

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting

DA2021/0008 - 12 & 14 Ponsonby Parade SEAFORTH

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The site is zoned R2 Low Density Residential under the provisions of MLEP 2013 and seniors housing is prohibited within the zone. As such, the application is made under the provisions of SEPP HSPD.

The application proposes the demolition of both existing dwellings and the construction of a two-storey seniors housing development, comprising 9 in-fill self-care apartments, over basement carparking.

Specifically, the proposal comprises:

- 1 x 2-bedroom apartments,
- 8 x 3-bedroom apartments,
- Basement carparking for 19 vehicles

Vehicular access is to be gained via Ponsonby Parade, with pedestrian access to both Ponsonby Parade and Ross Street.

Strategic context

- R2 Low Density zone, where large detached two storey dwelling houses are the dominant building typology. Concern remains in relation to the bulk and scale of the proposal and consistency with the objectives of the R2 zone, specifically “to provide for the housing needs of the community within a low-density residential environment”.
- The width of the garage presenting to Ponsonby Parade exceeds the 6.2m maximum width prescribed by clause 4.1.6.1 of MDCP 2013.
- The application nominates a FSR of 0.6:1, exceeding the 0.45:1 FSR prescribed by clause 4.4 of MLEP 2013. In accordance with clause 50 of SEPP HSPD, Council may, if appropriate, refuse the proposal in relation to density and scale as the proposal exceeds 0.5:1 FSR.

Recommendations

1. The increased FSR of 0.6:1 from 0.45:1 is not insignificant. Nevertheless, the proposal could be supported based on improvements to achieve design excellence and consideration for an FSR greater than 0.5: 1 which could be conditioned, perhaps by a deferred commencement.
2. The potential height non-compliance at the living room clerestory is insignificant in the context of the relatively low building form of the entire development and for the enhanced amenity of roof lighting, the minor breach is supportable.

Urban context: surrounding area character. Scale, built form and articulation, Landscape context, Façade treatment

- This is a development over a double block which sits within a residential precinct of large bulky houses. By contrast, it is a relatively low, long and lean form in a landscaped setting. The architectural composition of the proposal is not out of character with the area.
- The width is uncharacteristic. Potential to maximise central break on both frontages by reorienting the circulation cores to address the street, or to open them through the depth of each building.
- privacy between the terraces of Apartments 8 and 6 and 1; and Apartments 9 and 7 and 3, is compromised by their close proximity. The proposed pergola over the terraces of apartments 1 and 3 assists in reducing downward looking. It is recommended that trees with canopies at the level of Apartments 6, 7 8 and 9 be introduced to provide additional screening;

Recommendations

3. Greater articulation of the built form could be achieved if the building entries were notched into the residential blocks and consideration for the entries to become transparent “slots” between the two storey forms either side provide stronger articulation from the street.
4. Improved privacy to be provided between the dwellings with landscaping features

Landscape

- Generally, commend landscape layout and large area of deep soil areas and total landscape area of 47%. Commend addition of 11 endemic trees species including 5 large species. Large endemic canopy trees selected will assist in meeting GANSW Urban canopy targets and provide more shade
- A major issue is that we could not recommend approval without more detailed information on the landscape plans and details. The landscape plan is rudimentary and does not specify plant numbers and sizes leading the final outcome to be uncertain. Numbers and spacings of plants in plan are very minimal and the outcome would be “spotty” or “sparse” in the early years not taking into account plant failures. Likewise, little information is provided on landscape details or materials and also on the resolution of the landscape areas over the basement podium

Recommendations

5. Given the large landscape site area we would suggest the inclusion of more small endemic trees species to further green the project without impacting views.
6. Provide landscape Plans and Details by a *suitably qualified professional* (Landscape Designer or Landscape Architect) as required by Council for Development Applications. Documentation should include greater plant numbers/densities than shown on the current plans and a greater diversity of species and a higher percentage of natives. Pot sizes need to be specified and include large pot sizes for trees (min. 100L). More information on landscape details, materials and finishes, and also on the resolution of the landscape areas over the basement podium with levels indicated and sections provided. Ensure setdown for planting areas on podium is minimum 300mm for Ground covers, 600mm for shrub planting and 1000mm for trees.

Note Council Requirements are:

A Landscape Plan, prepared by a suitably qualified professional, must be submitted with all development applications, except where there are no external works.

Unit Design and Amenity

- Potential to come in straight of Ponsonby (to avoid a dog leg) with ramp continuing inside building.
- Further information is required to delineate common and private space (to ensure collective maintenance of landscaping).

Sustainability and resilience

- No NatHERS certificates or stamped plans were provided. Therefore, the design of the units in accordance with compliance requirements could not be assessed.
- The solar access to the rear block is compromised by the small building separation.
- Units 2, 8 and 9 are not connected to rainwater when all other ground floor units are?
- The solar array could potentially be in excess of common area demands during the daytime. There is an opportunity to connect part of the array to units 8 and/or 9

Recommendations

7. Preference for all units to be connected to rainwater.
8. Power from solar panels to be distributed to units, potentially the northern top floor units, to maximise onsite use (as opposed to sending it back to the grid).

Car parking

- The basement car park could be more compact in arrangement, particularly because of the individual garages being provided for each unit. The garage footprint could be reduced by providing a security door at the base of the ramp and eliminating individual garage doors to unit car spaces. This would also allow 2 accessible parking spaces/shared area and reduce the building footprint. The garbage door should likewise open out to a dedicated path connected to the footpath, not via the garage driveway.
- the basement fire exit door at lift 2 should be re-designed to avoid potential conflict with car swept paths.

Recommendations

9. Inclusion of a security at the entry of the car park to allow replanning of the basement to reduce carparking footprint

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel supports the proposal with minor amendments to address the design issues raised above.

The design is generally of good quality, and the increased FSR could be supported if the following were addressed, as detailed above:

- Articulation of the façade
- Improved privacy between the dwellings
- Provision of a detailed landscape plan from a suitably qualified professional
- Inclusion of more small endemic trees in the landscape plan
- Connection of all units to rainwater reuse
- Connection of some of the solar panels direct to some of the units
- Reconsideration of the car park design