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SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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Ms Lucinda Craig
Planning Officer
Department of Planning and Environment
Submitted via NSW Planning Portal

Dear Lucinda,

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS MODIFICATION 2 (SSD 7693 MOD 2)

This letter has been prepared by Urbis on behalf of Mulpha and relates to the above State Significant Development Application (**SSDA**) modification at the Intercontinental Hotel (115-119 Macquarie Street, Sydney) and Transport House (99-113 Macquarie Street, Sydney).

It responds to a Request for Information (**RFI**) issued by the Department of Planning and Environment (**DPE**) on 18 May 2022. DPE requested responses to additional submission by Heritage NSW following their review of the Response to Submissions (**RtS**) report submitted by Mulpha on 19 April 2022.

This letter and the attached Design Package prepared by Cottey Parker (Appendix A) responds to the matters raised in the RFI and are intended to facilitate the final assessment and determination of the SSDA modification by DPE.

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

This modification application seeks consent to include a "stage" in Concept SSD-7693, reflecting a one storey building envelope above Transport House that is connected to the existing Intercontinental Hotel via a physical stair connection. It is intended for the "stage" to be time-limited to ten years. This, in turn, will allow the lodgement of a future/separate 'detailed' SSDA for a function centre within the Concept envelope.

2. RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

2.1. DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Issue	Response
<p>Provide preliminary details into the external terrace/ bar area. The Department agrees with Heritage NSW comment and requires further details into fixed structures that may be located on the external terrace.</p>	<p>Cottee Parker have outlined the design concept for the external bar area within the Design Package appended to this correspondence, noting that it will be refined in the subsequent 'detailed' SSDA.</p> <p>The design will include high-quality, low and relaxed outdoor furniture, set on top of a hardwood deck that is flanked by low scale planters.</p> <p>Section drawings are included from key public domain vantage points (Macquarie Street, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Royal Botanic Gardens – near and far). The sections illustrate that the proposed raised deck and balustrade arrangement would be sufficiently setback from the existing parapet to be unsighted from these vantage points. The sections also demonstrate that any fixed furniture and/or bar would similarly be unsighted.</p> <p>These details will be further explored and developed as part of the next stage of the project.</p>
<p>The Department does not accept the external terrace/ bar area would not include structures (including bar, awnings/shade structures etc) and that no details are available. While future SSDAs would consider the detailed design, preliminary concept details are required to consider the potential visual impacts of the proposal.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

2.2. HERITAGE NSW

Issue	Response
<p>Proposed deck and its setback from the building parapet - There appears to be discrepancy between the setback shown in the submitted plans and as noted in the Heritage RtS letter. The <i>Proposed Level 10 Floor Plan</i> (Dwg No. 2003 Issue A dated 7/12/2021) prepared by Cottee Parker indicates a setback of approximately 2.3m, whereas the Heritage RtS describes this as 2.9m. It is considered that even a 2.9m setback is likely to have an adverse heritage impact. In the absence of a detailed visual analysis and assessment of heritage impact of all the elements associated with the proposed rooftop bar, establishing a setback as part of this stage is not advised.</p> <p>Therefore, it is recommended that the approval of the proposed deck is deferred to the detailed SSDA stage so that a more informed decision can be made based on additional information as noted above.</p>	<p>The setback between the existing parapet and the proposed balustrade is 2.3m.</p> <p>As above, Cottee Parker have prepared a Design Package which demonstrates that the proposed balustrade, furniture, bar et cetera are unlikely to be visible from key areas of the public domain.</p> <p>Previous assessments submitted in support of this modification application have confirmed that the works are not anticipated to have any negative heritage or visual impacts.</p> <p>The detailed SSDA will provide a full design package which will determine the setbacks, materiality and form of the rooftop structure. This will be supported by updated heritage and visual impact analysis.</p> <p>Prior to lodging this proposal, the Applicant will consult with Heritage NSW and consider any feedback in the development of the scheme (which Heritage NSW will be able to comment on as part of the SSDA referral process).</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that the proposed modification, which includes provision for an external deck structure, will not have negative heritage impacts.</p>
<p>Staging - the Heritage RtS letter confirms the possibility that additional storeys may be added on top of Stage 1a interim structure to attain the approved ballroom envelope. Since the Stage 1a structure will not benefit from a competitive design process, an ad hoc approach will limit the design potential of the final outcome, even if such a process is applied at the later stage. It is preferable that the Stage 1a prefabricated structure is removed from its location after the expiry of the approved time limit.</p>	<p>This comment has arisen from a misunderstanding of our previous submission. No 'additional' storeys will be added to the temporary function centre.</p> <p>The temporary function centre is one storey and will not have additional storeys added at a later date.</p> <p>It will be wholly removed from the site before the Ballroom is constructed.</p>

Issue	Response
<p>Time limit - The proposed Stage 1a is understood to be an 'interim' structure as a short-term response to Covid, so the basis for a 10-year duration is not clear. A much shorter time frame is likely to facilitate a more reversible structure and allow the original proposal to be executed as a separate concept based on a competitive design process in order to achieve design excellence.</p>	<p>The ten year time limit is considered wholly reasonable, given the impacts of COVID upon the local, domestic and international tourism markets.</p> <p>The hotel industry specifically is expected to experience a prolonged recovery to reach pre-COVID occupancies, which will be heavily reliant on the recovery of the international tourism market and consumer confidence.</p> <p>The time limit is also considered reasonable in view of Mulpha's desire to activate the (presently disused) rooftop space in the short to medium term. This activation will meet many local and state government objectives to bring activity back to the CBD in wake of COVID lockdowns. In this regard, the 10 year operational period is required to make the proposal viable, in view of Mulpha's investment in the works.</p> <p>The subsequent 'detailed' SSDA for the temporary function centre will require review by GA NSW and will also be required to demonstrate that it meets the City of Sydney's 'design excellence' criteria. It is also noteworthy that Mulpha has retained the services of an experienced architect (Cottee Parker) that has demonstrated experience in achieving design excellence in the City of Sydney and other jurisdictions.</p>
<p>Previous comments highlighting the overall impact of any rooftop additions within the 30m setback in this highly sensitive location are reiterated. Although there is a reduction to the previously approved envelope, the modified proposal features new deck addition to the roof (along with balustrade and elements associated with a roof top hospitality venue that are likely to follow), which would have an adverse heritage impact.</p>	<p>It is recognised that there are elements within the 30m setback to Macquarie Street that were not envisaged by (or approved in) the original consent. However, Urbis does not agree that these amendments will have a major adverse impact on the setting and significant views around the Treasury Building.</p> <p>The proposed deck itself will not be visible behind the parapet so there is no potential for impacts on the setting or views. The existing</p>

Issue	Response
	<p>parapet would remain dominant in the streetscape.</p> <p>A detailed design package with updated heritage and visual impact analysis will be provided at detailed SSDA stage – which will demonstrate the acceptability of the project.</p> <p>As above, Cottee Parker have provided preliminary analysis (appended to this letter), which demonstrates the proposed deck structure is unlikely to be visible from key public domain vantage points.</p>

3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This letter and the supporting Design Package satisfactorily respond to each of the issues raised by DPE and Heritage NSW.

It is considered the proposal is acceptable having regard to the relevant biophysical, economic and social considerations.

The application will provide significant public benefit by allowing Mulpha to activate the Transport House rooftop space in the short-term, enabling significant reinvestment in a heritage listed building and Sydney CBD.

Having considered all relevant matters, we conclude that the proposed modification is appropriate for the site and approval is recommended, subject to appropriate conditions of consent.

Kind regards,

Edward Green

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