

Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	1-9 Thomas Street Ashfield
Proposal:	Proposed changes to DA/2020/1094 – a previously approved development application for a mixed-use building
Application No.:	PDA/2024/0032
Meeting Date:	9 April 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	During Pre DA and DA stages – 11 August 2020 and 4 February 2021
Panel Members:	Jon Johannsen (chair) Russell Olsson Diane Jones
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Niall Macken Annalise Ifield Tom Irons
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	No conflicts advised.
Applicant or applicant’s representatives to address the panel:	Chris Katris – architect for the project Murray Donaldson (Urbis) – urban planner 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. The Panel thanks the applicant for attending a Pre-Development Application meeting, thereby allowing an early productive discussion and guidance for the development team in preparation for the DA submission to follow.
2. The Panel acknowledges that the proposal is subject to Chapter 4 – Design of residential apartment of the State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Housing 2021 and the NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) applies to the proposal.

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel notes that the applicant fundamentally retains the previously approved building envelope and building configuration as part of their modification application. However, there is internal reconfiguration of 2 bedroom apartments to convert these to larger 3 bedroom apartments. The Panel supports the applicant’s strategy of increasing the proportion of 3

bedroom apartments to 14% of the proposed apartments within the development, to improve housing diversity in the Ashfield area. However, there are residential amenity concerns discussed below which should be addressed as part of the formal modification application stage. For example:

- a. The balcony area and configuration for apartment A310 should demonstrate compliance is achieved with *Part 4E Private open space and balconies* of the ADG, in terms of guidance for the minimum area and dimensions.
 - b. The living area of this apartment A310 has constrained outlook and daylight access due to limited exposure to the building perimeter (creating a 'snorkelled' configuration).
 - c. The Panel recommends reconfiguration of the apartment layout, and the applicant should investigate possible adjustment of the adjacent apartment A309 to achieve desirable outlook and daylight within living area of apartment A310.
2. In order to improve residential amenity within all apartments, the entry spaces within individual apartments should be provided with an entry transition area, to improve privacy and to create a space which could be used for placing shoe-racks, hat or coat hangers, etc.
 3. The Panel expects more clarity with the amenity of apartment layouts and revised drawings must include furniture layouts to demonstrate functionality, usability, and circulation areas around the furniture.
 4. The Panel is concerned about the reduction in the quantum of landscaped spaces within the development, particularly within the central communal courtyard. Given the scale of the project there must be a clear strategy showing how different communal open spaces at ground level and on roof-terraces can cater for varying ages and social groupings.
 5. Greater consideration must be given to the landscape design with introduction of medium and large canopy trees and a variety of planters, shrubs, ground covers and gathering spaces be introduced for softening of the hard building edges enclosing the courtyard. The Panel appreciates that the previous arcade arrangement is retained in the revised modification, however, a suitably qualified landscape architect should be engaged to address the Panel's concerns.
 6. The Panel discussed the removal of the screen system previously included around a majority of the internal building perimeter addressing the courtyard. The Panel understands that these screens were partly used for avoiding visual privacy issues within the development. The applicant should confirm how the revised proposal will be compliant with the ADG Part 3F Visual privacy and building separation distances with removal of the screens. As part of the briefing, the Panel has been informed that there were pinch-points which were non-compliant with the ADG Part 3F identified as part of the former Architectural Excellence Panel (AEP) reviews.
 7. The Panel notes that the northern and western elevations have a lot of glazing and the applicant should develop effective strategies for sun control and weather protection. Furthermore, the applicant should avoid awning windows within the development since these could compromise natural ventilation due to the limited openings. The awning windows are recommended to be replaced with double hung windows.
 8. The Panel supports the use of a brick cladding system replacing the previously proposed full brick walls, however the applicant should nominate the brick insert type including its finish and colour as part of the formal application. The selection of brick and mortar colour for the main wall areas should take into consideration the high visibility of the site. Excessively light, smooth faced bricks and mortar will emphasise the building bulk and visibility. A slightly darker and/or more variegated brick and mortar selection could be considered. Brick samples and/or examples of existing buildings should be presented at the next presentation.
 9. The Panel strongly encourages incorporation of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles including but not limited to:
 - a. Ceiling fans to all habitable areas;
 - b. Full building electrification and inclusion of a rooftop photovoltaic system for environmental benefits and to power all common areas;
 - c. Provision of a rainwater tank for collection, storage and reuse within the site; and



- d. Nomination of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points within the basement.
10. Developed architectural drawings should fully describe the proposed design intent and include details of each primary façade type in form of 1:20 sections and elevations (or use appropriately detailed 3D diagrams) indicating materials, construction systems, balustrade types and fixings, balcony edges, window operation, integrated planter beds, junctions, rainwater drainage, including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal.
11. As part of the revised documentation, the applicant should demonstrate how waste collection will work within the basement level of the building. Additionally, the applicant is encouraged to resolve all building service elements (for example – water meter, fire hydrant booster valve, pump room, fire indicator panel, meters, panels and main switch board) to be thoughtfully located ensuring that a desirable amenity is achievable within the ground floor plane.

Conclusion:

The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel thanks the applicant for seeking early feedback at the Pre-DA stage. The Panel would like a second opportunity to review the proposal again during the formal development application/ modification application stage.