



## **DA2020/1756 351-353 Barrenjoey Rd NEWPORT**

### **PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

An earlier version of the proposal was presented to the Panel on 26 November 2020.

The Panel made 22 recommendations. Some of these recommendations have been adopted and incorporated in the design.

The Panel has also been provided with a summary of the content of 146 objections made in relation to the current scheme and all of the submissions have been provided and reviewed.

The Panel takes residents concerns very seriously, and appreciates the time taken to prepare the submissions and notes the affection for the character and qualities of the existing centre, that are by any measure highly variegated.

The Panel considers the overall proposal to develop the two sites as three stories' mixed-use building with retail and apartments above appropriate, a good contextual fit and in keeping with the vision for the Newport centre.

With the exception of the western portion that exceeds the height limit, the overall massing and built form is supported.

However there are significant challenges accommodating the amount of car-parking for both retail and residential components as well as the requirement for on-site loading.

#### ***Summary of issues***

In approximate order of difficulty and (changes that may be required):

- Impact of the vehicular on the street scape
- Solar access to the pedestrian plaza
- Inadequate solar access (refer to solar access section, reduction of number of units, enlarged courtyards and increased setback from NE)
- Fire and egress (not clear how this works in current design)
- Access from loading dock to retail (requires corridors /lift/stair)
- Retail amenities (bathrooms and WC)
- Circuitous circulation (access to units 13 and 14)
- Privacy and overlooking of private courtyards
- Deep floor plans

#### **Recommendation**

1. Investigate alternative planning strategies.

such as

- multiple cores in lieu of lift and balcony with direct access to street
- paired two storey maisonnettes with living on the upper level
- balcony access with the balcony on the Robertson road alignment (south side of building set below internal floor level etc.



## ***Strategic urban design issues.***

The centre has evolved over time and there is no consistency in heights, setbacks, materials, architectural form, proportion of glazing etc. Similarly, the public domain and publicly accessible parts comprise open and closed arcades, through site links, forecourts, parallel and perpendicular parking both curbside and in a consolidated form. This variety is bound together by the now luxuriant street and median planting that was introduced in the late 1990s? and early 2000s? provides some continuity and harmony to what would otherwise be a quite chaotic collation of buildings- this is in fact the source of the centre's charm.

The Newport Masterplan adopted in 2014 also recognises these qualities and characteristics, and rather than attempting to prescribe built form and materials to precisely, its aim was to accept what was there and provide a framework for further intensification, allowing for up to 3 storeys, some principles about 'slot views' between them and suggestions for a pedestrian network that already existed but which would benefit from being recognised and formalized by the drawings contained in the report.

The Masterplan also makes suggestions for how sites should be amalgamated and how car parking could be organised.

The outcomes, objectives and principles in the Masterplan are given effect by being referred to in the DCP in the following manner:

**Part D10 Newport Locality Pittwater DCP:** *Development in the Newport Commercial Centre shall be in accordance with the approved Masterplan for the Newport Commercial Centre (refer to Appendix 12 of this DCP.*

Taken literally, development of the subject site could not be considered unless it were amalgamated with 353 Barrenjoey Road in accordance with D10.19, that also requires the SEE to include:

*An analysis of how the proposed development has been designed to comply with the outcomes and controls of Pittwater 21 DCP for subdivision and amalgamation.*

The SEE does not include an 'analysis' but makes the following statement:

*In terms of realising Council's vision for the Town Centre regarding vehicular access and underground parking arrangements with adjoining sites, there are numerous challenges associated with the feasibility of redevelopment and the likelihood of such a scale of renewal/ redevelopment outcomes. The proposal involves amalgamation of two lots being No. 351 and 353. Vehicular access to the site is provided from Robertson Road as indicated on the plan. The location of the driveway crossover is closer to the western boundary to ensure the retail tenancies are arranged continuously and to minimise pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.*

This statement does not address the DCP requirement for 'analysis' however the Panel agrees that realising the vision will prove very 'challenging' if possible, at all, given the construction and legal (rights of way etc.) difficulties.

It is import to recognise not only what the DCP permits, but also what it requires, because many of the concerns of the submissions in relation to the disruption to the streetscape are attributable to what is required by the DCP and various standards and not a result of the current design. Nor is there much prospect of improving the design in relation to these issues.

- The size of the vehicle entry is determined by the requirement accommodate loading and access of waste vehicles on site.
- The number of cars and car movements are a result of the number of units and rate of parking provision required by the DCP.



In Panel comments to the applicant and Council in relation to a pre DA scheme it was suggested that car parking number could be reduced in this relatively accessible location, and that curbside loading and waste collection in specific hours be considered, as is common practice in other parts of Sydney and in Manly Town centre. These are appropriate 'management' responses to the particular circumstances, and could be considered a 'place-based', contextual response.

The panel also recognizes the design challenge to meet adequate freeboard for the vehicular ramp in relation to the flood planning level.

### ***Car parking, loading, servicing***

The site currently has 4 car spaces for the existing retail and shop-top residential

The building massing is discussed in more detail below, but with the re-planning that the Panel considers necessary it is likely that there will be a reduction in the number of units. The deletion of unit 14 and the section of unit 13 that exceed the 8.5m height control will reduce the number of cars. (refer to Height section)

Given the valid concerns expressed in many submissions that the ambience of Robertson Road will be degraded by vehicle movements, the Panel suggests that Council consider whether there should be no requirement for on-site retail parking and a relaxation of the car parking rates for residential.

This could have the following benefits

- eliminating the need for an entire basement level (approximate 34 spaces could be accommodated if loading and waste were off site)
- reducing embodied carbon in the construction,
- reduced operating energy consumption
- a reduced construction time and disruption to the centre

It is not clear how the loading area or onsite parking would work in the current scheme; assuming that the parking is for the exclusive use of patrons it is not clear how the public would be aware of whether there are spaces available and whether they would be required to be patrons.

Residential waste store requires residents to take garbage out through lobby, this is not acceptable.

There is no direct access for retail to the 'commercial refuse' area

There is no toilet for retail patrons, the 'accessible' toilet is inaccessible

The Panel notes requirements of the DCP that may be difficult to achieve:

- an expectation that adjoining sites (355 Barrenjoey Rd) and sites further to the north east will gain access to underground parking by established rights of way through the subject site (the proposal does not take this into account)
- an expectation that car parking for the retail component will be accommodated on site at rates specified in the DCP even though the current provision is a total of 4 onsite spaces for both existing retail and shop-top housing
- second basement level is well below water table and sea level

### **Recommendations**

2. In order to minimize the disruption to the street, in consultation with council
  - investigate the removal of the requirement for on-site loading and explore the possibility of curbside loading during restricted hours



- investigate the possibility of reducing car parking rates for retail
  - The Panel suggests that further reduction in car parking could be considered given the accessible location
3. Improve the accessibility of the waste storage area for the units.

Where the design does not comply with the controls, in the Panels view a proposal would need to demonstrate a better amenity for resident and occupants and users on the site, a contribution to the public domain and /or a lesser impact on adjoining sites or the public domain compared to a complying scheme.

Additionally it is the role of the Panel to comment and provide advice on the amenity and quality of the design irrespective of whether it complies with the controls or not.

4. Include toilets for retail patrons on the ground level
5. Introduce an internal service corridor to provide internal access from shops to waste and storage

### ***Height, building massing and impacts on south side of Robertson Road***

The overall building massing is appropriate for the context, however the Panel notes that the building exceeds the 8.5m maximum height limit in the rear third of the site.

#### **Recommendations**

6. Modify building massing to minimise impact, introduce vertical shading devices to minimize summer afternoon solar gain rather than relying on roof overhangs.
7. Unit 14 should be deleted. No part of the building should exceed the 8.5m height limit at the western end of the site.
8. Units 13 and 14 should be reconfigured to ensure that their shadows do not exceed that of the parapet at 10am in the morning 21 June.

### ***Streetscape and Public domain***

Concrete awning looks high and narrow compared with prevailing (and existing) condition - will this provide adequate pedestrian amenity?

#### **Recommendations**

9. Review design of concrete awning
10. Street awning should have a ceiling to provide pedestrian visual interest.

### ***Internal amenity and privacy***

Private open space of level 1 apartments are overlooked from unit 10 balcony.

Building footprint is excessively deep and locates kitchens and study spaces too far away from sources of natural light.

Required privacy screens impact on daylight and outlook

The Level 2 apartments are up to 19m glass to glass and will have poor light and ventilation to centrally located studies and pantries;

The above issues would be resolved by reducing the depth of the apartments on Level 2;



### **Recommendation**

11. Reduce the depth of the apartments and with the removal of apartment 14 re-planning of apartments 12 and 13 could occur.

### **Solar access**

Despite north facing arrangement, solar access to apartments are unsatisfactory.

Views from sun show that only 6 of 14 (42%) apartments (units 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10) receive sunlight for 2 Hours between 9:00 and 15:00 on the winter solstice falling significantly short of the 70% minimum requirement in the ADG

Views from sun show 4 of 14 (28%) apartments (units 1, 2, 8 and 9) do not receive any sun between 9:00 and 15:00 on the winter solstice, significantly exceeding the 15% maximum requirement in the ADG

Solar access is likely to become significantly more problematic with adjacent future development indicating that significant redesign may be necessary. - two storey apartment typologies or a second vertical access core may need to be explored in search of solar access compliance on this site.

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### **Recommendation**

12. Investigate alternative planning strategies to improve solar access and take into consideration the potential impacts of future development of the adjoining site (355 Barrenjoey Road)

### **Access and Fire egress**

The residential lobby is buried deep in the building and has no natural lighting or ventilation.

Access to apartments is extremely circuitous (apartment 14 in particular)

Not clear how fire egress works or whether the balcony path of travel is acceptable

### **Recommendation**

13. Assess compliance with egress requirements as part of the investigation of options.
14. Provide natural light and ventilation to the lobby.

### **Common area**

The common area is small, inaccessible and unlikely to be used.

### **Recommendation**

15. Reconsider location and size of common area as part of the re-planning.

### **Heritage**

The proposal adjoins St Michaels heritage item that is on the lot to the north west of the subject site.



### **Recommendation**

16. Set back the excavation from the NW boundary to provide an area of deep soil that could allow for screening vegetation that may provide a 'backdrop' for the church building.

### **Landscape**

Landscape planters shown on building sections should have adequate planting soil depth indicated.

The area of landscape should be increase when the unit depths are reduced.

### **Recommendations**

17. The Level 2 bedroom balconies are minimal and would benefit from having a planter to enhance the semi-tropical landscape character of the development;
18. Ensure a number of large street trees are selected for planting in consultation with Council in the public domain both on Clients setback and in Council verge to assist in meeting GANSW Urban canopy targets.
19. Ensure set-down for planting areas on private courtyards on level 1 & 2 is minimum 300mm for Ground covers, 600mm for shrub planting and 1000mm for trees.
20. Ensure private courtyard fences on level 1 are between 1200-1500 high to ensure the access path is not a corridor and gardens provide a communal visual amenity.

### **Aesthetics and materials**

The Panel supports the simple material palette proposed and considers it appropriate for the location.

### **Recommendation**

21. Brick detailing at windows and parapets would raise design quality.

### **Sustainability**

Amount of glazing in the ground floor retail may need to be reduced

A better ESD outcome if the car parking is reduced

10kL rainwater tank on the drawings but the space allocated for it seems far too small – is it realistic? Rainwater reuse is recommended, and is likely to be required for BASIX.

Stormwater provisions are inadequate.

### **Recommendations**

22. Develop a schematic approach for rainwater harvesting and re-use and part of the investigation of options
23. Test Section J compliance of retail to avoid needing a s4.55 later
24. The Panel encourages the maximization of onsite renewable energy generation and electrification of all appliances and services in anticipation of decarbonisation of the grid.
25. The panel would strongly suggest the inclusion of EV charging in the basement to encourage and support increased usage of electric vehicles. ('Level 2' electric vehicle charging points)
26. Provide natural light and ventilation to the bathrooms on the top level.
27. The Panel would support a roof with high albedo.



## **PANEL CONCLUSION**

**The Panel does not support the proposal in its current form.**

**No justification has been provided for exceeding the height limit at the western end of the site.**

The Panel recommends that alternative planning strategies and options are explored giving regard to the issues raised and recommendations.