Design

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1 Introduction

A key outcome for Randwick City in its 20 year Strategic Community Plan, the Randwick City Plan, is to achieve excellence in urban design and development. A strong appreciation of a development site and its context is vital to achieving good urban design. This is particularly important in Randwick City, with most development occurring in established neighbourhoods, most commonly as infill development or alterations and additions to existing developments.

This section of the DCP applies to all developments in Randwick City. It sets out the key components of good urban design, and requirements for development applications to address these via a context and site analysis. Additional requirements also apply to larger sites and developments as identified in RLEP.

This section of the DCP should be read in conjunction with:

- Part A - Introduction and Part B - General Controls; and
- Other sections of the DCP for specific development types, locations or sites, if relevant to the application.

1.1 Objectives

- To ensure that high quality urban design is a fundamental consideration for all development.
- To identify key components of urban design to be considered and addressed in development proposals.

2 Components of design

Explanation

Design is the process of deciding how we want things to be. In the built environment it is about creating a vision for a place, how it should work, look and feel. Vitruvius in the 1st Century BC famously defined good design as achieving a balance of firmness (or robustness), commodity (or usefulness) and delight (our visual, emotional and experiential response). These principles remain widely applied today to define good design.

Urban design is the practice of shaping the physical environment in order to improve the quality of life in cities and towns. Good urban design can contribute to the creation of useful, attractive, environmentally sustainable, safe, economically successful and socially equitable places. Good development contributes to the design qualities of successful places. This contribution may vary with the range of uses proposed, the location and qualities of the site, and scale of development.

Further information on good urban design can also be found at http://www.urbandesign.gov.au a federal and state government, community and industry collaboration.

Seven qualities of successfully designed places are outlined below. While some relate more directly to larger developments or those with a strong public interface; the overall effect of many small developments can also change a place over time.

Seven Qualities of Successful Places

1. **Sense of place**
   A place that responds to and reinforces well expressed and locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and biodiversity.

2. **Clarity of form**
   A place that relates to streets and spaces with comfortable scale and degree of continuity; where public and private space are clearly distinguished, and each space/element has a purpose.

3. **Sense of wellbeing and amenity**
   A place with a high quality public realm that is accessible, safe and pleasant to use; that is sustainable and contributes to a healthy environment.

4. **Connectivity and permeability**
   A place that is easy to get to and move through, that provides links to places people want to go.

5. **Ease of understanding**
   A place that has a clear image and is legible and easy to understand; that responds to views, landmarks and focal points.

6. **Adaptability and responsiveness**
   A place with robustness and flexibility to adapt and evolve over time, while retaining and enhancing its positive qualities and useability.

7. **Diversity and choice**
   A place with a variety of compatible uses to suit the community.

Urban form

The form of development is the physical expression of urban design. It consists of the relationships, shape and size of buildings, structures and spaces. High quality design addresses all aspects of urban form, and is fundamental to the success of a place.

The key aspects of urban form are:

1. **Urban structure**
   The relationship between buildings, spaces, infrastructure and connections, landform, topography and natural features.

2. **Urban grain**
   The subdivision pattern, the scale and configuration of streets and lots, and the rhythm of buildings and spaces.

3. **Density and Mix**
   The amount of development and the range of uses in relation to the site's location and size; and its accessibility and proximity to other uses.

4. **Height and massing**
   The scale, arrangement, volume and shape of buildings in relation to humans, other buildings, structures, spaces, skylines and views.

5. **Building type**
   The building footprint, its layout, circulation and access, and its functional relationship to adjoining spaces and buildings.

6. **Façade and interface**
   The relationship and expression of the external faces of the building, its rhythm and pattern of openings, expression of entries, corners and roofscape, setbacks and boundary treatments.

7. **Details and materials**
   The techniques, craftsmanship and detail of building components, and the selection, colour, pattern and treatment of materials including durability, sustainability and contextual fit.

8. **Streetscape and landscape**
   The surrounding built and natural context, including street elevation, building typologies and their spatial and locational characteristics, treatment of street/boundary interfaces, microclimate, ecology and biodiversity.

9. **Social and economic fabric**
   Non-physical aspects of urban form including the productive capacity and economy of the community, cultural and social factors such as health and wellbeing, and community interaction.

3 DA Requirements

3.1 Context analysis

Explanation

The first step in good design is to understand the wider context of the site. This includes considering the character of the neighbourhood and the streetscape, in addition to the specific development opportunities, constraints and particular qualities of the site itself.

The streetscape and neighbourhood character of an area may be consistent, with high design quality and amenity. This will provide a strong contextual backdrop with which new development should be consistent, complementing the area's key positive elements.

Conversely the existing character of the context may be inconsistent; existing development patterns may provide poor amenity or not respond positively to the urban form. In these situations there may be greater flexibility in the way the design of a development proposal responds to the context.

The aim of a context analysis is therefore to identify existing prevailing built and natural features in the streetscape and landscape context of a site that should inform the design of new development.

This section applies to all DAs involving new buildings, or those with external alterations or additions where these are visible from the public domain (excluding ancillary structures and outbuildings).

The extent of the area to be included in the Context Analysis, and the level of detail required will vary according to the size and type of development, and the location and characteristics of the site.

For smaller proposals the Context Analysis and Site Analysis may be combined.

Objectives

- To ensure that development demonstrates an understanding of and an appropriate response to the specific conditions of both the site and surrounds.
- To identify the key contextual features and characteristics of the surrounding urban form to which the design should respond.

Controls

i) Submit a context analysis with all DAs for new buildings and visible alterations and additions to existing buildings. This shall include an analysis of the urban form (using the sub-headings in the previous section), including but not limited to:
   - the nature and degree of consistency of the built form and character within the streetscape;
   - any significant aspects of urban form in the locality
   - a written statement describing how the design proposal has considered and responded to the context.

ii) The context analysis shall be submitted in the format as described in the DA Guide.

3.2 Site analysis

Explanation

A site analysis identifies the existing conditions of a development site, and provides a basis to ensure that the development is of a high quality and is sensitive to its environment.

The site analysis will identify the opportunities and constraints of the site to be addressed through site planning and design, such as minimising issues relating to noise, overshadowing, community safety, access, views, privacy, energy consumption and waste generation.

This section applies to all DAs for new buildings, or external alterations and additions to existing buildings.

Objective

- To ensure that the opportunities and constraints of a site are fully considered and incorporated into the design proposal.

Controls

i) Submit a site analysis with all DAs for a new building or external alterations or additions to an existing building. Information shall include, but is not limited to:
   - Property details including site boundaries, dimensions and area
   - Encumbrances such as easements or rights of way
   - Orientation, aspect, views and microclimate
   - Existing noise sources, light spillage and overshadowing
   - Landform including contours or spot levels, areas of landfill
   - Landscape including existing trees, vegetation and natural features
   - Services and infrastructure including stormwater drainage
   - Access and street features including roads, poles, footpaths, driveways
   - Existing development including buildings, fences, driveways
   - Existing heritage or archaeological features on or adjoining the site
   - Existing land and development adjoining the site
   - Proposed development

ii) Submit a written statement, supported by photographs, demonstrating how the design responds to the constraints and opportunities identified in the site analysis.

iii) The site analysis shall include a plan drawn to scale, addressing the specific details and format requirements identified in the DA Guide.

4 Additional requirements for certain development

4.1 Design Excellence

Explanation

RLEP requires development proposals on certain sites and certain development types to demonstrate design excellence. Typically these occur on larger sites and institutions, in commercial centres and on surplus lands, and cover a range of potential uses and building types.

These design excellence guidelines aim to establish a consistent standard and criteria for high quality design for significant development across Randwick City.

Under Randwick LEP (Clause 6.11) design excellence must be demonstrated for new buildings and existing buildings (where external alterations are proposed):

- With a height of 15m or greater anywhere in Randwick City, and
- To development on land with an area of 10,000 square metres or greater, and
- To key sites identified under RLEP clause 6.12 requiring the preparation of a site specific DCP.

Objective

- Establish a consistent standards and criteria for high quality design for significant developments in Randwick City.

Controls

i) The context analysis must include an analysis of the design proposal's contribution to the creation and reinforcement of the 'Seven Qualities of Successful Places' identified in Subsection 2, in addition to the requirements of Subection 3.

Note:

The proposed development will be referred to a Design Review Panel as part of the assessment process.

5 Guidelines for Site Specific Development Control Plans

Explanation

Under RLEP, a site specific DCP must be prepared for land identified as a Key Site, or having a site area of 10,000 square metres or greater, before development on that land can be considered and determined by Council.

The preparation of a site specific DCP should be made in consultation with Council to identify and resolve key issues early in the process.

A DCP is not required to be prepared if Council is satisfied that such a plan would be unnecessary or unreasonable in the circumstances, such as where there is already a masterplan or DCP in place, or the proposal is for minor or ancillary development.

Guidelines

i) Consult with Council, in the early stages of preparation, and prior to submitting the draft site specific DCP, to identify key matters needing to be addressed in the DCP.

ii) Include a minimum of one preliminary meeting to discuss the intentions of the proposal prior to submission of the draft site specific DCP.

iii) In addressing the requirements of RLEP clause 6.12, submit:
   i. Background documents, research and data supporting the draft DCP which explain and justify the proposed development, including a concept/ masterplan.
   ii. A detailed response to how the requirements of clause 6.12(5) of the LEP have been addressed.

iv) The draft site specific DCP should include suitably dimensioned plans, elevations, figures, photographs and text to adequately explain the desired outcome for the site.

Note:

Under the Regulation (clause 21A) Council will refer any DCP containing residential flat development to the Design Review Panel as part of the assessment process.