



Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – 27 May 2021

3. REV2021 0014- 321 Condamine St MANLY VALE

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The Panel reviewed an earlier version of the proposal (DA2020/0824 - PLM2019/0190) on 24 September 2020.

The Panel acknowledges that some of the less significant concerns:

- overlooking of adjacent properties to the west,
- resolution of the levels of shop entries relative to the adjoining footpath
- treatment and width of Somerville Place,

have been satisfactorily resolved in consultation with council.

The Panel did not support the previous design and recommended that the proposal should be re-designed *“to provide improved solar access and living areas that can open away from the main road towards the north and west, for all units including units facing Sunshine Street”*.

The Panel also suggested that *“exceeding the height limit and number of storeys in some parts may be supported if it can be shown that amenity within the development and in relation to adjoining sites is significantly improved”*.

This aligns with the general approach of the panel that may be summarised as follows:

Development potential

In the view of the Panel, the ultimate development potential (yield) of a site is determined by the quality of the design, amenity, impacts and perceived public benefit.

It follows that in general, proposals should comply with numerical standards (heights, FSR, setbacks) and other envelope controls.

In other words, the development potential defined by these standards will be taken as a maximum that may only be achieved if the quality of the design is adequate.

Non-compliance

In the Panel's consideration of any non-compliance with planning controls, it is expected that there will be:

- a demonstrable improvement in amenity within the proposal,
- reduced impact on adjoining sites (either existing or in relation to future development potential)
- contributions to the public domain or other public benefits (affordability, environmental performance)

In order to demonstrate the benefits of non-compliance the non-compliant proposal should be benchmarked and compared to a complying 'reference scheme'.

Reference to precedents

Precedents of non-compliance in other proposals, or on other sites, will not be considered a basis for non-compliance in a proposal unless they simply illustrate the benefits noted above.



The Panel notes that there is no density control in the form of a floorspace ratio (FSR) applying to the site. However, an analysis of FSR is a useful guide to what is possible and what may be considered over development.

As a rule-of-thumb shop top housing would achieve a maximum of approximately:

- 0.4-0.5 :1 FSR on the ground level once service areas, car park entries and so are taken into account
- 0.3- 0.4 per level above and where there is a corner site that might achieve a **maximum** of approximately 0.5:1

These approximate FSRs allow for good natural cross ventilation, solar access, avoidance of overshadowing within developments and flexibility in the building confirmation on the site.

Building envelope controls apply to the site, with a height limit of 11m. This assumes a **maximum** 3 storeys.

From this, it is reasonable to interpret the maximum FSR applying to the site to be in the range of 1.0:1 to 1.5:1.

The proposal is approximately 2.1:1 or 140% of what would be considered a maximum amount of development to achieve good solar access and cross-ventilation.

The proposal has very poor (unacceptable levels) of natural ventilation and solar access, has units with single aspect facing an inhospitable main road, and poor outlook.

It has been suggested that the development is 'consistent with the **desired future character** of the area that has been established by the development that has occurred nearby'. The Panel rejects this assertion, and would refer to the nearby development as **undesirable past character**, and as noted above rejects the suggestion that these developments should be referred to as 'precedents' other than to illustrate the pitfalls of overdevelopment on these difficult sites.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The Panel is very supportive of shop-top housing but notes that this may be sited in inhospitable locations and that the overall arrangement and built form should take this into account. In general the type of development is in character and has an appropriate range of uses.

Scale, built form and articulation

The proposal exceeds the height limit.

The Panel notes that there is no density control applying to the site in the form of an FSR. However the Panel considers that the revise proposal is still a significant over-development of the site.

The built form effectively fills the entire envelop and exceeds the height limit.

It is not the role of the Panel to redesign proposals, however in this circumstance , and to be clear the panel recommends a significant reduction in the number of units/floorspace, and evidence of the benefits of exceeding the height limit, with reference to a complying scheme. Then and only then could a variation to the height limit be considered.

Recommendations.

1. Reduce the overall bulk of the building and reduce the GFA by approximately 600sqm
2. Consider an "L" shaped form with a courtyard /roof terrace in the north west corner with the aim of provide dual aspect to as many of the units as possible and improving the relationship to the adjoining sites on Sunshine St.
3. As noted in previous advice and as outlined above, a variation to the height and an increase from 3 to 4 storeys may be considered favourably **if and only if** the benefits compared to a complying scheme can be demonstrated, noting that recommendation #1 would still apply.



The notes and recommendations that follow should not be interpreted as an acceptance of the current scheme. A comprehensive re-design is required, but the Panel also notes that there are many detailed aspects that also require resolution in any revised scheme.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

Vehicular movement should be easy and sweep paths for visitor and 'shopper' should be generous. Service access to retail is good, but access for 'shoppers' to retail is circuitous. This raises the question more widely of the efficacy of requiring underground retail parking for patrons when it is so difficult to access and mixed with residential parking and lobbies.

Recommendations

4. Improve legibility and ease of vehicular movement.
5. Consider a reduction in the amount of car parking on site, this should be discussed with Council staff prior to any amendments to your application.

Landscape

There should be a landscaped courtyard or roof terrace on level 1.

Consideration should be given to a common area roof terrace. If this requires additional height this could be acceptable if located to minimise visual and overshadowing.

Recommendations.

6. Significantly increase the dimensions of the 'light wells or convert to a generous roof terrace or raised courtyard.
7. Consider incorporating an accessible roof terrace for common use.

Façade treatment

The range of façade compositions, materials and colours is supported.

Amenity

The amenity of the dwellings is very poor. There are many aspects that could be improved, but these should be resolved in the re-design. The applicant should refer to the ADG for guidance.

Recommendation.

8. Resolve detailed amenity and interior planning issues, including:
 - Natural light and ventilation of lobbies
 - Room dimensions
 - Locate laundries away from front doors (units 3, 7 etc)
 - "I" shaped configuration of K/L/D areas that will mean constant artificial lighting (unit 6)
 - sealed windows (glass block in lieu of openable window)
 - separation between habitable rooms
 - outlook
 - avoidance of 'snorkel' bedrooms (units 8,10,11 etc)

Sustainability

No sustainability measures in excess of minimum compliance has been included.



Recommendations

9. Consider utilising electric heat pump hot water and induction cooktops to replace the use of gas.
10. The Panel recommends inclusion of a substantial amount of rooftop PV (1.5kW/unit).
11. Add external windows to bathrooms and utility rooms wherever possible including ground level retail toilets.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form. A complete redesign and substantial reduction in the floor area is required. As noted, any breaching of the height controls would need to be supported by an analysis of the benefits compared to a complying scheme.

The Panel refer the applicant to the Apartment Design Guide for aspects related to amenity and internal planning of apartments.