

6 DA2020/1743 45 Lantana Avenue, WHEELER HEIGHTS

PANEL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The proposal is for demolition of all structures on the site and the construction 8 self care residences under the Seniors Housing SEPP (HSPD).

The development comprises four (8) x (3) bedroom infill self-care housing units in two buildings separated by a courtyard above a basement for (16) accessible parking spaces.

Surrounding development consists primarily of one and two storey detached dwellings set back from the road in landscape settings.

Overall comment

The proposal is consistent with the pattern of infill that has occurred on adjacent lots, that is varied and does not follow any particular pattern and includes villa style developments, detached houses and duplexes.

The Panel has been provided with the notes from the PLM of 29 October 2020 and notes the changes to the design that have been made, however a number of issue remain.

Scale, built form and articulation

Under the SEPP (HSPD) density expressed as FSR cannot be the basis for refusal if the proposal has an FSR of 0.5:1 or less.

The Panel is concerned with the quality of the design this include the impact on neighbouring properties and on the quality of landscape that may be achieved

The scale and built form is sympathetic to the context but the introduction of re-entrant 'voids' between 05 and 07 increase the bulk of the building unnecessarily.

A reduction in the floor area would have a number of benefits:

- It would allow a reduction in the footprint – in particular for units 08,
- it would increase the garden area and
- could increase the separation between the two buildings and improve solar access to the garden areas

Given the intensity of development in the surrounding area, setbacks and built form should comply with the Northern Beaches DCP. The aims of the DCP setbacks are particularly important in this context:

- To ensure that development does not become visually dominant by virtue of its height and bulk.
- To ensure adequate light, solar access and privacy by providing spatial separation between buildings.
- To ensure that development responds to the topography of the site.

Recommendations

1. Reduce the building footprint and conform to an FSR of 0.5:1. This could be achieved in a number of ways, a reduction in the number of bedrooms, tightening up the planning, deletion of second living spaces in units with 3 bedrooms (1 bedroom could be used as secondary living area and could be designed to be flexible)
2. Confirm the definitions of floor space that apply to the proposal. In particular in accordance with the SEPP (HSPD) *"gross floor area means the sum of the areas of each floor of a building, where the area of each floor is taken to be the area within the outer face of the external enclosing walls (as measured at a height of 1,400 millimetres above each floor level)"* It seems to me there are no exceptions in the listed exclusions for common vertical circulation in the form of stairs or lifts.
3. Remove the 'void' on the second level between units 5 and 6
4. Comply with all setback include side boundary envelope controls. Particular attention should be given to the western boundary. It is not clear what benefit is gained by the protruding ensuites and bathrooms in units 02,04,06 and 07- these could be inset and would allow small north facing windows to bedrooms 2 and 3 to be introduced.

Car parking and services

The Panel commends the design of the car park that retains the mature tress on the site. But suggests that the rain OSD tank be relocated to allow improved lines of sight and simply movement in the basement. The Panel recognises the difficulty of achieving this while still achieving gravity discharge of water to the street. In this case the Panel recommends that the simplification of the car park circulation be given precedence.

Bin area to the street is unsightly

Car park lift door opening directly to car travel path access is unsafe.

Recommendations

5. Simplify the car park layout and improve circulation by relocating OSD while minimising intrusion into the TPZ
6. Provide external clothes drying spaces.
7. Provide further detail on bin area screening- (sliding screens?)
8. Provide bollards in front of lifts.
9. Reduce the size of the 'services' enclosure at the entry to the carpark to improve sightlines and ease of access.

Privacy

Privacy is generally achieved through setbacks from side and rear boundaries. And the fact that the DCP assumes that most dwellings will front a street. Due to the subdivision pattern and subsequent infill that has occurred, the site adjoins and overlooks residence on all sides.

It could be argued that the SEPP HSDP requirement for a single story at the 'rear of the site' should also apply to the 'front' of the site given that the intention is to minimise overlooking overshadowing and general visual intrusion on adjoin properties. Overshadowing is not an issue, overlooking and visual intrusion are in relation to both 47 and 49 Lantana Ave.

It is not clear how privacy from upper floor windows on east and west elevations will avoid overlooking of adjoining properties.

Recommendations

10. Ensure the principal outlook of units is not directly into or over adjoining properties- this should be easily achievable on a site of this size.
11. Consider the use of 'splayed' windows and light from the sides of bay windows for most bedrooms to avoid overlooking, otherwise provide detail on how privacy will be achieved.
12. Reconsider the layout of unit 03:
 - increase the set back from the balcony to the northern boundary,
 - consider the inclusion of a planter box or other screening strategy on the northern of the balcony
 - scaling back the accommodation to 2 bed room +study

Landscape

Retention of trees is positive.

Soil depths over the basement do not support trees shown on plans.

The building footprint at the rear of the lot intrudes into the TPZ of the 3 trees along the southern boundary. (basement and ground floor drawings inconsistent)

Landscape plan lacks definition to the planted / turfed areas. No layering of planting shown – trees, large/med shrubs, low with edges to turf areas.

Turf looks to be very shaded in many areas. May need to be reconsidered as a surface.

Recommendations

13. Provide more details for all the landscaping across the site, including consideration for shade tolerant planting
14. Use landscaping to provide screening for private spaces
15. Cumulative impact of development on trees to be retained to be assessed by arborist.
16. Provide raised planters over the basement.
17. Confirm solar access to private open space.

Unit Design and Amenity

Unit 08 has very little northern orientation and poor solar access. Natural light and ventilation could be significantly improved by the introduction of more and larger skylights.

Kitchen living dining areas in units 01.02, 05 and 06 are very deep and will have poor natural light

Kitchen living dining areas in units 01 and 02 could be improved by larger windows

Unit 6 could have a skylight if access to unit 7 was re-arranged

Recommendations

18. The solar access and the size of the unit 08 terrace should be maximised.
19. Introduce additional and larger skylights for unit 8
20. Access to unit 7 should be reconfigured to provide a skylight to for the dining area of unit 6

Sustainability and resilience

The Energy Efficient Design strategies in the Design Statement are very general, and not indicated on the drawings.

Recommendations

21. Identify where all sustainability aspects are on the drawings.
22. 25kL of rainwater seems excessive for 8 units. Reduce the tank size, and consider connecting it to more uses, such as toilets.
23. The thermal loads in the BASIX certificate are not correct. 5 of the 8 units have identical heating and cooling loads. There should be individual loads for each dwelling.
24. consider a change to all electric, offset the change in BASIX energy score with PV

PANEL CONCLUSION

The Panel supports the overall approach to the site and commends the commitment to the retention of mature trees, however the Panel does not support the proposal in its current form.

The proposal does not comply with a number of development standards and is in excess of the 0.5:1 SEPP HSPD threshold which contributes to the impact on amenity, privacy and solar access that would be more easily resolved by a reduction in the floor area and overall building bulk.