



THORNTON NORTH PENRITH: JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

In late 2016 a design competition was held in relation to the site at 184 Lord Sheffield Circuit, Penrith (legally described as Lot 3003, Lot 3004 and Lot 3005 in DP1184498).

The competition jury unanimously agreed that the Crone scheme was most capable of achieving design excellence according to the requirements of Penrith LEP 2010, subject to resolution of a range of matters identified in the Jury Report.

In 2018, the applicant met with GANSW to discuss a range of concerns with being able to deliver the project in its current form. Two very large towers were noted as being very difficult to stage, and there was a strong preference for four smaller towers.

On 21 September 2018 GANSW wrote to the applicant confirming that:

GANSW does not consider a new competition necessary if the proponent can meet the following criteria:

- *The proposal does not exceed the maximum 5:1 FSR standard under Penrith LEP 2010*
- *The same jury assembled for the design competition is reconvened to review the proposed changes in relation to the Crone scheme awarded design excellence.*
- *Detailed plans, elevations, sections and 3D renders are prepared to allow the jury to adequately compare and review the proposed changes with the previous scheme.*
- *Sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate ADG requirements can be met.*
- *The revised proposal does not compromise any planning or regulatory requirements addressed by the previous scheme.*

GANSW also supports that Crone architects be retained to undertake this rework to provide continuity and consistency in design approach.

If the jury does not consider that the revised proposal achieves design excellence it may request additional information or require an alternative process such as a new design competition.

MEETING 1 (14 DECEMBER 2020)

In response to the above, Urbis (as competition manager), arranged for the original competition jury to reconvene on 14 December 2020 to assess the proposed new massing arrangement, with indicative plans and information issued in advance of the meeting.

The following jury members in attendance included:

- Rory Toomey (on behalf of Dillon Kombumerri –NSW Government Architects Office)
- Lisa-Maree Carrigan – Director of Group GSA Architects
- Kim Crestani – Director of Order Architects
- Brett Newbold – Penrith Design Review Panel

The following feedback was provided by the jury in response to the information provided and presented by Crone:

1. ***There was a general consensus and agreement by the jury that a new design competition was not required, and an acceptance of the ‘four tower’ scheme proposition.*** *There was also an acceptance that the Crone team were capable of achieving and delivering a scheme that could achieve design excellence, subject to further detail and design review.*
2. ***It was agreed that the information provided at this stage was relatively high level in nature and required much more thorough analysis,*** *detail and work before the scheme could be endorsed. In this vein, all of the jury felt that it was important for there to be an ongoing design review phase and at least two (2) further meetings to refine the scheme.*
3. ***While the ground plane had some enhanced qualities compared with the competition scheme, it was felt that there were some changes that were less desirable and needed further development.*** *In particular, this included the positioning of the supermarket box and its relationship to the proposed public domain to the east and north, the need for finer grain retail along Lord Sheffield Circuit, and better sleeving of these spaces.*
4. ***It was felt that the outcome of Dunshea Street was a significantly poorer proposition than the competition scheme with large areas of plant and in-active spaces at the throat of the through-site link.*** *By comparison the competition scheme had much more thriving, active retail space which has been largely lost in the proposed changes. Crone should explore bringing these important elements back in some form befitting the location (eg bike hubs, small service businesses) and avoiding large areas of blank walls and inactive spaces wherever possible.*
5. ***The tower lobby of the residential building directly to the south of the through-site link doesn’t appear to be well planned or coordinated.*** *The jury would encourage exploring a pedestrian access off Lord Sheffield Circuit to create a more rational entry point for residents.*
6. ***Connecting with Country is missing as a strong narrative thread linking the proposal to place, culture and heritage.*** *A rich and integrated approach to including indigenous cultural heritage will enrich the project and its relationship to its location at the foot of the mountains near the river. Details of the consultation process and response to feedback should be included in any future presentation.*
7. ***There was a strong view by the jury that the project’s landscape architects need to be on board as soon as practically possible to ensure that there is much more resolved integration with the public domain and podium communal open space areas.*** *This will ensure that there is detail, layering and sophistication through the project and that social interaction and that ‘village character’ is embedded in the project. A strong opportunity for interpreting place, geology and ecology exists in the layered landscapes proposed. The jury looks forward to seeing development of these opportunities.*

8. ***The above ground parking provided needs a much more resolved and detailed consideration to ensure that these provide an acceptable design response when viewed from the public domain, but also from an amenity perspective of residents within the development.*** This may occur through a range of options such as landscaping, screening, lighting and the like. The jury drew reference to a recent example of an above ground car parking solution in North Penrith which was well resolved as one example.
9. ***The jury would encourage Crone to start exploring façade options for the four towers which balance the prevailing weather conditions, architectural diversity and residential amenity guidance in the ADG while striving for distinctive and distinguished architectural expression appropriate to a development of this scale and prominence.***
10. ***There generally needs to be more detailed plans, a variety of detailed and diagrammatic cross sections explaining the different edge and boundary conditions and information to assist the jury with the next iterative review.***

MEETING 2 (19 FEBRUARY 2021)

In response to the above feedback from Meeting 1, Crone prepared a series of amendments and presented to the competition jury on 19 February 2021 (Meeting 2). This included input from a landscape architect (Urbis) and included a presentation on the proposed landscape concept for the project.

The feedback from this session was as follows:

1. *The jury acknowledges the creative design ideas that have come together since the last meeting and are encouraged by the direction of the proposed change from 2 towers to 4 towers. With further comprehensive analysis and design progression prior to DA lodgement, the project has the potential to have a very positive influence on Penrith as multi-storey urban village.*
2. *The jury acknowledged that the design had responded to a number of suggested areas of feedback from the last meeting, including:*
 - a. *The project landscape team were on-boarded to provide conceptual ideas of how the podium and landscape areas were integrated into the architectural response. It is noted though, that this requires more sufficient rigour and coordination prior to lodgement.*
 - b. *Activation along Dunshea Street was much more resolved and positive*
 - c. *There was an intent and strategy to ensure that designing with country will be a strong narrative thread linking the proposal to place, culture and heritage. It is encouraged, however, to ensure that this is embedded in the design thinking as soon as possible.*
 - d. *The above ground parking was much more resolved and provided landscape responses to manage impacts from the public domain.*
 - e. *The exploration of facades of the buildings was starting to develop a good character and language, and there is a richness to the podium which is commendable. However, there needs to be a stronger appreciation of the Western Sydney climate, with further technical input.*
3. *The proposal is developing positively in some aspects in response to earlier DIP feedback. Whilst the proposal has the potential to achieve design excellence, further amendments and*

development are required before the design integrity panel can endorse the scheme for design excellence. In particular, the following areas require further thought and refinement:

Ground Plane

- *Earlier comments from the jury regarding the ground plane and residential entries/corridors still require better resolution. The commercial imperatives of retailers appear to be somewhat at the expense of the amenity and identity of the residents who will live in the buildings. It is recommended that the very long residential corridors off the through-site link are re-considered and rationalised and better integrated with the retail spaces. These residential entrances need to feel safe, legible, with clear sight lines and without a dog-leg configuration.*
- *The through-site link provides a very unique and exciting opportunity to create something really special – but it is in need of its own unique identity which needs to be explored in further detail. It was felt that precedent images presented by the design team (i.e. such as Casba in Waterloo) were not the most comparable as it is more of an enclosed space, more urban, and the scale differs quite considerably. The jury did, however, acknowledge the potential cues from Casba in relation to its richness of materials, landscaping and use of water to create amenity for residents, retailers and the public.*
- *As a general comment, there needs to be a much more reassuring level of detail on the types of trees, plants and materials in the through-site link. This needs to explore appropriate soil depths, landscaping and planting which can manage the harsh climate and which can create amenity.*
- *Consideration should be given to additional street trees along the north-eastern boundaries of the site, to provide a better amenity to the apartments which engage closely with the street. Integration of front gates, and finer grain street presentation is also encouraged.*
- *There is support for the proposed strong vertical grid language in the podium. The jury would encourage the design team to explore additional material richness here, which will provide some variety (for instance, does every vertical frame need to be concrete?). It was acknowledged that Penrith has a richness of materials elsewhere in the City Centre which can potentially be drawn upon.*
- *The jury are keen to understand the staging strategy of the proposal, and what this potentially means to the delivery of the through-site link.*

Terraced Landscape Areas

- *The jury support the emerging landscape ideas, diversity of spaces and concepts, and there is an opportunity for a very rich response.*
- *However, some of the landscape spaces are poorly connected to the architectural spaces. This needs to be developed further, particularly as there are some obvious CPTED issues with these spaces (i.e. some spaces are one way in, one way out) and are not supported.*
- *The layout and design of podium terraces should be refined to facilitate positive social interaction between residents, which the current design does not adequately achieve. Positive interaction requires high levels of visual amenity and climate protection, effective responses to residential and personal territories, visibility and accessibility for several lift lobbies, plus responses to safety and security design principles.*

- *Better integration to apartment lobbies and usable areas is required to activate these spaces (i.e. in particular Level 4 of the northern landscape terraces which appears to be only accessed through the car park).*
- *Where the podiums are sleeved (levels 1 through to 4 inclusive) improvements could be made to some of the long corridors which interface with the car park areas to ensure that appropriate daylight to corridors on longer corridors is achieved. Wider considerations include surveillance from lobbies, dwellings and car park areas, and the provision of 'break-out' spaces together with landscaped "places".*
- *The landscape screening of the car park was well resolved, but this needs to be proved up further to confirm that plant species can definitely work here with the harsh climate.*
- *There is a need to understand how the private planter beds get looked after in a strata scenario so the 'pretty' render images are a reality. It is recommended that a Landscape Plan of Management be prepared as part of any future DA.*

Tower Materiality, Climate and Façade

- *The jury acknowledge the efforts of the design team to start exploring façade strategies and treatments to the buildings.*
- *There needs to be further interrogation of the materiality and facades, and how they respond to microclimate, privacy between dwellings and public space, views, outlooks. This may affect the look and feel of the facades. The jury encourages the design team to keep developing the facades with those top of mind.*
- *The jury are mindful of the market in Penrith, project budget, and that some of the design moves could start to add considerable cost that needs to be carefully managed (i.e. alternating floor plates, wet areas above living spaces and the like), and there still needs to be technical advice which may continue to put pressure on the project budget.*
- *Potentially explore the tops of the buildings and their expression to ensure that this is well integrated with the rest of the building. Some of these areas also didn't appear to have shading devices unlike the lower areas.*

Apartment Design and Planning

- *The jury were generally supportive of the approach to apartment design and planning.*
- *However, there were concerns about some areas needing better amenity outcomes (one example was apartments having a single, south facing aspect adjacent to the Railway which could be better planned).*
- *Tower separation needed to be examined in further detail to ensure that compliance is achieved with the ADG.*

4. In summary, the jury recommends the following next steps:

- *It is essential for the applicant and design team to appropriately on-board technical consultants to refine and inform the design approach. Importantly, the appointment of these consultants will enable a number of the above considerations to shape the built form outcome, and richness of the design response.*
- *The design team continue to develop the positive direction with the design work and give consideration to the above feedback to enrich the scheme moving forward. The above*

feedback should provide appropriate direction to proceed towards the preparation of a development application (DA) for the project.

- *However, prior to lodgement of a development application, the jury will require a further review of the design to ensure that the above feedback has been integrated, whilst also balancing other feedback that may be provided by Council Officers (such as waste, traffic, planning and other disciplines). It is recommended that this meeting occurs with sufficient time prior to lodgement, to ensure that any feedback from the jury can be considered well in advance of DA lodgement.*
- *If required, the jury should remain as a Design Integrity Panel following lodgement of the application, in the event that there any major changes to the design which may occur following lodgement of the application.*

MEETING 3 (23 SEPTEMBER 2021)

In response to the above feedback from Meeting 2, Crone prepared a series of amendments and presented to the competition jury again on 23 September 2021 (Meeting 3).

Meeting 3 had the following agenda:

- An update to the feedback provided at Meeting 2
- Introduction by Graham Davis from the Deerrubbin Aboriginal Land Council to provide context to his input into the design phase to enhance and enrich the projects connection to country.
- Allow Crone (with Urbis Landscape) to talk through the refinement of the scheme with respect to the ground plane, landscape and architectural quality of the proposal
- Q/A and discussion
- Seek endorsement to lodge the application (noting a further review would be likely to occur post-lodgement by the jury).

The following feedback was provided by the Jury following Meeting 3:

Overall, the feedback was generally positive and with resolution of the below items, the jury were generally supportive of the proposal proceeding to the DA stage – noting that a final review will be undertaken during the formal DA assessment stage post-lodgement:

Overview

- *'Incremental recommendations' may be superseded by design development*
- *Current package reveals extensive changes and details which require time to process*
- *Design integrity demands holistic and comprehensive evaluation*

Form and facades

- *The facades of the towers are still not presenting a fully credible response to thermal load from western sun. These facades would also benefit the most from the articulation and dynamism that some sun shading would add.*

- *While acknowledging the project team's reluctance to introduce moveable shading elements (for operational and maintenance reasons), additional fixed sun shades are required.*
- *The NatHERS or BASIX documentation accompanying the DA MUST specify sun shading that is relied on to achieve compliance.*
- *NE corner: In considering amendments to the north east corner at ground level, a combination of 'addressing the corner', resolving the built form as a civic presence AND addressing pedestrian safety and CPTED is called for.*
- *Podium elements are much-improved: calmer + better-proportioned*
- *Podium + tower: Is architectural integration satisfactory?*
- *Tower:*
 - *Coherence of splayed vs rectilinear balconies?*
 - *Rectilinear conservatism of the taller towers: where's the village vibe?*

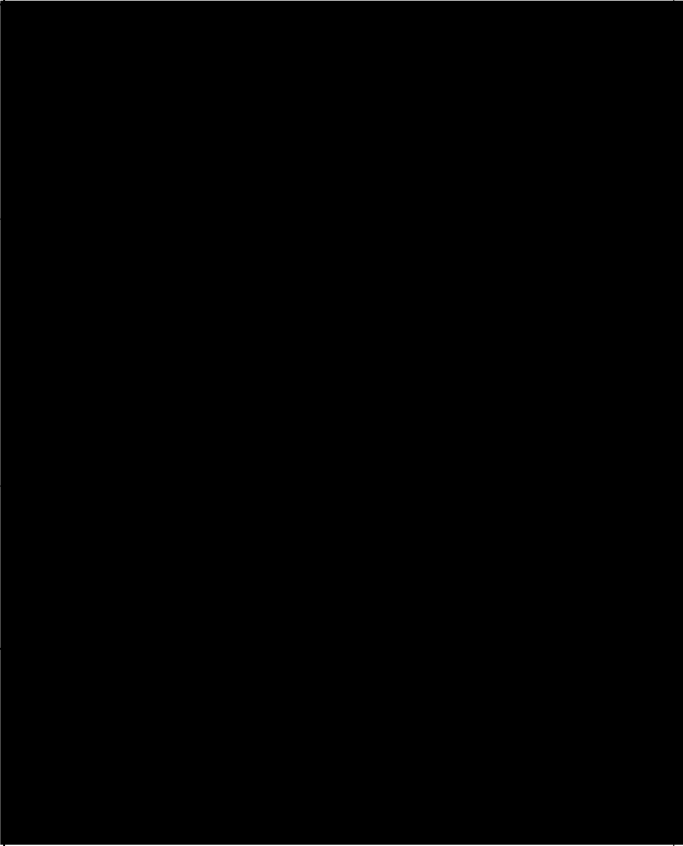
Layout

- *Parking: Locations for apartments + commercial?*
- *Ground and social edges to residential:*
 - *northern frontage: village-style interface between apartments and street footpath?*
- *Level 1 commercial: food and beverage?*
- *Open spaces are generally positive – interconnected spaces that allow a journey – significant contributions to a 'vertical village':*
 - *attention to sightlines, surveillance, personal territory and security*
 - *consider the lengths and alignments of corridors from lift lobbies*
- *Positives and shortcomings of open spaces:*
 - *level 2 NE corner: access to / accessibility of pocket park via a deep corridor?*
 - *levels 4 + 5: positive stair link between open spaces*
 - *apply elsewhere: eg connection of level 2 at NE corner to level xx?*
 - *access to level 4 open space (south) under stairs to level 5: visibility + surveillance*
- *Level five SW corner: large plant room interrupts the open space*
 - *relocation or mounding?*

Landscape

- *Heirachy and sequence of detail, coherence of language*
- *Ideas: Imported or indigenous to the Site?*
- *Fundamental value or merely superficial embellishments?*
 - *painting has a concealed location*
- *Level one: hardscape only, relevance of precedent images?*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF JURY

	SIGNATURE
KIM CRESTANI	 A large black rectangular box redacting the signatures of all four jury members.
RORY TOOMEY	
BRETT NEWBOLD	
LISA MAREE CARRIGAN	