



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	176 New Canterbury Road Petersham
Proposal:	Partial demolition of existing structures and construction of a 4-storey shop-top housing development
Application No.:	PDA/2024/0154
Meeting Date:	15 October 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Diane Jones Tony Caro Peter Ireland
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Ferdinand Dickel Andrew Newman Martin Amy Sinclair Croft
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	The applicant's team was invited by Council to meet with the Panel and discuss their proposal. However, they did not attend the meeting.

Background:

1. The Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel reviewed the architectural drawings and discussed the proposal 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:

1. **Shop top housing:** The Panel considers the integration of the existing shopfront as a positive aspect of the proposed design. While Council staff advised that there may be an interpretation that a large portion of the proposal may not fit the definition of shop top housing, the Panel considers this is a statutory planning matter for the Council's development assessment planners.

2. **Contextual fit:** The Panel notes that the proposal appropriately responds to the existing context in terms of its massing, height and scale, and would set a good precedent for increased density in the area. However, there are challenging concerns with regard to residential amenity as expressed in further parts of this report.
3. **Pedestrian entry sequence to apartments:** The Panel finds the pedestrian entry experience for all four units to be very unsatisfactory. Access is via a narrow lane with a kerb but no pedestrian footpath leading to an unsecured landing area (which is also utilised for hydrant infrastructure) for individual staircases that have constrained widths and configurations. The overall pedestrian entry experience is sub-optimal in terms of amenity for the residents and visitors. Potential CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) issues at the individual entry points to the apartments were also identified by the Panel due to the exposed/unsecured entries which appear open to public access. The relatively narrow width of the stairs and their configurations would make moving furniture difficult. Further, bedroom windows directly abut these entry stairs areas creating issues of privacy and noise.
4. **Solar access and natural cross ventilation:** The Panel notes that there are significant shortfalls for the proposal in terms of achieving consistency with the minimum targets of the NSW Apartment Design Guide for Part 4A Solar access and 4B Natural cross ventilation. The living areas do not appear to meet the required direct solar access ie minimum 70% apartments to achieve a minimum 2 hours direct solar access to both living areas and balconies in mid-winter. Further, none of the apartments have dual aspect to benefit from genuine natural cross ventilation.
5. **Internal amenity:** The spatial quality of the habitable areas appears constrained. The 'snorkelled' configuration proposed for the second bedroom in Unit 4 is considered problematic in terms of daylight, outlook and natural ventilation. The Panel also notes that access to daylight, outlook and natural ventilation would be further challenged due to the recessed location of all bedrooms. Additionally, it appears that the apartments do not have internal storage allocation consistent with Part 4G of the ADG.
6. **Floor-to-ceiling heights:** The Panel notes that many habitable spaces within the proposal do not achieve the minimum 2.7m floor-to-ceiling heights as required by the guidance within Part 5C of the ADG. This is considered problematic in terms of residential amenity, especially given the single aspect design of the apartments. Drawings indicate ceiling heights of 2.4m on bedroom floors, which would need to be closer to the 2.7m standard. The commercial space has a ceiling of just over 3m, which is also non-compliant.
7. **Deep soil and landscape areas:** The proposal does not offer any environmental benefits through deep soil or landscaped areas
8. **Noise attenuation:** The Panel discussed the nature of traffic along the New Canterbury Road frontage and recommended that the applicant work with a suitably qualified acoustic consultant to incorporate a design that effectively ameliorates traffic noise.
9. **Commercial Space:** The commercial space if operated as a food and beverage facility would need a mechanical exhaust system and other services not indicated on the drawings.
10. **Sustainability provisions:** The Panel expects the proposal should offer the minimum BASIX requirements, including but not limited to – ceiling fans to habitable areas, photovoltaic systems, EV charging facility, and the like. The proposal does not provide any information on this aspect of the design.
11. **Air conditioning:** Revised architectural drawings should confirm location of condenser units, which should not be located within the balconies (unless thoughtfully screened for visual and acoustic amelioration) or anywhere else visible from the public domain.
12. **Building services:** The Panel identified potential challenges with the carparking configuration which needs to be reviewed by Council's Engineer. Similarly, the operation of the waste bins seems to conflict with the two carparking spots along the western basement wall. The bins are problematic below the staircases, it would be better to consolidate the garbage room in one location



Conclusion:

1. In the Panel's view and given the above-mentioned urban design and amenity concerns, the current design represents an overdevelopment of the site.
2. The Panel recommends the applicant should reconfigure the proposal to provide good residential amenity, safety and workable pedestrian entry/entries for the residential component of the project.
3. This may be better achieved with three apartments (rather than four apartments) and with more flexibly designed spaces.
4. The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form, and recommends that a revised proposal and pre development application should be considered by the applicant for further discussion with the Panel.