



Your Reference: MP 10_0107
Our Reference: NCA/20/2010
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Director, Urban Assessments
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Attention: Caroline Owen

23 November 2010

Dear Ms. Owen,

**Major Project 10_0107 – Residential Development – Buildings 1, 2 & 3
61 Mobbs Lane - Epping - Channel 7 Site (Epping Park)**

I refer to the public exhibition of the above Major Project seeking approval for the construction of 28 townhouses ranging in height between 2-3 storeys, with associated garage parking and landscaping of private open space. Please be advised that Council raises issues with the proposed development with respect to urban design, compliance with the Concept Plan and tree retention. These issues are addressed below. Traffic and parking matters are also discussed within this submission with recommended conditions to be imposed on any consent granted.

Urban Design

Townhouse Development (Building 1 & 2)

Given these buildings are 3 storeys in height and have no access to private open space at ground level, Council would consider these buildings as residential flat buildings as opposed to townhouses. Nonetheless, the following comments are made on urban design grounds:

Public Domain Interface

The public domain interface of buildings 1 and 2 provides limited opportunities for activation or passive surveillance of Mobbs Lane. It is acknowledged that maximum activation and surveillance is difficult to achieve with the proposed development given its dual orientation to the street and to the internal circulation spaces of the development site. Notwithstanding this, options for increasing the activation and passive surveillance opportunities of Mobbs Lane should be investigated.

No Adaptable Dwellings

No adaptable dwellings are provided within these 16 dwellings. As a general rule of thumb, 1 per 10 dwellings should be adaptable. This cannot be achieved given the dwellings are not even accessible for people with disabilities.

Accessibility

No access is provided for people with disabilities to these dwellings. Whilst access is achievable to some of the entry doors, internal access generally cannot be achieved. All dwellings should be accessible for people with disabilities.

Private Open Space

Townhouses generally provide private open space at natural ground level and Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005 requires a minimum provision of 40m² per dwelling. Front yards should not be considered or used as private open space as they are semi-private areas. Fencing should be reduced in height to provide a better integration with the public domain of the internal circulation spaces. A maximum fence height of 1.2m should be permitted with no more than 900mm from natural ground level being solid and the remainder semi transparent.

Townhouse Development (Building 3)

Frontage

It is noted that the townhouse development has a continuous frontage of over 130m. This design conflicts with Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005 which restricts frontages of multi unit dwellings to a maximum of 20m. This is required to provide visual cohesion, continuity (including rhythm and spacing) and distinction of buildings. It is considered that the massing needs to be broken up into separate building elements.

Garage Dominance

Concern is raised with regard to the garage dominance of the proposed townhouse development. Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005 requires garages be located a minimum of 300mm behind the building line of the dwelling and be less than 50% of the front elevation. The proposed garages do not comply with these design standards and will effectively result in dominating the visual appearance of the dwellings, and thereby the internal streetscape.

Privacy

The 1st floor balconies at the rear should be deleted due to the potential overlooking impacts on the adjoining properties on Edenlee Street. The balconies do not serve any benefit as private open space and their deletion would not result in any loss of amenity to the future occupants of the site.

No Adaptable Dwellings

No adaptable dwellings are provided within these 12 dwellings. As a general rule of thumb, 1 per 10 dwellings should be adaptable. Access for people with disabilities also needs to be considered.

Approved Concept Plan Review

Building Envelope Controls

The proposal generally compiles with the controls outlined in Fig 8.9 Building Envelope Control Diagram of the approved Concept Plan (MP 05_0086) with the following variations:

(a) Front Setbacks - Buildings 1 and 2

The Concept Plan indicates a 6m setback to Mobb's Lane. The proposal separates this into a landscaped setback up to 3.6m wide from Mobbs Lane and a 3m wide partially submerged driveway and balcony on top. A 3m setback is not consistent with the character of the area. Parramatta Development Control Plan 2005 requires a front setback between 5m and 9m, which is more consistent with the approved Concept Plan than the application. Front setbacks of 3m are more conducive to secondary setbacks rather than primary setbacks. The proposal should be amended to comply with the setback requirements of the Concept Plan to enable a reasonable setback to Mobbs Lane and the ability to provide sufficient deep soil zones for landscaping along the frontage.

(b) Rear Setbacks - Building 3

The reproduced Concept Plan is of poor quality and it is unclear if a 6.7m or 8.7m is required to the eastern property boundary adjoining the rear yards of the detached dwellings. The proposal provides a varying rear setback to building 3 of approximately 8m. Clarification is sought about the setback required under the approved Concept Plan to the eastern boundary. If the setback is 8.7m, the proposal should be amended to comply with this requirement to protect the amenity of the adjoining properties, provide greater private open space and landscaping.

(c) Heights

The height controls for building 3 within the approved Concept Plan indicates a transition from 2 storeys to single storey towards the eastern site boundary. The application proposes a largely 2 storey building form with a limited single storey component. The proposal also includes roof elements that extend up to 2.75m above the upper level ceiling height for architectural articulation of the long linear building form. This appears excessive and unnecessary.

Housing Diversity and Choice

The proposal contains only three and four bedroom dwellings. It is assumed that the remaining stages of the development will incorporate additional apartment types to provide housing choice and achieve the housing diversity requirements specified by the original Concept Plan.

Tree Retention

Consideration must be given to the retention of trees located along the north eastern boundary as they provide a substantial screen to the adjoining properties and also for views to the site from Edenlee Avenue.

Developer Contributions

In March 2009, the Department of Planning made a determination in relation to the required contributions framework to be delivered with the re-development of the site. A Voluntary Planning Agreement is currently being negotiated with the proponent. It is considered appropriate that a condition be included on any approval granted by

the Department that the Voluntary Planning Agreement be entered into prior to the issue of any construction certificate for the proposed works.

Traffic & Parking

Parking Requirements

It is proposed to provide 2 garage spaces for each of the 28 townhouses while visitors will be able to park in the indented bays along the access road. The proposed parking provision would be compliant with the Concept Plan criteria.

Traffic Generation

The traffic generated by the 28 townhouses proposed can be accommodated on the road network.

Parking Layout and Access

The parking design and access are satisfactory.

Recommendation

If this application is to be approved, then the following traffic related conditions should be included in the conditions of consent:

1. 56 off-street parking spaces are to be provided, permanently marked on the pavement and used accordingly. The dimensions for parking spaces and aisle width to be in accordance with AS 2890.1-2004 (minimum of 2.4m wide x 5.4m long clear of columns plus 300mm clearance adjacent walls & 6.2m aisle width minimum).
2. Driveway and ramp gradients shall comply with Clause 2.5, Clause 2.6 and Clause 3.3 of AS2890.1-2004.
3. The driveway width (w) at the concrete layback shall comply with Council's Standard Vehicular Crossing plan (DS8).
4. The overall internal width of a single garage to be a minimum of 3.0m wide with a door opening of 2.4m wide minimum and double garages are to be 5.4m wide with a door opening of 4.8m wide minimum according to AS 2890.1-2004. Column locations are to be in accordance with AS 2890.1-2004.
5. Traffic facilities to be installed, such as; wheel stops, bollards, kerbs, signposting, pavement markings, lighting and speed humps, shall comply with AS2890.1-2004.
6. Ground Clearance Template as shown in Appendix C of AS 2890.1-2004 must be used to check that adequate ground clearance is provided on ramps, circulation roadways, access driveways or other vehicular paths where there is a grade change or an irregularity in the vertical alignment e.g. a hump, dip or gutter.
7. Sight distance to pedestrians exiting the property shall be provided by clear lines of sight in a splay extending 2m from the driveway edge along the front boundary and 2.5m from the boundary along the driveway in accordance with Figure 3.3 of AS2890.1. The required sight lines to pedestrians or other vehicles in or around the site should not be compromised by the landscaping, signage fences, walls or display materials.

8. The minimum available headroom clearance is to be signposted at all entrances and clearance is to be a minimum of 2.2m (for cars and light vans including all travel paths to and from parking spaces for people with disabilities) measured to the lowest projection of the roof (fire sprinkler, lighting, sign, and ventilation), according to AS 2890.1-2004.
9. A convex mirror to be installed within the ramp access (one near the entry driveway & one at the bottom of the ramp access) with its height and location adjusted to allow an exiting driver a full view of the driveway in order to see if another vehicle is coming through.
10. Occupation of any part of footpath or road at or above (including construction and/or restoration of footpath and/or kerb or gutter) during construction of the development shall require a Road Occupancy Permit from Council. The applicant shall submit an application for a Road Occupancy Permit through Council's Traffic & Transport Services, prior to carrying out the construction/restoration works.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed development should be amended to comply with the approved Concept Plan, particularly with respect to building setbacks. The issues raised within this submission should also be addressed through redesign of the proposed development to improve visual amenity, improve impacts upon neighbouring properties, increase accessibility and housing type and to maximise amenity for future occupants of the site.

Council appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above application and looks forward to further consultation on this matter.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above matters, please contact Kate Lafferty on 9806 5393.

Yours sincerely



Dr. Robert Lang
Chief Executive Officer
Parramatta City Council