
Design Excellence Panel Minutes

To: William Attard

Application No: DA2020/0542

Property: 14-22 Mary Street, Auburn

Proposal: Demolition of existing structures and construction of a 12-storey mixed use building comprising 4 ground floor retail spaces, a boarding house development containing 101 boarding rooms and 84 residential apartments over 4 levels of basement parking, including landscaping and associated site improvement works

Meeting Date: 16 December 2020

Panel Members: Ashley Dunn, David Appleby and Iain Stewart

Attendance: Council: Rashika Rani, Esra Calim, Jai Shankar, Michael Lawani, William Attard, Rennie Roanels

Applicant: Rolz Group Pty Ltd

Consultants: Urban Link (Architect), Site Image (Landscape Architects), SGC (Consulting Engineers), The Planning Hub (Town Planners).

Background:

On 21 December 2017 DA-32/2017 was approved by the Sydney Central City Planning Panel for the demolition of existing structures and the construction of a 12 storey mixed use apartment building containing a three storey basement car park, a ground floor comprising three commercial/retail tenancies at 18-22 Mary Street, Auburn

The current scheme includes 2 additional properties, 14 and 16 Mary Street and this is the scheme being assessed by the DEP.

It is noted that SEPP 65 and the ADG do not apply to the boarding house component of the proposal.

The site is zoned B4 Mixed Use under the provisions of the Auburn Local Environmental Plan 2010.

The site comprises of 5 separate residential properties commonly known as 14, 16, 18, 20 & 22 Mary Street, Auburn and are legally described as Lot 42 DP 738824, Lot 41 DP 89118, Lot 40, DP 982836, Lot 1, DP 742938 and Lot 1, 194169. Each property contains an older style detached single storey dwelling.

The combined sites have a frontage of approximately 62m to Mary Street to the north and frontage of 37.05m to Park Road to the west. Access to the site is from both Mary Street and Park Road. The site is generally rectangular in shape and has a total area of 2,286m².

The subject site is in vicinity of 2 heritage items – 8 Mary Street and 17 Mary Street

Key issues:

Presentation – No north point on drawings, no sections presented, page spread was difficult to read and could not be printed, plans lacked immediate and local context. The panel notes that the Architectural Set of drawings issued by council separately to the presentation issued by the proponent contained north points and sections. However, it was not clear if there were any discrepancies between the two different sets of drawings. It is recommended that 1 consistent set of drawings is issued to the panel to avoid this problem.

Site Coverage and Deep Soil Area - Non-compliant with Auburn DCP for Residential Flat Buildings.

Height of Building (HOB) - The proposal breaches the 38m height control by less than 10%.

Building Envelope – The proposal exceeds the max footprint requirement of 24x45m (29x59m) and the max tower footprint of 850sqm (around 1377sqm).

Setbacks – The proposal does not comply with the required setbacks as follows:

- The setback to the living room window in SE apartment at Levels 4-7 (ie 5th – 8th storey) to the eastern boundary is less than 9m (4.4m);
- The setback to the living room window in SE apartment at Levels 8-10 (ie 9th – 11th storey) to the eastern boundary is less than 12m (4.4m);
- The setback to the balconies to the rear southern boundary at Level 4 (ie 5th storey) is less than 9m (7m);
- The setback to the balconies and habitable rooms to the rear southern boundary at Levels 8-10 (ie 9th-11th storeys) is less than 12m (9.7m).

Visual Privacy - The proposal does not comply with SEPP 65, ADG building separation design criteria for visual privacy, with a reduced visual privacy setback (SEPP 65, ADG) as described above.

Solar Amenity – It is likely that future development will result in overshadowing of the proposal.

Summary of key issues discussed:

Presentation – The Panel found it difficult to understand the proposal due to a lack of general and detailed information in the drawings presented. In any subsequent presentations to the panel a full set of drawings need to be submitted and presented in such a way that they can be easily interrogated. The panel appreciated the site and context observations presented verbally, however, these observations were not evident in the proposal/ design response. It would have been useful for the presentation to include a comparison of the approved DA proposal with the revised proposal presented.

General comments – The panel suggested that the following design issues be considered:

- A colonnade be considered along Mary Street;
- improve path of entry and flood level response to tenancy at east end of Mary Street;
- improve amenity for the Studios to exceed the SEPP minimum requirements;
- northeast corner of the building to better address and relate to the garden;
- apartment entries are deeply recessed and concealed from street and may be unsafe – apply CPTED design principles and bring front door to street;
- vehicle entry on Park Street be reconsidered as it is very close to the intersection and in a residential area;
- loading dock is open to neighbours – consider how to ameliorate the acoustic impacts; and
- the 2 Lots left over on Harrow Street (one of which is a heritage item) appear to be too small to be consolidated. The panel is concerned that the current proposal will further isolate these sites.

Site Coverage and Deep Soil Area – The panel were concerned that there appeared to be little or no attempt for the proposal to keep the large trees on the boundary of the site. It would be possible for the proposal to work around the existing trees in the proposed deep soil area. It is suggested that options are explored to keep the existing large trees.

The panel's opinion was that the proposed deep soil area to the south of the building will be in shadow for much of the time and is inappropriately located for the occupants to have useful access to the proposed landscaped area. Consider placing the landscaped deep soil area on east side of the building where the space could be accessed from the adjacent retail tenancy and could save/incorporate the existing large tree on the site boundary. The panel suggested that the proponent should incorporate biophilic design principles and replace any trees removed with planting on the slab, on balconies, incorporating green walls and additional plantings on the roof of building.

Height of Building (HOB) – The panel considered the minor height breach of the rooftop lift over-run/stair to be inconsequential to the proposal.

Building Envelope and Massing– building massing proposed is a 38m single bulky mass, albeit articulated to appear divided into 3 bays. The central bay is shallower, with increased setbacks to the south that reduce overshadowing of southern properties. The recommendation made is to improve this condition by considering the following:

- Align massing with topography and express corner on Mary and Park Streets; and
- vary the height for each of the 3 bays, dropping the height of the central bay will ensure more sunlight passes through the building to neighbouring properties on the south. Should a design excellence submission be pursued, consideration might be given to increasing the height of the

western bay, in alignment with design excellence award definitions in the LEP, to recoup any FSR (GFA) that is lost – comprehensive solar access studies would need to demonstrate that this approach improves solar access to neighbouring properties to the south. The ability to explore increased height may slim the building's bulk and improve the massing outcome.

Setbacks and Visual Privacy – The panel considered the Level 4 setback to be insufficient and recommends that it meet the minimum ADG requirement. In general, further consideration should be given to visual privacy and a consistent and appropriate solution should be incorporated into the design. Further consideration should be given to the following items;

- On the first floor – the boarding house common areas are located immediately outside boarding units and pose acoustic privacy issues to residents. It is recommended to move this amenity to the west where it can add to/improve the corner retail expression on the Mary/Park intersection and be isolated from private units by doors off the west vertical circulation core;
- for the first level of apartments above boarding house floors, access to south facing balconies/terraces appears to contravene the ADG separation distances for visual privacy; and
- for boarding house apartments (first three residential levels) further consideration needs to be given to the balcony balustrade details to ensure visual privacy for residents from the street and from neighbours.

Solar Amenity – More detailed solar access and overshadowing analysis is required. Solar diagrams need to be developed and presented to describe the impact/ effect of surrounding approved development on the subject site.

Comparative solar diagrams should also be presented to describe and compare the existing approved proposal with the revised proposal.

Comprehensive solar access studies would need to demonstrate that the amended design improves solar access to neighbouring properties to the south and to the apartments.

Sustainability – There was a lack of detail on the ESD initiatives included in the project design. The panel suggested that the proponent itemise proposed ESD initiatives adopted in the design and clearly communicate the ESD schematic using diagrams etc. If the proponent is aiming for design excellence, then a commitment to excellence in ESD will need to be demonstrated. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Solar protection/ screening, especially on the Western Elevation;
- achieving minimum ADG requirements for cross ventilation and solar access on the top 9 floors;
- stormwater retention and cleansing;
- rainwater tanks/reuse; and
- a 5 to 6 Green Star Rating.

Recommendation:

The panel is of the opinion that whilst the current proposal does exhibit some merit in its design elements, it does not in the overall assessment of the design, demonstrate design excellence.

For the decision: Ashley Dunn, David Appleby and Iain Stewart

Considerations:

Considerations	Comments
Whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved.	On the information provided to the panel, it was not possible to make a definitive assessment on the appropriateness and quality of materials and detailing of the proposal. However, based on the conversations with the proponent during the presentation and review, the panel believes that this could be achieved by the design team with further refinement and development of the design as suggested above. The panel is supportive of the design concept perspectives that illustrate an effective façade composition and articulation of patterning, with refinement and thin-ness of leading edges of blade columns, balcony slab edges and street awnings. The panel asks that this be followed through into the detail design and that construction and balcony drainage pipes are suitably resolved/concealed to realise the desired refined design outcome.
Whether the form and external appearance of the development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain.	The recommendation made is to improve this aspect of the design by considering the following: • Align the massing with the topography and express the corner on Mary and Park Streets; • vary the height for each of the 3 bays, dropping the height of the central bay will ensure more sunlight passes through the building to neighbouring properties to the south. Should a design excellence submission be pursued, consideration should be given to increasing the height of the western bay, in alignment with design excellence award definitions in the LEP, to recoup FSR (GFA) lost – comprehensive solar access studies would need to demonstrate that this approach improves solar access to neighbouring properties to the south. The ability to explore increased height may slim the building's bulk and improve the massing outcome.
Whether the development detrimentally impacts on view corridors.	Due to time constraints, this was not discussed in the Panels review.

How the development addresses the following matters:	
The suitability of the land for development;	The Panel supports the proposed land uses.
Existing and proposed uses and use mix;	As above.
Heritage issues and streetscape constraints;	Consideration should be given to the bulk and scale of the east part of the building to address the heritage item and the 2 isolated sites. Refer to <u>Building Envelope and Massing</u> section above.
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;	Refer to <u>Building Envelope and Massing</u> section above.
Bulk, massing and modulation of buildings;	Refer to <u>Building Envelope and Massing</u> section above.
Street frontage heights;	Refer to <u>Building Envelope and Massing</u> section above.
Environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity;	A development of this nature should advance ESD initiatives and include a schematic presentation and details of the proposed ESD and environmental proposals with any future submission. Refer to <u>Sustainability</u> section above.
The achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development;	Refer to <u>Sustainability</u> section above.
Pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access and circulation requirements; and	Consideration should be given to the Vehicle Entry on Park Street as described above.
The impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain.	The landscape plans should clearly illustrate the proposed upgrade of the street frontages of the development. Comments above regarding amending the design in order to keep the existing large trees should be addressed in the next iteration of the design. Street trees on the Park Street frontage (say three of) should be included on the plans (are shown in the perspectives). It is questioned as to whether the tree planting proposed in the

	Deep Soil Zone and along the east boundary setback zone will be possible given the large twin stormwater pipes that are proposed to traverse these landscaped areas just below the surface. The future pedestrian crossing points at the roundabout need to be considered and compliant pedestrian ramps added to the Ground Floor Plan to align with pedestrian refuges in the median. A large timber power pole with cross arms is currently located at the Mary Street-Park Street corner (not shown in the perspectives). Consideration should be given to placing the power supply underground at this intersection. Access to the east commercial space should not be via a tight set of stairs – adjust the floor level to provide a seamless entry from the paved street to the retail/commercial tenancy.
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Signature



Ashley Dunn RAlA

NSW ARB 7547

Chairperson