



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**

Parramatta Design Excellence Advisory Panel Recommendation

Property:	37-41 Oxford St Epping
Application No.	DA/314/2017
Assessing Officer In attendance:	Alex McDougall
Applicants Name and/or Representative:	Panel liaison only– applicant was not required to attend
Date of Desktop Review:	17 January 2018
Item No:	
Members Present:	Jon Johannsen, David Epstein, Bob Meyer
Chair:	Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	
Other Persons in Attendance at Meeting:	

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Parramatta Design Excellence Advisory Panel (the Panel) comments are provided to assist both the applicant in improving the design quality of the proposal, and Parramatta City Council in its consideration of the application.

The nine design quality principles provided in SEPP65 Amendment No.3 are generally used to formulate the Panel's Report, notwithstanding that SEPP65 may not directly apply to the application. The absence of a comment related directly to any of the principles does not necessarily imply that the Panel considers the particular matter has been satisfactorily addressed.

PROPOSAL:

This is an amended Stage 1 DA submission for development of a mixed-use 30 storey residential tower with a 4 storey retail/commercial podium. Stage 2 for demolition and detailed building design would be subject to a further application to be determined by the Sydney Central City Planning Panel. A previous submission was reviewed by the Panel in June 2017, and the revised plans are in response to advice given at that meeting.

PANEL COMMENTS

The nine SEPP65 design principles were considered by the Panel in discussion of the development application. These are: **Context and Neighbourhood Character, Scale and Built Form, Density, Sustainability, Landscape, Amenity, Safety, Housing Diversity and Social Interaction, and Aesthetics.**

The Design Excellence Advisory Panel make the following comments in relation to the project:

In general the Panel believes this is a significant improvement on the two building option, and although there is a major breach of the height limit, justification in this case should be made in consideration of the improved urban and building design outcomes. Otherwise the proposal appears to be largely ADG compliant, but the following comments cover further points or clarifications that must be considered by the Applicant in the subsequent Stage 2 submission.

1. The Panel supports the single tower with additional height in-lieu of building 'B'. A taller and more slender building is appropriate in this location, and can provide a suitable apex for the cluster of high rise buildings now evolving around the Epping urban centre.
2. The articulation and stepping down at the top of the building is commended, and a good response to Panel suggestion from the earlier Stage 1 review. However the Panel considers this approach needs to be strengthened with perhaps larger steps, and indication of how this modelling would assist in minimising overshadowing and solar access loss relative to 35 Oxford Street.

3. As the building will be viewed from many directions, and due to its height likely be a landmark for the Epping Town Centre, it is suggested that distant urban form views from various points be shown as part of further design development. Precedents should also be reviewed for stepped roofs viewed from different directions in the Sydney CBD, such as the Deutsche Bank in Hunter Street, Governor Macquarie Building in Farrer Place and No. 52 Martin Place.
4. Articulation of the tower with recessed slots has significantly improved the appearance of the building envelope, and the Panel feels that these slots should perhaps continue down through podium levels to better express the main entrances more clearly at street level. Detailed perspectives/montages at street level are necessary to ensure the best appreciation of potential outcomes.
5. At the earlier Stage 1 review, the Panel noted that the podium should be 3-4 storeys high and include community uses and commercial spaces suitable for potential 'co-working' office spaces for local residents. While the podium height at 3 storeys is acceptable, the commercial spaces are limited in both size and configuration. Office units that are not connected to residences should be more uniform and adaptable, allowing for them to be linked to provide larger commercial spaces if required, and less suitable to be converted back to residential units in future.
6. Given the relatively small size of the commercial spaces not linked to residential units, consideration should also be given to provision of communal toilet amenities and kitchen facilities at Level 1. These could also be for the benefit of visiting maintenance or service personnel.
7. For a building of this scale it would be expected that a community room should be provided for owner corporation meetings and occasional communal functions. While there may be scope for such a space to be located within the Level 1 podium, an alternative could be on Level 27 adjacent the roof terrace. That approach would see the replacement of a 1 bedroom unit with a flexible space opening onto the terrace, and with shared amenities available for various social activities as well.
8. There is concern from the Panel about the proposed resolution of the public domain and landscape treatment to the Oxford Street frontage. The indicated front setback for the podium is 6m where Council requested 7.5m, and the panel previously recommended 3m to align more closely with No. 35 Oxford Street or the building to the north.

Furthermore, the footpath is highlighted in green suggesting soft landscaping when in fact it should be paved in accordance with the public domain controls to maintain a consistent streetscape.

9. Further investigation of landscape options is needed together with 3D images and material palette showing both the existing and proposed streetscape treatments. This should also consider how the main building entries can be better integrated to address Oxford Street, and provide cohesive activation along the retail frontage. The footpath awning is shown stopping short on the northeast corner, and it could extend further out and partially along the northern side for better protection to pedestrians and patrons using the outdoor space to the north.
10. As identified in the GAO Draft of Greener Places, a healthy and easily maintained tree canopy is increasingly critical in Western Sydney to deal with hotter summers, so there must be well considered strategies to support larger trees around site perimeters. The Basement Levels 2-3 cover a large part of the site, and although stepped in at Basement Level 1, there is diminished opportunity for real unrestricted deep soil planting. Given close proximity of the site to the Epping Station, scope should be investigated for potential car parking reduction to allow for perimeter pockets of more deep soil zones.
11. Previous pre-DA material shown to the Panel also indicated a greening strategy for the building facades with associated modelling, and this should be further explored in any future submission to help mitigate concerns about urban heat island effects. The Panel is encouraged to see the Level 27 roof terrace, but this and other upper setback levels could include more landscape treatment to help reduce heat load, and for further communal rooftop access.
12. The Panel noted access to the rear ground level communal open space via stairs from the central lobby, and to the multi-purpose court via ramp. It is unclear whether full equitable access would link these areas, or if this might be along the northern side of the building. Provision for communal amenities nearby should also be considered.
13. It is expected that more detailed elevations reflecting the proposed floor plans will be included in a Stage 2 submission, and there should also be detailed 1:20 sections to show use of materials and how the overall façade will work at the various levels.

14. While the unit layouts are quite tight, the Panel considered they are generally satisfactory but some refinements may be appropriate. Several units have limited kitchen bench space - eg. 2 bedroom units on level 2 on the south-west corner, and some living areas allow direct line of sight into adjacent bedrooms. Clarification of how various unit services will be provided is expected in any subsequent submission, along with detailed modelling for natural ventilation.

Panel recommendation - **AMBER**

In the event that amended plans are submitted to Council to address the concerns of the Design Excellence Advisory Panel the amended plans should be referred back to the Panel for comment.