

DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY PANEL MEETING REPORT

DA2025/0042 35-39 Carter Road BROOKVALE

PANEL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

This Development Application was presented to the Panel at Pre-DA stage on 1/02/2024. The advice provided the following conclusion:

The Panel commends the applicant for submitting preliminary design work for consideration. The Panel considers that, whilst much work remains to be done, the overall intentions of the scheme appear to be sound. It encourages the applicant to develop the design further -in line with the recommendations made below - and looks forward to reviewing the DA proposal.

24th April 2025

- Overall, the proposal presents as intricate and highly articulated, which is generally commendable.
- Attempts have been made to activate edges, with many tenancies having direct street address. However, not all tenancies currently demonstrate adequate amenity or building performance is achieved, nor outcomes for the ground plane resolution along Carter Street.
- The initiative to retain the existing building fabric is commendable in principle. However, there are questions around the viability and/or extent of retention given proposed wide range of interventions.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

- The site is within the Brookvale Strategic Plan that will allow greater height than current permitted.
- Variations to current permitted height and the 4.5m street setbacks are proposed.
- Analysis:
 - Existing easement on 35 Carter Street is not identified – will this be extinguished?
 - No real streetscape analysis provided – expected particularly where departures from public policies are proposed.
 - Also see Panel's previous Recommendations below.
- Setbacks – the sought variations are generally supported noting the zero setback along West Street is due to the retained existing building. The Carter Street setback proposes 4m (a variation of 0.5m), which in principle may be supportable, but requires amendments



to deliver more opportunities for meaningful deep soil, consolidated planting and/or canopy planting – see recommendations at Landscape and at Amenity for streetscape outcomes.

- Streetscape public domain interface:
 - West Street needs improvement including a footpath along the northern edge of building linking each tenancy entry.
 - Carter Street building entries – further consideration of pedestrian entry location(s) is needed to minimise, if not avoid, streetscape impacts of the extensive ramping along Carter Street. Also see comments and recommendations at Landscape and at Amenity.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

- I. *To reinforce and inform the design intentions of the project a comprehensive site analysis of the surrounding urban condition, including the size and scale of existing and future development as well as the streetscape character, should be prepared and included as a part of future submissions.*
 - a. Comment: Further streetscape elevation study should support the sought variation to permitted building height and setbacks.

Further recommendations for DA:

1. Include a recognition and design Response to Country – while only a single site, this will present opportunities for design in a considered continuum of water and topography.

Scale, built form and articulation

- Height – the proposed variation is considered acceptable in context of the Draft Brookvale Strategic Plan and the relatively minor departure being limited to the south-western corner of the site.
- Massing - generally, the proposed massing remains appropriate compared to the pre-DA design.
- Adaptive reuse - the Panel supports the principle retaining the existing building fabric but questions whether the intended brickwork and structure will retain its integrity due to the extent of changes (such as far larger openings) required to structural layout, increased sizes of openings. Further amendments may be necessary – see also comments and recommendations at Amenity and at Façade Treatments and Aesthetics.
- Articulation – generally there appears an intent to articulate and differentiate retained and new work including by using subtle intents/offsets where the fabric changes. The Panel encourages further design development to improve the legibility of retained and new work.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

- II. *Further design consideration of the 1st floor vehicular / entry space should be undertaken, including the edge currently taken up by carparking over-looking West Street.*
- Comment: Screening across the car spaces addressing West Street is proposed. This generally improves the elevation so the separated massing of Level 1 above appears more cohesive as a whole above the Ground Floor base. The proportions of the Level 1 tenancy massing appears more balanced along West Street.
 - Comment: However, further consideration is required to ensure the screen element is better integrated/coordinated between the Ground and Level 1 presentation to successfully resolve the void under the IN 11 Mezzanine and proposed openings on the Ground Floor below. See also comments and recommendations at Façade Treatment and Aesthetics.
- III. *Consideration might be given to another use for part or all of this outdoor space, e.g. break-out area with a pergola, one that can signal to passers-by what kind of activities the building houses. But also help to connect the public space of the street and surrounds with the particular uses of the building.*
- Comment: While the Panel supports introducing some landscape in the Level 1 car park, it appears unlikely to be used as an outdoor space for workers due to the level of solar exposure, lack of realistic access, and low amenity being slotted between vehicles. To avoid further impacts to the provision of required car spaces, it appears a seating area may be better served by the café terrace at ground level and opportunities for informal seating around planters along the street(s).
 - Comment: See also comments and recommendations at Landscape and at Sustainability.
 - Comment: The successful resolution of the West Street elevation will likely resolve the engagement of this street frontage and public domain.

Further recommendations for DA:

- Minor amendments to West Street to better integrate the screening and resolve the internal planning layouts, openings, and relationships of void /mezzanine in the vertical composition of the elevation.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

Pedestrian access

- Carter Street - Further consideration regarding accessible paths of entry to tenancies IN 01 and IN 04 Mezzanine is needed to minimise, if not avoid, the impact of the ramp in the street and maximise potential for meaningful deep soil planting. See also comments and recommendations at Landscape.
- Lower Ground tenancies' pedestrian accessibility to be clarified for IN 04, IN 05 and IN 06. While vehicle and pedestrian separation is provided, the pedestrian access relies on stairs.

Vehicles

- Car park ramp duplication - Opportunities to relocate the Level 1 car park driveway to a higher point of the site along West Street could be considered to avoid the duplicated 2-way upper and lower car park ramps which tend to dominate the Carter Street address.



- The proposed side-by-side location may introduce some confusion for tenancy access and introduces inefficiencies with the Level 1 ramp being located at the lowest point on the site.
- Splitting the car park ramp location may increase opportunities for an additional Lower Ground tenancy to have enjoy a street frontage that also improves natural daylight and ventilation performance. However, this would need to be balanced with the adaptive reuse and retention strategy, and whether the combination of vehicle entries for tenancies IN 01, IN 02 and IN 03 dominate the frontage and/or resulted in possible loss of on-street parking more widely.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

- IV. *Consideration of how to better demarcate shared-traffic zones to ensure safety and a habitable environment for end-users.*
- a. Comment: The proposed DA has included a pedestrian entry adjacent to the Lower Ground level vehicle entry. It appears more like a fire egress in the street rather than a safe pedestrian entry point or building 'entry' character
 - b. Comment: The Panel questions the accessibility of the path of pedestrian entry to the Lower Ground tenancies.

Further recommendations for DA:

3. Pedestrian access :
 - a. Existing ground levels appear able to provide an accessible pedestrian entry in West Street to avoid the extent of ramping for IN 01.
 - b. Relocate the start point of any pedestrian ramp for the IN 04 Mezzanine level to the high point along West Street.
 - c. Confirm accessibility requirements for the all tenancies.
4. Consider options for relocating the Level 1 car park ramp to West Street.

Landscape

- The Panel notes the sought 0.5m departures from the DCP min 4.5m along Carter Street in context of proposed zero setbacks along West Street.
- There is little to no deep soil landscape achieved within the 4m setback along Carter Street. The proposed ramps, dual car parking entries and the café terrace results in a streetscape of hardstand with only small planter areas.
- Opportunities to increase street tree planting in West Street could be further explored.
- It was noted that upper-level window box planters can be accessed through operable windows for maintenance which is positive. However, the planter size, widths and depths appear minimal. If pursued, these need to demonstrate adequate soil and irrigation is provided to ensure long-term and consistent plant health. See also comments and recommendations for Façade Treatment and Aesthetics regarding signage.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

- V. *Aerial photos indicate that there were previously street trees which should ideally be reinstated.*
 - a. Comment: Street trees are retained, and a new tree is proposed to complete the streetscape. This new tree should match the species of the existing trees.
- VI. *Review opportunities at Carter Road verge with Council for street tree planting of large canopy trees.*
 - a. See previous comment.
 - b. Comment: The design of the Café terrace and planters appears busy and fragments elements/spaces. This has the effect of compromising both the terrace amenity and broader landscape outcomes.
- VII. *Roof-Top Garden recommended to provide quality amenity to the industrial units especially if the intention is for more “up market” tenants.*
 - a. Comment: A small area for seating and landscape has been provided in the upper-level car park. The amenity of this space would be limited due to its location in the corner of the car park. When two cars are parked either side access would be limited, and the space would not be pleasant as a place to sit.
 - b. Comment: However, this Level 1 space has potential to become a larger consolidated planter while the seating amenity could be provided at the street level, making use of the outdoor amenity provided by the café.
- VIII. *Develop detailed scheme for adjacent outdoor area to the proposed café including detail planting, paving, outdoor seating and small trees.*
 - a. Comment: The scheme has developed including planters for some separation from Carter Street and an indication of outdoor seating on the landscape plans.
 - b. Comment: However, these planters are small and could be simplified and consolidated to provide fewer larger planters. This would reduce maintenance and improve plant health. This should be coordinated with amendments to the pedestrian ramp.
- IX. *Further design exploration is needed including planter boxes of sufficient depth to support large plants/small trees and to optimise potential for a pergola to cover/shade car spaces.*
 - a. Comment: Amendments are required to demonstrate a high-quality landscape and shade outcome is achieved for the Level 1 car parking deck area.
 - b. See previous comment.

Further recommendations for DA:

- 5. Amenity of the entry area on the street frontage could be enhanced by reconsidering the pedestrian ramp, café terrace and café planter arrangements.
- 6. The access ramp has an impost on the frontage both spatially and visually due to the switchback and handrails. This may be improved if access was provided from the higher corner of West Street. Based on the survey this would significantly reduce the ramp length (footprint) and allow it to be better integrated with access stairs and planters and allow the space gained to be used for a small seating area.
- 7. Consider relocating the entry to IN 01 from Carter Street to West Street to further minimise the ramp length. Amendments to the pedestrian ramp, Ground Floor tenancy entry locations, café terrace and associated planters should be well coordinated.



8. In consultation with Council, consider the need for a footpath to West Street for pedestrian access from the car park. This should be considered with a relocated pedestrian entry for IN 01 and potential for street trees including blisters within on-street parking.
9. Deleting the proposed Level 1 seating area intended for workers will maximise the area and soil volume consolidated for larger scale planting and provide some cooling shade.
10. Consider deleting the proposed Level 1 window box planters unless they demonstrate viable soil volumes - a consistent building line with viable soil width and depth, and maintenance access that will achieve the needed consistent plant health over the long term in the public domain. Coordinate with recommendation at Façade Treatment and Aesthetics.

Amenity

- Fire egress – the Panel notes the corridor proposed along the southern wall at the Lower Ground level and the associated flow-on layout changes to parking being pushed north and the slightly reduced internal areas for INs 04 and 05 compared to the Pre-DA.
- Daylight and ventilation into Lower Ground tenancies – lack of natural daylight and ventilation is not supported. It may be possible for IN 04 to include a window by relocating the bathroom. However, the Panel questions the amenity for tenancies IN 05 and IN 06 (IN 06 is also under the car park ramp). Consider opportunities in context of comments regarding the side-by-side car park ramps.
- Ventilation - Provision for ventilation ducting should be demonstrated – these will likely extend through Level 1 tenancies to the roof.
- Café – clarify the location of a WC needed for the café tenancy that ensures an adequate internal area for a café that supports the outdoor seating area is accommodated.
- Accessibility – Clarification of requirements for pedestrian accessibility from the street to all tenancies should be provided.
- Solar protection – facades with aspects within east through north and west appear to lack external solar protection – See also Façade Treatments and Aesthetics comments and recommendations.
- See Landscape comments and recommendations to simplify the Carter Street ramp, café terrace and planters to maximise the streetscape, amenity and landscape outcomes.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

- X. *Ensure internal amenity of individual tenancies is optimised with low-carbon materials and energy performance.*
 - a. Comment: Clarify daylight and ventilation performance for Lower Ground Tenancies.
 - b. Comment: See comments at Sustainability.
- XI. *Encourage good indoor-outdoor interaction.*
 - a. Comment: Amendments to the Carter Street ground plane and access is required to maximise the indoor-outdoor amenity and street engagement.



XII. Consideration of how to better demarcate shared-traffic zones to ensure safety and a habitable environment for end-users.

- a. Comment: Resolution is subject to clarification of pedestrian accessibility for Lower Ground level tenancies.
- b. Comment: See comments and recommendation regarding vehicle entry locations which may provide opportunities to enhance the separation of pedestrian and vehicle zones.

Further recommendations for DA:

11. Include shading to protect from harsh solar loads.
12. Amend the Carter Street ramping, pedestrian access points and tenancy entry IN 01, landscape and terrace configuration.
13. Explore how natural daylight and ventilation can be improved for IN 04, 05 and 06, and natural cross ventilation for all tenancies.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

- The Panel supports in principle the retention of the existing building. Further information is required to confirm the viability of the retained fabric.
- Demolition plans, all floor plans, elevations and sections should clearly differentiate the existing fabric being retained and new work. The proposal makes departures from the configuration and structural logic of the existing building resulting in ungainly and/or complicated patching.
- Materials are generally acceptable.
- Signage – the main building sign locations are supported. However, the proposed tenancy signage strategy requires reconsideration:
 - The number and locations of signs across every tenancy window assembly appears ad-hoc and detracts from the overall composition and streetscape outcomes of the elevations.
 - This is exacerbated where window box planters do not propose a consistent building line but appear inconsistent and uncoordinated.
 - And also exacerbated if not well integrated as a considered elements of retained brickwork and interventions of new materials with the composition of elevations.
- External shading to glazing is needed and should be incorporated into the elevations as integrated building elements and to deliver good façade performance over the long term.
- The proposed arches within metal framing may be a person choice, but risks inauthenticity. Further consideration of the arch resolution may benefit the strategy for retaining the existing building fabric.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

XIII. The Panel encourages the use of authentic (rather than fake) materials and applications in line with the way they need to be assembled. Further development of the junctions and interfaces between these materials is encouraged.

- a. Comment: See comments and recommendations at Sustainability.

Further recommendations for DA:

14. Consider the necessity of the extent of alterations to the existing façade and reconsider the design approach proposing arches within rectangular framing.
15. Consider making slight adjustments to better match window bays - existing openings/solids.
16. Reconsider the tenancy individual signage strategy.
17. Delete window boxes and replace with a cohesive horizontal signage zone including a consistent offset alignment from the wall face around the building, and vertical alignment for tenancies above and/or below. Consider the signage as an integrated building element.
18. Demonstrate effective external solar screening for openings/glazing along all openings exposed to the east through west arc well integrated with the façade design.

Sustainability

- The Panel commends the applicant on retaining the existing building, an essential part of good architecture in a time of urgent carbon reduction in the built environment. However, the larger openings currently indicated will require overly complicated engineering to ensure the stability of the walls.
- Rooftop PV appears proposed and is supported – further detail required to maximise provision and potential for integration with shading.
- Provision for EV charging, battery storage and implications for substation requirements should be clarified.
- Natural daylight and ventilation – Ground Floor and Level 1 appear generally able to achieve good natural daylight and ventilation. However, improvements are required for good natural cross ventilation. Lower Ground Floor access to natural daylight and ventilation is inadequate.

Recommendations

Previous recommendations from Pre-DA stage:

XIV. The Panel would recommend that the building be naturally ventilated, if possible. Ensuring good cross-ventilation is therefore essential. This should be easy to achieve for many of the spaces especially those that front the streets. Top-level tenancies that are adjacent to boundaries might benefit from operable skylights in order to achieve this.

- a. Comment: The Panel believes this has not been resolved and more work needs to be done to achieve successful cross-ventilation.

XV. The solar impact of the glazing needs to be assessed to ensure a sustainable internal environment – in line with seasonal heating and cooling requirements- can be maintained.

- a. Comment: This does not appear to have been addressed, with excessive areas of glazing to the western façade in particular. The Panel recommends these be

reduced in size with integrated shading to help manage heat loads while allowing appropriate views and ventilation. This should be considered also in context of comments and recommendation at Façade Treatment and Aesthetics.

Further recommendations for DA:

19. Opportunities for minimising urban heat through the introduction of pergolas at the Level 1 car park should be considered.
20. Reduce the size of the windows in the existing brick walls, working closely with the existing opening sizes.
21. To further highlight and celebrate the retention of the existing building, clearly differentiate the materials for the new work.
22. Salvage all bricks and other materials from the demolished buildings for reuse in the project.
23. Look at leaving bricks in un-finished form rather than re-painting or covering over with new finishes. This will be cheaper and offer a more sustainable building by minimising painted-finishes.
24. All services should be electric – gas (for tenancy cooking, hot water and heating) should be avoided.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel **supports** the development subject to amendments needed to address issues raised.