated outdoor seating, enabling social interaction is supported.

## **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. Revised architectural drawings should confirm location of A/C condenser units and other mechanical equipment. The Panel advises that these should not be located within balconies (unless thoughtfully designed with screens) or anywhere visually apparent from the surrounding public domain.
2. Revised architectural drawings should include details of the proposed design intent for key façade types in the form of 1:20 sections indicating materials, balustrade fixing, balcony edges, junctions, rainwater drainage system including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal.

## **Non SEPP 65 Matters:**

None



## **Conclusion:**

The Panel recommends the proposal should be supported once it satisfactorily demonstrates greater consistency with the recommendations provided in this Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel Report.