

Meeting Minutes - Peer Review Process: Architecture Design Review Panel

Rozelle Village

Redevelopment of Balmain Leagues Club - Victoria Road, Waterloo Street and Darling Street, Rozelle

Date:	10 November 2011
Meeting No:	Meeting 2: Design Development Presentation
Location:	Rozelle Village Information Centre, Rozelle
Time:	8.00am
Attendees:	Panel Members Ken Maher (KM) – Chairman, Hassell Professor Alec Tzannes (AT) – Director, Tzannes Associates Helen Lochhead (HL) - NSW Deputy Government Architect Tony Caro (TC) – Director, Tony Caro Architects Property Developers Ian Wright (IW) - Rozelle Village Pty Ltd Architects Frank Stanisic (FS) - Stanisic Associates Jason Nowosad (JN) - Stanisic Associates (scribe)
Apologies:	Alex Yasumoto (AY) - Rozelle Village Pty Ltd
Attachments	Design Development Presentation

A power point presentation was given by FS and A4 record copy provided to the panelists.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from the Initiation Meeting, Briefing and Site Visit were accepted.

Minutes from the previous Concept Design Presentation were accepted.

3.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

This section references the Design Development Presentation prepared by Stanisic Associates attached at **Attachment A**. Each sub-heading references a corresponding section of the agenda and presentation.

3.1 Rationale

- FS referred panelists to the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report (PEAR) included as part of the briefing material to panelists and noted that it included a Development Capacity Report prepared by Inspire with input from Leyshon Consulting. FS added that the DP&I was mindful of the FSR projected for the site in this report when declaring the project a major project.
- FS highlighted that the Development Capacity Report concluded that the FSR for the site is maximum 9.6:1 but that Pacific Investments were not seeking a maximum development FSR.
- HL questioned what the basis was for the FSR of 9.6:1. FS commented that he understood the basis was transport capacity, private and public, along the Victoria Road Corridor; residential, retail and commercial demand; and metropolitan strategic vision generally
- AT commented that the Development Capacity Report didn't appear to be based upon any physical, social or environmental criteria. FS said the report did address ESD.
- TC commented that the development capacities identified are upper limits, FS agreed and that the development capacity of the proposed development should have a merit assessment.
- KM commented that the upper limits are slightly irrelevant, as Pacific Investments are not seeking the maximum FSR.
- FS commented that the Pacific Investments are seeking an FSR of approximately 6.5 – 7.0:1, well below the 9.6:1 maximum identified in the Development Capacity Report (page 26)
- AT commented that the Development Capacity Report gives a framework for consideration of how the development fits into the inner west sub region and local context.

- FS indicated that the design methodology that has been used is more propositional, supported by analysis.
- AT expressed concern with a propositional methodology as the proposed development didn't arise from an analysis at the start. AT questioned whether this approach would satisfy the public and planning. AT advocated a more evidence-based methodology with research, criteria, assessment and urban design study.
- FS reassured AT that there has been a thorough analysis of the site and if more was necessary, it will be included in the Environmental Assessment.

3.2 Context, form and density

- FS tabled an analysis of topographic heights in Sydney, highlighting that the Rozelle Village site is the highest ground in a 3km radius of the inner west, adding that it is a unique site and therefore not a precedent for any other development in the area.
- AT commented that the proposed development is in the 'fringe department' because it is tall and will be a striking object.
- AT requested that additional information be provided that gives some understanding whether higher buildings are located on high points in Sydney. AT commented that if the study concludes that high buildings are located on high points, the argument should be that a high building on this site is not inconsistent in Sydney which may ameliorate the hostility of the public for a tower.
- FS commented that high buildings in Sydney were generally located on ridges and hills.
- KM commented that high buildings are also located in areas where there is transport to support it. AT added that there could be a case for the proposed density based on the site's location on Victoria Road Corridor.
- TC commented that the proposed density needs to be framed in the context of the broader city, which is supported by government policy such as The Metro Strategy.
- AT described Rob Adam's position, which supports density located along primary transport routes. AT added that this contrasted with Professor Bill Randolph position that density should be spread over a broader area.
- FS noted that the proposed Metro Rail Station adjacent to the site supported Rob Adams position for increased density on the site. HL commented that the Sydney Metro project has been scrapped. FS notes that Victoria Road Corridor which accommodates Sydney's Metrobus network.
- AT commented that he believes that the Sydney Rail Metro will happen in time. AT argued that if you get the transport plan wrong, put density in to support the transport in the future.
- TC commented that Rouse Hill Town Centre is a good example of this.
- KM commented that at Rouse Hill Town Centre there were policies in place to support density. KM added that he is working on a study that looks at appropriate densities around the proposed North West Rail Link project. KM commented that the argument for density is multi-layered and may include consideration of topography and transport.
- KM commented that if the transport infrastructure such as the Sydney Rail Metro isn't there for this site there are other factors such as the Victoria Road corridor for cars and public buses.
- HL commented that this project may set a precedent for other sites along Victoria Road, in particular the Terry Street Precinct, opposite the site. HL added that the argument for density on this site might be supported by proposing that density is also increased on other sites along the Victoria Road corridor.
- AT agreed with HL that the argument for increased density on this site could be an extremely positive thing, where the positives outweigh the negative consequences. AT added that although the site may be considered unique, the urban strategy is not unique.
- HL commented that increased density needs to be supported by considering the broader context and not just the site specific context.
- TC commented that there is no need to be defensive about proposing increased density for this site. TC added that 'Rozelle Village' is not a good start. TC questioned how the public would receive an idea of a village that is not publically accessible 24/7. AT agreed with TC, but commented that the Lord Mayor of Sydney describes the City of Sydney as a city of villages.
- KM commented that the site is a strategic site in terms of its access to transport and development capacity.
- HL requested that consideration be given to an urban strategy that considers what the public benefits are with increased density and what the resulting forms would be.
- FS commented that further justification for density and block forms on this site will be included in the EA. TC stressed that it should be emphasized in the PA that this site is not unique. KM added that this site is part of the densification of the city.
- TC commented that the impacts resulting from increased density should be made clear, but they should be considered in relation to the benefits to the broader context.
- HL commented that density and height are key issues and acknowledged that increased height may provide more opportunities to free up space at the ground plane to benefit the pedestrian experience.
- KM noted that the panel could not comment on urban design and architecture without also commenting on density. AT added that you can't separate density from a discussion about urban design and architecture.
- AT commented that he does not have any prejudice to density and height, but ultimately wants to understand the impact of density and the proposed form.

- AT commented that two wrongs don't make a right and that more options needed to be considered for the site, not just the refused DA and two tower proposal.
- AT commented that he understands that a single tower has a compact core and is more efficient, but is not interested in that. AT added that his interest is the impact of the proposed form on the public interest.
- FS indicated that there is no statutory height controls in the existing or draft Leichhardt LEP. FS added that in the future surrounding urban context building height could be inferred from the draft statutory FSR and Zoning controls.
- AT questioned the FSR of the previous DA submission that was rejected by the JRPP and what the primary reasons were for its refusal. FS confirmed that the FSR was 3.9:1 and that the primary reasons for refusal were lack of residential amenity: noise from Victoria Road, lack of compliance with SEPP 65 (natural ventilation and solar access). IW added that the FSR was consistent with the site specific controls for the site, but it was still refused by the JRPP. IW added that the development wasn't refused based upon FSR. FS commented that the draft LEP 2011 is now proposing an FSR of 1.3:1 and local centre/business zoning for the site,
- IW commented that following numerous meetings with Leichhardt Council, they were invited to provide a proposition for the best outcome for the site.
- HL commented that there is a large jump from 3.9:1 to 7. 0:1.
- FS commented that the Department is aware of the proposed yield for the site of 50,000-60,000sqm as it is clearly stated in the PEAR (page14).
- AT commented that the site specific DCP envelope for the site failed as it did not have a construction logic. AT added that these forms seem to only consider solar impacts on surrounding properties. AT noted that the focus on solar access to adjoining dwellings in the site specific controls did not appear to be a good basis for ensuring residential amenity on the site.
- AT commented that the pedestrian movement drawing isn't shown the correct way as it doesn't take into consideration the topography and distances along streets. AT requested that this drawing is amended to show how long it actually takes for pedestrians from the site to surrounding public open spaces ie ped shed. AT added that this drawing does show that the site is served by good amenity and extends main street retail
- AT commented that the tower/podium form criteria needs to be proven in order to understand how it could be considered poor/satisfactory/good. FS commented that the comparison matrix is just a summary and illustrates that there are more benefits with a single tower compared to two towers.
- FS commented that the comparison criteria are related to the building design as well as the public interest.
- TC commented that some of the comparison criteria are not relevant. KM added that the criteria should focus on the public and not the private interest. TC added that the comparison criteria need to separate the public and property developer interests. AT agreed.
- HL commented that the comparison criteria needs to be given a weighting as some are more important than others.
- AT requested that a built form analysis is undertaken that considers real options for the site: low, medium and high rise - avoid terms such as tower and podium.
- AT added that these options will allow the design team to reach their own decision about the better outcome for the site. HL commented that if there were other real options for the site investigated and it was proven that the proposition is the best option, it will be easier to support it. HL added that there is more than one solution for a site and that the better solution will become clear through authentic and legitimate propositions and analysis.
- AT commented that a lower FSR may not be in the public interest as the developer may not be able to propose many of the things that contribute to the public interest,
- HL commented that the rationale for density should be justified in a visual way, not just text. HL agreed that there should be an investigation of low, medium and high rise options.

3.3 Uses

- FS tabled a schedule of mixed uses for the site.
- TC commented that the quantum of floor space represents about 50:50 split of residential: non-residential. FS added that there is currently 30,000 sqm residential and 15,000sqm retail uses proposed on the site.
- TC commented that the developers don't want retail floor space on the site as it creates other pressures. IW added that they intend to retain the retail on the site and have looked closely at the retail mix. IW added that its focus is on the right retail balance and its marketability.
- IW commented that DP&I has not raised any issue with the amount of retail on the site and that the proposed retail mix is also a result of community feedback.
- KM commented that if without retail, the FSR for the site would be closer to 3.9:1.

3.4 Public domain / pedestrian environment

- AT questioned whether the passageways were publically accessible 24/7. FS commented that the passageways are not part of the public domain and will be gated at night, like most Sydney arcades (QVB, Galleries Victoria, Lumiere)

- TC commented that the Melbourne QV2 precedent is located in a different context to Rozelle, with many more desire lines. TC added that Rozelle probably doesn't require a high level of connectivity. FS said the images were more character references.
- HL questioned whether pedestrians are likely to use the stair in the middle of the site along Waterloo Street.
- FS commented that the permeability of the site is for physical and visual connection.
- KM asked whether the retail environment was a large singular building or a collection of elements.
- TC questioned whether there should be a publically accessible space as part of the development. TC added that if the passageways are not open to the sky, the retail will feel homogenous.
- TC described the importance of opening the development to the public domain, eg Darling Harbour on Sussex St.
- HL/AT both commented that the strongest through site link is the heritage laneway and the connection to Darling Street. AT added that this connection must be given more weight and public emphasis.
- KM noted that the main east- west passageway also brings light and air into the retail levels.

3.5 Amenity analysis – view and shadow

- HL noted in looking at the view studies that when a building breaks through the tree line in a public open space you need to consider the visual impact in relation to the public benefit provided by the development.
- AT recommended that a study is undertaken that looks at the site in the context of the development of other objects in Sydney. AT added that in the 1950s, Centennial Park and Kings Cross had urban change and this is the way of cities.
- AT commented that photomontages that show lower buildings will appear better, but when framing a higher form we need to consider the economic development of the land and environmental response which suggests that small is not necessarily good and big is not bad. AT added by presenting different values, there may be a convincing argument for something which is bolder and strikingly.
- AT commented that the overshadowing studies appear promising.
- TC questioned the location of the north point on the base drawings. FS agreed to confirm the north point and overshadowing diagrams.
- AT commented that while the building appears big on the site, there doesn't appear to be major amenity impacts.
- AT commented that at a local level, some residents may not currently receive any sun.
- AT commented that it appears 3 hours of sunlight at the winter solstice is a reasonable criteria. TC disagreed and commented that a taller building affects more residents than a lower building.
- IW commented that you can only work to a standard.
- TC commented that SEPP 65 is also about providing sun to new developments, not just retaining sun to existing dwellings.
- HL requested confirmation whether there is any additional overshadowing that is unreasonable. FS said he will investigate.

AT left meeting at 9.30am.

- TC commented that if you reduce the retail on the site you reduce the FSR and questioned whether this may be a better outcome for the development.
- HL commented that the retail hub in this location could be supported, but advised that the amount of retail needed to be sustainable.

KM left meeting at 9.45am

HL left meeting at 9.50am

- TC commented that a 4.0:1 residential only option may still be a single tower form in the proposed location. TC added that it is then an argument whether there should be a retail component to the development.
- TC commented that if the retail was deleted from the development, public benefit would be lost.
- TC requested confirmation of the FSR of the different uses in the development rather than a total FSR for the site.

3.6 Issues summary

The panel requested that the following key issues be addressed for the next meeting.

1. Further consideration of the rationale for density and yield on the site, from both a broader (sub regional) and local perspective.
2. Further building envelope/ form studies and comparisons, correlated with FSR, to confirm the preferred option for the site - criteria to focus on the public interest and benefit.
3. Further contextual and overshadowing analysis that investigates the impacts of the preferred option in relation to the broader as well as the local context.
4. Further study of the proposed pedestrian environment and its quality.

End of meeting: 10.00am

Next meeting: Monday 28 November, 3.00 – 5.00pm