

BRIEFING DETAILS

BRIEFING DATE / TIME	Monday, 20 November 2023, 11:00am to 12:00pm
LOCATION	MS teams

BRIEFING MATTER(S)

PPSSWC-342 – Liverpool – DA-381/2023 – 260 Eighth Avenue, Austral - Demolition of existing structures, excavation and construction of a commercial development involving the provision of an anchor supermarket, commercial and retail tenancies, public piazza and through-site link, with at-grade parking, associated landscaping and public domain works.

PANEL MEMBERS

IN ATTENDANCE	Justin Doyle (Chair), David Kitto, Helen Lochhead, Ellie Robertson, Daryl Hawker
APOLOGIES	NIL
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Councillors are conflicted on this matter as the Council owns the site.

OTHER ATTENDEES

COUNCIL ASSESSMENT STAFF	Nabil Alaeddine, Amanda Merchant
APPLICANT	Nikita Mahapatra, Aram Lello, Jacob Le Lievre, Jordan Curran, Jeff Mead, Jonathan Joseph, Gabriel Sicari, Robert Loughman, Tony Pratt
PLANNING PANELS SECRETARIAT	Kate McKinnon, Sharon Edwards

KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED

Issues discussed by the Panel and raised in the officer's report of residual concern include:

Consistency with the Masterplan - The DCP Masterplan for the Eighth Avenue Neighbourhood Centre envisaged a "town square" to be located on the boundary between the DA site and the site to the East to create a publicly activated north south through site link, noting a community facility was anticipated on the adjoining site.

The DA shortens the town square, and the consequence of the through site access being internalised into an arcade will be a blank wall on the remainder of that boundary until that site is developed rather than a site link that can be expanded beyond the Eighth Avenue frontage with the development of the adjoining site. The justification for the change in design approach is said to be the uncertainty of any development proposal for the neighbouring site. The Panel would be interested to know how Council or the Department has advanced its planning as to how that community facility shown in Urban Design Analysis is to be delivered, as it seems unlikely to be realised without public investment. If there is planning for the community facility then it should be taken into account in the planning for this site.

Assessment of whether such a significant departure from the Masterplan should be allowed should focus on the apparent objective of the layout included in the DCP Masterplan in creating an activated public space. Defining the uses around the public square so that they are compatible with a public square might assist noting that activation of the carpark might draw such uses to the rear leaving passive retail around the square.

Carparking – Council’s Design Review Panel has questioned whether at grade carparking was appropriate. The Panel said that if an at grade car park was to be approved it would need to be embellished with landscaping of sufficient quality to mitigate the visual and ecological impacts of that approach. The Panel noted that the surrounding area was likely to change over time to become much denser, and the design for the proposal might anticipate how the carpark could be adapted as the area evolves and the shopping centre changes. The Panel accepts that active uses around the carpark will have the advantage of increasing passive surveillance to assist with safety and security especially out of hours.

Retail floor area – Council reports that the proposal would take up 74.6% of the retail cap for the Eighth Avenue Neighbourhood Centre but comprises 60% of the relevant site area. A reduction in retail floor area might assist in allowing some of the other issues on the site to be resolved such as by expanding the activated public space. Exceedance of the floor area above that proportional for the site would need to be justified in those terms. Assistance from the Council as to its planning for the Neighbourhood Centre would help such as a reporting on the underlying planning which lead to the retail cap, whether it remains appropriate and whether allowance for retail opportunities on other sites need to be planned for.

Infrastructure – The ILP envisaged a road to be constructed along the western boundary. The proposal is to construct only half of that road and the design of the loading dock is entirely exposed in that direction. Design attention along that boundary is required as no activation is proposed. The issues with Endeavour Energy’s transmission easement will also need to be resolved.

The planning issues associated with this site are complex and important for the success of the Eighth Avenue Neighbourhood Centre, The Panel encouraged Council to engage an urban designer with experience in retail development of this typology to workshop a quality outcome.

Communication with the neighbours would also likely assist. The Council planner should attempt to speak to the adjoining owners and encourage the applicant to do so also.