

BRIEFING DETAILS

BRIEFING DATE / TIME	Monday, 15 March 2021, 10:00am and 11:02am
LOCATION	Teleconference Call

BRIEFING MATTER(S)

PPSSWC-129 – Penrith – DA20/0810 – 34 SOMERSET STREET KINGSWOOD 2747 – Construction of a Five (5) Storey Private Health Facility Containing a 90 Bed Mental Health Hospital and Associated Health Services With Three (3) Levels of Basement and Lower Ground Parking for 92 Cars and a Roof Terrace

PANEL MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE	Justin Doyle (Chair), Nicole Gurrán, Stuart McDonald, Glenn McCarthy and Jeni Pollard
APOLOGIES	Ross Fowler
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Louise Camenzuli: One of my Partners works for Perpetual Corporate Trust Limited.

OTHER ATTENDEES

COUNCIL ASSESSMENT STAFF	Sandra Fagan and Gavin Cherry
OTHER	Melissa Felipe – Panel Secretariat

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED

The proposed use of the site offers the potential of a desirable extension of the medical precinct anchored by the Nepean Hospital, and particularly providing a response to the “Somerset Centre” adjoining to the south. Extra provision for treatment of mental health inpatients and out-patients is much needed in the community.

However, the Panel agrees with the design comments of the Council assessment staff that the present design presents problems that in many cases seems reflective of an overdevelopment of the site, particularly with the bulk and massing, inadequate setbacks to the residential allotment at 4 Hargrave Street, no significant landscaping contribution, and non-compliance with height controls. Notably the DCP includes a requirement for setback of the rear boundary for buildings above 12 metres in height.

While a design might utilise a zero setback to Somerset Street for much of its façade, that should only be where there is also substantial articulation through architectural cut-outs or setbacks of upper levels to reduce bulk. The ‘Somerset Centre’ to the south affords a good precedent in that regard.

The Panel notes that the Applicant is in dialogue with Council's Urban Design Review Panel in that regard.

The non-compliances with height are of concern, noting that the Somerset Centre has achieved a development within the height limit. If any protuberances can be justified the Panel would hope to see them obscured by suitable setbacks from the Street frontages and 4 Hargrave Street.

Notably the floor to ceiling heights necessary to achieve the bonus do not seem in these plans to be satisfied. Any redrawing of the plans should allow for realistic provision for commercial services and any proposed air-conditioning.

The parking deficiency is a substantial concern noting the heavy demand near the hospital. Reliance upon the adjoining carpark is not appropriate. Addressing the overdevelopment issues to address the development controls (as raised above) may reduce the capacity of the centre, allowing for improved compliance with the parking requirements. Presumably Council's traffic engineers will advise as to whether the single width ramp between levels is workable.

Other matters requiring careful examination are

- Design of the façade which should demonstrate a more sophisticated attempt to reduce bulk and scale, and better integrate with the adjoining Somerset Centre to achieve a coherent streetscape.
- Activation of the street frontage through the design of the street level uses is important. Conditions ensuring the proposed openings to Somerset Street remain engaged after occupation might be considered.
- Privacy, overshadowing and overbearing of adjoining dwellings in Hargrave Street, noting the potential for tree planting in the set back with the adjoining house might assist noting that additional area might be required for that purpose.

TENTATIVE PANEL MEETING DATE: N/A