



URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING

ITEM No. 3

Date of Panel Assessment:	19 October 2017
Address of Project:	118-129 Brunner Road Adamstown
Name of Project (if applicable):	NA.
DA Number or Pre-DA?	No 2017/ 00031
No. of Buildings:	1
No. of Units:	47 comprising 10x1 bedroom units and 37x2 bedroom units.
Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	None
Attendees:	<u>Applicant</u> Andrew Daines - Architect Brooke Holdsworth - Architect Patrick Quinlan - Planner Samuel Newman <u>Council</u> Melissa Thomas

This report addresses the nine Design Quality Principles set out in the Apartment Design Guide (2015) under State Environmental Planning Policy No.65. It is also an appropriate format for applications which do not include residential flats.

Background Summary

The application has previously been reviewed by the Panel with the recommendation that the development be reduced in height to comply with zoning controls.

1.Context and Neighbourhood Character

The subject site is located on the north-western side of Brunner Road, an area currently occupied by freestanding weatherboard cottages of Inter War appearance. The adjoining site to the north-east is occupied by 2 storey townhouses stepped along the eastern boundary of the proposed development site. Sites to the west are occupied by narrow fronted weatherboard residences of early 20th Century construction. The proposed development represents one of a number of large residential flat buildings proposed in

Brunker Road in response to recent zoning changes. The neighborhood will be substantially changed by this new phase of construction.

2. Built Form and Scale

The proposed development is of six stories. The ground floor contains carparking, a commercial café linked to an open communal space and two accessible apartments off the main lobby entry. Floors above are set about a first floor court /communal space to the center of the western elevation. Upper floors are partially cantilevered over the communal court.

In response to previous assessment, the proposal has incorporated two lift cores improving overall circulation.

As one of the initial developments in Brunker Road under new zonings the development will initially provide a dramatic change in scale, an aspect requiring close adherence to setback requirements.

3. Density

The development at 1.85:1 exceeds the maximum FSR of 1.5:1. The additional floor space is proposed on the basis of a 0.5:1 bonus for affordable housing.

4. Sustainability

Previous recommendation that top-floor apartments include natural light and ventilation to inner bathrooms has yet to be incorporated in the application. Opportunity for solar panels on the expansive roof is also identified as a means of improving sustainability, particularly for affordable housing.

5. Landscape

Previous recommendations have yet to be fully incorporated in the proposal.

It was previously noted deep soil planting areas adjacent to the ground floor parking area should be visually linked to the carpark. The intermittent panels shown on the south western elevation provide limited response to this recommendation and should be increased in area.

The Panel discussed the applicant's response to previous recommendation that existing trees are retained on site, as well as the need to ensure that trees in the neighbouring property are not compromised by construction works in the subject site, including by fencing, footings and walls. Whilst some trees in the neighbouring property are shown to have been retained, structures are proposed in what will inevitably be within their critical root zones. This is unacceptable. None of the trees within the subject site, or those straddling the boundary, is currently proposed for retention. Several of these trees appear worthy of retention, and provide some pleasant green foil to what will otherwise be a fairly harsh streetscape. The larger tree towards the north east corner of the site is of a scale to be quite useful in the context of the proposed tall building. Removal of any trees should only occur on the basis of a thorough assessment by a qualified arborist. It is recommended that if it is still proposed to remove trees, this be assessed by Council's relevant officer in respect to justification. The proposed rows of Palms on both sides of the building are not considered an effective response to the removal of mature canopy trees, and this selection requires revision.

Provision of a green roof to the carpark is recommended to improve the amenity of the building and of neighbours.

The proposed form of the central court at first floor is not supported due to the cantilevered apartments above and general overshadowing. Because of significant privacy conflicts, it was suggested that this courtyard be utilized as one providing a landscaped outlook to the adjacent apartments, rather than being a space for active use. It should be accessed for maintenance only.

6. Amenity

Whilst the introduction of a second lift core has improved overall amenity, the floor plan of the entry corridor remains gloomy. It is recommended that the dual entry ramp/stair is altered to a wide ramp together with widening of the lobby near the lift and provision of mirrors on the wall adjacent to the lift to improve surveillance. If possible it would be highly desirable to provide daylight from above into the lift lobby areas. Their amenity and ambience could also be enhanced by detailed design to accentuate floor, wall, ceiling, and lighting in the lobby spaces, -so that they are experienced as arrival points from the adjacent corridors. The blade wall adjacent to the southern lift lobby might also be removed to increase its size. It is recommended that apartments adjacent to the central first floor court are projected into the undercroft of the above floors. The relocation is to provide an inset to the outer northeastern elevation of the building.

The central courtyard could not function effectively as a communal space due to overshadowing, privacy interface with residential units etc. Introduction of rooftop common facilities is one option recommended as an alternative to this first floor court, - see comments under 8 below.

7. Safety

No additional safety issues were raised. Recommended changes to the entry /lift lobby should be incorporated to improve user safety.

8. Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

The mix of one and two bedroom apartments should include some three bedroom apartments, given the range of families requiring affordable housing.

The linking of the street front communal area to the commercial café limits access to the communal area. Although this could be a useful amenity, it is not the 'communal' facility required in a development of this scale..

Relocation of the main common area from the central court to the roof, and allocation of the courtyard to landscaped space would enhance the amenity of adjacent apartments.

A potentially acceptable option for communal facilities would be the provision of two rooftop communal spaces, each accessible by the elevator serving that group of apartments. There should be a small room with kitchenette facilities in each, opening to a small protected terrace. Building forms in this location must be planned so that there are no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring properties in relation to overshadowing, view loss etc., and if this cannot be achieved an acceptable alternative location must be provided.

Improvements to the main lobby and entry as recommended above under 'Amenity' would enhance social interaction in this area.

Inclusion of a carwash area near the rear lift lobby would provide opportunity for social interaction and added surveillance to this area of the carpark.

Some natural light and ventilation could be provided to the car-park by way of 'slots' along the side walls opening to courtyard & terrace above on the east and west sides.

9. Aesthetics

Movement of the central mid-level apartments into the undercroft area of the central court would provide a break in the long north eastern elevation, which will reduce the current overbearing lineal nature of the building's massing.

The north-eastern boundary wall to the carpark should be constructed of well-detailed masonry incorporating visual relief such as incised patterning, intermittent projections or similar detailing, since this wall will be permanently exposed to residents in the immediately adjacent residential building.

Amendments Required to Achieve Design Quality

The following issues should be addressed:-

- Relocation of the common area from the central first floor court.
- Relocation of mid- level apartments into the undercroft of the central court.
- Reconfiguration of the main entry hall and lift lobby.
- Improved visual links between the carpark and the southwestern landscaped area.
- Provision of natural light and ventilation to top floor internal bathrooms.
- Improved detailing to the northwestern wall of the carpark.
- Further investigate retention of existing mature trees within the site, and protection of all neighbouring trees from impact from the development. Deletion of the proposed palms, in favour of appropriate species of tree.

Summary Recommendation

Although the application is supported in principle, the above issues must be addressed and the application referred back to the Panel.



URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING

ITEM No. 7

Date of Panel Assessment:	21 February 2018
Address of Project:	118-129 Brunner Road Adamstown
Name of Project (if applicable):	NA.
DA Number or Pre-DA?	No 2017/ 00031
No. of Buildings:	1
No. of Units:	47 comprising 10x1 bedroom units and 37x2 bedroom units.
Declaration of Conflict of Interest:	None
Attendees:	<u>Applicant</u> Andrew Daines - Architect Brooke Holdsworth - Architect Patrick Quinlan - Planner Samuel Newman <u>Council</u> Murray Blackburn Smith

This report addresses the nine Design Quality Principles set out in the Apartment Design Guide (2015) under State Environmental Planning Policy No.65. It is also an appropriate format for applications which do not include residential flats.

Background Summary

The application has previously been reviewed by the panel on a number of occasions with multiple issues having been identified as being of concern, including particularly, the very substantial bulk and scale of the proposal, and its relationship with the existing townhouse and villa-unit developments adjacent. The architect and proponent have made a consistent effort to address each of the issues raised, with some design responses being more successful than others, but generally with incremental improvements on each iteration.

1.Context and Neighbourhood Character

The subject site is located on the north western side of Brunner Road, an area currently occupied by freestanding weatherboard cottages of Inter War appearance. The adjoining site to the north-east is occupied by 2 storey townhouses stepped along the eastern boundary of the proposed development site. To the immediate south-west of the site are three single storey villa units that appear to have been constructed some 20 to 30 years ago. Narrow fronted weatherboard residences of early 20th Century construction occupy sites further to the south-west. The proposed development represents one of a number of large residential flat buildings proposed in Brunner Road in response to recent zoning changes. The neighborhood will be substantially changed by this new phase of construction.

2. Built Form and Scale

The proposed development is of six stories. The ground floor contains carparking, a commercial café linked to an open communal space and two isolated accessible apartments off the main lobby entry. The lobby continues as a long corridor to two separate lift and stair cores both also directly accessed from the ground floor carpark. Floors above are set about a first floor court to the center of the southwestern elevation. Apartments about the court have been relocated into a former undercroft below upper floor levels. The panel noted this as an improvement to the previous plan form and recommended that the court have limited access as a more densely landscaped area rather than function as a communal area. Dual common rooms are now provided at roof level.

As one of the initial developments in Brunner Road under new zonings, the development will initially provide a dramatic change in scale, an aspect requiring close adherence to setback and height requirements.

3. Density

The proposal remains at an FSR of 1.879: exceeding the maximum FSR of 1.5:1. The additional floor space continues to be justified on the basis of a 0.5:1 bonus for affordable housing.

4. Sustainability

Previous recommendation that top floor apartments include natural light and ventilation to inner bathrooms has not yet been incorporated in the application. Opportunity for solar panels on the expansive roof continues to be a recommendation for improved sustainability, particularly for affordable housing.

5. Landscape

Previous recommendations have yet to be fully incorporated in the proposal.

It was previously noted that deep soil planting areas adjacent to the ground floor parking area should be visually linked to the carpark. The lattice pattern panels shown on the south western elevation provide some response to this recommendation.

The Panel discussed the applicant's response to previous recommendation that existing trees are retained on site. The Applicant stated that two trees have now been retained to the front south east corner of the site and some near-boundary neighbouring trees protected. These need to be clearly designated on the Landscape Plan. The large tree that straddled the north-east side boundary, has recently been removed.

The recommended provision of a green roof to the carpark roof has been implemented. The indicated soil depth of 400mm may not be sufficient for some of the species selected, unless the area is mounded in part for bigger shrubs. One of the bigger

species indicated for this area is *Strelizia reginae* –Bird of Paradise, is known for having a very vigorous root system that can crack pots and planter beds. This may not be a problem if planted on a flat concrete slab and its roots can continue expand – but it is a consideration.

The inclusion of *Ealeocarpus eumundi* (Quandong) in the deep soil area to the south-west of the building is not supported as indicated, as this species can commonly obtain heights of 8m or greater, and would further reduce the already very limited solar access remaining to the private open space of the central single-storey villa unit to the south of the development. A deciduous species would be more appropriate in all locations where overshadowing of private open spaces or living areas of neighbouring villa units will occur. Understorey ground cover and shrub species should be specified in this area in addition to trees.

6. Amenity

The ground floor access has improved somewhat with dual lift cores, a full width ramp rather than dual ramp and stair and expanded waiting area about lift entries. However there is still long dark corridor access to the lift lobbies: it appears that daylight to both lobbies *could* be provided by way of skylights opening to corners of the central court, with some skillful minor re-planning in these corners. If this were to be included the access could be supported.

As noted previously, the location of the proposed car park on the north-east side boundary has an adverse visual impact upon the town houses that face the boundary at an angle. While the green roof of this area has potential to reduce some of the visual impact, the aspect from internal spaces of the townhouses is adversely impacted.

Overlooking from the proposed units and their balconies into the two neighbouring properties remains a concern, in spite of minimal ADG now generally setbacks being achieved. Glazed balcony balustrades tend to exacerbate this concern.

7. Safety

No additional safety issues were raised.

8. Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

The mix of one and two bedroom apartments should include some three bedroom apartments, given the range of families requiring affordable housing.

The linking of the street front communal area to the commercial café limits access to the ground floor communal area.

Inclusion of a carwash area has now been provided near the rear lift lobby.

9. Aesthetics

The visual bulk and scale of the development remains a concern to the Group. Treatment of external balustrades should provide increased privacy and screening of decks concealing drying space, air conditioning units and deck furnishings. Provision of adjustable screening for all or part of external decks should also be included, particularly at outer, cantilevered corners, prone to wind impact.

The disposition of face-brick, painted render and glazed surfaces should be further considered to reduce the apparent bulk of this large building.

A realistic photomontage should be provided showing the relationship of the proposed development to the existing streetscape.

Amendments Required to Achieve Design Quality

The following issues should be addressed:-

- Relocation of the common area from the central first floor court.
- Provision of skylights for daylight into the main entry hall/ lift lobbies.
- Provision of natural light and ventilation to top floor internal bathrooms.
- Clarification of detailing to the northwestern wall of the carpark.
- Further investigate of external finishes in order to assist in mitigating the scale of the building.
- Landscape plan revisions as recommended above.

Summary Recommendation

The application is supported in principle subject to the above issues being resolved, and referred back to the Panel should Council consider desirable.