



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	350 Illawarra Road Marrickville
Proposal:	Partial demolition of existing structures and construction of a 7-storey shop-top housing development with 17 units, 1 commercial tenancy, car parking and a basement level. (4th time review)
Application No.:	PDA-2024-0080
Meeting Date:	16 July 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Tony Caro (chair) Russell Olsson Jon Johannsen
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Felicity Hannan Tom Irons Martin Amy
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Glenn McCormack (Benson McCormack) – Architect 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.
2. The Panel thanks the applicant for attending this Pre DA meeting to allow early discussion and feedback.
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
4. NSW Apartment Design Guide (ADG) applies to the proposal.

Discussion & Recommendations:

Principle 1 – Context and Neighbourhood Character

1. The Panel is aware that a previous development application (DA/2023/0022) for a 6 storey shop top housing proposal was reviewed and supported by the AEDRP, and subsequently approved by Council. The previous application was subject to only one lot 350 Illawarra Road. This new predevelopment application discussion is for a larger consolidated site that includes two lots – 350 and 352 Illawarra Road.
2. The recent uplift in allowable bulk and scale of built form within this precinct is challenging, and the transitional impacts will be evident for some time. New development on small/micro sites of up to eight storeys presents visually prominent blank side walls and exaggerated differences in scale between old and new building fabric that is difficult for architects to reconcile easily.
3. The Panel is also concerned that a potential end-state of abutted eight storey walls of narrow residential buildings rising to a uniform parapet height above existing two storey heritage fabric is questionable in the long term for these kinds of finer grained heritage precincts.

Principle 2 – Built Form and Scale

1. As is evident in this proposal, the Panel encourages Council's urban design policy to restore and refurbish existing two storey masonry façades addressing Illawarra Road, with a large street setback to new and taller built form. The main discussion at the meeting therefore focussed on the building configuration proposed for the upper/setback residential levels. The Panel noted that there are two small lightwells located adjacent to the northern and southern side boundaries. These will be problematic in the future when adjacent site/s are redeveloped to the common boundary. The amenity of bedrooms relying on these lightwells for ventilation and natural light would be largely compromised as this occurs.
2. The applicant should investigate reconfiguration of the floor layouts by relocating the lift and fire stairs to the southern boundary, in order to create a larger more amenable lightwell along the northern boundary, where an existing residential flat building to the north (346-248 Illawarra Road) is unlikely to be redeveloped in the foreseeable future.
3. Consequently, the typical residential floor plan will have to be reconfigured by replacing the two-bedroom south-west apartments with either single aspect one bedroom or studio apartments. The design team could investigate the possibility of two storey maisonette-type dwellings to suit the form and planning configuration, which might provide better amenity to those units. Any revised floor layout should avoid unit entry doors directly adjacent the lift doors (Units 203-403).
4. The rear stepped form responds to ADG building separation guidelines and has an ungainly profile. The Panel suggested that the applicant consider a single step within the built form alignment, to create a simpler, more refined form.
5. The Panel could support a DCP variation for the rear setback if the applicant addresses consistency with the NSW ADG, and addresses other recommendations made in this report.
6. The side boundary walls will be highly visible from the surrounding public domain until such time as the adjoining properties are redeveloped, and the elevations must further consider a creative design solution for these large blank surfaces. This should include materiality, composition, pattern and texture, to create an acceptable architectural expression. Given the uncertainty of adjacent development, judicious introduction of a pattern of fixed fire-rated openings would add natural light to internal spaces. This particularly applies to the northern edge (refer Item 2 above).

Principle 3 – Density

1. The Panel notes that there is a relatively minor exceedance for both floor space ratio and height controls. A maximum floor space ratio of 3:1 applies to the site, including the 20% bonus, and the proposal is for 3.1:1. A maximum height limit of 24m applies to the site and the proposal extends up to 25m.

2. The Panel accepts these minor exceedances subject to issues identified and recommendations offered in this report being positively incorporated within an amended proposal submitted as part of the development application.

Principle 4 – Sustainability

1. Use of ceiling fans within all habitable areas of the apartments as a low energy alternative is strongly encouraged by the Panel.
2. Provision of an appropriately sized rainwater tank should be considered for water harvesting and re-use within the development.
3. 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 for successful integration of landscape design with architectural design.
2. 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.

Principle 6 – Amenity

1. The proposal should achieve the minimum solar access and natural cross ventilation targets within Parts 4A and 4B of the ADG.
2. 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.

Principle 7 – Safety

No discussion

Principle 8 – Housing Diversity and Social Interaction

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

Principle 9 – Aesthetics

1. The architectural expression 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.
2. The larger frontage of the amalgamated site has resulted in a somewhat utilitarian façade composition facing south to Illawarra Rd, which was not the case with the previous single lot site. The architects are encouraged to open up and fenestrate this façade in a manner more appropriate to its primary street frontage.
3. 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:

Recognising its independent, expert and advisory role, the Panel offers in principle support for 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.