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RJS/JJ

22 December 2010

NSW Department of Planning
23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attn: Michael Woodland, Director Metropolitan Projects

Dear Mr Woodland

RE: 45-47 MACQUARIE STREET AND 134-140 MARSDEN STREET,
PARRAMATTA (10/052) -
SEPP 65 DESIGN VERIFICATION STATEMENT

Pursuant to Clause 50 (1A) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, I hereby declare that I am a qualified designer, which means a person registered as an architect in accordance with the Architects Act 2003 as defined by Clause 3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.

I directed the design of the residential flat development stated above and I confirm that the design achieves the design quality principles set out in Part 2 of the State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development.

Yours faithfully
ALLEN JACK+COTTIER



Reg Smith
CEO-Principal and Nominated Architect
Architect 3312 (NSW)

SEPP 65 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT

22 December 2010/issue B

45-47 MACQUARIE STREET AND 134-140 MARSDEN STREET, PARRAMATTA (10/052)

Allen Jack + Cottier became involved in this project further to a previous Major Project Application in April 2010. The currently proposed overall building form does not differ greatly from the previous proposal by Bates Smart. AJ+C found the design studies and site analysis demonstrated in the April 2010 application comprehensive and logically thought through, and are supportive of the resultant built form. The amendments made have been largely in response to the Design Review Panel's comments as outlined in the Department of Planning's letter dated 18 August 2010 and Schedules 1 and 2 attached therein.

The following therefore outlines how any amendments made to the building since the April 2010 design proposal respond to the SEPP65 Design Quality Principles and highlights any aspects of the design not already described in the April 2010 EA report:

PRINCIPLE 1: CONTEXT

Good design responds and contributes to its context. Context can be defined as the key natural and built features of an area.

Responding to context involves identifying the desirable elements of a location's current character or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, the desired future character as stated in planning and design policies. New buildings will thereby contribute to the quality and identity of the area.

One of the most unique characteristics of this site which has largely determined the building's form on Macquarie Street is the existing archaeological remains. The existence of these remains has given rise to a grand forecourt activated by a café, archaeological interpretation centre, restaurant and commercial lobby. The upper level residential garden and commercial lobbies also have the opportunity to look down open this forecourt. The deletion of the gates closing off the archaeological forecourt at night proposed in the April 2010 scheme will result in the forecourt being used as an extension of the café and restaurant facilities at night.

The current proposal locates the building's commercial entry via the archaeological forecourt, due to Macquarie Street's existing high commercial activity, and has moved the residential entry onto Marsden Street. This street is believed to be more appropriate for a residential entry. The deletion of the long linear residential lobby which effectively provided a through site link (albeit for private use) at ground level will help activate Marsden Street. It was decided that a through site link that close to a street corner took away from activity on the street. This is further explored in Principles 7 and 8.

The Hunter Street streetscape has been improved by maximising the extent of retail frontage. The current proposal activates 65% of this street frontage as opposed to 41% in the previous proposal. This improvement was in response to the Design Review Panel's concern that the width of driveway and substation frontage dominated the streetscape, and achieved by combining the carpark and loading dock driveways.

PRINCIPLE 2: SCALE

Good design provides an appropriate scale in terms of the bulk and height that suits the scale of the street and the surrounding buildings.

Establishing an appropriate scale requires a considered response to the scale of existing development. In precincts undergoing a transition, proposed bulk and height needs to achieve the scale identified for the desired future character of the area.

The general scale of the proposal has not changed since the April 2010 Project Application.

PRINCIPLE 3: BUILT FORM

Good design achieves an appropriate built form for a site and the building's purpose, in terms of building alignments, proportions, building type and the manipulation of building elements.

Appropriate built form defines the public domain, contributes to the character of streetscapes and parks, including their views and vistas, and provides internal amenity and outlook.

The current proposal is still divided into essentially 4 building towers or blocks (identified as blocks A, B, C and D on the architectural drawings). Further to the Design Review Panel's concern regarding the building and apartment depth, Block C has been narrowed. The balcony line of the western elevation has come in by approximately 1m and the external enclosed building envelope has come in by up to 3m.

PRINCIPLE 4: DENSITY

Good design has a density appropriate for a site and its context, in terms of floor space yields (or number of units or residents).

Appropriate densities are sustainable and consistent with the existing density in an area or, in precincts undergoing a transition, are consistent with the stated desired future density. Sustainable densities respond to the regional context, availability of infrastructure, public transport, community facilities and environmental quality.

There is no change in the density of the proposal since the April 2010 Project Application. The proposed FSR is still 8.44:1 to match the approved commercial DA measured under the SREP28 definition for GFA (or the FSR equivalent of 8.23:1 as measured under the Parramatta LEP 2007 definition for GFA).

PRINCIPLE 5: RESOURCE, ENERGY AND WATER EFFICIENCY

Good design makes efficient use of natural resources, energy and water throughout its full life cycle, including construction.

Sustainability is integral to the design process. Aspects include demolition of existing structures, recycling of materials, selection of appropriate and sustainable materials, adaptability and reuse of buildings, layouts and built form, passive solar design principles, efficient appliances and mechanical services, soil zones for vegetation and reuse of water.

In addition to water and energy efficiency measures outlined by Advanced Environmental consultants in the April 2010 Project Application, and in response to the Design Review Panel's concerns that cross ventilation to the apartments should be improved, the current proposal now achieves 86% cross ventilated apartments. This has been achieved by the introduction of natural ventilation shafts at the rear of any apartment not bounded by at least 2 external walls. A ventilation study has been prepared as part of this Preferred Project Report by Windtech consultants.

PRINCIPLE 6: LANDSCAPE

Good design recognises that together landscape and buildings operate as an integrated and sustainable system, resulting in greater aesthetic quality and amenity for both occupants and the adjoining public domain.

Landscape design builds on the existing site's natural and cultural features in responsible and creative ways. It enhances the development's natural environmental performance by co-ordinating water and soil management, solar access, micro-climate, tree canopy and habitat values. It contributes to the positive image and contextual fit of development through respect for streetscape and neighbourhood character, or desired future character.

Landscape design should optimise useability, privacy and social opportunity, equitable access and respect for neighbours' amenity, and provide for practical establishment and long term management.

In response to the Design Review Panel's concerns that there was not sufficient communal open space in the April 2010 Proposal, this area has been significantly increased. In addition to the level 1 residential garden area off the communal internal facilities being increased by locating the lap pool outdoors, the current proposal incorporates two new rooftop garden areas on levels 11 and 22. The combination of these three areas represents approximately 33% of the total site area in outdoor communal open space. These spaces have been designed with constraints such as prevailing winds, district views, privacy and variety of spaces for residents' use to ensure that they are well-used additions to the buildings' amenities.

PRINCIPLE 7: AMENITY

Good design provides amenity through the physical, spatial and environmental quality of a development.

Optimising amenity requires appropriate room dimensions and shapes, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, visual and acoustic privacy, storage, indoor and outdoor space, efficient layouts and service areas, outlook and ease of access for all age groups and degrees of mobility.

In response to the Design Review Panel's concerns that solar access to the apartments could be improved, the apartment plans have been modified wherever possible to maximise on solar access into the living areas. The typical 1 bedroom apartment on the western side of Block C has been redesigned so that the living room is on the southern side of the apartment and projects further west than the bedroom. A solar access study has been prepared as part of this Preferred Project Report by Windtech consultants.

The western elevation of Blocks C and D now incorporate louvre screens for the full width of the balcony which will improve shading of these apartments in summer and privacy from adjacent commercial buildings all year round.

A specific concern of the Design Review Panel was the apartments which had bedrooms with their only outlook onto the slots between the building towers. These apartment types no longer exist, which not only avoids the issue of lack of daylight into these rooms but also the potential acoustic issues of sound from resident's bedrooms echoing within the building slot.

One of the most fundamental changes to the April 2010 scheme is the circulation within the building. This came about partly through an analysis of how the building could be improved at ground level. The April 2010 scheme proposed a long linear residential lobby space. This space effectively cut off the retail zone from the back of house facilities such as the loading dock and amenities, which would have caused operational difficulties.

The other advantage of discontinuing this pedestrian connection from Hunter to Macquarie Streets is being able to drop the level of the commercial entry at the northern end of the building. This avoids the need for a lengthy ramp up from Marsden Street, which in turn increases the useable retail/restaurant area. This entry was previously elevated due to the fall in the site from south to north and its reliance on being connected to the southern entry.

Circulation at the upper levels has also been improved since the April 2010 scheme. This was another concern of the Design Review Panel, in particular the number of apartments off a single corridor, and the 'dog-leg' configuration of the corridor. The spatial quality of the corridor has been improved by locating the residential lobby for the majority of apartments more or less centrally in the building in its own space off the corridor with views to the east.

The slot in this location has also been increased in width to ensure this space feels generous. The 'dog-leg' corridor has been avoided altogether by planning Block D in such a way that the apartments are narrower in plan and occur on either side of the corridor. Access to this southern corridor is more direct now that a separate lift which only rises the height of Block D is located at its easternmost end. All corridors have access to natural light and ventilation at both ends and in the case of the north-south corridor, in the middle as well.

All apartments comply with the SEPP 65 RFDC guidelines regarding storage, and the areas are now clearly identified on the architectural drawings.

PRINCIPLE 8: SAFETY AND SECURITY

Good design optimises safety and security, both internal to the development and for the public domain.

This is achieved by maximising overlooking of public and communal spaces while maintaining internal privacy, avoiding dark and non-visible areas, maximising activity on streets, providing clear, safe access points, providing quality public spaces that cater for desired recreational uses, providing lighting appropriate to the location and desired activities, and clear definition between public and private spaces.

SEPP 65 RFDC recommends separation of residential and commercial entries, which is the case in this current proposal.

The other improvement to safety and security around the site is deleting the need for the gates closing off the archaeological forecourt at night, mentioned previously in this report. An alternative method of securing the archaeological displays by means of vertical sliding glass screens enables the forecourt to be used during the day and night, which in turn activates the street.

PRINCIPLE 9: SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

Good design responds to the social context and needs of the local community in terms of lifestyles, affordability, and access to social facilities.

New developments should optimise the provision of housing to suit the social mix and needs in the neighbourhood or, in the case of precincts undergoing transition, provide for the desired future community.

There is still a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments which allows a diversity of product and promotes diversity within the neighbourhood. There is a slight increase in the proportion of 1 bedroom apartments which responds to a need in the community for more affordable housing options in this area of Parramatta.

In addition to communal residential facilities which already existed in the April 2010 scheme, the building now incorporates a common area for use by commercial tenants.

There is also a significant increase in the area for bicycle parking in this current proposal.

PRINCIPLE 10: AESTHETICS

Quality aesthetics require the appropriate composition of building elements, textures, materials and colours and reflect the use, internal design and structure of the development. Aesthetics should respond to the environment and context, particularly to desirable elements of the existing streetscape or, in precincts undergoing transition, contribute to the desired future character of the area.

Aesthetically, the building remains very similar to the April 2010 scheme. As discussed under Principle 7 full width louvre screens have been added to the western façade.