

9 November 2016

Design Excellence Statement
Mixed Use Residential Development, 134 Pitt Street, Redfern

Design Excellence

Consent must not be granted to a new building or to external alterations to an existing building unless the consent authority has considered whether the proposed development exhibits design excellence.

Proposal

a) Architectural Design

whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved,

Proposal: The development incorporates the site of the former Rachel Foster Hospital. This includes the main building and ancillary buildings including a colonnade. The street façade and structure of the main building is to be retained as well as the colonnade elements from the low building. These elements display the characteristics of mid-century deco style. Whilst the approved DA did not reference this context, the proposal adopts some of the characteristics of this style. This includes the use of strong horizontal lines and curved edges.

As the project progresses, these elements will be developed and the detail will reflect the high standard of design suitable to this site.

b) External Appearance

whether the form and external appearance of the building will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,

Proposal: The overall massing of the buildings is generally the same as the approved design. The character of the approved scheme could be characterised as typical of Sydney generic apartment designs of the early 2000's. There is no attempt to fit with the context of the Hospital or surrounding neighbourhood. We see the new application as a chance to improve the quality of the design including the facades. As such we have reconsidered the facades and attempted to provide a façade of higher quality.

The character of facades is influenced by the art deco character of the former hospital buildings. At the same time, we have emphasised the horizontal lines in order to minimise the apparent bulk and height of the scheme. And finally we sought a design which is progressive and contemporary with a mixture of warm and earthy materials.

The facades consist of horizontal white bands of painted masonry to reflect the art deco heritage. These bands are often curved in plan to reinforce this character. These bands are interspersed with areas of timber grain metal panel. This creates a patterning which introduces a diagonal movement which adds interest and articulation. Areas of horizontal timber louvres are also introduced. These areas provide privacy particularly between buildings and on the ends of buildings and balconies. The timber further softens the facades and adds earthiness.

Each building has a different composition of these elements. Building A is more restrained and upright. The northern façade has a high proportion of open balconies to maximise solar access. The southern façade is more solid and calm with no diagonal elements. Building D has a northern frontage to Albert Street. The horizontal expressing minimises the apparent height in relation to the existing 2 storey built fabric. The playful façade activates the length of the street providing a rich streetscape. Building B and C face inwards into the site and they are the least restraint. The diagonal geometry adds interest and character to the built form creating a unique and uplifting environment. As with the approved design, the lower 2 floors of building C incorporate the existing colonnade. Accordingly, the east façade of building C is more restrained than other facades of building B and C and the lower levels are harmonious with the colonnade. The colonnade denotes a retail verandah which articulates the public streetscape.

The ground level surrounding the plaza will contain retail and café spaces with large expanses of glazing shopfronts. This will provide streetscape activation which will add to the quality of the public spaces.

The overall effect is a sculptural composition which will create a unique contemporary inner city precinct with its own distinct identity. The result is a progressive design of a high quality which will enrich the area and provide a bench mark for the community.

c) Sustainable Principles

whether the building meets sustainable design principles in terms of sunlight, natural ventilation, wind, reflectivity, visual and acoustic privacy, safety and security and resource, energy and water efficiency,

Proposal: The design of the apartments has been influenced by the principles of passive solar design to maximise natural ventilation. The core design ensures a high proportion of corner units and through units resulting in a high proportion of north facing units and natural ventilation to minimise energy use. The design incorporates deep balcony overhangs and vertical timber louvres to maximise solar protection and minimise energy use. The common lobbies are all naturally ventilated.

The proposal contains water collection and recycling initiatives for the garden areas.

CPTED principles

Territorial Re-enforcement

Community ownership of public space sends positive signals to the community.

Proposal: The proposal exhibits design excellence as it makes a positive contribution with regard to public space. The previous approved DA provided for public space at the heritage port-cocher in the form of landscaped area surrounded by residential units. The current proposal activates this space by providing retail and café uses around the space. This will activate the space and provide community amenity and facilities which will benefit the neighborhood. In addition; the landscape design of the communal open spaces have been improved with more developed privacy for private open space. There is also an additional roof terrace communal space above building D.

The pathway network has been revised to maximize legibility and simplicity. This has been achieved by making the pathways simpler and more direct.

Surveillance

People feel safe in public areas when they can see and interact with others, particularly people connected with that space, such as shopkeepers or adjoining residents. Criminals are often deterred from committing crime in places that are well supervised.

Proposal: The proposal achieves a high level of surveillance. All of the public spaces are overlooked by windows and all of the pathways are directly accessed from individual units on the ground.

Further surveillance is provided with CCTV coverage throughout the design.

Access Control

Access control treatments restrict, channel and encourage people and vehicles into, out of and around the development.

Proposal: The proposal would allow public access to the retail/café plaza. Security gates would be provided beyond this point with swipe card access. This would limit access to the circulation paths and communal open space to residents. This maximizes security and resident amenity. The pathways and communal spaces have been revised to provide optimal way-finding, desire-lines. Planted zones, paved pathways, deep soil trees and timber fencing is used to define spaces and control access – see landscape design.

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