

MINUTES OF DESIGN EXCELLENCE PANEL MEETING

Thursday, 14th November 2024

DEP PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lee Hillam	Chairperson	DunnHillam Architects + Urban Design
Vishal Lakhia	Panel Member	Vishal Lakhia Architect

APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES:

Russell Olsson	Director / Architect	Olsson Architecture
Tavis Callaghan	Project Architect	Olsson Architecture
Mairead Hawes	Director / Planner	The Planning Hub
Ian Jordan	Developer	Australasian Property Group

OBSERVERS:

Tammy Lee	Technical Administration Officer	Liverpool City Council
Di Wu	Convenor / Snr Urban Design Advisor	Liverpool City Council
Nabil Alaeddine	Principal Planner	Liverpool City Council
Greg Samardzic	Team Leader	Liverpool City Council

ITEM DETAILS:

Item Number: 1

Application Reference Number: DA-364/2024

Property Address: 402 Macquarie St Liverpool NSW 2170

Council's Planning Officer: Nabil Alaeddine

Applicant: The Grand Liverpool Pty Ltd

Proposal: Construction of a 31-Storey Mixed-Use development with 168 apartments comprising 84 x 1 bedroom units, 63 x 2 bedrooms units and 21 x 3 bedrooms units, 198-room hotel or motel accommodation, recreational facility (Indoor) (gym), conference room, and food and drink premises with a small bar (licensed premises), over 6 levels of basement car park, containing 205 parking spaces comprising of, 1 loading dock, 1 loading bay, 11 motorcycle spaces, 115 bicycle spaces, and 2 wash bays with associated landscape and site works.

The development is Stage 2 of the approved Concept Development under DA-1262/2022. The Sydney Western City Planning Panel has the function of determining the application.

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 402 Macquarie St Liverpool NSW 2170.

4.0 DEP PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel commends the applicant's team for providing a comprehensive set of architectural drawings and documentation, as well as their efforts to address recommendations from the previous DEP. The Panel appreciates the architect for considering early investigation into detailed aspects such as structure, façade detailing, and resolution of building services, to ensure the design will be practical and buildable. As part of the design excellence framework, the Panel recognises the importance of the architects' involvement should continue throughout all stages of the project, including detailed design, documentation (post DA approval) and throughout construction.

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

1. While integration of public art into early stages of the development application process is recognised, the details remain unclear to the Panel. Given the significance of the project and prominence of the proposed public art location/s, the Panel recommends that the applicant maintains their positive collaborative approach with Council and local artists to ensure the public art celebrates local and Indigenous history. The applicant is encouraged to discuss with Council's assessment team whether the public art proposition is expected to be delivered as part of a separate development application.
2. The applicant should provide details of the appropriate placement of air condensers. If located on balconies, the response should include visual impact, operational efficiency, noise and the exhaust of hot or cold air onto balconies effecting the amenity of those spaces. Units should be screened from view from the street, apartment and balconies,

exhaust cold or hot air to the exterior façade, be noise attenuated and be fitted so that they work efficiently.

3. The panels suggests that the applicant include some safety measures for road verges. This will help ensure the public domain is both safe and desirable for users.
4. The Panel suggests that the planter boxes along Carey St could be reduced in complexity so that larger volumes of soil are available for planting. Tiering to align with the fall of the street is supported, while tiering back towards the building could be consolidated into one wider planter box.

The remaining recommendations build upon the previous DEP Minutes and are captured in the table below:

Previous DEP Comments (9th May 2024)	Current DEP Comments (14 November 2024)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel discussed that access to significant surrounding views is a key feature for the development. The applicant is encouraged to explore and document orientation to the surrounding significant views, including the Blue Mountains, Georges River, city and culturally significant places, to inform the design and layout of the apartments and the rooftop communal spaces, as part of the next development application stage.</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>The residential units from Level 9 and above, along with the rooftop communal open space, are designed to take full advantage of distant views.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel supports the proposed street trees in terms of the location and species nomination as Tristaniopsis Laurina. To ensure their long-term viability, particularly located in the CBD and surrounded by services, it is highly recommended they are installed in structural vaults designed to accommodate appropriate soil volumes to support the estimated mature height of the proposed tree species.</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>Structural vaults have been proposed for street tree plantings.</p> <p>Additionally, it is noted that the applicant has proposed <i>Elaeocarpus eumundi</i> instead Tristaniopsis Laurina.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that this replacement is supported by Council, as the previous species has become difficult to grow and sustain due to the Urban Heat Island Effect. It is no longer recommended in certain areas of the LGA, including the City Centre and Edmondson Park.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel appreciates and supports that the landscaping at ground level has been shifted closer to the Macquarie Street edge. However, this has created a large blank zone between the building, main</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Limited street furniture is proposed within the semi-public area (between the public domain and the building line). The applicant has provided justification, explaining that earlier</p>

Previous DEP Comments (9th May 2024)	Current DEP Comments (14 November 2024)
<i>entries and the road edge, and a poor urban condition as the building interfaces with the ground. The Panel recommends further design resolution to improve the pedestrian experience, public domain and sense of arrival in this semi-public area. Lighting, public art, planting and seating should be explored as part of the next development application stage.</i>	design iterations included extensive landscaping along the colonnade area. However, due to design changes aimed at improving site permeability and accommodating essential services, additional landscaping under the structure is no longer deemed necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel recommends the applicant provide public art in the development and requests confirmation of its location and details be provided in the Development Application. Public art and location to be provided in consultation with Council's Public Art Officer.</i> 	<p>Improved.</p> <p>The Panel supports the collaborative approach between the project team, artists, and Council's public art officer.</p> <p>Recommendations in the minutes above.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel discussed that planter boxes require ongoing maintenance, and if not maintained risk impacting the visual appearance of the built form, therefore are discouraged in privately managed spaces. The Panel recommends planters are removed from the private balconies, and careful consideration of the ease of maintenance for those integrated in the awning. It is the Panel's preference that planter boxes should be only located in communal areas where they can be accessed for irrigation, maintenance and removal of green waste.</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>No planters are proposed on the residential floors (Levels 9-29). Planters are only located on the hotel levels, where they will be managed and maintained by the hotel operator and building manager.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The planter boxes as part of the awning planting is supported, however at the shallow depth (300mm) proposed will be prone to drying out from both exposure to heat radiating off the façade, and during heavy rain, overflowing with water. The landscape design requires demonstrated coordination with the hydraulic and structural engineering to ensure that adequate drainage provision is provided for peak rainfall events. It is recommended that careful consideration is given to soil depths and irrigation to ensure that planting is not impacted by soil overheating. In the future submission</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>Drawing No. L-09 in the Landscape Plans indicates a soil depth of 500-600mm for the awning areas.</p>

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<i>larger detail sections such as 1:10 should be provided of all planter boxes.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel recommends further investigation for the refinement of the tower façades, given that the tower component will be highly visible from different parts of the city. The applicant should consider façade studies at a finer scale 1:500 to explore strategies for articulation, weather protection and on aesthetic merits. The Panel also discussed alternative strategies that could enhance the façade, for example introducing vertical panels in areas may break the horizontal banding and improve articulation - these should be explored.</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>Additional vertical windows have been incorporated into the east elevation, along with minor design changes to the south and west elevations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>As part of the façade studies, the Panel encourages the applicant to consider an appropriate colour and materials palette. The Panel supports the dominant use of cream colour and suggests introduction of a bronze shade to increase visual interest. The applicant is encouraged to develop their Designing with Country strategy and response as part of the material & tower design process for the DA stage.</i> 	<p>Addressed.</p> <p>The material schedules have been expanded to include additional finishes, colours, and fixtures, incorporating the suggested brown shade into the colour palette. The applicant also noted that a series of 1:20 detailed sections has been provided for assessment. The façade design has been developed in collaboration with the façade engineers, structural engineers, and other consultants to ensure its constructability.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel discussed at the meeting that the proposed housing mix is not consistent with the Liverpool DCP, given that there is a high percentage of one-bedroom apartments, and not enough three or four-bedroom apartments. The applicant should provide a rationale for not responding to the need in Liverpool, which is to provide family-friendly apartments. The applicant noted there is a possibility that the project will be changed to Build-To-Rent (BTR) in future. The Panel further notes that the proposed housing mix may be acceptable if the project is going to be delivered as Build-To-Rent. If so, please provide a statement from the BTR Housing Provider detailing their strategy.</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>No changes have been proposed. However, the applicant has provided justification, noting that a market analysis report by an economic consultant was conducted, which concluded that the proposed housing mix is suitable for the area.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In the Panel's view, if the project remains as (privately-owned) residential apartments, then the proposed mix should be reconsidered. The Panel recommends that the number of three-bedroom or four-bedroom apartments should be increased to a minimum of 25% (a minimum of 5% four-bedroom apartments), and a family-friendly strategy be incorporated into a portion of both the two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartment layouts. For example – two-bedroom apartments could be larger and provided with a study nook close to an external window and natural daylight.</i> 	<p>Refer to comment above.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel discussed that in residential living, kitchens become a central part of the home life. The Panel commends the thoughtful design of the corner apartment layouts where kitchens are adjacent to the balconies, creating direct connectivity and access with both – the living and the outdoor spaces.</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Minor internal layout changes have been made to the units at both ends. The Panel acknowledges the efforts made to revise the design, but notes that the changes may not represent the optimal outcome. In the Panel's opinion, the previous layout from the last iteration provided a better living outcome.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel notes that due to services coordination the AC condensers have been moved to the balconies. However, the Panel notes that the AC condensers on balconies would compromise the usable space and amenity of the balconies, creating potential visual impact. The Panel also discussed that the effectivity of condensers may also diminish when these are screened. Therefore, it is recommended that the applicant move the condensers back to a consolidated plant room on each floor in an appropriate discreet location, or move to a central system.</i> 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>No changes have been proposed. However, the applicant has justified that, due to functionality, effectiveness, and efficiency, it is challenging to group more than 8 condensers in a single room.</p> <p>Recommendations in the minutes above.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Panel notes that the south facing bedroom windows appear too narrow. The applicant is encouraged to widen the windows to improve outlook, daylight and natural ventilation.</i> 	<p>Improved.</p> <p>The applicant explained that, due to updates and compliance with the latest BASIX and NCC requirements, minor design changes have been made to maximise the window openings where possible.</p>

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.