

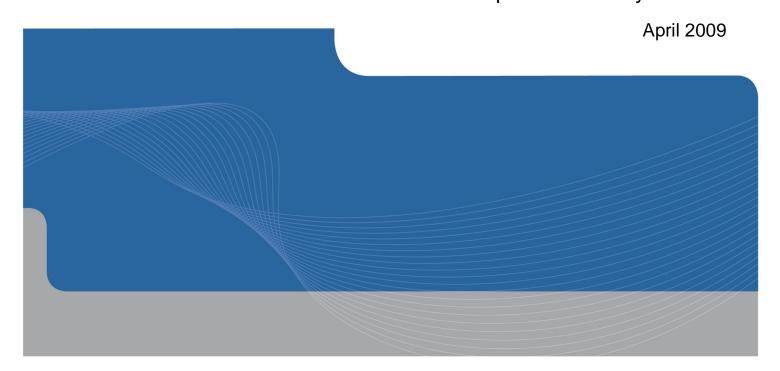
# Appendix C

Revised application for variation to the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme



# **Museum of Contemporary Art**

Museum of Contemporary Art Redevelopment Project Application for Variation to the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme





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- A Existing SCRA Scheme drawings
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### 1. Introduction

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) proposes to redevelop and expand the museum, located in The Rocks in Sydney, Australia.

The redevelopment involves an addition to the northern part of the building and refurbishment to the existing MCA building, and includes a new entrance, National Centre for Creative Learning, gallery spaces and cultural uses associated with the museum as well as ancillary uses such as lecture theatre, informal café and museum retail shop. The redevelopment would also address the non compliance of the current building in regard to access for all.

The key objectives for the redevelopment of the MCA are:

- » Equity of access;
- » Coherent circulation throughout the building;
- » Dedicated education spaces;
- » Flexible gallery spaces;
- » Improved revenue optimisation; and
- » A contemporary signifier.

The applicable adopted Environmental Planning Instrument for land that falls within The Rocks is the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA) Scheme. 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 (EP&A) Act 1979.* 

The proposed MCA redevelopment exceeds the height restriction contained in the SCRA Scheme, and provides only limited pedestrian access through the site where the SCRA Scheme requires such access. As part of the project application for the proposed redevelopment, it is necessary to amend the SCRA Scheme with regard to height and access controls.

This application is made under Clause 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Sydney Cove) Savings and Transitional Regulation 1999* and seeks amendment to the height and access provisions of the SCRA Scheme. It is submitted concurrently with the Environmental Assessment which seeks consent from the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

This application relates to land under the ownership of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) and leased to the MCA. GHD Pty Ltd (GHD) has been engaged by the MCA to prepare this submission to amend the SCRA Scheme.



## 2. Site description

The MCA occupies the former 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 1).

The MCA site is bounded by Circular Quay West, George Street, Argyle Street and First Fleet Park excluding the site of the existing The Rocks NSW Police building on the corner of Argyle and George Street. The Overseas Passenger Terminal is located to the north-east of the existing MCA building, with the West Circular Quay public domain and First Fleet Park to the east and south, and the Circular Quay Ferry Terminal further to the south-east. The Sydney Opera House is located to the north-east of Circular Quay.

The Project Application relates to the following allotments:

- » Lot 20 in Deposited Plan 787906 existing MCA building;
- Lot 21 in Deposited Plan 787906 strip of land to the east of the existing MCA building, which is currently part of the West Circular Quay public domain;
- » Lot 22 in Deposited Plan 787906 existing MCA car park and loading dock;
- » Lot 24 in Deposited Plan 787906 small triangular piece of land to the north-east of the existing car park and loading dock;
- » Part of Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 1052780 south of The Rocks NSW Police building, on which an existing annex to The Rocks NSW Police building, electricity chamber substation and café are located;
- » Part of Lot 25 in Deposited Plan 773812 part of George Street where Levels 3, 4 and 5 project; and
- » Part of the Circular Quay West public domain.

The land is under the ownership of SHFA.



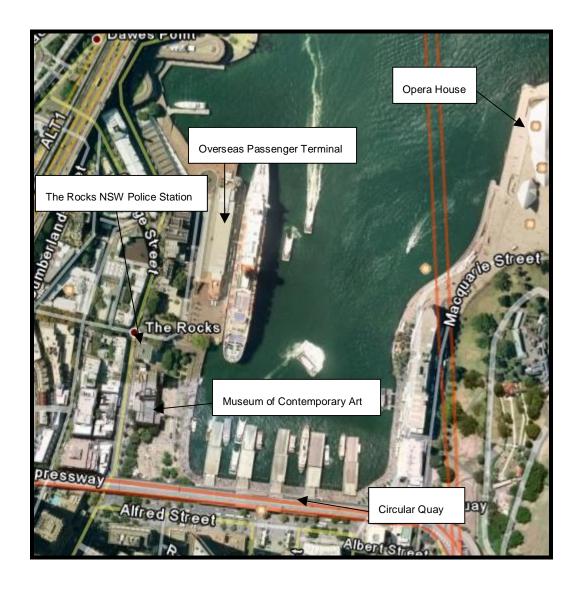


Figure 1 Aerial photograph of the MCA precinct

Source: Google Earth



## 3. Description of the proposed redevelopment

#### 3.1 Overview

A six level addition is proposed to the north of the existing MCA building on the site where the MCA's open air car park and loading dock is currently located. Rooftop venues spaces are added to the top level of the existing building while its internal spaces are remodelled and the existing terraces on Level 1 are extended to accommodate the enhanced Level 1 restaurant.

The redevelopment provides clear entry from both George Street and Circular Quay to the main building foyer, creating a 'street' between George Street and the Circular Quay concourse and achieving a publicly accessible link between the two that also provides access for mobility-impaired persons. The new additions to the building provide a positive and strong architectural response to the existing building in this prominent site.

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.

The redevelopment will also provide for new facilities at the MCA, which will incorporate a reconfigured entrance and foyer, international standard gallery and exhibition space including an Outdoor Sculpture Terrace, an education centre (National Centre for Creative Learning), lecture theatre, café and function areas with associated back of house facilities, offices, loading and car park area.

The location of the new building works is presented in Figure 2. The proposed design concept incorporates an east – west pedestrian linkage through the extension (as shown in yellow) and the retention of the existing car park entry/exit in generally the existing location (shown in blue).

Architectural plans of the proposed redevelopment are included in Appendix B of the Preferred Project Report (GHD, 2009).



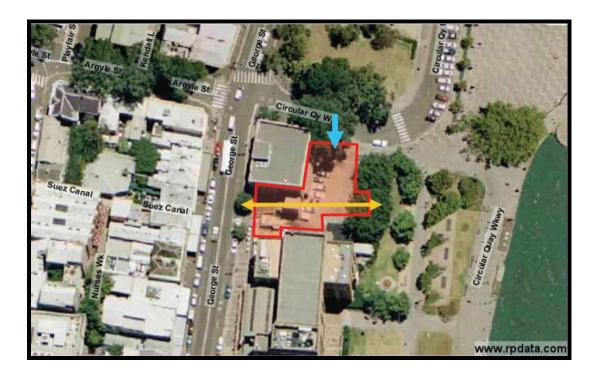


Figure 2 General location of new building envelope

#### 3.2 Objectives of the proposed redevelopment

The MCA redevelopment 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; and



» Provide a building of high architectural quality appropriate to its significant setting.

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 is a contemporary approach to design, which recognises and respects the importance of the existing building whilst creating a contemporary statement which reflects the internal activities of the Museum. The proposed design considers 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 reflect this.

The redevelopment contains 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 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 is a combination of refurbished and revitalised elements of the current Museum, and where required, incorporates extensions to the current facilities.

#### 3.3 Summary of the proposed redevelopment

A detailed description of the components of the proposed redevelopment is provided in the Environmental Assessment.

Following the proposed redevelopment, the MCA will have the following uses on each floor:

#### » First Floor

Circular Quay entry, restaurant, terraces, Foundation Hall, kitchen, plant rooms, Ambassadors room, conservation, framing, storage, first aid, workshop, car parking, garbage area, loading dock, security, goods lift, amenities, non public bike racks and shower facilities.

#### » Second Floor

George Street entry, retail, gallery, MCA shop, reception/information and cloaking, informal meeting space and goods lift.

#### » Third Floor

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



#### » Fourth Floor

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

#### » Fifth Floor

Tenancy, MCA staff room, MCA offices, plant room, guides/volunteers and Café (kitchen, café terrace), amenities and Outdoor Sculpture Terrace.

#### » Sixth Floor

Tenancy, terraces, plant room and amenities.

#### » Seventh Floor

Function space, deck, green room, amenities, storage, foyer and kitchen.

» Eight Floor

Plant room.

» Ninth Floor

Plant Room

There will be an increase in floor space of approximately 40% for the entire MCA site. Table 1 provides a break-down of the existing and proposed development in terms of height and density.

Table 1 Height and density for existing and proposed development

	Existing	New Addition	Total
Footprint	2,211 m²	920 m²	3,131 m <sup>2</sup>
Height	Existing Central Parapet Ridge is RL 37.440	Level 7 of MCA – Function Area Ridge is RL 33.331	NA
Gross Floor Area	10,794 m²	5,926 m²	16,720 m <sup>2</sup>
Car parking	15	-	4



## 4. Statutory context

#### 4.1 Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme

The applicable adopted Environmental Planning Instrument for land that falls within The Rocks is the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA) Scheme. The SCRA Scheme was prepared under the former *Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Act* 1968 and operates under the saving provisions of the EP&A Act. It therefore has the same effect as an Environmental Planning Instrument.

The SCRA Scheme Building Site Control Drawings XXV – XLV apply to this application. This Scheme divides the areas under SHFA's control into various maps, two of which are applicable to the MCA land. These maps provide the development controls for the MCA land, which are set-out in Drawing XXXXIX-A (1) and XXXIX-B(1). Drawing XXXXIX-A (1) refers to a proposed pedestrian route between the MCA and The Rocks NSW Police Station north of the MCA. Drawing XXXIX-B(1) provides a height restriction of Reduced Level (RL) 12 across the MCA site and RL 7 to the pedestrian area of West Circular Quay.

The proposed redevelopment exceeds the height restriction of RL 12. Whilst the redevelopment provides a new public access from George Street to Circular Quay in accordance with the SCRA Scheme, this access would only be available during operational hours of the MCA.

As a result of these non-compliances, this application is made under Clause 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Sydney Cove) Savings and Transitional Regulation 1999* and seeks amendment to the height and access provisions of the SCRA Scheme. It is submitted concurrently with the Environmental Assessment which seeks consent from the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

Part 2 Clause 4 (1) and (2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Sydney Cove) Savings and Transitional Regulation 1999* refers to applications for the variation to approved scheme:

- "(1) If a person proposes to carry out development on land within the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Area and the proposed development does not comply in all respects with the approved scheme, the person may apply to the Minister for a variation to the approved scheme that the person considers necessary to be made to enable development consent to be granted to the proposed development.
- (2) The application must:
  - (a) describe the respects in which the proposed development does not comply with the approved scheme, and
  - (b) set out the reasons for the variation to the approved scheme for which the person is applying, and



(c) address the matters referred to in clause 9 (2) in relation to which the Minister must form an opinion before making a variation to the approved scheme."

Clause 9 of the Regulation sets out the matters for consideration by the Minister to vary the SCRA Scheme:

- "(1) The Minister is to consider all submissions concerning a draft variation to the approved scheme made during the period of public exhibition of the draft variation.
- (2) If, after considering those submissions, the Minister is of the opinion that the draft variation, if made:
  - (a) will not permit development that will adversely affect:
    - (i) development on adjoining land, or
  - (ii) the heritage significance of buildings, structures or sites in the locality, or
    - (iii) the quality of the public domain in the locality, and
  - (b) will not permit development that will have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment or an adverse social or economic impact in the locality, and
  - (c) will conform with the general planning and design principles for the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Area,

the Minister may make the variation to the approved scheme in accordance with the draft variation or make the draft variation with such alterations as the Minister thinks fit.

(3) The Minister may make a variation to the approved scheme in accordance with this clause, whether or not development consent is granted to the application in relation to which the variation was submitted."

With regard to the above Clause 9(2)(c) the "general planning and design principles for the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Area" have been incorporated into the Guiding Principles of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 56 – Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Tributaries (SEPP 56). SEPP 56 has since been repealed by Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (Sydney Harbour REP). The provisions of SEPP 56 were incorporated in the Sydney Harbour REP.

This proposed variation therefore assessed in the following sections in terms of the Sydney Harbour REP and the Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways Area Development Control Plan (DCP).

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

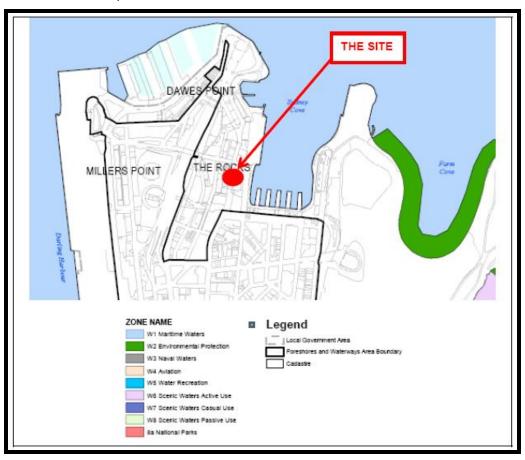
The Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (Sydney Harbour REP) provides a planning framework for Sydney Harbour. Within this Plan,



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.

The Sydney Harbour REP has 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 3), although it is not zoned for a specific use under the REP.



Source: SREP (SHC) 2005, Zoning Map

Figure 3 Zoning Area Boundary of the Harbour REP, Sheet 9 of 16

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 site. 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..."

The proposed redevelopment is considered to be consistent with the relevant aims and planning principles of the REP. Specifically, the redevelopment will not affect the ecology of the area and supports a prosperous working harbour. The redevelopment of the MCA will encourage more people to the area while improving the culture and vibrancy of the area. Accessibility to and along Sydney Harbour and its foreshores will remain unaffected.

In terms of planning, the natural assets and environmental qualities will be unaffected by the redevelopment. Public access along the foreshore will be unaffected. The unique visual qualities of Sydney Harbour will be protected. These are confirmed by the photomontages prepared for the proposed development in the Sydney Harbour locality.

The matters for consideration specified in Part 3, Division 2 do not apply to the proposed redevelopment, as the project is subject to Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

Part 4, Division 1 applies to development to be carried out on a strategic foreshore site. The MCA is located on Sheet 1-City Foreshores Area and as such Part 4 Strategic



foreshore sites applies. Clause 41 sets out the requirements for the preparation of master plans. However Clause 41(4) states that no master plan is needed for the City Foreshores Area. Since the MCA is located within the City Foreshores Area, no master plan is required.

Part 5, Division 3A of the REP applies to the Sydney Opera House buffer zone. The site of the proposed redevelopment falls outside of the Sydney Opera House buffer zone, and no further consideration under the REP is needed in this regard.

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

The Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways Area Development Control Plan 2005 (Foreshores and Waterways DCP) applies to the Foreshores and Waterways Area as defined in the Sydney Harbour REP, as discussed in Section 4.2 and as identified in Figure 3 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 the Sydney Harbour REP. The DCP also provides siting and design principles for new buildings and waterside structures within the area.

The planning principles for the Foreshores and Waterways Area are:

- "development should protect, maintain and enhance the natural assets and unique environmental qualities of Sydney Harbour and its islands and foreshores,
- » 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,
- » 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,
- » development along the foreshore and waterways should maintain, protect and enhance the unique visual qualities of Sydney Harbour and its islands and foreshores.
- » adequate provision should be made for the retention of foreshore land to meet existing and future demand for working harbour uses,
- » public access along foreshore land should be provided on land used for industrial or commercial maritime purposes where such access does not interfere with the use of the land for those purposes,
- \* the use of foreshore land adjacent to land used for industrial or commercial maritime purposes should be compatible with those purposes,



- water-based public transport (such as ferries) should be encouraged to link with land-based public transport (such as buses and trains) at appropriate public spaces along the waterfront,
- \* the provision and use of public boating facilities along the waterfront should be encouraged".

Since the proposed new building addition is on an existing open air car park, there will be no impact on the natural assets and unique environmental qualities of Sydney Harbour and its foreshores. The proposed redevelopment will improve the foreshore replacing the existing unsightly open air car park with the new MCA extension. Public access to the foreshore will be improved by the proposed through-flow pedestrian access which will create a 'street' through the building from George Street to Circular Quay and will comply with the requirements of the SCRA Scheme. There is currently no pedestrian access between the MCA and The Rocks NSW Police Station and under the redevelopment it is not proposed to change this. There will be no impact to the public access along the foreshore.

There are no specific controls for the MCA site under this DCP, as the 'Sydney Harbour-Foreshores and Waterways Area Development Control Plan: Ecological Communities and Landscape Characters' Map 8 identifies the area of the MCA as an "Area not mapped: site specific investigations required".

Notwithstanding this, Section 3.2 refers to the General Aims for landscaping which states:

"All development should aim to:

- » minimise any significant impact on views and vistas from and to:
  - public places,
  - landmarks identified on the maps accompanying the DCP, and
  - heritage items;
- » ensure it complements the scenic character of the area;
- » protect the integrity of foreshores with rock outcrops, dramatic topography or distinctive visual features;
- » provide a high quality of built and landscape design; and
- » contribute to the diverse character of the landscape."

The proposed development complies with these General Aims since the height, width, siting, scale, colour, reflectivity and function of the new building is suitable and consistent with the surrounding development. An assessment of heritage impacts is carried out in Section 6.2 of this report, which identified no impacts to any heritage item in the vicinity of the MCA. The only landmark in the area is the Opera House located across Circular Quay. An assessment of this is also in Section 6.2, which states that there is no competition between these buildings.

The landscape setting will consist of an upgraded landscaping to the Circular Quay side of the building. This involves new terraces at Level 1 to the east of the existing



building and grassed ramps up to these terraces with hard paving and seating to the east of the main public entrance area.

There is minimal degree of change in terms of new landscape works, and the proposed works will not conflict with the existing scenic environment. The landscaping attempts to provide a cohesive urban design setting which is integrated with the new building entrance from Circular Quay and provide an enhanced public amenity. This landscaping is considered to be suitable and is intended to complement the redevelopment of the building.

#### 4.3.1 Siting of buildings and structures

Part 5, Section 5.3 Siting of Buildings and Structures requires "existing native vegetation not to be disturbed, buildings should address the waterways, buildings should not obstruct views and vistas from public places to the waterway, buildings should not obstruct views of landmarks and features identified on the maps of this DCP."

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 urban design of the redevelopment will optimise its scenic location 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.

#### 4.3.2 Built form

Section 5.4 Built Form of the DCP provides design qualitative guidelines for land-based development, as detailed below:

"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."

The proposed redevelopment has been designed to complement the existing MCA building and surrounding buildings. 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 Rocks NSW Police Station).

#### 4.3.3 Planting

Section 5.6 Planting states "Vegetation in the form of bushland, remnant native species and cultural planting has important ecological and landscape values that require protection and enhancement. The following criteria should be addressed when providing landscaping for developments:

- » appropriate species from those found in the surrounding landscape should be incorporated;
- endemic native species should be used in areas where native vegetation is present or has the potential to be regenerated;
- » exotic species that have the potential to spread into surrounding bushland should be avoided;
- » existing mature trees should be retained where possible and incorporated into the design of the new developments;



- » vegetation along ridgelines and on hillsides should be retained and supplemented with additional planting to provide a backdrop to the waterway; and
- a landscape plan is to be submitted with any land-based development proposal showing existing and proposed changes in contours, surface and sub-surface drainage, existing trees to be retained and removed, measures to protect vegetation during construction, and proposed planting including species and common names."

The proposal involves the removal of a small number of existing trees which fall within the building envelope and construction zone. An arboricultural assessment was undertaken and is included in the Environmental Assessment (GHD, 2008). This assessment has identified these trees as poor examples of low landscape value to the area, in part due to there age and because growth has been limited by the adverse conditions of the location (principally due to salt laden winds). The assessment noted that only the existing Cabbage Palms to the north/east of the site were considered to be of value and could be readily transplanted to accommodate the redevelopment.

It is proposed to provide upgraded landscaping to the Circular Quay side of the building. This involves new terraces at Level 1 to the east of the existing building and grassed ramps up to such terraces with hard paving and seating to the east of the main public entrance area. The proposed grassed area provides a usable surface to relax on and view the promenade and Circular Quay.

#### 4.3.4 Redevelopment sites

Section 5.11 Redevelopment sites relates to improving access and enjoyment of the waterfront through redevelopment of waterfront sites. In this regard, redevelopment proposals should:

- » ensure continuous and inviting public access to the foreshores;
- » allow for a mix of uses to further improve the public utility and amenity of the waterfront;
- » provide public jetties and wharves for access to vessels where there is a demonstrated demand;
- » identify suitable areas that can be conserved and made available to the public;
- » provide public road access to the foreshore park where a park is being provided; and
- » be designed considering the site in the broader context of the River and the Harbour. Redevelopment sites have the potential to provide a gateway and become a waterside destination for the hinterland.

The redevelopment will not hinder public access to the foreshore and the existing pedestrian pathway will remain unaffected. The public utility will be enhanced by the new uses such as the lecture theatre and café. The site has been considered in the context of its surrounding and the Sydney Harbour.

The proposed works will not affect the existing maritime or boating industries and recognises these industries as legitimate uses of waterfront land. The proposed works



are a significant distance from the waters edge and will not hinder existing pedestrian movement along Circular Quay. The new development will be sensitive to noise, odours, light associated with museums and has been sited and designed to minimise disturbance to its future occupants. The proposed landscape works increase the amenity of the West Circular Quay public domain, providing an open landscaped grassed ramp and seating in front of the MCA.



# Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority Scheme variation

#### 5.1 Overview

The SCRA Building Site Control Drawings XXV – XLV apply to this application. This Scheme divides the areas under SHFA's control into various maps, two of which are applicable to the MCA land.

These maps provide the development controls for the MCA land, which are set-out in Drawing XXXXIX-A (1) and XXXIX-B(1). Copies of the current controls are provided in Appendix A.

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

As outlined below, the proposed development does not comply with the SCRA Scheme. Therefore an amendment to the SCRA Scheme is requested. This amendment process is expected to run concurrently to the Part 3A major project assessment process for the MCA redevelopment.

#### 5.2 Proposed height

The current proposal to extend the MCA does not conform to the height limit provided within the SCRA of RL 12 metres.

The existing building reaches a maximum height of RL 37.44 at the central parapet ridge. It is understood that the SCRA Scheme was based on an earlier intention to demolish the MCA building, which is no longer proposed.

The height of the proposed function area roof ridge on Level 7 of the existing building is RL 33.331 and the maximum height of the proposed new building is RL 30.764.

The proposed heights are consistent with the height of surrounding buildings and are lower than the highest point of the existing MCA building.

A revised building site control drawing in relation to height is provided in Appendix B.

#### 5.3 Public access requirement

Drawing XXXXIX-A (1) requires an east-west pedestrian route to be provided between the MCA and The Rocks NSW Police Station north of the MCA. The proposed redevelopment provides for this principle to be adopted and an access route through this part of the site is provided internally to the proposed extension. However, this pedestrian access would only be available to the public during the opening hours of the MCA, which is currently 10am to 5pm, seven days per week. The MCA is considering extended opening hours for special events and at other times, subject to operational, security and commercial requirements.



The proposed pedestrian access will provide access between George Street and Circular Quay for mobility-impaired persons, with lift access provided.



## 6. General planning and design principles

Clause 9(2) of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment (Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority) Regulation 1999* sets out the matters for consideration for any draft variation to the SCRA Scheme. A summary of these matters for consideration and responses are provided below.

#### 6.1 Impact on development on adjoining land

The proposed variation to the SCRA Scheme height restriction creates the opportunity for roof level additions on the existing MCA building and the erection of the new building to the north. The proposed variation will only affect the MCA site, to permit the proposed redevelopment.

The proposed functions area on Level 7 of the existing MCA building:

- » Will be setback from the roof edge;
- » Will be a low and unobtrusive scale; and
- » Will maximise unutilised space to the benefit of the patrons to the MCA.

The proposed new building to the north of the existing MCA building will not hinder public access to the foreshore and the existing pedestrian pathway will remain unaffected. The proposed design concept incorporates an east – west pedestrian link through the building (reflecting the Suez Canal corridor) between the George Street and Circular Quay entrances creating a 'street' which will provide improved pedestrian access during MCA opening hours. The public utility will be enhanced by the new uses such as the lecture theatre and café. The site has been considered in the context of its surrounding and the Sydney Harbour.

The proposed roof top plant on Level 6 of the proposed new building:

- » Cannot be viewed from ground level or any other buildings in the immediate vicinity; and
- » Will have no impact on the development of any adjoining land.

As outlined below, the proposed redevelopment will not adversely impact on the public domain in terms of overshadowing or views, and heritage impacts will be appropriately managed.

The proposed redevelopment will not affect the existing maritime or boating industries and recognises these industries as legitimate uses of waterfront land. The proposed redevelopment is a significant distance from the waters edge and will not hinder existing pedestrian movement along Circular Quay. The redevelopment will be sensitive to noise, odours, light associated with museums and has been sited and designed to minimise disturbance to its future occupants.



#### 6.2 Impact on heritage significance

#### Impacts to adjoining heritage items

The existing MCA building is not listed on any statutory heritage registers however is considered significant from a national, local and state level.

This statement of cultural significance for the MCA, as extracted from the draft listing in the SHFA Section 170 Register, is as follows:

"The Museum of Contemporary Art building and site are of State heritage significance for their historical, aesthetic and scientific cultural values. The site and building are also of State heritage significance for their contribution to The Rocks area which is of State Heritage significance in its own right.

The Rocks NSW Police Station, which adjoins the MCA building to the north at 132 George Street, is included on the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Section 170 Register. A Conservation Plan was prepared for this building in 1999. The Conservation Plan includes in its executive summary:

"The building at 132 George Street sits within a former dockyard precinct of national significance; however, the building itself is of lesser significance. The most significant attributes of the place lie more in its location and historic associations than in the configuration and fabric of the building itself."

A Heritage Impacts Statement has been prepared for the proposed redevelopment by Tanner Architects, and is included as an appendix to the Environmental Assessment. The Heritage Impacts Statement concludes that the new building is subservient in height, scale and colour to the orange/gold sandstone heritage landmark that is the existing MCA building. Its scale and block massing also relates to that of the adjoining The Rocks NSW Police Station at 132 George Street.

The proposed design allows the existing MCA building to be read as an 'in the round' design while providing a new building convenient to its north elevation, yet separated from it and linked to it by an open space with a glazed link including a 'bridge' and stair. The link space is relatively tight due to proximity of The Rocks NSW Police Station. In essence, the extended MCA will read as an historic building with a new wing of contemporary and acceptable character.

The key public views to the existing MCA building will not alter. The new structure will slightly impede views from the Overseas Passenger Terminal (and thereabouts) to the north-east corner of the sandstone building. The positioning of the new building has minimised any obvious change to public view impacts on the heritage item.

The distant view of the south-west corner of The Rocks NSW Police Station from the eastern side of George Street looking from the Cahill Expressway will be partially obscured by the projection of the mass of the lecture theatre. As this is a vista that is not identified as having heritage or streetscape significance, it is not be considered an adverse impact.

The introduction of the new building to the north of the MCA prevents the establishment of a permanent physical link from George Street to the harbour in the



line of the Suez Canal laneway. However, the use of glazing for the link between the extension and the MCA and the creation of pedestrian access or 'street' through the building will enable a link to be achieved.

#### **Naval Dockyards**

The car park site that is the subject of this application contains archaeological remains relating to the former Naval Dockyard constructed between 1796 and 1800. The site contains the archaeological remains of two docks with historic plans indicating another one to the southern end of the site. Sections of the docks have been exposed during various testing programs – these indicate that the middle dock has standing sandstone walls on the southern and northern sides while the western end has been cut into bedrock. The upper coursing of the northern dock has been removed, leaving the mortar beds on which the stonework was placed. Intact stone coursing has been found in the northwest corner and northern sides at depth. No remains of the southernmost dock have been found and it may have been removed by the construction of the MCA building. The entrances to all the docks are in the grassed area to the east of the MCA loading and car park site.

The proposed piling and footings for the new building have been located adjacent to the dock walls. The piling and footings will impact on the work areas around the docks and will introduce structural elements inside the docks. The piles within the docks will impact on the floors of the docks (believed to be bedrock), to a minor extent their fill (believed to be sand and rubbish deposits dating to the 1850s), and to the walls of the docks should lateral displacement occur while the piles are being inserted.

The piles and pad footings outside the docks will impact on dockyard work areas. The lift pit will impact on the work surface and any archaeological features that may exist between the docks in this area.

The size of the impacts will be minimised and the areas to be impacted will be recorded beforehand, meaning that the loss of archaeological fabric and knowledge will be minimised. While the optimal size of the piles and footings will be determined in the forthcoming design phase, the majority of the site and its archaeological resource will remain undisturbed by the building above.

The new building provides an opportunity to interpret the site and its archaeological remains. In this regard, the redevelopment will contain an interpretation zone, which will incorporate an artistic project/s for the interpretation of the site, and the development and history of the place.

#### Impacts to other heritage items in the locality

The Sydney Opera House is listed on the World Heritage List. In addition, there are a number of other heritage items and conservation areas, including The Rocks precinct, Sydney Harbour Bridge and other surrounding heritage items including Cadman's Cottage.

The MCA redevelopment is considered to provide an enhanced experience of the Sydney Harbour, The Rocks, Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge and other surrounding heritage items including Cadman's Cottage.



The proposed extension will enhance the viability and prestige of the MCA, while providing the opportunity for greater public awareness of the harbour and surrounding environs. It will cater for more visitors, and its terraces will encourage users of the MCA to spend time viewing the spectacular site context appreciating the heritage values and cultural significance of the heritage items and their setting, in particular uninterrupted views of the world heritage listed Sydney Opera House.

The proposed building is not considered to have any detrimental physical or visual impacts to surrounding heritage items located in close proximity to the site. Within the immediate vicinity of the subject site Cadman's Cottage and Barney and Bligh Reserve are situated to the north of the site. The cottage is separated from the subject site by Argyle Street (roadway) and Bligh Park to the south of the cottage. The proposed redevelopment will not affect the immediate curtilage or visual quality and scale of this building.

Other heritage items that are in the vicinity include the Sydney Harbour Bridge including approaches and viaducts and the Circular Quay Ferry Wharves. Although both these items are some distance from the subject site the proposed building will encompass some of their visual catchment so it is important to consider their location, siting and context and any potential impact from the proposed redevelopment.

The MCA redevelopment is not considered to adversely or detrimentally affect existing views or vistas from major surrounding vantage points to the Sydney Opera House. The key relevant public vantage points include views enjoyed from First Fleet Park, the lawn to the MCA, Argyle Street, Overseas Passenger Terminal Forecourt and the Sydney Opera House forecourt.

The general public appreciation of the Sydney Harbour Bridge is also not affected.

The redevelopment of the MCA will be partially visible from many other surrounding public places including the Harbour Bridge, Cahill Expressway, East Circular Quay, Circular Quay Railway Station, Circular Quay, Sydney Harbour and many high rise surrounding commercial, hotel and residential buildings. However, as the new extension is subservient in height, scale and colour to the orange/gold sandstone heritage landmark that is the MCA building, there will be no appreciable impairment of visual amenity or significant view loss from public places as a result of the proposed redevelopment.

#### **Aboriginal Heritage**

It is likely that any remains associated with the pre-1788 Aboriginal occupation of the area will have been destroyed or removed by the extensive construction activities and modification of the area since 1788.

#### 6.3 Impact on the public domain

The quality of the public domain will be strengthened by the proposal since the new works will provide a clearer point of reference for public movement. Pedestrian access between the George Street and Circular Quay will be provided in the proposed



redevelopment, during the operational hours of the MCA. There is a short walking distance for pedestrians around the building after hours and the quality of the public domain will be preserved. The proposed redevelopment involves little change to public the public domain on George Street and in First Fleet Park.

#### 6.3.1 Circular Quay Public Domain Revitalisation

It is understood that SHFA is planning 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 and has joined an informal working group with SHFA to ensure that there is an integrated approach and vision for the landscaping of West Circular Quay to which the redevelopment of the MCA relates.

It is proposed to provide upgraded landscaping to the Circular Quay side of the building. This involves new terraces at Level 1 to the east of the existing building and grassed ramps up to such terraces with hard paving and seating to the east of the main public entrance area. The proposed grassed area provides a usable surface to relax on and view the promenade and Circular Quay.

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.

Outdoor seating is proposed to be provided at the Circular Quay entrance, which will contribute positively to the public domain.

A Landscape Plan is provided with the plans of the proposed redevelopment in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 6.3.2 Overshadowing

The proposed development will overshadow part of George Street in the morning and West Circular Quay in the afternoon, however given the size of this public outdoor space the overall effect will be relatively minor. Shadow diagrams are provided in Appendix B of the Environmental Assessment.

New building works will block some of the windows in the east elevation of the existing NSW Rocks Police Station. Those that remain to the north on that east elevation will have some overshadowing. NSW Police have been fully informed of the proposed redevelopment and accept its impact. It should be noted that both the eastern and southern walls of the existing NSW Rocks Police station building have been designed to be built hard up against indicated by the lack of detail and brick corbelling.

#### 6.4 Impact on the natural or built environment

The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the natural environment since no sensitive ecology exists on the entire site. The built environment



will be strengthened by the new design and potential negative impacts have been mitigated by the architectural design. This is reinforced by the built form and urban design statement appended to the Environmental Assessment.

The proposed redevelopment works will be compatible with the existing built form in terms of bulk and scale. The surrounding development will benefit from the redevelopment, which will improve the appearance of the MCA. The new addition over the existing car park removes an unsightly utility use on Circular Quay and replaces it with an attractive new building, which is integrated with and suitable to the locality.

The proposed design and building height impact on the natural and built environment is considered under the following criteria:

#### 6.4.1 Height

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 Rocks NSW 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 a review of the original structural drawings carried out by Simpson Design Associates, structural engineers.

The proposed George Street elevation considers the scale of neighbouring buildings, with the proposed facade treatment for the new elements 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 Rocks NSW Police Station 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 Rocks NSW Police building.

#### 6.4.2 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 proposed development's three-dimensional quality, as outlined above, 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 proposed redevelopment's built form preserves views along George Street, and to the existing The Rocks NSW 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 has 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. The massing of the new building work enhances the stepped form of the original building, culminating in the central clock tower.

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 The Rocks.

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 design and resolution of the view corridor and are satisfied with the outcomes.

Photomontages of the proposed redevelopment are included in the Environmental Assessment.

#### 6.5 Social and economic impacts

The redevelopment will strengthen the social character of the area by encouraging more people to visit the MCA. People willing to spend money from the different offerings of the MCA will benefit the economy of the locality. This was a view supported in the MCA's consultation with the Rocks Chamber of Commerce. There will be a minor increase in employment generation for the MCA and the economic spin-offs will benefit the area at large.

# 6.6 General planning and design principles for the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority area

The general planning and design principles for the SCRA have been addressed through a review of the relevant sections of the *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan* (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 and the *Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways Area Development Control Plan 2005* as discussed in the relevant sections.

The proposed development generally complies with these requirements, however this compliance with the SCRA Scheme is not necessary for the following reasons:



- » The existing MCA building exceeds the current height controls of the SCRA;
- » Pedestrian access between George Street and Circular Quay is provided, and will be available to the public during the opening hours of the MCA, which is currently 10am to 5pm, seven days per week;
- » Heritage items will be unaffected by the proposed development;
- The scale, form and design of the proposed works are an improvement to the existing situation; and
- The proposed works are also sympathetic to the surrounding land uses and will benefit the appearance of both Circular Quay and George Street.



### Conclusion

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) proposes to redevelop and expand the museum, located in The Rocks.

The proposed redevelopment exceeds the height restriction contained in the SCRA Scheme, and provides only limited pedestrian access through the site where the SCRA Scheme requires such access. As part of the project application for the proposed redevelopment, it is necessary to amend the SCRA Scheme with regard to height and access controls.

The reasons for the proposed variation and the rationale in support of the variation in terms of height and access are:

#### » Height

- It is understood that the SCRA Scheme was based on an earlier intention to demolish the MCA building, which is no longer proposed;
- The existing MCA building reaches a maximum height of RL 37.44 at the central parapet ridge; and
- The proposed height of the works associated with the redevelopment is lower than the highest point of the existing MCA building and is consistent with the height of surrounding buildings.

#### » Access

- The proposed redevelopment provides for east-west pedestrian access from George Street to Circular Quay;
- This pedestrian access will be available to the public during the opening hours of the MCA, which is currently 10am to 5pm, seven days per week; and
- The quality of the public domain will be strengthened since the new works will provide a clearer point of reference for public movement.

The proposed variation to the SCRA Scheme has been assessed in accordance with the relevant matters for consideration under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Sydney Cove) Savings and Transitional Regulation 1999.* 

A heritage impact assessment has been undertaken, which concludes that the proposed redevelopment would not have a negative impact on the appreciation of the heritage significance of the existing MCA building or its precinct and would ensure that the prescribed relationships between various elements within the precinct are established and maintained.

The built form of the proposed redevelopment preserves views along George Street, and to The Rocks NSW 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. 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.

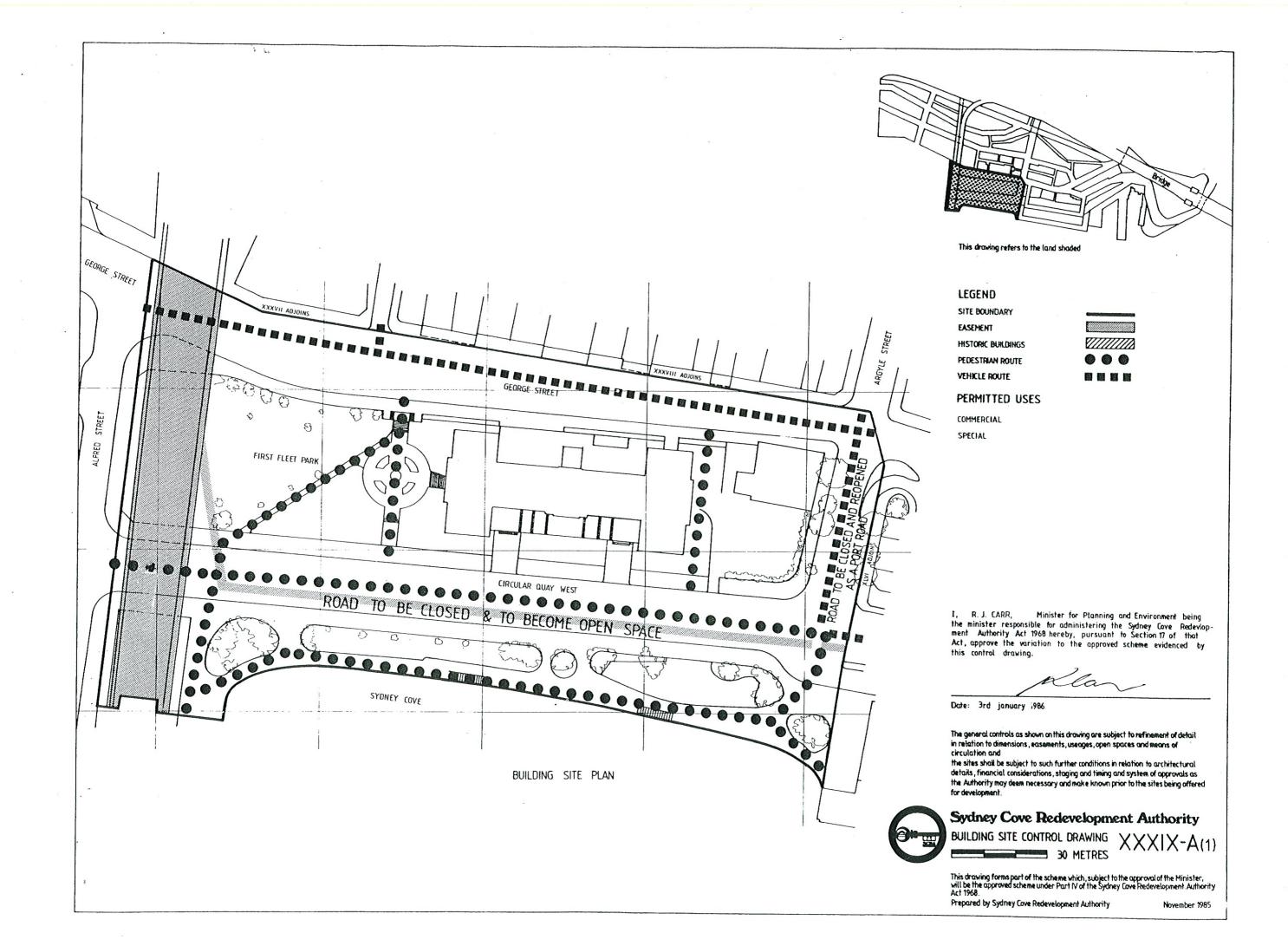


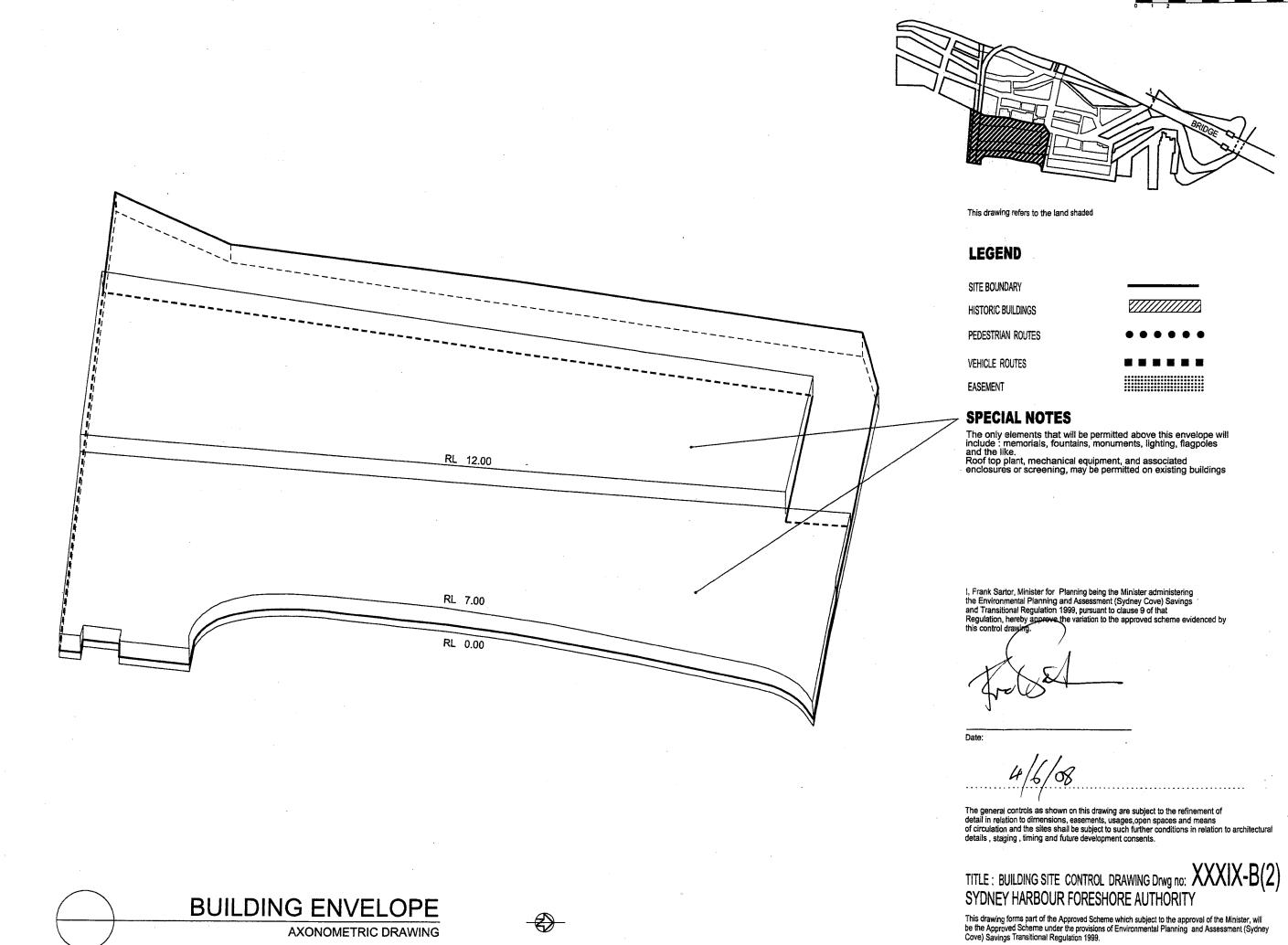
There will also be little impact on the public domain in terms of design, views and overshadowing.

This application is submitted concurrently with the Environmental Assessment, which seeks consent from the Minster for Planning under the EP&A Act. It is requested that the Director-General prepares a draft variation to the SCRA Scheme in accordance with this application and that, pursuant to Clause 9 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Sydney Cove) Savings and Transitional Regulation 1999*, the Minister make the variation to the SCRA Scheme in accordance with this application.



# Appendix A Existing SCRA Scheme drawings

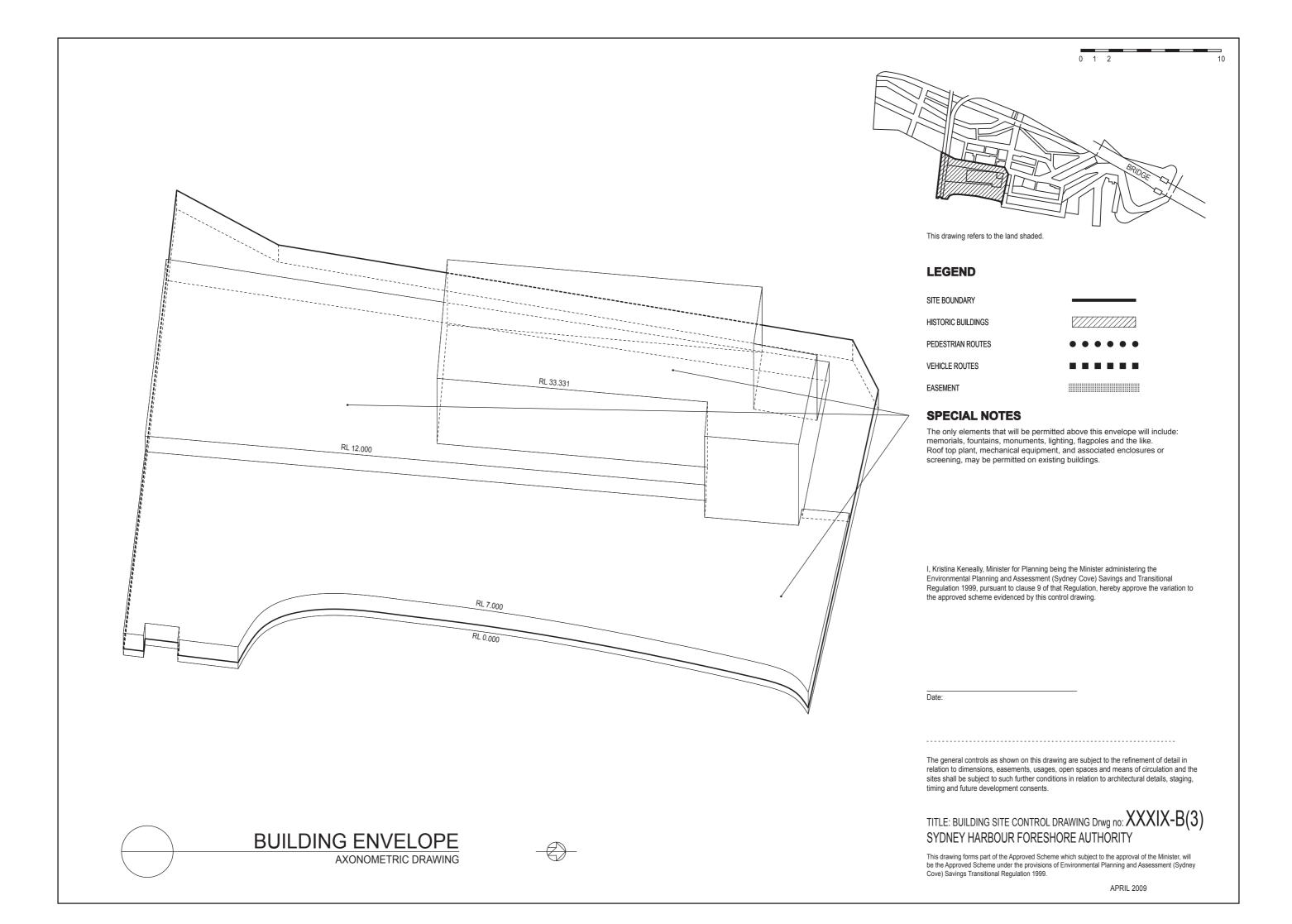




**APRIL 2008** 



# Appendix B Amended SCRA Scheme drawings





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#### **Document Status**

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