

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL MEETING | 10 DECEMBER 2019

111-119 Crown Street Wollongong & Lot 101 Crown Street
Wollongong DA-2019/1231 | ADM Ref: 2018-29



REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENT	ADM ARCHITECTS RESPONSE
Context and Neighbourhood Character	<p>Crown Street is the most important civic and retail spine in the Wollongong town centre. It is characterised by 'fine grain' shops with numerous heritage and contributory buildings. It is also supported by existing formal and informal pedestrian links, which contribute to the street's permeability. As per the LEP controls, the spine is earmarked for substantial height and density increases favouring commercial and mixed uses that would permit building heights up to 48 metres with the focus to create job generation through the provision of high-quality office spaces. The proposal takes advantage of the desired vision for this part of the town centre by proposing a similar scale development to the one already approved at 95-109 Crown Street (henceforth Lang's Corner). It is the Panel's opinion that the proposal will have a good 'contextual fit' with the desired future character of the precinct and with the adjacent approved development, which has been facilitated due to the ownership of both sites by a single entity. The panel sees this as an opportunity for positive synergies to be created between both sites and the consolidated areas for servicing and vehicular access are an example of this. Other positive outcomes of the proposal include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rationalised parking layouts to benefit from a single-entry point and ramping system. 2. Continuous podium expression and harmonious and complementary façade expressions. 3. The retention and improvement of Lois Lane as a formal pedestrian link with improved levels of activation and natural surveillance. 4. The partial retention of No. 115-119 Crown Street to form part of the street wall height, which will complement the retention of the contributory item on the approved development at Lang's Corner. 5. The provision of internal links and linked lobbies between the subject site and Lang's Corner. 	Noted
Built Form and Scale	It was the Panel's opinion from the 9th July review that the proposal has a generally positive form with the exception of three areas of concern:	

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	<p>1. The protrusion into the side setback adjoining Lang's Corner. The proposal attempts to build to the boundary for a segment equal to the length of the service core. This is not seen by the Panel as a good outcome and the provision or mirroring of the 4.5 m setback on the adjacent site is the minimum distance that needs to be kept clear to the common boundary on both properties above podium. This assists in the development reading as two separate towers.</p> <p>2. The expression of the facades requires further differentiation between its side by side components to further break the appearance of bulk and scale. This is specially required on the rear façade facing Simpson Place.</p> <p>3. The lack of a roof feature combined with the expression of the plant room need to be integrated to achieve a further differentiation of heights and avoid the dreaded 'flat roof' effect. This in turn can assist to inform or be informed by the location of the split in the façade's expression. A recess between the two sides can be carried up to the roof and be coordinated with the location of the height of the roof feature/plant room. These above issues have now been addressed by the revised plans submitted.</p>	<p>The minimum setback of 4.5m is provided and therefore 9m separation between the two buildings is achieved to assist in reading both developments as two separate towers.</p> <p>The rear façade has been purposely designed to be different in proportion to the adjoining Langs corner building. The extension of awnings along the rear (adjoining Simpson Place) assist break the appearance and bulk of the building in a manner which is different to the lane (west) side.</p> <p>The plant room is maintained to the east side of the roof top, to create the recess suggested by the DRP. The recess is further accentuated by the vertical wall separating the two "sides" of the façade fronting Crown Street.</p>
Density	The Applicant's proposal exceeds the allowable yield generated by the applicable FSR. The applicant put forward a number of arguments as to why this should be considered acceptable; however, it is not under the DRP's remit to comment on any areas of exceedance as this constitutes a non-compliance with the standard instruments and requires a separate process of assessment. The Panel yields any consideration on this point to Council's Assessment team.	Noted.
Sustainability	The Architect indicated they would be seeking 5 star Nabers rating for the proposal.	Noted
Landscape	The ground floor landscape is discussed in amenity below. The landscape on L2 may be better suited to having seating and planting separated and movable as opposed to fixed. The choice of tree species on the south side of the building needs consideration. Other landscape areas appear suitable to the development. All future plans should clearly indicate RLs, dimensions and slopes.	Noted and can be conditioned by WCC.
Amenity	The provision of an activated pedestrian link will provide high levels of amenity to visitors, workers and the community at large. The panel strongly recommends the following issues to be analysed and further documented in future iterations of the	

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	<p>plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of flat zones in Lois Lane to provide suitable areas for outdoor tables & seating. These flatter areas may be achieved by pushing other areas as hard as possible to maximize level changes in small areas. Ramps and handrails should be avoided to avoid visual and spatial clutter in this relatively small space. • The scale and pattern of the paving may be considered to subtly define and accentuate the space and differentiate between trafficable spaces and those set aside for seating. • Exploration of further opportunities for sculptural lighting in Lois Lane as indicated in the precedent imagery. The panel feels the use of lighting to create a 'ceiling' to the space would be the best approach of the imagery and options presented. • Further opportunities for public art to draw people into the laneway, particularly from Crown Street such as murals, greenwall or similar. 	<p>To avoid ramps and handrails the pedestrian lane currently slopes at a maximum grade of 1:20. The lane is connected to natural existing levels at either end at Simpson Place and Crown St, so the opportunity for intermediate flat areas are governed by the two end points and the desire to avoid handrails and "ramps" cluttering the spaces.</p> <p>Agree, and these finer points can be explored by the landscape architect and urban designer in greater detail at the construction documentation stage.</p>
Safety	The introduction of natural surveillance features to all elevations including the minimisation of inactive blank walls or blind corners as well as areas of potential concealment along the ground level elevations must be provided The provision of details of the lighting scheme proposed to all facades, arcades and the laneway would be a plus.	Glazed retail frontages and windows adjoin the proposed lane and Simpson Place. Lighting will be both sculptural and be provided to alleviate potential safety concerns.
Housing Diversity and Social Interaction	The proposal is for commercial and retail uses; this does not apply	N/A
Aesthetics	The expression of the facades has now been further and successfully developed as requested. The Panel recommends details of the curtain wall be provided to ensure shadow lines and recesses are successfully delivered as shown on the elevations and 3D views.	Noted
Design Excellence WLEP2009		
Whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved	It is the Panel's opinion that the proposal achieves a high level of design excellence.	Noted
Whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the	The replacement of a non-contributory item currently in existence, the continuation of the podium expression as approved in the Lang's corner proposal and the retention of existing contributory items will make a positive contribution to the surrounding public	Noted

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quality and amenity of the public domain,	domain. The retention of Lois Lane and the provision of activated uses along its eastern edge will make a positive impact for the quality of the pedestrian experience in the vicinity of the site.	
Whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,	No impacts are perceived.	Noted
Whether the proposed development detrimentally overshadows an area shown distinctively coloured and numbered on the Sun Plane Protection Map,	This does not apply; however, consideration of the overshadowing to the adjacent Presbyterian Church has been requested as well as the provision of detailed sun diagrams.	Further shadowing analysis is provided to council officers to include the cumulative impacts with the Langs corner building (currently under construction).
<i>How the development addresses the following:</i>		
the suitability of the land for development,	The proposal is suitable.	Noted
existing and proposed uses and use mix	The proposed uses are suitable.	Noted
heritage issues and streetscape constraints,	These issues are addressed at the ground level.	Noted
the location of any tower proposed, having regard to the need to achieve an acceptable relationship with other towers (existing or proposed) on the same site or on neighbouring sites in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form,	The setback between the towers has now been addressed.	Noted
bulk, massing and modulation of buildings	The proposal now provides a 4.5m setback to the common boundary with Lang's corner. Introduction of a combined roof feature has now been provided.	Noted
street frontage heights	They are considered adequate as they follow the establish street wall height of the contributory items facing Crown Street	Noted
environmental impacts such as sustainable design,	No information has been provided to properly address this point; however, the proposal will have to address issues of wind tunnelling between the approved and	A wind assessment report is now provided by SLR consulting.

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overshadowing, wind and reflectivity	proposed tower, meet standard coefficients of reflectivity and analyse overshadowing to the Presbyterian Church and other areas within the public domain.	
the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development	No information has been provided to properly address this point, although the Architect indicated 5 star Nabers rating was being targeted.	A NABERS report prepared by Greenview Consulting is now provided.
pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements	The proposed circulation appears to be adequate across the site and the Panel is supportive of the consolidation of vehicular and service entrances facing Simpson Place.	Noted
impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain	The retention of Lois Lane is very much supported as well as the provision of opportunities for activation and spill over cafes similar to a Melbourne Laneway.	Noted
Key issues, further Comments & Recommendations	In summary, the Panel found the proposal to follow a number of positive principles as discussed above. The few areas that require further development include: 1. The proposed lighting to Lois Lane. 2. Further detail of the curtain wall façade to ensure what is shown is delivered. 3. The levels in Lois Lane to ensure it's suitable for outdoor dining/seating. The panel is mindful that this development is inter-dependent with the adjacent Langs Corner development under construction. It is not a 'united' development hence the necessary cross easements and title encumbrances must consider every future ownership, development and demolition eventuality.	Noted and refer previous responses above.