

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – Date 26 October 2023

4 – DA2023/1395 – 1010, 1012, 1014 Pittwater Rd COLLAROY

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Generally site comprises 1010,102,1014 Pittwater Road, Collaroy and is Zoned B1. Land to its east is zoned R2

Proposal is for shop top housing including 2 retail tenancies, 22 apartments and car parking in basement and at grade.

The applicant seeks a 26% variation in height and 1 storey more than allowed.

While the submission has responded to many of the previous panel's comments, further development is required.

The Panel acknowledges that the following amendments have been made in response to the last Panel's recommendations;

- Reduction in units and FSR – 24 > 22 plus less space in NE corner
- blank wall to neighbours - alignment of courtyard with neighbours and low use rooms
- Compliance with front 5m setback to third storey.
- Increased setback from rear – ADG suggests 6m, R2 zone says anything has to be 6m from boundary. 6m setback to parking on GF, L1 6m setback, L2 9m setback. Complemented by large trees in the yards of the neighbours
- Maintenance to central courtyard enabled by access from common areas
- Inclusion of some common areas + communal open space – including roof top open space (must be away from R2 and no impacts) and ground floor inside gym/games room
- Amenity – of single aspect apartments to Pittwater Road. Changed so now only 1 apartment with single aspect
- Removal of 'snorkel' bedrooms
- Provision of light and ventilation to some but not all corridors
- Pergolas – included on top floor
- Sustainability – PVs on roof, EV chargers etc

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The application does not include adequate site analysis to demonstrate synthesis of the design outcome. More thorough site analysis to accurately describe what is happening on the site and in the neighbourhood needs to be undertaken so that it can inform the design. See ADG Appendix 1 – Site Analysis Checklist

The location of the site next to R2 on the east requires careful consideration of its impact on the smaller scale buildings. While the scale of the building presents well to the street on Pittwater Road, it is more imposing to the residents in the R2 zone to the east. Consideration should be given to moving some of the bulk towards the street.

The high wall to the neighbour on the south is not considerate. The opportunity to reduce its height was discussed and agreed, with care taken to ensure adequate acoustic and visual privacy for both the proposal and its neighbours.

Recommendations

1. Site analysis – needs to be more thorough
2. Reconsider where the height of the upper floors lies and how this impacts the neighbours to the east.
3. Reduce the height of the southern wall of the courtyard to increase the amenity of the space for both the scheme and the neighbours. Include appropriate measures for acoustic and visual privacy for all.

Scale, built form and articulation

Whilst two of the proposed cores have access to natural light and air via internal courtyards, it is a shame northern most core does not – apartments off this core are most problematic as they are very deep and necessarily have inefficient circulation and dark, internal spaces (see dining room on unit No. 16).

Rear setback from 26 Ocean Grove not dealt with well – should really have a 6m setback on this block as well to allow liveable rooms

A significant breach of the height control has been proposed. The additional height is in the order of almost a full floor height and offers no benefit save the provision of additional apartments. The reason and benefits of the additional height has not been adequately explained or justified. The panel cannot support the additional height as proposed as there are many outstanding amenity issues which require to be resolved.

Floor to floor heights proposed are likely inadequate, especially where terraces are located above habitable spaces.

Recommendations

4. Reduce thickness of buildings and re-plan to allow greater access of light to all common corridor spaces as well as habitable spaces within apartments
5. Improve interface with rear of 26A Ocean Grove. Set back 6m so that adequate building separation, privacy and daylight access may be achieved in the event that lot is developed in the future
6. Exceedance of the height limit is not supported as proposed.
7. Increase floor to floor heights to allow for adequate building tolerances

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

Pedestrian access to apartments from Pittwater Road is via two separate entries. In the instance of the Southern lobby, where entry is shared with 'shop access' from car park, wayfinding is not intuitive. In the instance of the Northern entry, a long, dark and narrow corridor is proposed.

Vehicle entry and fire egress have been made discreet and recessive wherever possible, which is positive.

Indent to retail facade associated with driveway visibility splay creates an awkward and ambiguous undercroft space adjacent to retail tenancy 02. it has the effect of increasing the impact of the driveway. What are the opportunities to make something of this space?

Recommendations

8. Explore simplifying residential entries, connecting to courtyards wherever possible and allowing sources of natural light to assist in wayfinding.
9. Explore separating retail lobby and residential lobby to provide a greater sense of security
10. Consider how to improve undercroft space associated with driveway visibility splay

Landscape

The submitted landscape plans provide sufficient information for an assessment however, there are no sections, elevations, perspective drawings or other more detailed information that help clarify the landscape and tree planting response to Pittwater Road which is a critical element of the landscape design.

The planting methodology for the trees along Pittwater Road should consider the use of a structural root cell system to be married in with the existing below grade services that exist along Pittwater Road.

In addition, there are trees in the rear of the property that are considered for retention and the landscape plans should consider showing the tree protection measures as outlined by the Arborist in their report for ease of reference during construction and corresponding compliance inspection visits from Council staff.

The proposal retains T12 which is an *Araucaria columnaris* however, there are no other replacement trees proposed for the northern courtyard area. The landscape plan should consider proposing at least one other canopy tree for this area to help contribute the canopy targets set by the Greener Neighbourhoods Guide as outlined by the State government.

The landscape design response proposes several raised planter boxes on the upper levels which is supported in theory but these must be compliant with The Apartment Design Guide Section 4P Planting on Structures when considering sufficient soil volumes and area provided for successful tree growth.

The proposal could easily respond to the surrounding character of the area with the repetition of plant species along the streets adjacent to the site and with a considered response to the building design by the Landscape professional.

Recommendations

11. Respond to the local area context by repeating plants and materiality in the landscape.
12. A revised landscape documentation package should include sections and elevations to provide more context with the landscape response to the proposed building footprint and the response to the existing conditions along Pittwater Road.
13. A structural root cell system should be incorporated into the Pittwater Road frontage tree planting design to work in and around the existing services under the footpath. A slightly raised planter box of either 150mm kerb height or 450mm seating height should be explored to provide a deeper soil area for the proposed trees. Trees should be able to reach a height of at least 10 metres.
14. The proposed communal open spaces in the upper stories should include a list of amenities such as but not limited to:
 - a. Retractable awning for shade
 - b. 1 x DDA compliant unisex toilet
 - c. BBQ and utility sink
 - d. Power point
 - e. Natural shade from deciduous trees
 - f. Permanent seating such as benches affixed to planter box walls
 - g. Rubbish receptacle.
15. The raised planter boxes should be in accordance with the depth and overall dimensions as outlined in the ADG for planting on structures which dictates a minimum planter box size of 3.5 x 3.5 metres with a depth of .8 metres to support the healthy and successful growth of a small tree to 8 metres in height. A permanent and automated irrigation system should be supplied.

Amenity

The changes to the plan to enable internal courtyards and better cross ventilation for all but one apartment is supported.

Plan is very deep and relegates several spaces to dark and internalised locations, this is particularly true of apartments accessed from the Northern-most lobby.

Several apartments have habitable spaces which depend on receiving light and air from central courtyards. In this location, doing so allows for apartments to avoid impact from road noise, so is generally supported and understood. Proportionately, the courtyard spaces are tight, but the locations of windows within courtyards assists with maintaining privacy between units. The effectiveness of courtyards in providing light is restricted by the large overhangs. Additionally, it is clear that the courtyard would offer even greater amenity if the number of storeys in the development was reduced to three (3).

It is unclear how residents would access the communal spaces on the rooftop from different parts of the building. The northern core does not connect save for through the basement, which is not adequate. The roof top needs to be adjusted to allow access from all lift cores, and should include a WC. Cooking and cleaning facilities would also add great amenity.

The communal space on ground level could be greatly improved by orienting it's long side towards the rear garden. This would allow more light into the space and allow for more effective sharing of the space.

Most of the building frontage to the COS is taken up by carpark. This reduces its amenity and appeal.

Recommendations

16. Reconfigure to allow light and air to Northern most lift lobbies and corridors
17. Avoid dark internal spaces within apartments – replan to comply with ADG Objective 4D-2
18. Where courtyards are being used as a primary source of light and air to habitable spaces, ensure ADG 4A-2. Consider reduction of overhangs to increase access to daylight.
19. The rooftop communal open space needs to be further developed to include:
 - access from all lift cores
 - accessible toilet facilities
 - cooking and cleaning facilities
20. Consideration should be given to relocating the gym /lounge so that it is sited parallel (and more central) to the communal open space. Reconfigure so that the long face of the gym/lounge opens to the landscape.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The proposal is simple and restrained in that weatherboards have been proposed in varying colours. Care should be taken in the detailing of these materials in this context and at this scale. How the weatherboards meet at corners/edges, how the materials will stand up to the greater wear and tear of a retail environment and whether the articulations in the profile will 'hold' environmental pollution from the busy road should all be considered and addressed to minimise the maintenance burden on residents. Particular attention should be given to how the party wall parapets are treated as they extend higher than adjacent buildings.

Presentation to street would benefit from integration and concealment of hydrant booster

Recommendations

21. Investigate suitability of this material in this environment and consider maintenance
22. Provide greater information around the detailing of the material proposed such that the character and robustness can be understood as appropriate.
23. Incorporate hydrant booster cupboard

Sustainability

While there has been some consideration of sustainability inclusions, the following improvements following aspects of design and servicing can be easily and cost effectively considered for inclusion to optimise the great location and future proof the apartments.

Recommendations

24. Decarbonisation of energy supply

- All services should be electric – gas for cooking, hot water and heating should be avoided.
- Heat pump systems for apartments or other ways of providing electric hot water should be considered.
- The storage of hot water can be considered a de facto battery if heated by PVs during the day.
- Onsite power generation and battery storage should be considered. 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
- Unshaded roof space is a valuable resource for PV installations. Their efficacy can be greatly enhanced when placed over a green roof, which has additional ecological benefits.

25. EV Charging

- Clearly note the EV charging points or infrastructure for future installation for each unit (Min 15 amp) to suit level 1 charging.

26. Passive design and thermal performance of building fabric

- Higher BASIX thermal performance standards commenced on 1 October 2023 require an average 7 stars NatHERS, with no unit below 6 stars. This is consistent with the National Construction Code for 2022. Given the coastal location a very comfortable indoor environment should be achievable.
- The inclusion of ceiling fans to all bedrooms and living rooms will provide comfort with minimal energy while reducing the need and energy required for air-conditioning.
- Incorporate external blinds to the window boxes on the western façade to enable appropriate control of the western sun.

27. Water use minimisation

- All fixtures and appliances should be as water efficient as possible
- Water storage for rainwater from the roofs should be increased and plumbed to the landscaping
- Landscape design and planting should be water tolerant and suitable for the microclimate

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form. Further amendments to the design as noted in the recommendations should be undertaken which can be reviewed by Council Staff.

The Panel refer the applicant to the Apartment Design Guide for aspects related to amenity and internal planning of apartments.