



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	168 Victoria Road Rozelle
Proposal:	Integrated development under the Road Acts 1993. Works include demolition of existing structures and construction of a four-storey mixed use building, including ground floor commercial space, residential accommodation above, and basement car parking
Application No.:	DA/2024/0306
Meeting Date:	19 June 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Matthew Pullinger (chair) Jocelyn Jackson Peter Ireland
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Eric Wong Iain Betts Sinclair Croft
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	No interests were declared
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Lex Yuan, Henry Hill and Carlon Giron (SRH Architecture) – Architects for the project Pip Hyde (GLN Planning) – Urban planner for the project Ian Wright – Applicant's representative

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 acknowledges that the proposal is subject to Chapter 4 – State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) Housing 2021 - Design of residential apartment development - and the NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) applies to the proposal.

Discussion & Recommendations:

Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

1. The Panel notes that the approved DA-proposal for the former Balmain Leagues Club site is located immediately adjacent to the south east of the subject site. The Panel supports the applicant's proposal to connect the basement for vehicular access and facilitating waste collection within the subject site via the adjoining property through an easement for right of way.
2. The Panel understands further details regarding vehicular access and manoeuvring will be reviewed by Council's engineering section and an easement would be formalised through relevant statutory provisions to allow the proposed configuration and arrangement. The Panel was informed during the Council's briefing that a DA Condition of Consent may need to be imposed on the proposal reflecting the necessary construction sequence, given the subject site relies on the neighbouring site for access.
3. The Panel noted that the proposed through-site link connecting Waterloo Street with Victoria Road, serving future residents only, does not provide broader public benefit and is not essential to the proposal. Additionally, the Panel discussed the proposed built form presentation to Waterloo Street and suggests the proposal might be amended to provide two x three-storey terrace house types, creating a more appropriate built form character and transition between the former Leagues Club site and traditional residential buildings elsewhere along the streetscape. In this suggested configuration, the two terrace houses would present entries at the ground floor to Waterloo Street, while the primary apartment building would maintain its formal pedestrian address to Victoria Road.
4. The Panel understands the proposal currently reflects requirements of the land use zoning by including non-residential ground floor uses at the subject site. Council's assessment team informed the Panel during the briefing session that the applicant could seek to rely on existing use rights retaining residential uses on the ground floor along Waterloo Street in order to achieve an outcome consistent with the Panel's suggestion and a proposal that better complements the primarily residential character of Waterloo Street.

Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

5. The Panel notes that the Waterloo Street portion of the basement appears constrained and recommends some reconfiguration to allow more direct, individual access from the two suggested terrace houses above through individual stairs or possibly individual residential lifts.
6. The Panel recommends some internal replanning as suggested above and the incorporation of further design strategies (such as use of screening devices or other architectural treatments) to avoid or mitigate against cross viewing with the adjoining residential properties – 21 Waterloo Street, 23 Waterloo Street and 174 Victoria Road.
7. The Panel recommends some reconfiguration within the Victoria Road building to introduce natural light and ventilation to common circulation corridors, ensuring consistency with the guidance offered at Objective 4F-1 with the ADG. Additionally, the width of the common circulation corridors within the eastern building might be increased to allow for greater comfort and intuitive movement for the residents.
8. The Panel notes the proposed light-well along the north-western boundary may become problematic in a scenario where the adjoining property is redeveloped, as solar access provided to the proposal risks being negatively impacted in the future. The Panel notes that the recommended reconfiguration at point 7 above may also be undertaken in a manner that reduces reliance on (or eliminates) light-wells as a primary source of daylight and ventilation.

Principle 3 – Density

9. The Panel offers in-principle support to the proposed density, subject to issues identified and recommendations offered in this report being positively incorporated within an amended proposal.

Principle 4 – Sustainability

10. The Panel expects the proposal to achieve the minimum solar access and natural cross ventilation targets within Parts 4A and 4B of the ADG.
11. Revised documentation should include suns-eye views at hourly interval between 9am to 3pm in mid-winter, confirming that both – living rooms and balconies achieve at least 2 hours of direct sunlight for at least 70% apartments. The Panel notes this appears to be problematic for the balconies of Unit 03, 08 and 13.
12. Use of ceiling fans within all habitable areas of the apartments as a low energy alternative is strongly encouraged by the Panel.
13. Provision of an appropriately sized rainwater tank should be considered for water harvesting and re-use within the development.
14. The applicant should nominate appropriately sized and integrated rooftop photovoltaic system and confirm location in the revised 2D and 3D architectural drawings.

Principle 5 – Landscape

15. Detailed landscape architecture drawings were not provided to the Panel as part of the DA documentation. The Panel recommends the involvement of a suitably qualified landscape architect for successful integration of landscape design with architectural design.
16. The landscape architecture drawings should demonstrate whether planters within the ground floor and on structures will achieve appropriate soil volumes for. The applicant should apply parts 4O and 4P of the ADG and Council's Green Roof Policy and Guidelines to develop details of the landscape design.
17. The Panel notes and supports the proposed location for deep soil towards the centre of the site and encourages the extent of this deep soil to be maximised during any suggested reconfiguration of the proposal. The landscape design solution should be developed to maximise the benefits of deep soil in this location.

Principle 6 – Amenity

18. The applicant should investigate and incorporate suitable design measures for noise attenuation along the Victoria Road frontage seeking to strike an appropriate balance for outlook, solar access and natural ventilation against the noise and pollution impacts also present.
19. Revised architectural drawings should confirm that internal and external apartment storage volumes are consistent with the guidance offered within Part 4G of the ADG.
20. The Panel suggests refinement within apartment type 08 (and similar), to ensure that bathroom doors are located at a more discrete location not directly visible from the living and dining areas of the apartment.

Principle 7 – Safety

21. The Panel recommends built form addressing Waterloo Street should be amended to include two terraces with direct street access as noted above, to improve activation and passive surveillance of Waterloo Street.

Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

22. Details of the pre- and post-adaptable apartments should be confirmed within revised architectural drawings. The Panel recommends the minimisation of structural and plumbing changes necessary between pre- and post-adaptation stages.

Principle 9 – Aesthetics

23. The Panel encourages an opportunity for the integration of an artwork or architectural feature on the blade wall at the pedestrian entrance addressing Victoria Road.
24. Any revised architectural drawings should provide 3D views of the amended built form addressing Waterloo Street for the Panel's further review.
25. The architectural expression considered for the Victoria Road building is generally supported by the Panel. Developed architectural drawings should fully describe the design intent and include details of each primary façade type for both buildings in the form of 1:20 sections and elevations (or using appropriate detailed 3D design material) indicating proposed materials, construction systems, balustrade types and fixings, balcony edges, window operation, integrated landscape planter beds, junctions, rainwater and balcony drainage, including any downpipes and similar details within the proposal.
26. Revised architectural drawings should be provided confirming locations of any AC condenser units and the Panel seeks that these not be located within balconies (unless thoughtfully screened) or anywhere visible from the public domain.

Conclusion:

Recognising its independent, expert and advisory role, the Panel offers in principle support to the proposal, subject to suggestions and recommendations set out in this report being meaningfully addressed. The Panel requests that the proposal return for further review once any amendments have been incorporated as part of this development assessment process.