

# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	845 New Canterbury Road Dulwich Hill
Proposal:	Demolition of existing structures and construction of a mixed use development comprising residential apartments above a shop
Application No.:	PDA/2021/0429
Meeting Date:	14 December 2021
Previous Meeting Date:	None
Panel Members:	Jon Johannsen – chair, Peter Ireland and Russell Olsson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia, Niall Macken and Katerina Lianos
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant’s representatives to address the panel:	Ziad Boumelhem, Urban Link Architects – Architect for the project

### Background:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference.
2. The Panel thanks the applicant for seeking early feedback at the Pre DA stage, and for providing a comprehensive set of architectural drawings.
3. The Panel understands that the applicant seeks a variation to the 14m maximum permissible height control in the LEP. The applicant proposes a 16.4m height for Building A (front building) and a 15.1m height for Building B (rear building).
4. As a proposal subject to the State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development (SEPP 65), the Panel’s comments have been structured against the 9 Design Quality Principles set out in the SEPP 65 NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG).

## Discussion & Recommendations:

### Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

*“Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context is the key natural and built features of an area, their relationship and the character they create when combined. It also includes social, economic, health and environmental conditions.*

*Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of an area’s existing or future character. Well designed buildings respond to and enhance the qualities and identity of the area including the adjacent sites, streetscape and neighbourhood. Consideration of local context is important for all sites, including sites in established areas, those undergoing change or identified for change.”*

1. The immediate context was discussed at some length during the meeting. Critical to the site and the success of any design response will be establishing an appropriate relationship with the immediate neighbours along the western boundary. To the west of the site are two existing lower scale residential dwellings, which reflects a zone transition at the boundary between the subject site (B2 Local Centre) and these dwellings (R1 General Residential).
2. These points are elaborated upon in the remainder of this report.

### Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

*“Good design achieves a scale, bulk and height appropriate to the existing or desired future character of the street and surrounding buildings.*

*Good design also achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building’s purpose in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type, articulation and the manipulation of building elements. Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.”*

1. The Panel supports – in principle – the general arrangement of the proposal with 2 x 4 storey buildings provided with an approximately 14m building separation, subject to other recommendations within this report.
2. It is the Panel’s view that adjustment is needed to the proposed built form of the northern building (Building B). One suggested strategy is to express the top level of Building B in a mansard roof form. The objective is to establish an improved built form transition to the low-density dwelling houses to the west.
3. The northern building should be provided with a second lift access for overall access and amenity from the basement, and the Panel would support a non-compliance with the car parking controls, subject to consistency established by the applicant with the recommendations offered in this report.
4. The Panel recommends that fire egress within the proposal from the basement and the residential levels above should be reviewed by/with a suitably qualified certifier to ensure BCA compliance can be achieved
5. In terms of the ground floor configuration, the Panel recommends that the extent of street activation should be increased by limiting vehicular driveway to a single width (3 to 3.6m width). Subsequently, a generous foyer width with more robust architectural qualities should be provided at the residential entry, and allow for mail and parcel delivery
6. The Panel considers that the applicant should incorporate building servicing requirements for 2 x 4 storey buildings including fire hydrant booster valve, pump room, fire indicator panel, meters panel, main switch board, communications, and other technical requirements within the ground floor plan, without compromising amenity and quality of these spaces.
7. The Panel discussed the extent of hard landscaped surfaces within the communal open space, which could result in potential noise transmission to the upper levels within the building. The applicant should consider reduction in hard landscape surfaces by incorporating planters and landscaped treatment with soft surfaces. Additionally, the balconies and fenestrations addressing the courtyard should be provided with appropriate architectural features to help mitigate noise attenuation such as sound absorption to balcony soffits.

### Principle 3 – Density

*“Good design achieves a high level of amenity for residents and each apartment, resulting in a density appropriate to the site and its context. Appropriate densities are consistent with the area’s existing or projected population.*

*Appropriate densities can be sustained by existing or proposed infrastructure, public transport, access to jobs, community facilities and the environment.”*

No discussion

## **Principle 4 – Sustainability**

*“Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Good sustainable design includes use of natural cross ventilation and sunlight for the amenity and liveability of residents and passive thermal design for ventilation, heating and cooling reducing reliance on technology and operation costs. Other elements include recycling and reuse of materials and waste, use of sustainable materials, and deep soil zones for groundwater recharge and vegetation.”*

1. Provision of ceiling fans is strongly encouraged in all habitable areas. Floor-to-floor and floor-to-ceiling heights should be adjusted to allow the use of ceiling fans within the proposal.
2. Installation of p/v solar panels on the roof is also recommended, for power to common areas within the proposal.
3. The Panel encourages the applicant to consider commitment to sustainability targets for water, energy and waste efficiency.

## **Principle 5 – Landscape**

*“Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in attractive developments with good amenity. A positive image and contextual fit of well designed developments is achieved by contributing to the landscape character of the streetscape and neighbourhood*

*Good landscape design enhances the development’s environmental performance by retaining positive natural features which contribute to the local context, co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy, habitat values, and preserving green networks. Good landscape design optimises usability, privacy and opportunities for social interaction, equitable access, respect for neighbours’ amenity, provides for practical establishment and long term management.”*

1. The Panel appreciates provision of a 6m wide deep soil area within the northern setback. The deep soil area should be provided with large canopy trees, to improve privacy and to enhance outlook of neighbours within the adjoining apartment building to the north.
2. It is recommended that further consideration be given to the layout and detail of the communal courtyard as noted below.

## **Principle 6 – Amenity**

*“Good design positively influences internal and external amenity for residents and neighbours. Achieving good amenity contributes to positive living environments and resident well being.*

*Good amenity combines appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.”*

1. The Panel considers the applicant should consider relevant architectural and landscape design elements to avoid potential overlooking from the central communal open space into the balconies and habitable areas of the ground floor apartments, and to help mitigate any noise generation from use of that space
2. The Panel discussed the internal configuration of the ‘up-and-over’ apartment L1.03. The staircase location seems problematic as it compromises usability and amenity of the living, dining and kitchen areas. The Panel suggested that this apartment could be a 2 bedroom layout with the third bedroom on ground floor used as a garbage storage room. (The ground floor retail area could be extended to occupy the location of the current garbage storage room). The entry door to the apartment should be reconfigured to avoid direct opening-up into the kitchen corridor.
3. The development application should nominate the adaptable apartments within the proposal. The Panel recommends that the extent of amendments required from pre- to post-adaptation should be minimised, particularly with regards to structural and building services elements. Additionally, all apartments within the proposal should be ‘visitable’ and demonstrate compliance with the relevant Australian Standards (accessible bathrooms, kitchens and other common spaces).

## Principle 7 – Safety

*“Good design optimises safety and security, within the development and the public domain. It provides for quality public and private spaces that are clearly defined and fit for the intended purpose. Opportunities to maximise passive surveillance of public and communal areas promote safety.*

*A positive relationship between public and private spaces is achieved through clearly defined secure access points and well lit and visible areas that are easily maintained and appropriate to the location and purpose.”*

No discussion

## Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

*“Good design achieves a mix of apartment sizes, providing housing choice for different demographics, living needs and household budgets.*

*Well designed apartment developments respond to social context by providing housing and facilities to suit the existing and future social mix. Good design involves practical and flexible features, including different types of communal spaces for a broad range of people, providing opportunities for social interaction amongst residents.”*

No discussion

## Principle 9 – Aesthetics

*“Good design achieves a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements, reflecting the internal layout and structure. Good design uses a variety of materials, colours and textures.*

*The visual appearance of well designed apartment development responds to the existing or future local context, particularly desirable elements and repetitions of the streetscape.”*

1. The Panel notes the raised awning alignment over the pedestrian entry door, but the Panel's preferred treatment would see its integration with the existing awning-line within the New Canterbury Road streetscape. The applicant could consider an alternative strategy for defining the pedestrian entry within the streetscape.
2. The Panel considers that the western side boundary walls of both buildings A and B will be highly visible from the surrounding public domain. The Panel recommends greater resolution and refinement of these side boundary walls in terms of design treatment, composition, texture and material selection for maintenance. Fully painted surface patterns should be avoided. Additionally, refer recommendations offered in Paragraph 2, Principle 2 Built form and scale.
3. Revised architectural drawings should confirm location of A/C condenser units and other mechanical equipment. The Panel considers these should not be located within balconies (unless suitably screened visually and acoustically) or anywhere visually apparent from the surrounding public domain.
4. Revised architectural drawing should include details of the proposed design intent for key façade types in form of 1:20 sections indicating façade type, balustrade fixing, balcony edges, junctions, rainwater drainage system including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal.

## Conclusion:

The Panel recommends the proposal should be supported once it satisfactorily demonstrates improved design quality in-line with the recommendations provided in this Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel Report.