



Architectural Excellence & Design Review Panel

Meeting Minutes & Recommendations

Site Address:	400 Liverpool Road Croydon
Proposal:	Demolition of the existing improvements, construction of a five (5) storey shop top housing development containing 11 residential units (including affordable housing units), 1 commercial retail tenancy and basement parking.
Application No.:	PDA-2025-0007
Meeting Date:	25 February 2025
Previous Meeting Date:	-
Panel Members:	Diane Jones (chair) Russell Olsson Jean Rice
Apologies:	-
Council staff:	Vishal Lakhia Camille Guyot
Guests:	-
Declarations of Interest:	None
Applicant or applicant's representatives to address the panel:	Paul Bulgevic and David Ahn (PBD Architect) – architects for the project Daniel Barber – urban planner for the project

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. Additionally, the Panel reviewed the proposal in terms of design excellence as required by the Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022 – Clause 6.9.

Discussion & Recommendations:

1. The Panel thanks the applicant for considering a Pre DA meeting to allow early discussion. Although a good quality and comprehensive architectural set of drawings and 3D views were presented by the applicant, the Panel notes that the proposal has fundamental urban design, amenity and site planning issues.
2. Given the extent of high priority issues, the Panel addresses those only in this report and does not address in detail the architectural expression, landscape design, internal apartment layouts, sustainability and other relatively lower priority elements of the proposal.
3. Moreover, the Panel was informed by Council at the briefing session that the proposal does not meet the minimum requirements of the SEPP (Housing) 2021 – Part 2, Division 1 In-fill Affordable Housing, which should be addressed as a priority to Council's satisfaction.
4. The Panel strongly recommends that the applicant consider amalgamation with the adjoining properties to achieve realistically sized building footprints (residential, basement and ground floor levels) for the proposal and to avoid potential isolation of the adjoining properties. The Panel is concerned that the development will create a poor urban design precedent for redevelopment of the surrounding area and other similar areas within Inner West. Furthermore, the adjoining property to the east of the subject site may not be developable with a similar floor space ratio and height achieved by the subject site if these properties are developed in isolation.
5. The Panel expressed concern that the proposal does not achieve compliance with key criteria within the NSW ADG such as minimum landscaped and deep soil areas. More importantly the zone transition requirements within Part 3F Visual Privacy – 3F.5 of the ADG are seemingly overlooked in the proposal.
6. The Panel noted that the NSW ADG requires a setback of 6m + an additional 3m (totalling 9m) given that the properties south of the subject site have R2 Low Density Zone. Further, the Panel considers a 3m setback from southern/rear boundary is unacceptable given the visual and overshadowing impacts to the southern neighbours. The applicant's strategy of relying on 3m rear setback / separation is considered to be flawed as it assumes that a 0m side setback is acceptable in a residential zone. However, Lion Street is not a main street (within a centre) where 0m setback would be acceptable.
7. The applicant's strategy of built form abutting the eastern boundary with a 0m side setback is problematic, if the adjoining property is not developed in (near) future. The Panel is concerned that the adjoining property/properties may not be able to be redeveloped in future to their full potential due to lack of basement access. The Panel particularly notes that vehicular access from Liverpool Road will be highly challenging in this instance. It is unacceptable to the Panel that access to future development on the adjoining property to the east relies on access through the subject site.
8. The Panel notes that the site is subject to potential road widening and the applicant should investigate appropriate front setback and footpath treatments to Liverpool Road, and how these could align with desired future treatments for adjoining properties.

Conclusion:

The Panel does not support the proposal since it represents overdevelopment of a small site, and potentially creates a poor urban design precedent for the surrounding area and other parts of the Inner West.