

Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	52-54 Charlotte Street Ashfield
Proposal:	A Section 4.55(2) application to DA/2020/0505, proposed modifications include amendments to the approved floor plans, reduction in boarding rooms from 54 to 53 and addition of a new storey to the rear (western) portion of the development.
Application No.:	MOD 2021 0565
Meeting Date:	22 February 2022
Previous Meeting Date:	28 July 2020 (Previous AEDRP Report is attached)
Panel Members:	Diane Jones (external member); Jon Johannsen (external member); Niall Macken (internal member); and Vishal Lakhia (internal member) – chair
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Chirag Bhavan
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant’s representatives to address the panel:	Joseph Panetta (Habitation) – Architect for the project; and Andrew Martin (AM Planning) – Town Planner for the project

Background:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and 3D views and discussed the proposal with the applicant through an online conference.

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. Building Form Transition:

- a. The Panel restates that the proposal needs to establish an appropriate built form transition to the rear and side interfaces of the site. As previously advised to the applicant, the built form transition to the formally listed heritage buildings (at 29-31 Bland Street and 35 Bland Street) across the rear boundary should be improved by reduction in the building height by at least 1 storey.
- b. Additionally, the Panel is concerned by the constrained building separation distances (including internal building separation, side and rear setbacks) which are below the best-practice standards expected for boarding houses within the Inner West local government area. The Panel understands that as per the Housing SEPP 2021, the building separation distances are expected to be consistent with the SEPP 65 Apartment Design Guide.

- c. The Panel also notes that there are additional shadow impacts created by the proposed 4th storey on the central courtyard and the adjoining property to the south (48 Charlotte Street) at mid-winter.
- d. Based on the abovementioned aspects, the Panel restates that only a maximum of 3 storeys is supported at the rear (western) portion of the site.

2. Building Height:

- a. The Panel restates that the proposed floor-to-floor height of 2.8m is not supported as it is below the acceptable standard required for achieving design excellence. It is the Panel's concern that a 2.8m floor-to-floor height would result in constrained ceiling heights of – 2.4m within the habitable areas and 2.1m (excluding service bulkheads) within the kitchenettes and bathrooms.
- b. The Panel expects the floor-to-floor heights to be increased in order to achieve a minimum 2.7m clear ceiling height within all habitable areas, to comply with the Inner West DCP and to accommodate ceiling fans.
- c. As a consequence, the height of both buildings will increase and the applicant should ensure that there are no habitable spaces proposed beyond the LEP height plane.

3. Ground Floor Configuration:

- a. As mentioned by the applicant, the proposal no longer requires a substation and as a consequence there is an opportunity for reconfiguration of the main entry staircase and the pedestrian ramp providing access from Charlotte Street. The Panel expects further refinement and design development to improve the quality of the residential entry, to create a more comfortable and inviting experience. The applicant should align the pedestrian entry across the direct line-of-sight to foyers of both front and rear buildings.
- b. While the Panel appreciates the provision of universal access from Charlotte Street, the design of the ramp should be more thoughtfully integrated with the landscaped design presenting the street frontage to prevent the institutional appearance associated with 1:14 ramps. In addition, scope for some casual social bump space near the entry should be provided.
- c. The access pathway to the rear garden is recommended to be relocated to the northern boundary, and replaced with a landscaped area providing buffer to adjoining property to the south in association with driveway narrowing.

4. Building Configuration:

- a. The Panel notes that the extent of balconies have been increased however there is a need for further resolution regarding the placement of screening devices, to avoid potential visual privacy issues between the rooms and with the adjoining properties to the north and south.
- b. The Panel notes that the main entry doors to Rooms G04, 307 and 303 open-up directly in front of the lift doors. The entry doors to these rooms should be reconfigured to improve privacy for these residents.
- c. The Panel recommends that the balustrades should be provided with partly solid treatment (e.g.600-800mm high solid masonry/brick elements) with glass or open-type treatment above, to maximise privacy within the balcony spaces.
- d. The Panel queried the proposed internal areas within the boarding rooms with regard to the affordable rental housing SEPP 2009 and Housing SEPP 2021 definition of room area. The applicant should ensure that a minimum 12m² is provided for rooms with single lodgers and a minimum of 16m² is provided for rooms with two lodgers. The Panel considers that any circulation corridor, ensuites, kitchenettes and fixed furniture should typically be excluded from the floor area calculations. This may have the effect of reclassifying a number of two-lodger rooms as single lodger rooms.

INNER WEST

- e. Revised architectural drawings should include details on the location and size of the plant room, including any mechanical equipment or condensers for the rooms. The equipment should not be located within the balconies (unless thoughtfully integrated with screens), above the rooftop, within the communal open spaces, or anywhere apparent from the public domain. Incorporation of solar p/v panels on the flat roofs would be encouraged.

Conclusion:

The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel recommends a second opportunity to further review to confirm whether the proposal satisfactorily demonstrates consistency with the recommendations made in this AEDRP Report.

Attachment 1 – AEDRP Report from 28 July 2020 meeting