

**Wollongong Design Review Panel**  
**Meeting minutes and recommendations DA-2017/1729**

<b>Date</b>	16 February 2018
<b>Meeting location</b>	Wollongong City Council Administration Offices
<b>Panel members</b>	(Chair) David Jarvis (Member) Susan Hobley (Member) Carlo Di Giulio
<b>Apologies</b>	Theresa Whittaker - Senior Development Project Officer
<b>Council staff</b>	Pier Panozzo - Manager City Centre & Major Development
<b>Guests/ representatives of the applicant</b>	Angelo Di Martino – ADM Architects Dejan Pavic – ADM Architects
<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	Nil
<b>Reasons for consideration by DRP</b>	Clause 7.18 WLEP2009
<b>Item number</b>	1
<b>DA number</b>	DA-2017/1729
<b>Determination pathway</b>	Southern Joint Regional Planning Panel (cost >20million)
<b>Property address</b>	25- 27 Denison Street Wollongong
<b>Proposal</b>	Commercial - demolition of existing structures and construction of a seven (7) storey commercial building over three (3) levels of basement parking
<b>Applicant or applicant's representative address to the design review panel</b>	
<b>Background</b>	The site was Inspected by the Panel on 16 February 2018
<b>Design quality principals SEPP65</b>	
<b>Context and Neighbourhood Character</b>	<p>The proposal is located on a site zoned for mixed use (B4) with the south coast railway adjoining the eastern boundary of the site. Neighbouring sites to the north and south currently accommodate low scale buildings containing commercial premises and at grade parking. Given the capacity and zoning of these sites they are likely to be developed to accommodate significantly larger buildings in the future. It is likely that neighbouring buildings will consist of podiums / ground floor levels containing retail / commercial spaces and residential towers up to 60m in height.</p> <p>On the southern edge of the site a currently unformed road way is located. When finished this road will form the eastern end of Hercules Street. The road will terminate in a dead end, as it abuts the rail way, providing access only to the subject site and its neighbour to the south.</p>
<b>Built Form and Scale</b>	<p>The proposal is located in a zone that allows far more height than is currently proposed (31m proposed -60m permissible). However, the proposed commercial usage lends itself to larger floor plates that result in a shorter building form. Given the proposals mid-block location the proposed height is acceptable. The strategy currently proposed to create a building with a clearly defined base, middle and top is reasonable, particularly given that the building top steps back from the side boundaries when it reaches the 24m maximum street frontage height set out in WLEP 2009.</p> <p>Given that the section of Hercules Street that interfaces with the building is a short, narrow dead end providing access to only two properties; it need not be treated as a major intersection or node within the street. The need for a tall significant building to emphasize the street corner or a grand street level plaza is</p>

	<p>unnecessary.</p> <p>However, if this approach is to be successful, consideration must be given to how the building interfaces with its future neighbours to the north and south.</p> <p>The southern interface will benefit from the generous separation that will be provided by Hercules Street. The approach to tree planting in Denison Street and Hercules Street proposed in the Landscape Plan is appropriate for the site conditions (including underground services) and use of the roads by large vehicles. It should be followed, given the nature of this portion of Hercules street it is seen as unnecessary to provide a building entrance on this street (as required by WLEP 2009). Providing one clearly defined entrance from Denison Street provides a far clearer entry process to the building.</p> <p>The building's interface with its northern neighbour is far more constrained. The currently proposed 3m set back from ground level to level 5, though compliant with both BCA and council controls creates a poor quality space at ground level with limited functionality. The upper levels will also be very vulnerable to loss of amenity when the adjoining site to the north is developed. Two different approaches to address this issue were discussed at the design review meeting.</p> <p>Option 1, set back the entire building 6m from the northern boundary. This will provide a northern terrace at ground level. The additional set back will also provide more separation between the north facing commercial tenancies and future built form of the neighbouring site. Additional floor space may be provided to compensate for the increase set back by extending the building slightly closer to its eastern boundary and / or locating the building further south closer to Hercules Street.</p> <p>Option 2, set back the first two levels (only) 6m from the northern boundary. This will provide a covered terrace to the north at street level. The upper level commercial space would remain vulnerable to loss of amenity, when the site to the north is developed. However, it is acknowledged that if a taller residential tower were to be developed on the adjoining site to the north, the ratio of FSR to height permissible on this site would accommodate reasonably generous setbacks from the subject site.</p> <p>Both option 1 or option 2 are considered as acceptable outcomes for this proposal.</p> <p>It is important that reasonably substantial landscape plantings be established as part of any detailed design for this area.</p>
<b>Density</b>	<p>The proposed density complies with council controls and results in an acceptable building form, providing issues highlighted with the buildings interface with its northern and southern neighbours are addressed.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<p>The proportions of the typical floor plate are reasonable, only a very small portion of the floor is in-excess of 12.5m from a window</p> <p>The use of PV's is also encouraged to contribute to some of the energy use of the building.</p> <p>Opportunities to harvest rainwater for use in maintaining any plantings established on the building or the site should be explored. Other water minimization measures should be</p>

	<p>considered and reuse of rainwater for toilet flushing and washing machines should also be implemented for a site of this size</p> <p>Species selection for any plantings should aim to support council's commitment to maintaining local biodiversity and natural landscapes, and preventing future weed problems. The species proposed on the Landscape Plan do not currently address this goal.</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>Given the nature and context of the site, opportunities for establishing good-sized trees are limited. The plantings in Hercules Street should be selected on the basis of achieving as much canopy cover as possible whilst taking into account the need to retain clearance for heavy vehicles. The plantings in Denison Street should be negotiated with Council to ensure sustainability and public domain amenity concerns are addressed.</p> <p>The landscape design for the northern boundary will need to be revisited in light of any changes to the building setback and the goal should be to establish a more naturalistic planting scheme that provides privacy, shady and sunny spaces, visual amenity and ecological benefits.</p> <p>The planters for the proposed terrace landscaping should allow for a minimum 750mm soil depth and 1000mm width to ensure reasonably sized shrubs / small trees can be established. An irrigation system will be necessary.</p>
<b>Amenity</b>	<p>Pedestrian access and circulation through the building is functional and appropriate.</p> <p>The location of the vehicular access and service area at the rear of the property provides a functional and appropriate strategy for servicing the building.</p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p>Consideration should be given to how the northern street level terrace can be secured after hours to limit the potential for antisocial behaviour. The rear service area should also be capable of being secured after hours.</p>
<b>Housing Diversity and Social Interaction</b>	<p>The proposal will provide employment and daytime activity to this area. It is an appropriate typology of building for this precinct.</p>
<b>Aesthetics</b>	<p>The building aesthetics have been developed in a competent manner. The form and composition of the building is reasonable and the selection of materials appropriate.</p> <p>The buildings eventual aesthetic success will be largely dependent upon the quality and typology of the screening system applied to each façade. Detailed studies should be undertaken by the applicant to develop each screening system to respond to the four different facades (north, east, south and west) of the building. Ideally these studies / detailed section should be presented to council to demonstrate the quality of each façade and its effectiveness in controlling the environment within the building.</p>
<b>Design Excellence WLEP2009</b>	
<b>Whether a high standard of architectural design,</b>	<p>The buildings eventual aesthetic success will be largely dependent upon the quality and typology of the screening system applied to</p>

<b>materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved</b>	each façade. Detailed studies should be undertaken by the applicant to develop each screening system to respond to the four different facades (north, east, south and west) of the building. Ideally these studies / detailed section should be presented to council to demonstrate the quality of each façade and its effectiveness in controlling the environment within the building.
<b>Whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,</b>	The form of the building is appropriate for this precinct. The design provides a clearly defined entrance and a strong, direct connection to the street.
<b>Whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,</b>	The proposal does not appear to impact upon any prominent view corridors.
<b>Whether the proposed development detrimentally overshadows an area shown distinctively coloured and numbered on the Sun Plane Protection Map,</b>	The panel has not been provided with a sun plane protection map.
<b>How the development addresses the following:</b>	
<b>the suitability of the land for development,</b>	The site provides good opportunities for servicing, vehicular access and a prominent street address to allow a commercial building of this scale to be developed.
<b>existing and proposed uses and use mix</b>	The proposed commercial building will provide an appropriate addition to this neighbourhood, consistent with the future desires character of this precinct.
<b>heritage issues and streetscape constraints,</b>	The proposal relates appropriately to the street, there appear to be no neighbouring heritage items.
<b>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,</b>	No tower is proposed.
<b>bulk, massing and modulation of buildings</b>	The massing of the building is reasonable, pending further development of the northern façade.
<b>street frontage heights</b>	The street frontage height is approximately 24m, this is within the limitations set out in WLEP 2009.
<b>environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and</b>	Overshadowing is not an issue due to the modest height and orientation of the development and the nature of the urban development it adjoins.

<b>reflectivity</b>	<p>Section J of the BCA, sets the baseline for some aspects of sustainable design but the aim should be to go as far beyond it as possible. The choice of materials will be one factor in achieving this.</p> <p>The site analysis indicates that the building will be screened from direct exposure to southerly winds by the development to the north.</p>
<b>the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development</b>	<p>The building's environmental performance will be largely dependent upon the quality and typology of the screening system applied to each façade. Detailed studies should be undertaken by the applicant to develop each screening system to respond to the four different facades (north, east, south and west) of the building. Ideally these studies / detailed section should be presented to council to demonstrate the quality of each façade and its effectiveness in controlling the environment within the building.</p> <p>It is also recommended that the environment commitments outlined above (sustainability) are accommodated in the building design.</p>
<b>pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements</b>	<p>Appropriate pedestrian and vehicular access has been provided.</p>
<b>impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain</b>	<p>It is expected that the proposal will provide a positive contribution to Denison Street.</p>
<b>Key issues, further Comments &amp; Recommendations</b>	<p>The proposal generally provides a building form that responds appropriately to this site and its immediate context. The proposal to construct Hercules Street and allow for future rear access to sites to the south is also commendable. However further consideration of the following issues is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further development of northern interface, either options 1 or 2 as outlined above (Built Form).</li> <li>- Further detail information documenting façade treatments.</li> <li>- Implementation of sustainability indicatives as outlined above (Sustainability).</li> </ul> <p>Pending the resolution of these issues to the satisfaction of council staff, this proposal does not require further review by the panel.</p>