

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting - 22 April 2021

4 DA 2021/0179 255 Condamine St MANLY VALE

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The site is zoned B2 Local Centre under the provisions of WLEP 2011 and the proposed boarding house is permissible with consent.

Overall comment

Although boarding houses are permissible in the zone, the site is located on the highly trafficked Condamine Street (AADT>40,000) and is highly constrained by the requirement not to build over the creek, by flooding and by the size and geometry of the site.

The objectives of the zone include:

- *To provide a range of retail, business, entertainment and community uses that serve the needs of people who live in, work in and visit the local area.*
- *To encourage employment opportunities in accessible locations.*

No commercial or business activity floor space is proposed.

Although the Panel is not an approval authority, the **suitability** of the site **exclusively** for residential accommodation of any kind is questionable.

Consequently, the proposal can only be considered on its merit in relation to:

- the internal amenity of the residential accommodation
- the adjoining urban pattern and potential development to the south
- the impact and relationship to the creek
- the presentation to the road including activation of the street frontage that is already inhospitable

The panel also notes a number of non-compliances identified at the PLM, as well as comments by various Council departments. These identify a range of issues related to the **quality** of the design in relation to impacts on neighbouring properties, riparian area, internal amenity in addition to the non-compliance with specific controls.

The Panel notes that this development in conjunction with the approved development to the north has effectively destroyed the environmental integrity of this section of the creek. It is very difficult to see how vegetation would survive in the low light levels, and whether bio-retention system would be viable. Given the poor access to the area and the fact that the undercroft and creek area does not provide amenity to the occupants of the site or for the adjoining site, it is unlikely that it will be maintained. The low amenity is clearly illustrated on sections B and C.

The reality is the undercroft space will not be cared for simply because there is no reason for it to be.

Given these circumstances, the Panel suggests that the treatment of the undercroft area be treated as 'hard infrastructure' whose primary function will be determined by flood mitigation. In high flow events it is likely that the 'bio-retention' and any soft landscaping would be stripped

out, and rubbish would be deposited on the uneven, unsurfaced, excavated 'existing terrain' shown on section B.

In summary, the Panel does not consider the site appropriate for residential accommodation.

Scale, built form and articulation

The height non-compliance is not of concern as much as the bulk of the floor plates, the separation distance between the buildings and the encroachment over the creek.

The neighbouring building was only approved through the Land and Environment Court, and at the time, there was no indication of piles in the creek. The development next door should not be used as a precedent in any respect if the aim is to achieve design quality.

Conversely, *if* the residential proposal proceeds it is important for the building massing to relate to the pattern of courtyards that has been established by development on sites to the north.

The Panel commends the applicant for showing the relationship of the proposal to the adjacent development (Ground floor plan, sections and elevations) but this serves to show how the adjoining development has almost obliterated the creek and is set back from the proposal by less than a metre.

Recommendations

1. Increase the distance between the two blocks
2. Reduce the depth of the block fronting Condamine Street and ensure no units have single aspect to Condamine Street.
3. The reduction in depth could be achieved by the elimination of units 3, 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 18, 19, 29 and thirty.
4. Consideration could be given to an extra floor in the building fronting Condamine. This would 'retrieve' 4 units and allow the rear block to be 'slid' eastward.
5. The building should not at any point extend past bottom of bank line, and preferably not beyond a line midway between the bottom of bank and top of bank. This would increase the amount of light reaching the 'bio-swale' and retain some outlook to the creek for the adjoining property.

Access Car parking and services

Access to the rear building is solely through the car park. Pedestrian access to the rear block is via the stairs on the street, through the foyer, across the turning bay, through the carpark to the rear lobby; this is unacceptable.

Recommendation

6. Provide access to the rear block via the courtyard.

Privacy

Privacy between the rooms appears to be an issue, with windows directly opposite each other between the two buildings

Recommendation

7. Increase the separation distance between the block to achieve ADG separation of 12m and ensure planters have sufficient depth to support medium sized trees

Landscape

Refer to previous comments relating to the building alignment and treatment of the undercroft.

Eleocarpus will not fit in the front planter with building setbacks over.

The rear area is not usable communal space. It is landscaped but has no access or amenity.

Recommendations

8. Reconsider interface to the creek. Look to use this for resident amenity.
9. Building to be setback to provide positive streetscape benefits of this tree.

Unit Design and Amenity

Privacy between the rooms is issue, with windows directly opposite each other between the two buildings

Single aspect units facing the main road are undesirable

Recommendations

10. As noted previously, no units should have a single aspect to the creek.

Sustainability and resilience

The Energy Efficient Design strategies in the Design Statement are very general, and not indicated on the drawings.

Recommendations

11. Identify where all sustainability aspects are on the drawings.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal.

The Panel does not consider the site suitable for residential development.

The site is so constrained that it will be very difficult to achieve adequate design quality and amenity for residential use.

The site is more appropriate for commercial use consistent with the objectives of the zone

If the proposal does proceed in any form the Panel recommends significant reduction in the volumes of the building and the following measures:

- No rooms should have single aspect to the main road (AADT >40,000)
- The building mass should be reduced so that it does not extend past a line midway between the bottom and top of bank
- The building should be setback from the adjoining building by at least 3m at any point
- The courtyard alignment should more closely align with the courtyards to the north
- The height of the building on the eastern end may be increased as it would not have an adverse effect on any adjoining properties or on the character of the area