

GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT NEW SOUTH WALES

11 May 2021

Bernardo Reiter Landa
Development Manager
Level 5, 45 Jones
Street, Ultimo, NSW
2007

breiter@toga.com.au

634-652 High Street & 87-91 Union Road, Penrith |
Architectural Design Competition (Buildings 1 and 2)
Amended Development Application.

Dear Bernardo,

We write regarding the Architectural Design Competition for 634-652 High Street & 87-91 Union Road, Penrith. The Competition was held in accordance with an endorsed brief and procedures contained in the NSW Director General's Design Excellence Guidelines for a 3.3:1 FSR and a 6:1 FSR scheme, to the satisfaction of clause 8.4(3)(c) of the Penrith Local Environmental Plan 2010 (PLEP).

As such, a design competition waiver from the Director-General as set out in clause 8.4(4) of the PLEP is not required. The proposed development relies on clause 8.7 of the LEP, whereby a 6:1 FSR development with no height limit is permissible if the development includes community infrastructure. The development does not rely on clause 8.4(5) for the additional 10% of FSR and/or height, and therefore does not require the concurrence of the Director-General.

It is acknowledged that the evolution of the proposed design since completion of the Competition in November 2017 has been considerable. However, the Design Integrity Panel (DIP) has reviewed the revisions and considers that the development still exhibits design excellence as outlined in clause 8.4(2) of the PLEP.

The DIP acknowledges that the main design amendments from the Competition masterplan include

- Redesign of the north-south link road from Union Road to High Street in accordance with the Penrith DCP road alignment resulting in a long rectilinear site that demanded a single podium,
- Re-distribution of massing due to the inability to transfer FSR across Key Sites 3 and 10,
- Relocation of some tower forms further north towards High Street to improve the solar access to surrounding properties.

Government Architect
New South Wales

4 Parramatta Square
L17, 12 Darcy Street
Parramatta NSW 2150

government.architect
@planning.nsw.gov.au
T +61(02)9860 1450

governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au



The DIP considers the proposal has addressed these fundamental issues which were not fully resolved at the Design Competition phase, and that the proposal remains consistent with the intent and qualities of the original Competition masterplan. This conclusion was made after the applicant, SJB and the DIP met on seven occasions between November 2019 and March 2020 to review the 6:1 FSR scheme for the eastern portion of the masterplan. Following this process, the DIP unanimously endorsed the proposal and were satisfied that the development exhibited design excellence.

In March 2021, the DIP was made aware that Council raised issues about the proposed development so agreed to reconvene and review design amendments in order to satisfy Council's concerns.

At subsequent design review meetings on 30th March, 16th April and 23rd April 2021, the applicant, DIP, SJB and Council all agreed that the following design changes would address Council's concerns about the proposal:

- Reduce podium height from 5-storeys to 4-storeys,
- Include a second basement level to achieve the car parking requirements,
- Activate the podium by sleeving portions of the podium carpark with apartments,
- Further articulation to reduce visual impact of podium length.

As such, the DIP confirms that:

- The design quality of the proposed 6:1 FSR DA is superior to the previously approved 3.3:1 development for the site,
- The proposed development is consistent with the intent and qualities of the original Design Competition masterplan,
- Reconfiguration of the ground floor plan allows continuous activation of the frontage to John Tipping Grove,
- The proposed podium, which contains 3 above ground parking levels, provides an engaging sculptural backdrop to the surrounding streetscape with a highly articulated façade and the inclusion of sleeved apartments to further activate it,
- The sleeved apartments on the northern end of the podium also provides visual relief whilst maintaining a strong character and balance between the podium and tower forms,
- The northern tower height steps down on its southern end, further improving the scale of the building and its transition to the smaller southern tower.

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The DIP agrees unanimously that the PLEP design excellence provisions are satisfied by the amended 6:1 FSR scheme which was issued on 13th May 2021.

The DIP recommends that the current panel members be retained for ongoing review of design quality should any further design amendments be made to the scheme.

Yours sincerely,



Dillon Kombumerri
Principal Architect GANSW
Design Integrity Panel Chair

Panel Members:

Bob Nation – TOGA representative and Independent Architect
Brett Newbold – Penrith Design Review Panel and Urban Design Expert

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