



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	2B West Street Lewisham
Proposal:	Follow up PDA - Modification of Determination No. DA201800505 dated 2 September 2020 to change the number and mix of Independent Living Units and Residential Aged Care beds across development and built form changes. (2nd time review)
Application No.:	PDA-2024-0072
Meeting Date:	16 July 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	5 September 2023 (PDA/2023/0151)
Panel Members:	Tony Caro (chair) Russell Olsson Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Ferdinand Dickel Andrew Newman Martin Amy
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Tom White (WMK) – Architect for the project Mahmoud Chatila – Applicant/Applicant's Representative Jack Rixon (Meccone) – 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 considering a Pre DA meeting to allow early discussion and feedback.
2. The Panel offers a correction that the proposal was approved by the Regional Planning Panel (and not by the NSW Land & Environment Court – as described in the previous AEDRP Report)
3. 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:

1. The Panel notes that a previous Pre DA proposal was reviewed at the AEDRP meeting on 05 September 2023. That scheme was fixed in terms of its yield, overall height and building envelopes, to maintain consistency with a previous DA approved by the Regional Planning Panel. The September 2023 review was therefore limited in the most part to a review of internal planning compliance and amenity.
2. The revised scheme now presented to this AEDRP meeting (16 July 2024) varies in a number of significant ways from the previous scheme, and there is a question as to whether the revised proposal can be considered as the same development, or whether a new process DA is required. This is a separate statutory planning matter, which needs to be clarified with Council.
3. The significant departures identified by the Panel are:
 - addition of approximately 6,000m² of GFA
 - reduction in number of dwelling units from 264 to 229
 - change to mix and reduction of RAC unit provisions
 - increase in ILU provisions, including an increase in large units (3 or more bedrooms)
 - relocation of RAC units from previous podium to Stage 2 - Novitiate Building (Heritage Item)
 - significant height increases to the three ILU tower buildings (Stages 3+4)
 - changes to built form expression
 - changes to site layout and planning
 - circulation and access (pedestrian and vehicular)

Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

1. The Panel has concern that the design team has not demonstrated how the revised scheme has been considered in its relationships with the urban design context and character of the immediate and wider precinct of Lewisham. An urban design and context analysis has not been provided as part of this or any previous submission to the Panel. The design team must clearly demonstrate how this large development can integrate well with its diverse, lower scale context and local community infrastructure.
2. The previous scheme proposed a large podium, which provided a base for two of the towers and a clear diagram that protected communal open space within the site from the rail corridor.
3. Deletion of the podium may have resolved issues related to dwelling amenity in proximity to interfaces with the railway, however it has necessitated a different site planning strategy that the Panel has concerns with.
4. These include increase in the visual scale and impacts of all three towers, which now come to ground and have additional storeys added at the top.
5. In addition the Panel expressed concern about the idea and quality of the central courtyard. Whilst the concept diagram is clear: a pedestrianised courtyard edged with a colonnade connecting the three towers, closer investigation reveals it to be largely occupied by vehicle-centric trafficable surfaces, and more exposed to noise and wind impacts through deletion of the podium.
6. There are no sightlines clearly established within the site planning diagram. As a result the views to the subject site and from the subject site to the surrounding context are largely obstructed by the tower forms.

Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

1. As noted there are significant changes to the overall site planning diagram, building massing, open space planning, pedestrian/ vehicular access and circulation, building configuration and internal unit planning.
2. Building separation distances between the three towers appear to be less than the minimum requirements required by Parts 2F and 3F of the ADG.
3. The towers are now taller and come to ground, as noted above. This is a new paradigm for built form in the immediate area, and the towers are challenging in their morphology and height to the existing scale of buildings and spaces in the established surrounding precinct. The design team must therefore demonstrate how their scheme addresses this question. It would be beneficial for typological examples to be provided in support of an alternative design approach to address issues raised.
4. The relationship of built forms to the southern site boundary and railway corridor is irregular in plan and elevation. There are no visual reference points for the proposed forms in relation to the existing boundary, the rail corridor alignment or surrounding built forms. The proposed towers will be highly visible to commuters standing on the platforms of Lewisham train station, to drivers and pedestrians on Railway Terrace and residents living on the southern side of the rail corridor. It is recommended that views from the train platforms and Railway Terrace to the proposed development be provided to assess the composition and quality of the proposed built forms.

Principle 4 – Sustainability

1. Not discussed at the meeting, however in addition to mandated requirements the following should be addressed:
2. Use of ceiling fans within all habitable areas of the apartments as a low energy alternative is strongly encouraged by the Panel.
3. Provision of appropriately sized rainwater tanks must be provided for water harvesting and re-use within the development.
4. 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

1. 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 to ensure successful integration of landscape design with architectural design.
2. A whole of site approach to landscape design and WSUD must be demonstrated in any future submission to the Panel.
3. The landscape architecture drawings should demonstrate whether planters within the ground floor and on structures will achieve appropriate soil volumes. 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.
4. Provision of diagrams to clarify the anticipated user patterns for the open spaces and landscape elements would help to explain how these will interface with the built form and circulation.

Principle 6 – Amenity

1. The Panel expects the proposal to achieve the minimum solar access and natural cross ventilation targets within Parts 4A and 4B of the ADG.
2. There appears to be a significant number of south facing Independent Living Units (ILU) and consistency with Objective 4A-1, 3 of the NSW ADG may not be achievable if there are more than 15% of apartments without direct sunlight at mid winter.
3. 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.

4. Living units proposed in close proximity to the rail corridor should incorporate appropriate treatments for compliant ventilation and noise attenuation, to ensure consistency is achieved with Part 4J Noise and pollution of the NSW ADG.
5. Internal planning would need to be reviewed by the Panel following when the broader issues raised in this report have been resolved. This must include compliances with relevant ADG requirements.

Principle 7 – Safety

Not discussed at meeting.

Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

1. The Panel noted that the proposal no longer offers 1 bedroom units within the development, which would appear to be well-suited to the demographics of single and elderly customers. While the applicant suggested this was in response to current market expectations, there should be more substantive material provided to support this change.

Principle 9 – Aesthetics

1. As for the previous submission there is little detail provided, which is consistent with pre-DA submissions where broader design principles are presented and a preferred approach identified.
2. The new plans indicate more articulated forms for each tower building as an expression and consequence of the indicative floor layouts. Ultimately the form of these buildings needs to resolve both functional and urban design requirements, as noted above.
3. Although the podium adjacent to railway has been removed, it provided a base datum that related well to that of the heritage items and the scale of surrounding fabric. It also created a sense of human and urban scale within the site. The Panel is of the view that this idea of more articulated masonry bases to the tower buildings should be re-visited.
4. Built form principles should be reinforced with material and colour selections. The existing buildings to be retained offer a starting point for considerations of visual unity, façade articulation and contrast in materials and colours across the site.
5. Developed architectural drawings with a future full DA 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.
6. Revised architectural drawings should be provided confirming locations of any AC condenser units and the Panel seeks that these are not located within balconies (unless thoughtfully screened) or anywhere visible from the public domain.

Conclusion:

Noting its role is independent and advisory, the Panel does not support the proposal in its current form and configuration, and recommends that a redesign be undertaken to address the matters raised in this report. The applicant could elect to develop a revised, high-level site planning and built form massing option studies for discussion at an additional meeting with the AEDRP, before committing to detailed architectural design development.