

**MINUTES OF NSROC DESIGN REVIEW PANEL MEETING
LANE COVE COUNCIL
Friday 25th February 2022**

DRP PANEL MEMBERS

Peter St Clair (PSC)	Chairperson	Architect
Michael Harrison	Panel Member	Urban Designer
Aldo Raadik	Panel Member	Architect
Jason Cuffe	Panel Member	Landscape Architect

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES

Diana De Borja	Applicant	Aqualand
Jeff Ellis	Applicant	Aqualand
Carol Digiulio	Applicant	Gyde Consulting
Penny Fuller (PF)	Architect	Silvester Fuller
Jad Silvester (JS)	Architect	Silvester Fuller
Matt Durning (MD)	Landscape Architect	RPS Landscape

COUNCIL STAFF

Rajiv Shankar (RS)	Manager Development Assessment
Chris Shortt	Senior Town Planner
Christopher Pelcz	Strategic Planner

APOLOGIES

Mark Brisby	Executive Manager, Environmental Services
Angela Panich	Panel Secretary

ITEM DETAILS

Property Address: 11-19 Holdsworth Avenue, 10-20 Berry Road St. Leonards NSW 2065 (Areas 16 and 17).
Council's Planning Officer: Chris Shortt
Owner: Aqualand
Applicant: Aqualand c/- Gyde Consulting
Proposal: Demolition of existing houses and related structures and the construction of a mixed-use development featuring 129 residential apartments, a childcare centre, a community hall and associated landscaping and parking.

1.0 WELCOME, ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND OPENING

RS and PSC welcomed the Applicants and Design Team. All Panel members, Council staff and Applicant's representatives introduced themselves and described their respective project roles. PSC provided an acknowledgement of country.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Panel members had separately indicated that there were no conflicts of interest.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This design review forms part of the St Leonards South Pre-DA process. The Panel is engaged by Council to provide independent and impartial advice on the design of development proposals

and applications to lift the design quality of projects. The Panel's comments and recommendations are intended to assist Council in their design consideration of an application against SEPP 65 principles and where relevant the requirements of the St Leonards South Landscape Masterplan dated October 2020, Lane Cove LEP 2009 (including Clause 7.6 Design Excellence) and Lane Cove DCP Locality 8 (Parts A & B), dated 22nd October 2020. The absence of a comment under a particular heading does not imply that particular matter to be satisfactorily addressed, more likely the changes are suggested under other principles to generate a desirable change.

Your attention is drawn to the following;

- SEPP 65, including the 9 Design Quality Principles and the requirements for a Qualified Designer (a Registered Architect) to provide Design Verification Statements throughout the design, documentation and construction phases of the project.
- The Apartment Design Guide, as published by Planning NSW (July 2015), which provides guidance on all the issues addressed below.

Both documents are available from the NSW Department of Planning.

1. To address the Panel's comments, the applicant may need to submit amended plans. Prior to preparing any amended plans or attending additional Panel presentations, the applicant must discuss the Panel's comments and any other matter that may require amendment with Council's assessing Planning Officer.
2. When addressing the Panel's comments by way of amendments, if the applicant does not propose to address all or the bulk of the Panel's comments and wishes to make minor amendments only, then it should be taken that the Panel considers the proposal does not meet the SEPP 65 requirements. In these instances, it is unlikely the scheme will be referred to the Panel for further review.

4.0 DESIGN REVIEW

4.1 Presentation

The Applicant and Design Team were invited to present the pre-DA proposal for the subject sites. PF and JS presented the architectural proposal *Concept Summary – Condensed WIP* by Silvester Fuller dated 22 February 2022 and MD presented the landscape proposal contained in RPS's *Pre-DA Package PR148589-1*.

4.2 Panel comments and recommendations

The Panel commends the Applicant and Design Team on the high quality of the design proposal including the analysis, conceptual ideas, explanatory diagrams and the innovative strategies applied to the built form and apartment planning and amenity.

The design includes proposals for several variations to the masterplan building envelopes. Some of these are supported by the Panel, subject to the continued inclusion and further development of key design features such as the apartment planning, naturally ventilated lift lobbies and the communal roof facilities to both buildings.

The Panel makes the following specific comments and recommendations in relation to the project.

4.2.1 Principle 1 Context and Neighbourhood Character

The central position of the project site within the South St Leonards Precinct means most of the immediate built context will be demolished however the wider precinct presents a distinct

character of shaded tree lined streets and early to mid-20th century brickwork bungalows stepping down to the south with the topography.

The proposed elevations and materiality should be further developed in response to this wider context and the proposed neighbouring buildings.

The Applicant is encouraged to engage an Indigenous design consultant to work collaboratively with the design team to develop the overall Connection to Country approach and design outcome for presentation at the next DEP meeting. The Applicant should also consider contacting the Aboriginal Heritage Office to obtain further advice.

4.2.2 Principle 2 Built Form and Scale

While the buildings appear to exceed 10 storeys in height this is supported subject to:

- the whole of the buildings including lift motor rooms sitting within the LEP height controls
- the permitted FSR not being exceeded
- maintaining and further developing the highly articulated roof forms
- maintaining the proposed extent and location of indoor and outdoor communal open spaces to both building roofs
- the removal of all ground level dwellings facing a street located more than 1m below street footpath level and the majority of ground level dwellings to be at or above street footpath level.

The additional GFA proposed to the North elevation of the Berry building is not supported as in addition to the non-compliant setbacks this negatively impacts the design and amenity of the childcare centre and ground plane. Consider the extension of the “secret gardens” to the north elevation, with landscaped terraces rising to the east-west pedestrian link, thereby allowing improved solar access, outlook and street legibility to the childcare centre. Consider also the reconfiguration of the indoor community space to the north-west corner adjacent to the street corner to enable direct level access and address to Berry Road.

The additional GFA proposed to the Holdsworth building North elevation may be supported subject to the above and to the Applicant demonstrating no adverse impacts on public and resident amenity. Regarding passive surveillance, consider the bike storage spaces on the E/W link and any additional communal workshops / meeting rooms as potential increased activation to this elevation.

The South elevations demonstrate minor non-compliances with ADG setbacks. Subject to further design development these could be supported where blank walls or privacy screening ensures amenity is preserved to the future neighbouring development. Provide further design development including massing, scale, materiality and levels resolution to neighbouring properties. Substantiate the deep soil and sunlight availability for the landscape trees shown on this boundary

Street fronting dwellings situated more than 1m below the street level are not supported and should be revised so that no dwelling is more than 1m below street footpath level and that the majority of these dwellings are at or above street footpath level. The reason is that dwellings below street footpath level do not provide a high level of amenity in Sydney’s humid climate and is not consistent with design excellence.

The internal elevations should be further developed to provide additional articulation and variety. Angled windows could be considered to the central banks of single aspect apartments with their main aspect north or south. To achieve this the Panel would support them extending no more than 1m into the separation distance between the buildings subject to the permitted FSR not being exceeded.

The “hero” balconies to the upper-level street orientations are supported subject to them remaining lightweight without columns and enclosure, thereby not appearing to extend the building envelope into the setback zone. Ensure that all apartments have external balconies and terraces, particularly at the lower levels facing the Green Spine

4.2.3 Principle 3 Density

The proposed density and FSR is supported subject to the comments and recommendations described in other sections being satisfactorily addressed.

4.2.4 Principle 4 Sustainability

A clear sustainability narrative is not yet evident in the design. Provide a sustainability report to address both the building and landscape design initiatives including the site's unique position relative to the broader landscape context. The Panel strongly encourages the Design Team to think about sustainability as an opportunity to drive a bigger site wide narrative respond to the National Climate Emergency.

4.2.5 Principle 5 Landscape

The Panel supports the DDA compliant east-west link however its placement against the buildings reduces the amenity of the adjacent childcare areas and apartments by preventing daylighting and solar access from the north. This should be reviewed.

The design of the overall east-west pedestrian link should be coordinated with the neighbouring open space to the east and park to the west. The Panel notes the layout of diagonal pathways is very different to that proposed to the open space to the east. Council could assist with this matter.

Short term parking should be considered to Berry St. adjacent to the childcare centre for child drop-off.

The Panel requests studies demonstrating why deep soil zones have been located below playgrounds to the north instead of to the south where larger canopy trees could then be located.

The size and configuration of the external childcare space should be reviewed to increase the residential private open space and buffer zone to the west facing courtyard level apartments to the Holdsworth building. The proposal to provide resident access to the playground on weekends should be elaborated on.

The design and extent of the roof top communal open spaces to both buildings are supported and commended.

The exposed carpark exhaust shafts to the communal open space are not supported and should be positioned to the building risers.

High value existing trees should be retained where possible. Please provide an arborist report to support the updated design. The Panel supports the extensive tree canopy coverage in the current scheme.

The Panel notes that this precinct has a landscape character guideline document. In this context the landscape narrative should demonstrate a contextual response to the Green Spine design and clarify how the designed “tree structures” are part of that narrative. Furthermore, built structures within the Green Spine must not exceed the height limit restrictions.

4.2.6 Principle 6 Amenity

The apartment planning is generally of a high quality and the introduction of Genkans and naturally ventilated loggia entrances and lift lobbies are commended and considered fundamental to the achievement of design excellence of the project. Daylight access to studies and ensuite bathroom dimensions below 2.6m in length should be reviewed.

It is noted that large areas of un-shaded glazing are provided to living rooms. Provide sun-shading devices to these north and west facing windows consistent with Part 4A of the ADG.

Review solar access to all east (slightly south) facing apartments and graphically demonstrate that 2 hours of sunlight is achieved to the interior of living spaces and private open spaces in accordance with Part 4A of the ADG. Overall building and detailed views from the sun at hourly intervals may suffice.

The use of open naturally ventilated lift lobbies and apartment entrance loggias are considered to provide an innovative solution with enhanced amenity. The overall cross ventilation strategy is supported subject to:

- these spaces being open to the air and permitting east-west airflow to double frontage lobbies (lower levels) and single sided airflow to single frontage lobbies (upper levels)
- the provision of floor-by-floor plan diagrams clearly indicating which dwellings are considered to achieve cross ventilation (and solar access) in accordance with the ADG

Windows to most bedrooms are considered narrow however are supported subject to:

- window glazing being full height without significant obstructions
- all window reveals and joinery being chamfered
- an outside view being available from the bed (windows may need to be widened)
- a minimum of 300 lux of daylighting being achieved to the centre of bedrooms

Some living rooms are dimensioned as only 3.35 metres in width. It is assumed that the living room joinery shown is not fixed and therefore would allow a 4.0m wide room to be achieved in accordance with the ADG.

The courtyard level “secret gardens” should be developed further to avoid reflected noise to apartments above.

4.2.7 Principle 7 Safety

No comments.

4.2.8 Principle 8 Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

The ratio of 1-bedroom apartments is below the DCP requirement of 20%. This should be reviewed.

Communal spaces are indicated adjacent to the lower-level lift lobbies however appear unresolved.

4.2.9 Principle 9 Aesthetics

The drawing analysis demonstrates a variety of façade conditions including proximity, privacy, solar access, orientation and character. Consider developing the individual façade designs further to respond to these conditions and to provide more variety and articulation.

Develop the material palette further to respond to the overall precinct character and consider the re-use of existing on site sandstone.

Provide further details of air conditioning plant. Individual plant rooms are preferred to each floor than balcony mounted units.

Provide details of vertical external drainpipes and drainage to balconies to demonstrate their integration into the design.

5.0 OUTCOME

The Panel provides qualified support for the proposal, subject to resolution of the identified issues as detailed under each Principle. Revised drawings and reports should be prepared and provided to Council for presentation to the Panel.