

Item 4 - DA2023 0868 – 37 Hay Street Collaroy

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The FSR non-compliance (at 30% above permissible) is substantial and does not appear justified in an R2 zone.

The quality of documentation and architecture is high.

The landscape is generally supported.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The FSR non-compliance is contributing to an inconsistency with the existing and desired character of the low-density residential R2 zone, especially in the Anzac Avenue frontage. The reasons for this are the application proposal is relying on the DCP reduction in street setbacks for corner lots from 6.5m to 3.5m. The corner street setback reduction in urban design has the objective of ensuring corner lots are not unreasonably constrained for orderly development. In the circumstances of this case the site has been amalgamated and so setbacks should be able respond to other urban design considerations so long as the attainment of compliant FSR as a minimum is not precluded.

The urban design considerations are set out in the B7 Front Boundary Setback objectives. They include; *to create a sense of openness, to maintain the visual continuity and pattern of buildings and landscape elements, to protect and enhance the visual quality of streetscapes and public spaces and, to achieve reasonable view sharing.* These objectives are compromised because the application proposes townhouse forms setback 3.5m with cantilevered roofs encroaching approximately 1.2m -1.8m and landscaping constrained by the need to for long accessible ramps to entry points. The three dwellings proposed to the Anzac Avenue frontage do not all step with the street gradient and are therefore articulated as two built forms, one of which is bulkier than typical R2 adjacent development. This condition is exacerbated by having one essentially un-broken building form (in length, mass and height) covering the whole site. This results in a character similar to that expected within an R3 medium density residential zoning and cannot be supported.

This contrasts with the neighbourhood character which consists of mainly 2-storey single dwellings large suburban blocks which front fences and some form of planting and lawn.

The surrounding context is characterised by detached single dwellings with generous front gardens that merge into the street verges. Fences are quite visually porous and there is good visual connection between the front rooms and POS of the houses and the street. This establishes good visual surveillance and helps to give a sense of informal neighbourliness. These houses also have generous landscape setbacks along the side boundaries which is a strong feature of the R2 zoning.

Recommendations

1. The neighbourhood character should be emulated in the final landscape design with the facades of the units responding to the building proportions, street frontage address and residential feel of the neighbourhood to help the proposed development blend into the neighbourhood setting.
2. Consider reducing the FSR and building footprint by increasing the Anzac Avenue setback sufficient to provide a landscaped setting consistent with the R2 objectives stated above

3. Consider providing two slightly larger townhouses to Anzac Avenue rather than the 3 currently proposed

Scale, built form and articulation

The built-form is generally supported as is the degree of architectural articulation. However (as recommended in Strategic Context above) a reduction in FSR and building footprint (see suggested amendments to the Anzac Avenue frontage) would deliver a more appropriately-scaled building.

Recommendations

4. Consider more articulation on the Anzac Avenue street frontage with a more substantial planting strategy that consists of all layers of planting including ground covers, shrubs, mid-storey planting and upper canopy trees with a medium spread of at least 8 metres.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

Generally acceptable.

Landscape

The landscape plan has addressed many typical considerations for multi dwelling developments of this size including a variety of use areas including both open lawn and garden bed planting along with paved areas for circulation as well as tree planting but there are a few areas that could be improved with some minor changes in design strategy.

Recommendations

5. The setback area along Anzac Avenue should be expanded to provide sufficient soil volume areas for successful tree planting in a continuous trench planting area to aid in the reduction of the bulk and scale of the building bulk and façade when viewed from the street.
6. Consideration should be given to the use of a structural root cell system to be utilised along Anzac Ave which may continue onto the council verge to enable the trunk of trees in the front setback to be placed just inside the property boundary which would allow for the use of the front setback to encompass the pedestrian circulation and access to dwellings.
7. T#7 *Corymbia citriodora* should be considered for retention and utilised as a feature for Unit #7. The project Arborist can provide a tree protection and management methodology statement to help improve the health of this tree considerably.
8. The plant schedule should consider proposing several trees that are super-advanced and at least 4 metres in height above finished ground level at the time of installation to provide some immediate replenishment of the tree canopy and begin to replace the neighbourhood character that existed prior to the development being constructed for the benefit of the neighbourhood character.
9. In addition, due to the existing vegetated rear yards of #37 and #40, additional tree planting should be provided to the rear yards of the proposed units #4, 5, 6, 7, and 1.
10. Although the Schedule of Plant Materials provided identifies “native” plant species with an asterisk, this should be cross-referenced with the Native Planting guide for the Narrabeen Ward to ensure “endemic” plants are proposed to reduce the amount of water and nutrients that might otherwise be required for plant establishment.
11. All levels of plant stratum should be specified to ensure a naturalistic planting strategy that mimics the surrounding plant community and microclimate where applicable.

Amenity

The Panel is generally supportive.

The planning looks to be well-considered. Room sizes and apartment layouts look to be generous and well-configured.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The Panel is generally supportive.

Sustainability

The basement appears to be inefficiently designed. We recommend that some spaces are reoriented or positioned to enable reduced excavation and save a significant amount of materials. Also reconsider if two spaces per unit is necessary when there is good public transport to the area.

Recommendations

12. Remove gas and replace the cooktops with induction units, replace the hot water with heat pump hot water systems. There may be adequate space in the basement for heat pumps.
13. Increase the size of the PV array on the roof. More panels could be included which are connected direct to the resident switch boards to enable direct use of the solar power by the occupants
14. Consider where EV charging will be allowed in the basement within fire safety constraints.
15. Consider a green roof under the solar panels
16. Investigate low carbon materials for the structure such as Portland cement replacement in the concrete.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form. A reduction in area is required. Improvements are also sought to the Anzac Avenue frontage.