

# **Attachment G**

## **Competitive Design Process Report**

# Competitive Design Alternatives Report

## 94-104 Epsom Road, Zetland

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### PREPARED BY

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# Annexure

- 1. Competitive Design Alternatives Brief**

# 1 Introduction

This Competitive Design Alternatives Report (the Report) has been prepared by Meriton Property Services for the Competitive Design Alternatives Process undertaken for 94-104 Epsom Road, Zetland. The Report outlines the Competitive Design Alternatives Process (Competitive Process), providing a summary of each competition entry and the Selection Panel's recommendations. It should be read in conjunction with the Competitive Design Alternatives Brief prepared by Meriton (refer **Annexure 1**).

The Competitive Process was conducted in accordance with the Brief, which was developed in consultation with the City of Sydney and endorsed by the City of Sydney on 19 December 2018. The Brief was issued to all invited entrants on 14 January 2019 and the Competitive Process was also notified to Australian Institute of Architects on 14 January 2019 for information purposes.

The process was undertaken pursuant to *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012*, *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012* and the *City of Sydney Competitive Design Policy*.

## 1.1 Competitive Design Alternatives Process

The competition comprises an 'invited' Competitive Design Alternatives Process. Meriton, as the proponent of the Competitive Process, invited four (4) architects to participate. In accordance with the protocols for the Invited Competitive Design Alternatives Process, each entrant was supplied with the Brief endorsed by the City of Sydney.

### 1.1.1 Entrants

The entrants who were invited to participate in the process were selected based on their reputation for high quality and sustainable architecture and urban design. The four (4) selected architectural firms were:

1. FOX JOHNSTON;
2. TURNER;
3. DKO; and
4. SJB.

### 1.1.2 Selection Panel

The Selection Panel as appointed by that proponent and was decided in consultation with City of Sydney and comprised of two nominees from City of Sydney and two from the proponent:

- Peter Spira (Proponent Nominee)
- Robert Nation (Proponent Nominee)
- James Weirick (City of Sydney Nominee)
- Michael Zanardo – Selection Panel Chair (City of Sydney Nominee).

### 1.1.3 Observers

The following City of Sydney observers were present at the presentations to the Selection Panel and during their deliberations.

- Aisling McGrath
- Tahlia Alexander; and
- Graham Jahn

#### **1.1.4 Recommendation Process**

The selection process was based on the written material supplied, as well as the presentations given by each architect to the Selection Panel. Competitors were allocated 30-minute presentations and 30 minutes of questions and discussion by the Selection Panel on 21 March 2019.

Consideration was given to the planning, design, commercial and buildability objectives of the brief.

An overview of each scheme against the objectives of the brief, and the recommendations of the Selection Panel, is outlined in the following sections of this report.

## 2 Competitive Design Process Timeline

The competitive process has involved a series of briefings, meetings and presentations, which have helped Meriton in its review and assessment of the four schemes. The chronology of the key events is outlined below:

DATE	TASK/EVENT
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Monday 14 January 2019</b>	<b>Commencement Date</b> Competitive Design Alternatives Process begins. Brief issued to Competitors
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Wednesday 16 January 2019</b>	<b>On-Site Briefing Session</b> Briefing to all Competitors will be held at the subject site.
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Tuesday 12 March 2019</b>	<b>Final Submission Lodgement Date</b> Competitors to lodge final submissions to the Competition Manager by 5pm (AEST). Competition Manager to issue hard and electronic copy of Final Submissions to all Selection Panel members and the City of Sydney by close of business the following business day.
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Thursday 14 March 2019</b>	<b>Lodgement of Presentation Date Material</b> Competitors are to submit Final Presentation Date material to the Competitive Process Manager via email by 5pm (AEST) for audit. No later than 24 hours prior to the Presentation Date, the Competitive Process Manager will request Competitors to delete any additional content. See Section 5.15 below.
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Thursday 21 March 2019</b>	<b>Presentation Date</b> Competitors to present final submissions to the Selection Panel. Presentations to be held at Meriton head office. The schedule of presentations will be provided directly to the Competitors.
<b>Within 14 days of the Presentation Date</b>	<b>Decision Date</b> Date by which submissions are evaluated by the Selection Panel with a recommendation made for formal appointment of a successful Competitor.
<b>Within 14 days of the Presentation Date</b>	<b>Notification to Competitors</b> Date by which all Competitors are notified in writing of the decision.
<b>Within 21 days of the Decision Date</b>	<b>Competitive Design Alternatives Report</b> Date by which the Proponent is to issue the Competitive Design Alternatives Report to the City of Sydney.

### 3 Review of Submissions

This Section provides an overview of each design, as well as an assessment of each submission against the key objectives of the brief.

#### 3.1 Fox Johnston

##### 3.1.1 Overview of the Design Scheme

The design put forward by Fox Johnston is shown in **Figures 1 to 3** and contains the following:

Element	Proposal
<b>Unit Mix</b>	Studio <b>0</b> 1 Bed <b>87 (32.6%)</b> 2 Bed <b>126 (47.2%)</b> 3 Bed <b>48 (18%)</b> 4 Bed <b>6 (2.2%)</b> <b>Total 267</b>
<b>Retail</b>	9 Retail shops and commercial spaces <b>Total 653.19 sqm</b>
<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	26,254 sqm
<b>Car Parking</b>	192 spaces



Figure 1: Fox Johnston scheme looking along Gunyama Park/ George Julius Avenue



Figure 2: Fox Johnston scheme looking along Epsom Road



Figure 3: Fox Johnston scheme looking along Rose Valley Way

### 3.1.2 Assessment of Submission

The panel provided the following assessment on the scheme and its ability to meet the objectives of the brief:

The Fox Johnson scheme proposed a clear, thoughtful urban design strategy with a 'shell' wrapping the southern block to protect from the busy Epsom Road, smaller-scale terraces lining both sides of Rose Valley Way, and buildings positively addressing Gunyama Park and George Julius Avenue defining a central courtyard.

The panel commended the crisp architectural expression of the proposal and thought that acoustic treatments along Epsom Road generated a compelling façade but noted that the complexity of this solution was not required or appropriate for this site. The panel appreciated the continuity that the terraces to Rose Valley Way provided with the streetscape of the neighbouring development, however questioned whether they could have defined the curve of the street more strongly, making for a more urban edge. The 'garden village' concept was well received, offering intimate shared green spaces within the building whilst creating large green 'apertures' to the park, however the spaces themselves were considered too narrow and deep. The east-west permeability of the courtyard was seen as a positive move, as was the location of the pool and gym in the podium with large voids over.

The panel felt that the non-compliance with LEP height limits posed planning risks to the application and that the alternative 'compliant' option was not sufficiently explored. Also, the reallocation of floor space to the upper levels of the southern block, lost the idea of a 'tower' and made this building more 'wall-like', lessening relief to the street and neighbouring blocks. The single lift cores to twelve-storey buildings were not seen as practical and the lobbies to Epsom Road could have had more presence. Building separation between the northern and eastern buildings was unresolved in terms of privacy.

The Proponent thanks Fox Johnston for its submission and recognises the efforts made in their scheme. However, having regard to the above and the strengths of the other shortlisted schemes, it was decided not to proceed further with this proposal.

## 3.2 Turner

### 3.2.1 Overview of the Design Scheme

The design put forward by Turner is shown in **Figures 4 to 6** and contains the following:

Element	Proposal
Unit Mix	Studio <b>0</b>
	1 Bed <b>73 (26.3%)</b>
	2 Bed <b>144 (51.9%)</b>
	3 Bed <b>50 (18.05%)</b>
	<b>Total 277</b>
Retail	9 Retail shops and commercial spaces <b>Total 957 sqm</b>
Gross Floor Area	26,242 sqm
Car Parking	285 spaces



**Figure 4: Gunyama Park view in Turners Scheme**



Figure 5: Epsom Road/ George Julius Avenue in Turner's Scheme



Figure 6: Epsom Road/ George Julius Avenue in Turner's Scheme

### 3.2.2 Assessment of Submission

The panel provided the following assessment on the scheme and its ability to meet the objectives of the brief:

The Turner scheme proposed a significant rethinking of the DCP envelopes within the constraints of the maximum LEP heights to create a closed perimeter-block form to the edges of the site whilst incorporating a lower, finer-grain interface along Rose Valley Way.

The panel appreciated that the overall strategy of the scheme was resolved within the confines of the LEP. The panel commended the approach of maximisation of yield fronting onto Gunyama Park, however felt that there was opportunity to make a stronger statement with additional articulation possible to this important face of the building. The panel considered that the lobbies were logically located, would activate the street edge and that their two-storey expression was appropriate and attractive. Detailed consideration of the relationship of terrace ground floor with the street was commendable. Windows at the ends of corridors were a positive in terms of amenity and in articulating slender end elevations, although corridors were generally too long. The location of the pool and gym within the podium of the south building was seen as good use of the deep envelope. Car parking layouts were particularly efficient.

The panel was not convinced however by the site organisation which did not provide permeability of the block and resulted in a 'wall-like' building, rather than 'tower' form, along Epsom Road. The panel felt that the 'fins' to the Epsom Road façade were probably too assertive, and that the curve introduced into the elevation did not successfully break up the building length or relate in a meaningful way to the heritage building opposite as intended. The panel noted that the approach to natural cross ventilation of apartments at the 'triple corners' required further resolution. The materials palette put forward was basic and could have explored other opportunities for texture and colour.

The Proponent thanks Turner for its submission and recognises the efforts made in their scheme. However, having regard to the above and the strengths of the other shortlisted schemes, it was decided not to proceed further with this proposal.

### 3.3 DKO

#### 3.3.1 Overview of the Design Scheme

The design put forward by DKO is shown in **Figures 7 to 10** and contains the following:

Element	Proposal
Unit Mix	Studio <b>0</b>
	1 Bed <b>119 (43%)</b>
	2 Bed <b>126 (46%)</b>
	3 Bed <b>31 (11%)</b>
	<b>Total 276</b>
Retail	7 Retail shops and commercial spaces <b>Total 796 sqm</b>
Gross Floor Area	26,261 sqm
Car Parking	216 spaces



Figure 7: The Terraces fronting Rose Valley Way proposed in DKO's scheme



**Figure 8: The Tower fronting Epsom Road proposed in DKO's scheme**



**Figure 9: The George Julius Apartments proposed in DKO's scheme**



**Figure 10: The Parkside Apartments proposed in DKO's scheme**

### 3.3.2 Assessment of Submission

The panel provided the following assessment on the scheme and its ability to meet the objectives of the brief:

The DKO scheme proposed a series of intelligent and nuanced moves that worked in concert to refine the DCP envelope. These included shifting the tower element to the east to mediate heights along Epsom Road and increase views to Gunyama Park past a neighbouring tower, adjusting the upper level setbacks along Epsom Road to tie in with neighbouring developments, creating a linear park to the south side of Rose Valley Way, and 'sleeving' the northern podium with terraces to address Fuse Street.

The panel commended the overall quality of the presentation. The panel was particularly drawn to the elevational diagram of the proposed tower massing and considered the intention to strengthen the relationship to the context, and also creating a distinct façade composition, very convincing. The long hand-drawn section was also especially evocative in describing the communal areas of the proposal well. The panel appreciated the attention given to creating address and activity to George Julius Avenue and Fuse Street with retail spaces wrapping the corners and individual terrace frontages turned to the west. The co-location of the lobbies at the southeast corner of the site providing convenient access between the blocks to share facilities was seen as a positive, so too was the permeability of lobbies on the northern block allowing direct connectivity to the landscaped courtyard beyond. The thought given to the staging of the development was admirable, as was the pool and gym location with skylights over, and the apartment planning in general.

The panel noted however that the fourteenth floor to the Epsom Road building exceeded the LEP height and posed a significant planning risk and that alternative options for redistribution of this floor space elsewhere were not readily apparent. The panel also considered that the proposed 'Tote Park' would not be a desirable outcome as the two-storey relationship across Rose Valley Way would be lost and the landscaped space would be impacted by the driveway crossing. In terms of building layout, more than one building had more than eight units per core without offering additional amenity to the communal corridors serving them. The panel was also not convinced by the proposed approach to natural cross ventilation where the majority of the living space was not on the ventilation path. The panel found the design language of the main buildings to be quite 'heavy', and whilst overall moves were positive, the architectural expression of the tower element emphasised the massiveness of the composition. With the predominance of painted concrete and glass balustrades, even for the terraces, a richer materials palette could have been proposed.

The Proponent thanks DKO for its submission and recognises the efforts made in their scheme. However, having regard to the above and the strengths of the other shortlisted schemes, it was decided not to proceed further with this proposal.

### 3.4 SJB

#### 3.4.1 Overview of the Design Scheme

The design put forward by DKO is shown in **Figures 11 to 14** and contains the following:

Element	Proposal
<b>Unit Mix</b>	Studio <b>0</b>
	1 Bed <b>82 (31%)</b>
	2 Bed <b>142 (54%)</b>
	3 Bed <b>40 (15%)</b>
	<b>Total 264</b>
<b>Retail</b>	9 Retail shops and commercial spaces <b>Total 785 sqm</b>
<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	26,157 sqm
<b>Car Parking</b>	210 spaces



Figure 11: The view along George Julius Avenue looking North in SJB's scheme



Figure 12: The view across Gunyama Park in SJB's scheme view across Gunyama Park



Figure 10: The view across Gunyama Park in SJB's scheme view across Gunyama Park



Figure 14: The view along Epsom Road looking South in SJB's scheme

### 3.4.2 Assessment of Submission

The panel provided the following assessment on the scheme and its ability to meet the objectives of the brief:

The SJB scheme proposed an approach which recognised its unique location fronting directly onto Gunyama Park. A through-site link traversing the northern block opens up access and views as well as creating a break in the building which reduces the scale to the park frontage. The tower to Epsom Road is reenvisioned as two separate forms, increasing amenity and views, whilst also reducing bulk to the street. Terraces define the edge of Rose Valley Way and Fuse Street making for a pleasantly human-scaled environment.

The panel considered this scheme to be superb. It is a skilful and elegant proposal which has the potential to become a beautiful backdrop to the public domain, particularly with its civic presence to Gunyama Park. The panel applauds the quality of the presentation material and the succinctness of the diagrams which built the story. The massing analysis was very convincing, with the connection to the park through the northern block a visually and functionally compelling feature. The vista that the through-site link provides also continues between the towers on Epsom Road to reveal a crucial slice of sky which greatly relieves the massing. The panel appreciated the metaphor of the 'tree' which, in this instance, gave meaningful direction to the calm ordering and proportioning of the facades, informing a solid and consistent two-storey colonnade at ground level, then becoming lighter above with blades lessening in density as they rise up the building. The panel found the asymmetry to the park façades particularly pleasing and can see merit in the architectural roof feature accentuating the north eastern roof line. The proposed limestone, travertine, brickwork and metal handrails make for a warm and textured palette, whilst the variegated shades of paint applied to the sides of the blades have the potential to create subtle yet agreeable effect. The panel felt that the comprehensive landscape proposition was impressive and delightful, taking advantage of every opportunity to improve outlook, usability and performance. Public art suggestions were appropriate in their form and location embellishing the public domain. Overall, the proposal delivered the best residential amenity of the four schemes.

The panel held concerns that the minor breaches of the LEP height limit may present planning problems, however if all enclosed habitable spaces could be brought within the height plane and exceedances could be limited to lifts and stairs providing access to roof gardens only, the panel could see merit in supporting this approach. Another planning concern was the non-compliance with upper level setbacks to Epsom Road. In this regard, the panel could see merit in the architectural efforts taken to articulate and vertically proportion the south-facing facades, which is also relieved by the vertical split in the massing, and encourages further planning justification to substantiate this aspect. The panel felt that the base of the Epsom Road façade could be improved by the removal of the horizontal elements which disrupt the two-storey reading. Conversely, the panel felt it was important that the base of the George Julius Avenue façade be broken at the residential lobbies and the division of this elevation into three discrete components be further emphasised. The panel was not convinced by the pool and gym layout and would support exploration of whether the pool could be rotated and have skylights over. The panel also felt the scheme presented challenges in terms of driveway locations being close to a street corner and opposing one another. Movement of the southern driveway towards eastwards could be considered, with the Fuse Street frontage freed up for retail. Options should be investigated to look at the distribution of car spaces on each block in relation to the units served, with each block being self-contained. Similarly, servicing should occur within each block, with particular thought given to resolving the servicing of retail facing Epsom Road. The panel considered that unit yield is best increased by splitting larger units into smaller units rather than adding additional volume to the proposal. Level 3 and 4 units should ensure that living room balconies open up towards the courtyard or Rose Valley Way rather than look into the side wall of the terraces. It is suggested that all terraces should have an individual connection to the podium car park. Ground floor dwellings on the south side of Rose Valley Way need to provide dedicated commercial space without compromising living rooms. Opportunities for deep soil should be explored.

The Proponent thanks SJB for its submission and recognises the efforts made in their scheme.

## 4 Recommendations

The Selection Panel unanimously recommends the SJB submission as the winning scheme for the competition, for both the north and south blocks. As outlined above, it is considered that the scheme best fulfils the design, commercial and planning objectives of the brief and demonstrates the potential to achieve design excellence as required by Clause 6.21 of *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012*, and as outlined in the approved Design Excellence Strategy. It also proposes buildings that will provide a positive contribution to the existing urban fabric in this important location and support the achievement of significant improvements to the public domain within the precinct.

The SJB submission is recommended by the Panel as the winning scheme, for both the north and south blocks, with potential to meet design excellence pending design development. The final Panel recommendations are as follows.

The panel believes the fundamental aspects of the design which should be retained throughout further design development are:

- The publicly accessible through-site link in the location proposed
- The alignment of the through-site link with the gap between the towers on Epsom Road
- The asymmetry of the façade facing Gunyama Park
- The strength and consistency of the whole architectural expression, and particularly the depth of blades and their general distribution on the facades
- The proposed selection and quality of materials
- The quality and extent of the landscape proposition, including the planted rooftops
- The current level of residential amenity should not be reduced

The panel considers the aspects of the design which require further attention throughout further design development are:

- Ensuring that the LEP height limit is not breached by habitable space
- Further substantiating the architectural approach to the Epsom Road façade
- Adjustments of facades to achieve a clear two-storey reading at street level
- Address the length of the George Julius Avenue façade with distinctive breaks in the massing
- Improvements in the layout of the pool and gym to provide greater amenity
- Reconsideration of driveway locations to avoid conflict and improve the street edge
- Ensuring that each block is self-contained with regard to car parking and servicing
- Adjustment of unit layouts to improve outlook
- Providing terraces with individual connections to the podium car park
- Ensuring ground floor dwellings on the south side of Rose Valley Way have dedicated commercial space without compromising living rooms
- Investigate opportunities for deep soil

## 5 Conclusion

This Report summarises the outcomes of the Competitive Design Alternatives Process for 94-104 Epsom Road, Zetland.

The Competitive Design Process has been carried out in a professional and thorough manner in accordance with the Design Excellence Strategy and endorsed Competitive Design Brief, prepared by Meriton Property Services. This Design Alternatives Report documents the competitive process, and the Selection Panel's final recommendation.

The winning entry, designed by SJB, best fulfils the design, commercial and planning objectives of the brief and demonstrates the potential to achieve design excellence.

The significant efforts made by all Competitors are recognised and the Selection Panel and Proponent wishes to thank them for their participation.

This report is endorsed by the Panel.



**Michael Zanardo**, City of Sydney Nominee - Selection Panel Chair



**James Weirick**, City of Sydney Panel Nominee



**Robert Nation**, Proponent's Panel Nominee



**Peter Spira**, Proponent's Panel Nominee