



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	350 Illawarra Road Marrickville
Proposal:	Pre-DA submission for alterations and additions to existing building and construction of a new shop top housing development comprising a commercial use and six (6) dwellings with associated parking
Application No.:	PDA 2022 0144
Meeting Date:	19 July 2022
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Tony Caro – chair, Jon Johannsen; and Jocelyn Jackson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia; Niall Macken; Annalise Ifield; Keeley Samways; and Kaitlin Zieme
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Glenn McCormack – Architect for the project; Darren Laybutt – 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 thanks the applicant for seeking early feedback at through a Pre DA stage.
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 Panel understands that the proposal significantly exceeds the maximum permissible height and floor space ratio controls for this site, as set out in the Inner West DCP site-specific controls.
2. Whilst Inner west Council LEP specifies a 20m maximum height and FSR 2.5:1 control for the site, these provisions are subject to further compliance with the DCP site-specific controls, in particular the requirement for development lots to have a minimum 12m site frontage and 325sqm minimum site area required for a shop top housing proposal to achieve the maximum allowable LEP FSR.
3. The Panel further understands that under the DCP if this 7m wide site is developed in isolation, then a 14m height limit (equivalent to 4 storeys including a non-residential ground floor) and maximum FSR 1.5:1 applies.
4. The architect advised that the owner has made previous formal offers for site amalgamation with the adjoining property to the south west (No. 352 Illawarra Road), however this has not been successful. The owner is therefore submitting this shop top housing proposal for the 7m wide site with substantial exceedance of the applicable built form controls. Consequently, the Panel does not support the proposed extent of height and density non-compliance.
5. The Panel supports the retention of existing 2-storey building fabric addressing the Illawarra Road frontage, however as noted above it is concerned about the proposed height and floor space ratio exceedances for the new built form proposed at the rear. The applicant must further demonstrate through urban design analysis how the proposal could integrate successfully with adjoining and other properties within the urban block if they are redeveloped.
6. Furthermore, the Panel is concerned about a scenario where the adjoining property (to the south-west) is not developed, resulting in a 6-storey party-wall highly visible from the surrounding public domain, and particularly along the Illawarra Road frontage. This is a critical issue that could set a poor urban design precedent for other properties along the Illawarra Road frontage, Heritage Conservation Areas and other locations within the Inner West local government area.
7. The Panel recommends the applicant considers an overall form reduction to four storeys based on the controls Inner West controls. The Panel may consider an additional fifth storey (Ground + four residential levels), subject to consistency established by the applicant with the recommendations offered in this AEDRP Report. The applicant needs to carefully develop the form of any proposed fifth storey, which should be setback further than 6m from the street and lane frontages. Thorough of overshadowing impacts on adjoining properties and the public domain should be provided.

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 further resolution of the ground floor configuration to allow comfortable and intuitive movement for the residents. Wheelchair access to the rear portion on the ground floor appears problematic.
2. The proposed location of the common room is not supported as it lacks daylight and natural cross ventilation. It would likely not be used in this location. All common areas within the proposal should be provided with barrier-free wheelchair access.

3. The planning of the ground floor is circuitous and inefficient. The front entry door should be pushed closer to the street alignment, to avoid potential CPTED issues. The built form presentation to the laneway should be reviewed against CPTED and best practice urban design principles.
4. The internal configuration of the proposal needs to be reviewed with a qualified certifier, given that the number of storeys, and the staircase not being isolated from the lift and adjoining apartments. Fire egress from the ground floor also appears to be problematic and needs a performance review. The Panel also notes there are windows and openings near the side boundaries that should be reviewed for NCCA fire safety compliance.
5. The Panel discussed buildability of the side party-walls given the constrained width of the lot. The Panel queried how the party-walls along these boundaries could be built and maintained without relying on access from the neighbouring properties.
6. The applicant needs to investigate structural impacts on existing party-walls on both the subject site and adjoining properties.
7. The Panel discussed a number of potential issues with the proposed vehicular parking, access and egress configuration and their impacts on the laneway. The Panel further recommends that the car stacker arrangement including pedestrian access and egress be reviewed by a suitably qualified specialist in consultation with Council. Similarly, waste management should be reviewed with Council.

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 does not support the density proposed in its current form. The proposal should be developed in accordance with the recommendations offered in this report, which would assist in delivering acceptable design quality.

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 ADG targets for solar access and natural cross ventilation are met by the proposal, as well as sustainability targets for water, energy and waste efficiency.
2. The Panel encourages provision of ceiling fans for habitable areas. Floor-to-floor and floor-to-ceiling heights should be both ADG compliant to allow the use of ceiling fans.
3. The applicant is encouraged to include a 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.”

1. The absence of deep soil and communal open space is contrary to NSW ADG guidance, and the Panel recommends this is addressed in a revised scheme. The applicant should 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 the rooftop courtyards.

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 proposal should provide storage requirements to comply with 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.”

1. The ground floor configuration needs further resolution to avoid potential CPTED issues within the Illawarra Road and laneway frontages. Refer recommendations offered 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.”

No discussion/acceptable.

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. In considering a fifth storey beyond the allowable four storeys, a detailed resolution of the built form that is consistent with the fine grain urban character of the area is required. The Panel suggested introduction of a vertical building articulation at the junction between the proposed building and potential adjacent new buildings, to create a clear visual articulation and a fine grain of elements that reflect the street character within the overall built form of the block.
2. The Panel strongly encourages use of integral materials (such as face brickwork, metal claddings and high quality off-form concrete) for this proposal. Exclusive or predominant use of rendered and painted surfaces is not supported.
3. Future architectural documentation should identify locations of A/C condenser units and other mechanical equipment. These should not be located on balconies unless thoughtfully integrated so not visible from the public domain and clear of balcony furnishing.
4. Developed architectural documentation should include details of the proposed design intent with 1:20 sections indicating materials, balustrade types and fixing, balcony edges, junctions, rainwater drainage including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal.



Conclusion:

The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel thanks the applicant for seeking early feedback at the Pre-DA stage.

The Panel is of the view that subject to further design development being consistent with the recommendations of this report, the proposal would be capable of delivering an acceptable level of design quality. The Panel recommends a second opportunity to review the proposal at DA stage.