

WDRP REVIEW : 03 June 2019**Brendan Randles, Chairman****(Based on meeting minutes and recommendations for DA-2018/1638, 19th February 2019)**

Date	19 February 2019
Meeting location	Wollongong City Council Administration Offices
Panel members	Brendan Randles
	Tony Quinn
	David Jarvis
Apologies	Theresa Whittaker - Senior Development Project Officer
Council staff	Mark Riordan – Director Planning & Environment (Acting)
	Pier Panozzo – City Centre & Major Development Manager
	Felicity Skoberne – Landscape Architect
Guests/ representatives of the applicant	Angelo Di Martino – ADM Architects
	Michael Elias
Declarations of Interest	Nil
Item number	2
DA number	DA-2018/1638
Determination pathway	Southern Regional Planning Panel
Property address	71-77 Kembla Street Wollongong
Proposal	Mixed use development - fourteen (14) storey building comprising of one hundred and two (102) residential units and eight (8) commercial tenancies over two (2) levels of basement parking - Re-notified with correct development description
Applicant or applicant's representative address to the design review panel	
Background	DE-2017/161 (pre-DA DRP) on 6 December 2017; PL-2017/228 held on 17 January 2018
	The site was Inspected by the Panel on 19 February 2019
Design quality principals SEPP65	
Context and Neighbourhood Character	The Panel has seen this proposal before at a voluntary pre-DA meeting (which in itself is commendable). Since then the corner building (by the same architect) has substantially commenced construction. While the context at the pre-DA stage was reasonably well described, it was noted that there was limited information presented regarding adjacent sites - especially on elevations and sections – making assessment of detail very difficult. It was advised at that time, that context must be shown all plan, section and elevation drawings. This has not been done.

	<p><i>Hence, the public domain interface requires substantial design resolution and the Stewart Street frontage needs to demonstrate that its proposed built form will work in its current and future context.</i></p> <p>Although the Panel has clearly stated on a number of occasions that “limited information regarding adjacent sites” makes “assessment of the detail” interface very difficult, the Proponent continues to ignore this advice. Clearly the proposal’s interface with the public domain, streetscape and adjacent sites is of chief importance to the proposal’s acceptability. It is therefore critical that all elevations and sections must include adjacent sites and streetscape in order to demonstrate an acceptable level of amenity and urban design quality. This has still NOT been done. For a large scale project in the City Centre, that breaches the ADG setback requirements on its northern boundary and contradicts the DCP street setback requirements along its western boundary, this remains an unacceptable outcome. Therefore, the proposal must be resubmitted with adjacent sites and built form shown on all elevations and sections, so as to demonstrate :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the amenity and urban design quality of the interface - massing and scale transition across boundaries - resolution of character and expression between neighbours - landscape quality across each interface
Built Form and Scale	<p><i>As stated at the last meeting, the massing and scale of the proposal generally responds well to its context. Given its alignment with the building further south, the Panel support the alternative setback proposed and with the screening proposed, can support the non-compliance the site’s northern boundary.</i></p> <p><i>However, levels 8 and below (though compliant with ADG setback controls) are in close proximity to the open plan office spaces of the future office building to the north. Consideration must be given to the detail treatment of the northern elevation to limit potential privacy issues whilst providing controlled solar access.</i></p> <p>Lack of contextual information on adjacent sites and public domain prevents this issue from being assessed (see notes above).</p> <p><i>The layout rationally distributes and circulates amenable and complying units in a skillful manner. In response to the Panel’s comments, the ends of the corridors have been opened up, which improves their amenity significantly.</i></p> <p>Noted.</p> <p><i>The footpath however is not well resolved. Instead of creating a single flexible expanse of tree lined paved space, it is bisected by steps and planters, severely constraining its physical and visual amenity. This is exacerbated by the location of the basement car park, which lifts the paved surface and necessitates the removal of all street trees.</i></p> <p><i>While required flood levels will lift the ground floor above footpath level, the Panel believe that the change in level between the kerb and the tenancies along this street frontage can be resolved. through footpath slope and the introduction of 1 : 20 ramps (Max. 1</i></p>

: 14) within foyers, tenancies and to the north of commercial space 1. This will require setting back the basement western edge to the glass line – which could also save the street trees – and a more precise calibration of levels.

The planter beds and steps have been removed, which is a great improvement. Ideally, all entry ramps would be kept to 1 : 20 to optimize amenity. It is not clear if this has been attempted. It appears that Commercial Space 1 may not require an internal ramp, given that its northern façade would be close to the required internal level.

The Panel accepts that a different solution will be required on the Stewart Street frontage - with steps and a platform lift to allow accessibility from the south west of the site. If well resolved, this treatment could create a distinctive character for the Stewart Street frontage – which as noted above, requires better description (of current and likely future contexts) and demonstrated coordination with the proposal.

The Stewart Street frontage has been amended with integrated steps and platform lift. However, the revised southern elevation does not indicate how the proposal will address the existing site to its east, nor how it may accommodate or generate a future streetscape. This ignores the Panel's requirement that this issue must be addressed (see notes above) and that all elevations and sections are to include adjoining sites and public domain.

As discussed at the meeting, while the Panel generally support the massing and scale of the building, its double height expression at lower levels appears excessive in the Stewart Street context – especially south of the proposed entry slot, where the height of the building steps down. It would be preferable if the height of the commercial space too stepped down to a single storey. This would create a better proportioned façade and allow for a more appropriate response to the streetscape to the south.

While the south elevation has been amended as suggested, the elevation treatment of level one lacks continuity with the floors above. This creates an odd architectural expression that looks “accidental”. It is therefore recommended that a similar expression is extended from level 1 to level 5.

As proposed, the penthouse is not successfully resolved within the form of the building; its footprint is too big to be expressed as a “pavilion” and its distinction is blurred by the building’s flush façade screening, which currently extends full height. Either the penthouse should be incorporated into the general form of the building – set back perhaps from the northern edge to create a large north facing terrace - or its footprint should be significantly reduced to express itself as a lightweight pavilion setback from a consistent terrace parapet.

The Panel was concerned that the penthouse was not well integrated into the built form and in such a prominent “public” locality, required further thought. Two design strategies were suggested for further study in order to provide a more resolved and amenable built form. In response to this comment, the top floor has been redesigned to maximize its site coverage, without stepping the building at its northern end to create a large open terrace (as suggested by the Panel).

Hence, much greater physical and visual bulk is now proposed, exacerbating the non-compliance with the ADG's setback requirements and its compatibility with the approved built form on its adjoining site (which as stated above, is not shown at all).

Clearly, the Panel was seeking a more amenable built form to better integrate with its context : limiting its bulk, introducing landscape at its upper level, cutting back its roof where not required, introducing stepping and so on. The proposal instead increases its bulk and fails to demonstrate compatibility with adjoining properties and streetscape. It is therefore not acceptable.

The redesigned penthouse also illustrates that additional bulk is not even necessary; the top level is dominated by large service and internal rooms, virtually every room is over sized and all perimeter balconies have been increased in depth. ALL the outdoor space – including the very deep north facing al fresco space – is proposed as covered space. This gives the penthouse a deep and internal character, dominated by a long corridor and deeply recessed living spaces. It is therefore not supported.

To address issues of bulk as well as ADG compliance and internal and external amenity, the Level 13 floor plate must be reduced in size. Balconies should be narrowed to match the floor below. Service and storage rooms should be greatly reduced in size and number. Habitable rooms too - reduced in size and all must have windows.

The rationalization of internal and external areas at the southern portion of the plan should allow for a large north facing landscaped terrace – of approximately 10m depth - as previously suggested by the Panel. The unit's new north facing glazing should have a cantilevered roof eaves of no more than 2.5m to allow adequate solar penetration to living spaces. The northern edge of the terrace must have a 2m constructed landscaped planter to prevent overlooking to its adjoining boundary. The landscape treatment of the new private terrace must be thoughtfully considered and designed to integrate tree planting to ameliorate the issues of bulk and separation identified above.

As stated above, the revised west elevation must include its adjoining properties and existing street trees. The terrace at level 13 (described above) should extend south as far as the first structural bay (approximately ten metres from the northern façade on lower levels). The level 13 roof eaves should project no further north than the north side of the slot below.

As noted above, the west elevation does not include its adjoining building, which makes the new streetscape very difficult to assess. This issue must be addressed.

As stated above, the revised west elevation must include its adjoining properties and existing street trees, as well as a redesigned penthouse and north facing terrace described above.

Notably, the entire western façade is contingent on the detail and quality of the louvres proposed, the detail of how it is incorporated into the building facade, its modules, proportions and operation. Therefore, the product and its detail must be clearly explained and shown to be consistent with the perspectives prepared. In addition, the Panel advise that this product and its detail is clearly specified on the DA drawings.

	Louvre details have been provided as requested.
Density	<i>Complies</i> Unchanged.
Sustainability	<i>High degree of compliance with solar access and natural ventilation is commendable. The Panel recommends the setting back of the basement levels to retain the street trees along Burelli Street.</i> The basement levels have been setback as required.
Landscape	<i>The landscape treatment of the streetscape needs to be substantially modified to achieve a more flexible, expansive and consistent footpath space to Burelli Street with retained street trees, as described above.</i> The remodification of the streetscape has been achieved as requested. The coordination of paving, lighting and tree pits requires coordination with Council landscape staff. <i>The basement car park should be setback to provide deep soil and the planters and steps removed.</i> Basement car park has been setback as requested. <i>A platform lift should be integrated into the Stewart Street frontage at its eastern end.</i> A platform lift has been provided as requested.
Amenity	<i>Unit A701 needs to be modified to provide access to the Level 7 communal terrace from the Burelli Street building,</i> Achieved. <i>As advised at the previous panel meeting, access to the Level 7 communal terrace should not be via the communal room.</i> Achieved. <i>Bedroom 2 of Unit A106 (and above) does not have a wardrobe; these units need minor reorganization to provide wardrobes to all bedrooms and a serviceable laundry.</i> Achieved. <i>Further development of screening to northern elevation is required to limit potential privacy issues whilst providing controlled solar access</i> Achieved. <i>Adaptable units should show living room furniture layouts and wheel chair turning circles.</i> Achieved.

	<p>In addition, the proposed level 13 unit requires substantial modification to reduce physical and visual bulk as described above – especially along the western elevation. This will include the rationalisation and reduction in size of the proposed internal spaces, storage and perimeter balconies. A substantial landscaped terrace is to be provided at level 13's northern end to reduce physical and visual bulk as described above. It is to be appropriately landscaped and open to the sky.</p> <p>In addition, to comply with the ADG, all habitable rooms are to be provided with windows and living rooms given a demonstrably adequate access to northern light.</p>
Safety	<p><i>Acceptable</i></p> <p>Noted.</p>
Housing Diversity and Social Interaction	<p><i>Acceptable</i></p> <p>Noted</p>
Aesthetics	<p><i>As noted at the last Panel meeting, the three dimensional views provided illustrate that the building should make an interesting contribution to the street's expression and character.</i></p> <p><i>The penthouse level however appears unresolved; its footprint is too big to be expressed as a "pavilion" and its distinction is blurred by the building's flush façade screening which extends full height. Either the penthouse should be incorporated into the general form of the building – set back perhaps from the northern edge to create a large north facing terrace; or its footprint should be significantly reduced to express itself as a lightweight pavilion setback from a consistent terrace parapet.</i></p> <p>The revised level 13 penthouse – with its full roof - results in excessive visual and physical bulk. This is not acceptable as it exacerbates issues of scale, streetscape character, non compliance with ADG setback requirements on the northern boundary and the relationship with built form on the adjoining property (not shown). The penthouse level needs to be rationalised and cut back to align with the first structural bay as noted above. New elevations and sections MUST include adjoining sites to demonstrate that the material and expression of the proposal aligns and complements existing and future built form.</p> <p><i>The applicant's departure from council's controls (street setback and street wall heights) is an appropriate response to the immediate context of this site – especially along Kembla Street where its retail character is acknowledged. However, the Stewart street frontage should respond to its quite different existing and likely future character and the fact that it will be more detached from the street, by its proposed change of level and steps, In the light of these differences, the Panel believe that the Stewart Street façade would be better suited to commercial rather than retail uses.</i></p> <p><i>The Panel therefore believe that the expression of the base of the building as a continuous two storey element is not justified on Stewart Street, south of the entry slot. It would be better expressed a single storey, not only creating a more dynamic expression of the building base in its entirety, but also more appropriately addressing the change of scale and character after it turns the corner.</i></p>

	<p>While the south elevation has been amended as suggested, the elevation treatment of level one lacks continuity with the floors above. This creates an odd architectural expression that looks “accidental”. It is therefore recommended that a similar expression is extended from level 1 to level 5.</p> <p>As previously requested by the Panel, the revised southern elevation must indicate how the proposal will address the existing site to its east, how it may accommodate and even generate future streetscape.</p> <p>As noted above, all elevations and sections are to include adjoining sites and public domain.</p>
--	--

Design Excellence WLEP2009

Whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved	Y – notwithstanding required amendments to level 13 noted above
Whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,	Y – provided level 13 and the Stewart Street façade can be resolved as described above
Whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,	OK
Whether the proposed development detrimentally overshadows an area shown distinctively coloured and numbered on the Sun Plane Protection Map,	OK
How the development addresses the following:	
the suitability of the land for development,	Y
existing and proposed uses and use mix	Y
heritage issues and streetscape constraints,	Y
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,	Y - provided the penthouse level can be resolved as described above
bulk, massing and modulation of buildings	Y - provided the penthouse level can be resolved as described above

street frontage heights	Y
environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity	Y
the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development	Y
pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements	Y
impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain	Y
Recommendations	<p>On a number of occasions, the Panel advised that all elevations and sections must include adjoining properties, built form and public domain so as to demonstrate that the proposal's amenity, urban design quality and character align with the existing and future character of the context. This was very important in this case due to the site's centrality and public nature, its ADG non compliant side setbacks and deviation from the DCP's street setbacks. This has still not been provided.</p> <p>In addition, level 13 has been visually and physically increased, to the detriment of the built form. This exacerbates issues of visual and physical bulk, non-compliant separation to northern boundary and streetscape character.</p> <p>Therefore, while the Panel does not need to formally see the proposal again, it is required that :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recommended design changes are incorporated in DA drawings - elevations and sections are revised to include adjoining properties, built form and public domain - revised drawings are approved by the DRP <p>Only after DRP approval, should the proposal be returned to Council for processing.</p>