

marchese partners

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INSPECTION REPORT – CATHEDRAL PLACE

INSPECTION REPORT AND INFORMATION

for

CATHEDRAL PLACE

For

THE CATHEDRAL PLACE BODY CORPORATE

At

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Prepared By:

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INTRODUCTION

Marchese Partners was approached to complete a site inspection and create a report on the enclosing of balconies at the complex known as Cathedral Place. Currently there have been several approaches taken to enclose the balconies by individual unit owners. The reason for enclosing the balconies has largely been due to the disturbance caused by various venues in the adjacent entertainment district and the increased noise from Gipps and Ann Streets due to increased traffic flow. Brisbane City Council has been made aware of these enclosures and has written to the owners advising them of the non-compliance with the original development approval for the site. The Council was seeking to have these enclosures removed, however now there is a potential acknowledgement from the Council that a problem exists and this may mean that if a noise nuisance can be proven then the balcony enclosures may remain and others may be approved.

OBSERVATIONS

A site visit was undertaken on 18th April 2012 in which the apartments of 2 of the owners were visited and a general walk around of Gipps and Ann Streets was undertaken to look at the various installations. The first apartment (owner Sam King) had an enclosed balcony (glazed in OXXO configuration) and a rendered masonry balustrade. The 2nd apartment (owner Chris Byrnes) was not enclosed, but had a mix of glass and masonry balustrade, as well a Structural Column sitting inside the line of the balustrade. This balcony was at a higher level overlooking the intersection of Gipps and Ann Streets. The time of the inspections was between 10am and 11:30am, and the inspector noticed the level of noise at that time of day was still significant.

The enclosures that have been installed are in various forms due to the balcony types. There are generally 3 types of installation:

- 1) Where a solid balustrade (rendered masonry) is provided, the base of the frame is fixed to the inside face of the balustrade near the top, and the head is fixed to the soffit of the balcony over. The glazing generally comes in an OXXO or OXO configuration providing $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ opening vs the window width.
- 2) Where a glazed balustrade is supplied, there is a full height glazing suite provided from balcony floor to soffit of the balcony over. A transom sits at the balustrade handrail height. The glazing beneath the transom is fixed panels, the glazing above are sliding panels. The glazing generally comes in an OXXO or OXO configuration providing $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ opening vs the window width.
- 3) Where there is a mix of solid and glazed balustrade, the glazing provided is a mix of items 1 and 2 above. The main opening glazed panels are generally over the larger of the glazed or solid balustrade, and there are also some occasions where the operable panels are over both glazed and solid balustrade.

The 2nd apartment that was reviewed had a circular column sitting approximately 100mm inside the face of the balustrade in the corners and at the centre point of the balcony. It was commented that the Body Corporate considers this column to be common property. The Body Corporate will need to discuss how this affects the placement of any future proposed glazing installations.

An acoustic report was undertaken by TTM, and the resultant recommendation was provided to Marchese Partners via email on Thursday 26th July. A copy of this report is included in Appendix 2. Within this report, it is noted that Intrusive Measurement observations were taken on 30th May 2012 to record the amplified music emanating from the club located across the road (approximately 45m from equipment to centre of outdoor bar area). There were also Ambient Noise Measurement observations on 12th June 2012, with measurements taken at 1.5m above road level to ensure amplified music was inaudible.

During a walk around the exterior of the site, it was noted that the window mullions are out of alignment with the existing central balustrade posts (see photos 8, 11 and 12 in the Appendix). We would recommend that in any future installations that the mullions align with the central posts to make them look more uniform.

Photos of the existing installations are included in Appendix 1 of this report.

INVESTIGATIONS

Several items need to be taken into consideration when looking into a design solution for this issue, including in no particular order:

Acoustics

There has been a report prepared by an Acoustic Engineer that suggests a 4mm float glass with acoustic seals and an acoustic rated frame to any windows that are to be installed. The system should achieve a minimum Rw_{27} , and the overall reduction from enclosing the balconies would improve the current acoustic amenity and is expected to reduce noise levels be approximately equivalent to the maximum acceptable noise level near major roads of 45dB(A) as per AS2107 2000.

Aesthetics

The system that is to be installed should complement the existing building and should not be a dominant feature. Therefore the frame should be powdercoated to match the main colour of the façade of the building, and the glazing should be clear. As the colour of the building is not known to us, it is recommended that a glazing suite manufacturer be required to make an exact colour match during their site inspection.

Affordability

The solution to be provided should be an affordable one to allow the residents the ability to install the enclosure without undue financial implications. However, perhaps some flexibility in the selection of glass type and thickness should be offered to owners as, in general, glass which provides greater acoustic privacy is more expensive.

Compliance with relevant Building Code of Australia

All glazing to be installed needs to comply with the requirements of the relevant BCA (now called NCC) and its Section J requirements for Thermal properties and Acoustic properties. It should also comply with the Australian Standards including (but not limited to):

- AS1288 Glass in buildings selection and installation
- AS1170 Minimum Wind Loadings on Structures
- AS2208 Safety Glazing materials in Buildings
- AS4666 Insulating Glass Units
- AS4667 Quality Requirements for cut to size and processed glass

Based on projects within a close proximity (2km radius), the building is in Region B and Terrain Category 3 with an Ultimate Wind Speed of 57m/s and Serviceability Wind Speed of 39. For this area, it is recommended that the glass should have a U-Value of 6.2 or better and a SHGC of 0.55 or better. These figures need to be verified by qualified engineers before design and manufacture of any future installations.

Compliance with Brisbane City Council regulations

The currently installed enclosures do not comply with the City Plan 2000 document. Under Chapter 5 – Codes and related provisions, in the section regarding Residential Design there are Performance Criteria and Acceptable Solutions listed. The relevant provision states:

Performance Criteria

P13: Screening and partial enclosure of balconies is limited to provide privacy for neighbours and comfort for residents without resulting in unattractive buildings or an appearance of excessive bulk or restricting opportunities for passive surveillance of the street.

Acceptable Solutions

A13.1: Screening of balconies is limited to the side and rear boundaries and the sides of balconies between those units where needed to prevent noise and overlooking of other units or dwellings and recreation areas.

A13.2: Street frontages of balconies are not screened or enclosed by shutters, glazing.

In addition to this, at the Prelodgement Meeting held on 19th August 2011, it was noted that the “Retention of space as a balcony would have to be demonstrated by the use of operable (minimum 50% opening) clear glass attached to or behind the inner surface of the existing balustrade with no blinds, curtains or other sun control/privacy device.”. It was also noted that the Extension of the internal space of the unit into the balcony will not be accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

Given the above information, there are factors that need to be taken into account when considering the appropriate solution. There are several possible solutions, including bi-fold doors, sliding doors etc, but these solutions may be cost prohibitive and would be out of keeping with the existing installations.

We would recommend that the systems to be installed should follow the same look and principles of the existing installations to maintain consistency. Therefore we would recommend the following system to be used in any future installations to minimise disruption and provide comfort to the residents and also offer an economical solution:

Sliding Window Frame: Capral 580 series frame (or similar approved), powdercoated to match existing frames and balustrade colour.

Seals: Acoustic Seals are to be Schlegel Q-Lon Seals (or similar), note that Mohair seals are not considered as acoustic seals and therefore are not acceptable.

Glass: We would recommend a 6.5mm Viridian V-Lam Hush glass (clear) be installed. This is based on previous experience on sites where acoustic treatment is required.

We would recommend that a different glass be installed to improve the acoustic amenity further than the base case submitted by TTM. In their report on the comparison between the 4mm float and the 6.5mm Vlam Hush glass, TTM indicate that Vlam Hush glass achieves an additional 7dB sound transmission loss at all of the frequencies except the 63Hz octave, where no testing data was available but it is estimated that it would achieve an extra 4dB reduction. It is expected that while there may be a cost differential between these 2 glass types, this would be negated by the improved acoustic performance offered by the Vlam Hush glass.

When the glazing frames are installed, there should be no holes or air gaps between the frame and the substrate that it is fixed to. We would recommend a waterproof silicone sealant to fill the gap between the frame and substrate. The openings should be a minimum of 50% of the window width. Therefore, an OXXO window would be suitable, and an XOX should be suitable.

Currently the enclosures that are installed have been done so without the prior written consent of the Brisbane City Council. We would recommend that Council is approached as per the Pre-Lodgement meeting from 19th August 2011 to submit a proposal that would cover the whole site, with typical installation details. This application should be accompanied by an ordinary resolution of the Body Corporate agreeing to the application and its content.

The solutions that have currently been installed should be mimicked in any future installations to ensure consistency throughout the building appearance. It is also recommended that in situations where there is currently 3 panes of glass, there should be an allowance to replace any OXO glazing suites with OXXO glazing suites (or similar) to help achieve the minimum 50% opening as required by Council.

Sketch details of the recommended installations are included in Appendix 2 of this report.

Marchese Partners International



BLAIR KEENAN
Associate

APPENDIX 1 – SITE PHOTOS



Photo 1 – Sliding windows to balcony with a solid balustrade from inside the apartment.



Photo 2 – Sliding window sill track fixed to the inside face of the solid balustrade.



Photo 3 – Sliding window head track and jamb, fixed to soffit and rendered masonry wall.



Photo 4 – Underside of sliding window sill track.



Photo 5 – Column to the balcony with glass balustrade.



Photo 6 – Column to balcony with glass balustrade.



Photo 7 – Example of unenclosed balconies with a mix of solid and glazed balustrades.



Photo 8 – Example of enclosed balcony with glass balustrade.



Photo 9 – Example of enclosed balcony with both a solid and glazed balcony.



Photo 10 – Sliding windows to balcony with a solid balustrade from the street.



Photo 11– Sliding windows to balcony with a solid and glazed balustrade from the street.



Photo 12 – Sliding windows to balcony with a solid and glazed balustrade from the street.



Photo 13 – Sliding windows to balcony with a solid balustrade from the street.



Photo 14 – Sliding windows to balcony with a solid balustrade from the street.

APPENDIX 2 – SKETCH DRAWINGS AND TTM REPORT