

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 28th September 2023

Item 2 - DA20230967 – 20-22 Macpherson Street Warriewood

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Two previous meetings took place regarding this design. One was a PLM meeting with Council officers on 1 February 2022 and the other was a Design and Sustainability Panel meeting on 23 March 2023. Reports were issued following both meetings. The degree to which those previous recommendations have been actioned is not apparent in the documents submitted to the current Panel (28 September 2023).

For these reasons, the previous recommendations of the DSAP Panel on 23 March 2023 remain current and are to be taken into account in the re-design of this application, in addition to the recommendations below.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

This is the last remaining site to be re-developed in this part of Macpherson Street Warriewood. Existing adjacent developments to the south-east and north-west of this site contain more visual permeability from Macpherson Street into the site than the proposed development. The development to the north-west has a public pedestrian link from Macpherson Street to the creek corridor.

Recommendations

1. Provide greater permeability into the site in the form of straight physical and visual links between Macpherson Street and the creek corridor.

Scale, built form and articulation

The scale of the houses is acceptable and the range of built forms and roof designs provides a reasonable degree of articulation and variety.

Lot sizes vary in size from 168sqm to 251sqm but the housing typologies stay the same for all of them (eg. row housing). Greater potential for variation appears possible. Although Type D is classified "detached" the separation distances between each house are narrow and un-useable (for at least half the site length). Consideration should be given to better allocation of POS and internal footprint with respect to Lot boundaries to maximise the potential use and amenity of POS. The benefits of a larger lot size have not been realized. 4 bedroom housing types arguably support larger families with children and therefore should incorporate more generous POS provisions.

Recommendations

2. Amend house layouts and forms in accordance with recommendations for Access, Amenity and Sustainability below.
3. Consideration given to providing greater variation in housing typologies with respect to variable lot sizes and POS relationships.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

Access to the site from Macpherson Street is poor, as the proposed entry street (Driveway 01) is short and on axis with garages in Lot 45. This blocks views into the site and discourages pedestrian access both into the site and towards the landscaped creek corridor. Driveway 01 should retain its proposed width and be re-located towards the south-east to be on axis with the centreline of Driveway 02. The proposed central median of Driveway 01 could be retained, or removed and the carriageway narrowed to allow for tree planting on both sides of the carriageway.

To promote pedestrian access from Macpherson Street to the site and landscaped creek corridor, a pedestrian only link is recommended between Lots 21 and 22.

Driveway 02 is currently irregular in its treatment of verges and landscape design. Driveway 02 should become a tree-lined avenue from Macpherson Street to the creek landscaped corridor. It should have a different scale and character compared to other driveways, creating a hierarchy of streets. Lot 47 is currently a wide private lot. This lot (and Lot 42) might be narrowed in favour of a wider communal space containing canopy trees. The open parking space in front of Lots 27 to 34 should be a minimum of 6m long to avoid parked cars projecting over the pedestrian path. The proposed width of 1.2m for the pedestrian path is a minimum width for any footpaths.

A car right of way is proposed in the landscaped buffer zone within the 50m setback to access Lots 59 and 60. This will compromise the landscaped character of this zone and the car access should be removed. Car access to Lots 59 and 60 should be in an access drive behind the house in Lots 58 and 61. The layout of the houses in Lots 58, 59, 60 and 61 should be amended to accommodate this vehicular access.

The proposed kerb-free Driveways 4 and 5 are supported as they promote pedestrian and bicycle use in a shared street environment. The same opportunity should be explored in Driveway 03. Special paving could designate this as a shared street environment to promote walking in a relaxed slow traffic zone. These specially paved, kerb-free zones will contribute to creating a hierarchy of streets in the development.

Recommendations

See recommendations as described above.

Landscape

The landscape design response must be in accordance with the Warriewood Valley Landscape Masterplan and Design Guidelines (WVLMDG) dated August 2018 in all aspects.

The document requires generous sized tree stock at regular intervals of between 6 – 12 metres for street trees which should be delivered. 30% tree canopy cover should be the minimum target. The current proposal suggests the removal of 4 x AA important trees; #55, #59, #60 & #61 with no justification by the Project Arborist and is not supported.

Consideration should be given to the use of a structural root cell system such as Strata Vault by City Green or approved equal to provide the most suitable growing conditions for new trees and to aid in water management of the site.

Pedestrian circulation within the development should be further reviewed providing easier access and more generous footpaths as well as a shared user path as outlined in the WVLMDG.

A break in the building form for every 3 x units is required and these breaks should provide an opportunity for planting and heat island mitigation measures as well as providing habitat for local fauna.

The 25-meter outer creek line corridor is to perform the functions of part water quality control and a fauna/flora corridor. The private buffer strip is to be a multifunctional corridor, appear to be part of the public domain, and may contain water quality control ponds; other water quality treatment measures; and/or roads and other impervious areas traditionally sited in the public domain, for up to 25% of the outer Creek line Corridor area subject to merit assessment".

The current proposal has designed this area as the rear yards for the corresponding units and is not supported.

There does not seem to be any communal open space provided and a local park with play equipment, bubbler benches and shade at the very least should be incorporated into the design.

There is to be further coordination with the Landscape and Vegetation Management Plans in accordance with the planning controls for this area.

Recommendations

4. A revised planting plan and schedule to meet all the relevant criteria of the Warriewood Valley Landscape Masterplan and Design Guidelines with a focus on the Plant species for landscape development on page 7.
5. A further coordinated Landscape Documentation package with the Vegetation Management Plan to ensure creek line rehabilitation and biodiversity guidelines are met.
6. Providing water management and passive recreation opportunities in the outer 25m creek line corridor in accordance with the Warriewood Valley Landscape Masterplan and Design Guidelines.
7. Increased pedestrian amenity and circulation measures throughout the development with a dedicated pedestrian entry into the site.
8. A target canopy cover should be compliant with the Greener Neighbourhoods guide which prescribes a minimum canopy cover target of 30% for developments of this type.
9. The current proposal suggests the removal of 4 x AA important trees; #55, #59, #60 & #61 with no justification by the Project Arborist and is not supported.
10. Provision of a local park with play equipment, bubbler, benches and a structural shade element should be considered.

Amenity

The interiors of the house types are reasonably varied and offer reasonable amenity. Types A1 and A2 contain a ground floor study with a skylight as the only source of natural light and ventilation. As this room is large enough to serve as a bedroom, the amenity of this room would be poor. It is recommended to reduce the room size by aligning the external wall with window(s) with the rumpus room window above, and for the room to serve as a study.

The internal layouts of house types on Lots 58, 59, 60 and 61 should be amended to accommodate rear car access to houses 59 and 60 as described above.

The house on Lot 24 should be replaced with a pedestrian through site link, or house plans adjacent to the link amended to accommodate the link.

Recommendations

11. Amend the floor plans of Types A1 and A2, and the internal planning of houses on lots 58-61 and houses on Macpherson Street to accommodate recommended changes to access.
12. Consideration should be given to increasing the size of the POS to Lots 9-26. At 3m these spaces are very constrained in size.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The façade treatments and overall aesthetics are generally acceptable. Cement render and paint finish is not recommended. Light-coloured roofs should be introduced to minimise summer heat load.

Recommendations

13. Materials with integral finishes such as face brick, prefinished, integral colour square edged, compressed fibre cement (CFC) panels, metal cladding including zinc and copper panels or integrally coloured acrylic textured coatings with long-term warranties are encouraged for consideration.

Sustainability

This application meets only the minimum compliance for sustainability, and considering minimum compliance is just about to be increased through changes to the NCC and BASIX, then it is expected that this application should include forward looking initiatives to better future proof the proposal. These include:

- Removal of gas and replacement with induction cooktops and heat pump hot water systems.
- Inclusion of PV on all roofs.
- Improved landscaping and canopy cover, in line with landscape and urban design comments above.

Otherwise, all comments from previous submission are still valid:

Recommendations

14. 16 % canopy target is inadequate. Aim should be for at least 30%.
15. Discussion of biodiversity should be based on compliance in the first instance. A riparian zone is by definition the transition between natural landforms and waterways. Riparian zones are intended to be a zone of soil protection, natural water filtration to reduce water pollution, and a rich ecological zone. Landscaped lawn, fences and roads are not land use types that would constitute a natural "riparian zone".
16. Discussion of water management in relation to 'sustainability' should be in relation to strategies and approaches that achieve more than minimum compliance. This could include more naturalistic approaches to water management in the development area (rain gardens etc. as part of the landscape design) and detention that may have habitat and landscape value as compared to the fenced 1.6m deep pit proposed.
17. Potential use of PV needs to be a firm commitment and full electrification including provision of bi-directional EV charging noting imminent NCC requirements
18. Consider how more dwellings could have only 1 space by encouraging alternative forms of transport and providing space for car share vehicles
19. Light coloured roofs and hard surfaces to reduce heat island effect
20. High NatHERS performances – at least 7 Star average will be required by BASIX in 2024. Consideration could be given to this in the re-design.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form. The proposal is to be presented to the Panel once amendments are made as recommended above and in previous reviews.