



Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 22 July 2021

2 DA2021-0744 – 50 Lawrence St FRESHWATER

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General; Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The site is located at the highest point and western extremity of the 'Freshwater Village' Local Centre. It is bound by three streets and as such the proposal is able to be read 'in the round'. Each of the bounding streets has distinctly varied character; vehicle dominated to the west, civic and cosmopolitan along the north and residential along the east. Furthermore, a significant grade change exists about the site, amounting to a complex array of challenges for development.

The panel is supportive of high-quality shop top housing in this location as it will serve to support, enhance, and provide greater access to the outstanding local character of Freshwater.

The proposal consolidates ground floor retail at the northern end of the site where it serves as an appropriate continuation of the prevailing strip retail condition of Lawrence Street and where it is least encumbered by topography.

The housing component is comprised of considered single and double level apartments which respond well to environmental conditions of the site.

The proposal mediates sensitively to its surroundings through form, articulation and materiality and makes use of the topography to efficiently consolidate parking and services on the lower levels of the building.

A zone interface about the southern boundary is addressed with setbacks to create a clear delineation between zones and to allow for seemingly acceptable solar access to the southern neighbour.

Recommendation

1. Provide view from sun analysis demonstrating adequate solar access to southern neighbour

Scale, built form and articulation

The proposal is set over four (4) storeys, however is articulated into a series of horizontal planes which set back incrementally in response to the site's topography to create a broadly three (3) storey form. There is a commendable cohesiveness between the form and the quality outdoor spaces it creates including the integration of the street awning into the 'language' of the building as well as private open space in the form of terraces open to the sky.

The proposal exhibits a minor exceedance of the height limit. The panel agrees that there are negligible environmental effects to the public domain as a result of this exceedance.

Floor to floor heights throughout the proposal are minimal such that careful coordination will be required to achieve ADG compliant ceiling heights, in particular where terraces are located above habitable rooms. Flush door thresholds are indicated in sections, but not enough information is provided to satisfy the panel that drainage falls and construction tolerances are adequate to achieve compliant ceiling heights within the building heights stated.

Recommendation

2. Provide confirmation of terrace drainage and constructional tolerances demonstrating adequacy of stated building heights or else, amend building heights to accommodate adequate tolerances.



Access, vehicular movement and car parking

The proposal utilises site falls to consolidate lobby, servicing, garage entries and parking on site in a most discreet and efficient configuration, considering the constraints.

The panel has suggested that this configuration avoids expensive excavation and vertical circulation infrastructure and may one day lend itself to effective non-vehicular usage, should the demand arise.

Landscape

Whilst communal open space has not been accommodated on site, opportunities for communal outdoor recreation exist in abundance in close proximity to the site. The panel feels it is appropriate that landscape space on site have been effectively utilised as deep soil buffer planting and private rooftop terraces in lieu of communal open space.

Species selection of mostly natives is appropriate.

The architectural facade strategy and visual amenity relies upon architectural plantings, thus the success and maintenance of the plantings is imperative.

Recommendations.

3. Ensure planter volumes are adequate to contain growing medium, tolerances and drainage infrastructure required to support extent of climbing plants illustrated
4. Consider including a condition for establishment and initial maintenance for architectural plantings.
5. Provide greater detail of planters on the Dowling Street frontage
6. In consultation with Council investigate the possibility of small planting beds at ground level in the public domain to 'soften/green' the building /footpath interface.

Amenity

Dwellings have been carefully considered to allow for high levels of amenity including exemplary access to daylight, including to kitchens and some bathrooms. Of particular note are the two storey 'cross over' apartments which are configured to bring light and sky view to the point of entry via the stairwells.

As the south-west apartment on level 02 faces south and west, there is the potential for uncomfortable privacy interface with the southern neighbour and perhaps the elevated public footpath. The panel feel that privacy to this apartment could be improved by allowing the view to be shuttered.

Recommendation.

7. Investigate enhanced privacy to south-west apartment on Level 02

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The proposal contributes to its surroundings through considered facade expression and a well-considered hierarchy of materials and facade devices that relate well to the context. The panel recognises that details such as the deeply articulated concrete slab edge profile, integrated facade planting and sandstone base are integral to the scheme's success.

The panel feel that the scheme may benefit further from refinement of the sandstone cladding and screening.

Recommendation.

8. Concrete slab edge profile, integrated facade planting, screens and sandstone base to be retained and refined.



Sustainability

The panel recognises many sustainability initiatives inherent in the design including; excellent daylight access to kitchen and bathroom spaces within apartments, external venetian shading to west facing windows and natural ventilation to common areas.

Spaces currently provisioned for parking offer an opportunity for future adaptation to non-vehicular space, especially due to the availability of level access.

Recommendations

10. Consider full electrification of apartments in lieu of gas.
11. Consider design aspects of the car parking spaces that may enhance and allow for post-vehicle adaptation of the garage spaces.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel commends the design approach overall and supports the proposal in its current form with the minor modifications and amendments recommended above.