

**ANGEL PLACE  
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15 December 2023

Ms Kiersten Fishburn  
Secretary  
Department of Planning and Environment  
4 Parramatta Square  
12 Darcy Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150

## **DESIGN INTEGRITY PANEL ENDORSEMENT - ALEXANDRIA HEALTH CENTRE**

This letter has been prepared on behalf of the Design Integrity Panel (**DIP**) for the Alexandria Health Centre State Significant Development (**SSD**), in relation to the design integrity process. It provides endorsement of the design by the Design Integrity Panel (DIP) prior to the lodgement of the SSDA.

Warren and Mahoney + MAAP, as the winning architect, presented the proposed scheme to the DIP on 7 September and 28 September 2023 for their review and feedback following the design competition.

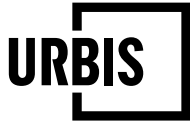
Following DIP Session 2, updated façade information was provided to the Panel on 16 November 2023. This was reviewed by the Panel and discussed at a meeting of the DIP on 23 November 2023 to focus on façade design. The attendees at the 23 November 2023 meeting were the Panel and Urbis as observers.

The DIP for the Alexandria Health Centre comprises three panel members. In accordance with the endorsed Terms of Reference, this includes members of the Competition Jury. The members of the DIP are as follows.

<b>Panel Member</b>	<b>Role/Position</b>
<b>Rory Toomey (Chair)</b>	Principal of Design Excellence - Government Architect NSW
<b>Phillip Rossington</b>	Principal – BVN Architects
<b>Troy Uleman</b>	Director – John McAslan + Partners

DIP session 1 was held virtually via Microsoft Teams and on 7 September 2023 and was attended by key members of the Warren and Mahoney + MAAP team and the Proponent.

A copy of the DIP Session 1 feedback is provided at **Attachment A** to this letter. The following sections of this letter outline the DIP Session 2 and subsequent session feedback and the DIP endorsement for the proposal to proceed to SSDA lodgement.



## DESIGN INTEGRITY PANEL – SESSION NO. 2

The following table reflects the Panel’s observations and responses to the design team’s request for clarification during DIP Session No. 2. This feedback is based on the presentation by the **Warren and Mahoney + MAAP** team on 28 September 2023.

The comments have been grouped into ‘focus areas’. All Panel observations reflect the unanimous position of the DIP after Session No. 2.

Table 1 Design Integrity Panel Observation (DIP Session No. 2)

Focus Areas	Panel Commentary
<b>Engagement with an Aboriginal Spatial Design Expert</b>	1.1 The Panel supported the engagement of an Aboriginal spatial design expert.  1.2 The Panel encouraged Warren and Mahoney + MAAP to explore how Blacklash will inform the design process and consult with local knowledge holders.  1.3 Warren and Mahoney + MAAP noted that UAP and Blacklash will be working closely together to explore public art opportunities. Options being considered included native landscaping (Kangaroo Grass) and pavement patterns along the pedestrian entry, brick patterning along the Eastern elevation, and using corten steel landscape elements to mimic ‘boulders’ in the landscape. The Panel noted they were happy with the options being considered.
<b>Solar Access and courtyard voids</b>	1.4 Warren and Mahoney + MAAP explained how the design has responded to comments from DIP Session #1 by architecturally finessing the voids and including landscaping design in the courtyards with meandering spaces and pockets of spaces carved into nature.  1.5 The Panel encouraged the thoughtful consideration of the safety mesh to minimise any vertical elements and consider tensile mesh that clips together.  1.6 The Panel recommended minimising solid elements in the courtyard voids and internal walls where possible to ensure the design is visually recessive.
<b>Floor plates and natural light</b>	1.7 The Panel supported the improvements to natural light through additional openings to the eastern façade, and noted that this should be included within the final design.

Focus Areas	Panel Commentary
<b>Ground Plane and Entry Experience</b>	<p>1.8 The Panel supported the ground plane design updates presented by Warren and Mahoney + MAAP, which includes the refined seating, corten steel 'boulders', and pedestrian entry pathway design.</p> <p>1.9 The Panel noted that the feature tree planting on the eastern portion of the Bourke Road frontage appears to have diminished during the design process. The Panel reinforced the importance of this significant tree to the success of the overall design.</p>
<b>Car parking</b>	<p>1.10 The Panel were supportive of the refinement and finesse of the screen system, including the flat fascia elements. The Panel commended the thoughtful integration of signage along this frontage and noted that this is to be retained.</p> <p>1.11 The Panel recommended that the glazing line is pulled back as far as possible into the laneway.</p>
<b>Façade design</b>	<p>1.12 The Panel agreed the dark coloured band along Level 4 of the eastern façade was redundant, and instead encouraged the exploration of a uniform colour with different textures or materiality to mark this level.</p> <p>1.13 The Panel encouraged Warren and Mahoney + MAAP to continue investigating the western façade to ensure it has a strong connection to the Bourke Road façade. The Panel also recommended exploring the use of sun shading devices along the podium suites on the western facade.</p> <p>1.14 The Panel encouraged exploring of planting on either side of the podium rooftop balustrade so the barrier is less visible to users and is integrated into the garden. Mesh fencing to be considered.</p>
<b>Cost Rationalisation and Budget</b>	<p>1.15 The Project Team presented three cost rationalisation options that are currently being investigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Removal of planters on each level of the street wall.</li> <li>- Investigating alternate façade materiality (aluminium instead of terracotta).</li> <li>- Removal of façade fins and conversion to commercial glazing.</li> </ul> <p>1.16 The Panel acknowledged that the project would require continued value management through the design development process. The Panel encouraged retention of the layered and rich façade which was a key component to the competition winning scheme.</p>

Focus Areas	Panel Commentary
	<p>1.17 The Panel noted the planters on the façade were not fundamental to design excellence and their removal would be supported provided that the level 4 podium rooftop planting is enhanced.</p> <p>1.18 The Panel do not oppose the use of aluminium instead of terracotta, provided that a similar ‘matte like’ finish and layered façade look is still achieved.</p> <p>1.19 The Panel highlighted the flat fascia elements as a key element to retain as part of any revised façade design, to retain the breaks in composition, distortion in the overall regularity and light reflection of the competition scheme.</p> <p>1.20 The Panel offered the Project Team another meeting to discuss the design refinements and feedback if required.</p>

## SUBSEQUENT DIP SESSION – 23 NOVEMBER 2023

Following DIP Session 2, updated façade information was provided to the Panel on 16 November 2023. This was reviewed by the Panel and discussed at a meeting of the DIP on 23 November 2023 to focus on façade design. The attendees at the 23 November 2023 meeting were the Panel and Urbis as observers.

The revised façade design included:

- Increased extent of planting on the level 4 podium with 500mm soil depth
- Slab edge expression increased from 250mm to 350mm.
- Three sizes of horizontal expressions to provide variety in the façade.

The summary of the panel commentary is summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Subsequent Session – 23 November 2023

Focus Area	Panel Commentary
<p><b>Revised façade design</b></p>	<p>2.1 The Panel noted that the revised design has not lost design quality from the competition scheme. The reduction in complexity and number of elements on the façade has generally improved the scheme.</p> <p>2.2 The Panel are supportive of the removal of the façade planter boxes, subject to meaningful landscaping on the podium rooftop, which will provide amenity to street and patients</p>

Focus Area	Panel Commentary
	<p>2.3 The use of three 'baguette' façade sizes creates variation and complexity to the façade and is supported by the Panel.</p> <p>2.4 The transition from the Bourke Road façade system to the western façade supported in principle, however the Panel would like to see further details regarding the dimensions during the assessment phase.</p> <p>2.5 The Panel also noted that there maybe complexity in the maintenance of the building which would need to be further considered as the maintenance zone has been reduced.</p>
<p>The Panel unanimously agreed that there was not a need for another DIP meeting ahead of the SSDA lodgement. The Panel noted that there is an opportunity to review the scheme in full and provide comment during the assessment phase of the SSDA.</p> <p>The Panel also noted that this discussion (23 November 2023) was only in relation to the façade design. The Panel will provide detailed comments in the response to submission phase about the scheme as a whole, including (but not limited to):</p>	
<p><b>Relationship between the sun shading and glazing system</b></p>	<p>2.6 A review of the relationship between the sun shading and glazing system. The Panel noted the depth and distinction between the sun shading and the glazing system is an important element of the competition winning scheme, and to ensure this is not further value engineered.</p>
<p><b>Western façade resolution</b></p>	<p>2.7 A review of the western façade resolution at the ground and mezzanine level – The DIP noted that the additional plan pack only provided a portion of this elevation. The competition winning scheme successful integrated the back of house services along this façade into the design. The Panel would like to review this detail during the submissions phase of the SSDA scheme. It is noted that the western laneway will form part of a wider laneway network and is therefore an important aspect of the development.</p>
<p><b>Handrail integration</b></p>	<p>2.8 The Panel raised concern about the handrails in renders. The competition winning scheme featured Corten steel balustrades and handrails integrated with the landscaping. The renders seemed to show a compliance/ engineering approach to handrails. The level of sophistication and design resolution in facades should also be achieved in forecourt landscaping.</p>

Focus Area	Panel Commentary
Floor plates and natural light	2.9 Given the size of the floor plates, the Panel suggested there are further opportunities to increase daylight access to occupants of the building. This may be through stepping ceilings towards the edges of the buildings and maximising clear glazing.
Resolution of lateral walls	2.10 The resolution of lateral walls in relation to façade should be carefully managed to retain integrity of façade treatment. The plan pack showed walls in between the mullions on level 4 of the western façade.

**Closing comment:**

The DIP endorses the design as presented and does not see need for further review of the design prior to lodgement. Should significant design changes occur prior to lodgement or during the assessment of the SSD DA the design would need to be referred to the DIP for further review and endorsement.

**PANEL ENDORSEMENT**

The Panel Chair confirms that this letter is an accurate record of the DIP feedback and that the DIP endorses the observations and clarifications by consensus.

**Design Integrity Panel (DIP) endorsement**

Name	Signature	Date
Rory Toomey Panel Chair		14 December 2023
Phillip Rossington Panel Member		12 December 2023
Troy Uleman Panel Member		14 December 2023

*Attachment A: Design Integrity Panel Session 1 Feedback*