



# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	21-25 Gordon Street Petersham
Proposal:	Section 4.55(2) Modification to DA/2023/0238 dated 13/02/2024, modification involves an increase in the size of level 5, the addition of a new level 6 and a new third basement level and an increase in the number of dwellings to 21 including 4 affordable housing dwellings and other internal and external changes
Application No.:	MOD/2024/0244
Meeting Date:	17 September 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Matthew Pullinger (chair) Russell Olsson Jocelyn Jackson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Ferdinand Dickel Sinclair Croft
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Darren Laybutt – 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.
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.
3. The Panel notes the proposal was recently reviewed as part of the development application stage at the 16 May 2023 AEDRP meeting and was subsequently approved by the Local Planning Panel. However, the Panel notes a number of previously unaddressed design recommendations which have been restated in Part 2 of this AEDRP Report.

## Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel supports the applicant’s proposition for creating additional affordable housing by seeking to access building height and density bonuses available under recently introduced state government incentive provisions. However the Panel encourages the applicant to amend the DA in order to re-distribute the proposed additional building height and massing in order to achieve a closer contextual fit. The Panel discussed a series of possible strategies for how the additional massing and height might be distributed. For example, one such strategy might be to achieve a greater concentration of building mass adjacent to the common boundary with 27 Gordon Street and ensuring there is a clear height transition stepping down towards the northern neighbour, which is currently a low scale single dwelling. In the Panel’s view, it is more appropriate to have greater massing concentrated at the southern portion of the site where the proposal would abut an existing blank wall of the neighbouring apartment building.
2. The Panel expects the applicant’s architect should apply their design judgment to thoughtfully resolving the overall massing and composition as part of this modification application. As a guide however, some potential solutions are noted below:
  - a. The approved 3 storey brick component situated at the south western corner of the site could be increased to 4 storeys, creating additional building volume in this location. Apartment 4.03 could be reconfigured to suit.
  - b. An equivalent volume of building mass and gross floor area is expected to be reduced from the northern end of the building at Level 5. Apartment 5.01 could be reconfigured to suit.
  - c. Level 6, which is proposed to be ‘centralised’ within the floor plate, could be relocated to the common boundary at 27 Gordon Street.
  - d. The below diagram indicates a suggested massing redistribution across the northern end in ‘black’ outline, the suggested massing addition at the south western corner in ‘blue’ outline and the potential redistribution of building mass at Level 6 in ‘red’.



3. The Panel notes that the northern boundary wall will be highly visible from the surrounding public domain and until the adjoining northern property is redeveloped. For this reason, this elevation must further provide a creative design solution for the otherwise large blank surface. This is also an exercise in creative judgment and the applicant's architect is encouraged to consider materiality, composition, pattern, texture, and possibility of creating depth and relief, to mitigate against an otherwise blank façade. Further resolution and details are sought from the applicant as part of the revised architectural documentation.
4. The Panel notes that the applicant proposes to nominate each of the apartments at Level 1 as the affordable housing dwellings as part of this modification application. The Panel would prefer the affordable housing dwellings not to be concentrated in one location, and for the affordable dwellings to achieve a more equitable level of access to amenity representative of the site. This distribution should be considered in further discussions with Council's development assessment officers.

## Part 2 – Previous Recommendations:

5. The Panel restates a number of recommendations that appear not to have been addressed in the original DA consent. In order for the project to achieve a good level of design quality, the ground floor area should be reconfigured to reduce potential conflicts between the entrance lobby and open bicycle storage, as the presence of bicycles within the entry foyer may diminish its quality. The bicycle spaces should be relocated or screened within a dedicated bicycle storage room.
6. The applicant should confirm consistency of all apartments with Part 4G Storage within the ADG in terms of both – internal and external storage volumes, particularly for Apartments 1.04, 2.04, 3.04.
7. The ground floor bin and bulky waste room should be relocated to the basement as in its current location it appears to be compromising amenity of the communal open space.
8. The Panel restates the following matters related to Principle 4 Sustainability, which should be addressed as part of the modification application, and these become more important as the proposed population density increases on the site:
  - a. Location of A/C condenser units should be confirmed on 2D and 3D architectural drawings. These should not be located within balconies (unless appropriately screened), over the rooftop, or anywhere visually apparent from the public domain.
  - b. Use of ceiling fans within all bedrooms and living areas should be confirmed on the relevant floor plans. The Panel considers these are important as a low energy alternative to mechanical A/C systems.
  - c. Provision of a rainwater tank should be confirmed to allow for collection, storage and reuse of water within the development.
  - d. Appropriate rooftop photovoltaic system with details should be confirmed on all 2D and 3D architectural drawings.
  - e. Revised documentation should confirm full building electrification and safeguard the inclusion of EV charging points in the basement carpark.
8. The ground and first floor apartments addressing Gordon Street will be highly visible from the public domain and the Panel recommends a greater degree of privacy be incorporated. The Panel suggests considerations such as the use of louvred screens, solid panels to balustrades, and/or opaque glazing to appropriate sections of doors and windows.
9. Developed architectural drawings should fully describe the proposed design intent and include details of each primary façade type in the form of 1:20 sections and elevations (or using appropriate detailed 3D design material) indicating 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.



## **Conclusion:**

Recognising its independent, expert and advisory role, the Panel offers qualified in-principle support to the modification application, subject to Council being satisfied the suggestions and recommendations set out in this report are meaningfully incorporated and/or addressed by the applicant.