

**MINUTES OF NSROC DESIGN REVIEW PANEL MEETING
LANE COVE COUNCIL
Tuesday 28th May 2025
10:30am**

DRP PANEL MEMBERS

Jason Cuffe	Chairperson	Landscape architect
Emili Fox	Panel Member	Architect
Digby Hall	Panel Member	Architect/ Sustainability
Timothy Williams	Panel Member	Architect/ Urban Design

APPLICANTS REPRESENTATIVES

Eric Ludberg	EDSGEAR
Tim Grees	TZG Architects
Wolfgang Ripberger	TZG Architects
Daniel Barber	Paro Consulting

COUNCIL STAFF

Mark Brisby	Director Planning and Sustainability
Rajiv Shanker	Manager, Development Assessment
Chris Shortt	Senior Town Planner
Angela Panich	Panel Secretary

COUNCIL OBSERVERS

None

APOLOGIES

None

ITEM DETAILS

Property Address: 28-42 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards 2065
Planning Officer: Chris Shortt
Owner: EDSGEAR Pty Ltd
Applicant: Paro Consulting on behalf of EDSGEAR Pty Ltd
Proposal:

- Demolition of existing structures and the construction of a Mixed-Use, Hotel development comprising; commercial tenancy, 99 motel units, communal living and communal outdoor areas, basement parking and facilities and associated works at 28 – 42 Pacific Highway, St Leonards.
- The proposal has not had a pre da meeting and has been submitted for a development application
- The applicant noted that a potential end use of the site would be co-living

1.0 WELCOME, ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND OPENING

Chris Shortt (Council Staff) and Jason Cuffe (Chairperson) welcomed the Applicant and Design Team. All Panel members, Council staff and Applicant representatives introduced themselves and described their respective project roles.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3.0 INTRODUCTION

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 Chapter 4 (Housing) 2021 principles and where relevant the requirements of the Lane Cove LEP 2009 and Lane Cove DCP. The absence of a comment under a particular heading does not imply that a particular matter to be satisfactorily addressed, more likely the changes are suggested under other principles to generate a desirable change.

The Panel note that the applicant identified that the potential end use of the development would be co-living and as such have applied best principles of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG).

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- Chapter 4 SEPP (Housing) 2021, including the 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 (ADG), 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 Chapter 4 SEPP (Housing) 2021 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 Design Proposal for the subject site. Tim Grees of TZG Architects presented the Architectural Concept Design for the Planning Proposal, DA Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) April 2025. The Panel notes that the Applicant is engaging with the Panel during the Development Application assessment process.

The project site is located within the Lane Cove LGA and located at 28-42 Pacific Highway. The site consists of four (4) allotments described as Lot 1 DP 746012, Lot A and Lot B DP 418201 and Lot D 419240. The site fronts Pacific Highway to the north and Marshall Lane to the south. The site is situated within the Crows Nest Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Precinct and is in close proximity to St Leonards Station and Waddangari Park to the east, and the Royal North Shore Hospital and Gore Hill Park to the west.

The total site area is 1,236 sqm, 40m in length and approximately 35m in depth. The four (4) lots are subject to the following zones:

- LEP land zones - Commercial Centre (E2 zoning)
- Crows Nest Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Precinct

4.2 Panel comments and recommendations

The Panel thanks the Applicant for their open and constructive engagement throughout the design review process. While the design has been submitted under the Development Application process, the Panel notes that further work is required to address the feedback provided. It is expected that future presentations to the Panel will focus on both architectural and landscape design refinements.

The following comments and recommendations are provided in relation to the relevant provisions of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) and selected elements of the Lane Cove Council Development Control Plan (DCP).

The Panel's principal concern is that, while the development is being presented as a Mixed-Use Hotel, there is a fundamental lack of clarity regarding its operational functionality—particularly in relation to vehicle access, pedestrian movement, and user circulation. Additionally, the Panel notes that a clear design response to Section S (Sustainability) of the Lane Cove DCP was not evident in the submitted documentation.

The Panel offers the following specific comments and recommendations to guide further development of the proposal.

4.2.1 Principle 1 Context and Neighbourhood Character

While some analysis of the local context and character was presented, the Panel considers the level of detailed site analysis—particularly in relation to Country—to be insufficient. The Panel highlights the cultural significance of the Pacific Highway ridgeline to First Nations peoples, recognising the site as a place of connection and community gathering.

Although the proposal includes a potential through-site link and an active frontage to Marshall Lane, the development lacks broader integration with the surrounding precinct beyond the immediate site boundaries.

The Panel commends the applicant for the proposed activation along Marshall Lane and encourages the expansion of this approach to support a precinct-wide vision, including consideration of a shared-zone treatment for the laneway.

In addition, the interface with the Pacific Highway remains unresolved. While outside the project boundary, enhancements such as tree planting and pavement upgrades would significantly improve the development's street frontage and contribute to a more meaningful public realm through increased canopy coverage and amenity.

The Panel strongly encourages the applicant to engage with Council in addressing these matters.

4.2.2 Principle 2 Built Form and Scale

The Panel supports the overall scale and articulation of the built form. However, the following aspect requires further refinement:

- **Lift Core and Upper-Level Services:** The bulk and scale of the lift core and associated plant/service rooms at the upper levels should be more effectively integrated into the overall built form to avoid their current appearance as a separate, standalone element.

The Panel supports the proposed setbacks, with particular endorsement of the raked southern plane.

4.2.3 Principle 3 Density

The Panel is supportive of the proposed FSR of 5.1:1. Through modification to the built form, as outlined in Principle 2, the Panel believe that the proposed FSR is still achievable

4.2.4 Principle 4 Sustainability

The Panel supports the use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) as the primary structural system within the building.

While the applicant has indicated that the proposal aligns with Section S (Sustainability) of the Development Control Plan (DCP), the current submission lacks clear articulation of the overarching sustainability principles and objectives. The Panel highlights the following areas where further detail and development are required:

- **100% Electrification:** Provide documentation and strategies demonstrating full electrification of the building.
- **Rainwater Management:** Develop an integrated water management system that captures and reuses runoff to support landscaping at rooftop, balcony, and podium levels.
- **Façade Design:** Undertake further design development to refine the building's cross-ventilation strategy. The applicant has noted two potential options; a preferred approach should be resolved and detailed.
- **Material Selection:** Consider the embodied carbon of material choices. Where possible, design strategies should be employed to reduce or eliminate material waste.
- **Bicycle Storage:** Bike storage provide street-level activation, provide passive surveillance, and improve connectivity and accessibility for users. Relocate the bike store location to either be at street level on Marshall Lane or on the lower ground level, easily accessible via the entry ramp.
- **Waste Management:** Review the overall waste strategy, including the location of storage areas, operational functionality, and vehicle circulation requirements.
- **User Circulation:** Provide a clear circulation diagram that identifies the various user groups within the development to inform the planning of end-of-trip facilities and the layout of primary building entrances.

4.2.5 Principle 5 Landscape

The Panel supports the proposed arrangement of communal open space on the rooftops and highlights the exceptional regional views these areas afford. The project is encouraged to continue leveraging these rooftop spaces as valuable communal amenities for future residents. The Panel requests further development of the following items:

- **Pacific Highway Frontage:** Collaborate with Council to establish a strategy for tree planting and footpath upgrades along the Pacific Highway frontage.

- **Marshall Lane:** Work with Council to develop a cohesive vision for Marshall Lane that benefits both the development and the broader community. Consider improvements such as tree planting, paving, and shared-way enhancements.
- **Planter Boxes:** Where feasible, consolidate planter boxes to maximise soil volume and support robust plant health. Review all planter box details to ensure full compliance with the National Construction Code (NCC), noting that the current details within the landscape architectural package are inconsistent and non-compliant.

4.2.6 Principle 6 Amenity

The Panel considers that the current proposal requires the following refinements to optimise residential amenity for future occupants:

- **Integration of Through-Site Link and Core:** Co-locate the through-site link with the building core to strengthen the internal circulation network. The through-site link must provide fully equitable access from Marshall Lane through to the Pacific Highway.
- **Core Location and Configuration:** The Panel recommends rationalising the location, arrangement, and orientation of the building core. A centrally positioned core, adjacent to the through-site link and rotated 90 degrees from its current orientation, would offer multiple benefits:
 - Enable internal communal spaces at the centre of the building on each level.
 - Provide natural light and ventilation to the core and adjacent lobbies, aligning with best practice under the Apartment Design Guide (ADG).
 - Support a more efficient apartment layout, free from the constraints imposed by the current fire stair configuration.
 - Allow for fire stairs to be relocated within the corridor footprint at either end of the building, potentially increasing yield. The use of glazed blocks in the fire stairs could also encourage incidental interaction and promote their use by residents.
- **ADG Compliance and Co-Living Considerations:** Apply relevant ADG principles related to communal spaces, circulation, daylight access, and apartment planning, with consideration given to the building's future Co-Living use.

4.2.7 Principle 7 Safety

Noting that the current phase of the design, safety considerations were not presented by the Applicant. However, safety items within landscape zones, built form and future through site links should be considered in the future phases of the design.

4.2.8 Principle 8 Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

Given the intended future use as Co-Living, the current core and apartment layout does not adequately prioritise internal communal space. The Panel considers that a reconfiguration of the core, as outlined in Principle 6, would create opportunities for communal areas on each level. These spaces would increase resident amenity, be well-utilised and strategically positioned along the building's central circulation paths.

4.2.9 Principle 9 Aesthetics

The Panel supports the proposed approach to the aesthetics of the built form. In particular, it acknowledges that the extensive use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) will contribute to a high-quality, biophilic environment for future occupants of the development.

Further opportunities should be explored to incorporate materials that reflect connection to Country and enhance sustainability outcomes.

5.0 OUTCOME

The Panel has determined the outcome of the DEP review and provides following direction to the Applicant as follows:

- Noting the end use of Co-Living, the Panel is not convinced that the current core arrangement, internal communal space, building servicing and or equitable circulation has been properly resolved
- The Panel are not convinced that private vehicle, taxi, ride-share, truck bike and equitable pedestrian circulation has been properly considered along both Marshall Lane and the Pacific Highway
- The Panel has insufficient material to review the developments sustainability approach in relation to Section S (Sustainability) of the DCP
- The Panel does not support an on-street waste management strategy.

The Panel request that the current Development Application, including drawings and associated reports, be further developed in accordance with the above recommendations and returned to Council and the Panel for consideration at a further design review.