



# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	36 Lonsdale Street and 64-66 Brenan Street Lilyfield
Proposal:	Proposal for demolition of existing buildings, site remediation and construction of a new 5 storey plus attic mixed use building with a lower ground including neighbourhood shops, live-work units and 34 residential apartments.
Application No.:	DA 2022 0266
Meeting Date:	21 June 2022
Previous Meeting Date:	23 March 2021
Panel Members:	Matthew Pullinger – chair; Jocelyn Jackson; and Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia; Niall Macken; Katerina Lianos; and Adele Cowie
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Derek Raithby – Architect for the project; and Josh Owen – Urban Planner 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.
2. The Panel notes the timing of the development application lodgement for this proposal precedes formalisation of the draft site-specific Development Control Plan associated with the site.

3. 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 immediate context for the site was discussed at a considerable length at the meeting. The Panel considers that in absence of certainty that the adjoining lots (No. 68 and 70 Brennan Street) will be redeveloped within a foreseeable timeframe, the applicant needs to demonstrate that the proposal is capable of achieving a desirable outcome for the subject site and for the remaining residential properties left in isolation.
2. The Panel appreciates that the applicant has prepared a future likely development scenario for the adjoining properties (No. 68 and 70 Brennan Street) as part of the DA submission. The Panel notes that the adjoining properties are likely to achieve a resultant floor space ratio greater than that permissible, and the overall density across the combined development including all - 36 Lonsdale Street and 64-70 Brennan Street is likely to therefore increase beyond the maximum permissible floor space ratio of 2.0:1
3. Based on the documentation presented by the applicant, the Panel needs to be further convinced about the appearance of the proposal when considered in isolation, during any transition stage, until the adjoining lots are developed in future. The Panel raised concerns regarding a highly visible blank party wall on the western boundary adjacent an existing dwelling house (that may also incur loss of amenity), the abrupt ending of the colonnade treatment along the primary street frontage and the challenge of facilitating vehicular access for No. 68 and 70 Brennan Street from the subject site, given these lots could be under separate land ownership.

### 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 is unconvinced whether the colonnade treatment is the optimal urban form approach, given the challenging environment along the City West Link, and encourages a more traditional robust architectural treatment with built form aligned to the street boundary. In such a scenario, further consideration is required for the provision of pedestrian amenity and the Panel recommends the integration of an awning.
2. The Panel recommends that any overshadowing of neighbouring low density residential properties to the south should be minimised during mid-winter. If the adjoining properties do not currently receive the required hours of solar access, the proposal should ensure solar access to neighbouring properties is not reduced by more than 20%, consistent with the Part 3B-2 criteria in the ADG.
3. The Panel noted that in its current configuration it appears bedrooms within Unit 3 address the vehicular driveway. The applicant should consider further resolution of the ground floor plan in terms of vehicular access and building service allocation that have a significant impact on the amenity and visual qualities of Lonsdale Street. The Panel also recommends introduction of



potential landscape area to allow an appropriate transition, and to help mitigate visual impacts from units above that overlook this area.

4. The residential entry and staircase circulation to the City West Link frontage lacks weather protection and presents potential CPTED issues. In addition, the Panel recommends further resolution of the general circulation arrangement, the building address and the residential pedestrian arrival experience. The Panel appreciates the proposed cross-over apartment strategy in principle, however, the Panel is unconvinced about the extensive and convoluted common circulation corridors which result from this strategy. Furthermore, the lack of natural light and ventilation within the common residential corridors is also a concern.
5. A potential alternative residential access strategy encouraged by the Panel might consider a primary ground floor residential access from Lonsdale Street which is a quieter street with a residential character less affected by the traffic noise and pollution of the City West Link.
6. The Panel recommends the applicant provides a more considered and contextually appropriate architectural treatment for the primary façade, and is unconvinced with the colonnade and arched treatment, and proposed hit-and-miss brickwork treatment, which risks creating too great a sense of enclosure to these apartments.

### **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. The Panel understands that a maximum permissible floor space ratio of 1.55:1 applies to the site, and the applicant is relying on the affordable housing provision bonus which allows up to 2.0:1. At this point, given impacts and constrained amenity, the Panel is concerned for the proposed density. The Panel requests an opportunity to further review and confirm the proposed density on the subject site.

### **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 expects that key targets established within the ADG for solar access and natural cross ventilation are met by the proposal. Similarly, the Panel encourages commitment to further sustainability targets for water, energy and waste efficiency.
2. The Panel encourages provision of ceiling fans to all habitable areas. Floor-to-floor and floor-to-ceiling heights should be both ADG compliant and adjusted to allow the use of ceiling fans.
3. The applicant is encouraged to consider rooftop photovoltaic system for environmental benefits, including power/lighting to common areas.
4. Provision of a rainwater tank should be considered to allow collection, storage and reuse within the site.

### **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.”*

# INNER WEST

1. The Panel appreciates provision of a deep soil area within the southern building setback. The deep soil zone should include the provision of landscape with appropriately sized canopy tree species and shrubs to improve the interface and transition with the adjoining low density residential sites to the south and to improve the amenity of the ground floor uses.
2. The Panel notes the provision of rooftop communal open space above the western building, however the apartments within the eastern building have poor access to this communal open space. A greater diversity of communal open space/s with more direct access for a greater proportion of apartments should be considered within the proposal.
3. The amenity of the rooftop communal open space/s should be improved through provision of outdoor seating, shaded areas, a barbecue or outdoor kitchen, and a unisex accessible toilet.
4. The applicant is further encouraged to apply the ADG Parts 4O and 4P and Inner West Council's Green Roof Policy and Guidelines to develop a detailed landscape design.

## 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 expressed concern regarding the proposed floor-to-floor height of the proposed upper level, as 2.6m (floor to floor) is inadequate to achieve consistency with ADG Part 4C.5 ceiling heights and compliance with the relevant NCC requirements. The provision of dormer windows to all of the top level bedrooms is also problematic due to the constrained outlook in these habitable spaces that should be capable of having views from a seated position.
2. Internal layouts of apartments should be reconsidered, particularly since some of the kitchen dimensions appear constrained. Additionally, kitchens should not be located as part of circulation areas to bathrooms or bedrooms.

## 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.”*

*Refer No. 4 in Principle 2 – Built form and scale.*

## 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.”*

Capable of support.

## 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 these should not be located within balconies unless thoughtfully designed and screened, or anywhere visually apparent from the surrounding public domain.
2. The applicant should develop 1:20 or 1:50 sections through each primary façade type in order to demonstrate the proposed resolution of key materials, junctions, balustrades, fixtures, including integration of building services such as balcony drainage and A/C condensers.

### **Conclusion:**

The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel does not support the proposal in its current form and recommends the design be amended in-line with the comments offered within this report. The Panel requests a further review of this proposal as part of the development assessment process.

Attachment 1 – Architectural Excellence Panel Report from 23 March 2021 Meeting.

## INNER WEST ARCHITECTURAL EXCELLENCE PANEL – REPORT

---

<b>Site Address:</b>	36 Lonsdale Street and 64-70 Brenan Street Lilyfield
<b>Proposal:</b>	A 5 storey residential flat building with a childcare centre on ground floor
<b>File Reference:</b>	PDA/2021/0053
<b>AEP members in attendance:</b>	Peter Ireland (Director – Peter Ireland Design); Matthew Pullinger (Director – Matthew Pullinger Architect); Niall Macken (Team Leader, Heritage & Urban Design, Inner West); Vishal Lakhia (Urban Design Advisor, Inner West)
<b>Assessment Planner:</b>	Katerina Lianos (DA Planner); Adele Cowie (Team Leader, Development Assessment)
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	23 March 2021
<b>Report Date:</b>	6 April 2021
<b>Previous AEP:</b>	-
<b>Disclosure of Interest:</b>	None

---

### BACKGROUND:

The Architectural Excellence Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference. The Panel notes that there is an active planning proposal for the site to rezone the land to a B2 zone for a FSR of 1.5:1 and a building height of 5 storeys. The Panel understands the Planning Proposal is likely to be gazetted.

### DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### 1. Massing and Built Form:

- a. The Panel supports the general massing strategy of two taller elements placed in a north-south orientation above a single storey base, configured with open space between, noting that the taller elements step down to preserve solar access to southern neighbours.
- b. The taller elements could be configured to create a primary address to each of the side streets and generally avoid a direct address to the City West Link, this is in order to minimise the amenity impacts of noise and air quality issues from the busy road.
- c. The single storey building base would benefit from a more conventional interface with the City West Link public domain. The Panel noted the scalloped brick edges do not particularly relate to the context nor with the expression of the proposed elements above. Built form to the City West Link could be provided with a nil setback, maintaining the alignment of the existing warehouse building. The Panel does not see significant benefit in introducing deep soil, landscape or setbacks within what will always be a tough urban environment.
- d. Consequently, a landscaped setback could instead be considered along the Russell Street frontage. The ground and first floor built form along the Russell Street frontage could include 2 storey terrace type apartments at the southern interface, configured with direct and

individual street entries. This typology along Russell Street would create a better relationship with the 2 storey dwelling houses located south of the site, and may allow for a better distribution of the available gross floor area for the proposal.

## **2. The Existing Building Façade:**

- a. The Panel notes the existing warehouse building on the site does not appear to have significant heritage value. However, the strategy for retention is supported. The Applicant is encouraged to further investigate the history and former use of the warehouse to potentially enable a more meaningful level of retention than is currently evident.
- b. The Panel is keen to ensure a retained building façade avoids looking like ‘facadism’, and encourages the applicant to more closely coordinate the proposed internal planning to directly engage with the fenestration evident within the existing façades. The Panel also encourages the applicant to consider a design strategy to more closely integrate new elements with the existing façade, and particularly the retention of some portion of the existing roofline of the warehouse.

## **3. Childcare Centre:**

- a. The Panel raised concerns for potential noise and air quality impacts associated with the proposed childcare use on the ground floor and its outdoor play area above given the proximity and address to the City West Link.
- b. The Panel noted challenges with the car parking, access and drop-off within the basement component serving the childcare centre.
- c. The existing public domain along the City West Link is a difficult urban environment that lacks desirable pedestrian amenity and the primary entry currently proposed from City West Link would be better located to either of the side streets to facilitate safer, more amenable access for users arriving by foot.
- d. The outdoor play area is disconnected from the indoor activity area, and presumably creates operational inefficiencies as children move under supervision via the lift from indoor to outdoor play areas. Ideally these spaces would be co-located for ease of access for children and carers.
- e. The fire stairs and lift within the childcare centre could be reconfigured to allow for more efficient planning of the outdoor play area. A consolidated open area is preferable and smaller segregated areas should be avoided.
- f. The Panel raised concern for noise transfer from the outdoor play area impacting apartments U6 and U7, noting noise may potentially travel through the central open space and affect the amenity of the residents within apartments above. There is a similar privacy impact with the outdoor play area located adjacent to apartments U6 and U7.
- g. The Panel suggests that childcare uses could be considered feasible if the above mentioned matters are appropriately addressed in the design of the proposal. Alternatively, a live-work use or other non-residential uses could be more suitable on this site and to complement the residential uses. The Panel notes that such live-work spaces would potentially allow a greater degree of retention of the warehouse building fabric.
- h. The Panel also notes that if a childcare is pursued then it could potentially be designed within part of the envelope of the existing warehouse (at corner of City West Link and Brennan Street). The Panel considers that outdoor play areas may be accommodated within the volume of the existing warehouse if these spaces include generous spaces with maximum natural light and outlook. The design should also successfully mitigate noise and air quality issues from the City West Link.

## **4. Architectural Expression:**

- a. The Panel considers that the mansard roof form proposed for the top storey may not be required and may unnecessarily complicate to overall composition. Given there are no visual amenity concerns for the 5<sup>th</sup> storey, the Panel encourages an overall simplification of elements within the composition.
- b. The Panel recommends a greater variety clarity or diversity should be considered between the architectural expression of any proposed existing building form retained, and the proposed expression of new building elements.

**5. Building Configuration:**

- a. The Panel notes that each of the taller elements is provided with a single fire stair, and the travel distances from apartments to the fire egress should be reviewed by/with a certifier.

**Conclusion:** The Architectural Excellence Panel thanks the applicant for seeking early feedback, considering the challenges presented by the proposal, particularly with noise, public domain, and air quality issues associated with the City West Link. Given the extent of recommendations provided by the Panel it is suggested the proposal benefit from further review, either in the pre DA or post DA environment.