



# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	500-502 Marrickville Road Dulwich Hill
Proposal:	Partial demolition of existing structures and construction of a four storey mixed use building (shop top housing), including ground floor commercial space and six residential units above
Application No.:	DA/2024/0631
Meeting Date:	17 September 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Matthew Pullinger (chair) Russell Olsson Jocelyn Jackson
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Kaitlyn Attard Sinclair Croft Kaitlin Zieme
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Eduardo Villa (Villa + Villa) – Architects 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 considers the **Design Verification Statement** provided by the architect to currently be inadequate and expects that it will require augmentation to explain how the 9 design quality principles are addressed by the design of the proposal. Additionally, a signed verification statement from the architect confirming they have designed (or directed the design) of the proposal should be provided in support of the DA submission.

## Discussion & Recommendations:

### Principle 1 – Context and neighbourhood character

1. The Panel discussed the local streetscape character, the Heritage Conservation Area and the existing building fabric proposed to be retained. In the Panel's view, the degree of intervention into the existing front facade appears to be out of character given the use of the 'I' beam and alterations to the parapet silhouette. The Panel recommends that more of the existing facade be retained, particularly its parapet capping. If new openings are to be created in the existing facade, these openings should adopt proportions familiar to the building and elsewhere in the local area and should preserve the solid-to-void ratio evident in the HCA.
2. Further, while the Panel appreciates the intention to achieve improved outlook and daylight within the first and second floor balconies and living areas, alternative design strategies that strike a better balance between internal amenity and streetscape presentation may include:
  - a. The retention of approximately 4 courses of the brickwork parapet profile supported on a new lintel, with discrete openings below.
  - b. Alternatively, the creation of a number of narrower vertical openings (say 150-300mm wide) within the existing parapet wall to provide outlook from the second floor apartments.
  - c. The existing first floor windows are proposed to be removed to create balcony openings - these would be more successful if they retained a sense of being framed and fenestrated openings rather than 'dead' openings. A suitable treatment does not necessarily require glazing, but may incorporate some framing and subdivision the masonry openings so the face doesn't look 'hollowed out'. A deep reveal around the openings may also assist.
3. In relation to the front elevation, the Panel also suggests that the proposed planter-box overhanging apartment 4 could be realigned, to improve the outlook available from the second floor units.

### Principle 2 – Built form and scale

1. The Panel discussed cross viewing issues between apartments (particularly bedrooms) addressing the central atrium courtyard. The separation distance is below the guidance offered by the ADG Part 3F Visual privacy. The Panel is not convinced by the proposed fluted glass treatment to the bedroom windows and recommends the incorporation of more effective measures to eliminate visual privacy issues while still providing some outlook to each habitable room. A suggested strategy is to add a blade wall or perforated screen across the courtyard perpendicular to the fire stairs.
2. The Panel recommends the applicant should engage a suitably qualified specialist as part of this development application stage to review compliance (or propose alternative solutions) with the National Construction Code, particularly for fire safety in regards to the open fire stairs, window proximity to the side boundaries and the proposed wall-types.

3. Revised architectural drawings should indicate details of the neighbouring buildings in the corresponding cross-sections.

#### **Principle 4 – Sustainability**

1. The Panel expects the proposal will achieve consistency with the targets within the ADG for solar access (part 4A-1, design criteria 1, 2 and 3) and natural cross ventilation (Part 4B-3, design criteria 1). Direct solar access achieved through skylight within Apartment 5 was discussed at the meeting and the Panel notes that the skylight does not provide solar access to the balconies, as guided by the ADG. This results in a shortfall in solar access across the scheme, which should be addressed.
2. Additionally, Council should satisfy itself that the following recommendations are incorporated within the revised DA documentation:
  - a. Use of ceiling fans within all bedrooms and living areas as a low energy alternative to mechanical A/C systems.
  - b. Provision of a rainwater tank to allow collection, storage and reuse within the subject site.
  - c. Inclusion of an appropriate photovoltaic system, and confirmation on 2D and 3D drawings.
  - d. Full building electrification including provision for EV charging points within the basement carpark.

#### **Principle 6 – Amenity**

1. The internal configuration of Apartments 3 and 5 was discussed at the meeting and the Panel recommends some reconfiguration of the kitchen and island bench layout to increase internal efficiencies within the combined living, dining and kitchen area.
2. As noted above, cross viewing between apartments should be eliminated. Reliance on fluted glass is discouraged. Each habitable space should achieve a degree of outlook without compromising privacy.

#### **Principle 7 – Safety**

1. The residential entry sequence would benefit from greater generosity and clearer lines of sight towards the lift. This may have a small impact on the size of the adjacent retail tenancy.

#### **Principle 8 – Housing diversity and social interaction**

1. The Panel recommends that the applicant discuss further with the Council's assessment section whether an additional accessible apartment is required as part of statutory requirements, and if so, then revised architectural drawings should confirm the relevant details.

#### **Principle 9 – Aesthetics**

1. The Panel discourages the use of dark roofing and cladding with low albedo rating (for example – Monument colour) and this should be avoided considering urban heat island effects. Alternative colours should be investigated which are more familiar to the local area character and with a higher albedo rating.
2. Revised architectural drawings should confirm location of AC condensers and the Panel prefers these are not located within balconies (unless thoughtfully screened) or anywhere visible from the public domain.
3. Developed architectural drawings should fully describe the 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 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. Typical wall details to be developed to meet NCC2022 requirements.



## **Conclusion:**

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