



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

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| Site Address: | 21-25 Gordon Street Petersham |
| Proposal: | Demolition of existing structures and construction of a 6- storey residential flat building comprising 20 apartments and associated landscaping, basement car parking and facilities |
| Application No.: | DA/2023/0238 |
| Meeting Date: | 16 May 2023 |
| Previous Meeting Date: | - |
| Panel Members: | Jon Johannsen – chair; Russell Olsson; and Jean Rice |
| Apologies: | - |
| Council staff: | Vishal Lakhia; Niall Macken; Ferdinand Dickel; Iain Betts; and Martin Amy |
| Guests: | - |
| Declarations of Interest: | None |
| Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel: | Jim Apostolou (Loucas 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.
2. The Panel commends the architect for preparing a comprehensive set of architectural drawings, landscape drawings and 3D views.
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 Apartment Design Guide (ADG).
4. The applicant needs to provide a Design Verification Statement prepared by a qualified designer (a registered architect) as required by the EP&A Act and the NSW SEPP 65 Policy, as part of this development application submission.

Discussion & Recommendations:

This DA proposal seeks the demolition of all existing structures and the construction of a six (6) storey residential flat building with two (2) levels of basement parking and associated landscaping and site works. A total of 20 residential units are proposed with 5 x 1 bedroom units, 12 x 2 bedroom units, and 3 x 3 bedroom units. Two basement levels will provide parking for 22 cars, 2 motorcycles, unit storage and service areas.

Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

1. The Panel commends the overall architectural expression, built form and well-planned internal apartment layouts as configured within the proposal that is considered to be an appropriate building envelope within this urban context.
2. AEDRP support for the development application is however subject to acceptable resolution of the further recommendations made in this report, as well as other statutory planning matters that will need to be addressed separately with Council. In this regard the FSR and height variances (6 storeys instead of 5 as per MA 6.5) that are supported by a CI.4.6 variation appear well founded, and it should be noted that if a 5 storey scheme was pursued that would likely be less compatible in built form with the adjacent development at 27 Gordon Street.
3. The Panel discussed the suitability of 6 storeys within the 20m LEP height limit applicable to the subject site and considers that the height is acceptable in this instance given that the proposal complies with the LEP height limit of 20m, and incorporates appropriate façade setbacks and consideration of a coherent relationship with its the neighbour to the north.
4. Furthermore, the Panel agreed that the proposal appropriately abuts the party wall of the recently constructed 6 storey residential flat building on the adjoining property to the south (27 Gordon Street), and understands that this was approved by the NSW Land & Environment Court, even though it was contrary to the DCP guidance of 5 storeys within the 20m LEP height limit.

Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

1. The Panel recommends reconfiguration of the ground floor area to avoid the overlap of the entrance lobby area with bicycle storage as it diminishes the quality of the entry foyer. The Applicant should consider relocating bicycle spaces within basement levels or potentially within a separate bicycle storage room clearly segregated from the residential entry foyer and entry court that should provide a pleasant social bump space for residents.
2. Concern was raised about the limits to natural cross ventilation within apartments G01, 101, 201 and 301. The Applicant should maximise further opportunities of improving ventilation that could be via use of highlight windows to the lobby slot that may assist creating pressure points for effective airflow (but this should be properly tested).
3. The Applicant should confirm consistency of all apartments with Part 4G Storage of the Apartment Design Guide in terms of both internal and external storage volumes.
4. The doors proposed to Ground Floor waste bin area should be relocated to improve amenity of the adjacent communal open space.

Principle 3 – Density

The Panel noted the FSR exceedance supported by a Cl. 4.6 variation and supports the case for this subject to proposed amendments being carried through in the final DA documentation.

Principle 4 – Sustainability

The Panel expects the applicant to address the below matters related to Principle 4 Sustainability:

1. Revised architectural drawings should be provided confirming locations of A/C condensers. These should not be located within balconies (unless appropriately screened), over the rooftop, or anywhere visually apparent from the public domain.
2. The Panel encourages use of ceiling fans within all bedrooms and living areas as a low energy alternative to mechanical A/C systems.
3. Provision of a rainwater tank should be considered to allow collection, storage and reuse within the subject site.
4. The applicant should include an appropriate rooftop photovoltaic system with details confirmed on all architectural drawings and 3D views.
5. Full building electrification and inclusion of EV charging points in the basement car park is recommended.

Principle 5 – Landscape

The detailed landscape proposal was not available for the Panel to scrutinize, but from material available in the architectural package the concept appeared well founded. The landscape design should be subject to review by Council and include a complete list of proposed species, planting methodology and maintenance schedule to ensure a robust greening of the development is achieved.

Principle 6 – Amenity

As ground and first floor units facing Gordon Street a highly visible from the public domain, there must be some detail of how unit privacy can be improved through louvred screens or solid panels to balustrades, and/or opaque glazing to appropriate sections of windows.

Principle 7 – Safety

No discussion.

Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

While the proposal includes a good unit mix, inclusion of a least 1 studio unit would be encouraged to broaden the scope and affordability of accommodation.

Principle 9 – Aesthetics

The Applicant must include 1:20 construction sections and details of the façade that clearly show materials, balustrade types and fixing, balcony edges, junctions, rainwater drainage including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal. Sections should also confirm whether a 3.1m floor-to-floor height will be adequate in achieving compliance with the Design & Building Practitioners Act 2020 and the relevant NCC provisions, whilst achieving a minimum 2.7m floor-to-ceiling heights within all habitable spaces of the apartments.



Conclusion:

With acceptable resolution of the recommendations made in this report, the Panel is of the view that the proposal is capable of delivering an acceptable level of design quality.