

THE PANEL'S ADVICE

NATIONAL CAPITAL DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Block 1 Section 30 Phillip – First Session
Colbee Court Mixed Use



Australian Government
National Capital Authority



ACT
Government

NATIONAL CAPITAL DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

THE PANEL'S ADVICE

Date issued: Friday, 2 December 2022

Project: Colbee Court Mixed Use

Review date: Wednesday, 16 November 2022

Meeting location: Meeting held online via Microsoft Teams

Site visit: Site visit conducted by the Chair (Catherine Townsend) on 14 November 2022

Panel members: Catherine Townsend, Chair and ACT Government Architect

Clare Cousins

David Clarke

Rosemary Burne

Proponent: PD (ACT) Pty Limited

Observers: Representatives from:
Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)
Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS)

Conflicts of interest: None

Confidentiality of the Panel's Advice: Design review considers concept proposals at various stages throughout the design process that are frequently subject to change and improvement in relation to feedback from the NCDRP. Throughout this time a commercial in confidence status is maintained for proposals that engage with the NCDRP.

In accordance with Section 139 of the Planning and Development Act (2007) (the Act), prescribed development proposals are required to provide a copy of the 'Panels Advice' and the proponent's 'Response to the Panels Advice' in writing when the Development Application is submitted. Section 30 of the Act identifies the design advice and the proponent's written response to that advice as associated documents, therefore the most recent Panel's Advice and the proponent's response become publicly available once a Development Application is publicly notified for community comment.

MEETING SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Property address

1 Colbee Court Phillip ACT 2606 (Block 1 Section 30 Phillip)

Proposal

The subject site is located at Block 1 Section 30 Phillip (1 Colbee Court, Phillip ACT) and has a block area of 1239m². The site is within the Phillip Service Trades area and is bounded by Townshend Street (primary frontage) to the west, Grenville Court to the north and Colbee Court and parkland to the south. Existing on the site are two storey commercial buildings and private surface car parking. The site is zoned CZ3: Services Zone under the Territory Plan (2008) and the provisions of the Phillip Precinct Map and Code apply. Strategic planning recommendations for the service trades area are also provided in the Woden Town Centre Master Plan (2015).

The Phillip Service Trades Precinct is located approximately 600m south of the Woden Town Centre retail core that includes the Westfield Woden shopping centre. The precinct provides a mix of retail and service trades for residents living in the Woden Valley and surrounds and is planned as a series of courtyards that provide shopfront address and landscaped park spaces to streets such as Colbee Court and rear service access via streets like Grenville Court. Townshend Street provides the primary north south vehicle and pedestrian movement connecting each courtyard landscape space. The precinct is currently entirely commercially operated with no residential development at this stage.

The proposal is for a mixed-use residential development comprising a five (5) storey building (including attic) with approximately 800sqm of commercial space at the ground level and 43 build-to-rent apartments, including a variety of unit designs, double height ground floor tenancies, pedestrian laneway, open air corridors, naturally lit circulation stairs and elevated communal gardens. The primary building entry is identified by a double height open-air link which progresses vertically at the rear of the site for resident vertical circulation as well as solar and ventilation opportunities. Building corners are proposed to be inverted similar to existing Townshend Street buildings. The proposed building is to feature an articulated brick and glass façade with pitched roofing form for the attic that includes the use of dormers for light and ventilation.

Proponents' representative address to the Panel

The proponent's architectural design team, represented by Tynan Freeman of Stewart Architecture commenced the presentation with an overview of the 2004 Woden Town Centre Master Plan depicting historic considerations for the site and Phillip Service Trades Precinct. He presented the proposal as a mix of commercial tenancy, "build to rent" apartments with basement car parking. The proponent explaining the site's context within the service trades area noting the opportunities to include three active street frontages and an address to the adjacent Colbee Court parkland. Utilising extracts from the Woden Town Centre Master Plan the proponent explained the strategic desire for Townshend Street to enable mix use development fronting the future multi modal urban treed boulevard.

The proponent then presented a series of plans depicting the design proposition, explaining the ground floor to include commercial tenancies to the street frontages with the potential for a

THE PANEL'S ADVICE

mezzanine floor in this space for additional uses (not included in this proposition and subject to planning framework allowances). He went on to describe the double height central pedestrian open air laneway to the Townshend Street frontage linking the street through to the proposed shared rear laneway. The upper floors were described to include a mix of one (1) and two (2) bedroom apartments accessed from a single core and apartment sizes considered by the proponent appropriate for this area of the city. The proposal will feature a covered communal rooftop garden to the north of level two with the built form recessed at this level and above in response to planning framework requirements. The proponent added that the upper-level apartments will have access to significant long views and that the Level 2 communal area with perimeter planting will provide added amenity for the users of the development. Moving to the attic level the proponent presented these apartments as gaining light and ventilation through the inclusion of rooftop dormer windows as a key architectural feature of the development.

Presenting solar access and natural ventilation diagrams the proponent noted that 70% of the total apartment units receive a minimum of three (3) hours solar access between 9am and 3pm during the winter solstice and that 63% of the total apartment units achieve natural cross ventilation. Shadow diagrams were presented indicating the overshadowing impacts at the summer and winter solstice, primarily to the adjacent parklands to the south of the site.

The proponent continued the presentation by explaining the materiality for the proposition noting that use of redbrick to the highly articulated façade with expressed concrete structure. Significant landscape is proposed to be incorporated into the structure including cascading plants above the proposed building awnings to the north, west and south. Utilising the elevations for the proposal, the proponent went on to explain the composition of the building describing it to have symmetry and rhythm, with identified difference in materiality (i.e. metal clad) for the roof top attic floor and dormers to break in the building's composition. The proponent concluded their presentation by indicating a series of 3D renders of the proposal.

Based on the documentation provided prior to the design review session; a site visit by the Chair (Catherine Townsend) on Monday 14 November 2022; and the proponents presentation, the following comments and recommendations are provided:

The Panel is pleased that the development proposal has been presented to NCDRP at this early design concept stage. Engaging early with the Panel has provided the opportunity for a meaningful discussion about the key elements of the proposal and to identify how the design concepts could be further enhanced for the benefit of the proponent, future residents and the broader community.

The proponent is commended for their aspirations to deliver a high-quality development that is considered by the Panel to contribute to the evolving nature of the Phillip Service Trades Precinct. The Panel notes that the proposal will play a significant role, as a catalyst project in defining the future possibilities for the revitalisation of the area. In this regard the Panel considers that there is an opportunity for the proposal to respond more positively to its local context and surroundings and that the adjacent parkland to the south of the development offers a unique opportunity for increased connectivity and engagement.

The proponent is also commended for a highly articulated proposal that is considered by the Panel to be an appropriate response to the future desired character envisaged for the Phillip Service Trades Precinct. The Panel supports the proponent's intention of creating an interesting,

THE PANEL'S ADVICE

functional and viable aesthetic for the upper level of the building that incorporates the roof, attic and dormer windows. As design development continues the Panel recommends the proponent carefully considers how additional roofing elements, such as air conditioning units and plant will be incorporated into this space so as to not detract from the merits of the envisioned architectural aesthetic.

The Panel considers the intention to activate the proposal at the ground level with a central pedestrian laneway including commercial tenancies to be greatly beneficial to this proposition however, recommends further consideration of the programming of uses to avoid potential safety and functional conflict associated with accessing and maintaining planter boxes, the proposed café, adjacent waste collection and basement vehicle access all located at the rear laneway.

The Panel thanks the proponent for their positive engagement with the design review process and commends them for the demonstrated commitment to achieving a positive outcome for the site. In progressing the design through further design development, the proponent is encouraged to consider how the Panel's Advice could be adopted to further refine and enhance the scheme, for the benefit of residents and the broader Phillip Service Trades Precinct. Based on the advice provided the Panel recommends and looks forward to further review for the proposal.

Key Issues and Recommendations

The *Key Issues and Recommendations* provide further advice to the proponent, consistent with the above recommendation.

To achieve the best possible design outcome for the proposal, the proponent is encouraged to consider the following issues through the next stages of the design development:

1.0 Context and character

1.1 The Panel commends the proponent for their aspirations for the proposal that will contribute to the evolving nature of the Phillip Service Trades Precinct. The Panel considers this proposal to respond positively to its local context and surroundings and that it has the potential to define the future character of the service trades precinct as a catalyst for the renewal of the area. The adjacent parkland to the south of the development is highlighted by the Panel as an opportunity for connection with the proponent recommended to further consider how the proposal may increase its engagement with this adjacent open space.

2.0 Landscape

2.1 The Panel considers the proposal's landscape offering has the opportunity to define the changing nature of this area within the Phillip Service Trades Precinct through the provision of greener infrastructure. The Panel encourages the proponent to develop a robust landscape strategy for the development, including the consideration of how the proposal may contribute to its local context (i.e. provision of street trees, connection to adjacent open space parkland). To ensure the proposal reaches its full potential as depicted in the 3D renders presented to the Panel the proponent is recommended to;

2.1.1 Engage the services of a suitably qualified consultant (i.e. Landscape Architect) for the provision of professional landscape design services.

2.1.2 Ensure the allocation for deep soil planting zones is sufficient to support optimum growing conditions for the proposed plantings. The Panel observes

that there is an opportunity for connected deep soil zones to be provided at the northwest and southwest corners of the site where canopy trees are proposed. The proponent is encouraged to consider the removal of basement in these locations for the provision of deep soil.

- 2.1.3 Consider the Townshend Street frontage as potential for the introduction street tree plantings in this location. The Panel recommends the proponent coordinates with the local authorities (i.e. TCCS) to identify the opportunity for the reinstatement of street trees along this frontage as recommended by the Woden Town Centre Master Plan (2014).

3.0 Sustainability

- 3.1 Acknowledging the early stage of design development, the Panel observes that the proposal will be a significant and transformative development for the Phillip Service Trades Precinct and therefore should aspire to set a new benchmark for sustainable development. In this regard the Panel encourages the proponent to strive for a truly exceptional standard of sustainable development befitting the scale and prominence within the precinct.
- 3.2 The Panel considers the proposal for photovoltaic (PV) solar panels that are integrated into the northern façade cladding of the development to have merit however little information on how this will be achieved was not provided at design review. The Panel therefore requests that the proponent provides further information on how this innovative proposition will be successfully achieved as consideration of the design progresses through to implementation.

4.0 Density and connectivity

- 4.1 Nil comment at this stage.

5.0 Built form and scale

- 5.1 The proponent is commended for a highly articulated proposal that is considered by the Panel to be an appropriate response to the future desired character envisaged for the Phillip Service Trades Precinct. The Panel acknowledges the requirement for an upper-level setback to the northern facade that has provided for the generous Level 2 communal area. The Panel notes the visual amenity that is provided by the adjacent open space parkland to the south of the development in Colbee Court and recommends the proponent considers how the proposal may better interface at this frontage at the upper levels.
- 5.2 The Panel supports the proponent's intention of creating an interesting, functional and viable aesthetic for the upper level of the building that incorporates the roof, attic and dormer windows. As design development continues the Panel recommends the proponent carefully considers how additional roofing elements, such as air conditioning units and plant will be incorporated into this space so as to not detract from the merits of the envisioned architectural aesthetic.

6.0 Functionality and build quality

- 6.1 The currently proposed floor to floor heights of 3000mm are considered by the Panel to be unlikely to support the high-quality living environment envisaged for this proposal and unlikely to provide adequate space for the required services. The Panel encourages the

proponent consider increasing the floor to floor heights to a minimum of 3150mm to ensure appropriate levels of solar access and natural ventilation will be achieved for the apartment without the use of bulkheads for servicing.

- 6.2 The Panel commends the proponent for providing functional unit layouts to the proposed apartments that are considered appropriate for this location. The Panel however notes that privacy and separation issues may occur with the two connected balconies at level two (2) on the Townshend Street frontage. The Panel therefore recommends that the proponent considers revising the planning of these areas to mitigate any future privacy issues associated with this current configuration.
- 6.3 The proposal to provide deep awnings in the round with living infrastructure is commended by the Panel. It is however observed by the Panel that the awnings appear to be located at a height that is misaligned with any accessible points from within the building which is considered a potential for future maintenance issues. The Panel therefore recommends the proponent carefully considers how the programming of the building may be revised to ensure appropriate access and maintenance is achieved for these spaces as the design development continues.
- 6.4 The Panel notes that the proposal's western façade features significant amounts of large panel glazing and raises concerns regarding the adequacy of the proposal in conditions of extreme summer heat. The Panel is concerned that the potential for additional heat load on the building will increase the reliance for mechanical cooling by future residents. The proponent is encouraged to develop a robust façade strategy that includes a thorough analysis of the site context and conditions with the proponent recommended to further explore the use of external passive shading of the façade that responds appropriately to the orientation and reduces the potential for an excessive amount of solar exposure.
- 6.5 The panel notes that the fire egress arrangements from the basement level central fire stair (adjacent to the lift) are unclear, especially in relation to their interaction with the proposed open stair that connects the upper levels with the ground floor. The proponent is recommended to review the stair connectivity and fire egress arrangements of the proposed central stairs.

7.0 Legibility and safety

- 7.1 Nil comment at this stage.

8.0 Diversity and amenity

- 8.1 The Panel notes the increasing prevalence of electronic vehicles (EV) and the growing need for supportive infrastructure (i.e. EV charging stations) to be located within development for residents. The Panel highlights the benefits that this added infrastructure will offer to the future residents of this proposal and therefore recommends the proponent considers the incorporation of future-proofed EV charging infrastructure within the development.
- 8.2 Waste management within the proposal is of concern with the Panel noting that servicing difficulties may arise in relation to the residential waste chute collection point currently located at basement level (i.e. having to transfer garbage up the vehicle ramp to the main collection point). The Panel recommends the proponent investigates locating the residential waste chute collection point at the ground floor level in association with the main waste

collection point, and to develop an effective waste strategy that will ensure the success of this proposal.

9.0 Community and public domain

9.1 The Panel commends the proponent for the intention to activate the proposal's central pedestrian laneway with commercial tenancies that includes the provision for a cafe at the rear of the development. The Panel is however concerned that the location of the proposed café is adjacent to the waste collection for the building and basement vehicle access from the rear laneway. In this regard the Panel recommends the proponent considers safety and functionality in conjunction with the materiality and service functions of the building at the ground plane to avoid future conflict in uses.

10.0 Visual appearance

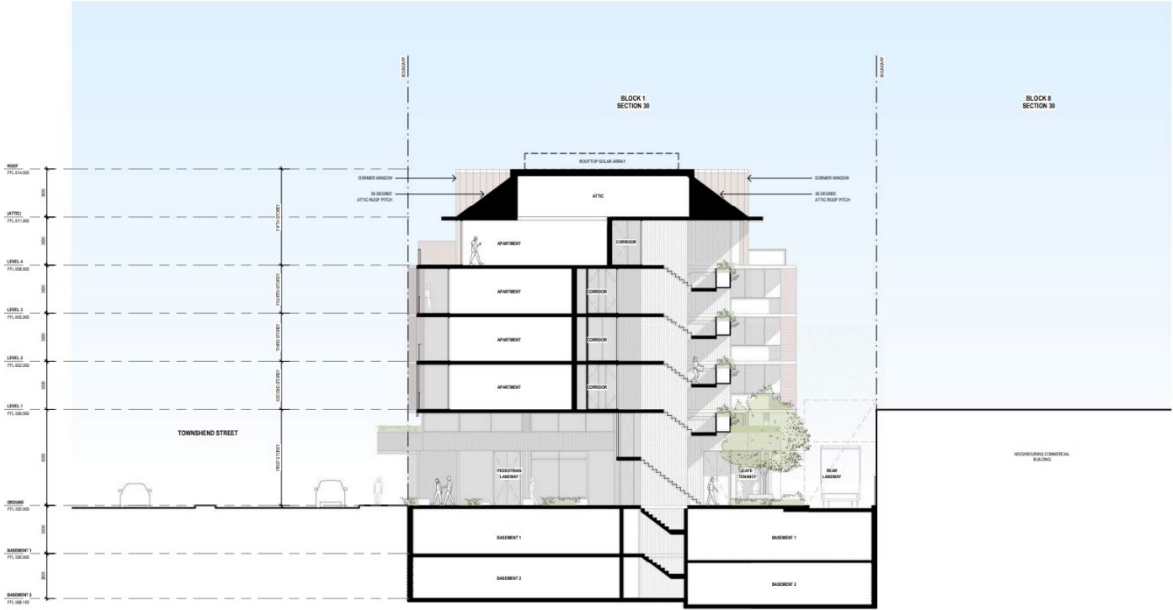
10.1 The Panel considers the architectural expression for the proposal to be an enticing proposition that responds to the service trades industrial and urban setting, is highly articulated with a supported aesthetic to the upper levels that includes the attic space and the use of dormer windows. The Panel commends the proponent for the simple massing to the base of the building and the elegant expression of the floor slabs to the façades however, is concerned that this expression may be diluted upon implementation. The Panel is also concerned that the north and south elevations present as sheer walls and therefore recommends the proponent considers how these façades may increase opportunities for enhanced internal amenity and to respond to aspect and adjacent uses, particularly the southern open space parkland and that consideration is given to detailing of the façade to preserve the intention as presented.

THE PANEL'S ADVICE

3D Perspective view – Detail

Sample images from presentation

The following images have been extracted by the NCDRP Secretariat from the proponent's presentation to the Panel during the session. The images have been selected as an indicative sample of the proposal at the time of design review. It is noted that the provided images may not be representative of the proposal as lodged for development assessment.



Cross Section



STEWART ARCHITECTURE 1:100 (B) A1

BLOCK 1 SECTION 3B PHILLIP

Elevation – Townshend Street

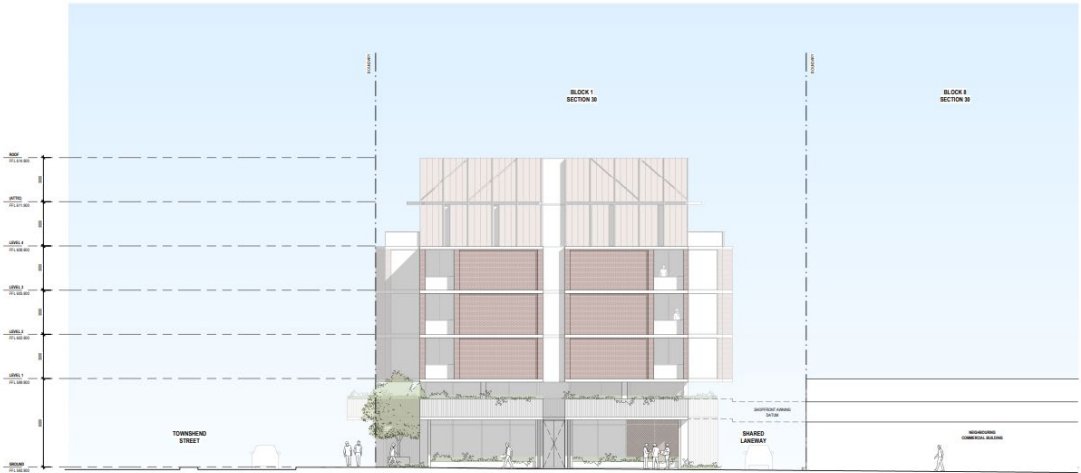
THE PANEL'S ADVICE



STEWART ARCHITECTURE
1:100 @ A1

BLOCK 1 SECTION 30 PHILLIP

Elevation – Rear Laneway

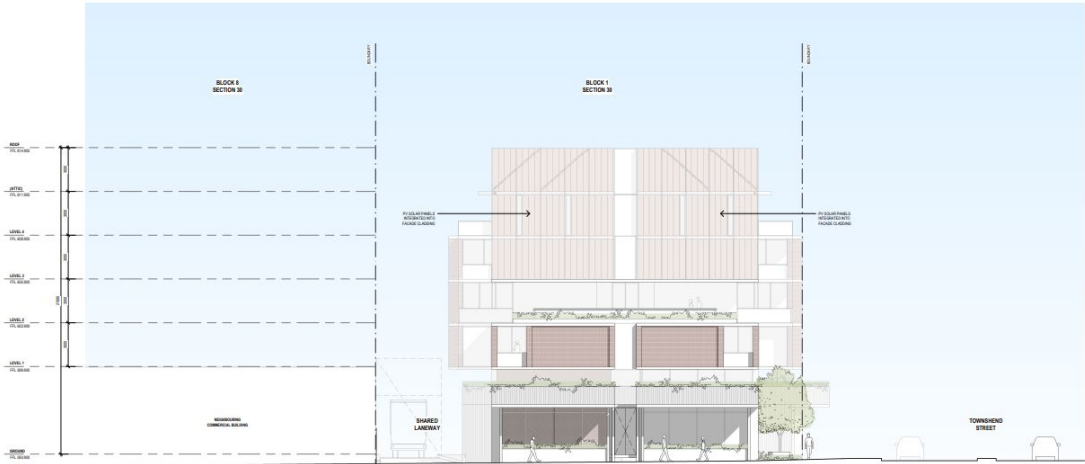


STEWART ARCHITECTURE
1:100 @ A1

BLOCK 1 SECTION 30 PHILLIP

Elevation – Colbee Court

THE PANEL'S ADVICE



STEWART ARCHITECTURE 1:100 (g. A1)

BLOCK 1 SECTION 30 PHILLIP

Elevation – Grenville Court



3D Prespective view – Townshend Street

THE PANEL'S ADVICE



3D Perspective view – Colbee Court



3D Perspective view – Detail

