2. DA2021/1166 - 142 Ocean Street NARRABEEN

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The proposal seeks approval for four residential apartments above a basement car park.

The site is 15.1m wide with a depth of 60.9m, located with a single sort east facing street frontage to Ocean Street, between an existing 3-4 story multi-unit residential building to the north and an approved 2 story multi-unit residential building to the south. The neighbouring northerly building is setback only has numerous windows and balconies looking directly into the subject site. These site conditions present challenges with dwelling orientation for solar access and privacy. The architect has skillfully worked with these constraints to create a place and site responsive design which respects its neighbours and the future residents of the development.

The overall design approach is a well-considered response to a site with difficult constraints it is architecturally sophisticated and spatially rich. The following are suggestions to further enhance the already excellent proposal.

Strategic context, urban context: surrounding area character

The proposal is a complying use and a well-considered response to a modest scale, high quality, multi-unit development suitable for its context.

Scale, built form and articulation

The scale of the proposal is suitable within its context, aiming to comply with the site height limit.

It is noted that the building exceeds the maximum number of stories by 50% however the introduction of the third level utilising the slope of the land to create a lower level with connection to private open space has negligible impact and significantly enhances amenity. As such this non-compliance is supported on merit.

The reduced setbacks are acknowledged however the quality and amenity created in the dwelling units, careful consideration of privacy and outlook and the inclusion of landscape treatments mean that the benefits are considered worthwhile to support the reduced setbacks.

Access, vehicular movement and car parking

The basement car park is well laid out, naturally ventilated, providing natural light and views to the garden beyond. These are all desirable and aspirational design features.

Recommendations

1. The avoidance of mechanical ventilation should be further explored by way of openings to the western end of the garage, the roof penetrations as well as the garage entry. Such a solution may involve perforated garage doors to the four apartment areas as well as strategic openings in the northern side of the car park including the escape door to the fire exit.

Landscape

The landscape treatments, including the species selections are generally appropriate and will be successful, however some minor adjustments may enhance an already sound proposal.

While the ground level landscape area proposed is under the DCP requirement of 50% the dwellings are provided with a range of private open spaces which will significantly enhance their amenity.

The rooftop landscaped space is supported however it is suggested that this be enhanced by the reduction of the private terrace space and inclusion of a communal roof terrace area and additional planting areas for privacy and amenity. The breaching of the height limit to bring the lobby stair and lift (assuming a minimum overrun model) to the roof would have minimal impact on adjoining properties and is supported by the Panel on the basis of additional residential amenity.

The provision of a low profile green roof for the inaccessible portion would enhance visual amenity, reduce urban heat and increase the efficiency of co-located PV. Any minimal height breaches required to achieve the required depths of soil is supported by the Panel if the impacts on the adjacent property to the south are negligible.

A green roof to the entry pavilion/waste area would additionally enhance visual amenity.

The entry path is noted hard up against the eastern end of the northern boundary fence in order to achieve the 2m landscape zone. The amenity of units 1 and 3 would be improved by varying this control to get planting to both sides of the path.

Recommendations.

2. Suggest the reduction of the private roof terrace and inclusion of additional planters to the north to enhance privacy to the existing building to the north.
3. Suggest incorporating an accessible roof terrace for common use.
4. Review the species, mature size and number of trees provided, particularly to the northern boundary considering future impact on both the proposed dwellings and the neighbours. Smaller, deciduous and less trees may be required to maintain amenity.
5. Suggest the provision of low profile green roof to inaccessible roof areas and the waste / entry pavilion.
6. Recommend relocating the entry path to the lobby to allow for landscaping against the building and the fence sides.

Amenity

The apartment layouts are commendable with all bedrooms and living spaces facing north and all apartments appearing to achieve two hours of solar penetration in mid winter, although the eastern Apartments 1 and 3 may be just short of 2 hrs. The entry is skilfully managed to provide a casual feel to the development. Terraces to the northern side of the plan provide outdoor spaces and desirable relief to the large four story residential building to the north. The use of screened interstitial courtyards to the north and breezeway entries to the south is a particularly desirable nuance.

The Panel commended the exceptional attention intricate spatial configurations that make the most use of the balconies and inset planting that compensate for the reduced outlook to the north and south.

Recommendation.

7. It was noted that the waste storage area, with a potential green roof, maybe able to be relocated adjacent to the side wall of the apartment one living so as to provide a deeper courtyard associated with Apartment 1 and its external Terrace.

Façade treatment/Aesthetics

The architectural treatment is well considered. Materials selected for the project are rich and appropriate for its context. The use of stone, glazing, brick and screening materials is considered appropriate in its location.

Sustainability

The proposal considers passive design and provides good levels of natural light and ventilation to all dwellings. The provision of PV on the roof is supported with further expansion of this installation suggested.

The Panel commended the inclusion of lightwells to the car park that will not only reduce the amount of additional light and ventilation required for the basement, but also change it from a typically dingy dank space to a space that should manage to retain an open, breezy ‘coastal’ atmosphere.

Provision of a fully naturally ventilated basement is encouraged supported (see car parking notes above).

Recommendations

8. Suggest changing to heat pump hot water and PV on the roof instead of solar gas boost. There is significant space for PV on the roof and the efficiency of it will be supported by installing a green roof under the panels.
9. Suggest induction cooktops along with the hot water system change to enable removal of gas from the development.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel supports the proposal with the consideration of the recommendations above to further enhance the already well-considered design response.

The Panel commended the design overall, the quality of the presentation, the depth and clarity of thinking and ingenuity in the planning of the apartments.