

DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

Address: 84 Wharf Road, Melrose Park

Date: 14 August 2025

Application Summary

Application Number	DA/356/2025
Assessing Officer	Darren Wan
Applicant/Proponent	SH Melrose PP Land No. 2 Pty Limited
Architect and Registration Number	Group GSA Lisa-Maree Carrigan - 7568
Landscape Architect	Arcadia
Planner	Think Planners
Others in attendance	-

DAP Members	Brendan Randles, Oi Choong, David Logan
Chair	Brendan Randles
Other Persons in attendance	Gregory Thorne - Project Officer, Design Excellence
Item No.	1 of 1
DAP Meeting Number	1 st DA Referral - previously went to the special 'DEAP' meeting on 25 November 2024 under PL/105/2024

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

The scheme was previously considered by the Panel at the pre-lodgement stage on 25 November 2024 under PL/105/2024.

Proposal

Construction of a 7-24 storey residential flat building containing 227 residential units, 3 basement levels providing 269 car parking spaces, earthworks, landscaping, and public domain works.

Panel Comments

1. The Panel supports the rotation of the built form to achieve a north facing courtyard; the resultant massing better accommodates driveway and servicing to the south and improves solar access to the courtyard.
2. The Panel also supports the massing and circulation generally, including location of lift cores and through site linking steps; however, greater legibility is recommended throughout the courtyard, where curvaceous paths and extensive raised planters restrict visual and physical access, fail to mediate street landscapes and constrain outdoor amenity
3. the proposal's built form appears very flat, with some sizable areas of blank unrelieved walls and an over-reliance on paint finished precast surfaces – which the Panel does not support. The tower and podium features an excessive amount of unscreened west facing glazing, which is not supported. It is recommended that the materiality of the scheme be substantially reviewed to include integral maintenance free materials such as brick and/or prefinished concrete and well considered screening to full height glazing
4. The articulation and expression of the proposal appears preliminary and unresolved. In particular:
 - the relationship of the podium to the tower element requires greater articulation (setback, material and expression change etc); without greater differentiation, the podium is not liable to be perceived as street defining at a human scale, as intended by the DCP.

- The northern expression of the western wing is particularly unconvincing (see Renders), with no north facing balconies, applied feature spandrels to painted precast walls and the top two levels not setback but merely given a change in paint colour. It may be better to amend the plans to feature north facing balconies as per the eastern wing, which would also provide additional 3-D modelling.
- The Panel notes that the north facing elevation of the southern wing of the courtyard is a much more successful composition, in terms of solid to void and legible bays; this could be used a model to be used more extensively - with integral materials such as brick or dyed concrete.
- the legibility and expression of the podium would be improved if it were to extend across the western wing, and setting back the two levels above (perhaps as duplexes) in a different material
- the single datum line at ground level appears unresolved. It is very compressed at the north west of the built form (making the building appear top heavy and pushed into the ground) and far too high along the southern elevation (thereby emphasizing services and roller shutter - which appears unnecessarily high). It is recommended that the datum be relaxed so that it can appropriately respond to adjacent levels and potential proportions

5. The prominent south-west corner is unresolved at present and instead appears like a back-of-house service space. The Panel recommends that the boundary wall be regularised, services better housed and the resultant open space be more purposefully accessed and landscaped.

6. As noted above, the street-facing courtyard requires considerable design development. The space is currently highly programmed with an outdoor play area, bbq area and dedicated seating areas arranged around a small lawn. The design would benefit from simplifying and freeing up some of the spaces to allow more flexibility without losing the amenity provided

- Planting in the courtyard is reliant on an excessive use of raised planters, which block sightlines and restrict legibility to entries. Instead of relying on raised planters, consideration should be given to dropping the slab or using mounding to achieve the required soil depths, especially for the placement and growth of substantial trees.
- Whilst the use of indigenous trees for the major public open spaces and habitat corridors is strongly supported, the selection of trees for the courtyard could be more varied, such as the introduction of deciduous or semi deciduous trees for solar access and signature flowering trees for reinforcing identity and character,

highlighting circulation routes, building entries and complementing architectural forms and features.

- The BBQ is poorly located at the interface with the street edge and at a significant entry into the courtyard; it would be better relocated to a roof terrace or location with lesser circulation and/or potential user conflicts.

6. The Panel generally supports the landscape objectives and ambition to create a high quality landscape for the development. However, the following recommendations are made to improve its amenity :

- Introduce a green roof treatment to Building C, combined with the proposed solar panels (bipolar roof). This will create a positive index for building sustainability and achieve better outlook from Building A
- The roof gardens to Building A and B provide a diverse range of communal activities. Due to their heights and orientation, further protection from wind effects will be required, especially for Building A.
- In both cases, the BBQ area is centrally located in the space. To reduce user conflicts, effects of smoke and activity etc, it may be better located in a corner area. This could be reviewed in conjunction with simplifying the design of some of the integrated planting/seating areas to create more user flexibility and reduce maintenance.
- The selection and pairing of street trees with the perimeter site trees needs further consideration, especially regarding their compatibility in terms of scale, canopy and root systems. As the designs for the streetscape and site landscape will be prepared by the same landscape architect, further co-ordination of the appropriate species selection, pairing, locations, and framing, especially at street corners, can be achieved.
- Trees such as Angophoras have aggressive root systems and are not suited to some the narrow planters adjacent to the footpaths and should be re-located.

7. The amenity of the units and circulation is generally supported by the Panel; however:

- The entry door to unit C0404 and below should be relocated so as not to be in front of elevators
- Units C0401 and C0406 and below would be improved if they incorporated north-facing balconies
- There may be privacy issues between the west-facing window to C0404 and below and adjacent window at the end of the access corridor
- fan coil units on balconies are a poor outcome

Panel Recommendation

The Panel recommends that further design development be carried out in a revised proposal that responds to the issues noted above.

The plans and elevations should show locations of any exposed services including fan coil units, rain heads etc.