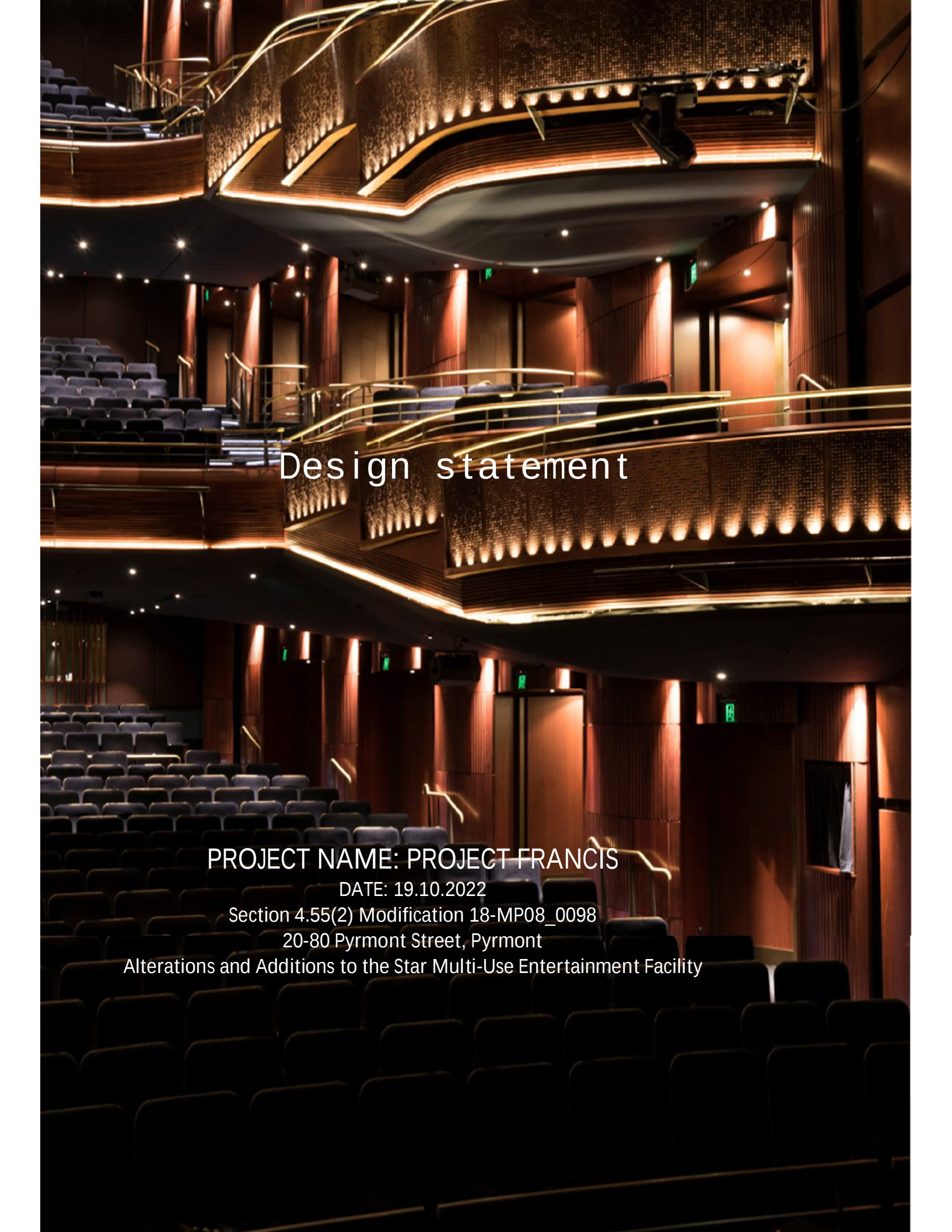




Design statement

PROJECT NAME: PROJECT FRANCIS

DATE: 19.10.2022

Section 4.55(2) Modification 18-MP08_0098

20-80 Pymont Street, Pymont

Alterations and Additions to the Star Multi-Use Entertainment Facility



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INTRODUCTION

The proposed development at 20-80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont is to modify the existing entertainment venue known as the Event Centre into two theatres. One will be a proscenium arch Broadway style theatre seating 1550 patrons and capable of accommodating musicals, opera and ballet. The second will be a smaller theatre (referred to as the Live Room) for 1000 patrons designed for smaller live performances such as concerts, cabaret and comedy. Both of these theatres are being designed to cater to specific demand for theatres of this configuration in Sydney.

Broadway Style Theatre

Foundation Theatres is an Australian family-owned theatre owner and operator. They currently operate the Capitol Theatre & Sydney Lyric Theatre in Sydney. Together with NSW Government agencies, a demand has been identified for additional theatres in Sydney to enable the city to accommodate increasing patron demand for large scale, complex productions particularly from Broadway and the West End. In order for these productions to operate viably, venues of the right size and capability need to be constructed. The demand for a theatre that can accommodate 1500 plus patrons is well established. A theatre of this size must have all the required technical components to attract complex shows including a full fly tower and suitable support rooms.



Figure 1. Artist's impression of "Broadway Style Theatre"

Live Room

The Live Room while smaller in scale is no less significant on what it can offer the Sydney Live performance industry. The brief for the room is to provide a space that can be configured to host a wide range of entertainment including, concerts, comedy, cabaret, plays and smaller scale theatrical productions. This smaller theatre will have the ability to provide space that will be attractive to both local artists and international productions of this scale.



Figure 2: Artists impression of the “Live Room”

Based on the brief and the constraints of the existing space the overarching design philosophy for the project are to:

- reuse the existing building where practically possible and only add elements where absolutely necessary.
- be sympathetic to the existing architectural design of the Star precinct where elements are added.
- minimise the mass of the new elements as much as possible to lessen impacts on neighbours

While the existing Event Centre is an entertainment building that can accommodate up to 4000 patrons, the type of events currently programmed differ from the events that will be programmed in the new theatres. This has led to the requirement to add a number of new elements including:

- Adding a fly tower over the exiting stage to allow Broadway style productions to be accommodated.
- Adding a rigging loft over the stage in the Live Room.
- Additional space to accommodate dressing rooms and theatre support rooms.

Refer to the design philosophy section of this statement for more information on the impact the different types of events and performances have on the building requirements.

CONTEXT

The existing Event Centre sits on the podium of The Star complex at 20-80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont, NSW 2009.

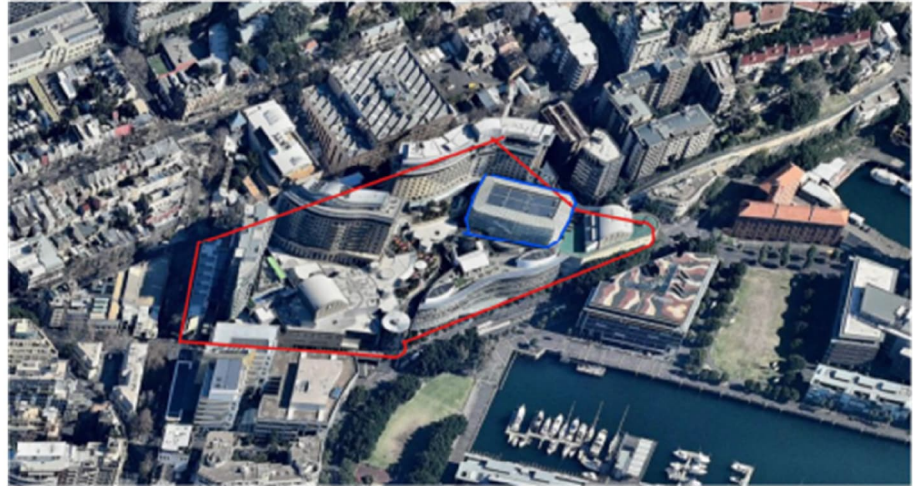


Figure 3: Event Centre (outlined in blue) sitting amongst the larger The Star complex (outlined in red).

The site has street frontage on 4 sides with Pyrmont Street to the west, Jones Bay Road to the North, Pirrama Road and Edward Street to the East and Union Street to the South. The site itself contains a podium with hospitality facilities including a casino, restaurants and The Sydney Lyric Theatre. On top of this podium there are further hospitality venues in the form of the existing Event Centre as well as three hotel towers, the Astral Hotel, Astral Residences and The Darling.

The precinct is well catered for in terms of transport as it houses a light rail stop on level B2 of the complex as well as being serviced by bus stops along Pirrama Road. Vehicle access is off both Pirrama Road which has the main car park entry and exit as well as a drop off point. Jones Bay Road provides access to a drop off point within the precinct running parallel to Pyrmont Street.

The site has two loading docks, one entered adjacent to the car park entry off Pirrama Road on level B2 leading to a loading dock in the northern end of the site with a second entered and exited off Jones Bay Road on level 00. Both loading docks serve the existing Event Centre with bump in and out for shows being catered for in the northern loading dock on level B2 with food and beverage and smaller deliveries being catered for in the second loading dock off Jones Bay Road on level 00. Refer to figure four below for the location of the B2 loading dock outlined in red with the truck loading bay highlighted in blue and the scenery lift highlighted in violet. This scenery travels directly to level 3 where scenery is loaded directly into the rear of the stage as indicated with a red arrow on figure 6 below. Also refer to sketches SK01 to SK04 for more detailed analysis of how items are transported from the loading docks to the Broadway style theatre and Live Room.

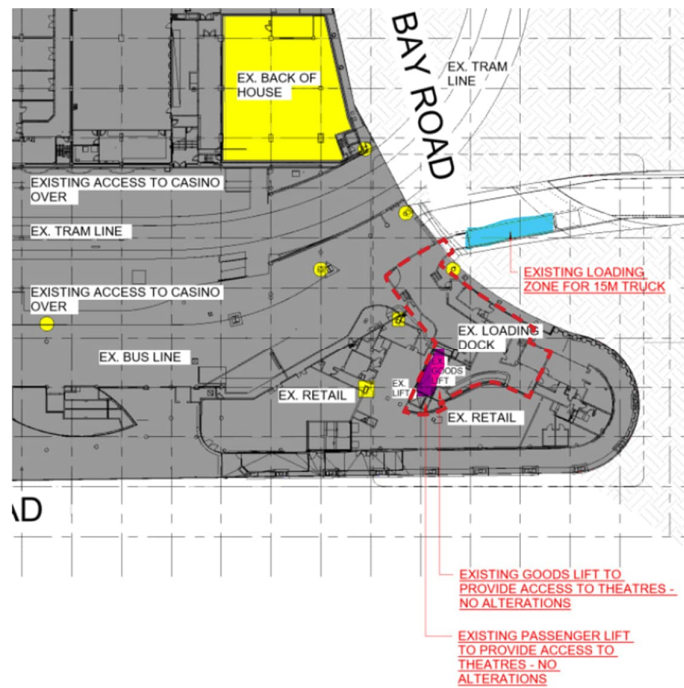


Figure 4-bump in loading dock

The smaller loading dock on level 00 is used for food and beverage deliveries. While the amount of food required for the new theatres will be less as the existing kitchens that service the Event Centre are being demolished, food and beverage for the bars in the foyers will continue to use this loading dock and lift. Refer to figure 5 for the location of the Level 00 loading dock as well as Figure 6 for the route from the lift to the stalls bar.

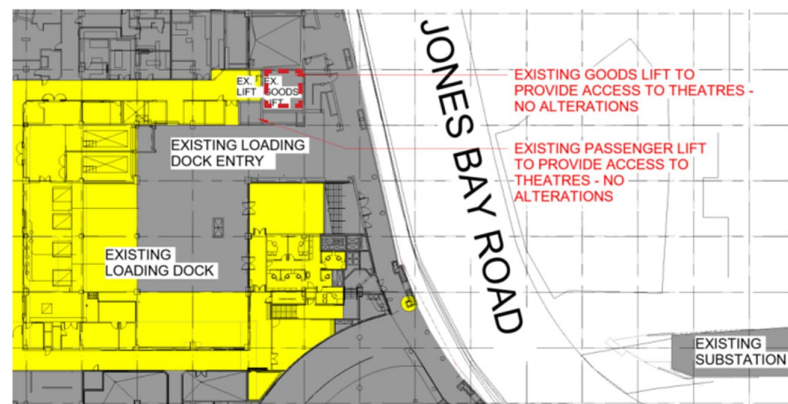


Figure 5 Level 00 Loading Dock

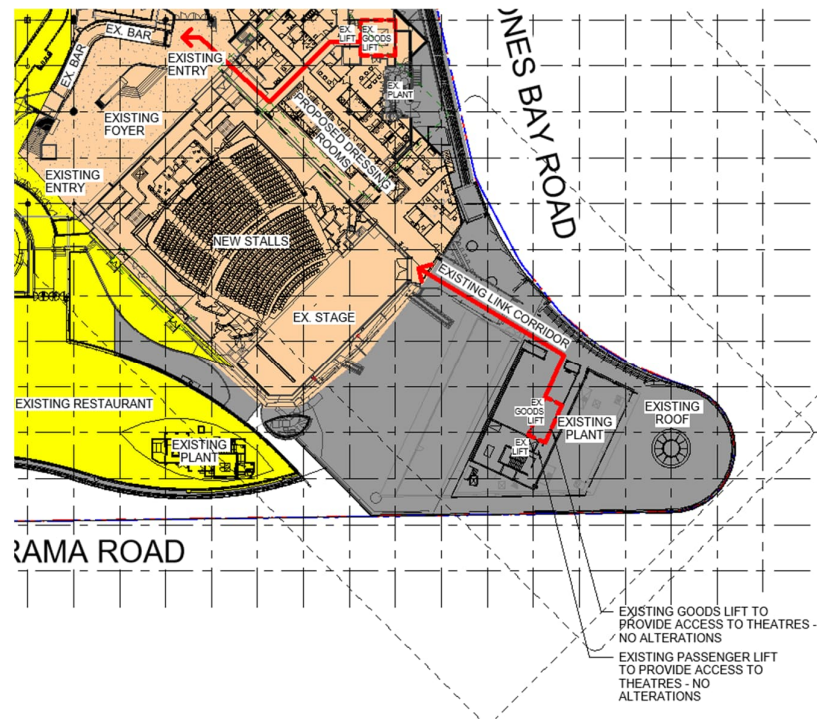
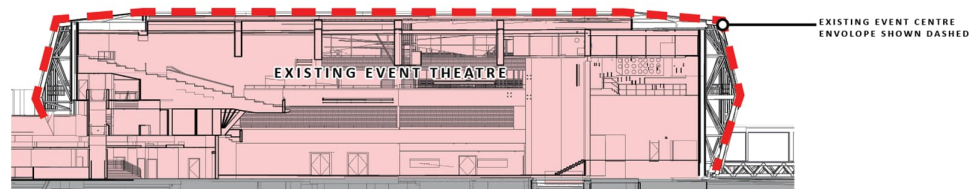


Figure 6: access from good lift to foyer

The major benefit of the existing loading docks is that both are internal and existing therefore there will be no change to the neighbour's amenity.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Existing Event Centre



Proposed alterations

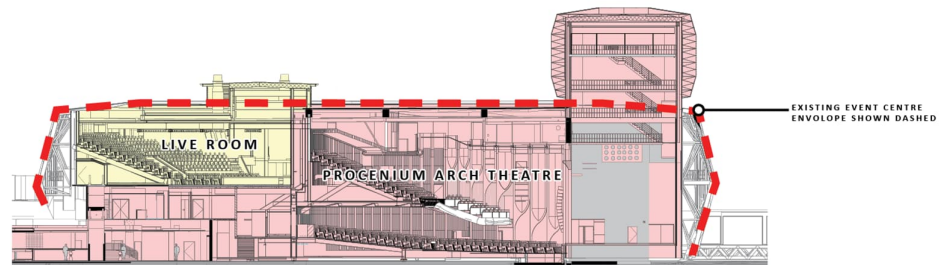


Figure 7: Proposed alterations with 1550 seat auditorium and 1000 person capacity Live Room.

The existing Event Centre is well catered for accommodating conferences, awards nights, trade shows, concerts and gala events. These types of events:

- are typically run over a short time period
- do not have a large number of performers and therefore don't need many dressing rooms and support rooms
- Do not have many physical props and backdrops that need to be moved during an event. Therefore while the Event centre does have a fly tower to give the capability to hang backdrops, it does not have the ability change these during a show.

The proposed proscenium arch theatre will typically host medium to long running musicals, ballet and plays. A proscenium arch theatre is a theatre that separates the stage from the patrons in the auditorium by means of a wall with an opening (proscenium) to allow patrons to see what is happening on stage but not be able to see the mechanics of the various sets, props and backdrops being moved on and off stage from the sides and above.

The live room ('black box' theatre) will host a mix of short to long running events, including plays, conferences, concerts and comedy nights. This venue is known as a black box theatre as it typically has the stage sitting amongst the space rather than behind a proscenium wall. To afford the producers and performers the opportunity to decorate the space in a way to suit the show, there are typically far less decorative wall features and typically has dark or black finishes.

For the types of events that are currently catered for in the existing Event Centre, the auditorium is supported by pre function spaces over three levels, a large kitchen and 2 dressing rooms on level 03.

The three pre function spaces will be reused as foyers for both the main theatre and Live Room. The existing level 03 and 04 pre functions will serve the stalls and circle levels of the main auditorium and the level 05 pre function will service the Live Room.

The existing kitchens will be converted into dressing rooms and theatre support rooms such as production offices, wardrobe and green rooms etc. The existing level 03 dressing rooms will be demolished to allow for the erection of a crane during construction and rebuilt with new dressing rooms levels above. Refer to architectural drawings for existing and proposed layouts showing the reuse of the existing foyers.

While the design philosophy is one of adaptive reuse, there are some elements that are required for the successful running of the new theatres that cannot be accommodated within the existing building footprint.

These include:

- A fly tower over the stage in the main auditorium,
- A loft over the stage in the Live Room
- Additional dressing rooms to serve both the Broadway Theatre and Live Room.

Fly Tower

To successfully host a musical or play, it is essential to have a fly tower capable of allowing the set to be seamlessly changed throughout the show. The purpose of a fly tower is to be able to store multiple backdrops and props outside the view of the patrons watching the show. A fly tower consists of 3 main zones, a stage at the bottom which is visible to the patrons through the proscenium (opening on to the stage), a flying zone where backdrops and props are stored ready for use (but hidden from the audience) and a grid level which is a working gridded platform, high enough for people to work on above the flying zone to allow the backdrops and props be installed. To allow the backdrops and props to be hidden, the distance between the stage floor and the grid needs to be 2.5 times higher than the height of the proscenium, this results in requirement to raise the height of the building by 10m on the northern end.

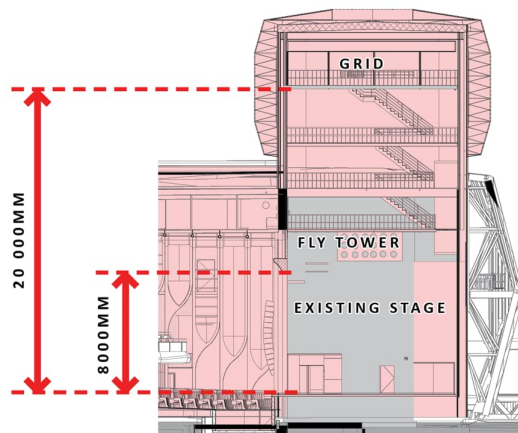


Figure 8: Fly tower extension

Loft

In the Live Room, the technical requirements of the shows will not be as stringent as the main auditorium. Having said this, the space will still require the ability to have props and backdrops on the stage. To accommodate the props and backdrops a loft will be built above the Live Room Stage. The loft will allow for the relocation of existing smoke exhaust to a higher level and prevent clashes between the smoke exhausts and the production below.

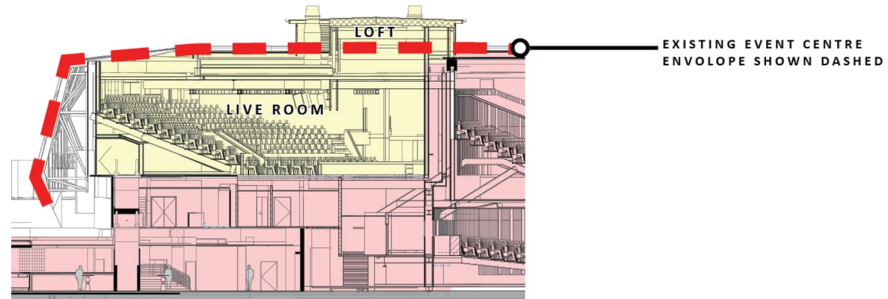


Figure 9: Loft Extension

Dressing Rooms

While we are going to modify the internal layout to convert the existing kitchens into dressing rooms and theatre support rooms, we don't have enough space to accommodate the number of dressing rooms required for the proposed theatres. To house the required number of dressing rooms the existing level 3 dressing rooms will have their footprint expanded by 50m² together with an extension above up to the height of the existing adjacent plant room. Within the extension new plant equipment will also be housed which will serve the main auditorium and live room which was previously designed to be above the existing plant room. Refer to figures 10 and 13 for the existing and proposed dressing room and theatre support room layouts.

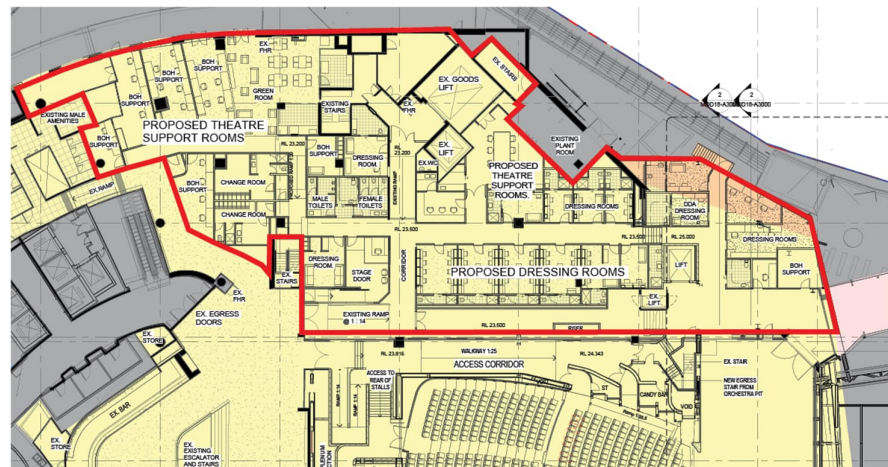


Figure 10: Level 03 dressing rooms and support rooms for the Broadway Theatre

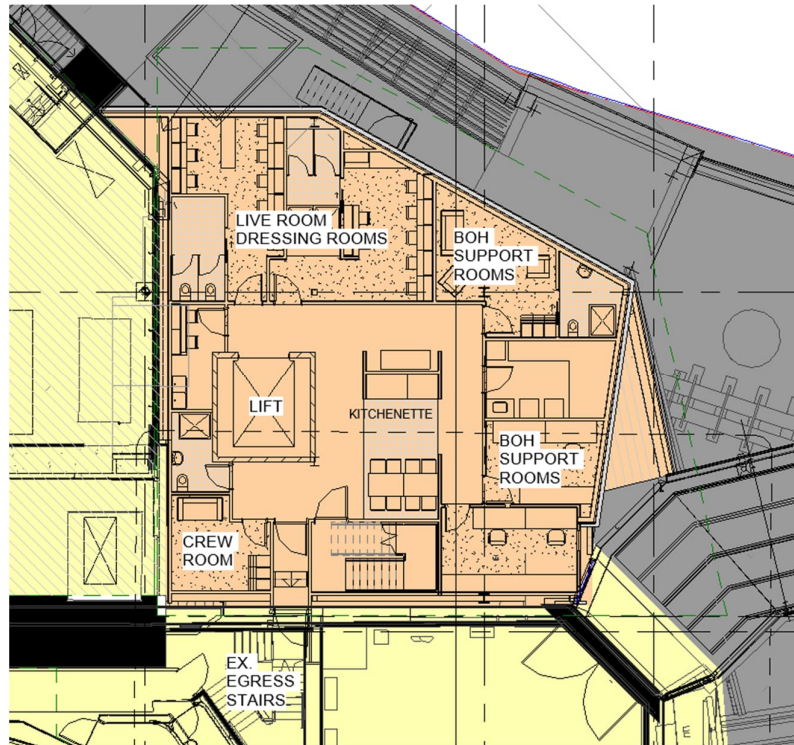


Figure 11: Level 04 dressing room layout serving the Live Room

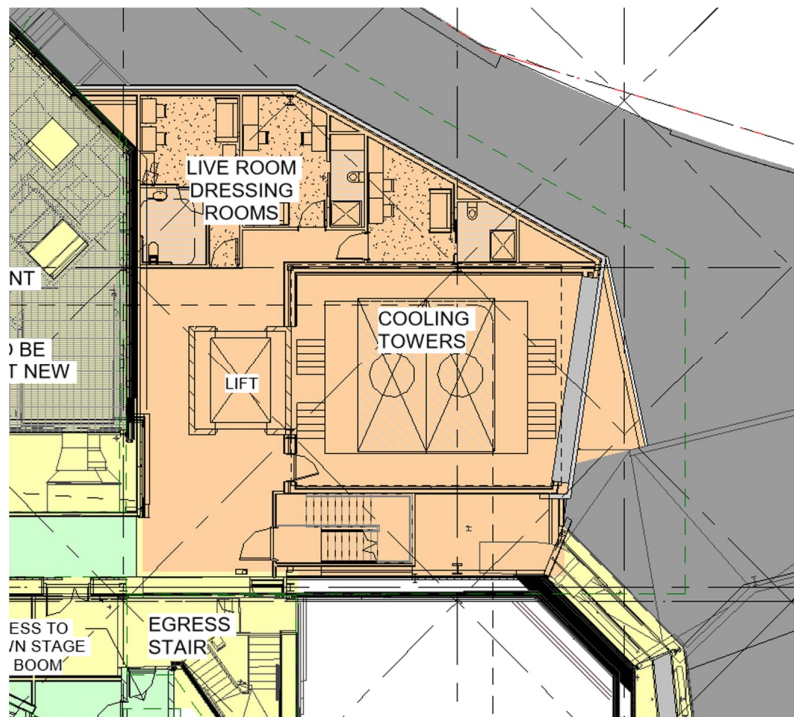


Figure 12: Level 05 dressing room layout serving the Live Room

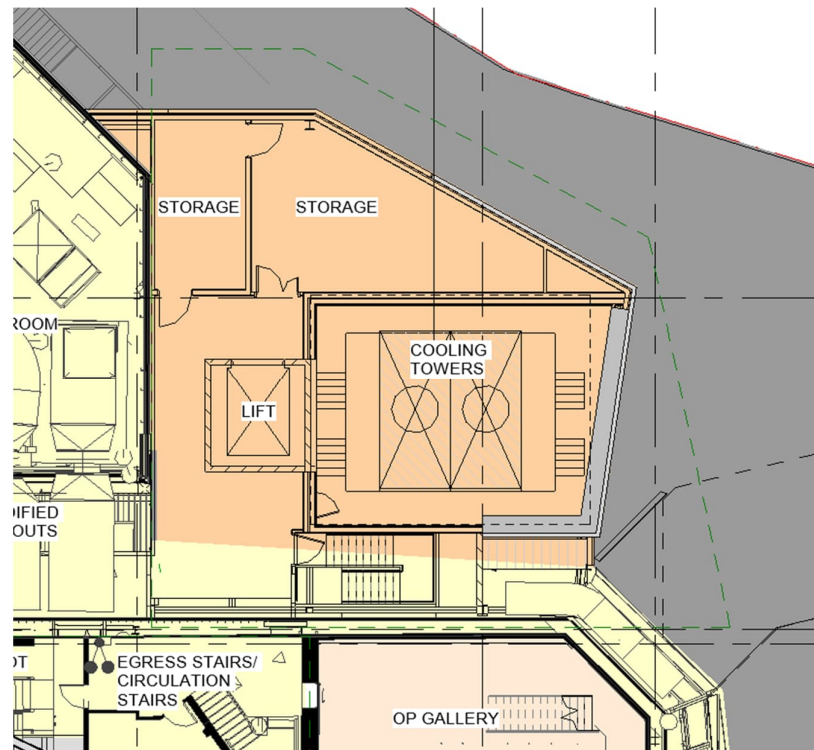


Figure 13: Level 06 plant room layout

As much of the existing mechanical plant as possible is going to be reused in the new theatres. This includes the reuse of the existing air handling units which will be assigned to either the main auditorium or the Live Room. To make the new theatres self-sufficient from the rest of The Star precinct, cooling towers are going to be housed in the upper floors of the extension with a louvred roof above. The extension parapet level matches the existing plant room level.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

MASSING AND HEIGHT

As mentioned in the design philosophy we are trying to construct the new theatres within the enclosure of the existing Event Centre where possible. The items that don't fit within this enclosure are the Fly Tower, dressing room/plant extension and the loft extension.

The greatest intervention in terms of massing is the new fly tower. Several options were considered when contemplating what form the fly tower should take, ultimately the most cohesive solution was to continue the form and aesthetic of the existing glass façade rather than seek to add another object on top of the existing building. Several options were considered when continuing with this design aesthetic including a concept which depicted the extension as an unfolded origami addition to the original panels. The break-up of the panels from the existing building, would have been replicated on the fly tower to give the impression that the new fly tower has folded out of the existing shape creating one cohesive envelope.

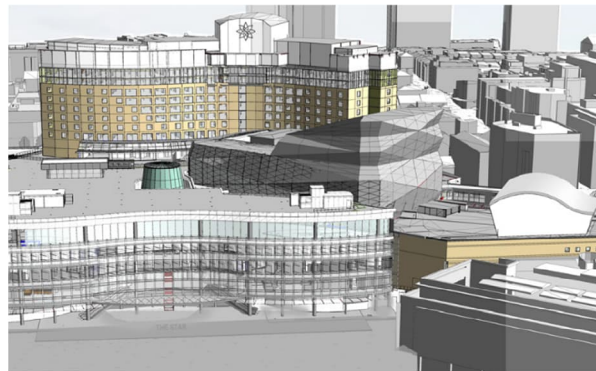


Figure 14: Preliminary Fly Tower Façade

Following on from feedback from The Department of Planning and Environment, The City of Sydney and neighbours in Pyrmont, the design for the fly tower façade has been revised. The concept to tie in with the existing form and aesthetic of the existing Multi-use Entertainment Facility is still being maintained but rather than folding out of the existing form over the entire northern half of the building, the revised concept has replicated the existing form over the footprint required for the fly tower only. This results in a form that sits cohesively with the existing building but also minimises impacts on neighbouring views. Refer to figure 15 below for the proposed façade treatment.

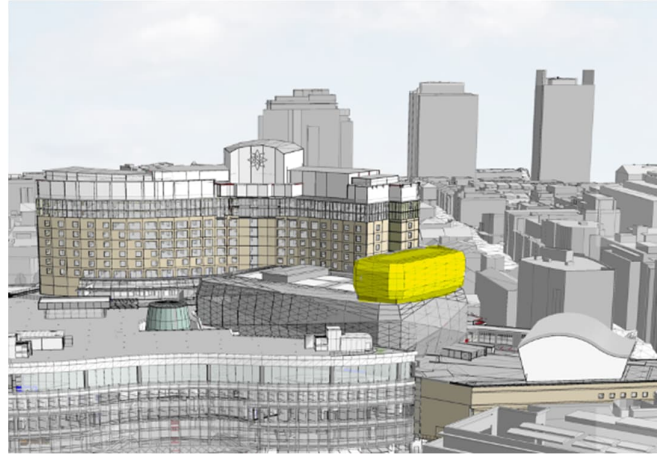


Figure 15: Proposed Fly Tower Façade

The dressing room extension has a far smaller impact in terms of massing. Similarly to the lodged design, the extension sits in the location of the existing dressing rooms in the North West corner of the Event Centre. To accommodate the number of dressing rooms required for the successful running of both the main auditorium and the Live Room the dressing rooms will be spread over 3 levels with mechanical plant and a store room on a fourth level over. Level 03 (the first level of dressing rooms) will be allocated to the main auditorium which is ideal as this is directly adjacent to the stage entrance, levels 04 & 05 will be allocated to the live room which will be accessed via a new corridor leading directly to the stage. A new lift will also be provided within the extension providing access to all levels from level 03.

Previously the existing plant room was expanded to accommodate new REQUIRED cooling towers, which lead to an increase in height of 6m to the existing plant room. In this reduced design the new cooling towers have been housed within the new extension minimizing the massing impact on neighbouring buildings.

The dressing rooms extension and existing plant rooms are adjacent to each other so both will be treated as one design element rather than having a number of elements at the northern end of the Astral Hotel. Existing levels of the plant room louvres and sandstone have been matched in height and we also intend to match the materials. The existing sandstone coloured precast concrete panels of the Astral hotel are currently being painted a light grey as part of the approved MOD15 of the star casino complex. The new dressing room extension will tie in with the existing adjacent plant room by replicating the existing louvre and solid elements of façade from the plant room on the new extension. The break up of the louvres and solid elements are aligned with the level of the hotel room windows on the Astral tower to the south providing an integrated façade when viewed from the west. At the lower level 03 of the extension, fibre cement cladding finished in a dark grey will be used to match the existing link bridge to the north. Further detail on finishes can be found below in the materiality section of this statement. To reduce the bulk and scale of this element the height of the main footprint of the dressing rooms have been aligned to the top level of the existing plant room. As seen below in figure 16 and 17. This is 1.4m lower than the previously submitted scheme.

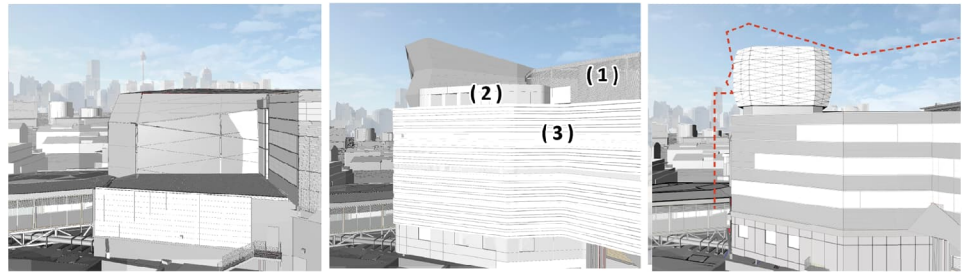


Figure 16: Existing (left), previously lodged (middle) + proposed extension (right). Revised proposal has removed the 6m high plant room extension (1), the topmost level of the dressing room extension (2), the aluminium screen (3). Note: The massing of the revised dressing room has resulted in a decrease of 4.5m from what was originally submitted.



Figure 17: Extension massing comparison to previously lodged mass. Previous massing shown with dashed red line.

The proposed loft also has a far smaller impact on the massing of the existing building. As the extension is minor in nature, the loft has been contained within the roof area between the existing glass cladding. By containing the rigging loft to the width of the existing well containing a metal deck roof, it was possible to integrate a simple floating roof structure within the existing roof well without impacting on the 'cut stone' mass.



Figure 18: Rigging Loft

STREETSCAPE

The existing Star Precinct consists of a strong podium throughout the site. This podium is generally a mix of sandstone, coloured concrete panels, glass and brick. There will be no alterations to the podium as part of this works and therefore no changes to the street frontage. The Astral Hotel and Astral Residences on top of this podium are also constructed from coloured concrete which has led to a blending between the base podium and the buildings above. The remaining buildings on the podium creates a greater level of separation from the base as they consist of glass (in the case of the event centre) or aluminium cladding (on the pop up roofs facing Pirrama Road). As part of the works associated with the approved MOD15 scheme, the Astral Hotel and Astral Residences are going to be painted a lighter colour with new dark grey cladding at the top level of the hotel. This is providing a clearer separation between the building podium and the elements above.



Figure 19 - Existing star podium precinct prior to painting of hotel towers



Figure 20 - Proposed alterations to Event Centre to accommodate fly tower, loft and dressing rooms. New colour scheme of Astral towers show.

MATERIALITY



Figure 21: Existing event centre

The existing multi use entertainment facility is clad in coloured glass. This glass varies in tone across the building and varies in appearance depending on what angle the sun is hitting the various triangulated surfaces of the building. At night the glass is back lit to provide a striking jewel sitting atop the casino podium. The intent for the new fly tower extension is not to match the glass cladding of the original building below. Instead, the fly tower will be clad in aluminium which will have a lower reflectivity than the existing glass. While the new cladding will be of a consistent colour, the replication of the triangulation of the panels will result in different tones depending on what angle the sun is hitting the different planes on the fly tower, thus tying in with the variation in tone of the existing glass. Between the new fly tower and existing Event Centre building there will be a shadow gap which will be clad in a darker aluminium cladding. By not extending the back lit glass over the fly tower, it will help downplay the scale as it will be less prominent on the site, particularly at night. This will also help lessen the impact on the neighbours as there will be no increase in light being emitted from the multi-use entertainment facility.



Figure 22: Fly Tower Façade (refer to figure 25 for finishes)

As part of the construction sequencing, the existing single story dressing room building will be demolished to allow for the erection of a crane for materials handling. After the crane has been removed from site, the dressing rooms will be rebuilt on a slightly larger footprint and over 4 stories. This part of the building will be enclosed with a metal deck roof to match the existing roof that is being removed while the walls will consist of prefinished fibre cement panels and louvres. The base of the building will be in a dark finish to match the adjacent existing bridge link which are both darker finishes as shown in figure 21. The remainder of the wall cladding will consist of prefinished fibre cement and light grey coloured louvres to match the existing adjacent plant room. As part of the MOD15 works to Astral Residences and Astral hotel the existing sandstone façade is being painted an off white / grey colour which is currently underway, figure 23 below shows the final finish although the full works have not been completed at the plant room at the time of this statement. The prefinished fibre cement panels in the extension will match this finish so the extension reads as one with the existing building. The windows to the dressing rooms will be frosted to match the existing windows.

Figure 23 – Existing MOD15 paint finish (refer to figure 25 for finishes)

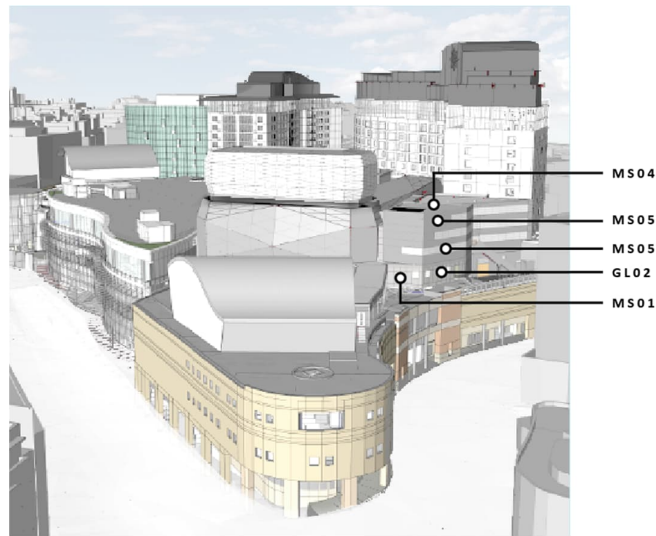
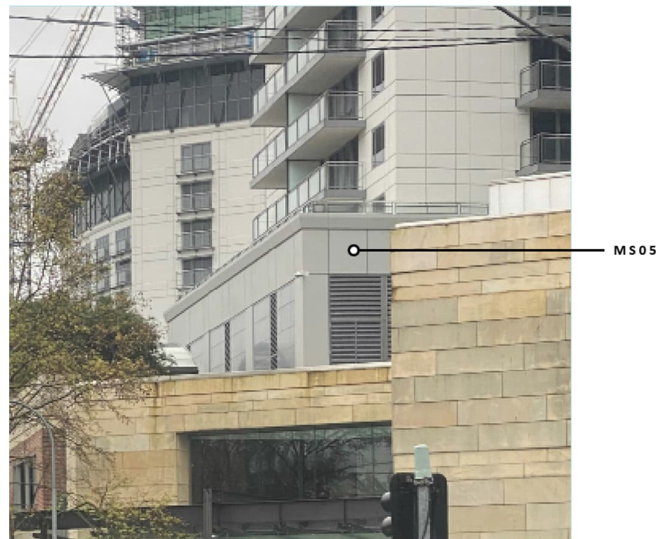


Figure 24 – Dressing room materiality (refer to figure 25 for finishes)

PROPOSED MATERIALS:

MT01:
DARK ALUMINIUM CLADDING



MS01:
PRE FINISHED FIBRE CEMENT PANELS TO MATCH EXISTING LINK BRIDGE



MS02:
PRE FINISHED FIBRE CEMENT PANELS TO MATCH EXISTING MOD15 PAINT FINISH



MS03:
MEDIUM TONE COLOURED ALUMINIUM CLADDING TO MATCH EXISTING



MS04:
ROOF SHEETING TO MATCH EXISTING



MS05:
LOVRED WALL TO MATCH EXISTING PLANT ROOM



GL01:
EXISTING GLASS



GL02:
FROSTED GLASS TO MATCH EXISTING DRESSING ROOM GLAZING



Figure 25: Proposed finishes

2280.08_Project Francis_The Star, 20-80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont, NSW, 2009

PRIVACY

One of the major driving forces of the design of the additions to the Multi-use Entertainment Facility was the affect there might be on the neighbours. Windows are proposed on the lower levels of the dressing rooms however will consist of frosted glass to match the existing window treatment of the existing dressing room; the frosting will ensure there are no privacy issues with the neighbouring residential properties. There will be no windows in the upper levels of dressing rooms further ensuring no privacy issues.

SUMMARY

The proposal intends to:

- Repurpose the existing Multi-use Entertainment Facility to accommodate 2 new theatre venues for the benefit of all Sydneysiders.
- Reuse the existing elements where possible
- Where new building elements are necessary, tie into the existing built form and finishes of the site.
- Be respectful of neighbouring residences by reducing bulk and scale where possible and integrating measures to optimise privacy.



WORK THAT WORKS

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