

Design + Sustainability Advisory Panel Meeting Report – 29 April 2021

6 DA2021/0139- 2 Cross Street, BROOKVALE

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Demolition works and construction of an industrial warehouse with 17 self-storage units and 23 industrial units, including parking for 56 cars.

Strategic context

The site is in a prominent location opposite Warringah Mall and within the area subject to the *Draft Brookvale Structure Plan*. Principal concerns raised included building height non-compliance, building bulk and wall articulation, wall height, non-compliant road boundary setback, streetscape and stormwater / flood engineering.

The Brookvale Draft Structure Plan (August 2017) has identified Cross Street to undergo future investigations to create landscaping initiatives for enhancement of the pedestrian environment whilst maintaining vehicle connectivity throughout the precinct. The objective will be to create tree lined streets that provide workable and attractive access for the east and west precincts of the Strategic Centre and also link the green grid assets across Brookvale.

Urban context: surrounding area character

The site is located at the northwest corner Cross Street and Green Street, opposite Warringah Mall.

The site is rectangular in shape having two broad street frontages of 55.8 metres (m) to Cross Street and 75.8m to Green Street. The western side setback area contains a major stormwater line.

Scale, built form and articulation, façade treatment

Currently the proposal exhibits non-compliance with maximum building height up to 3.1m over the 11m height controls for parapet and ceiling void spaces.

Non-compliance with the front boundary setback requirement of 4.5m for street frontages - Green Street. Currently the Green Street set back proposes public stairs which are located on public land and therefore is not supported.

Well-designed facades should reflect the use, internal layout and structure of the building. The proposed elevation treatment to create interest such as the big overhanging hoods framing windows should be more meaningful applications e.g. to provide privacy or sun-shading purposes.

The Panel discussed the possibility and advantages of a more articulated façade and building massing on the upper level that could project 'in and out' and could accommodate the canopy of larger trees in the recessed sections.

The Panel would not support the upper level protruding out to the boundary line along the entire length of the building.



Recommendations:

1. The ground level facade should be set back to the required 4.5 m. This will have an impact on the proposed building form
2. Upper-level units at RL 16.88 could and should cantilever over the ground floor facade to provide a colonnade around the street frontages and a more interesting built form which avoids the appearance of a “big box”. This cantilevered form could be supported by a colonnade of columns or cantilever from the facade line but in either case the cantilever should be high enough to accommodate some large canopy trees along both street frontages
3. The applicant should consider a potential full height colonnade treatment at the ground level behind the prescribed setbacks.
4. The applicant should explore larger and more distinctive pedestrian entries including coordinated DDA compliant access and entry points from Cross and Green Street as not all users of the complex will travel by private vehicle.

Landscape area and car parking

The landscaped setbacks and tree planting are not consistent with WDCP front boundary setback requirements or the Brookvale Draft Structure Plan (2017).

From the current perspectives provided the Panel is not convinced of how the change of level from street level to the ground FFL and setback is designed to meet the flooding requirements.

Recommendations:

5. The 4.5m setback should accommodate a combination of walkway along the front of the units and landscaped terraces or planters. Terrace and planter walls should not exceed 900mm at any point.
6. The 4.5m WDCP front building setback requirement should be complied with along both streets to allow street tree canopies to overlap and to maintain adequate landscape buffer.
7. Revise the Landscape plan to create an engaging and sustainable street, building and public realm interface including suitable canopy and shade trees based on Councils suggested street tree list for this evolving precinct.
8. Detailed design and consideration of the type, material selection and detailing of the way the required (flood level) level change of level from street level to the ground FFL and setback is required.

Amenity

Although the proposal is for industrial /commercial uses some consideration should be given to the amenity provided on site for workers.

Recommendations:

9. The communal facilities for users of this building - commonly shared kitchens and recreational areas should be considered in addition to just an entrance and lift.
10. Office mezzanines would benefit from re-location against external walls where natural ventilation and illumination is available



Sustainability

Industrial development like the proposal provide the opportunity for the installation of large arrays of photovoltaic arrays (PV) on buildings that generally have a good maintenance and management regimes associated with them.

The Panel notes the location of the substation on the site.

Recommendations:

11. Include and optimise the amount of PV on the roof given the potential to clip peak loads. The Panel strongly encourages the proponent to engage with the energy retailer and Ausgrid to optimise the onsite system.
12. The Panel encourages the applicant to include stormwater capture and reuse for the landscape setback.

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel does not support the Proposal in its current form due to the range of issues identified, in particular non-compliance with the setback that should be landscaped area and the reliance on stair in the public domain.

The recommended amendments to the design are important and should be incorporated in any revision to the design.