

# Design Excellence Advisory Panel Report

**Address: 10 James Street Carlingford**

**Date: 24 July 2025**

## Application Summary

|                                   |                                                              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Application Number                | DA/273/2025                                                  |
| Assessing Officer                 | Greg Samardzic, Senior Development Assessment Officer        |
| Applicant/Proponent               | The Trustees for Captag James Property Trust                 |
| Architect and Registration Number | Architect Name Reg No. 11314<br>Capio Property Group         |
| Landscape Architect               | Conzept Landscape                                            |
| Planner                           | Mecone                                                       |
| Others in attendance              | The applicant and consultant team did not attend the meeting |

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DAP Members                 | Russell Olsson, Deena Ridenour, Oi Choong                                                                                                                             |
| Chair                       | Russell Olsson                                                                                                                                                        |
| Other Persons in attendance | Jay Ahmed, Senior Project Officer, Design Excellence<br>Emma Paling – Senior Landscape Tree Management Officer<br>Gregory Thorne – Project Officer, Design Excellence |
| Item No.                    | 1 of 1                                                                                                                                                                |
| DAP Meeting Number          | 1 <sup>st</sup> Referral                                                                                                                                              |

## General Information

The City of Parramatta Design Advisory Panel (DAP) provides independent expert advice on applications relating to a diverse range of developments within the City of Parramatta Local Government Area.

The DAP comments are provided to assist both the applicant in improving the design quality of the proposal and the City of Parramatta in its consideration of the application.

## Preamble

This is the first time the proposal has been presented to the Parramatta DAP. There was no representation at the DAP meeting from the Applicant. The scheme has been assessed on the information provided prior to the meeting.

## Proposal

The subject site is one lot with a width of 18.288m and a depth on the western boundary of 44.194m and on the eastern boundary of 52.386m. The site is orthogonal on its northern end addressing James Street and is splayed on its southern end, where it interfaces with State Rail owned.

An existing approval with 2 basement levels of parking has had construction commenced with 2 basement parking levels being excavated.

The proposed development seeks partial demolition and construction of a 16-storey Residential Flat Building over basement parking. Specifically, this DA seeks consent for:

- Partial demolition of some existing structural elements and preparatory earthworks.
- The construction of a 16-storey residential flat building development (with a lift overrun) comprising:
  - Construction of a two-level basement consisting of 30 car parking spaces, bicycle parking, a motorbike parking space, services and waste room.
  - A three-storey non-residential podium including 34 car parking spaces, bicycle parking, waste storage, services and residential lobbies.
  - 45 dwellings across 13 storeys.
  - Communal open space located at the roof top including barbeques, seating and picnic areas and a swimming pool.
  - Associated landscaping, public domain works and infrastructure improvements.

## Panel Comments

1. The site is approximately 60m west of Carlingford light rail station and is visible from the station. Opposite the site on the northern side of James Street are a series of 6 storey street front buildings between the light rail station, Thallon Street and Jenkins Road. Towers on these sites are set back a minimum of 6m from James Street. On the southern corner of James Street and Jenkins Road are 6 storey high street frontage buildings. The 6 storey street frontage buildings on the northern and southern sides of James Street establish the scale and built form character of James Street. They are an appropriate scale for pedestrians arriving or departing from the light rail station. The set back towers above 6 storeys minimise any wind downdrafts and overbearing effect on pedestrians in the public domain. The subject site is located in Block 4 of Carlingford

Local Centre and is a designated key site in the DCP. The Block 4 controls have generally shaped the existing built form in James Street, as the Block 4 controls have a 6 storey street wall scale for these sites, with set back tower.

2. The approved building to the east of the subject site at 12 James Street has a tower set back approximately 8m from the James Street boundary. The tower to the west of the subject site at 2-8 James Street is set back approximately 2 metres from the front boundary (James Street). Although the levels above Level 6 are also set back only 2m from the front boundary, creating a vertical tower form, the tower has a rebate between levels 6 and 7, marking the predominant 6 storey height in the street.
3. The proposed development is built to the front boundary on levels 1 and 2 (carparking) and is set back minimally on Levels 3 – 11. These setbacks vary between 886mm, 1493mm and 3700mm. As the tower at 2-8 James Street is set back 2m, the proposed Level 1 and Level 2 carpark facades project forward of the existing building to the west and Levels 3 - 11, are slightly set back in a range of alignments. These minimal proposed setbacks do not align at any point with the existing building to the west or the approved building to the east, and consequently create a discordant series of built forms within an otherwise consistent streetscape.
4. It is recommended that the proposed Ground Level to Level 5 (6 storeys) be set back 2m from the front boundary, to align with the lowest 6 storeys of the building at 2-8 James Street. It is recommended that the proposed Level 7 to Level 15 be set back 6m from the front boundary. The built form outcome will be to make the lowest 6 storeys visually prominent in the street, to reinforce the predominant 6 storey scale in the street at podium level and to make a stepped transition of tower forms from 2-8 James Street to 12 James Street.
5. This built form approach will require re-planning of car parking and apartments internally. It may require a reduction in apartment numbers and/or sizes on Levels 3-11. This reduction of floor area may mean that a reduction in parking spaces on Levels 1 and 2 would still provide sufficient parking spaces.
6. It is noted that the site has been excavated for 2 basement parking levels and the excavation does not extend to the rear boundary. It may be useful to excavate further toward the rear boundary to allow for the proposed 2m front setback at the lowest 6 levels with minimal loss of parking area or floorspace. This approach may minimise the reduction in apartment numbers and/or sizes on Levels 7 to 15. These levels could move closer to the rear boundary without unduly impacting on the rear streetscape.
7. This approach may reduce some of the deep soil area currently proposed. There is a triangle of land along the laneway, owned by TransportNSW and proposed as part of the light rail works to remain landscape area. The land is contiguous with the subject site and could contribute to landscape area and deep soil in this location.
8. Building separation for the rear portion of the buildings is insufficient at 3.05m and at 4.5m at the notch. The high-level windows in bedrooms and bathrooms in the rear 4 bedroom apartments are not effective in eliminating cross-viewing, as occupants of higher levels in adjacent buildings to the east and west are able to look down into the proposed bedrooms and bathrooms. It is noted that the proposed bedrooms have south facing windows which have the potential to comply with the BCA for window areas without creating cross-viewing between neighbouring buildings. It is recommended to remove or make translucent the high level windows in bedrooms and to make windows translucent and operable for ventilation in bathrooms.

9. The 4 bedroom apartments to the rear of the site have relatively small living and dining areas for such a large number of bedrooms. These are likely to be family apartments with a need for more living space than a 2 bedroom apartment would need. It is recommended that the living and dining areas be extended, possibly with a separate living room or extended living room and that the apartment becomes 3 bedrooms plus a study or some other configuration.
10. There are no windows to the lift lobby and corridor on Levels 3 – 9. It is recommended that windows be provided with screening to avoid cross viewing to bedrooms, to allow for daylight to the corridor, with at least one window openable to allow for natural ventilation.
11. The proposed mix of curved and rectilinear forms, small steps and changes in paint colours on the James Street facade create excessive verticality in the façade. This is a tall tower on a relatively narrow lot and a more horizontal composition of forms would create a more balanced façade composition. A more regular composition of forms and colours, with fewer steps, would create a more visually calm and legible elevation.
12. The material palette of the tower is limited to predominantly painted concrete. The creation of a 6 storey podium is an opportunity to have a visual distinction between the podium and the tower. It is noted that dark grey brick brickwork is currently proposed on Levels 2 and 3 facing James Street, however it returns only a short distance along the eastern elevation and the change of material to painted concrete would be visible from the street. It is recommended that brickwork be provided on the lowest 6 storeys. Brickwork, without the need for windows, would be an acceptable finish for the visually prominent eastern façade and should continue for the full extent of the lowest 6 storeys on the eastern elevation. It is recommended that a warm mid-tone brick be selected rather than the currently proposed dark grey brickwork.
13. The proposed louvres on the James Street façade are a major element of the street frontage. More detailed information on the materials and detailing is required, including a 1:20 wall section.
14. The fire pump rooms and fire tank project above ground and do not align with balconies on levels above, creating an incoherent rear elevation. The forms should be aligned and the lowest 5 levels on the southern elevation should be facebrick.
15. The landscape plans prepared by Conzept indicate mass planted areas to the front and rear of the site with communal open space located principally on the roof level. This roof open-space incorporates a barbecue area and swimming pool. Given the size and configuration of this primary communal open space, the Panel questions the inclusion of the pool, both for its suitability and for its impact on the communal amenity.
16. The triangle shaped 'leftover' area to the rear of the site is entirely mass planted with Trees and shrubs. Access for maintenance to this area appears to be limited. The Proponent should investigate the opportunity to better integrate the space with the PLR land.
17. No sustainable development measures are included in the current proposal. It is recommended that solar panels be provided on the roof to power common areas, as a minimum. Ceiling fans are to be provided in habitable rooms. Glass louver windows are to be provided in key locations to promote natural ventilation. No gas is to be used in the building.
18. The submitted plans do not contain evidence of achieving solar access to comply with the ADG. Eye from the sun modelling is to be provided in future submissions.

### **Panel Recommendation**

The Panel does not support the proposal and significant re-design is recommended to respond to the issues noted above.