

2 – DA2023/1763 – 4 Minna Close BELROSE

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The panel notes the history of pre-lodgement and DSAP reviews, and the work done since the last DSAP meeting to consider a non-compliant front setback and reduced site coverage in order to reduce the amount of trees removed and excavation required. The architects tested a range of options from 6m setback to 2m setback (minimum distance), along with loading through the front and impact on streetscape. The team landed on a 2m front setback with rear loading for HRV trucks as a maximum.

The Panel is supportive of the proposed changes – including the 2m front setback – subject to the following recommendations.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The site is an undeveloped bushland site located within the Austlink Business Park. It has a split zone comprising SP4 -Enterprise and C2 -Environmental Conservation (a 16.7m buffer strip to the northern edge of the site adjacent to Mona Vale Road). The site is surrounded by industrial and business land uses ranging from 2 to 3 storey in height.

The site is dominated by dense remnant native vegetation. The dominant plant community forms part of the 'Duffys Forest Ecological Community in the Sydney Basin Bioregion' (Duffys Forest) listed as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) under Schedule 2 of the BC Act.

While there is a right for development to occur, there is also a need to reducing the impact this will have on their precious ecological community. As such, changes to the front setback (along with reductions in size of the footprint) to achieve this are seen as the best way to develop the land.

The Panel is interested to see the trees are valued and used in positive ways – not mulched or discarded. Options for placement in the existing forest areas as well as using in the development in creative ways are encouraged.

However, in order the optimise the potential planting in the setback – to continue to park setting of the area – the panel would like to see the removal of the pedestrian ramp and replacement with an internal solution such as direct access from the street to the lift and possibly new stairs.

Recommendations

1. The Panel supports the proposed setbacks and layout.
2. The pedestrian ramp is to be replaced with an alternative accessible solution that is entirely internal. The 2m setback and Council verge is to be landscaped as much as possible.
3. Options for honouring the trees removed by placement in the existing forest areas as well as using in the development in creative ways are encouraged.

Scale, built form and articulation

The Panel is comfortable with the amended building size and form and believes the glass façade tilting towards the street is good. The ability to see activity within and possible reflections of the trees across the street will make a positive contribution to the area.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

The Panel commends the team for the work done to test alternative options for how the access and vehicular movement could be managed on site, with an aim to reducing the impact on tree removal and excavation, and agrees the proposal provides the optimal solution.

Landscape

On the assumption a BOS will be in place; the option of shifting forward the building with resultant reduction in the front setback to 2m is supported. This will increase retention of the threatened bushland community.

Recommendations

4. Applicant to provide details of an ongoing Vegetation Management Plan to be prepared by the consulting ecologist to ensure the vegetation is maintained in good health and vigour in perpetuity.
5. Provide a more detailed landscape plan for those areas outside of the retained bushland using endemic species of local provenance.
6. Provide tall endemic canopy trees on Council verge in consultation with Council to supplement the 2m setback planting.

Amenity

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

As noted above, the glass façade tilting towards the street is good and the simple cladding proposals for this shed are appropriate.

Sustainability

With the regulatory environment changing now – for efficiency, electrification, zero emissions and mandatory disclosure – these investments at this time will be worthwhile both for future residents and the developers' reputation, market position and marketability of the units.

The Panel is happy to see the Embodied Emissions Materials Form as required under the new Sustainable Building SEPP as part of this submission. It would be better if printed in landscape format for easier reading.

Recommendations

The following aspects of design and servicing can be easily and cost effectively considered for inclusion:

7. Decarbonisation of energy supply
 - **All services should be electric** – gas for cooking, hot water and heating should be avoided.
 - The storage of hot water can be considered a de facto battery if heated by PVs during the day.
 - Onsite power generation and battery storage. On site battery storage has benefits for the grid and may be a highly desirable back-up during the transition to a de-carbonised grid
 - Unshaded roof space is a valuable resource for PV installations. Their efficacy can be greatly enhanced when placed over a green roof, which has additional ecological benefits.
8. EV charging:
 - Provide EV charging points for cars (Min 15 amp) to suit level 1 charging.
 - Consider future EV charging for electric trucks

9. Passive design and thermal performance of building fabric

- Fabric first approach to ensuring amount of energy required for heating and cooling can be kept to a minimum

10. Water use minimisation

- All fixtures and appliances should be water efficient
- Water storage for rainwater from the roofs should be included and plumbed to at least the landscaping and toilets
- Landscape design and planting should be water tolerant and suitable for the microclimate

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel is supportive of the proposed changes – including the 2m front setback – subject to the recommendations noted above. They should be submitted to the staff for evaluation. The proposal does not need to return to the Panel.