

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 8 December 2022

Item 5 - DA2022/1985 - 27 Waine Street, FRESHWATER

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The proposal has non compliances in building height, number of storeys, side boundary envelope, side setbacks, front setbacks, landscaped open space, deep soil, and ADG separation to the adjoining site.

The Panel's position remains that any non-compliance with planning controls should only be considered where there is:

- a demonstrable improvement in amenity within the proposal, (overshadowing, privacy, access to rooftop open space etc);
- 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).

The proposal does not justify the non-compliances in terms delivering improved outcomes in any of the three areas stated above.

The Panel is of the view that as a consequence of the extent of non-compliances there is a cumulative impact resulting in overdevelopment. In particular, the significant landscape noncompliance resulting from the size of the building footprint is fundamental. The reduction of the building envelope and dwelling numbers would also enable the basement excavation to be reduced in key deep soil areas.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The urban context is adjacent to an R2 zone to the north and is in an R3 zone with generally 3 storey flat buildings, although the adjoining site has a 4-storey flat building of which the eaves heights are in approximate alignment with the proposed development.

The Panel notes that as a curving 'corner' allotment on Waine Street which has a wide road reserve, a variation to the setback control along this boundary (or part thereof) can be justified in terms of the surrounding area character test.

In terms of scale transition to the R2 zone, the northern built form which is 4 storeys high and non-compliant is sited so that it has an effective 3 storey scale when viewed from Waines Street.

The southern frontage is more problematic as the building is effectively 5 storeys, even though the built form is steeped and has a lesser setback (4m) than the prevailing frontage adjacent (6.5m).

Recommendations

1. Notwithstanding the northern frontage has an effective 3 storey scale when viewed from Waines Street, the landscaping/tree canopy in the banked setback zone will need to be designed to protect and enhance the visual quality of the streetscape.
2. The southern setback should be required to be compliant at 6.5m or the built form reduced by 1 storey to meet the surrounding area character test.

Scale, built form and articulation

The flat roof built form has the potential to dominate its surroundings where the existing built form is generally pitched roofs. This visual impact is alleviated by stepping the built form with the topography.



The height non compliances result in minimal detrimental overshadowing impacts in comparison to the complying reference scheme and in themselves are not a major concern to the Panel in terms of amenity impacts.

Key issues are

- The scale of the building footprint has resulted in a non-compliant landscaped open space and in particular the ability of the landscape to accommodate appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities that meet the needs of the occupants both in terms of private open space and communal space.
- Concern about the visual impact of the built form in the south east corner of the site where the building reads as 5 storeys over the carpark entrance particularly when viewed obliquely with the 4 storeys of blank masonry wall on the east elevation. This portion of wall projects forward of the street frontage with a reduced (non-compliant 4m) setback. (The adjacent No.25, though 4 storeys is setback and compliant at 6.5m and does not have an excavated car park entry.)

Recommendations

3. Reduce the height in storeys from five to four on the southern street frontage or reduce the building footprint by increasing the building setback to 6.5m. This will enable opportunities for a rooftop communal open space to compensate for the non-compliant landscaped open area.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

The Panel notes that stair access to carparking is not provided and in the event of lift failure the only access is via the Bin Room after exiting the property.

Recommendations

4. Provide direct stair access to the car park.

Landscape

The Panel notes the landscaped area is significantly non compliant.

All site trees are proposed to be removed significantly reducing the existing canopy cover.

The Panel were very concerned that a endangered tree, The Port Jackson fig *Ficus rubiginosa* on the sites NW corner is scheduled to be removed due to proximity to the proposed basement. The Panel is yet to review Councils tree officers report, however this tree should be preserved and maintained in the current site. The reduction of one dwelling would reduce the requirement for basement volume in the north west corner.

The private open space between Units G02 and G03 is not separated by a landscape planter buffer and relies on fencing for privacy separation.

Recommendations

5. Reduce the basement footprint to enable retention of the existing *Ficus rubiginosa*
6. Increase the landscaped area by providing a significant planter (10m³ - Refer ADG Table 1.5.4) above the basement capable of supporting a small tree to provide increased canopy cover and a landscaped buffer between private open spaces of G02 and G03.

Amenity

The reduced landscape area does not provide adequate space for outdoor recreation, either private or communal.

Stair access to the carpark is not provided so that in the event of lift failure access to the apartment lobby is obtained by exiting the property which results in safety issues at night and exposure to weather.

The eastern façade has habitable windows less than 6m from the boundary that face habitable rooms in No.25 Waine Street with screening devices and so is non-compliant with the ADG.

The adaptable dwelling does not have a bedroom at the living room level.

External bathrooms and laundries do not all have windows

Recommendations

7. Provide landscaped communal open space to rooftop on Level 3 to the southern frontage to compensate for reduced landscaped area in addition to increased landscaping required in Recommendations 5 & 6). This will also reduce the scale of the built form to the southern frontage in addition to changes required in the Recommendation No. 3
8. Provide onsite, secure, sheltered stair access to the carpark
9. Provide natural light and ventilation to all bathrooms and kitchens adjacent to exterior
10. Ensure all window openings are compliant with ADG separation or means to provide appropriate levels of privacy between adjoining dwellings.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The Panel notes that the scheme is in the early stages of development. Whilst the photographic examples of other projects allude to a certain character and palette, they are not definitive. The use of stone, solid timber and off-form concrete (that are shown in these images) is supported. Elevations need to be provided that provide confirmation.

The blank wall on the southern end of the eastern elevation has been patterned with projecting block details. The Panel has concerns that this detailing is not enough to mitigate the scale of the 4-storey blank wall. The masonry detailing proposed would be more successful architecturally if the floor slab edges were not expressed. Further, it is likely that the detailing will result in the off-white blockwork staining due to its orientation (continuous exposure to the wet and shaded south east aspect).

Northern facades have no overhangs or eaves and large expanse of glazed wall

Recommendations

11. Consider the use of less absorptive honed blockwork to minimise staining on severe exposure facades and remove the expressed slab edges, or
12. Consider avoiding large expanses of blank wall with window openings screened for privacy rather than relying on decorative masonry
13. Provide appropriate sun shading to exposed north glazed areas.

Sustainability

The Panel notes the development:

- Does not include ceiling fans in living rooms and bedrooms
- Proposes gas cooktops in all the kitchens
- Unit G01 has a poor NatHERS star rating of 4.7

It is also noted that higher BASIX thermal performance standards will commence on 1 October 2023 will require an **average 7 stars NatHERS, with no unit below 6 stars**. This consistent with the National Construction Code for 2022.

Given the levels of non-compliance the Panel would recommend that any approval be conditional on the following recommendations.

Recommendations

14. Modify the design as necessary so that it achieves a minimum 6-star NatHERS for Unit G.07 while maintaining a minimum 7-star average for the development
15. Provide ceiling fans in bedrooms and living areas



16. Replace gas cooktops with electric induction cooktops
17. Provide PV Panels to serve common areas
18. Provide windows to all external bathrooms and utility rooms
19. Provide EV charging capability so that all spaces are 'EV ready'. e.g. the provision of a backbone cable tray and a dedicated 15A circuit within an EV Distribution Board enabling future installations of a smart EV charger and cabling to the EV Distribution Board.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form.