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CBTP

5th November 2010,

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

RECEIVED

- 9 NOV 2010

RECORDS

Dear Mr Thomas & Mr Shankar,

RE: Development Application 284-288 Burns Bay Road, Lane Cove DA 10/219

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: Statement of Environmental Effects by LandPartners dated 27th September 2010, Drawings by DKO architects DA100/01-/10, DA 200/01-/04 dated 24/9/10, SEPP 65 report by DKO, Landscape plans by Context and appendices A,B,C,F-P, as indicated in the S.E.E.

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

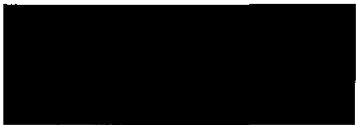
Part 2 of SEPP 65 sets out the following design quality principles as a guide to assess a residential flat development. The 'Residential Flat Design Code' (The Code) is referred to as an accepted guide as to how the principles are to be achieved.

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)

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Nominated Architect Timothy Williams NSW 5187 QLD 3966



The site is located on the east side of Burns Bay road on the narrow strip of land that separates Burns Bay and valley from the Lane Cove River to the west. The land slopes steeply away to the southeast. The immediate landscape is dominated by Burns Bay Road, which runs down the ridge of Linley Point. Both sides of Burns Bay Road are heavily vegetated with native trees, which contribute to the overall impression of a green landscape despite a busy Burns Bay Road.

The subject site is serviced by a driveway off Burns bay road and by a rear entry off Caroline Chisolm Lane. The site is the first property one comes to as one enters the precinct. The land has been benched into fairly large terraces to accommodate semi industrial and commercial premises. The site currently has a low brick building with at grade car parking on the northern side. Trees have been left around the perimeter of the site, reducing the impact of the buildings and maintaining the overall green environs.

The subject site runs roughly east-west and has a long side facing south over a commercial building for the western half of the site and a car park and access road for the eastern part of the site.

The East side of Burns Bay Road has a mixture of 4 storey apartment buildings and similar sized commercial buildings. There is an 8 Storey apartment building known as Riverview Apartments is sited at the bottom of the hill, which is not visible from burns Bay Road.

The proposed 6 and 7 storey apartment buildings would not be out of context in this area. This corner of Lane Cove has already been established as a precinct of residential flat dwellings.


The steeply undulating topography reduces the effective impact of taller buildings as they step down the hill.

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)



As mentioned in the Context Principle section, the proposal is generally in keeping with the scale of the buildings and site configuration of the east side of Burns Bay Road. The 1 and 2 storey detached dwellings on the west side of Burns Bay Road will not be affected by larger buildings on the eastern side due to the distance, topography and amount of vegetation, which largely screens buildings on this side.

The height of the building needs to be well understood as it will be taller than the current surrounding buildings and be visible above the tree line in this area.

The building will be approximately 5 storeys above the height of Burns Bay Road at the driveway. The building will be visible as one drives south down Burns Bay Road from Bridge Road. The horizon line of the tree canopy will be broken.

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)


As discussed above, the building roughly follows the benching of the land. The East/west configuration of the land allows for buildings of a slender east/west footprint, which is ideal for maximum sun exposure and cross ventilation and minimal heat gain from exposure to east and west sun.

The building form generally follows the contours of the land, which allows the natural topography to be understood.

The built form is bold and simple. Two slender buildings sit side by side with well-articulated façades featuring sun shading and deep balconies. The buildings generally respect the setback lines with the exception of the north-facing balconies on the upper levels of the western building. However, as the buildings generally comply everywhere else I would not quibble about such a minor transgression.

The property to the south of the subject site will be overshadowed by the proposal.

Any future application on the site to the south will be forced to locate the bulk of the building near its southern boundary in order to maximise the exposure to northern sun. Given that there are no properties to the south of this site, I would suggest that this be taken into consideration when considering any application on this site.



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 combination of the particular topography of the site, its position along well serviced public transport routes and the proximity of recreation facilities makes this a suitable location for higher density living. Large apartment buildings already exist in the precinct and in my opinion seem to be in balance with the amount of greenery and natural bush land that is characteristic of Lane Cove.

The proposal appears to be in accord with Council's stated desired future 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 buildings use an efficient plan form with minimal double loaded corridors thus enabling a very high proportion of the apartments to have good cross ventilation. The orientation of the building is ideal to achieve good sun amenity. Deep, protected balconies will make the apartments very agreeable. The building will require a minimum of heating and cooling.

Only the 2B apartments on the southern side of the eastern building (2 per floor) have minimal sun access. These apartments have large balconies however that are orientated to the east or west and will get some sun, especially in the summer. Some



vertical screening will be required on the outer edge of these balconies to improve privacy to the apartments on their outside.

The proposal 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 is well considered and will contribute to the character of the area as the buildings will appear to be in a natural park-like setting. The setbacks around the buildings work well in this case to provide a continuity of landscape between buildings.

It is a shame that it was not possible to retain more of the existing trees. However, the new plantings will be mostly local, drought resistant species which will enhance the biodiversity of the area.


There is good provision for equitable access in the development even in the landscape design.

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)

As mentioned above, accessibility issues have been well addressed in this proposal.

The apartments will be of very high amenity due to the amount of sun exposure and cross ventilation but also because of excellent planning. The living areas mostly open onto generously proportioned balconies. There is in most apartments a clever separation of living and sleeping areas. The only concern I have is the amount of storage space provided which appears a little less than one would expect. The storage cages in the basement are very small.

There is the potential for the residents in the buildings on Caroline Chisolm Lane to be disturbed by the comings and goings from the car park in this location. They are surely used to their lane being a dead end. It is not clear whether there are any mitigation measures proposed to address this issue.

The proposal 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 four entry lobbies, which are accessed via the pathway that extends along the northern boundary of the site. This pathway is well overlooked by the apartments and should be well lit. The length of the paths that lead from the longitudinal path to the lobbies is of a minor concern as are the deep-set doors to the lobbies. Perhaps this could be addressed by advancing the location of the doors, or providing gates at the line of the courtyard walls.

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 caters for a wide range of residents and appears to respond to the needs of the neighbourhood.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle.

10. Aesthetics

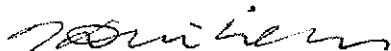
Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development. Aesthetics should respond to the environment and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape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

The proposal is of a modern aesthetic that expresses the planning of the buildings. The buildings play with the setback lines by expressing them in different materials, creating buildings of bold and interesting form. The addition of adjustable screens to the balconies will give the façades a lively quality.

The proposal meets the objectives of this principle

Conclusion

The proposal meets the objectives of the principles of good design. The criticisms and observations made here are of a minor nature or are easily addressed.



Tim Williams
Architect AIA