

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### **3 - DA2023/0995 – 52-54 Brighton Street FRESHWATER**

## **PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***General***

The Panel notes that the scheme has been before the Panel before. The previous Panel made 24 recommendations following that meeting. The Panel acknowledges that improvements have been made to the scheme. However further improvements are recommended before the scheme could be supported.

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

The FSR non-compliance (SEPP Housing) was raised previously as a concern. The application claims an FSR of 0.598:1 which represents an exceedance of 0.5:1 in the non-discretionary standard.

The Panel remains concerned about the FSR non-compliance and believes that full compliance with SEPP Housing control would deliver a better building fit on the site. The proposed built form does not -as yet -fit within the general character and built form of the area.

Improvements are sought in order to mitigate the overall bulk of the building (especially as it is viewed from the street) and to reduce the effective length of facades on side boundaries.

### **Recommendations**

1. Reduce the building footprint and conform with the FSR (SEPP Housing).

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

The proposal to have two dwellings per floor presenting as a single form to the street is problematic as it creates a wide building frontage that is incompatible with its neighbourhood context. This is exacerbated by the horizontality of balcony and roof projections.

The Panel considers that the through-site link mid-way between the two buildings is an improvement on the previous scheme. Better interface between the exterior landscape and the rooms adjacent to this space are sought. A better sequence of arrival (at the termination of the 1:14 entry ramp) is also sought – perhaps combining ramp and stair and relocating planter against Unit 1- to improve sight-lines and movement to the lift and provide better acoustic and visual privacy to Bed 3 of the front corner unit.

The Panel considers that the planter boxes proposed on side boundaries of the top floor units (in the designated non-trafficable area) are inadequate due to privacy and maintenance concerns. Permanent fixed privacy screens are sought. A more permanent planting strategy (one that doesn't rely on the uncertain longevity of moveable planter boxes) is also sought.

### **Recommendations**

2. Reduce the width of balconies (pulling them back into towards the building on both south and north sides) and consider introducing vertical break mid-way between each paired configuration (thereby reducing their length and allowing the building to appear more as two narrower forms to the street);
3. Consider reducing the length of the balconies, pulling them back in from the side/corner by say 1.5m

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

The Panel remains concerned about the excessive amount of car parking that is proposed. The scheme appears to deliver in the order of 3 spaces per dwelling.

### **Recommendations**

4. Consideration given to a reduction in the amount of car parking to reduce associated excavation;

## ***Landscape***

The landscape features of the proposal are generally supported.

### **Recommendations**

5. The free-standing planter boxes on the non-trafficable roof areas should ideally be replaced with more permanent fixtures and consideration given to a combination of structural elements that support a very hardy, endemic climbing vine with an automatic irrigation system fitted to each planter;
6. The raised planter boxes are very narrow at @500mm and should be widened overall with at least one area that is not less than 2.5m square with a soil depth of not less than 800mm for successful small tree planting;
7. It should be clearly marked on all plans that the stand of trees in the south-eastern corner are to be retained and protected as depicted on the landscape plans;
8. Consider planting 2 x large, endemic canopy trees in the front setback.
9. Consider the use of a structural root cell to be used with the 2 x large endemic canopy trees at the front to assist in the creation of the most suitable growing conditions / microclimate to assist in canopy replenishment.
10. Consider the use of a porous paving material in the mixed-use garden bed / circulation areas to assist in the management of overland flow and potential water harvesting.

## ***Amenity***

Improvements are sought to address privacy concerns (on neighbouring properties) of top floor side terraces.

Consider introducing a privacy screen north of the ground floor planter box (located mid-way of circulation) so that visual privacy to "MPR"s of units 3&4 is maintained from entry and circulation corridors of U1&U2.

### **Recommendations**

11. Address privacy concerns as described above.

## ***Façade treatment/Aesthetics***

The Panel notes the use of white rendered exterior finish to walls. Consideration should be given to face brick alternative. This material is likely to provide greater longevity (affecting both aesthetics, sustainability and maintenance).

### **Recommendations**

12. Consider use of more durable external wall materials for example face brick.

## ***Sustainability***

As noted previously, the Panel is concerned about the excessive amount of car parking. This encourages car use instead of alternatives and requires significant amount of additional excavation to accommodate. Both aspects do not lead to positive sustainable outcomes.

Introduction of natural light and ventilation to all bathrooms and wet-areas adjacent to external walls is encouraged.

## **Recommendations**

13. Remove gas appliances and replace with electric alternatives such as heat pump hot water and induction cooktops;
14. Consideration given to introduction of green roof (under the solar panels).
15. Consider providing windows to all bathrooms adjacent to external walls.

## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel notes that improvements have been made to scheme since it last came before the Panel. However further amendments are recommended.**