

Wollongong Design Review Panel – MS Teams meeting
Meeting minutes and recommendations

Date	16 September 2022
Meeting location	Wollongong City Council Administration Offices
Panel members	(Chair) David Jarvis (Member) Tony Tribe (Member) Sue Hobley
Apologies	Robert Gizzi – Design Workshop Australia
Council staff	Pier Panozzo – City Centre & Major Projects Manager Rebecca Welsh - Senior Development Project Officer
Guests/ representatives of the applicant	Stewart Levee - Design Workshop Australia Nathan Tyerman - Design Workshop Australia Luke Rollinson – MMJ Wollongong Stephen Kerr – Gyde Nell O'Brien - Gyde Goran Ugrinovski – ATB Consulting Carmelo San Gil – MODCO - Project Manager Jared Beneru – Planning Solutions
Declarations of Interest	None
Item number	3
DA number	DA-2022/14
Reason for consideration by DRP	DA Stage, SEPP 65, Design Excellence Clause 7.18 WLEP 2009
Determination pathway	Southern Regional Planning Panel
Property address	24-30 Kenny Street, Wollongong
Proposal	Demolition of existing building /structures and construction of an 18 storey mixed use development including hotel
Applicant or applicant's representative address to the design review panel	The meeting was conducted via video link between the Panel (Council offices) and the applicants' team (remote).
Background	The Panel previously reviewed the proposal as a pre-DA application on the 7 th July 2021 (DE-2021/82) and 9 th March 2022 under this application. Panel members have previously visited the site.
Design quality principals SEPP 65	
Context and Neighbourhood Character	<p>The proposal is located within the commercial core of Wollongong. The area currently consists of a mixture smaller scale (1 to 2 storeys) commercial buildings and more recently developed mixed use building, providing commercial uses at street level and residential apartments at upper levels.</p> <p>A detailed contextual analysis has been developed by the applicant. However, the Panel previously questions the potential built form illustrated on 18 – 22 Kenny Street:</p> <p><i>The neighbouring site contains a drainage easement that will restrict development potential. In response to the Panels comments two development options were provided. Option A, maintains the drainage easement and develops the site with a four storey high commercial base, with a residential tower above. Option B, relocates the drainage easement and develops the entirety of the site with a four storey high commercial base, with a residential tower above.</i></p> <p>In response to the Panel's comments, option A has been further developed to demonstrate that a tower form can be developed on the neighbouring site whilst maintain ADG compliant solar access to the subject site. A knockout panel has also been proposed in the basement of the subject site to allow vehicular access and</p>

	<p>servicing of the neighbouring site. This strategy allows a more functional basement to be accommodated on the neighbouring site and reduces the number of driveways on the street.</p> <p>The Panel remains concerned with the development option for neighbouring site (22 Kenny Street) outlined by the applicant. The proposed tower is setback as little as 3m from its southern boundary. However, further development of the proposal may be possible if detailed investigation of the drainage easement were to be undertaken and the drainage easement reconfigured to accommodate a consolidated building base and increased tower setbacks.</p> <p>A further site visit has reinforced the panel's previous comment:</p> <p>Existing key infrastructure constraints, opportunities, options (including stormwater management/flooding, sewer diversion) influencing the design should be identified in site and context analysis (ADG Appendix 1)</p> <p>Additional detail survey information is required to clearly describe existing levels and the relationship with stormwater management measures discharging to the site. Plans, elevations, and sections should include levels and profiles of existing stormwater infrastructure abutting the site.</p>
<p>Built Form and Scale</p>	<p>The podium/tower envelope, form and scale proposed is generally appropriate, qualified as noted below.</p> <p><u>Kenny Street interface.</u></p> <p>The proposal has addressed potential flooding issues by incorporating pedestrian flood doors to Kenny Street and providing overland flow paths alongside boundaries. This strategy has provided an improved connection to the street. However, further detail refinement is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The fire booster and gas services are enclosed in a cupboard that screens the café from the street. The height of the cupboard should be reduced to allow a visual connection between the street and café. If the cupboard is no more than 1400mm above street level, bench seats could be created within the café overlooking the street. - The overland flow paths adjacent to side boundaries must be secured and concealed. Details of the garage door and gates / fences proposed fronting Kenny Street should be provided, together with finished levels, to demonstrate how overland flow is achieved, whilst providing a positive contribution to the aesthetic of the street. Direct views down the drainage passage, from the street must be minimized. Maintenance access should be indicated. - The residential entry and street/address presence is disproportionately constrained for the magnitude of the apartment use. It consists of a long narrow space that relates poorly to the lifts. It is recommended that the Fire Control Room be relocated further south (perhaps behind the substation), which would allow egress corridors to be located further north. This will create more space to accommodate a more generously proportioned residential lobby, that better relates to the lifts. The option of integrating the ramp and pedestrian entrances for at least some extent should be explored.

	<p>All works proposed on the public domain should be shown on architectural plans verifying intent and design coordination with other consultants.</p> <p><u>Interface with western neighbour</u></p> <p>An exposed podium base is presented to the neighbouring sites to the west. In response to the Panels previous comments the base has been stepped and planters introduced to the edge of the base, reducing the height of the height of the wall presented to the neighbours from 6m to approximately 4.5m. This is a positive development that provides an improved interface with the neighbour. Openings on the northern and southern edges of the podium, connect overland flow from the subject site to a drainage easement / channel on the neighbouring sites to the west. Details of screens proposed to secure these openings should be provided.</p> <p><u>Expression of tower roof / upper two levels</u></p> <p>Revisions made in response to the Panel's previous comments have improved the expression of the top of the tower. The Panel remains uncomfortable with the symmetrical expression. However, it is acknowledged that this is a highly subjective issue and the form proposed by the applicant is a valid option that responds appropriately to site context.</p> <p>The tower appears to encroach into the dimensioned street setback.</p> <p>It is recommended the drawings (e.g., Sections Dwg 055W) locate the boundaries, setbacks and describe and dimension any proposed encroachments.</p>
Density	<p>The proposal appears to be consistent with council's FSR control and the future desired character of this precinct.</p>
Sustainability	<p>The provision of balconies, natural ventilation and sun-control louvres to all hotel rooms is commended. Confirmation is required that all screens are to be independently operable to ensure sustainable levels of natural light are available to hotel rooms.</p> <p>The extent of full height glazing to the apartment tower raises some thermal management concern, particularly in relation to the eastern (street) elevation. An expert review is recommended for advice on compliance and current best practice.</p> <p>The use of solar power and water heating is strongly encouraged, particularly to service communal areas, carpark lighting, ventilation, and pumps. Confirmation as to the capacity and use of power provided by the roof PV panels indicated should be required, together with provisions for safe maintenance access.</p> <p>The proposal's apartment tower appears capable of providing natural cross ventilation and solar access in accordance with the objectives of the ADG.</p> <p>Opportunities to harvest rainwater for use in maintaining any plantings established on the building or the site should be explored. Other water minimization measures (reuse of rainwater for toilet flushing and washing machines) should also be considered.</p> <p>The provision of electric vehicle charging stations is noted.</p> <p>Landscape plantings should address aims for biodiversity protection, weed minimisation and low water use. Locally</p>

	<p>indigenous species should be predominantly (if not exclusively) used in all amenity plantings.</p>
Landscape	<p><u>Streetscape</u></p> <p>The existing street tree is a significant element in the streetscape and should be retained, as shown on the Site Plan and Landscape Plan.</p> <p>Proposed additional street trees are shown as Blueberry Ash. This species is not sufficiently substantial, given the scale of the proposed street wall and the anticipated scale of future developments along this street. Council should be consulted to determine suitable species for these plantings, noting that locally indigenous species should be specified. The locations of all new tree plantings should be carefully determined to ensure they do not align inappropriately with Hotel & Residential entries; both require clear street identification and strong addresses.</p> <p>As noted above (Built form), the Panel is not satisfied with the treatment of the residential entry. It requires a stronger, more substantial threshold to the street.</p> <p><u>Communal Open Space</u></p> <p>It is noted that the applicant has responded to the Previous Panel's recommendations regarding communal open space and that this results on a clear distinction between Hotel COS (Level 1), residential COS (Level 4) and private open space.</p> <p><u>Hotel COS Level 1</u></p> <p>The proposed scheme appears to be generally well-conceived but there is scope for a few further improvements. The Panel recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of the two communal rooms needs to be considered in terms of how they relate to the adjoining open spaces and whether they might (one or both) support the particular proposed activities of those spaces. - Is a single (unisex) toilet sufficient for the size and uses of the open space it serves? - The use of large, spreading trees that overhang the edge of the building is both a safety concern and a maintenance issue; - Do the exercise stations require cover to support all-weather use? - The densities and lay-out of plantings should take into account the need for access for maintenance. - <i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i> is a beautiful, hardy species but it drops leaves, flowers and seeds throughout the year and therefore requires a high level of landscape maintenance in its vicinity. <p><u>Communal Open Space – Level 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The expansive undercroft spaces are problematic for amenity; they will require careful, high quality detailing, selection of materials and finishes. The Panel acknowledges that enclosing more of these spaces is constrained by FSR requirements but considers that they will only be acceptable if they are well lit and ventilated and finished with high-quality materials that integrate the indoor and outdoor spaces well. Dividing the spaces from the outdoor areas may not be the best option for achieving this.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The function of the outdoor space on the southern side of the building is unclear. Why would anyone go there to sit on artificial turf when other spaces, including their own balconies, offer much higher amenity? Options for activities that invite residents to use this space should be explored (e.g., a community garden; outdoor gym or mini sports field; dog play area...) - The inclusion of numerous planters under the roof space is strongly questioned. They are very poor in terms of sustainability, requiring special lighting, artificial irrigation and frequent replacement of plantings that fail due to the poor growing environment. The lay-out of southern and northern plantings should be reconsidered and alternatives to the extensive plantings around the swimming pool explored. - The Panel does not support the use of artificial turf except for particular circumstances where no suitable alternatives are available. It is not clear that this is the case with the proposed design. What is the role of the artificial turf? What other options are possible for the ground treatment in this location? <p>The documentation should show all proposed boundary fencing and clearly indicate how the existing wall that is to be retained along the northern boundary will be treated.</p>
Amenity	<p>In response to the Panel's previous comments, the full extent of the level 4 podium has been dedicated to residential communal open space. A generously proportioned amenable communal area has been provided to residents.</p> <p>The pool is potentially a vibrant active space that will generate noise that may create privacy issues with the western neighbours; consideration must be given to the perimeter treatment of the pool to mitigate noise and limit visual privacy issues. Detail treatment of the pool perimeter should be provided to demonstrate how potential privacy issues are resolved.</p> <p>Unit identification numbers are required on the plans. Adaptable and Livable apartments noted on the Summary sheet (Dwg 000 W) cannot be located.</p> <p>The northeastern corner units appear to be accessed via the bathroom. It is assumed that this is a drafting error, and that the entry door is located further east.</p> <p>Residential lobbies are serviced by a single window that will provide minimal outlook and natural lighting. AC condenser units have been located at the base of the lobby windows, further restricting natural light, outlook and creating a noise source that will further degrade the quality of the lobby spaces. The AC condensers should be housed in an alternative location, to maximise available natural light and ventilation.</p> <p>There appear to be no post boxes provided to residential units. This should be addressed concurrently with design finessing to provide a more generous apartment entry and street presence.</p>
Safety	<p>A plan of management should be developed to reduce potential conflicts between residents and visitors in the basement parking area.</p>

	<p>The narrow strip of unbuilt upon land to the west boundary is a potential safety and health hazard to be addressed.</p> <p>The transition of the open flood water tunnel under the multi-storey residential building (27 Atchison St) to the southwest onto the subject site must be designed and managed to ensure safety and maintenance access.</p> <p>BCA egress compliance clearly will rely on 'Fire Engineered solutions'. Any consent needs to be supported by specialists' confirmation that compliance will not involve structural or planning change.</p>
Housing Diversity and Social Interaction	The proposal will provide an appropriate contribution to this precinct.
Aesthetics	<p>The base of the building has been expressed with a clearly defined grid infilled with adjustable aluminium louvers. The grid has been further broken down with deep blade walls. The tower form is well proportioned and expressed in an acceptable manner. In response to the Panel's previous comments, detail sections through the street façade have been provided documenting detail façade treatments and street awnings.</p> <p>The panel acknowledges the design changes, to the rooftop areas in response to previous comments on over-stated roof design. It is felt further design finessing is necessary, which, in co-ordination with expert sustainability/ thermal load design inputs could result in some overhang, eaves or shadowing to enhance the towers skyline.</p>
Design Excellence WLEP2009	
Whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved	Acceptable
Whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,	Generally acceptable, details of the screens provided to drainage easements fronting the street should be provided.
Whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,	
Whether the proposed development detrimentally overshadows an area shown distinctively coloured and numbered on the Sun Plane Protection Map,	N/A
How the development addresses the following:	
the suitability of the land for development,	The site is suitably proportioned and well located within Wollongong's commercial core. Relevant authority consent to flood management and sewer diversion proposals is to be verified.

existing and proposed uses and use mix	The proposed uses are consistent with the site's commercial core location.
heritage issues and streetscape constraints,	Generally acceptable. Details of the screens provided to drainage easements fronting the street should be provided.
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,	Acceptable
bulk, massing and modulation of buildings	Acceptable
street frontage heights	The proposed 4 storey street wall height is consistent with the emerging character of this precinct.
environmental impacts such as sustainable design, overshadowing, wind and reflectivity	Acceptable
the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development	Acceptable
pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access, circulation and requirements	Further refinement of the residential entry is recommended.
impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain	Acceptable
Key issues, further Comments & Recommendations	A level of careful design finessing is recommended, addressing all the detail comments above. This would greatly enhance the quality of the development for occupants, users, and its contribution to the public domain.