



# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

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| Site Address:  | 452 Parramatta Road Petersham  |
| Proposal:  | Partial demolition of existing structures and construction of a seven-storey mixed use building, including ground floor commercial space, co-living housing above, and at-grade car parking. |
| Application No.:   | DA/2025/0316   |
| Meeting Date:  | 3 June 2025  |
| Previous Meeting Date:   | 18 October 2024 (Pre DA stage)   |
| Panel Members:   | Jon Johannsen<br>Diane Jones<br>Vishal Lakhia (chair)  |
| Apologies:   | -  |
| Council staff:   | Camille Guyot<br>Kaitlin Zieme   |
| Guests:  | -  |
| Declarations of Interest:                                      | None   |
| Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel: | David Benson, Daniel Martins (Benson McCormack) – Architects for the project<br>Joe Vescio – 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 reviewed the proposal in terms of design excellence, as required by the Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022 – Clause 6.9. Additionally, the proposal meets the threshold established within the AEDRP Terms of Reference to be nominated for this review.

## Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel notes that the current statutory planning controls for the site include a floor space ratio (FSR) of 1.5:1 and a maximum building height of 14 metres. The applicant's proposal instead relies on the Draft Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (PRCUTS), which proposes an FSR of over 3:1 and a building height exceeding 23.5 metres.
2. At Council's request, the Panel has provisionally reviewed the design quality of the proposal against the Draft PRCUTS, which is yet to be finalised by the NSW Government. The applicant is encouraged to engage further with Council's development assessment team to clarify the status, timeframes, and potential acceptability of a development application based on the draft PRCUTS controls.
3. The Panel commends the quality of the submitted architectural drawings, 3D views, and photomontages. Overall, the proposal is considered to be well-planned and demonstrates acceptable internal amenity outcomes, but the Panel expressed concerns about the proposed built form envelope, its contextual fit and possible amenity impacts. The recommendations set out below should be positively addressed by the applicant for any subsequent DA submission.
4. The ground floor lift lobby is highly internalised and visually disconnected from the public domain, potentially raising Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concerns—particularly during after-hours use if surveillance and activity are limited. The Panel recommends reconfiguring this area to provide a direct and more legible visual connection between the lift lobby and the public domain, maintaining clear sightlines from the street.
5. The commercial workspace at ground level should be clearly separated from the co-living residential foyer to ensure functional and operational clarity. The Level 2 area indicated as communal open space is mostly undercover and with exposure to Parramatta Road should require better treatment for user amenity.
6. The applicant should address how the architectural design will mitigate potential noise and amenity impacts for rooms facing Parramatta Road. In particular, open balustrade treatments may be inappropriate in this context. A composite balustrade (solid upturns with partial opening) may offer a more suitable solution, and some acoustic analysis should support the detail design.
7. For landscaping over structures, the landscape architectural drawings should include 1:20 design intent sections to confirm adequate soil depths. Additionally, details should be provided regarding irrigation, green waste management, maintenance strategies and provision and location of uses such as BBQ areas.
8. The design development of the landscaping is recommended to ensure that it provides amenity benefits beyond a green outlook; for example, the layering of deciduous and evergreen foliage to filter dust from the surrounding roads.
9. The Panel queried the usability of the communal spaces provided at both the ground floor and upper levels. Further refinement is recommended to create more generous spaces which will function effectively as social areas for residents.
10. The Panel strongly encourages a high standard of sustainability, exceeding minimum BASIX requirements. This should include, but not be limited to: full building electrification, ceiling fans in habitable rooms, solar photovoltaic systems, and EV charging infrastructure. The current proposal lacks sufficient information on these aspects.
11. Updated architectural drawings—including floor plans, elevations, and 3D views—should clearly indicate the location of air conditioning condensers. These units should not be placed on balconies unless adequately screened and integrated into the architectural expression. They must also be concealed from view from the public domain.
12. The developed architectural drawings should comprehensively describe the design intent. Each primary façade should be detailed using 1:20 sections and elevations (with equivalent 3D design tools), including materials, construction systems, balustrade types and fixings, balcony edges, window operation, integrated planter beds, junctions, and stormwater drainage systems such as downpipes.



## **Conclusion:**

1. The Architectural Excellence and Design Review Panel recognises that a fundamental statutory planning issue remains unresolved—the timing and formalisation of the PRCUTS controls. This must be addressed to Council's satisfaction if relied on for any further DA submission.
2. In the context of the Draft PRCUTS, the Panel offers in-principle support for the proposal, provided that the applicant constructively addresses the recommendations outlined in this report.
3. However, until the PRCUTS controls are finalised and formally adopted, the Panel would only support a scheme that complies with the current planning controls.
4. The advice provided in this report is intended to guide the applicant in the interim period while the PRCUTS remains a draft, and until such time as the relevant height and FSR controls are formally gazetted.