

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – 29 April 2021

DA2021/0053 101, 111 and 121 Dove Lane, WARRIEWOOD

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The site is zoned R3 Medium Density Residential under the Pittwater LEP 2014, and the proposed development is permissible with consent in the zone.

The application is proposed in stages. Stage 1 is west of the subject site and is not the subject of this DA. Stage 2 is this DA. Stage 3 is to the east of the subject site and is not the subject of this DA. The proposal is for a range of 2 and 3 storey buildings. Some of the attached dwellings TH1-TH5 and semi-detached dwellings SM1- SM6 are 3 storeys, with the third storey located within the roof form.

Strategic context

New subdivisions in R3 medium density areas in the Northern Beaches are typically composed of low density detached houses plus a higher density apartment building to achieve the permissible density. This proposal is an exception to this typical approach and is to be commended for its range of detached and attached house types on a fine-grained pattern of lots, lanes and streets. This proposal has the potential to be an exemplary project in the Northern beaches.

Urban context: surrounding area character

The site is located adjacent to the riparian zone of Fern Creek. The surroundings, particularly to the north and west of the site, are comprised of a largely natural environment, with canopy trees and endemic grasses in the creek riparian zone. The site is at the western end of a new network of streets and lanes which will carry no through traffic and relatively few car movements.

The planning of the site addresses the site gradients which are generally flat rising at the south western edge. The development complies with Council controls and provides a high standard of architectural quality and landscape treatment. The diversity of housing types and design is reflected by diverse material selection which is thoughtfully considered.

The proposal complements this context with a fine-grained network of lanes, streets and subdivision pattern. The opportunity exists to complement the existing context further, with slowed traffic, unit paving and carefully selected and sited trees and shrubs to create a unique, landscaped development within the Northern Beaches.

Recommendation

1. Consider enhancing the public domain design and landscape character to further complement the landscape context.

Scale, built form and articulation

The plans indicate that the proposal will comply with the relevant built form controls in the Pittwater DCP. The Panel commends the predominantly 2 storey scale with an articulated skyline of pitched roofs and dormer windows. The well articulated built form creates a unified group of small scaled dwellings and a sense of identity for the whole development.

Landscape, Vehicular movement and car parking

The opportunity exists to extend the character of the Fern Creek riparian zone into the site with carefully sited trees, shrubs and grasses, very calmed traffic movements and carefully selected paving materials.

The applicant is commended for innovative car parking arrangements such as the shared car park entries to SM1 to SM5. The car parking arrangements are generally supported.

It is noted that there is a discrepancy between the canopy trees shown on the general arrangement plans and those shown in the perspective views.

Canopy trees are shown in the future public domain along landscaped verges adjacent to the carriageways in the general arrangement plans. This is recommended, compared to the relatively barren perspective views, as the trees in the public domain will have a long term chance to survive and flourish. It is rare for future occupants of houses to plant canopy trees in individual house lots once the house is sold. The Panel would encourage the applicant to plant trees and shrubs in house lots before they are sold, however it is recognized that the long term landscape character of the area cannot rely predominantly upon the landscape in private lots.

Traffic speeds should be minimised to have a maximum speed of 30km per hour or, if traffic counts would be sufficiently low, lanes to be converted to share ways with a 10 km per hour speed limit. This approach would allow textured unit paving, the avoidance of dedicated pedestrian footpaths and a preponderance of soft landscape throughout the development.

The Panel would encourage the applicant to plant trees and shrubs in house lots before they are sold, however it is recognized that the long term landscape character of the area cannot rely predominantly upon the landscape in private lots.

Potential conflicts between canopy trees and cars exist in certain locations which need to be resolved in detailed design. The double garages in TH1 to TH5 are separated by canopy trees, however the swept path of cars may not allow these trees to be planted or to survive. A careful study of tree and shrub species and car movements needs to be made throughout the development to maximise the number of canopy trees and shrubs whilst allowing car movements.

Recommendations

2. Consider changing lanes into 10 km per hour shared ways with unit paving, landscaped verges and no dedicated footpaths; This approach would also provide a safe precinct for children to play.
3. Permeable paving would create a better response to stormwater management and a greater sense of the housing being in a landscaped rather than urban setting
4. Consider a 30 km per hour maximum speed throughout the development;
5. Co-ordinate tree planting in the public domain with car movements, by testing car swept paths with tree trunks and canopies in the traffic model;
6. Consider planting trees and shrubs in private lots before sale of the houses;
7. Prepare a comprehensive and detailed landscape plan that encompasses public domain and private lots and is maintained through all stages of the project.
8. Alternative arrangements for waste management should be investigated with the aim of reducing the pavement width in laneways or having garbage collected from the end of lanes. This may lead to some alteration of Lane/street alignments and sweep paths or alternatively the engagement of private contractors.

Façade treatment

The range of façade compositions, materials and colours are supported, however these colours may need to be re-considered should the roof colours be amended as recommended in Sustainability below. This decision is for the architect to make once the decision regarding the roof is made.

Amenity

The amenity of the dwellings is generally supported and will be enhanced with the changes recommended in Sustainability below.

Sustainability

The proposed roofs are dark coloured metal deck roofing. The metal deck roofing creates a crisp appearance for the roof form, however the dark colour will absorb heat, which may not be able to be expelled within the roof construction. The heat load on the house may lead to excessive use of air conditioning. A more energy efficient and sustainable approach would be to reflect heat before it enters the roof. Steel roofing products are becoming available in the market that have high solar reflectance and are able to improve the thermal performance of the building. These are in a range of light colours. It is recommended that a metal roof with these qualities is used.

The current mix of light and dark paving is supported, to minimise the heat island effect.

A heat pump system would be more efficient than the currently proposed solar hot water system. Heat pump hot water systems are recommended as a good sustainability outcome. Unfortunately, including heat pumps may reduce the energy score, but this can be compensated for with additional PV. Increasing the PV would be a positive and practical outcome.

Laundries on external walls in TH 6 to TH 12 should have windows to provide natural ventilation and light. The laundries in SM1 to SM6 could be located on an external wall with a window for natural ventilation and light. The WC in SM6 could have a window.

Recommendations

9. Amend the roof colour to reduce heat island effect.
10. Consider utilising electric heat pump hot water and induction cooktops to replace the use of gas.
11. Update the BASIX Certificate to reflect the provision of PV cells. The Panel recommends increasing the capacity of PV.
12. Add external windows to utility rooms wherever possible (e.g. swapping laundry and pantry in some of the units)

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel is very supportive of the proposal and the overall approach to the site planning, built form and articulation, however the Panel recommends that the street design and landscape design be tested in greater detail to create a development that further complements its unique landscape setting.

The recommended amendments to the design are relatively minor and should be incorporated in any revision to the design.