



# DESIGN EXCELLENCE PANEL POLICY

**Policy Owner:** Director Community, Planning and Environment

**Category:** Strategic

**Direction:** 3. Our Innovative City

## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 North Sydney Council encourages high quality urban design and sustainability in the North Sydney local government area. This process will be enhanced by seeking the independent advice of a Design Panel.
- 1.2 Council may appoint more than one Design Panel. The functions of the Design Panel(s) shall include but not be limited to comment on:
  - a) the design and sustainability qualities of major proposals in the local government area; and
  - b) draft statutory and non-statutory planning documents where they impact upon quality design outcomes.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Design Panel - is an advisory body that may inform the planning and assessment processes undertaken by Council staff.
- 2.2 A Design Panel will be appointed by Council. In appointing a panel, a Charter will be prepared that establishes the membership, functions and terms and conditions of membership.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Design - concerns the form and function of a building or public space. High quality design brings a range of economic, social and environmental benefits to a range of stakeholders.
- 3.2 Sustainability - concerns the capacity of a building to reduce negative impacts on the environment, and the health and comfort of building occupants, thereby improving building performance. The basic objectives of sustainability are to reduce consumption of non-renewable resources, minimize waste, and create healthy, productive environments.

## 4. PROVISIONS

### 4.1 Membership

4.1.1 To receive the support of both the community and the development industry, the panel needs to be recognised as an expert body capable of providing high quality design and sustainability advice. Accordingly, the panel will be comprised of well-known and respected professionals who are involved in the design of major projects and have extensive expertise in architecture, urban design, urban planning or sustainability. The inclusion of at least three professionals on the panel with a range of expertise will encourage debate and develop creative design solutions.

To bring a local perspective, the panel should also have a community representative with a demonstrated understanding and experience in architecture, urban design, urban planning or related field.

4.1.2 Membership should normally be for a two year term.

4.1.3 To ensure the panel's independence, a panel member:

- a) cannot be a Council Officer or elected member i.e. Councillor of North Sydney Council;
- b) must disclose any conflict of interest on any matter being considered by the panel; and
- c) may temporarily withdraw from the discussion on any matter for which there is a conflict of interest.

4.1.4 Relevant Council officers may attend panel meetings to assist the consideration of any matter being discussed by the panel. Council staff may chair or take minutes of the meeting.

### 4.2 Meeting Frequency

4.2.1 The frequency of meetings will be determined by the number of matters referred to the panel.

### 4.3 Financial Considerations

4.3.1 Panel members will be remunerated for attending the meetings and for their design advice.

### 4.4 Operation of the Panel

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- 4.4.1 The Chair will set the meeting date and prepare and circulate the agenda.
  - 4.4.2 A site visit may be undertaken by the panel prior to, or during a meeting.
  - 4.4.3 The meetings will not be public, however each applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion in respect of their application.
  - 4.4.4 The panel will consider the design and sustainability issues relating to each application, according to the functions of their charter. The views of the panel are one part of the assessment process and achieving a satisfactory design and sustainability outcomes may not in itself result in a recommendation for approval.
  - 4.4.5 A single, majority view should be presented to Council, however alternative views may be made available to Council if necessary.
  - 4.4.6 Minutes of the meeting will be taken and forwarded to each panel member and relevant Council staff for comment. Once settled, the minutes will be forwarded to the applicant.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 5.1 Council's Director Community, Planning & Environment is responsible for ensuring that appropriate matters are forwarded to the panel for comment.
- 5.2 At any time, the General Manager, Mayor, or Council may request that a matter be referred to the panel for comment.
- 5.3 Membership of the panel will follow published expressions of interest and nominations.
- 5.4 Should a member of the panel resign or a position become vacant for another purpose, the procedure outlined in Section 5.3 should be followed.

## **6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION**

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council policies and documents:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Design Panel Charter
- Development Control Plan

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- Local Environment Plan

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents/legislation:

- Local Government Act 1993
- State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Resolution No.</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
1	16 February 2009	Council	61	2012/13
2	18 February 2013	Council	61	2016/17
3	13 May 2013	Council	267	2016/17
4	25 June 2018	Council	214	2020/21
5	26 September 2022	Council	296	2024/25
6	26 June 2023	Council	196	2024/25