Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 27th February 2025

ITEM 2 - DA2025/0022 – 101 North Steyne Manly

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

This application was previously presented to the Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel meeting on 22 August 2024.

The application seeks approval for the demolition of a 3 storey brick building containing 8 apartments and the construction of a 5 storey building with 7 apartments and 14 car spaces in one basement level.

The site is zoned R3 – Medium Density Residential under the provisions of the Manly Local Environmental Plan 2013 and the proposed development is permissible with consent.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The site addresses North Steyne, an important and highly visible streetscape directly opposite the North Steyne beach front. The site has a secondary, however also important, address to Pine Lane.

The North Steyne streetscape is comprised of relatively consistent building setbacks, however the existing 3 storey building on the subject site is set back less than adjacent sites. The proposed building is set back further than the existing 3 storey building and is consistent with adjacent building setbacks.

The existing ground level public-private domain interface is comprised mainly of landscape adjacent to the footpath in front of masonry front fences. Front gardens contain low level landscaping. The proposed public-private interface follows and improves upon the established pattern of landscaping in front of a masonry front fence with landscaping behind the fence in the front setback.

The existing Pine Lane streetscape is comprised of a wide range of fences, garages and car ramps, service cupboards, built forms and landscape treatments along the lane frontage. The proposed design contains a fence in front of a landscaped setback to the building, a waste cupboard and a car ramp. The landscape in the proposed design enhances the existing lane frontage.

Recommendations

1. The proposed front and rear building setbacks and ground level interface design between the public and private domains, are consistent with the existing streetscapes. Implementation of the landscape recommendations below will enhance the streetscapes.

Scale, built form and articulation

The North Steyne streetscape is comprised of 4 – 5 storey apartment buildings. The top storeys of these buildings are generally contained within roof forms or set back from the levels below. Many of these buildings have relatively low floor-to-floor heights as they were constructed in accordance with earlier building regulations.

The proposed building has a greater overall height than the adjacent 5 storey buildings to the north and south of the site, which is largely due to a raised ground floor level to alleviate flooding concerns and current building regulations requiring increased floor-to-floor heights. The proposed top floor is set back

from all sides above floor levels below, which reduces the visual impact of the top floor viewed from the public realm, in particular from North Steyne.

The pattern of building types along North Steyne has been, historically and up until very recently, comprised of detached apartment buildings with side setbacks. These side setbacks allow for views to be gained from the beachfront park through to Pine Lane and from Pine Lane through to the beachfront park. The apartment buildings are identifiable as discrete forms, each with its own architectural character.

The adjoining existing building at 98-100 North Steyne is built to the side boundary with a 3 storey high protrusion from the main 5 storey built form. Other buildings to the south also contain these protrusions. The building type created by these protrusions is a hybrid perimeter block / detached building type. Potential views and glimpses of sky and trees between the buildings are blocked, creating an appearance of excessive building bulk and continuous forms, which diminishes the experience of gaining glimpses of the natural setting between buildings and creates a more homogenous overall form.

The proposed building also has a 3 storey protrusion from the otherwise rectilinear 5 storey building form. This blocks the opportunity for gaining glimpses of the natural setting between buildings, reduces air movement and access to light and creates a precedent for future developments to the north to also have zero side setbacks.

At ground level the protrusion blocks pedestrian access from the front to the rear of the property, which would be useful for maintenance and emergency access, even if across private open space. A well designed gate, canopy and possibly landscape could signal entry to the building without impeding access or views. Access from front to rear does not appear to be possible along the northern boundary.

Side, front and rear setbacks at upper levels are otherwise acceptable. The proposed curved building corners and balconies emphasise the stand-alone character of the form, which would be diminished with the proposed 3 storey protrusion.

Recommendations

2. Remove the 3 storey protrusion on the southern side of the building and allow for ground level access to the western side of the site.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

The Pre-DA design contained the ground floor at grade, flood gates to the basement parking and a larger basement footprint to accommodate parking. In response to the Panel's comments, the proposed design now has raised the ground floor level to resolve the flooding issue and avoid flood gates and has introduced car stackers which reduce the basement site coverage. This, in turn, has allowed for deep soil provision to exceed 7% site area and comply with the ADG. These design amendments are fully supported.

Recommendations

3. Include EV charging as recommended in Sustainability below.

Landscape

The proposal has responded positively to previous Panel comments regarding deep soil and landscape. The landscape is significantly improved through the inclusion of the deep soil zones at the front and particularly in the rear lane. The benefits of this deep soil zone should be maximised given it does not meet the 6m min dimension under the ADG, by using permeable paving in the bin area and shifting the retaining wall at the front onto the basement line. This could bring additional benefit to the spa through more integration into the planting beds on slab, rather than providing pots.

Recommendations

4. Maximise the benefits of the deep soil zone as described above.

Amenity

The previous pre-DA design contained windows to habitable rooms along the side boundaries without screening. These windows created potential privacy problems for neighbours and the occupants of this building. This DA submission has responded positively to the Panel comments regarding privacy and proposes louvres along the side boundary windows to resolve any privacy issues between buildings. A window cleaning strategy also ensures maintenance being able to be carried out from inside the apartment. Natural ventilation may be restricted due to the proposed privacy screening (which is supported). Ceiling fans would complement natural ventilation and minimise the use of air conditioning.

The previous pre-DA design also contained two relatively narrow 3 bedroom apartments adjoining each other on Levels 2 and 3, extending between the beach side and the lane side of the development. The proposed design re-orientates these apartments so that wider 3 bedroom apartments are orientated towards the beach and 2 bedroom apartments are orientated towards the lane. This approach enhances the amenity of the apartments, particularly the apartments addressing the beach.

It is noted that the curved, cantilevered balconies addressing the beach potentially reduce privacy in relation to neighbouring properties, however the provision of planter boxes allows occupants the option of maintaining privacy with landscape and is supported.

Recommendations

5. Provide ceiling fans, as recommended in Sustainability below.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The proposed balcony and side elevation curved forms create a distinctive and handsome architectural character.

The proposed materials and colours, including sand blasted concrete, terrazzo and aluminium metalwork, are appropriate to the materials and colours within the surrounding context and have the potential to create an attractive and durable building.

Recommendations

6. Ensure that proposed materials and colours are retained throughout the design, documentation and construction phases of the development.

Sustainability

This well-designed apartment building has the bones of offering many sustainable living opportunities. The following comments are made to help realise that potential.

The Panel notes the many issues that have been addressed following on from the previous panel. In particular it is noted that:

- Achieving minimum BASIX requirements is required as a bare minimum. This is not leading in sustainability.
- All electric services have been specified for the apartments
- All water fixtures and appliances are min 4 stars and some 6 stars.
- All apartments have achieved 6 stars or more.

- Attempts to reduce the embodied carbon of the concrete generally, and cantilevered balconies to the front in particular.

Recommendations

In addition to what has already be achieved, the following aspects of design and servicing can be easily and cost effectively considered for inclusion:

7. Decarbonisation of energy supply
    - 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
    - Good to see the unshaded roof space used for PV installations. Their efficacy can be greatly enhanced when placed over a green roof, which has additional ecological benefits.
8. EV charging: it would be good to understand how charging (Min 15 amp) to suit level 1 charging will be provided with the car stacker. Also consider charging and storage for E Bikes.
9. Passive design and thermal performance of building fabric
    - The inclusion of ceiling fans to all bedrooms and living rooms will provide comfort with minimal energy while reducing the need and energy required for air-conditioning.
10. Materials
    a. A new area of BASIX, it would be good to further understand how you are aiming to reduce the impact of materials.

       Consideration should be given to:

       i. agreeing to the low emissions options for the concrete noted in the BASIX report,
       ii. continue to reduce the amount of concrete and steel required for the cantilevers at the front of the building.
       iii. dematerialisation throughout
       iv. reducing basement carparking and/or its impacts

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel acknowledges that the design has positively responded to previous Panel comments with regard to privacy, parking, flooding, deep soil, landscape and sustainability. The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form, primarily due to the proposed inclusion of the 3 storey element built to the southern side boundary. The final design should also respond to other detailed recommendations above.