

## Item 6 - DA2023/0304 - 87 Blackbutts Road FRENCHS FOREST

### PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **General**

Council advice at pre lodgement was that the application is seeking to largely replicate the building footprint of the approved development of DA2020/0341 and notes that given general compliance with the non-discretionary provisions of SEPP Housing 2021 and similar envelope, this would justify the additional dwelling on site.

The Panel has taken into consideration the non-compliances in the existing approval in the rear setback and in the side boundary envelope controls.

#### **Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character**

The proposal is an improvement on the existing approval. The first-floor plan in the approved development was configured in one contiguous form whereas the current proposal better articulates the first floor as three separate masses. The Panel was of the view that the current proposal is a more appropriate response to the existing neighbourhood character.

#### **Scale, built form and articulation**

The scale and built form are considered acceptable in the context of the existing approval being a benchmark.

#### **Access, vehicular movement and car parking**

The driveway/residential entry path needs to be considered as a landscaped element.

#### **Recommendation**

1. Refer *Landscape* and *Façade treatment, aesthetics*.

#### **Landscape**

The landscape plan presented to the Panel takes into several of the Panel's previous recommendations.

#### **Recommendations**

2. TH4 courtyard should have a *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* as per the other units.
3. The Panel recommends that the OSD garden associated with TH1 have a step or ramp access into the basin space in order to maximise the use of outdoor areas for residents. To achieve this, it is suggested that a suitable turf species be used in lieu of extensive sedges and rushes as currently specified.
4. The Panel recommends that the landscape plans indicate a trellis system on the Eastern boundary wall that could support evergreen vines as specified. As noted in the *Façade treatment / aesthetics*.
5. The Panel highly recommend the inclusion of an arbour structure with appropriate climbing species to improve the visual experience of the constrained driveway space and to provide shade.
6. The Panel recommend that the proposed hedge species on the Western, Southern, and Northern boundary be substituted for a native species such as Lilli Pilli that can grow to a height above 1.8m in order to provide a good evergreen native screen.

7. T1. Mature Broad leaved Paperbark. Building footprint slightly encroaches the structural rootzone. Arborist to specifically address the requirements for protection during construction to ensure the tree remains viable.

## ***Amenity***

The Panel notes recommendations for living room skylights has been accepted. Living rooms spaces are long and narrow in proportion. The vista through living spaces from the entry to a blank wall with a highlight window is not supported.

The opportunity exists to provide windows with sun hoods to the north facades of upper bedroom and upper living room windows to improve passive solar design and improved natural cross ventilation.

The Panel notes that 15 rooms are to have dedicated air conditioning and the location of condenser units has not been addressed.

## **Recommendations**

8. Provide a full height glazed return to the Living Room north facing window wall so that a vista to outside is achieved at the entry point. Ensure landscape screen planting or privacy screens are provided to the window return to prevent side boundary overlooking to neighbours private open space.
9. Increase the width of living spaces to the maximum possible by reducing the bedroom width to the minimum possible. i.e. 1.2m from the foot of the bed to robe. Reduce the length of the Living room to maintain current FSR. This will increase side boundary setbacks and landscape screening areas slightly.
10. Provide windows with sunhoods to upper rooms with north facades.
11. The drawings should identify the location of all condenser units for air conditioning/hot water. The location should not be in private open space or areas where it will affect the amenity of adjoining dwellings or areas visible from the public domain or the shared entry space. Enclosures should be integrated into the existing building envelope and should not be roof mounted.

## ***Façade treatment/Aesthetics***

The façade to the driveway shared entry zone reads as a wall of garage doors.

## **Recommendations.**

12. Ensure the garage doors are high quality natural finishes such as timber sectional lift doors.
13. Reduce the width of each garage doors to approximately 3.8m. This will allow adequate access for bikes and wheelchairs to the garage while a car is parked.
14. Provide planted trellises for creepers across the driveway to create a garden character to the shared entry space.



## ***Sustainability***

The revised design will require the BASIX to be updated.

The BASIX Certificate indicates gas instantaneous which is not recommended. Note that BASIX has updated its greenhouse gas emissions factors and the calculations associated with heat pumps and (induction cooktops).

The use of PV to offset BASIX Energy in TH4 is commended.

The Panel notes that NCC 2022 requires new Class 1a dwellings built after October 1, 2023, must have at least a 7-star NatHERS rating.

The applicant has stated they are not obliged to adopt the sustainability recommendations set out in the previous report. However, some of these are zero or minimal cost (e.g. ceiling fans) and others may be required to meet BASIX (e.g. the PVs).

Therefore, it is recommended that the applicant provides a more reasonable approach to demonstrate their consideration of sustainability initiatives, and the Panel's previous recommendations still apply:

## **Recommendations**

15. Confirm 7-star NatHERS is achieved for each dwelling.
16. All services should be electric – gas for cooking, hot water and heating should be avoided.
17. Heat pump systems for apartments or other ways of providing electric hot water should be considered.
18. The storage of hot water can be considered a de facto battery if heated by PVs during the day.
19. Provide ceiling fans to all bedrooms and living rooms.
20. Provide outdoor drying areas for each dwelling.
21. Onsite power generation and battery storage. 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.
22. Unshaded roof space is a valuable resource for PV installations.
23. Provide PV solar as per TH4 to all other dwellings to offset electrical loads.
24. EV charging: Provide EV charging points for each unit (Min 15 amp) to suit level 1 charging.
25. Passive design and thermal performance of building fabric.

26. The Panel notes that higher energy standards are under consideration by the Department of Planning in the document 'BASIX Higher Standards- Proposed changes for feedback'. Available here <https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/draftplans/under-consideration/basix-higher-standards>.
27. The Department advises that the higher BASIX thermal performance standards will be at least average 7 stars NatHERS rating system and minimum 6 stars any dwelling. This consistent with what the Federal Government proposes for the National Construction Code for 2022. Given the coastal location a very comfortable indoor environment should be achievable.

## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel supports the proposal subject to the recommendations above being incorporated.**