

Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	23 Croydon Street, Petersham
Proposal:	Full demolition and reconstruction of the residential flat building (Building A) addressing Croydon Street
Application No.:	DA/2022/0308
Meeting Date:	9 August 2022
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Jon Johannsen – chair; Diane Jones, and Russell Olsson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Council Staff: Vishal Lakhia, Niall Macken, Keeley Samways, Annalise Ifield, and Kaitlin Zieme
Guests:	
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Barry Rush – Architect for the project; Vasudev Parulekar – Applicant's representative

Background:

- The site is subject to an approval (25 August 2016) under DA201500665 to demolish part of the premises and carry out alterations and additions to an existing residential flat building fronting Croydon Street (Building A) containing 4 dwellings with a communal kitchen and BBQ area and the construction of a new 3 storey residential flat building to the rear (Building B) containing 18 dwellings with basement car parking. This application was approved with variations to the maximum building height and floor space ratio development standards based on retention of Building A as a contributory item in this heritage conservation zone.

- The subject application claims the existing front building (Building A) cannot now be retained and as such, demolition and reconstruction of the existing building is proposed. The proposed design is largely the same building envelope as what has previously been approved with overall number of units and bedrooms unchanged, but internal unit configuration has changed slightly at each level and there are minor changes to type/location/size of windows and doors.

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel understands that the applicant, as part of this development application, intends to demolish and rebuild Building A in the same built form (but not consistent in detail), while retaining other aspects from the previous DA approval mainly including Building B at the rear and the surrounding landscaped area. The Panel notes that the documentation provided as part of this DA submission did not include adequate details of the previous DA-approved proposal or overall context analysis.
2. The Panel was informed by the applicant at the meeting that the rationale for demolition of Building A is the lack of its structural integrity and the applicant intends to rebuild Building A to match its DA-approved state. The Panel is not convinced by the validity of applicant's strategy, given that much of the architectural detailing of the existing Building A would be lost in the process (as confirmed also by Council's Internal Heritage Report). The likely result would not achieve design excellence expectations and be a poor 'facsimile' of the original. Furthermore, the Panel believes that there may be potential compliance issues with the National Construction Code (NCC) and Design and Building Practitioners Regulation 2021.
3. Discussion then followed on whether the proposal should be considered as a completely new Development Application (rather than S 4.17) for the entire site, understanding that this would require complete reconsideration of the Building A rebuild strategy compared to its replacement with an alternative building envelope based on a contemporary design. Such an approach would then require that outcome be a suitable fit in the conservation zone streetscape.
4. In either case the DA documentation should adequately demonstrate the proposed built form relationship with the earlier approved Building B units, surrounding landscaped areas and the existing broader urban context. The Panel expects that the proposal should create an improved street address and the apartments should achieve consistency with the principal controls within the NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) including but not limited to – solar access, natural cross ventilation, communal open space, deep soil zones and internal residential amenity.
5. With regard to the current DA proposal for Building A, the Panel's further concerns are:
 - a. likely negative impacts in a heritage conservation environment
 - b. poor residential amenity and adverse built form impacts on adjoining residential properties
 - c. location of the communal open space that will be overshadowed, south of Building A
 - d. internal unit planning that is compromised by the required structural insertions
 - e. resolution of access and building services along the street frontage
6. It is the Panel's view that the current DA proposal cannot be supported as it does not meet the standards of residential amenity and design excellence expected for a residential flat building within the Inner West local government area