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fitzroy residents' association

Established in 1969 to promote, protect and enhance residential amenity

Submission on behalf of the Fitzroy Residents' Association
Martin Brennan
Chair

Planning Application No: PLN19/0491
84 -104 Johnston St, Fitzroy
Objection to Development

The Fitzroy Residents' Association (FRA) objects to the proposed development at 84 - 104 Johnston Street, Fitzroy which would allow for a 11 storey building, 107 apartments, 2 retail shops plus 4 basement levels of car parking for 150 vehicles.

We object to the proposed development on the following grounds:

- height and bulk and visual impact on Johnston and Fitzroy streets and suburb
- impact on adjacent heritage buildings
- increased traffic will be generated by the 150 car park
- failure to deliver on environmental sustainable design and passive living
- poor results in energy and resource efficiency

In both form and function the development fails to meet the policy or pub test.

In form it fails to respond to neighbourhood characteristics in terms of height, bulk, design and heritage. It also pre-empts the policy rewrites for activity centres in Yarra (C269) and Interim DDO 29 for Brunswick Street (C272).

Council's endorsement at its meeting on 17 December 2019 provides relevant interim planning controls which would allow: 6 – 8 storeys on the south side of Johnston Street; 4 – 6 storeys at the rear of Johnston Street, facing Victoria Street and 4 storeys along Brunswick Street.

At 11 storeys, this development falls well outside the Council's endorsed position and is excessively tall and bulky with no substantial setbacks from Johnston Street.

The proposed development also fails to maintain the integrity of the heritage streetscapes and to respect the significance of individual heritage buildings. The Heritage Impact report is silent on any new built form controls to conserve heritage streetscapes.

In function the proposed development also falls well short of Yarra City Council's adopted policies for sustainable building design and passive living including;

- energy efficiency
- water efficiency
- active transport
- indoor environment quality
- waste management

It also fails to respond the Council's response to the climate emergency.

At the state level the development falls well short of the intentions of the Planning and Environment Act which sets out clear directions for addressing the impact of development on the environment.

"What matters must a responsible authority consider?

(1) Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider, inter alia (e0 any significant effects which the responsible authority considers the use of development may have on the environment or which the responsible authority considers the environment may have on the use or development."

At the local level the development fails to respond to the current Yarra Planning Scheme which recognises 'Energy and resource efficiency' through environmentally sustainable development and improve energy efficiency in energy use through greater use of renewable energy technologies (15.02-1S); and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimize water use (21.07).

The Scheme also aims to promote Environmentally Sustainable development (21.07-1) by encouraging new development to incorporate environmentally sustainable design measures in the areas of energy and water efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, passive solar design natural ventilation, stormwater reduction and management solar access..'

The 'Sustainable Management Plan' submitted in support of the development is an inadequate response to state and local requirements to incorporate sustainable building design and passive living into new developments.

The building has a poor Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) with a 53% rating covering management, water, energy, stormwater, indoor environment quality, transport, urban ecology and innovation. There is no doubt that BESS ratings will increase in the future with changing policy settings in response to climate change and carbon reduction and this building will become sub-standard for current and future owners and tenants of the apartments.

In the summary provided by the developer, the NatHERS rating of 6.5 is for selected apartments above that rating so there are many of apartments that do not meet this rating to the detriment of many residents. The building's lack of performance is not a

question of ‘how to?’ There are many examples of better performing buildings that the architect for this development has in fact been involved.

The solar energy sourced by the building (16Kw) is inadequate and represents the equivalent to that provided for four suburban homes. The percentage of apartments connected to the solar system is minimal. Only four apartments have thermally broken windows despite this being perhaps the most important insulation choice for buildings today. A larger solar system would increase the amount of energy and provide thermal shading benefits to the building. The addition of vertically mounted solar panels on the walls would provide a greater amount or renewable and cheaper energy for residents. Reverse cycle air conditioners, gas HW and the lack of clotheslines is surely not smart energy thinking.

Comparisons with other developments highlight the inadequate response of this development to key sustainable design and passive living metrics. For example, if we compare the performance of the Nightingale Village, Brunswick, with the proposed development (Regent) the shortfall in performance is stark.

Comparative Key Metrics:

- Building Floor Area - Nightingale 2316 sqm Regent 6982 sqm
- Number of units: Nightingale 35 - Regent 107
- BESS Score: Nightingale 78% - Regent 53%
- Solar System: Nightingale 12.6 kW - Regent 16 kW
- Solar Energy consumption: Nightingale 41% - Regent 4%
- Rainwater Tank: Nightingale 11 kL - Regent 36 kL

The Brunswick development has a vastly superior overall BESS score, and generates a much greater proportion of its energy from its solar panel installation.

Rainwater capture and the efficient use of water is a critical factor in a building’s performance and its impact on the environment. The rainwater harvesting (35Kl) results in a 59% reliability of supply for toilet flushing and irrigation and the

underground water storage means water will be need to be pumped to those toilets and gardens.

The Traffic Assessment Report, whilst acknowledging the attributes of Fitzroy as second most walkable suburb with exceptional public and active transport options supports an excessive number of car parks. The Nightingale Village development, referred to, was able to achieve a reduction in car parking from 250 to 20 including 25 designated for car share only, through the effort of the same traffic consultants and the Moreland City Council.

The Report also fails to provide information on accessing and exiting the car park and the impact on surrounding streets and the neighbourhood in general. Exiting the building via one-way Fitzroy and entering Johnston Street is not viable and will result in frustration for motorists, and present safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists.

In conclusion, the FRA opposes this proposed development in a City that is seeking a response to sustainable building design, passive living, heritage protection, public and active transport and the recent declaration of a Climate Emergency. We seek and deserve better!

The FRA has received many calls from residents for the development to be opposed. We therefore call on the Council to refuse a Planning Permit for this development given its current form and function.

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