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REDEVELOPMENT & EXPANSION OF THE MCA

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

BUILT FORM & URBAN DESIGN

3.11.8

BACKGROUND

MCA Vision

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) is the only institution in Australia devoted to collecting and exhibiting contemporary art. The MCA seeks to make contemporary art accessible and engaging for a broad spectrum of public audiences through stimulating exhibitions, education programs and special events.

MCA Objectives

- To engage people with contemporary art and contemporary ideas
- To support and promote the work of Australian artists within an international context
- To be a meeting place for artists
- To be welcoming and inclusive to all sectors of the community
- To educate a new generation about art
- To be locally loved, nationally recognized and internationally respected

Background to the MCA

The Museum of Contemporary Art was established through the founding bequest of Australian expatriate artist John Power (1881-1943) to the University of Sydney. The building, the former Maritime Services Board Building, was gifted by the NSW State Government. The restoration and refurbishment of the building commenced in 1990 under the direction of Andrew Andersons of Peddle Thorp & Walker/John Holland Interiors. In November 1991 the Museum of Contemporary Art officially opened to the public.

The MCA's contemporary collection of Australian and international art, dating from the late 1960s, includes extensive collections of indigenous art from Arnhem Land from the 1960s to the present (incorporating the Arnott's collection and large collections from Ramingining and Maningrida), the Contemporary Art Archive comprising collections of material contextualising the work of major Australian artists, the Loti and Victor Smorgon Collection of Contemporary Australian Art (paintings from the 1980s), a collection of

international art multiples, as well as numerous individual works by major international artists. The MCA continues to manage the Power Collection on behalf of the University of Sydney. The collection has around 7000 artworks.

The University of Sydney's annual funding came to an end in 1999, leading to a period of financial instability, falling attendances and negative press coverage. In 2000, a number of steps were taken to address these issues, not least the inherent financial instability in trying to operate without public sector support. Telstra's support to underwrite free access was instrumental in an immediate increase of 68% in attendances in the first year. The Museum extended its activities across the city and region, forging links with Blacktown and with the network of regional galleries and worked closely with the education sector to develop programs for schools.

The City of Sydney considered options for re-developing the building to encompass a cinema centre and income generating offices, but these ambitious plans, which proposed fundamental alterations to the building, were met with criticism in the press and public disapproval. In 2001, the State Government announced that it would support the MCA by providing around 30% of the annual running costs, initially for a five year period. SHFA was appointed to manage the building, for which the MCA has a 37 year lease. A sum of \$2.4m was allocated by the State Government to upgrade the Museum's facilities.

Current Position

Since the State Government commitment in 2001 and the introduction of free admission the MCA has gone from strength to strength. Attendances have continue to increase from a low of 98,000 in 1999 to over 420,000 in 2007 with current figures for 2008 showing a predicated audience of over 500,000 for the current year.

The MCA is now a major attraction in the Rocks area and an ambitious exhibition program of Australian and international artist have attracted critical acclaim both locally and internationally. A comprehensive touring program further supplements this national and international position with over 7 touring exhibitions in 2007 alone.

This growth is also reflect in the MCA Public Programs and Education programs with record figures in 2007 & 2008 both in schools visits and event attendees.

This growth has also been recognized locally through the awarding of the Sydney Chamber of Commerce Most Popular Museum award In 2004 and the City of Sydney Tourism award in 2007 to name just a few. This is also reflected by the corporate sponsorship arrangements which have been achieve over the past few years including National Australia Bank, Channel 7 and Qantas who have recognized the opportunities provided through the MCA Brand.

The Future: Key Issues

The major issue facing the Museum is that the increase in popularity has exacerbated the physical problems of the building. The confusing circulation, lift only access to level 4, the absence of passenger lift access to the level 2 galleries and inappropriate disability access and foyer spaces are major constraints. Other fundamental public services such as toilets, in particular disabled toilets, are also proving to be inadequate given the growth in visitor numbers. Recently the issue of access for people with disabilities has become more critical as the MCA has made particular efforts to extend its activities to this audience, for which it has been widely praised. However, the current situation is far from adequate and any changes to such a high profile public building must address this issue.

There is also a lack of basic museum facilities, such as a lecture theatre to accommodate the public programs and dedicated education spaces. Museum visitors are increasingly sophisticated and expect more information about what is on display. The MCA needs to be able to accommodate new techniques of interpretation, particularly using new technology.

The Museum also needs to be able to find other ways to increase its income to keep pace with the rising costs of exhibitions and to develop the full potential of the education and outreach programs.

Development Plan

In August 2002 SHFA commissioned Architect Marshall to prepare a five year development plan for the building to:

- look at the MCA and the building's constraints and opportunities
- establish principles for solving and accommodating these and
- make a recommendation on how to move forward.

The recommendation, which was approved by both the SHFA and MCA Boards, was to establish an equitable entrance by building a link between Circular Quay and George Street. and providing new facilities, for the Museum over the car park between the MCA and Police buildings

In 2004 part of this was undertaken in the form of internal works to the existing MCA building.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The MCA Redevelopment project aims to provide a facility that is functional, compliant and financially viable, while responding to its location and reflecting its use as a world class art gallery exhibiting the latest in contemporary art.

Specific design objectives include:

- Make contemporary art accessible and engaging for a wide range of audiences
- Improve identification of and access to the building's public and non-public entrances
- Provide equitable and compliant access to and within the building

- Provide international standard gallery spaces
- Provide leading edge education facilities
- Provide additional commercial venues to supplement existing income sources
- Incorporate ecologically sustainable design initiatives
- Provide an integrated approach to information technology
- Externally reflect and present the MCA's internal activities
- Respond to the site's urban context, and heritage and archaeological significance
- Provide a building of high architectural quality appropriate to its significant setting

CONSULTANTS

A comprehensive team of consultants has been assembled for this project who have collaborated in developing the design presented in this Project Application. They are:

Project Manager	Root Projects Australia
Architect	Architect Marshall & Government Architects Office in association
Access	Morris Goding Access Consulting
Acoustic	Acoustic Studio
Archaeological	Casey & Lowe
BCA	BCA Logic
Electrical & Lighting	Haron Robson
Heritage	Tanner Architects
Hydraulic & Fire	Warren Smith & Partners
Lifts	Jim Campbell & Associates
Mechanical & ESD	Steensen Varming (Australia)
Planning	GHD
Private Certifier	Blackett Maguire + Goldsmith
Quantity Surveyor	Page Kirkland Group
Structural, Civil & Facade	Simpson Design Associates

CONSULTATION

The MCA have been active in undertaking extensive briefings of the proposal for stakeholders affected by the scheme.. MCA Director, Liz Ann Macgregor and/or Euan Upston, MCA Chief Operating Officer, have met with and briefed the following groups in date order from July 2007:

- Carl Green, Office of the Premier of New South Wales July 2007
- Sancha McDonald and Alison McLaren, Accessible Arts 2007
- Tina Jackson and Jacqui Goddard, National Trust July 2007
- Bridget Smythe, City of Sydney July 2007
- Frank Sartor, Minister for the Arts June 2007
- Monica Barone and Clover Moore, City of Sydney September 2007
- Andy Palfreyman, Arts Advisor to Peter Garrett September 2007
- Heritage Council September 2007
- John Issac & Robert Laing, SHFA Sep 2007
- Carl Green, Arts Advisor to the Premier November 2007
- Councillor John McInerney, City of Sydney Councillor Nov 2007
- Maria Roberts, The Ian Potter Foundation, Melbourne
- Mrs Margaret Ross AM Chairman of the John T Reid Charitable Trusts
- John O'Neill, Executive Director and General Manager, Tourism NSW
- Department of Education and Training
- Present building proposal to the City of Sydney Councillors Dec 2007
- Chris Brown, Managing Director of Tourism and Transport Forum Dec 2007
- Giovanni Cirillo, Director City Planning at City of Sydney Dec 2007
- Building briefing with Lucy and Malcolm Turnbull
- Building briefing with Richard Evans, CEO Opera House
- Building presentation to Peter Duncan and Dianne Leeson, Office of the Coordinator General Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Briefing with Andrew Andersons, Peddle Thorpe and Walker
- Dr Stone, Opposition Arts Minister
- Carol Mills, Director General, Department of the Arts April 2008
- Alex Gordon, Senior Advisor to Prime Minister April 2008
- Kate Pasterfield, Deputy Chief of Staff, Federal Arts Minister
- Gabrielle Kibble, Chair of the Heritage Council, Administrator, Liverpool CityCouncil
- Lyn Bean, First Assistant Secretary Arts Division & Mark Taylor - Assistant Secretary Arts Policy and Access
- Todd Clewett, NSW Department of State and Regional Development June 2008
- Chris Johnson, Executive Director Urban Renewal, Department of Planning July 2008
- Geoff Parameter, Events NSW
- Building and Education briefing with Maxine McKew

- Mr Chris Hayes, MP, Government Whip for Federal Labor
- Robert Domm, SHFA
- John Neish, Executive Director National Trust
- Senator John Faulkner, Cabinet Secretary Federal Senator for NSW
- Michael Lacey, President Rocks Chamber of Commerce
- Millicent Chalmers, Chairman Millers Point Organisation Oct 2008
- Senator Arbib Sept 2008
- SHFA Landowners Consent Committee Oct 2008

The MCA are committed to continue this process with the following briefings to be organised after submission of the Project Application:

- Sydney Ports
- NSW Maritime
- Sydney Ferries
- National Trust to review Project Application plans prior to exhibition
- Alan Amos, Energy Australia to review sub station and ventilation proposal
- Sancha McDonald and Alison McLaren, Accessible Arts

SHFA has been involved with the project since inception, being the client and proponent for the Development Plan. Since then, both the SHFA Board and executive officers have been regularly briefed on the scheme and given the opportunity for comment.

As part of the refurbishment of the Police Building at 132 George Street by the NSW Police and SHFA, which is partially on MCA leased land, the MCA took part in a long and exhaustive consultation process. The outcome of this process was a memorandum of understanding between the three parties which related to land ownership, the proposed development of the MCA and access rights for the NSW Police over MCA land. In order for the proposals to proceed the NSW Police agreed to concede to the MCA the area around and including the toilet block annex to the south of 132 George Street, and the MCA agreed to sublease land to the east of 132 George Street back to the Police so that they could construct their van dock and prisoner run.

As part of this process the MCA attended all PCG meetings to ensure that communication between the two development proposals was clear and would allow both proposals to be delivered in their entirety. The Police Building refurbishment work was completed in May 2008. It has been specifically indicated to NSW Police that the MCA proposal includes building right up against their building and as a result window drenching has been incorporated within the Police building's refurbishment works.

A Design Review Panel (DAP) was assembled to review the design with particular reference to the urban context, the exterior built form, materials, circulation and the quality of interior spaces. The DAP consisted of architects Alec Tzannes, Prof. Tom Heneghan, Ken Maher and artist Mikala Dwyer to oversee the design process. Four such meetings were held, the first on 16th October 2007 and last on 2nd October 2008.

The meetings were of great assistance to the design team and the MCA. All comments given have been accommodated in the current design. The final

meeting, which was primarily to assess the final arrangement of the facade and location of the L5 cafe, fully supported the submitted proposal.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Overview

A five level addition is proposed to the north of the existing MCA building on the site where the MCA's open air car park is currently located. Rooftop venues spaces are added to the top level of the existing building while its internal spaces are remodelled.

The new addition allows access from both George Street and the Circular Quay concourse and provides a publicly accessible link between the two. The new additions to the building are built over the current car park and provide a positive and strong architectural response to the existing building in this prominent site.

This is further strengthened by its use – a major public cultural building on Sydney's major public space. The redevelopment of the MCA provides the opportunity for reconsideration of the nature of the public space in front of the building.

The following outlines accommodation to be provided and the rationale behind its placement in the design.

Public entry

As described below, an entry 'street' has been provided between George Street and Circular Quay.

Circulation

Visitors to the MCA will enter via the 'street' and proceed to either a public or non-public vertical circulation spine.

Loading to back of house and venues will be from the Loading Dock

The proposed plan achieves separation from the public circulation system to the art movement, exhibitions installs and venues operations required by the MCA.

Equitable access for all is achieved with the proposed plan.

Galleries

Existing gallery spaces (except that on Level 1) are retained in this proposal. New gallery spaces is created on level 2 to provide a critical mass of exhibition on that entry level as well as create a substantial double height gallery space which the building currently lacks.

Additional gallery space is added on level 4 to the west of the existing building.

Loading dock

It is essential for the MCA's operation that trucks are able to load and off load art works and venue props undercover and in secure conditions.

The proposed loading dock design solves the significant constraints presented between the operational requirements and the existing building and site, to achieve undercover, secure loading without making significant changes to the existing building fabric or traversing open space in the public domain. The entrance and exit for 4.5m high trucks accessing the loading dock for exhibition bump in's and bump out's is at the north-east corner of the site directly off Argyle Street. It is only possible to achieve the required minimum head height of 4.5m in this location..

Daily activities such as MCA venues and restaurant deliveries will continue to operate through the Loading Dock and car park entrance as per existing conditions but will have the added benefit of being undercover and more secure.

Back of House

For easy access to the Loading Dock and to the vertical movement of artwork and miscellaneous exhibition materials via the existing Goods Lift, back of house facilities have been located in the current exhibition spaces on level 1 ensuring higher levels of security, climate control and safer working methods

Education

Dedicated education spaces are located on Levels 3 and 4 to provide secure premises for school and other groups. A lecture theatre is located on the western side of Level 3 providing easy access to the entry street level as well as an outdoor breakout space. The MCA Library and Artists Research Centre is relocated to a more publicly accessible area on the eastern side of Level 3 and will allow artists, academics, researchers and members of the general public access not only to the Library files but also to the MCA artist files presently not publicly available. A dedicated seminar room on the Eastern side of the building provides space for life long adult learning and corporate training opportunities.

Venues

The Foundation Hall on Level 1 will remain 'as is' with minor alterations and restoration of finishes, additional toilet facilities and enhanced outdoor access to the new terraces on Circular Quay. The Roof top venues on level 7 optimise the extensive views available from the site and will provide a high tech space for corporate and private hire

Offices

The MCA offices at the north end of Level 5 are to remain and will be refurbished and extended into the new building extension to the north.

An existing commercial tenancy remains at the south end of Level 5 while Level 6 becomes new commercial tenancies.

Retail

The redevelopment of the MCA includes modifications to Retail 5 tenancy on George Street while the cafe to the north over the substation is removed and a new George Street retail tenancy is provided in the location of the existing MCA George Street entrance.

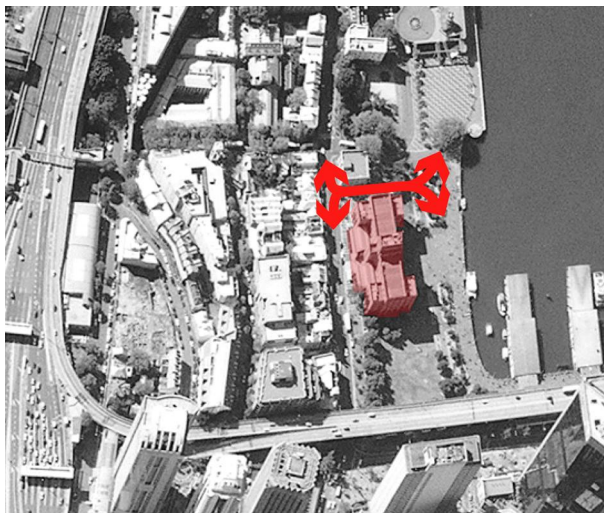
Food and beverages

The existing cafe/restaurant in the Foundation Hall will be remodelled as a restaurant with an enlarged and improved outdoor seating area.

A fast service cafe will be provided on level 5 of the extension adjacent to the outdoor Sculpture Terrace to the north utilising the surrounding views.

ACCESS

Entry points to the MCA for its various user types are currently unclear and confusing - in particular for members of the public. The proposed redevelopment provides a new public foyer to the north of the existing building, which takes the form of an east-west circulation route linking George Street and Circular Quay - in essence, a 'street' through the building. This reconciles the level difference between George Street and Circular Quay. On this entry 'street' can be easily found the MCA's reception and easy access to the vertical circulation system of lifts and stair (Stair 6).



Accessible to all members of the public, the 'street' is a visual extension of the Suez Canal view corridor, fulfils the SCRA's desire for a pedestrian link through this part of the site and provides the MCA with highly visible public entrances at both its George Street and Circular Quay frontages. The 'street' runs across the natural contours between two major thoroughfares and provides view corridors to Circular Quay in recognition of the established historic pattern throughout the Rocks and East Circular Quay.

The entrances are designed to attract and inform visitors through the form of the building, the use of overhead signage panels and cast in-situ concrete

signage.. The new main entrances will provide equitable and compliant access for all members of the public.

Entrances for visitors are to be clearly identifiable.

Visitors to the MCA will enter via the 'street'.

MCA staff, tenants, venues' staff including their visitors will enter the level 1 side of the 'street' and will then be directed to the function spaces by using the Foundation Hall corridor to access the Foundation Hall and existing vertical circulation lifts (Lifts 1 & 2).

A discrete exit for MCA staff, tenants and venues' staff is maintained on George Street.

The existing main entrance on the Circular Quay side of the building will be utilised on occasion for specific major functions.

A ramp from the south to level 1 Terraces 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 & 1.4 allows visitors to the restaurant with easy access from the CBD.

Vehicles

The loading dock / carpark is clearly separated from pedestrian entrances and is accessed from Argyle Street. It will be used for deliveries associated with exhibitions, venues, restaurants/cafes, store merchandise and couriers, and will also be used by staff using the car park.

An existing arrangement with SHFA is maintained through the West Circular Quay public domain and First Fleet Park from Argyle Street for delivery of large objects to the southern entry of the Foundation Hall.

CIRCULATION

Internally the proposed development provides coherent, identifiable, accessible to all and clearly separated circulation pathways for both public and non-public users.

Public

The public circulation 'street', linking Circular Quay on Level 1 and George Street on level 2 and, is carried vertically through the building and forms a major part of the visitor's experience of the new development. It provides an easily navigable path linking all functions requiring public access. Vertical circulation is available via lifts (Lifts 3 & 4) or the wide public stair (Stair 6), which is open to circulation spaces on each floor. It is anticipated that many MCA exhibition visitors will catch a lift to level 5 then filter down through the building via Stair 6.

Voids between floors and external views from the public circulation zones orient visitors and enliven their experience of moving through the building. Views are available between the existing and new buildings both to the west (through the public stair) and to the east (through the glazed lift).

Non-public

Vertical circulation for non-public users is centred on the existing building's existing lift core. On Level 1 this core links with the new wing via the Foundation Hall Corridor and the western Service Corridor.

The redevelopment of the MCA will provide equitable circulation which complies with the relevant statutory requirements.

BUILT FORM

A reading of the form of the existing MCA building reveals a strong intent to express the strength of the MSB which was at the time one of the most powerful government authorities due its control of imports and exports from Australia prior to the proliferation of air travel. This was achieved by bisymmetrically arranging accommodation in 5 storey blocks of accommodation about a central 6 storey block culminating in a central 9 storey block.

The original building is unique in its location as it is fully 'in the round', does not abut any other building and is of an architectural era not found in its immediate context. All the above adds to the building very consciously expressing its independence.

The desire to express such power in an organisation ended when the MSB vacated the building to be replaced by the MCA. As the MCA's public image is an open-to-all inclusive, adding onto the original building does not lend itself to maintaining the strong symmetry. On the other hand, to express respect for the original building, it is appropriate that the block-like allocation of accommodation be maintained but without the symmetry, hence expressing the MCA's desire for inclusivity.

With the MCA needing extra space, how should such an addition be designed to respect the existing building fabric, the historic nature of the Rocks and the monumental scale of Circular Quay and the central business district, and at the same time present the persona of the MCA to the public?

The only unbuilt upon space is to the north of the MCA building - east being the West Circular Quay public domain, south being First Fleet Park and west being the public domain of George Street (and where the building is currently built to the boundary). This space is under utilised as it is currently occupied by the MCA's open air car park.

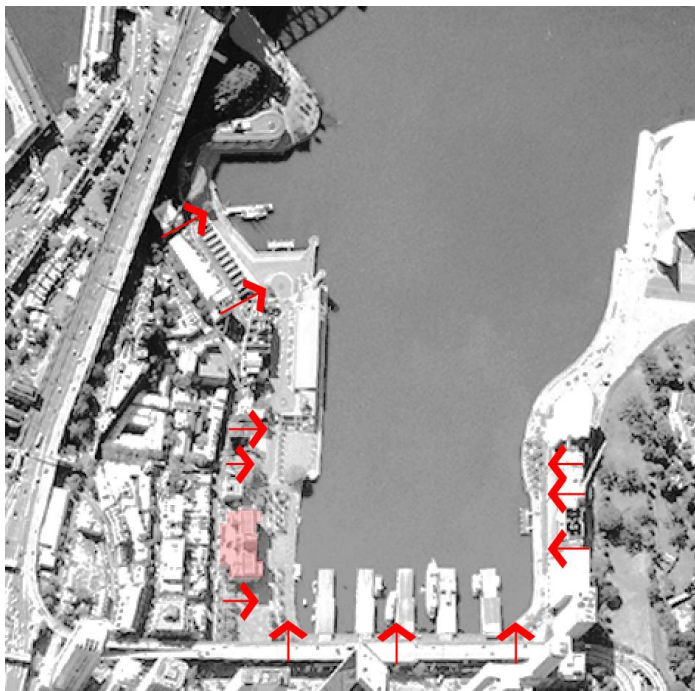
The MCA's brief is broadly divided into circulation, education, venues, back of house and gallery space. These are then subdivided into specific spaces and relationships. To maintain the existing building's block-like nature but in an open less powerful contemporary expression, functional spaces have been articulated as block like forms with the resultant space between them being glazed for prospect, natural light and ventilation.

One of the prime objectives of this proposal is to solve the existing problem of circulation into and the through the building.

Context

In the broadest context, the MCA building is unique in being a stand alone building with extensive clear space around it. To the south the commercial CBD is held back by the Cahill Expressway and City Circle railway. Around the foreshores of Circular Quay is a generous open promenade continuing on from under the Harbour Bridge around Circular Quay, Opera House, Farm Cove and beyond. Residential high-rise defines the built form of East Circular Quay. The land to the east of the Bradfield Highway is characterised as being the small scale mixed use (mainly commercial) of the historic Rocks. The Overseas Passenger Terminal and the MCA building, although technically in the Rocks, fall outside the general character as they are from much more recent times and both have generous space around them.

A pattern of slots occur between the wall of buildings that bound the Circular Quay promenade. From Macquarie, Alfred, George Streets and Hickson Road these slots provide special framed views of the Quay and in most cases pedestrian access through to the promenade.



Setbacks

The existing MCA building reads as a building “in the round”, and unlike the nearby buildings on the western side of George Street does not contribute to a wall of buildings forming a street edge. The proposed redevelopment recognises and plays on this fact by manipulating building setbacks to enliven the building’s exterior and draw attention to the entrances, while at the same

time respecting the surrounding urban context. The massing of the new building contributes to the external legibility of its internal activities.

On the Circular Quay elevation the new building mass projects beyond the existing property boundary to signify the main entrance below. The extent of the projection is located behind with the eastern elevation of a substantial group of buildings to the north of the existing MCA building, which are located to the north of the Bethel Steps, namely the former Mariner's Church at 100 George Street and 35-43 Circular Quay West.

On the George Street elevation, the new building remains within the property boundary at street level, while the levels above project over the boundary providing sufficient new area on the levels above to fulfil its educational aspirations by creating space for a lecture theatre and a National Centre for Creative Learning on Levels 3 and 4 respectively in addition to all weather protection over the entry. Given the constraints of the circulation stairs and their forced relationship with the existing building it would not be possible to achieve this without such an overhang.

It is important for a public building such as the MCA to have a noble welcoming entry and one that provides space to stand out of the rain prior to entry. These levels have been designed so as the maximum projection will align with The Rocks NSW Police Building's western boundary and there is a further setback over the main George Street entrance to the MCA on Level 3 to reveal the south-western corner of The Rocks NSW Police Building. All this maintains the view corridor looking north along George Street from the south.

Existing views looking south down George Street from the north are also maintained. The proposed redevelopment is set back from The Rocks NSW Police building on Levels 3, 4 and 5 to reveal the southern elevation of The Rocks NSW Police building.

The existing galleries on Level 3 designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker in 1991 are built up to the boundary. To provide a clear reading between the new works and existing sandstone building, and because the sandstone of this 1991 facade is showing signs of failing, a new facade in keeping with the new northern addition refaces this 1991 facade, the break up of which makes direct reference to the original MSB building form. The proposed facade for this is setback from the established setback (ie. the 1991 addition on the boundary) in various places to articulate the facade. The resultant Museum as a whole will be read in two architectural languages - as the original MSB building and the new MCA alterations.

Building height and scale

The height of the new works to the north of the existing MCA building respects and enhances the stepped form of the existing building, and helps to negotiate the difference in scale between the existing building and the surrounding buildings (in particular the existing Police Station).

The new rooftop function areas on Level 7 complement the stepped form of the existing building, with the new walls setback in behind the existing

parapet, and the roof reading as a 'floating plane'. The extent of the new roof is symmetrical about the central vertical core to respect the existing building's severe symmetry. The original structural drawings for the building show that an extra level was intended. This is backed up by testing the existing structure for this by Simpson Design Associates.

The proposed George Street elevation considers the scale of neighbouring buildings, with the facade treatment of any new building work broken down into a series of panels of varying dimension, alignment, colour and texture.

The height of the redevelopment over the George Street entrance, the height of the George Street level 4 gallery addition, the top of the Police Building are all within a half level of each other and the four 5 level corner blocks of accommodation of the existing building. This consistency of height, each broken by substantial open space, respects the existing building and the Police building. Discussions between SHFA Planning and the MCA have clarified that SHFA is comfortable with the proposed RL32.877 height and the Environment Impact Statement which SHFA are preparing for the area will include this RL as the desired planning control.

By referencing to the existing MCA building and The Rocks NSW Police buildings' flat roofs, the proposed works terminate with flat roofs, further making this group of buildings as a counterpoint to the historic Rocks precinct on the western side of George Street which is characterised by pitched roofs.

Similarly, broken up box-like forms in response to the box-like existing MCA building and The Rocks NSW Police building has been adopted as the same counterpoint to the built form on the western side of George Street.

Numeric summary

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
Site area			
Footprint	2,211 m ²	920 m ²	3131 m ²
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 m ²	5,926 m ²	16,720 m ²
Carparking	15	4	

Overshadowing

The proposed development will overshadow West Circular Quay, however given the size of this public outdoor space the overall effect will be relatively minor.

New building works will block most of the windows in the east elevation of the existing Police Station (what are these rooms used for and what is the impact of this on the police station). Those that remain to the north on that east elevation will have some overshadowing. This is understood by SHFA and the Police and has been clearly outlined at the PCG meetings during the refurbishment of the Rocks Police Station in 2008. The MCA was a member of this control group. The MCA has reduced the impact of this shadowing by only taking the southern development up one level on the George Street side and reducing the thrust of the building towards the north on the eastern elevation. It should be noted that both the eastern and southern walls of the existing Police station building have been designed to be built hard up against..

Refer to the shadow diagrams prepared as part of this Project Application.

Privacy

Given the existing public nature of the MCA building and site, the privacy of adjoining properties is not overly affected by the proposed development. In terms of privacy the south and east elevations of the existing Police Station will be affected, with proposed facades of the new building only metres away. The proximity of the new facades to the existing Police Station windows is mitigated by limiting fenestration in the new MCA external walls on the northern elevation. This is understood by SHFA and the Police and is documented in the minutes of the PCG of the Police Building Development.

VISUAL IMPACT

With views to and from the site in all directions, including from Harrington Street above, it is appropriate that the MCA redevelopment be considered as a sculptural object 'in the round' with no 'back' facade. This approach has informed the proposal's three-dimensional quality, as outlined above under "Built Form", and enhances views to the site from buildings in the Central Business District, the Cahill Expressway, City Circle railway and station, the eastern Harbour Bridge walkway and from the all parts of the Circular Quay foreshore, including the Opera House.

The proposal's built form preserves views along George Street, and to the existing Police Station. Treatment of new building work visible from George Street is of a scale that is consistent with neighbouring built fabric, particularly that on the western side of George Street.

The design team have endeavoured to achieve as much visibility through the site as possible.

When viewed from Circular Quay and Opera House, the new building work is designed to act as a contemporary signifier for the MCA, and in particular to identify the new main entry. To this end the mass of the new building projects over the entry beyond the property boundary, as outlined above under “Setbacks”. The massing of the new building work enhances the stepped form of the original building, culminating in the central clock tower.

Initial site analysis identified a series of viewing slots between existing buildings that enclose the Circular Quay promenade. The new public foyer between the existing and new buildings maintains one of these slots - the existing Suez Canal view corridor – thereby preserving views from George Street through to Circular Quay. SHFA Planning and Heritage have both been briefed on the view corridor and are satisfied with the outcomes.

MATERIALS

External materials have been selected to satisfy a number of criteria:

- To reflect the MCA’s stature as a high profile building open to the public
- To complement the existing MCA building and neighbouring buildings without resorting to mimicry
- To draw upon the range of materials and colours in the nearby Rocks and central business district.
- To reflect the MCA’s standing as a forward looking institution
- To satisfy energy efficiency requirements
- To supplement the architectural approach to the proposed development's massing
- To last at least 30 years without major maintenance, bearing in mind the potentially corrosive marine environment.

The palette of materials includes:

- off-form concrete to the external walls for one level where the building comes out of the ground
- glass reinforced cement as a general cladding panel in a variety of colours and finishes
- glazed windows and balustrades
- possible future signage zones to denote main entrances on George Street and Circular Quay;
- ceramic tiles/concrete pavers to terraces, including the Level 7 terraces
- metal roof sheeting to Level 7 roofs
- glass reinforced cement paving (similar to the general cladding panels in a variety of colours and finishes) on concrete roofs.

Looking at the Rocks and immediate Central Business District as a whole and in detail reveals an existing range of colours. This colour range has formed the basis for the palette of colours to be used in the redevelopment.



SIGNAGE

The use of banner signage on existing building will continue.

Zones where future signs will be considered in future applications have been identified.

HERITAGE

The existing MCA building is not identified on the State Heritage Register and is not the subject of other conservation instruments under the Heritage Act, but is considered culturally significant at a national level. New development is intended to respect and complement the existing building, while creating a contemporary statement appropriate to the MCA.

By solving the MCA's circulation, functional and spatial problems with the redevelopment, the future of the MCA is assured and hence the long term preservation of the existing fabric is assured.

A Heritage Impacts Statement dated October, 2008 has been prepared by Tanner Architects as part of this Project Application..

ARCHEAEOLOGICAL DOCKS

The archaeological report discusses the importance and state of the docks underground in the car park. Numerous excavations have been undertaken to establish their location and condition.

It was recommended by SHFA that the best way to protect what remains there are of the docks is to leave them in the ground undisturbed.

This has been adopted with the redevelopment being designed around them with structural interventions being carefully located to miss what remains of them. Recent excavations have tested out that these positions avoid the docks.

LANDSCAPE

It is understood that SHFA is about to initiate the Circular Quay Public Domain Revitalisation project which will encompass West Circular Quay and the MCA Redevelopment project. The MCA will be a key player in this revitalisation project.

In the meantime, the physical scope of the landscape component of this Project Application is limited to new terraces to the east of the existing and new buildings and grassed ramps up to such terrace.

The Terrace is raised to match the Level 1 floor height, and forms a unified base for the development that establishes an equitable new public entrance and existing entrance to be enjoyed by members of the public as well as visitors using the Foundation Hall. On its three open sides, the terrace is accessed by a gentle grassed bank, facilitating comfortable pedestrian movement from all directions. The bank is supplemented by ramps at the northern and southern ends of the terrace. The terrace and bank are paved where major pedestrian movements are anticipated, in particular outside the main public entry, and grassed where passive enjoyment is expected. The

gently sloping grassed ramp along with the paved terraces and ramps gives the MCA building a base and front door mat. The grassed area provides a usable surface to relax on and view the promenade and Circular Quay.

SUBSTATION

The existing substation will be retained in its current location, and have appropriate access provided. Negotiations on the details of the substation have been ongoing with Energy Australia.

The substation itself will remain unchanged apart from having a new stair to it from the south through the MCA building which will allow easy access from George Street to the substation. At the moment access is only down via ladders through floor hatches. One of the existing ladders will remain and have its hatch raised to suit the new levels.

The access opening for replacement of the transformers will also be raised to suit the new pavement levels and be replaced with a waterproof hatch.

Ventilation will be revised so exhaust air will be relieved up through the MCA building and intake air will be taken in just north of the new George Street entrance.

OPERA HOUSE BUFFER ZONE

As the redevelopment falls outside the buffer zone, there will be no impact on the Opera House. Opera House management have been briefed on the proposed development.

The redevelopment being square in form and broken up into smaller elements of different earth colours (in opposition to the huge curved white surfaces of the Opera House) offers no competition for the Opera House and when seen from the Opera House blends into the surrounding CBD and Rocks.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Public domain

Consideration of the surrounding public spaces has informed the design process and has generated some of the proposal's fundamental design principles. The result is a design proposal that will enhance the existing public spaces.

A major attribute of the proposal is the internal 'street' which forms the main public entry to the complex and provides a pedestrian link between Circular Quay and George Street, and extends to the Suez Canal corridor.

A raised terrace, banked on its three open sides, is proposed for the eastern side of the development. It forms a visual base that unifies the existing and new building work, and provides a platform from which access is available to both the new main entrance and the original entrance to the existing building. Raising the terrace provides a subtle physical separation from the Circular Quay promenade. The terrace and bank are paved where major pedestrian movement is anticipated, in particular outside the new main entrance. The existing path from the Circular Quay promenade to the original entrance will be removed, thus emphasising the MCA's new public entrance.

Access for people with disabilities

The provision of equitable and compliant access to and within the proposed development is one of the primary design objectives for the redevelopment of the MCA. The proposed design provides ample opportunity to fulfil this objective.

Entry ramps and four passenger lifts offer equitable access to all levels of the building. Additional disabled toilets have been provided. See access report for further details.

Separation of pedestrian & vehicle access

Pedestrian and vehicle access to the proposed development are clearly separated. Pedestrian access is afforded via the western (George Street) or eastern (Circular Quay) sides of the development, while vehicle access is obtained via the northern (Argyle Street) frontage.

Open areas / landscaping

This has been addressed in the Built Form & Urban Design section of this report.

The open nature of the design and landscaped areas provides little cover for the perpetrators of crime to lay in ambush. An active open MCA attracting people to its events provides surveillance by such visitors as a deterrent to acts of crime in the immediate area.

Lighting

At present the eastern facade of the existing building is uplit at night with floodlights.

The provision of new external façade lighting apart from security lighting is not included in the scope of works for this redevelopment.

Internal lighting will be partially visible from the surrounding public spaces and Sydney Harbour, most noticeably through the glazed facade elements of the new building.