

# Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

## Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	167 Norton Street Leichhardt
Proposal:	Follow up PDA - Shop-top housing development including demolition and erection of a 4-storey building containing 1 x Shop and 7 x residential units (comprising 2 x 1-bed dwellings and 5 x studio dwellings).
Application No.:	PDA 2024 0187
Meeting Date:	19 November 2024
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Diane Jones (chair) Jon Johannsen Jean Rice
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Eamon Egan Sinclair Croft
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Dejan Smovic – architect for the project

### Discussion & Recommendations:

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.
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 that the existing building on the site is a contributory building (located within the Wetherill Estate Heritage Conservation Area – Inner West LEP 2022 – Schedule 5 – C59), and previous proposals were not supported by the Council. The Panel notes that a detailed heritage management strategy was not presented by the applicant as part of this discussion.
4. Although Council's assessment officer advised that the proposal does not meet the planning definition of 'shop top housing' because of its proposed ground floor configuration, the Panel considers this to be a statutory planning matter which needs to be addressed to Council's satisfaction.

5. The Panel notes that the applicant did not provide an urban design analysis to demonstrate how the proposal is an appropriate contextual fit for either existing or possible future urban form. The Panel expressed reservations about the proposal in terms of the urban design issues outlined below:
  - a. high visibility of the proposed volume and side walls from the surrounding public domain and neighbouring properties,
  - b. significant non-compliances with the Housing SEPP 2021 and the NSW Apartment Design Guide,
  - c. unsatisfactory outcomes related to – internal amenity, landscape design, and the overall design quality,
  - d. potential fire protection and NCC-compliance issues,
  - e. lack of consideration of the history of the site and its immediate streetscape.
6. The applicant should consider a scaled-down proposal for the site and rework a built form strategy with the reconstruction of the front façade to mirror or be more complementary with that of 163/165 Norton Street. Behind the resultant 2 storey built form on Norton Street could be a recessed upper floor over a shop at ground floor and first floor unit.
7. Any revised scheme for the site should have incorporation of Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles and as a minimum the applicant should offer the elements listed below:
  - a. Ceiling fans to all habitable areas;
  - b. Full building electrification and inclusion of a rooftop photovoltaic system for environmental benefits and to power all common areas;
  - c. Provision of a rainwater tank for collection, storage and reuse within the site.

## **Conclusion:**

The Panel appreciated the Pre-DA submission but does not support the proposal as currently conceived for this site and context, nor the reference by the applicant to another project for a similar site in another country.