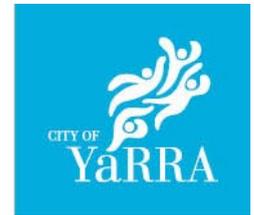


MEMO



To: Statutory Planning
From: Urban Design
Date: 20 December 2021
Site Address: 147-161 Elizabeth Street, Richmond
Description: Big Housing Build

COMMENTS SOUGHT

Urban Design and Open Space comments have been sought on the above proposal. These comments are provided on consultation material including Landscape Plans (Oculus, November 2021) and Architectural Plans (KTA, 12 November 2021).

URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS

The development comprises one four storey, one five storey, one seven storey, and one eight storey building with a central courtyard. A total of 144 dwellings are proposed (72 social and 72 affordable apartments) and 366sqm of 'non-housing use'.

The site has frontages to Elizabeth Street (south), Cooke Court (east) and Williams Court (north), an east west pedestrian link. Existing residential buildings in the immediate context range in height from three storeys (brick walk up buildings) to the west and more recent six storey development to the north east.

Site Layout

Precinct Connections

- Draft Amendment C291 proposes to apply Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 49 (DDO49 Victoria Street East) to the section of the Victoria Street Activity Centre north of the subject site, replacing interim DDO22. DDO49 includes an Access and Movement Plan, nominating preferred vehicular access requirements, potential shared zones, and pedestrian links. Including a north south pedestrian link, connecting Victoria Street to Williams/Cooke Court immediately northeast of the subject site (aligning with the existing building - 3 Cooke Court).
- A through link to Victoria Street would increase the permeability of the precinct, the block between Lennox Street (west) and Church Street (west) extends approximately 400m. It is noted that this relies

on coordination with private landowners. The siting and design of the proposal should account for the potential for this link, considering sight lines, building entrance locations and other public infrastructure to maximise accessibility and safety.

Entrances and Internal Courtyard

- There are limited open sightlines through the site and to the internal courtyard, as a result of the raised ground floor level and site configuration. While the raised levels require extensive ramps and stairs, it also affords dwellings at ground level additional privacy and raised planters provide a defined building edge at the street interface.
- The visual and physical connection between entrance spaces and the internal courtyard could be improved. The design of foyer entry threshold spaces should be welcoming and safe, providing:
 - Strong visual connection between street and internal spaces
 - High quality security screens and fences (height, level of permeability, materiality)
 - Incorporation of seating where appropriate
- The interface between ground level apartment habitable rooms and the central communal residential courtyard is sensitive and should be considered carefully. Window treatments and landscaping should ensure residential privacy while maintaining surveillance.

Ground Floor Interface

- The use of the two 'non-residential' ground floor spaces are to be specified. Community uses that extended across day-early evening, providing activation to the adjoining external spaces are supported.
- Limited ground floor active uses are proposed to interface with Cooke Court. Suggest providing some additional community active uses in addition to bicycle storage within Building 2 (South). The existing building fronting Cooke Court is largely inactive at ground and at grade car parking results in a poor streetscape outcome.

Streetscapes & Public Realm Infrastructure

Footpaths and Access

- Existing streetscape features are to be included on the Landscape Plan and Ground Floor Plan. The existing footpath treatment along Elizabeth Street is inconsistent. It is recommended that the footpath be reinstated with standard materials. The existing crossover is to be removed and footpath, kerb and channel reinstated.
- All external and internal footpath widths should be dimensioned, demonstrating adequate width is provided. Tactiles and handrails should not encroach into footpaths as indicated along the Cooke Court interface (Building 2).
- To ensure pedestrian safety, a continuous footpath should be provided along Cooke Street, consider alternative treatments to the car park entrance to delineate pedestrian priority and ensure adequate sight lines are provided (subject to Engineering approval).

Public Realm Amenity and Fixtures

- It is proposed to retain and protect three of the four existing trees along Williams Court. Other public realm infrastructure (bins, seating and bicycle hoops) along this edge is proposed to be removed, no provision has been made for relocation. The extent of this area is to be hardscaped (concrete pavers and flagstone pavers) with additional tree planting. There is potential to improve the function, amenity, and quality of the space (having regard to the adjacent ground floor sensitive uses).
- A total of 18 bicycle spaces are provided, across two locations. Reconsider the overall provision in relation to the shortfall (12 spaces) from the removal of existing hoops along Williams Court and the distribution of parking across the site in relation to proposed 'other' uses and residential entrances.
- Seating along street frontages is supported, raised planters provide an opportunity to integrate seating provide resting points. Consideration should be given to providing some backrests and armrests to improve accessibility and seating should be wholly contained within the site boundary. Locate seating in relation to less sensitive uses such as resident bicycle parking and entrances.
- Further information is required in relation to public realm lighting, the precinct would benefit from an overarching integrated lighting strategy.