



28th July 2010,

Attention **Peter Thomas**
Manager, Development Assessment
Lane Cove Council
48 Longueville Road
Lane Cove NSW 2066

Dear Mr Thomas,

RE: Development Application 3-9 Finlayson Street SEPP65 Report

Thank you for inviting me to comment on this proposal.

The following comments have been prepared based on the drawings and documents supplied by Council including: Drawings DA-1001,1002, DA 1101-1108, DA 1201-1202, DA 1301-1303, DA 1401, DA 1501-1503 by Candalepas Associates Dated 24th June 2010, A statement of environmental effects by Urbis Planning consultants dated June 2010.

I have visited the site and viewed the model.

We take on face value the accuracy of all the documents given to us and rely on them to form our assessment.

DESIGN QUALITY PRINCIPLES

Part 2 of SEPP 65 sets out the following design quality principles as a guide to assess a residential flat development. The 'Residential Flat Design Code' (The Code) is referred to as an accepted guide as to how the principles are to be achieved.

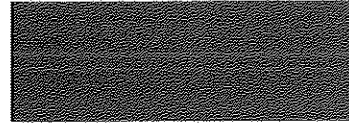
1. Context

Good design responds to and contributes to its context. Context can be defined as the key natural and built features of an area. Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of a location's character or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, the desired future character as stated in Planning and design policies. New buildings will thereby contribute to the quality and identity of an area. (SEPP65)

The site is an amalgamation of four lots on Finlayson Street. It is one small lot away from Rosenthal avenue which is parallel to Longueville road and adjacent to one of the main parking areas that serve the shopping strip of Lane Cove. The area currently has a mixture of single detached dwellings, religious buildings, Public service buildings, health related businesses and residential flats.

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Nominated Architect Timothy Williams NSW 5187 QLD 3966



Council has identified this site as being in area where increased residential density is desirable. The proposal complies with the general controls as set out in the DCP.

The site is in a valley that is considerably lower than Longueville Road or Burns Bay Road. One has the impression of descending into the area from every direction.

The site is on a sloping site that falls towards the north. The northern parts of the site has some mature trees as does the streetscape along Finlayson street.

The proposed building will represent a larger scale of building than currently exists in the area but will be consistent with the desired future character.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle.

2. Scale

Good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings.

Establishing an appropriate scale requires a considered response to the scale of existing development. In precincts undergoing a transition, proposed bulk and height needs to achieve the scale identified for the desired future character of the area. (SEPP65)

The scale of the building is appropriate so close to the town centre and to the amenities that it offers. It is also similar in height to the church on the opposite and higher side of Finlayson Street. The building itself will be lower than many of the trees in Finlayson Street. One will look down towards the building from the car park and from the approaches to the site.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle.

3. Built form

Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of the building elements.

Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscape and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook. (SEPP65)

The built form of the proposal is unusual as it is a deep building footprint that under normal development standards would not allow for the adequate cross ventilation or sun amenity. This proposal however has addressed the bulk of these issues in an innovative way, which will be discussed under the amenity principle.



The overall form of the building is characterised by a vertical expression of elements which will break down the apparent scale of the building.

The southern side of the building facing Finlayson Street established a building frontage and street wall dimension that is in keeping with the scale of the street and the required set back.

The northern side of the building has two projections that allow for sun penetration into the building. The building appears taller on this side due to the lower RL to the north of the site. The 9m setback required under the residential flat code is respected. The building respects the setbacks almost everywhere except on the side boundaries where there are minor encroachments where the balconies widen to the North. These are considered acceptable due to their minor and punctual nature.

The proposal meets the objectives of the principle.

4. Density

Good design has a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields (or number of units or residents)

Appropriate densities are sustainable and consistent with the existing density in an area or, in precincts undergoing a transition, are consistent with the stated desired future density. Sustainable densities respond to the regional context, availability of infrastructure, public transport, community facilities and environmental quality. (SEPP 65)

The proposal is in keeping with the Council's desired future density for the area.
The proximity of transport, services, community facilities and a retail centre make this an ideal location for increased density.

The proposal meets with the objectives of this principle.

5. Resource, energy and water efficiency

Good design makes efficient use of natural resources, energy and water throughout its full life cycle, including construction. Sustainability is integral to the design process. Aspects include demolition of existing structures, recycling of materials, selection of appropriate and sustainable materials, adaptability and reuse of buildings, layouts and built form, passive solar design principles, efficient appliances and mechanical services, soil zones for vegetation and re-use of water. (SEPP65)

The proposal replaces four small detached dwellings and so there is no opportunity to re-use any building fabric.

The building's form is largely derived from its approach to natural ventilation and sun access. A north facing balcony has been provided to each apartment.



Most of the apartments are well ventilated with the exception of the two 1b apartments on each level that are tucked into the corner of the northern projections. It is not clear whether the Light wells also act as ventilation shafts that might draw ventilation through the back of these apartments. This would be desirable, if achievable.

These same apartments only have a single orientation with a limited number of hours of direct sunlight. They will be rather dark for a large part of the day especially in the kitchen and dining areas.

The Basix report shows a commitment to using low energy and water consumption appliances and fittings.

The proposal generally meets the objectives of this principle

6. Landscape

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in greater aesthetic quality and amenity for both occupants and the adjoining public domain.

Landscape design builds on the site's natural and cultural features in responsible and creative ways. It enhances the development's natural environment performance by coordinating water and soil management, solar access, microclimate, tree canopy and habitat values. It contributes to the positive image and contextual fit of development through respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character, or desired future character.

Landscape design should optimise usability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity and provide for practical establishment and long-term management. (SEPP65)

The landscape design retains significant existing trees on the northern boundary. In addition to new plantings, these will screen the development from the properties to the north and allow for the continuity of native species through the valley.

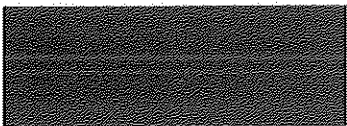
With the exception of the driveway on the western side, the site not covered by the building is deep soil planting. Appropriately scale species have been selected for the side gardens.

It is not clear whether the landscape is accessible in all areas, however it is noted that ramps are provided to the Finlayson Street entrances

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle.

7. Amenity

Good design provides amenity through the physical, spatial and environmental quality of a development.



Optimising amenity requires appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, outlook and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility. (SEPP65)

The setback issues on the east and west boundary, have already been addressed and are not considered significant.

The apartments are well planned, with adequate sized living spaces and access to good-sized north-facing balconies.

The apartments do not have additional storage within the apartments but provision has been made for storage in the car parking areas.

Both entrance lobbies are accessible by ramps.

The meets the objectives of this principle.

8. Safety and security

Good design optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public domain. This is achieved by maximising overlooking of public and communal spaces while maintaining internal privacy, avoiding dark and non-visible areas, maximising activity on streets, providing clear, safe access points, providing quality public spaces that cater for desired recreational uses, providing lighting appropriate to the location and desired activities, and clear definition between public and private spaces. (SEPP65)

The proposal has clear views to the entrances and adequate passive surveillance of the street side of the building. Hiding places have been avoided.

It is assumed that adequate lighting would be provided in both the public and private outdoor areas of the proposal.

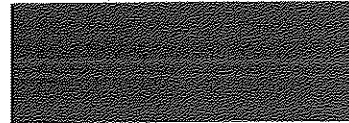
The proposal meets the objectives of the principle.

9. Social dimensions

Good design responds to the social context and needs of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability and access to social facilities. New developments should optimise the provision of housing to suit the social mix and needs of the neighbourhood or, in the case of precincts undergoing transition, provide for the desired future community. (SEPP65)

The proposed mix of 1b, 2b and 3b dwellings allows for a broad range of residents and appears to respond to the needs of the neighbourhood and to the desired future community.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle.



10. Aesthetics

Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development. Aesthetics should respond to the environment and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area. (SEPP65)

As described earlier, this building has good articulation on the southern and northern facades with a vertical expression of the basic room unit. The horizontal roof element will finish off the building in a classical manner.

The proposal describes in some detail, the proposed finishes and materials for the various components of the building and landscape features.

The materials chosen are noble and honest not requiring additional finishing. They will have good longevity and require a minimum of maintenance. The materials will help enhance the sculptural qualities of the design.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle

Conclusion

The proposal satisfies the principles of good design. Despite the slight misgivings about the amenity of the 1b apartments on the internal corners of the development, I feel that this is a good quality development and will set a high benchmark for development in the area.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tim Williams'.

Tim Williams
Architect AIA