## Museum of Contemporary Art

Museum of Contemporary Art Redevelopment Project

> Preliminary Environmental Assessment

> > July 2008

# Contents

1.	Introduction		
	1.1	Overview	1
	1.2	Background to the Project	1
	1.3	Purpose of this Report	2
	1.4	The Proponent	2
2.	Loc	ation	3
	2.1	Context and Positioning	3
3.	The Proposal		6
	3.1	Overview	6
	3.2	Objectives of the Proposal	6
	3.3	Existing and Proposed Uses	7
4.	Statutory Framework		
	4.1	Relevant planning controls applicable to the MCA	9
	4.2	Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979	9
	4.3	State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005	10
	4.4	Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005	10
	4.5	Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme	12
	4.6	Draft SHFA Environmental Planning Instrument (EPI)	13
	4.7	Development Control Plans	13
	4.8	Commonwealth legislation	14
5.	Preliminary Environmental Assessment		
	5.1	Architectural, Building and Urban Design Impacts	16
	5.2	Heritage and Archaeological Impacts	17
	5.3	Geology, Soils and Groundwater	17
	5.4	Traffic and Transport	18
	5.5	Construction Impacts	18
6.	Consultation		
7.	Conclusion		

### Table Index

Table 1	Existing and proposed development	8
---------	-----------------------------------	---

## Figure Index

Figure 1	Cadastral Plan and Existing Land Titles	3
Figure 2	Aerial Photograph of the MCA Precinct	4
Figure 3	General location of new building envelope	5
Figure 4	Zoning Area Boundary of the Harbour REP	11

## Appendices

A Site Plan

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Overview

GHD Pty Ltd (GHD) has been engaged by the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) to prepare documentation to support a project application for the proposed redevelopment of the MCA. The MCA is seeking project approval under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).

#### 1.2 Background to the Project

The MCA is Australia's only museum dedicated exclusively to exhibiting, interpreting and collecting contemporary art from across Australia and around the world.

In 1990 the MCA building in The Rocks was gifted to the MCA by the NSW State Government. Unlike most other museums and galleries in Australia, the MCA was launched as a self-supporting operation. However, it became clear by the end of its first decade that, without further support, it would not be able to serve its public purpose.

The NSW Government agreed in 2001 to make an ongoing financial contribution to the MCA's core operations. This decision marked a turning point in the history of the MCA, transforming it into a strong business that successfully combines popular public and education programs with sustainable commercial activity. The MCA receives ongoing funding and support from the NSW State Government through the NSW Ministry for Arts and the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council.

The MCA needs to grow to meet the dramatic increase in its popularity and visitor demand. We need to take the next step towards making the MCA one of the world's great contemporary art museums. The current proposal will address the building issues presently preventing the MCA achieving its goals, which are:

- » Access is inequitable and non-compliant;
- » Circulation is confusing;
- » No dedicated education facilities;
- » No lecture theatre;
- » Constrained building with no room to grow physically or financially; and
- » Aging building with inefficient plant, deteriorating facilities and gallery spaces.

To resolve these issues, the MCA Development Plan was prepared by Architect Marshall Pty Ltd, which provides a framework to improve the building.

The current proposal for re-development will provide:

- » A new circulation system providing among other things full access to people with disabilities for the first time and coherent wayfinding.
- Access from George Street to Circular Quay and a more active presence on the Quayside;

- » Dedicated educational facilities for schools and colleges, (the Centre for Creative Learning) the acclaimed Bella program for young people with special needs and for new programs designed to encourage creativity in everyone;
- » Dedicated galleries for the MCA collection, including some of the most significant collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art;
- » 120-seat lecture theatre;
- » New gallery spaces;
- » New venue hire facilities and a larger museum shop and café for increased revenue generation;
- » New environmental standards; and
- » Renovation of the existing building.

Both the works to the existing building and the proposed new works will be a contemporary and important addition to the MCA. Through the use of technology and materials the redevelopment will reflect the MCA's purpose as a world class art gallery exhibiting the latest in contemporary art from Australia and internationally.

#### 1.3 Purpose of this Report

On 15 May 2008, the Department of Planning advised that this proposal is a Major Project and that Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) applies. The project requires approval from the Minister for Planning and this Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) acts as a formal request to the Department of Planning for the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements for this project. Upon receipt of the Environmental Assessment Requirements, the MCA will undertake an Environmental Assessment (EA) and submit it to the Department of Planning as part of formal application for project approval.

The aim of this PEA is to provide the Department of Planning with information on the project to enable the preparation of Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements. The PEA outlines the approvals process for the project, describes the existing environment and outlines key issues that need to be addressed in the EA report.

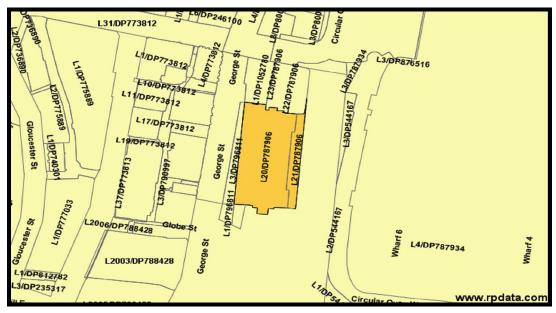
#### 1.4 The Proponent

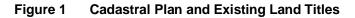
The MCA is a non-profit company under the direct control of the MCA Board. The MCA through its Project Manager, Root Projects Pty Ltd have engaged GHD Pty Ltd to prepare documentation to support a project application for the proposed MCA redevelopment works.

## 2. Location

### 2.1 Context and Positioning

The existing building and adjacent carpark are located on land described under Lots 20 to 23 in Deposited Plan 787906 (refer to Figure 1).





The MCA occupies the old Maritimes Services Board building, which was opened in 1952. The site is located at 140 George Street in the historic Rocks area of Sydney, to the west of Circular Quay (refer to Figure 2). The Sydney Opera House is located to the north - east of Circular Quay. The MCA site is bounded by Circular Quay West, George Street, Argyle Street and First Fleet Park excluding the site of the existing Rocks Police building on the corner of Argyle and George Street. The Overseas Passenger Terminal sits in the vicinity of the existing MCA building to the north-east with First Fleet Park and the Circular Quay Ferry Terminal respectively to the south - east (See Appendix A for Site Plan).



Source: Google Earth

#### Figure 2 Aerial Photograph of the MCA Precinct

The location of the new building works is presented in Figure 3. The current concept incorporates an east – west pedestrian linkage through the extension (as shown in yellow) and the retention of the existing carpark entry/exit in generally the existing location (shown in blue).



Figure 3 General location of new building envelope

### 3. The Proposal

#### 3.1 Overview

This proposal is for the refurbishment of the current MCA building and for a new addition on land to the north of the existing building. The footprint of the proposed new building is approximately 1015m<sup>2</sup>. The Site Plan diagram can be viewed at Appendix A.

The redevelopment will link all floors of the new building to the existing building. It will include the refurbishment of some areas of the existing building to achieve a functional link and to enhance the existing facilities and bring them up to the appropriate standards. A landscaping concept will be prepared in conjunction with project stakeholders to enhance the urban space and support the architectural concept design.

The redevelopment will also provide for new facilities at the MCA, which will incorporate a reconfigured entrance and foyer, international gallery and exhibition space including an external rooftop installation space, an education centre, lecture theatre, café and function areas with associated back of house facilities, offices, loading and carpark area.

#### 3.2 Objectives of the Proposal

The key objectives for the project design are to:

- » Resolve the difficulties of the current building entrance;
- » Provide equitable and compliant access from both Circular Quay and George Street for all visitors;
- » Provide leading edge education facilities;
- » Provide international standard gallery spaces;
- » Provide additional leading edge commercial venues;
- » Ensure responsible energy consumption; and
- » Make provision for new technology.

Apart from the new addition, much of the proposed works to the existing building are internal. The redevelopment of the MCA is to improve and expand upon the current arrangement of gallery spaces, recognise and address the functional aspirations of these spaces and equipment ensuring they are fit for purpose, represent value for money and support the primary function of the building as an art gallery which incorporates best practice in accordance with international art gallery standards.

The redevelopment will be a contemporary approach to design which will recognise and respect the importance of the existing building whilst creating a contemporary statement which reflects the internal activities of the Museum.. The proposed design will consider the views to the building from a distance and its presence and scale in the locality. The MCA is a forward looking institution and the design and choice of materials would reflect this.

The redevelopment will contain the best in urban design, addressing views from across Circular Quay, George Street, vistas down from Pitt, George and also from above (Harrington Street). The proposed design will provide clear view corridors both through to Circular Quay and along George Street and will retain a view corridor (the Suez Canal View Corridor).

The redeveloped MCA will include a clearly visible and recognisable point of entry. The design will provide equity of access for all who use the building with coherent circulation.

The finalised redevelopment would be a combination of refurbished and revitalised elements of the current Museum, and where required, incorporate extensions to the current facilities.

#### 3.3 Existing and Proposed Uses

The MCA currently has exhibition galleries located on Level 1 to 4 of the building. The function facilities include the Foundation Hall, located on Level 1 of the Museum, and two rooms on Level 6 of the Museum. MCA offices are located on Level 5 along with an office tenancy and Level 7 is used as an office tenancy. Level 8 is a plant room and lift motor room. Level 9 has cooling towers and a flag tower disguising mobile phone transmitters.

The proposed development would have the following uses on each floor:

» First Floor

Terraces, hall, kitchen, plant room, Ambassadors room, storage, first aid, workshop, carparking, garbage area, loading dock, goods lift and café

» Second Floor

Retail, gallery, MCA shop, goods, lift and foyer.

» Third Floor

Gallery, lecture theatre, library, seminar, artists resource area, foyer, deck, goods lift and resources.

» Fourth Floor

Gallery, Centre for Creative Learning (multi- media classroom, digital classroom, accessible workshop, breakout space, creativity room, office, storage, preparation), store room, goods lift and plant room

» Fifth Floor

Tenancy, MCA staff room, MCA offices, plant room, guides/volunteers and café (kitchen, café terrace, rooftop installation space)

» Sixth Floor

Tenancy, terraces, plant room,

» Seventh Floor

Deck, functions, office, foyer and kitchen.

» Eight Floor

Plant room.

There will be an increase in floor space of approximately 40% for the entire MCA site. The following table is a break-down of the existing and proposed development in terms of height and density.

	Existing	New Addition	Total
Footprint	2,211 m²	920 m²	3131 m <sup>2</sup>
Height	Existing Central Parapet Ridge is RL 37.440	Level 7 of MCA – Functional Area Ridge is RL 32.877	NA
Gross Floor Area	10,794 m²	5,926 m²	16,720 m <sup>2</sup>

#### Table 1 Existing and proposed development

### 4. Statutory Framework

#### 4.1 Relevant planning controls applicable to the MCA

This section of the report sets out the statutory and strategic planning instruments and relevant planning controls applicable to the MCA site, which are:

- » Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (Part 3A);
- » State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005;
- » Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005;
- » Sydney Harbour Foreshores Area Development Control Plan;
- » Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme;
- » City of Sydney Signage and Advertising Structure Development Control Plan 2005 and
- » Draft SHFA Environmental Planning instrument.

#### 4.2 Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979

All development in NSW is assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (the Regulation). The EP&A Act institutes a system for environmental planning and assessment, including approvals and environmental impact assessment. Implementation of the EP&A Act is the responsibility of the Minister for Planning, statutory authorities and local councils.

The EP&A Act contains three schemes which impose requirements for planning approval:

- Part 3A provides for control of 'major projects' that require approval from the Minister for Planning;
- » Part 4 provides for control of 'local development' that requires development consent from the local Council; and
- » Part 5 provides for control of 'activities' that do not require approval or development consent under Part 3A or Part 4.

The need or otherwise for development consent is set out in environmental planning instruments – State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), Regional Environmental Plans (REPs) or Local Environmental Plans (LEPs).

Major projects to which Part 3A applies are identified in *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005*, as well as in declarations made by the Minister for Planning. The proposal is identified in clause 6 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005* as a project to which Part 3A would apply as the proposal is a Sydney Harbour Foreshore Site (Circular Quay - Map 9) with a capital investment value of more than \$30 million. In accordance with clause 75B of the EP&A Act, Part 3A of the Act applies to the proposal. As a result, the Minister for Planning is the approval authority for the proposal, and an environmental assessment is required to support the application for development approval.

#### 4.3 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005

Major projects are identified in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005, or may be declared by order of the Minister. Clause 6(1) of SEPP 2005 (Major Projects) states that

"Development that, in the opinion of the Minister, is development of a kind:

(a) that is described in Schedule 1 or 2, or

(b) that is described in Schedule 3 as a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies, or

(c) to the extent that it is not otherwise described in Schedules 1-3, that is described in Schedule 5,

is declared to be a project to which Part 3A of the Act applies."

Schedule 2, Clause 10 Sydney Harbour and Foreshore Sites of the SEPP refers to specified sites and states that:

"(1) Development (with a capital investment value of more than \$5 million) within the area identified on (a) Circular Quay—Map 9 to this Schedule".

The MCA is located on Map 9-Circular Quay.

As the proposed use of the site is for a Museum and has a capital investment value of more than \$5 million, the proposal is considered a major project, and requires the approval of the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

#### 4.4 Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005

The Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (the Harbour REP) provides a planning framework for Sydney Harbour. Within this Plan, Sydney Harbour is identified as being a major natural, cultural, recreational and commercial asset. The REP seeks to continue this role, while also recognising increasing pressures on the harbour and its foreshores.

This Plan has therefore been developed to provide a clear and consistent planning framework to protect and enhance the unique attributes of the Harbour.

The MCA is located within the Foreshores and Waterways Area (Figure 4), although it is not zoned for a specific use under the REP.



#### Figure 4 Zoning Area Boundary of the Harbour REP

The specific aims of the plan are as follows:

"(a) to ensure that the catchment, foreshores, waterways and islands of Sydney Harbour are recognised, protected, enhanced and maintained:

- (i) as an outstanding natural asset, and
- (ii) as a public asset of national and heritage significance, for existing and future generations,
- (b) to ensure a healthy, sustainable environment on land and water,
- (c) to achieve a high quality and ecologically sustainable urban environment,
- (d) to ensure a prosperous working harbour and an effective transport corridor,
- (e) to encourage a culturally rich and vibrant place for people,
- (f) to ensure accessibility to and along Sydney Harbour and its foreshores,

(g) to ensure the protection, maintenance and rehabilitation of watercourses, wetlands, riparian lands, remnant vegetation and ecological connectivity,

(h) to provide a consolidated, simplified and updated legislative framework for future planning."

The relevant planning principles for land within the Foreshores and Waterways Area, including the MCA are as follows:

(a) development should protect, maintain and enhance the natural assets and unique environmental qualities of Sydney Harbour and its islands and foreshores,

(b) public access to and along the foreshore should be increased, maintained and improved, while minimising its impact on watercourses, wetlands, riparian lands and remnant vegetation,

(c) access to and from the waterways should be increased, maintained and improved for public recreational purposes (such as swimming, fishing and boating), while minimising its impact on watercourses, wetlands, riparian lands and remnant vegetation,

(d) development along the foreshore and waterways should maintain, protect and enhance the unique visual qualities of Sydney Harbour and its islands and foreshores...

Under Part Five, Division 3A of the Regional Environmental Plan *"Sydney Opera House"*, the development site falls outside of the "Opera House Buffer Zone". No further consideration is needed in this regard.

The relevant aims and planning principles of this SREP will be assessed in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 4.5 Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme

The applicable development controls for land that falls within The Rocks is the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme ("SCRA Scheme") and the Minister for Planning is the consent authority.

The SCRA Scheme was prepared under the former *Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Act 1968* and operates under the saving provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and therefore has the same effect as if it were an Environmental Planning Instrument.

Drawing XXXXIX-A (1) refers to a proposed pedestrian route between the MCA and the police station north of the MCA (Refer to Appendix A for the location of this route). Drawing XXXIX-B(1) provides a height restriction of Reduced Level (RL) 12 across the MCA site and a RL 7 to the current pedestrian area of Circular Quay.

If the proposed development does not comply with the SCRA Scheme, a formal request to amend the relevant SCRA Scheme drawings would need to be submitted to Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA). An assessment will be carried out in the Environmental Assessment Report.

### 4.6 Draft SHFA Environmental Planning Instrument (EPI)

SHFA are currently preparing a draft EPI that will eventually supersede the SCRA. This document is only at the early stages of development and has not been subject to any external consultation. Once gazetted, it will set out a number of controls in relation to the MCA which will be considered in the Environmental Assessment.

### 4.7 Development Control Plans

#### 4.7.1 Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways Area Development Control Plan 2005

This DCP applies to the "Foreshores and Waterways Area" as defined in SREP (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 and as identified in Figure 4 above.

Performance-based criteria and guidelines relating to matters such as foreshore access, visual and natural environments, and recreation uses are established by the DCP, with the aim of protecting ecological communities within the area covered by SREP (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005. The DCP also provides siting and design principles for new buildings and waterside structures within the area.

There are no specific controls for the MCA site under this DCP, as the 'landscape character' maps identifies it as an "area not mapped: site specific investigations required".

Notwithstanding this, Part Five of the DCP provides design qualitative guidelines for land-based development, as detailed below:

#### **"5.4 BUILT FORM**

Buildings and other structures should generally be of a sympathetic design to their surroundings; well designed contrasts will be considered where they enhance the

scene. Many councils have development controls governing built form and the heights of buildings. The following guidelines are designed to reinforce the local requirements:

- where buildings would be of a contrasting scale or design to existing buildings, care will be needed to ensure that this contrast would enhance the setting;
- » where undeveloped ridgelines occur, buildings should not break these unless they have a backdrop of trees;
- while no shapes are intrinsically unacceptable, rectangular boxy shapes with flat or skillion roofs usually do not harmonise with their surroundings. It is preferable to break up facades and roof lines into smaller elements and to use pitched roofs;
- » walls and fences should be kept low enough to allow views of private gardens from the waterway;
- » bright lighting and especially floodlighting which reflects on the water, can cause problems with night navigation and should be avoided. External lights should be directed downward, away from the water. Australian Standards AS/NZ1158.3: 1999

Pedestrian Area (Category P) Lighting and AS4282: 1997 Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting should be observed;

- use of reflective materials is minimised and the relevant provisions of the Building Code of Australia are satisfied;
- colours should be sympathetic with their surrounds and consistent with the colour criteria, where specified, for particular landscape character types in Part 3 of this DCP;
- » the cumulative visual impact of a number of built elements on a single lot should be mitigated through bands of vegetation and by articulating walls and using smaller elements; and
- » the cumulative impact of development along the foreshore is considered having regard to preserving views of special natural features, landmarks or heritage items."

These matters will be addressed in the Environmental Assessment report.

#### 4.7.2 City of Sydney Signage and Advertising Structure Development Control Plan 2005

Any proposed signage would be assessed in terms of the City of Sydney Signage and Advertising Structure Development Control Plan 2005. If any applicable signage is proposed, this will need to be in accordance with this DCP and any variation would have to be justified.

#### 4.8 Commonwealth legislation

The Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) prescribes the Commonwealth's role in environmental assessment, biodiversity conservation and the management of protected areas and species, populations and communities and heritage items.

The approval of the Commonwealth Minister of Environment and Heritage is required for:

- » An action which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on "matters of National Environmental Significance" (NES matters). The current NES matters include:
  - The world heritage values of a declared World Heritage property;
  - The National Heritage values of a listed National Heritage place;
  - The ecological character of a declared Ramsar wetland;
  - Listed threatened species and ecological communities;
  - Listed migratory species;
  - The Commonwealth marine environment; and
  - Nuclear actions.
- » An action by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth agency which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment;

- » An action on Commonwealth land which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment; or
- » An action which has, will have or is likely to have a significant impact on the environment on Commonwealth land, no matter where it is to be carried out.

The Sydney Opera House, located on the eastern side of Circular Quay, is a declared World Heritage Property and is also a listed National Heritage place. Based on a preliminary assessment, the proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on the heritage values of the Sydney Opera House, or on any other NES matters or on Commonwealth land. As such, the proposal is unlikely to require a referral to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. This will be further considered and confirmed as the project progresses.

## 5. Preliminary Environmental Assessment

This section provides a brief overview of existing information on the key environmental features of the proposed redevelopment. The key environmental issues have been identified through the MCA and project team's consideration of the potential environmental risks associated with the proposed development. These issues are:

- » Architectural, Building and Urban Design;
- » Heritage and Archaeology;
- » Geology, Soils and Groundwater;
- » Traffic and Transport; and
- » Construction impacts.

#### 5.1 Architectural, Building and Urban Design Impacts

#### 5.1.1 Height and Public Access

The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme (SCRA Scheme) will be reviewed in terms of the redevelopment and extension of the MCA. Any variation to the SCRA would need to be approved by SHFA. This can occur concurrently with the Part 3A process.

#### 5.1.2 MCA Extension

The design philosophy for the MCA building and its extension would be to create an element of separation to maintain a good visual curtilage to the main MCA building when viewed from the north and north-east and to minimize over-crowding of the original building when viewed from both the north and the south. Further to this, the new addition will be of a contemporary design, with no intention of replicating the traditional design of the current MCA building.

The Environmental Assessment will consider the design context of the proposed extension.

#### 5.1.3 Visual Impacts

The proposed development would be visible from The Rocks and Circular Quay. As such, any additions to the roof of the MCA would need to retain views across the top of the existing building. The Environmental Assessment will provide perspectives and photomontages to identify views to the site from these strategic locations.

#### 5.1.4 Overshadowing

As the proposed development incorporates the construction of a new building, there is the potential that overshadowing may be an issue. The Environmental Assessment will assess the shadow impacts on adjacent properties and uses.

#### 5.1.5 Signage

Any proposed signage will be assessed under the requirements of the City of Sydney Signage and Advertising Structure Development Control Plan 2005 in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 5.1.6 Landscaping

The MCA will be forming a working group with SHFA to develop an appropriate landscaping strategy for Circular Quay west including the area surrounding the new building and the MCA. This working group will involve the MCA's architect, Government Architect and the Sydney Harbour Foreshore officials. A landscape outline plan will be prepared by a landscape architect in accordance with this strategy and submitted in the Environmental Assessment.

### 5.2 Heritage and Archaeological Impacts

#### 5.2.1 Heritage

The existing MCA building is not identified on the State Heritage Register however it is considered culturally significant. The MCA is adjacent to The Rocks Police Station, which is included on the Heritage Register (pursuant to Section 170 of the Heritage Act, 1977). The existing Rocks Police Building is located on the corner of Argyle and George Street adjacent to the site for the redevelopment. SHFA is the owner of both the MCA and the Police land, which it leases, to the MCA and Police under separate lease agreements.

The MCA building is also located in proximity to the Sydney Opera House and numerous other heritage items. The Environmental Assessment will contain a thorough assessment of all heritage impacts associated with the proposal.

#### 5.2.2 Archaeology

The proposed site for the MCA carpark area incorporates the area of the Macquarie period Dockyards (Dock 1 and Dock 2). The design and redevelopment of the MCA would respect the existing archaeological situation in the proposed design to minimise any potential impacts. This will be assessed in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 5.3 Geology, Soils and Groundwater

#### 5.3.1 Geotechnical Design and Site Investigation

The ground water level, influenced by the tide in Sydney Harbour, is relatively high and will be a factor in the design and construction of footings and basement walls below the water level. The Environmental Assessment will demonstrate that through selection of suitable piling methods the extension can be constructed without affecting these structures.

#### 5.3.2 Contamination

The Environmental Assessment will provide an assessment of contamination issues by a qualified consultant. The Environmental Assessment will demonstrate compliance with the requirements of SEPP 55 if required.

### 5.4 Traffic and Transport

#### 5.4.1 Car parking

The MCA's current on-site carparking provision is approximately 20 spaces. Under the redevelopment it is likely that this number will reduce and on site carparking will be designed in a flexible manner to meet the operational loading requirements. Car parking will be assessed as part of the Environmental Assessment.

#### 5.4.2 Loading Area and Refuse

The Environmental Assessment will consider the access and egress requirements for the back of house loading facilities which are vital to MCA operations. The design of the loading area will facilitate the safe access and movement of artwork to meet the range of functions and vehicles used by the MCA.

The design will have a designated waste removal and recycling area, which will be secure to minimise the impact of the MCA operations. Opportunities for improving the operation of this area will be discussed in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 5.5 Construction Impacts

The Environmental Assessment will address measures to ameliorate potential impacts arising from the construction of the proposed development including construction, traffic, noise and stormwater management.

### 6. Consultation

Consultation is an important part of the planning process and consultation will occur with relevant local and State government agencies and key stakeholders during the Environmental Assessment process.

Section 75F of the EP&A Act requires the Director-General of the DoP to consult with relevant public authorities during preparation of the Environmental Assessment Requirements. The Director General is to have regard to the need for the Environmental Assessment Requirements to assess any key issues raised by those public authorities.

In addition the MCA has already consulted with a number of agencies on the proposed development and will continue to engage with these authorities throughout the approvals process. These agencies include:

- » Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
- » City of Sydney Council
- » Heritage Council
- » NSW Police
- » Utility Providers and
- » Opera House.

NSW Maritime, Sydney Ports and the Roads and Traffic Authority have not yet been consulted but are identified as part of the ongoing consultation process.

## 7. Conclusion

The proposed MCA extension will deliver a high quality development, which would significantly improve the functionality of the museum and its associated facilities. This Preliminary Environmental Assessment provides a description of the project and identifies key environmental issues that will require further assessment as part of the Environmental Assessment.

The project requires approval from the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and this Preliminary Environmental Assessment acts as a formal request to the Department of Planning for the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements for this project. Upon receipt of the Environmental Assessment Requirements, the MCA will undertake an Environmental Assessment and submit it to the Department of Planning as part of formal application for project approval.

Appendix A Site Plan

#### GHD

10 Bond Street Sydney NSW 2000

-

T: 2 9239 7100 F: 2 9239 7199 E: sydmail@ghd.com.au

### © GHD 2008

This document is and shall remain the property of GHD. The document may only be used for the purpose of assessing our offer of services and for inclusion in documentation for the engagement of GHD. Unauthorised use of this document in any form whatsoever is prohibited.

#### **Document Status**

Rev No.	Author	Reviewer		Approved for Issue		
	Addition	Name	Signature	Name	Signature	Date
	Shivesh Singh	Monique Roser		David Chubb		