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SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
320 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT | DEPARTMENT OF LANDS BUILDING, 23-33 BRIDGE STREET, SYDNEY SSD7484 – CONDITION B4 (NCC UPGRADE WORKS)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared to assess the impact of the proposed National Construction Code (NCC) upgrades that are a required component of the approved development for the Department of Lands Building (Lands Building) located at 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney.

This HIS is being submitted following approval of State Significant Development (SSD) Stage 2 Application Number SSD7484, for the adaptive reuse of the Lands Building, located at 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney, and the Education Building, located at 35-39 Bridge Street, Sydney as a hotel facility. Both buildings have been described as the “Sandstone Precinct”. SSD7484 includes the following condition:

National Construction Code (NCC) Compliance (including internal works)

B4 All new structural and internal works are to comply with the NCC, and structural, building services, acoustic, fire protection and access upgrades are to be designed and integrated into the two heritage items in a manner that maximises the conservation and enhancement of their historic spatial qualities and the conservation and exposure of significant original and early fabric and finishes. Alternate solutions are to be proposed, wherever these are necessary to ensure the most sympathetic heritage outcome. Significant plaster ceilings must not be intentionally or accidentally disturbed or damaged in any way.

A detailed Statement of Heritage Impact, including guidelines for necessary upgrades to comply with the NCC, reflecting the above shall be prepared in consultation with Council

and the Heritage Council for approval by the Secretary prior to issue of the Construction Certificate 3 – Foundations/In Ground Structure (CC3) for each building.

This HIS has been submitted to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to satisfy Condition B4 of the SSD approval. Overall, we consider that the proposed NCC upgrades will have an acceptable heritage impact in the context of the major adaptive reuse works that have been approved for the Lands Building.

1.2. METHODOLOGY & STRUCTURE

This HIS has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013*, known as *The Burra Charter*, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now Heritage NSW) publication, *NSW Heritage Manual*.

The Burra Charter provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words 'place', 'cultural significance', 'fabric', and 'conservation', is as defined in Article 1 of *The Burra Charter*. The *NSW Heritage Manual* explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.

This HIS will outline the heritage context and significance of the Lands Building, describe the works proposed as part of the NCC upgrades, and will discuss their potential impact on the established heritage significance of the place.

1.3. LIMITATIONS

Archaeological assessment of the subject site is outside the scope of this HIS.

This HIS only addresses the relevant heritage planning provisions and does not address general planning or environmental management considerations.

This HIS does not include any new physical or historical evidence and, as such, should be read in conjunction with the *Lands Department Building Conservation Management Plan (CMP)* prepared by GBA Heritage, dated May 2017 and endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council in June 2017.

2. SITE IDENTIFICATION

2.1. LOCATION

The subject site is located on the south of Bridge Street facing Macquarie Place to the north, and occupies a whole block bounded by Loftus Street to the east, Gresham Street to the west, and Bent Street to the south. It is legally described as Lot 1877 / DP 877000.

2.2. SPECIAL CHARACTER AREAS

The site is located within 2 Special Character Areas as identified under the Sydney Local Environmental Plan, being:

- Bridge Street / Macquarie Place / Bulletin Place Special Character Area (northern half of site)
- Farrer Place Special Character Area (southern half of site)



Figure 1 – Aerial image of locality, with Lands Building highlighted
 Source: NSW Spatial Services, SIX Maps 2022

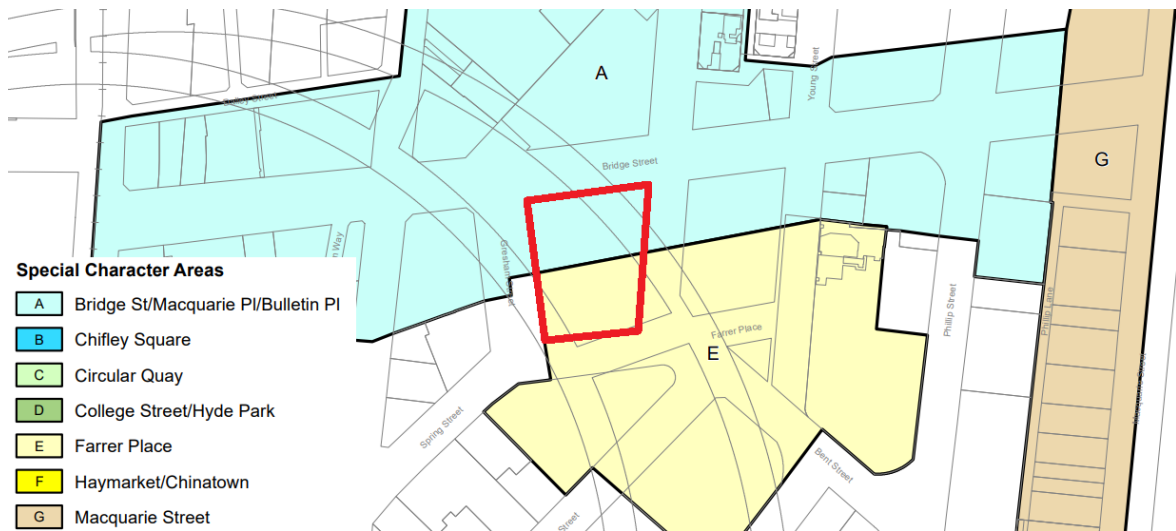


Figure 2 – Detail from Special Character Areas Map Retail Premises Map sheet 014, showing Lands Building (outlined red) within 2 Special Character Areas
 Source: Sydney LEP 2012, with Urbis overlay

3. HERITAGE CONTEXT

3.1. STATUTORY LISTINGS

The following statutory heritage listings apply to the site:

Local

Listed under Schedule 5 of the Sydney LEP 2012 as *Former “Department of Lands” building including interior* (State significance, I1683).

State

Listed on the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR) as *Department of Lands Building* (SHR 744).

National

Located within the *Governors’ Domain and Civic Precinct* National Heritage Place (Place ID 106103). It is identified as a building which forms part of the National Heritage values of the listed Precinct.

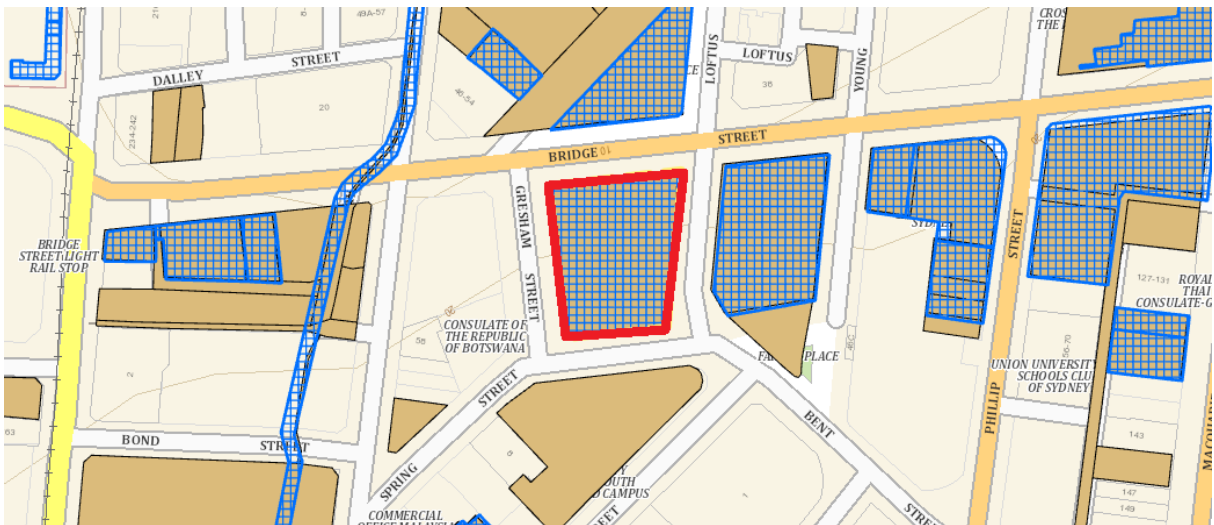


Figure 3 – Detail from Planning Portal map showing Lands Building (outlined red) and general heritage context. Items shaded tan are listed under the Sydney LEP 2012; items hatched blue are listed under the SHR.

Source: NSW Department of Customer Service 2022, with Urbis overlay

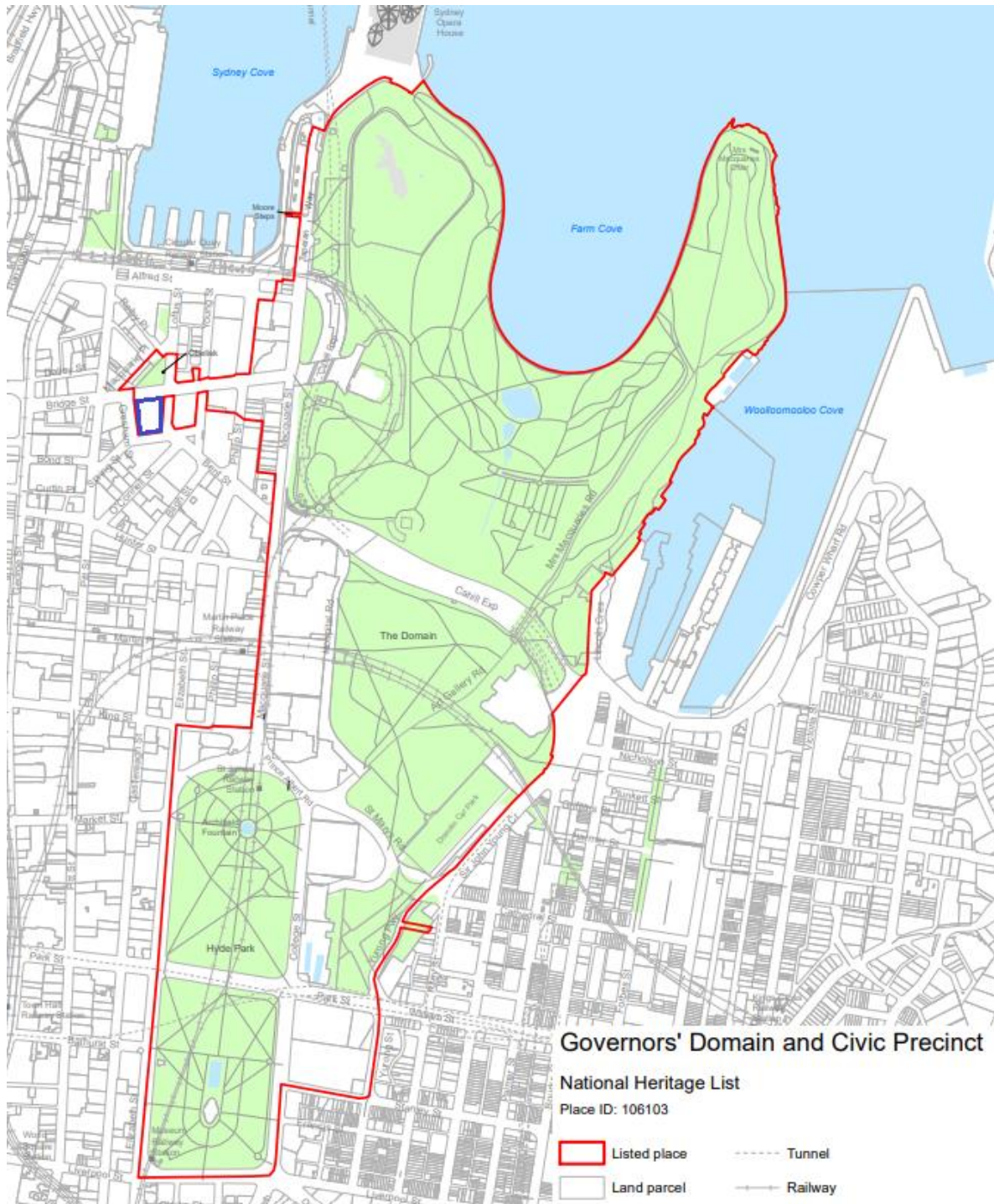


Figure 4 – Location and boundary map of the Governors' Domain and Civic Precinct, showing Lands Building (outlined blue) within the context of the National Heritage Place
 Source: Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 2021, with Urbis overlay

3.2. ESTABLISHED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The following statement of significance for the Lands Building has been reproduced from the endorsed CMP prepared by GBA Heritage (May 2017):

The Lands Department Building has STATE (and possibly National) heritage significance.

It is an outstanding example of a late nineteenth century purpose-built government administration building and represents a major change in the way government departments were housed at the time. Directly associated with the influential and powerful Lands Department for most of its life, the Lands Department Building is one of a number of public buildings constructed at the time that gave civic expression to the significance of the government's role in guiding the colony's development.

The Lands Department Building is an exceptional example of a late-Victorian classical revival public building adapted for Australian climatic conditions with the addition of colonnades, verandas and central ventilation wells. The scale and style of the building, the use of a mix of Australian, British and classical decorative motifs and the inclusion of statues of famous Australian explorers and surveyors reflects the significant growth in national confidence and pride throughout the late nineteenth century, leading to Federation in 1901. This period marked a change in Sydney's identity from a provincial town to a city of standing within the British Empire and the world. The Lands Department Building is closely associated with a significant phase in Australia's history and in the development of the visual character and identity of Sydney itself during the late-Victorian period.

The building retains a very high degree of authenticity and integrity in its external form and detailing, its internal layout and decorative detailing, and its moveable heritage. The retention of the look, feel and spatial qualities of a late-nineteenth century building, combined with its complementary townscape, is rare in Australia.

The Lands Department Building is a very fine example of NSW Colonial Architect James Barnett's work and clearly demonstrates his skilful detailing of the classical style, combined with the beginnings of a more vernacular style for major public buildings. The building is also associated with the work of builder and notable citizen John Young, as well as the numerous State Ministers and Surveyor Generals who occupied offices in the building.

At the time of its construction the Lands Department Building was a landmark and it remains so today. It is particularly well known because of its portrait statues and its clock tower. Together with the Chief Secretary's Building, the former Treasury and the Education Department Building, the Lands Department Building contributes to one of the most intact late Victorian/ early Edwardian precincts in Sydney. Forming the core of the colonial government administration, this monumental precinct reinforced the role and importance of government in New South Wales.

The Lands Department Building was notable at the time of its construction for its innovative use of fire resistant materials, as well as its services including heating, lighting, ventilation and communication devices, which were at the forefront of technology. The building displays a high degree of technical achievement in its fine



detailing and high quality workmanship, both externally and internally; particularly its carved stonework, joinery, metalwork and decorative plasterwork.

4. WORKS PROPOSED

A Design Statement has been prepared by Hassell, accompanying this application, which explains the works which are proposed to be carried out for NCC compliance. In summary, the works would entail:

Walls

New openings

- New openings in original walls, optimised to accommodate new services and enhanced access & circulation. Combination of arched and rectilinear lintels, finished with contemporary steel.

Reinstatement of original openings

- Where possible, original openings that had been concealed over time will be reinstated.

Ceilings

Fire protection

- Intumescent paint finish to retained lathe & plaster ceilings to perform as vertical fire separation between levels.
- Lower-ground tenanted retail areas have been designed to allow for future service zones between the conserved, original ceilings and the new, fire-rated ceilings (including allowance for capped-off services).

Acoustic isolation

- A combination of suspended acoustic panels, soft furnishings (including carpeting, rugs, or curtains) at ground-floor level and level 1 club suits to provide acoustic isolation.

Corridors

Structural upgrades

- New structural ties within corridor ceiling voids to allow for required seismic upgrades to unreinforced concrete ceiling arches.

New services

- Preliminary reticulation routes for electrical, hydraulic, and mechanical services to be located within the existing corridor ceiling voids, where possible. Access to be provided from above via existing and some new access panels, aligning to dimensions of marble tile infill flooring above.
- Addition of a suspended access platform within the northern corridor.
- Primary plant servicing the Lands Building is located within the adjacent Education Building and will utilise the interconnecting subterranean tunnel for service transfer.

Fire protection

- New sprinklers within the primary service reticulation zones and existing corridor ceiling cavities, including:
 - Sprinklers in southern corridor to be integrated within new ceiling linings; and
 - Sprinklers in northern corridor to be served as existing, with minimal new penetrations in nominated locations within lathe & plaster ceiling to accommodate new sprinklers (to be coordinated with heritage architect).

Floors

Seismic upgrades

- Existing floors to be upgraded to meet seismic requirements, with the introduction of a new plywood diaphragm above existing timber floor joists to be refinished in new or salvaged timber floorboards, where possible.

In-ground services

- New in-ground service reticulation paths, which have been coordinated to best avoid removal of the highly significant, original marble flooring and in-laid chain measure at the east corridor. New services to largely reticulate under salvaged timber floorboards within the retail spaces and within the repaved courtyards. A combination of boring and trenching will be coordinated to best consolidate service zones and to minimise potential impacts.
- Any marble floor to be impacted to be carefully removed, salvaged, and reinstated in accordance with future methodologies.

Service risers

- New service riser locations have been rationalised and limited to the following areas:
 - 3x locations for kitchen exhaust (in areas with least impact to significant fabric);
 - 2x locations for bathroom extraction (resulting from the consolidated locations of new amenities across levels); and
 - 3x consolidated major service rises adjacent to lift shafts.

Floor units

- Building on the current mechanical strategy for many rooms within the building, the club rooms at ground-floor level & level 1 will be mechanically served by floor-mounted FCUs, with reticulation paths coming from the adjacent and below corridor ceiling voids. Diagonal drilling is proposed to connect servicing and for coordination to occur between existing openings and floor joists.

Internal sound flanking paths

- Acoustic treatment to internal sound flanking paths is proposed within existing cavities and voids (e.g. behind walls and under floors) to minimise visual impacts.

Northern dome & tempietti

Rooftop bar

- New high-performance glazed door and window systems to new rooftop bar at levels 3 & 4 (in conjunction with future operational management measures).

Northern dome

- Removal of existing, non-compliant mezzanine level (including introduced lightweight partitions, and floor structure & finishes) within northern dome to provide required functional upgrades.
- Proposed new mezzanine within dome which will connect and align with the heights of the east & west terraces, providing new equitable & functional public access. New structure to be predominately independent of the existing fabric, with supporting structural columns transferring within the floor build-up of the level 3 zone.

Northern roof & terraces

- The accessible northern roof terraces and inter-connecting corridors (housing amenities) have been designed with new structural steel to support the proposed functional use and anticipated populations.

Tempietti

- New corridors within the plane of the existing roof, connecting the north dome to the east & west tempietti, which will provide level connecting access to new food & beverage spaces including a functional show kitchen in the east tempietto.
- Minor spatial alterations to facilitate this work, namely:
 - Removal of introduced, redundant, lightweight partitions
 - Removal of stair access to roof spaces
 - Upgrades to floor, wall, and ceiling finishes

Roof cavity services

- New services to be introduced in existing level 3 roof cavity, to be reticulated within the tempietti and northern dome.
- Southern roof services to be coordinated around existing roof trusses, to avoid onerous demolition and reconstruction.

Plant room acoustics

- Roof space insulation to mitigate noise transmission between new plant room areas at lower-ground level at the south-east corner of the building and new services within the existing roof cavities.

Courtyards

Northern courtyard façade and infill

- Introduction of a new high-performing glazed façade system in place of the 1950s lifts & stairwell which are already approved for removal

- Reconstruction of internal slabs where the fire stair has been removed.

Doors

Existing door acoustic upgrades

- Upgrading of existing internal timber doors in accordance with individual acoustic performance requirements. All works to be in accordance with relevant CMP policies and salvage methodologies. Upgrades to variously entail:
 - Introduction of additional acoustic perimeter seals
 - Replacement of glazed / timber panel inserts to meet requirements, where required
 - Replacement of door leafs, where required

Door swing directions

- Existing doors and gates within entries are retained against the flow of population with a fire-engineered performance solution. Doors to be upgraded with automated switches in fire mode.

Fire doors

- Upgrades to selected individual doors in accordance with fire engineering strategies. Upgrades to include replaced glazing, new fire seals, and / or fire-performing leafs and hardware. Details to be approved by design architect and project architect.

Accessibility upgrades

- Upgrades to existing doors to meet compliance & accessibility requirements, limited to those nominated within the DDA Performance-Based Design Brief, namely new compliant hardware and automated push buttons.
- It is noted that existing door width clearances and latch clearances do not meet current requirements, however these will not be altered.

Building access & entrances

Fire-isolated exits

- Use of 3 existing stairwells & entrances at Gresham Street (lower-ground level), Bent Street (ground-level), and Loftus Street (ground-level) – use of these egress points will result in no physical changes.
- The additional fire stair access from the subterranean tunnel allows for egress up to lower-ground level from basement, and a performance solution has been established by the fire engineer for egressing populations through to the nearest exit path.

Fire mimic panels & Education Building

- The primary fire booster for the Lands Building is located across Loftus St within the Education Building. As such, the associated Fire Mimic Panel is located within the Loftus St entrance.

Accessible building entry

- The primary entrance to the Lands Building has been nominated as the Gresham Street entrance on lower-ground level, co-located with the dual front-of-house lifts, servicing all publicly accessible levels of the building.
- The accessible upgrades required for equitable access to the Lands Building includes the provision of a compliant grade ramp in place of the existing non-compliant, modified stair within the existing vestibule. Existing marble floor that is removed to accommodate the wheelchair-compliant ramp will be salvaged and reinstated, detailed within the proposed finish of the new ramp. New brass handrails are proposed on either side of the ramp for compliance, detailed with minimal impact to heritage fabric.

Heritage stair upgrades

- Upgrades to the existing, highly significant stairs will entail:
 - Refinished anti-slip treatment to treads
 - Additional handrails fixed to outside walls
 - New integrated balustrades and handrails installed on the inside of the existing inner non-compliant balustrades, for fall prevention and safe egress
 - New contrasting nosing strips applied to stair treads

Vertical circulation

- 7 new lifts are being installed into the building, as approved under the existing SSD approval
- The new lift at the level 3 function spaces – co-located within the northern dome, east tempietto, and west tempietto – will require an additional pit-less DDA-compliant platform lift to provide equitable access to these upper-level public spaces. The new lift will be sited away and independent of the existing fabric of the dome, and instead integrated within the new mezzanine and above the existing floor joists.
- The back-of-house staff offices at lower-ground level will also require a new, DDA-compliant platform lift. This will be set within an area of the building which has been subject to a high degree of change over time (being the former plant area).

Loggia

- Removable, temporary ramps will be used on an as-needs basis to provide access to the external balcony (loggia) space.

5. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

Overall, the upgrades, which are required to satisfy the requirements of the NCC, have been carefully designed to minimise adverse heritage impacts. Overall, these works are considered acceptable in the context of the major adaptive reuse works which are being undertaken at the Lands Building.

Urbis Heritage has worked extensively with the design team to explore all available options to satisfy the NCC and other necessary structural, building services, acoustic, fire protection and access upgrades. On balance, Urbis Heritage is satisfied that these necessary upgrade works have been designed in a manner which best mitigates and minimises potential impacts on significant building

fabric and elements while equipping the Lands Building to successfully perform its new use as a publicly-accessible tourist facility. Key ways in which potential impacts have been minimised include, variously:

- the introduction of new, reversible fabric;
- containing interventions in previously altered fabric or in new fabric which is approved to be introduced;
- consolidating services; and
- performance-based solutions which take into account the existing conditions of the Lands Building in the context of its future use.

Further, Urbis Heritage is satisfied that the NCC upgrade works have been designed to be in accordance with relevant conservation policies contained in the endorsed CMP. The endorsed CMP for the Lands Building, prepared by GBA Heritage in May 2017, includes the following policies which apply to these NCC upgrade works:

6.7 Principles for proposed change

Policy 6.7.1

Generally, proposed changes that impact on heritage significance should only be considered if:

- *The change is considered necessary to maintain the asset in working order; [...]*
- *Care is taken to minimise adverse impacts on heritage significance; [...]*
- *There is no other alternative solution; [...]*
- *The change supports a viable ongoing use;*
- *The change enables or increased public accessibility; [...]*
- *Any change is reversible if it adversely affects elements that make a defining contribution to the place's significance. Non-reversible change should not prevent future conservation action.*

6.16 Services

Policy 6.16.1

To achieve the most effective and efficient outcome the approach should be a 'whole of building' solution, rather than piecemeal.

Policy 6.16.2 Upgrade of services

Ensure that the upgrading of services and/or planning for new services:

- *Minimises the impact on significant fabric;*

- *Locates services in areas of lesser significance or areas already containing services;*
- *Uses the existing penetrations as much as possible; and*
- *Avoids areas of potential archaeological sensitivity.*

Policy 6.16.3 Location and visual presentation of new services

The location and visual presentation of new services within the building should generally remain subservient and respectful to the scale, dignity and presentation of the existing building.

Policy 6.16.4

The introduction of new services within spaces identified as being of Exceptional and High significance requires careful attention. The work should aim to be reversible wherever possible, with minimal impact on significant fabric.

Policy 6.16.7 New services

Where new services or upgrading of existing services are required (communication, fire, electrical and plumbing), these should be sympathetic to the original design intent. They should be introduced discreetly in areas of lesser significance to avoid damage to significant fabric and avoid visual impact on significant spaces.

6.17 Code compliance

Policy 6.17.1

Required initiatives to meet the requirements of the National Construction Code (including the Building Code of Australia and the Plumbing Code of Australia) and other codes and standards must be carefully designed to avoid unacceptable adverse heritage impacts.

Policy 6.17.2

Required initiatives to meet the requirements of public utilities, such as the NSW Fire Brigade and Ausgrid, must be carefully designed to avoid unacceptable adverse heritage impacts.

Policy 6.17.3

Future adaptations and upgrades of the Lands Building must aim to meet the requirements of the National Construction Code, particularly in regard to protection against fire. Where there is a conflict between the National Construction Code and the heritage significance of the building, alternative options to achieve compliance should be investigated, including performance fire engineered solutions. However if it can be demonstrated that the alteration is absolutely essential then such alteration must be made in accordance with the policies in this Conservation Management Plan.

Policy 6.17.4

If original or early architectural elements have to be removed or concealed in order to achieve code compliance, then the appropriate approach should be one of “reversibility” and the minimisation of damage. Dispensation options must be explored prior to any intervention.

Policy 6.17.5

A strategy should be developed which seeks to address Code compliance from a whole of building perspective to avoid piecemeal solutions that may have an incremental adverse heritage impact.

6.18 Access

Policy 6.18.2

Any changes to the site required to improve public access should also be made in accordance with the other policies in this Conservation Management Plan.

Policy 6.18.3

Where compliance with the DDA is likely to have an unacceptably adverse heritage impact on significant fabric, formal advice on alternative means of compliance shall be sought from expert consultants. Where there is a conflict between the DDA and the heritage significance of the building (particularly the retention of fabric of Exceptional or High significance), alternative options to achieve compliance should be investigated and dispensation options explored prior to any intervention.

However, if it can be demonstrated that the alteration is absolutely essential then such alteration must be made in accordance with the policies in this Conservation Management Plan.

Policy 6.18.4

The lessee and hotel operator must ensure that the public areas of the hotel remain publicly accessible and that members of the public, who may not be staying in the hotel, are able to access the public areas of the building. [...]

Policy 6.18.5

Consideration should be given to ensuring that areas of the Ground Level are publicly accessible and that public connectivity is promoted through the ground plane of the building.

The proposed upgrade works are considered to have been designed in accordance with the above conservation policies. The works proposed are required to enable the building's ongoing use as a publicly-accessible and useable premises which is able to achieve compliance with the NCC and other structural, building services, acoustic, fire protection, and access requirements commensurate with its future use. The works are, therefore, considered to have an acceptable heritage impact.

6. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This HIS has been prepared to assess the impact of the proposed NCC upgrades that are a required component of the approved adaptive reuse of the Lands Building located at 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney.

This HIS is being submitted following approval of SSD Stage 2 Application Number SSD7484, for the adaptive reuse of the Lands Building and the Education Building (located at 35-39 Bridge Street), Sydney as a tourism facility. This HIS has been prepared and submitted to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in part fulfillment of condition B4 of the SSD approval, which requires that a detailed HIS be prepared to assess the proposed upgrade works.

Overall, we consider that the proposed NCC upgrades will have an acceptable heritage impact in the context of the major adaptive reuse works that have been approved for the place. The upgrade works have been developed with Urbis' heritage input to minimise adverse heritage impacts while responding to the requirements of the NCC.

The upgrade works are in accordance with the intent of the endorsed CMP, prepared by GBA Heritage and endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW. The proposal is also considered to be in accordance with the relevant heritage requirements of the Sydney LEP 2012 and the guidelines of the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012.

The proposed works are therefore considered to have an acceptable and not unreasonable heritage impact on the significance of the Lands Building in the context of the major adaptive reuse work which has been approved. It is therefore our recommendation that the Department have no hesitation, on heritage grounds, in approving the proposed scope of upgrade works.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Bryant".

Jonathan Bryant
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