



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	77 Glassop Street Balmain
Proposal:	Section 4.56 Modification of Development Consent DA/2022/0684 which approved demolition of existing structures and construction of residential flat building including basement parking and landscaping works, seeking consent for various internal and external modifications at all levels, including roof changes.
Application No.:	MOD/2024/0085
Meeting Date:	14 May 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	18 October 2022 – DA stage; 25 January 2022 – Pre DA stage
Panel Members:	Russell Olsson – chair Tony Caro Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Niall Macken Eric Wong Ian Betts
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Liljana Ermilova (CD Architects) – Architect for the project

Discussion & Recommendations:

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 understands that the proposal was approved as part of the NSW Land & Environment Court – Class 1 Appeal process and details of the former proposal approved as part of the Court process were not reviewed by the Panel.
3. The Panel thanks the applicant for providing a set of drawings with side-by-side comparison between the court-approved and the S4.56 modification schemes. Further, the applicant described at the meeting that their intention of lodging the modification application is to resolve compliance matters related to the Design & Building Practitioners Act 2000, other NCC matters, and to consider further refinements in the design and documentation considered in coordination with other specialist consultants as part of the construction documentation stage.

4. The Panel notes that the overall outcome for the project in terms of the building envelope, gross floor area calculations, and number of apartments is consistent with the previous court-approved scheme. While there are additional carparking spaces within the basement, and amendments in the architectural expression. The main matters for the Panel are the private rooftop terrace area and consistency of architectural language.
5. In the Panel's view, the proposed changes to architectural details in comparison to the court approved design diminish the design quality of the project, which is particularly important as the proposal is located within a Heritage Conservation Area. These changes mainly include – removal of the traditional shutters screening the windows along the side elevations, conversion of window frames from timber to aluminium, and simplification of the door and fenestration design, and front fence details. The Panel prefers the proposal retains these elements as part of the previous court approval.
6. Furthermore, awning windows should be replaced by double hung windows, to allow effective natural ventilation within habitable areas while achieving a consistent architectural language. If visual privacy needs to be resolved then the Panel supports frosted glass provided within the windows if any screening along the side boundaries is proposed to be removed.
7. The Panel extensively discussed the private rooftop terrace which has increased from 19m² to 60m² in the modified scheme. In the Panel's view, this creates potential acoustic privacy issues for the neighbours. The Panel considers that if the area is increased significantly then it should create overall community benefits for all residents within the building, rather than creating benefit for one particular resident. The Panel would offer support for an increased rooftop terrace area if it is offered as a communal open space, however issues of access and concealment of the lift overrun would require design resolution. Additionally, a potential rooftop communal space should be provided with improved amenity such as landscaped planters along the perimeter to avoid potential privacy and cross-viewing issues with the neighbours. In the case that a communal rooftop space is unachievable, the terrace area should be reduced to 19 m².
8. The Panel strongly encourages the applicant to incorporate further sustainability provisions within the project, including but not limited to – rooftop photovoltaic cells, provision of ceiling fans to all habitable areas, rainwater tank for collection and reuse within the site.

Conclusion:

The Panel appreciates that the applicant has considered a modification application to resolve building compliance matters and to refine the overall design currently in construction documentation stage. However, the Panel does not support these amendments since they appear to be diminishing the design quality of the proposal. The Panel expects the proposal should be amended as per the recommendations offered in this report.