

MINUTES OF DESIGN EXCELLENCE PANEL MEETING

Thursday, 9th May 2024

DEP PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Shaun Carter	Chairperson	Carter Williamson Architects
Vishal Lakhia	Panel Member	Vishal Lakhia Architect
David Moir	Panel Member	Moir Landscape Architecture

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES:

Jean Ligadu	Applicant	Morfosis Architects
Kasem Zraika	Project Manager	QA Construct
Ken Li	Client - Owner	
Bo Meng	Client - Owner's Assistant	

OBSERVERS:

Amanda Merchant	Panel Support Officer	Liverpool City Council
Melissa Riley	Convenor/Sen. Urban Design Advisor	Liverpool City Council
Greg Mottram	Senior Planner	Liverpool City Council
Andrijana Mijoski	Senior Administration Officer	Liverpool City Council

ITEM DETAILS:

Item Number: 1

Application Reference Number: DA-380/2023

Property Address: 28 McKay Avenue, Moorebank and 30 McKay Avenue, Moorebank NSW 2170.

Council's Planning Officer: Greg Mottram

Applicant: Morfosis Architects Pty Ltd

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings, construction of a six-storey residential flat building proposing 28 units (including affordable housing) and associated landscaping

Meeting Venue: Microsoft Teams Meeting

1.0 WELCOME, ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND OPENING

The Chairperson introduced the Panel and Council staff to the Applicant Representatives. Attendees signed the Attendance Registration Sheet.

The Liverpool Design Excellence Panel's (the Panel), comments are to assist Liverpool City Council in its consideration of the Development Application.

The absence of a comment under any of the principles does not necessarily imply that the Panel considers the particular matter has been satisfactorily addressed, as it may be that changes suggested under other principles will generate a desirable change.

All nine design principles must be considered and discussed. Recommendations are to be made for each of the nine principles, unless they do not apply to the project. If repetition of recommendations occur, these may be grouped together but must be acknowledged.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

3.0 PRESENTATION

The applicant presented their proposal for DA-380/2023, 28 McKay Avenue, Moorebank and 30 McKay Avenue, Moorebank NSW 2170.

4.0 DEP PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The nine design principles were considered by the panel in discussion of the Development Application. These are 1] **Context**, 2] **Built Form + Scale**, 3] **Density**, 4] **Sustainability**, 5] **Landscape**, 6] **Amenity**, 7] **Safety**, 8] **Housing Diversity + Social Interaction**, 9] **Aesthetics**.

The Design Excellence Panel (DEP) commends the project team including the Architect, Landscape Architect, Client and Project Manager for a comprehensive and detailed presentation, and their efforts in engaging with the Design Excellence process. The Panel thanks the applicant and appreciates that the previous DEP recommendations were carefully considered, and positive refinements have been incorporated, resulting in a well-designed residential building with good amenity, generous landscaping and the necessary deep soil for healthy, sustainable plantings. The process, project and design outcomes are considered to be an exemplar of a successful DEP process.

The Design Excellence Panel makes the following recommendations in relation to the project:

- As described in the Previous DEP minutes, *'the Panel could support height exceedance if the proposal demonstrates consistency with other recommendations in this report'*. In the Panel's view, the proposal successfully responds to the previous DEP

recommendations as part of the revised DA documentation, and results in acceptable architectural, urban design and landscape design outcomes, therefore the Panel supports the height exceedance in this instance.

- The communal rooftop space and the required strategies incorporated in the building design to support its success are commended, including the well-considered provision of soil depths and floor-to-floor heights to allow compliance with the detailed design aspects such as drainage and cross-falls required for the compliance with the Design & Building Practitioners Act 2020 and the NCC provisions.
- The Panel discussed that planter boxes require ongoing maintenance, and if not maintained properly these could risk impacting the visual appearance and amenity within a building. In this proposal, the Panel notes that there is generous landscaping and deep soil offered on the ground floor that will enable substantial tree canopy and landscape design amenity around the building. The Panel recommends planter boxes should be removed from the private balconies, and balcony areas should be maximised for outdoor seating. The Panel further discussed that such planters are recommended only in communal areas where they can be managed by a building manager for any maintenance, irrigation and removal of green waste.
- The Panel recognises through this proposal that private and communal gardens provide gardening opportunities for its residents. It is also recommended that water taps be introduced to balconies and private open spaces to facilitate landscape maintenance.
- The Panel appreciates the applicant's positive response of adding pergolas covered with vines over the driveway. The applicant should provide further details on how vine growth is facilitated and nominate appropriate species as part of the landscape drawings. The Panel further suggests extending the balcony slab edge of the apartment type U1 balcony so the pergola edge can be straightened and allow better integration with the building design.
- The applicant should confirm details (provided as 1:5 or 1:10 drawings) and materials used for screening the AC Condenser units in the revised DA submission, demonstrating thoughtful consideration of the operational needs for AC condensers and visual appearance. It is the Panel's preference that condensers should not be visually apparent from any point within the surrounding public domain.
- The Panel recommends the applicant investigate rotating the fire hydrant booster and substation 90 degrees to reduce these large services dominating the street frontage, improve the pedestrian experience and interface with the public domain.
- The Panel discussed that the adaptable unit layouts appear constrained and would barely fit a 2-seater lounge. The layout should be improved to enable a 2-seater lounge to fit comfortably and allow intuitive movement around the furniture post-adaption.
- The Panel recommends further refinement of the apartment type U3. For example – the entry door opens directly onto the laundry and storage on the left-hand side creating a poor entry experience. The layout should benefit from further resolution to improve the entry experience.

- The Panel notes that storage provisions are important for apartment living however some apartments do not have any storage (outside of the bedrooms). The NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) Part 4G offers guidance on storage size requirements that are required to be provided in addition to kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms. The Panel recommends the apartment layouts be reviewed to incorporate storage cupboards outside of the bedroom and ensure consistency is achieved with the ADG.
- The Panel discussed that the rendered and painted façade materials require on-going maintenance incurring cost every 7-10 years. Alternatively, the Panel prefers use of self-finished materials with an integral finish such as - face bricks or concrete. Please refine the design using more low-maintenance external façade materials such as face brick and concrete.
- The Panel discussed that typically, darker colours absorb more heat compared to lighter colours. Since the Liverpool LGA experiences severe urban heat island effect, the darker colours could be problematic as they maximise heat gain and result in potential thermal loading issues. If the applicant continues with rendered and painted surfaces then lighter colours (with a lower solar absorptance (SA) rating) are recommended.
- The windows open to the sky at the end of corridors throughout the foyers, improve amenity and are supported. The Panel recommends introduction of openable highlight windows (and translucent if necessary) to the bathrooms in the indents adjacent to these foyer windows, to allow natural airflow.
- The Panel notes that excessive glazing within the façade would contribute to solar heat gain, while creating potential privacy issues within habitable areas. The applicant should review the location of the glazed balconies and full height windows in relation to visual privacy and orientation to the neighbouring buildings, and as a balance introduce solid balustrades where appropriate. For example it may be more appropriate for the first 4-storied to have greater proportion of solid balustrades, and the upper recessed stories could maintain glazing.
- The Panel identified that the previous recommendations are unaddressed. These recommendations are still applicable and should be provided as part of the next submission:
 1. *'The Panel notes excessive use of awning windows within the proposal, and recommends these window types should be replaced by other operable window types (such as louvres, sliding or double hung windows). Awning windows only offer a limited extent of opening and should be replaced with other window types to allow effective natural ventilation and natural cross ventilation within the apartments.'*
 2. *'The applicant welcomes this opportunity for inclusion of 16 apartments as part of the affordable housing offering within the scheme. The Panel recommends that details of the Community Housing Provider and its perpetuity of the arrangement should be confirmed with Council's assessment officer as part of this development application stage.'*
 3. Furthermore, the previous DEP included several sustainability recommendations and it is unclear how these have been addressed. These items still apply, should be provided in the revised DA submission and will be review by Council in further detail.

The previous DEP minutes have been attached for reference.

5.0 OUTCOME

The Panel have determined the outcome of the DEP review and have provided final direction to the applicant as follows:

The project is supported. Respond to recommendations made by the panel, then the plans are to be reviewed/approved by Council.

**MINUTES OF DESIGN EXCELLENCE PANEL MEETING
Thursday the 14th of September 2023**

DEP PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lee Hillam	Chairperson	DunnHillam Architects
David Moir	Panel Member	Moir Landscape Architecture
Vishal Lakhia	Panel Member	Vishal Lakhia Architect

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES:

Jean Ligadu	Architect	Morfosis Architects
Kasem Zraika	Project Manager	QA Construct

OBSERVERS:

Amanda Merchant	Panel Support Officer	Liverpool City Council
Joshua Walters	Convenor / A Senior Urban Designer	Liverpool City Council
Greg Mottram	Senior Planner	Liverpool City Council
Di Wu	Senior Urban Design Advisor	Liverpool City Council

ITEM DETAILS:

Item Number: 2

Application Reference Number: DA-380/2023

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Council's Planning Officer: Greg Mottram

Applicant: Morfosis Architects Pty Ltd

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings, construction of a six-storey residential flat building proposing 28 units (including affordable housing) and associated landscaping.

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1.0 WELCOME, ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND OPENING

The Chairperson introduced the Panel and Council staff to the Applicant Representatives. Attendees signed the Attendance Registration Sheet.

The Liverpool Design Excellence Panel's (the Panel), comments are to assist Liverpool City Council in its consideration of the Development Application.

The absence of a comment under any of the principles does not necessarily imply that the Panel considers the particular matter has been satisfactorily addressed, as it may be that changes suggested under other principles will generate a desirable change.

All nine design principles must be considered and discussed. Recommendations are to be made for each of the nine principles, unless they do not apply to the project. If repetition of recommendations occur, these may be grouped together but must be acknowledged.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NIL.

3.0 PRESENTATION

The applicant presented their proposal for DA-380/2023, 28 & 30 McKay Ave Moorebank NSW 2170

4.0 DEP PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The nine design principles were considered by the panel in discussion of the Development Application. These are 1] **Context**, 2] **Built Form + Scale**, 3] **Density**, 4] **Sustainability**, 5] **Landscape**, 6] **Amenity**, 7] **Safety**, 8] **Housing Diversity + Social Interaction**, 9] **Aesthetics**.

The Design Excellence Panel makes the following recommendations in relation to the project:

4.1. Context

- The Panel appreciates the applicant for providing a comprehensive set of architectural drawings and 3D views as part of the submission.
- A site analysis is required that demonstrates the development of the design has been influenced by the study of the context. The Panel strongly encourages the applicant to consider the recently approved residential flat buildings within the vicinity and the existing school in both 2D and 3D, geography, viewlines and existing vegetation as part of their urban design analysis of the site.
- It is appreciated the applicant has considered the planning setbacks in their approach for the site. This has produced a parallelogram-shaped building envelope that creates odd internal corners and spaces which will be hard to furnish or use well.
The Panel recommends the applicant to consider a more relaxed approach for the front and rear setbacks by 'squaring-off' the habitable rooms (living rooms and bedrooms). The Panel's objective with this recommendation is to maximise efficiency with the internal layouts and provide some relief for spatial planning by adopting an average setback approach rather than strictly complying with the front and rear DCP setback controls.
- The Panel further discussed that a 'serrated' edge (in plan), particularly to the front setback addressing the school would add more depth to the streetscape elevation.
- It is recommended that the applicant to maximise the full extent of their building envelope, including the southwestern corner by considering appropriate internal planning strategies. The additional floor area could be allocated to the apartments improving the overall residential quality and amenity.

4.2. Built Form + Scale

- The driveway structure at the vehicular entry should be well-integrated with the building and the landscape design. A suggested strategy is to create a pergola structure with vegetation screening the ramp.
- The Panel notes that the internal apartments on Levels 4 and 5 needs a greater degree of resolution and refinement. The ground level offers great connectivity to the communal areas and similarly, Levels 1 to 3 offer openings to the sides and the front to capture daylight and natural ventilation. The Panel recommends that the same quality within common corridor should be reflected on Levels 4 and 5.
- The Panel notes excessive use of awning windows within the proposal, and recommends these window types should be replaced by other operable window types (such as louvres, sliding or double hung windows). Awning windows only offer a limited extent of opening and should be replaced with other window types to allow effective natural ventilation and natural cross ventilation within the apartments.

4.3. Density

NIL.

4.4. Sustainability

- The Panel considers the applicant has presented a considered scheme which will be able to achieve the expected targets for solar access, natural cross ventilation, deep soil zone and other principal design criteria within the ADG with some development of the design. The Panel encourages the applicant to achieve further sustainability targets as discussed below.
- Use of ceiling fans is encouraged within all bedrooms and living areas as a low energy alternative/augmentation to mechanical A/C systems.
- Provision of a rainwater tank should be considered to allow collection, storage and reuse within the subject site.
- The applicant should include details of an appropriate photovoltaic system on all architectural drawings and 3D views.
- Full building electrification is encouraged along with the inclusion of EV charging points within the basement carpark.
- The Panel notes that bathrooms located along the building perimeter should be provided with windows for natural light and ventilation, and to improve natural cross ventilation within the apartments.
- Drying space should be allocated for each apartment that is screened from public view.

4.5. Landscape

- The Panel discussed that the current arrangement of COS on the ground floor may comply with the ADG in terms of its numerical requirement, however, it would only offer a limited benefit to the residents.
- The Panel recommends the applicant consider a roof-top COS provided with maximum amenity for its residents, including - a unisex accessible toilet, outdoor kitchen/barbecue,

sink, shaded areas, seats, and planter boxes. The applicant should refer guidance offered within ADG Parts 4O and 4P to develop further details.

- The Panel acknowledges that introduction of a rooftop communal open space would require a barrier-free lift access and fire stairs to encroach beyond the 18m LEP height plane. The Panel offers in-principle support to such height exceedance if the proposal demonstrates consistency with other recommendations offered in this report.
- Furthermore, the Panel recommends the ground floor front, rear and side setbacks should be offered as private open spaces/gardens to the ground floor apartments. The ground floor apartments should benefit from direct and individual street entries which could be also used for removing green waste from the individual private gardens.
- Detailed landscape design proposal should confirm medium-to-large canopy trees and shrubs within the above-mentioned private open spaces to enhance the amenity and outlook of the ground floor residents.
- The Panel notes trees have been removed from the rear of the site, and suggests the applicant provide replacement canopy tree plantings (i.e., species with a mature height of 8m or greater).
- There are inconsistencies between the architectural plans and 3D renderings regarding the tree planting along the east boundary. Additionally, the Panel emphasizes the importance of ensuring that adequate soil volumes have been taken into consideration to support the tree planting. In the absence of a section provided at this location, the Panel requires the applicant provides further information to demonstrate the proposed development can successfully achieve the tree planting as intended.
- The Panel suggests that by rationalizing the built form, there will be greater opportunities and flexibility for landscape design at the ground level.
- The Panel recommends consideration of Designing with Country principles in the selection of plant and tree species when preparing the landscape plan. Species should be selected that provide habitat and forage for native insect, bird, reptile and fauna species.
- With the removal of trees on the northern boundary, the landscape design should seek to capitalise on the deep soil area and reinstate significant canopy along this boundary edge. Species should be selected be endemic to the area and provide habitat and shade.
- More detail is required in the landscape plan to demonstrate that appropriate soil volumes will be provided on all podium areas to support the proposed planting. This should be demonstrated with calculations on soil volume and with sections through podium planting.
- The Panel recommends thoughtful resolution of building services elements - substation (if required), fire hydrant booster assembly, fire indicator panel should be well-integrated with either built form and or the landscape design.

4.6. Amenity

- The Panel appreciates the applicant has introduced three access points to the building, which enhances site permeability. However, there is a concern regarding the access point along the western boundary, where there are opportunities to incorporate additional planting to help mitigate the impact caused by the driveway.

- The Panel notes that the internal apartment sizes exactly comply with the minimum ADG Part 4D area requirement, however the non-orthogonal planning doesn't allow for full use of the spaces and some rooms do not meet minimum dimensions eg. master bedroom within the typical apartment U2. Within the same apartment, the living, dining and kitchen areas appear highly constrained. It appears that the layout will not allow intuitive circulation and movement around furniture.
- The balcony size and orientation of the typical apartment U4 creates an awkward relationship with the living area. The kitchen aisle within this apartment overlaps with the main circulation corridor and not in-line with the guides provided in the ADG Part 4D. The layout needs full reconfiguration to allow a more efficient and amenable living, dining, kitchen and balcony arrangements.
- The bedroom sizes within the typical apartment U3 are below the ADG Part 4D requirements.
- The balcony layouts for all apartments need to demonstrate consistency with the minimum area and the overall objective of the ADG Part 4E. For example - the orientation of the longer side should face outwards. Minimum depths of 2m (for 2 bedroom) and 2.4m (for 3 bedroom) apartments should be achieved. The layouts should demonstrate adequate space for a small outdoor table with chairs.
- The Panel acknowledges that, as per the Land and Housing Corporation Design Requirements, there is no requirement for two bathrooms in 2-bedroom apartments. Therefore, the Panel recommends considering the removal of one bathroom for those 2-bedroom units.
- As recommended in 4.2 Built Form and Scale, the apartment layouts on Levels 4 and 5 should benefit from a greater degree of resolution in terms of vertical alignment of services, unless the floor-to-floor height is further raised to allow transfer of services.
- The Panel appreciates that the common corridors within the lower levels of the proposal have openings that align with building gaps creating opportunities for natural light, ventilation and outlook for the common areas. And suggests that the layouts for Levels 4 and 5 should have a similar approach that maximises natural light, ventilation and outlook within the common corridors.

4.7. Safety

- The Panel discussed the adjacency of the vehicular driveway with the pedestrian crossing and recommends it to be reviewed by a suitably qualified traffic engineer.

4.8. Housing Diversity + Social Interaction

- A suitably qualified access consultant should review whether all apartments need to be 'visitable'. It is noted that some of the apartments allow visitable entries but not exits.
- The applicant should demonstrate that all communal areas and common areas have barrier-free access and circulation.
- The applicant welcomes this opportunity for inclusion of 16 apartments as part of the affordable housing offering within the scheme. The Panel recommends that details of the Community Housing Provider and its perpetuity of the arrangement should be confirmed with Council's assessment officer as part of this development application stage.

- Details of the pre and post adaptation layouts should be provided as part of the next revision. The Panel recommends the extent of alteration required from pre to post adaptation should be minimised, particularly with regards to structure and services such as plumbing points, location of sinks, floor-wastes and the like.

4.9. Aesthetics

- The applicant should provide a comprehensive design proposal for the primary façade/s at a future meeting. This must include 1:20 sections and details to clearly show materials, balustrade design, balcony edges, junctions, integration of rainwater drainage including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal. Sections should also demonstrate that a 3.1m floor to-floor height will be adequate in achieving compliance with the relevant NCC provisions, whilst also achieving minimum 2.7m floor-to-ceiling heights within all habitable spaces of the apartments.
- Location of A/C condensers and other mechanical equipment should be confirmed on drawings and 3D views. The Panel these should not be located within balconies (unless thoughtfully screened), the rooftops or anywhere apparent from the public domain.

5.0 OUTCOME

The panel have determined the outcome of the DEP review and have provided final direction to the applicant as follows:

The proposal is not supported by the DEP and must return to the panel, with all feedback incorporated or addressed.