



Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting – 22 April 2021

## **DA2020/1489 and DA2020/1480 8 Forest Road, WARRIEWOOD**

### **PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### ***General***

Proposal: Demolition, sub-division and construction of a Residential Flat Building in two separate DAs on the 5.678 hectare site. Separate DA's as follows.

**DA2020/1489** - Demolition works and the subdivision into 3 Torrens Title and Community Title lots. Proposed Lot 1 comprises a Community Scheme, Lots 2 – 18 are created to accommodate future dwelling houses. Lot 19 is created to accommodate a future residential flat building and is the subject of a separate DA. Lot 2 comprises the Inner 25 metre Creekline Corridor to be dedicated to Council and Lot 3 comprises the RU2 zoned portion of the land.

**DA2020/1480** (Lot 1 DP 5055) - Construction of a three storey Residential Flat Building containing 64 apartments with basement parking for 139 vehicles and associated landscaping.

The Panel is responding to DA 2020/1480 on the proposed Lot 19 Lot to accommodate a residential flat building containing 64 apartments and 13 parking spaces.

Council officers have provided the Panel with a comprehensive briefing in relation to the proposal including a general compliance review and referral comments. While the Panel will not repeat the comments provided by Council, it agreed with the concerns raised particularly regarding, streetscape treatments and presentation, clarity of entries and wayfinding, quality of common circulation spaces, visual privacy. The retention and adaptive reuse of the existing dwelling located within the western boundary is also supported.

**It is noted that the size of the files provided with the submission resulted in a significant impediment for the Panel to review the drawing packages. In the future all files should be compressed and/or flattened to a reasonable file size to ensure the files are usable.**

#### ***Strategic context***

The Site is subject to split zoning R3 Medium Density (R3) and Rural Landscape (RU2) under the provisions of the Pittwater Local Environmental Plan 2014 (LEP) and is permissible with consent.

Lot 19 is proposed to be Community Title and the perimeter road is not a public road, however it will function as public access to a great extent given the size of the proposed development.



***Urban context: surrounding area character.***

The site is irregular in shape having a frontage to an unmade section of Forest Road, a secondary frontage to Jubilee Avenue an irregular southern boundary to Narrabeen Creek.

The RU2 zoned portion of the site is heavily landscaped and the remainder of the site has been cleared with the exception of an existing dwelling located within the western boundary.

Access is currently gained at the north-eastern corner of the Site. A residential estate of one and two-story dwellings is located to the east, an industrial and business park development is located to the north-east and Mater Maria School is situated to the south.

The predominant character of the area is a beautiful native bushland setting, creek lines and established tree canopy. This setting should be taken advantage of in the planning and design of the residential flat buildings.

***Public domain: relationship to public domain, access, safety/security.***

The Panel acknowledges that the perimeter loop road is part of the Community Title and is not a public road, but is of the opinion that it should be treated as if it were a public street given the likely level of use.

The street address points are unclear with visitors arriving directly into the basement car park with no opportunity to experience the beautiful natural setting of the development. Wayfinding is convoluted and would rely heavily on extensive signage.

Access paths from the street are indirect through landscaped spaces which adds to the difficulty in understanding how to enter the development. The proposal does not demonstrate a positive relationship with the street or comply with the principles of Safety Through Environmental Design.

The basement currently encroaches on the tree planting along the road impacting the desired character of a tree lined local street.

The waste management strategy is not working and the location of the bin storage directly on the street at a prominent access point would be unsightly.

The retention and adaptive re-use of the existing dwelling has the potential to positively contribute to the amenity of the development. The Panel supports the retention rather than demolition and interpretation as shown.

It is not clear what function the pedestrian path along the eastern boundary performs. If it is intended to provide access for people with reduced mobility, then it is circuitous and does not conform with the DDA principle of having the same arrival point for people with reduced mobility. An analysis of 'desire lines' and the site in relation to the wider neighbourhood pedestrian networks, both existing and future is required.

This will determine pedestrian access points to the site is required. The long path along rear fences is not acceptable. It is possible that this space could become private courtyards for the adjoining ground floor units. If so, medium sized trees should be included in the landscape scheme to provide privacy and amenity for these units.

**Recommendation**

1. Reconsider and maximise the number of units addressing and having access from the street. Regardless of the private nature of the road, the relationship of the building and the street should follow good urban design principles and consider CPTED and include on-street parking with tree bays.



2. The perimeter loop road should be redesigned to reflect the Warriewood Valley Landscape Masterplan and Design Guideline, section S-3 Local Street. The tree spacing should be determined based on the separation requirements within the APZ.
3. Provide road sections to illustrate the street treatments and relationship to the buildings.
4. Reconfigure all lobbies to connect to both the street frontage and the communal open space. Provide at least one vista to exterior space from each lobby. Enhance the street entry landscaping and provide sightlines to lobbies from the street.
5. Wayfinding should be intuitive, and all access is to be equitable throughout the site and communal open space.
6. Consider locating waste collection areas perpendicular to the streets and breaking down the scale by locating in two locations.
7. Investigate options for the retention and adaptation of the existing dwelling as a community amenity.
8. Remove the pedestrian path along the eastern boundary and convert to private courtyards.

### ***Car parking***

The location of all visitor parking within the basement reduces the quality of visitor experience and wayfinding and increases the basement footprint reducing deep soil area.

### **Recommendation**

9. Remove all visitor parking from the basement and locate it on the access road to allow visitors to experience the sites location and to assist in wayfinding.
10. Use the space that is freed-up to accommodate better pedestrian access-form the north east corner of the site into the courtyard.
11. Reduce the basement to closely align with the building footprint to reduce the impact on proposed street planting and create deep soil areas for the planting of large trees within the communal open space. This could be in a void to the car park to enhance the daily experience of using the car ark
12. The Panel would strongly support a very low key, landscape approach with swales, pervious/segmented paving in parking bays and without kerb and gutter as is common and valued in many parts of the Northern Beaches.

### ***Built form, façade and articulation***

The building design has good bones but it is not yet demonstrating a clear response to context.

Separation distances do not present significant concerns provided the details of small, offset or skewed windows are incorporated to maintain privacy between dwellings.

The extent of glass facing the backyards of properties to the east will impact visual privacy of the private open space for these dwellings.

Blade wall configuration, louvers in front of living rooms (rather than bedrooms) and V form balconies seem to run counter to enhancing views to the surrounding landscape setting.

The eastern façade remains long and relatively flat. Consider further articulating this façade as it will be visually prominent from the adjoining lots.

### **Recommendations**

13. Reduce glazing and consider façade response to provide increased privacy.



14. Reconsider architectural expressions which reduce amenity and rather use these elements to enhance the quality of interior spaces.

### ***Dwelling Planning and Amenity***

Overall the dwelling planning and amenity is good.

Some entry corridors are too meandering, and do not take advantage of the potential outlook to the courtyard.

Some bathrooms on external walls are not provided with windows (drafting error?), natural lighting and ventilation of bathrooms is strongly encouraged.

### **Recommendations**

15. Generally, one corridor turn maximum before a view to living room/exterior.
16. Provide windows and natural light to all internal spaces on external walls.

### ***Landscape Treatments***

Generally the landscape offers a variety of spaces and amenities and is a positive offering for residents.

Blank walls of the cores face the communal open space reducing the amenity of the space and not taking advantage of views to the COS from inside.

The Private open space areas all appear enclosed.

The purpose of the path along the eastern boundary is unclear and would present issues with CPTED. The planting along the eastern boundary is positive for screening views into the adjoining dwelling lots but should be increased. Refer to previous comments

### **Recommendation**

17. Minimise blank walls to the COS and maximise views into and out of the space.
18. Consider opportunities to provide more open private gardens.
19. Reconsider the need to the eastern path and consider repurposing the area for extended POS areas and screen planting to the adjoining lots.

### ***Common areas, Amenity***

Common areas and all lobbies are internalised and do not address the street and some of these do not have adequate access to natural light and ventilation. Equitable access to each lobby is unclear.

### **Recommendation**

20. Re-arrange the layout and location of the lobbies and common circulation to allow for greater visual connections between the landscape context and the communal open space to provide better outlook and daylight. These spaces should be clearly visible and directly accessed from the street.
21. 3 storey fire stairs are not required to be fire isolated and the opportunities this provides to open these up to the open air and look out to the courtyard should be explored.



### ***Sustainability and resilience***

The NatHERS scores are surprisingly high for some of the apartments where they have large amounts of unshaded glazing.

Bike parking and storage is not clearly identified on the drawings.

### **Recommendation**

22. Provide NatHERS stamped plans.
23. Clearly indicate required storage and bike parking on drawings.

## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form.**

The design should be reconsidered to enhance the experience for residents and visitors, making the most of the opportunity the natural setting presents.

Removing visitor parking from the basement will free up the planning and allow for better pedestrian access.

The design should take advantage of the surrounding natural context including offering clear views and connections which increase amenity to circulation and common spaces.

Current pedestrian access arrangements are not acceptable.