



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	159 Princes Highway St Peters
Proposal:	Alterations and additions to an existing shop top housing development, including partial demolition of existing structures and construction 5 additional apartments on top level of the building fronting Church Street including structural and remediation work to the building.
Application No.:	PDA/2024/0010
Meeting Date:	12 March 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	16 May 2023 (previous development application)
Panel Members:	Tony Caro (Chair) Jocelyn Jackson Peter Ireland
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Niall Macken Luke Goulding
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Christian Grennan – Architects for the project

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference. The Panel thanks the applicant for attending a pre development application meeting, thereby allowing an early productive discussion and guidance for the development team.
2. The site comprises two separate residential flat buildings of sub-standard design and layout, exacerbated by inadequate maintenance of the building fabric and external areas over its life to date. The application applies to Building A only.
3. The applicant proposes an addition of five apartments to the existing of Building A, on the side addressing Church Street. The proposed new apartments would occupy the area of an existing communal rooftop pool, which is derelict and apparently was never used. A maximum permissible floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.8:1 applies to the entire site, however the applicant is proposing an FSR of 2.34:1, resulting in 30% exceedance of the control.
4. The applicant advised that the communal rooftop pool is currently a health and safety risk to residents due to major structural defects. Furthermore, the two buildings are in poor and unmaintained condition requiring various building maintenance works. The applicant has advised that the Body Corporate currently lacks sufficient funds to carry out the required

INNER WEST

building maintenance and structural upgrade works. The applicant's intention is therefore to generate funds (through sale of the 5 new apartments) for the required works.

Whilst the Panel shares these concerns, they are beyond the Panel's scope and expertise. The AEDRP is an advisory-only Panel, its role is to provide independent design advice on residential amenity, architecture, urban design and landscape design quality. The Panel does not support approval of additional non-compliant building works as the reason for funding refurbishment works.

5. Beyond this and based on the review of the draft architectural drawings provided by the applicant, the Panel considers that the proposal fails to achieve consistency with the principal controls within the Apartment Design Guide, including but not limited to – natural cross ventilation, solar access and communal open space requirements. Additionally, the Panel has strong concerns that the proposal will be capable of meeting the design quality and residential amenity expected from a contemporary residential flat building within the Inner West area.
6. The Panel notes that the floor plans presented at the meeting are still at an early/diagrammatic stage and need greater resolution of detail. For example – the fire egress from the five new apartments appears to be unresolved. Additionally, impact on the residential amenity of existing apartments should be demonstrated by the applicant. The Panel notes that only one lift is provided for the building and further addition of five apartments creates extra pressure on the vertical circulation, especially considering when the lift is out of order, used for maintenance or by removalists.
7. In a broader sense the Panel recommends that the entire site needs to be considered holistically in terms of design excellence. The overall presentation of the existing development is detractive to its urban context, and any application to increase the density should provide for a comprehensive refurbishment of the buildings and its open spaces.
8. The applicant should also engage a suitably qualified structural engineer to investigate capacity of the existing structure and the overall viability of the project.
9. ADG amenity requirements need to be addressed in detail if the Panel's support for the project is sought. The applicant should provide a justification for the significant floor space ratio exceedance, the removal of approved communal open space (the pool) ,how the proposal delivers the expected residential amenity, and achieves acceptable compliance with ADG objectives.