

WILLOUGHBY DESIGN EXCELLENCE REVIEW PANEL JURORS REPORT:

1-31 Walter Street and 452-460 Willoughby Rd, Willoughby

Final For Chair and Jury Signatures

INTRODUCTION

This advice is provided to Willoughby City Council following a meeting and presentation with the proponent and design team in respect to a proposed residential development at 1-31 and 452-462 Willoughby Rd Willoughby.

A planning proposal for the site achieved Gateway Approval and was gazetted in March 2021. In addition to the requirements of this approval, Councils LEP DCP and other relevant controls, the proposal is subject to the specific requirements of: **with AU comments noted in Red.28.11.2024**

- **Willoughby LEP 2012 (Amend.15)** requiring that design excellence is granted by the consent authority, and
- **Willoughby Site Specific DCP Provisions for 1-27A and 452-462 Willoughby Rd, Willoughby**, which establishes the detailed envelope parameters for the five residential buildings and associated basements planned for the site.

The primary controls provide for maximum FSR 1.5:1 and maximum building heights between 17m and 27m, with setbacks established in the Site DCP. **The Proposed amending DA seeks to increase the FSR from 1.5:1 to 1.8:1, maintains the approved height of blocks B+C which are 17 and 24m maximum respectively and seeks to increase the heights of block D from 24m to 29.71m and blocks E+F from 27m to 33.42m which are the direct result of the provision of additional affordable rental housing and compliance with the Affordable infill housing SEPP.**

The development is also subject to a draft Voluntary Planning Agreement between the proponent and Council.

The Design Excellence Review Panel (DERP) process is being conducted in accordance with the requirements of the **"Willoughby City Council Guidelines for Design Excellence Review and Competitions (19/12/2019)"**, with particular reference to the detailed requirements of **Part 4.3 – Design Excellence Review Processes**.

Council is required to prepare a Report in consultation with the Panel, that:

- summarises the review process,
- outlines the assessment of the design merits of the submitted material,
- presents the Panel's decision, including the rationale for the design excellence qualities that it exhibits and outlines any recommended design amendments relevant to achieving design excellence, and - describes the design excellence qualities exhibited in the submitted material.

The Report may:

- nominate the entry as having the potential to achieve design excellence, or
- recommend design quality improvements that could be made to permit its endorsement as a project that has the potential to achieve design excellence, or
- decline to endorse the entry if in their opinion it does not demonstrate the potential to achieve design excellence.

The Panel video-conference meeting was conducted in accordance with the Guidelines and the Agenda.

The Panel acknowledges that the proposal is generally compliant with the approved planning proposal and Site Specific DCP requirements, while noting that the regular distribution of built form envelopes and building typologies across the site may not necessarily provide the best planning option in relation to optimised urban planning and placemaking outcomes.

It is noted that the DERP's role is advisory only, as design excellence can only be awarded by the consent authority.

2021-08-31-Updated with AU Comments updated response on 28.11.2024

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DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROPOSAL - ATTRIBUTES:

The DERP notes the following design attributes of the proposal as submitted to the meeting for review on 17 August 2021: with AU comments noted in Red.28.11.2024

- The site plan offers a clear way-finding structure and good visual connectivity between the streets and building entries. The proposal remains consistent with the Panel's review Comments .
- The design allows for 3-6 apartments per service core, resulting in a high ratio of corner apartments. This maximises natural cross ventilation and light to most apartments, reduces wait time for lifts, and encourages social interaction within the buildings. The proposal remains consistent with the Panel's review Comments .
- Façade design of Building B (corner of Willoughby Rd and Walter St) provides alternative access options, with a distinctive articulation of the masonry building form in counterpoint to other buildings along Walter St. This building responds appropriately to its highly visible corner location, and can be further developed to address environmental quality issues arising from adjacency to Willoughby Rd. The proposal remains consistent with the Panel's review Comments and constructed as per the approved DA.
- Good light and natural ventilation is available to all common spaces, with windows in the deep articulation slots at ends of corridors. This also creates a strong sense of visual permeability through the buildings. The proposal remains consistent with the Panel's review Comments for all 5 buildings and constructed as per the approved DA. The additional levels on buildings D,E+F and maintains the same slots and openings which are carried vertically to the additional levels.
- Both street setbacks are generous, allowing opportunity for extensive deep soil, landscaping and adjacent public domain treatments. Street setbacks and Landscaping is consistent with Approved DA.
- The public domain improvements to Walter St under the terms of the VPA are commended.
- Of particular note is the provision (in addition to the VPA offer) of a pedestrian/cycle pathway connection and additional landscape to the southern side of Walter St below the Gore Hill Freeway. The proposal maintains the provision of a pedestrian cycle pathway connection to the southern side of Walter St below the Gore Hill Freeway as noted above.
- Integration of water elements within communal spaces that will provide water play and calming, cool communal spaces during summer months. The proposal remains unchanged as noted above.
- Amalgamation of the five sites provides an opportunity for all residents to access a range of well located, protected communal spaces and facilities, as well as opportunity to reduce fencing or walling between properties. The proposal is consistent with the Panel's comments and will provide pedestrian connection between communal landscape areas of both sites.
- All buildings sit below the maximum height, including rooftop plant and lift over-runs. There are variations to the heights of blocks D,E&F. It is proposed to raise block D by 3 levels, from 24-29.71m equating to 5.71m, with blocks E&F by 2 levels from 27m-33.42m equating to 6.42m which is a total increase of 23.81% to each block. The extra height increases are direct result of the provision of additional Affordable rental housing and the affordable infill housing Sepp.
- High quality, robust and resilient materials are proposed, particularly for the podium facades. The proposal maintains the same materiality through out as per original approval.
- Splayed walls increase light and ventilation into apartments facing south to Walter Street. The proposal maintains the same design principles as per original approval.
- Generally well planned apartments with good storage. The proposal maintains the same design principles as per original approval.
- Opportunity for 'Work From Home' arrangements within apartments. The proposal maintains the same design principles as per original approval.
- Demonstrates strong capacity to achieve ADG compliance. HVAC equipment is consolidated on roofs, freeing up private terraces for occupants. The proposal maintains the same design principles as per original approval.

- A generous and well considered integrated landscape proposal. The proposal maintains the same Landscapae design principles as per original approval.