

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023

## **ITEM 2 - DA2023 1224 - 62 Myoora Road TERREY HILLS**

### **PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### ***General***

DSAP reviewed a previous Development Application for this site which was of a much larger scale and which was subsequently withdrawn as unviable. The revised proposal is for a scaled back scheme which retains an existing building and outdoor nursery at the centre of the site while including additional services and carparking. The current proposal resolves many of the criticisms and issues raised previously.

The Panel remains concerned by the excess parking especially given that the carpark takes up such a large hard-paved area on the main public curtilages of the building. The applicant contends that a lack of parking is a major problem for this type of centre and DCP rates are well below what is required for optimal operation and to avoid parking in neighbourhood streets. However, given that the proposal includes substantial more parking than required in the DCP, the Panel feels that further reductions are warranted.

The Panel notes that the architectural drawings are hard to read.

#### ***Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character***

The applicant contends that the proposal builds on the success of the existing centre in this location. It scales up the offer by introducing additional land-uses, a fruit and a pet shop, a playground and café, as well as a separate bulky goods store. The Panel recognizes that there are benefits associated with the additional uses. It makes the building potentially more diverse.

The revised scheme generally complies with the setbacks and the intended landscaped setting along Mona Vale Road but has large hard stand areas for parking, nursery and the bulky goods landscape shop.

The Panel is keen to ensure that key objectives of the RU4 zone, being to maintain or enhance the natural landscape including landform and vegetation and to maintain the rural and scenic character of the land, are satisfied.

The Panel sees the potential for new businesses to have a symbiotic relationship with the existing nursery. It is disappointed that the architectural expression of this appears to be of a strip mall type. The landscape experience and spatial interconnectivity between different parts of the building could therefore benefit from further development.

#### **Recommendations**

1. Introduce more trees through-out the parking areas;
2. Enrich the architectural and landscape experience between new and old (nursery) uses.

## ***Scale, built form and articulation***

The Panel notes that improvements have been made. However the proposal still seems to be a little too driven by the preferencing of parking (capacity) but leaves little engagement between this entry /perimeter landscape and the buildings (both new and existing) within the building complex.

The buildings generally comply with the height controls apart from some non-compliances in the centre of site which are considered minimal in terms of their impact on neighbouring sites and therefore acceptable.

The building presents as a central spine with pitched roofs and a central external space. Unfortunately the benefits of this strategy are compromised by changes in level – necessitating a lot of ramps -and the absence of a centralized easily accessible communal space.

### **Recommendations**

3. Further development between the perimeter landscape and the buildings (both new and existing) within the building complex is encouraged.
4. Pedestrian routes between the carpark and the different uses within the building – as well as the spatial connections between these separate uses- could benefit from further consideration.

## ***Access, vehicular movement and car parking***

The proposal includes a closure of the Mona Vale Road entry and exit balanced by additional entries off side roads. While excess parking has been reduced from approximately 400 in the previous application the numbers are still considered too high and present too great an impact on the overall landscape and architectural response. Whilst the Panel acknowledges that parking is crucial for the success of the retail centre it does need to be balanced against environmental and amenity outcomes.

### **Recommendations**

5. Consideration should be given to more clearly defined and safe pedestrian pathways across site. Walking in parking aisles is not acceptable.
6. Consideration should be given to further reduction in parking to more closely align with Council controls

## ***Landscape***

The Panel sees the integration of additional landscape as an opportunity for the centre to define its character and showcase its products. The carpark has the potential to celebrate landscape and be part of the sales process.

The panel notes that the landscape architect did not attend the meeting and the landscape architecture documentation for the DA is light on detail.

### **Recommendations**

7. Avoid removal of mature trees along Cooyong Road – relocate driveway.
8. Introduce additional trees in carparking area to increase tree canopy.
9. The 12m landscaped setback should extend for the full length of the site, ie include the area of the closed Mona Vale Road driveway.

## ***Amenity***

In addition to pedestrian circulation and tree canopy improvements discussed the central circulation space should be decluttered of ramps and storage space. The quality of the café and kids play areas are difficult to understand due to poor-legibility of the architectural drawings.

### Recommendations

10. Improve movement and spatial efficiencies between perimeter (entry/parking areas) and the central spaces to remove number of ramps and minimize the impact of “back-of-house” elements like services and storage.

### ***Façade treatment/Aesthetics***

The panel encourages the design to incorporate greater authenticity in material selection. Simplify the use of the materials which will make the project cheaper and more beautiful, as well as more sustainable.

### Recommendations

11. Consider making strip windows bigger to better connect inside with outside, and make interiors feel more generous.
12. Avoid paint finishes.

### ***Sustainability***

The Panel supports the use of PVs on roof which are perfect for a daytime business with so much roof area, as well as that all water onsite is captured and reused for irrigation.

### Recommendations

13. Incorporate more landscaping.

## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel is generally supportive of the changes that have been made between this and the previous proposal. However further improvements can be made as outlined in the recommendations above.**