

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 23 March 2023

## **Item 4 - DA2022/2265 - 323-327 Warringah Road FRENCHS FOREST**

### **PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

The proposal is for an industrial complex in Frenchs Forest. The character of the areas is a landscaped zone with tall gums and generous vegetation. The previous comments of the Panel have been in part adopted to decrease the site coverage and increase the landscaped character of the scheme.

The increased side setbacks and reduced footprint of the building has greatly enhanced the possibility for a landscaped setting, however the Panel have further recommendations as to how the landscape is designed and the overall siting of the building. These issues are discussed in the following sections.

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

The overall footprint of the building has been reduced to achieve compliance with the site coverage requirements. This is achieved by adding a third storey to the project. This amendment is welcomed however there are still issues with the siting of the proposal especially in relation to the commercial building to the south. The proponent has complied with the 30m setback from the Warringah Road. This setback pushes the building behind the setback of the existing building on the site and the two neighbouring buildings. This results in unnecessary and impacts on the adjoining commercial building to the south and limits the possibility of southern landscaped zone.

#### **Recommendations**

1. The Panel recommends that the building be moved 6-7m to the north and support the relaxation of the 30m setback requirement to Warringah Road
2. Create a generous 6-7m landscaped zone between the right of way along the southern boundary and the entry ramp to the relocated building. The landscape zone should support large canopy trees.
3. There is a large area of screens to the upper level of the building. These screens increase the bulk of the project and prevents any outlook from the upper levels of the building. The Panel recommend the reduction of the extent of these screens.

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

The Panel support the amendments to the scheme to provide a landscaped setting between the ramps and the boundary.

#### **Recommendations**

4. The carparking and access requirements should be adjusted to create a southern landscaped zone that works with the existing easements
5. Provide pathways and cycle access from Warringah Road

#### ***Landscape***

The Panel appreciated the quality of the Landscape plan, Flora and Fauna Assessment & Arborists reports for this DA submission.



## Recommendations

6. The Panel encourage that the landscape architect to creates more outdoor seating, breakout areas within the boundary setback from the Warringah Road. Within this zone the proponent is encouraged to greatly increase the number of endemic canopy and understorey planting to compensate for trees to be removed and greater a more naturalistic “bush” setting rather than lawn and canopy trees as proposed by the current DA documents. The species list should use the endangered Duffy’s Forest Association as a good starting point for a more comprehensive bush planting solution.
7. The Proponent is encouraged to explore the opportunity for a pedestrian and cycle path linking the shared path along Warringah to the new development and link this path to the end of trip facilities associated with the new building. DDA compliance needs to be actively pursued.
8. The Panel encourages the use of green vegetated screens on areas of the building façade with a preference for planting in deep soil and train the vines / plants through trellis systems. Planters and pots attached to a building of this size is typically not as successful as deep soil planting.

## Amenity

The Panel noted that the industrial complex should address the amenity of the users. Currently there are no breakout spaces, communal external areas or a consolidated strategy for end of trip facilities. The Panel notes the opportunity of the northern setback to provide a meaningful area for the users of the facility that could be in the form of a sunken courtyard. For this area to work it is suggested that the vertical circulation, lobbies, and end of trip facilities should be combined to work with this external courtyard.

The Panel is aware of the changing nature of ‘light industry’ and suggests that a reconfiguration of the design to provide more shared facilities could provide a market advantage and point of difference, noting that this is a suggestion, not a requirement.

## Recommendations

9. Utilize the excavated area between the setback of the new building and the existing excavated area of the demolished existing buildings to provide a high-quality external breakout area, this area should contain covered seating, BBQs and landscaped gathering area to improve the amenity of the users of the facility.
10. Relocated vertical circulation and lobby to be adjacent to these outdoor spaces
11. Provide a shared indoor lunchroom
12. Investigate the potential and market demand for shared/bookable meeting room, offices, end of trip facilities, lunch-room, BBQ facilities etc that could take advantage of the attractive northern aspect (a suggestion, not a requirement)
13. Provide shade to the upper level

## Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The Panel commends the high-quality materials and architectural composition of the building.

## Recommendations

14. The extent of the screens should be minimised to increase the opportunity to look out and reduce the bulk of the building
15. The proponent should investigate introduction of landscape element to soften the remaining screens of the building



## ***Sustainability***

### **Recommendations**

16. The Panel encourages a project of this size to capture site and roof water and reuse in passive and articulated irrigation where appropriate
17. The Panel encourages a project of this size to potential use a non-accessible green roof garden associated with a large PV rooftop
18. Include shading on the windows to reduce heat gain in summer
19. Provide EV charging points for each unit
20. Consider utilising electric heat pump hot water and induction cooktops to replace the use of gas
21. Consider materials selection with respect to embodied carbon and environmental impact
22. The Panel recommends inclusion of a substantial amount of rooftop PV. The PV array could extend beyond the roof line to provide shading to the upper level.
23. Use landscaping to reduce the heat island effect
24. Include rainwater harvesting for irrigation, wash down and toilet flushing

## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form. The proponent should amend the design to consider the commentary on the building siting and the amenity suggestions listed above. The DA should also include the sustainability and landscape initiatives listed above.**

**The Panel suggests that these changes would constitute a modification to the design, that would remain substantially the same.**