

Parramatta Design Excellence Advisory Panel

Panel Recommendations - 20 October 2022

Re: Revised Application dated 31 August 2022 - mixed use development comprising 7 buildings with residential accommodation, childcare centre, neighbourhood shops, public open space, landscaping and underground parking.

Site: 263-281 Pennant Hills Road, Carlingford

Applicant: Meriton Apartments

Architect: Fender Katsalidis

The Panel makes the following comments in relation to the revised plans;

The Panel is concerned that the application does not adequately address the Principles of SEPP 65 and the requirements in the ADG including;

1. Context and Neighbourhood Character

- i. *Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of an areas existing or future character.*
 - ii. *Well designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area including adjacent sites streetscape and neighbourhood.*
 - iii. *Consideration of local context is important for all sites including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change.*
- The proposed site layout and structure has not responded to the existing or desired future character of the area. The significance of the RE1 Public Park as a public park and associated east/west link between the light rail station and the shopping precinct in Carlingford has been compromised in the latest iteration providing only a narrow pathway in-lieu of the previously proposed road with footpaths and cycleway. This has resulted in poor access to the park with limited connectivity to surrounding areas. See further comments below regarding public access to the RE1 Public Park.
 - The scheme is lacking information regarding the existing and future potential development of the adjacent shopping precinct and does not contribute to enhancing the quality and identity of the area.

2. Built Form and Scale

- i. *Appropriate building form **defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks** including their views and vistas and provides internal amenity and outlook.*
- The Panel is concerned that the development is not in-keeping with surrounding development and future character of the area due to proposed bulk and scale, large building footprints and inadequate landscaping.
 - The buildings do not properly define the public domain or planned internal semi-public/communal open spaces and does not contribute to the character of the streets and parks in accordance with the ADG.
 - Building B in the northeast/southwest direction is excessive and needs to be broken into two built form elements.
 - Cross sections provided to date showing the interface between the buildings and the public domain have not convinced the Panel that the design achieves appropriate built form and scale.

3. Density

- i. Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents and each apartment resulting in a density appropriate to the site and its context.*
- Whilst there may be an opportunity to provide high density development on the site it is the level of amenity in the current proposal that is of concern to the Panel. As discussed throughout this report and previous reports by the Panel, the main concerns relate to the design of the public domain, the street environment and the interface between the public and private areas of the development.

4. Sustainability

- There appears to be no details provided with regard to sustainability. Given the scale of the development, a comprehensive strategy covering relevant aspects of sustainability including those mentioned in the Sustainability Principle combining positive environmental, social and economic outcomes by incorporating passive thermal design, recycling and re-use of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials, deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.

5. Landscape

- The Panel notes there are several non-compliances with significant sections of Part 3 of the ADG including;
 - a. Communal open space – its location and proximity. Lack of structural integrity that clearly defines the open space network and hierarchy of spaces.
 - b. The inclusion of the RE1 Public Land as part of the landscape area for the site.
 - c. Deep soil zones – Poorly located and insufficient deep soil zones within the site particularly at the southwest part of the site and between buildings A/B, B/C and C/F and between buildings D1 and D2.
 - d. Similarly, we note the inadequacy of the communal open space in terms of its utility. The landscape report which includes plans of the open spaces are simply an enlargement of the overall site landscape plan. Consequently, the detail plans are severely lacking information necessary for a Development Application such as a way finding plan/signage, lighting, and urban elements plan.
 - e. Greater landscape amenity is required on the internal road parallel to Pennant Hills Road. As drawn the opportunity for deep soil planting in the verge between the site boundary on Pennant Hills Road & the internal loop road varies in width and offers less room for large long term canopy tree growth along this important interface.
- With regard to the RE1 Public Park, the removal of the internal road on the south side of the park is not supported by the Panel for the following reasons;
 - a. Poor public vehicular and pedestrian access to the units that face the Public Reserve.
 - b. Poor CPTED safety conditions to provide passive surveillance of the park.
 - c. Poor access to the Public Reserve for Council maintenance.
 - d. Potential privatization of the park edge by private residential units.
 - e. Unacceptable DDA access opportunities from the proposed pathway with steps into the residential units facing the public reserve.

6. Amenity

- The Panel notes there are non-compliances with Part 4 – Amenity requirements in the ADG including;
 - a. Solar Access
 - b. Cross Ventilation
 - c. Length of corridors, with or without daylight – more cores are recommended to achieve required amenity for occupants.

7. Safety

See comments above under 5: Landscape

8. Diversity and Social Interaction

Whilst a variety of communal spaces and opportunities for social interaction are proposed, issues relating to the use of the open space such as the amount and location of open space, lack of deep soil for large shade trees, safety issues, poor connectivity to surrounding areas and lack of public access etc. discussed elsewhere in this report, must be addressed.

9. Aesthetics

- a. The Panel notes there are non-compliances with sections of Part 3 of the ADG.
 - i. *Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structure. Good design uses a variety of materials, colours and textures.*
 - ii. *The visual appearance of well designed apartment development responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.*
- b. Instead, the built form appears the same for all buildings and there is no understanding or commentary on how the built form responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements, and repetitions of the streetscape.
- c. As noted above, the length of Building B in the northeast/southwest direction is excessive and needs to be broken into two built form elements.

In conclusion, the Panel considers the application is lacking in the appropriate level of understanding of its context and detail required for such a significant development proposal.

DEAP
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