

**Wollongong Design Review Panel**  
**Meeting minutes and recommendations DA-2016/1073**

<b>Time &amp; date</b>	31 January 2017
<b>Meeting location</b>	Wollongong City Council Administration offices
<b>Panel members</b>	(Chair) Brendan Randles (Member) Iain Stewart (Member) Susan Hobley
<b>Apologies</b>	Nil
<b>Council staff</b>	Mark Riordan, Manager Development Assessment & Compliance Pier Panozzo, Manager City Centre & Major Development Theresa Whittaker, Senior Development Project Officer
<b>Guests/ representatives of the applicant</b>	<b>Brian Hollis, RFA Architects</b> <b>Bihn Hua, RFA Architects</b> <b>Ram Baskaran, Rammy Associates</b> <b>Bala Balakrishnan, Property Owner</b> <b>Mahi Mahathenan, Property Owner</b>
<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Item number</b>	2
<b>DA number</b>	DA-2016/1073 This proposal was previously considered by the Design Review Panel on 15 September 2016 At these times the Panel made a number of recommendations which have influenced the design outcome proposed in the current application. This design review Panel has considered the previous panel comments in these recommendations.
<b>Reasons for consideration by DRP</b>	Clause 28 SEPP 65
<b>Determination pathway</b>	JRPP will be the determining authority due to the cost of works exceeding \$20M
<b>Property address</b>	31-33 Atchison Street, Wollongong
<b>Proposal</b>	Residential - demolition of existing structures and construction of an 11 storey shop top housing development with two (2) levels of basement parking containing 70 car spaces, 52 residential apartments, child care centre and two (2) retail premises
<b>Applicant or applicant's representative address to the design review panel</b>	
<b>Background</b>	The site was previously inspected by the Panel
<b>Design quality principals SEPP65</b>	
<b>Context and Neighbourhood Character</b>	<i>At the last DRP meeting, the context of the site was discussed with the applicant. It was noted at the time that the site analysis prepared was very basic and did not illustrate how adjacent sites may develop – especially to their maximum height and bulk – and how this would impact on the subject site. The amended proposal does not include a more comprehensive analysis or any additional graphic material to support the revised proposal. For a DA submission for a project at this scale, this is inadequate.</i>

	<p>The Panel has seen this proposal twice. On both occasions, the Panel were concerned that the context was insufficiently analysed and described and that this was reflected in the proposal's lack of resolution, especially in regards to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- side and rear setbacks</li> <li>- potential privacy issues between adjoining properties</li> <li>- desired future character</li> <li>- street address and interface, especially at ground level</li> <li>- access to and amenity of childcare</li> <li>- flooding issues</li> <li>- landscape quality and/</li> <li>- building expression</li> </ul> <p>Apart from amended shadow diagrams, the site analysis appears unchanged. After each DRP meeting, changes were made to the layout to incorporate the Panel's comments. Notably, the most recent amendments increase the density of the proposal so that it now exceeds the LEP requirements by more than 300sqm.</p>
<p><b>Built Form and Scale</b></p>	<p><i>The proposed built form has been modified to create an active full width residential base, with increased side tower setbacks and a reduced number of units in the tower footprint. Side facing balconies have been removed and upper level side facing windows structured to face front and back so as to restrict overlooking. The rear setback has not been increased to 12m as advised by the Panel; hence, the 9m setback proposed does not satisfy the DCP's requirements for the residential component of shop top housing. While the 9m setback would comply with the ADG at 8 storeys, the 9<sup>th</sup> storey 9m setback would not comply.</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED :</b> The revised proposal has a rear setback to Level 01 – 08 balconies (habitable space) of 9.330m. This does not comply with the DCP requirement for a 12m. rear setback. Furthermore, Level 08 does not comply with the ADG requirement for 12m. setback to levels above 8 stories.</p> <p><i>Despite the above modifications, the side elevations are still dominated by large windows; however, it is better practice to be defensive and protective within confined setbacks. Therefore, it is recommended that side facing windows are greatly reduced in size and quantity, and designed for privacy as much as outlook.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALY RESOLVED :</b> Side elevations have now been modified, however a predominance of large side facing windows still raises issues of privacy. While horizontal “blinds and/or privacy screens” are noted on side facing elevations, there is no detail provided to illustrate how visual privacy will be achieved while maintaining outlook.</p> <p><i>Similarly, the interface between east facing duplex bedroom windows and adjacent tower bedroom windows will create severe visual and acoustic privacy issues, as well as creating BCA issues between units. All these windows need to be redesigned to address these serious proximity issues.</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p>

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*On level 03, there are severe privacy issues between communal and private open spaces and adjacent bedrooms. To address these concerns, the Panel recommend that Unit Types C and D are removed from level 03, that communal covered and open space is expanded across this space, that large east facing planters are introduced and adjacent tower bedroom windows completely redesigned for privacy.*

**RESOLVED : Unit types C and D have been removed from level 03, open space extended across this space and large east facing planters have been introduced.**

*In providing communal covered space on this level, it will be important to maintain access from the lift lobby to communal open space without having to traverse communal function rooms.*

**NOT RESOLVED. Access from the lift lobby is via communal function room.**

*The ground floor level remains highly problematic. Access to the building is highly constrained and the frontage is dominated by stairs, an oversized vehicular ramp and egress.*

**NOT RESOLVED. Frontage is still dominated by an oversized vehicular ramp and egress stairs. Access to the main lobby and commercial spaces is highly constrained and lacking in amenity. The frontage now features a number of places of concealment which increases safety and security concerns.**

*Access to the childcare facility is via a shared residential lobby - which is not acceptable. Retail entries too are highly constrained. 1:10 ramps appear very steep and ill-conceived for the building's main entry. There appears to be no separate commercial lobby. The grouping of the childcare elevator with the residential elevators confuses the circulation and prevents the childcare facility from having a legible, secure and amenable relationship with the street.*

**NOT RESOLVED. While a discrete commercial lobby has been introduced, it is very tight and leads to a dog leg corridor. Rather than introducing a clear frontage to the street, the childcare facility's entry remain obscure and unpleasant.**

*Although the location of fire boosters is an essential component of the DA submission, they are not indicated on the plan and elevation drawings.*

**NOT RESOLVED. It is not clear if the cupboard shown along the frontage of commercial space C2 is proposed as fire boosters or adequately sized. Similarly, it is not clear if the larger service room along the frontage of commercial space C1 is intended to be a sub station. If correctly sized, these service spaces may completely cut off or severely reduce access of both commercial spaces to the street frontage.**

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<p><b>Density</b></p>	<p><i>While the proposal appears to comply with the requirements of the LEP, it is predicated on a built form that does not comply with the DCP's rear setback controls. See above in "Scale and Built Form".</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED</b> – see notes above regarding rear setback in Built Form and Scale. According to the proponent's area calculations, the GFA now proposed exceeds the LEP's density's requirements by over 300sqm. Notably, the proponent has NOT included the lobby area on each level in their GFA calculations; once added, the GFA now proposed will far exceed the density requirements for this site.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><i>The proposal achieves high compliance with the ADG's mid winter solar access and cross ventilation requirements. However, the fenestration proposed requires significant modification to address privacy issues (see notes above in Built Form).</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED; see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <p><i>West facing windows are not screened and little consideration has been given to solar protection to communal open spaces.</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED; no screening has been provided to west facing windows so it remains unclear how westerly sun is addressed. While a sail cloth screen has been shown for the child car open space, there appears no solar protection indicated on the landscape plans (only now provided).</b></p> <p><i>There are no further sustainability measures proposed, which, for a project of this scale is questionable.</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED. No additional sustainability measures appear to have been proposed.</b></p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p>	<p><i>No landscape plan was provided with the proposal; this is unacceptable.</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED : a landscape plan is now provided.</b></p> <p><i>The site is located in flood-prone land and the applicant has not carried out the necessary flood study to enable an understanding of how flood risk on the site and the local catchment will be managed through the design. It is not acceptable that the flood management of an adjoining property be used as the basis for this site.</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED : no flood study provided</b></p> <p><i>The panel is of the opinion that a larger common area with an associated indoor space on the third floor podium would be a superior approach to that presented.</i></p>

	<p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED . See notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <p><i>The roof area could be used for residential dwellings and private outdoor space if the third floor podium was largely dedicated to common areas as recommended above. The access to the outdoor space on the roof is through the proposed common area and will compromise the usefulness of the latter. If a common roof area is retained in the amended proposal, access concerns should be addressed.</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED. Access to common open space is still via the indoor common room.</b></p> <p><i>Any trees proposed for the Atchison Street nature strip should be medium-to-large, hardy – and preferably local coastal - species.</i></p> <p><i>The development is located in a coastal environment and landscape plantings will be on-slab. These factors create challenging conditions for plantings. In addition to being able to cope with the environmental conditions, the species should be selected on the basis of the ecological context of Wollongong, in particular being concerned about the invasiveness of non-local species. The contribution of the proposed landscape plantings to local ecological values (and a local ‘sense of place’) should be positive.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED. Requires Council’s Landscape Architect to assess against the proposed species against the Panel’s recommendations.</b></p> <p><i>No deep soil is provided. All planting on structure proposed requires that soil depth in accordance with the ADG is specified on drawings.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED. Requires Council’s Landscape Architect to assess if soil depth is in accordance with the ADG’s recommendations.</b></p>
Amenity	<p><i>The proposal is still plagued by numerous amenity issues :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Severe privacy issues between adjacent habitable spaces on duplex levels</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED. All bedrooms windows in Units Type Aa on levels 01 and 02 are very large and located adjacent to the south facing lobby. The bedroom windows are not screened or oriented away from the lobby. To address privacy concerns, “high level windows” have been introduced into the lobbies (the elevation suggests an openable glazed panel above obscure glazed panels) at each level. While greatly reducing the amenity of each lobby, this measure will not address acoustic privacy to the adjacent bedrooms which 3 and two</b></p>

	<p><b>bedrooms in Unit (Level 2) Unit 3.</b></p> <p><b>Bedroom windows on level 01 also directly face the private open space of Unit 2, which will creates severe privacy issues.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Severe privacy issues between communal open space and adjacent habitable spaces on Level 3</i></li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Severe privacy issues between rear facing balconies on level 12 and front facing balconies above level 03</i></li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Street frontage dominated by egress and vehicular ramp</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>poor interface between street frontage, main entry and commercial spaces</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>poor access to childcare facility</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>childcare reception, administration, staffrooms and cot rooms have no access to natural light and ventilation</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – childcare reception, admin., staff room and cot rooms still have no access to natural light and ventilation.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>shared residential/commercial entry lobby is unacceptable</i></li> </ul> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>inadequate landscape design for communal spaces</i></li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED – landscape drawing now submitted</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>there appears to be inadequate storage provided to units</i></li> </ul> <p><b>To be tabulated</b></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bathroom accessed directly from dining room in unit type E</li> </ul> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – bathroom accessed directly from dining areas in Units Type D (levels 4 – 12) and Type E (levels 1 – 8).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- shared WC directly off main lobby is unfortunate</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p><i>The shared access to residential and childcare spaces (and its hidden corridor to WC) is potentially unsafe.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see notes above in Built Form and Scale.</b></p> <p><i>There are potential conflicts between vehicles and parents with children at basement level</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p>
<b>Housing Diversity and Social Interaction</b>	<p><i>The separation of typical access from assisted access to commercial premises is potentially discriminatory.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED.</b> The solution proposed appears to address this key accessibility issue, but creates an entry space that is highly constrained and lacking in urban design amenity. Furthermore, this raised lobby space could be further constrained by the provision of service cupboards and spaces along the street frontage.</p> <p><i>See notes above regarding privacy issues between private habitable spaces and communal open space at level 03</i></p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p><i>No adaptable units appear to have been provided</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED.</b> Five (5) adaptable units have now been provided on levels 04 – 08. All of these units are 2 bedroom; it is preferred that a mix of adaptable of units is provided.</p>
<b>Aesthetics</b>	<p><i>The building's composition and expression appears far too preliminary and schematic for a DA submission. In the absence of informative drawings – with levels, notes and rendered materials - the Panel can only make the most basic assumptions regarding finish, material, construction method, colour, etc.</i></p>

	<p><i>No three-dimensional representation of the building was provided, so it is impossible to gauge how it sits in its context. This is exacerbated by the elevations and sections, which fail to show context or any scalar reference.</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED.</b> A three dimensional view of the proposal has now been provided which now allows an assessment of its aesthetics and contextual fit. The proposal expression is greatly improved, with a much more resolved massing of tower and base and landscaped terrace at third floor level. The expression of the tower above a modulated base in well handled and side elevations are promising.</p> <p>However, the building struggles at ground floor with a great length of its frontage dominated by driveway and services; this is exacerbated by the width of driveway proposed and awkward resolution of fire egress, which still raises questions regarding BCA compliance (especially adjoining the child care open space). Once the real dimensional requirements of fire boosters and sub station are known – including blast zone – glazing could be greatly reduced and the entry further internalized.</p> <p>Side elevations would benefit from more regard to the design and orientation of windows to provide outlook, as well as privacy. And the zero lot party walls to both boundaries needs greater attention to material and composition – especially on the north, which will always be visible and exposed. The north elevation is also compromised at ground level by a side setback, with large openings exposing undercroft areas and the driveway to the street frontage. This is poorly resolved.</p>
<b>Design Excellence WLEP2009</b>	
Whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved	<p>No</p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see Aesthetics above.</b></p>
Whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,	<p><i>Not as proposed</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see Aesthetics above.</b></p>
Whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,	N/A
Whether the proposed development detrimentally overshadows an area shown distinctively coloured and numbered on the Sun Plane Protection Map,	N/A
How the development addresses the following:	
the suitability of the land for development,	<i>OK – However, the site is severely constrained by flood issues that must be analysed, understood, and addressed through the design.</i>

	<b>NOT RESOLVED – see Landscape above.</b>
existing and proposed uses and use mix	<p><i>OK – but must be well designed</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see Built Form and Scale above.</b></p>
heritage issues and streetscape constraints,	<i>N/A</i>
the location of any tower proposed, having regard to the need to achieve an acceptable relationship with other towers (existing or proposed) on the same site or on neighbouring sites in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form,	<p><i>Requires further modification</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – see Built Form and Scale above.</b></p>
bulk, massing and modulation of buildings	<i>OK</i>
street frontage heights	<i>OK</i>
environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity	<i>OK</i>
the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development	<p><i>Limited</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see Built Form and Scale above.</b></p>
pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements	<p><i>Vehicular ramp and egress dominate the frontage; steps and main entry poorly handled</i></p> <p><b>NOT RESOLVED – see Built Form and Scale above.</b></p>
impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain	<p><i>Frontage (steps, entry, lobbies etc) poorly handled</i></p> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see Built Form and Scale above.</b></p>
Key issues, further Comments & Recommendations	<p><i>See above for detail</i></p> <p><i>This is the second time the Panel has seen this DA proposal. Despite the Panel providing detailed notes to improve the scheme, it still fails to meet DA standards in terms of analysis, design strategy, resolution and representation. The proposal cannot be supported by the Panel as :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- the ground floor interface with the street is extremely poor</i></li> <li><i>- the child care, commercial and residential entry and access is very poor</i></li> <li><i>- separation of uses at ground level has not been achieved</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>circulation and egress is overly complex and dominates the frontage</i></li><li>- <i>privacy issues between habitable private spaces</i></li><li>- <i>privacy issues between habitable private spaces and communal open space</i></li><li>- <i>undeveloped materiality, composition and expression</i></li><li>- <i>lack of landscape plan</i></li><li>- <i>lack of certainty in relation to flood constraints</i></li><li>- <i>ADG setback requirements to rear boundary at 9<sup>th</sup> storey</i></li></ul> <p><b>PARTIALLY RESOLVED – see comments above.</b></p>
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