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27 February 2019

Ms Gabriela Olivares

Laing O'Rourke Australia
By email: GOlivares@laingorourke.com.au

Dear Gabriela ,

RE: SUSAN WAKIL HEALTH BUILDING (SWHB) PROJECT, SSDA / UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY – SUSAN WAKIL HEALTH PRECINCT STAGE 1 – HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Urbis has been engaged by Laing O'Rourke on behalf of the University of Sydney (the Applicant), to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement in conjunction with a modification to SSD 16_7974 pursuant to Section 4.55(1A) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).

BACKGROUND AND THE PROPOSAL

On 11 September 2018, development consent was granted by the Minister for Planning. The approved development consisted of construction of an education building and use by the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery and the Central Clinical School, including:

- Site excavation and earthworks.
- Construction and use of a nine level education building (including a plant level).
- Landscaping works.
- Building identification signage; and
- Utilities and infrastructure connection works.

The modification seeks to amend the following conditions of consent:

- A2 (Terms of Consent)
- B26 (Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan)

Within Condition A2, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (NSW DPE) provide a schedule of approved drawings. Amendments to A2 includes replacing submitted landscape plans to reflect the intended tree removal of trees 557 and 693 (as identified in the arborist report and landscape plan). Tree removal is proposed as they are currently located within the path of travel from Gate 1 to the concrete loading and materials handling location on site; and to propose a more orderly construction traffic route to the site.

The Heritage Impact Statement is limited to the assessment of the removal only.

It is not clear in the CMP when the trees were planted and the age of the trees is unknown. The TreelQ report describes the trees as follows:

Tree 557: Mature tree, 17m in height, 4m radial crown spread, of good health and structural condition, and with a useful life expectancy of 15-40 years. TreelQ have accorded the tree a moderate landscape significance (this is assessed from an Arboricultural perspective rather than heritage significance).¹ We understand this tree is 30-40 years of age.

Tree 693: Mature tree, 14m in height, 7m radial crown spread, of good health and structural condition, and with a useful life expectancy of 15-40 years. TreelQ have accorded the tree a moderate landscape significance (this is assessed from an Arboricultural perspective rather than heritage significance).² We understand this tree is 30-40 years of age.



Figure 2 – Tree 557

Source: Tree IQ 2018, Plate 1



Figure 3 – Tree 693

Source: Tree IQ 2018, Plate 2

¹ Tree IQ, 19/11/2018, *University of Sydney – Health Precinct, Arboricultural Assessment*, Appendix 2

² Ibid

STATUTORY LISTINGS

The following listings are applicable to the site:

Listing	Item
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register	The University of Sydney, University Colleges and Victoria Park, Listing Number 01974
Sydney Local Environmental Plan, 2012	University of Sydney Conservation Area (C5)

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Campus Improvement Program (SSD 6123) consent, specifically Conditions B8, B9 and B10, requires future applications (such as the subject amendment) to consider the University of Sydney Grounds Conservation Management Plan (GCMP).

Figure 4.4, titled 'Cultural soft landscape: significant trees and types of open spaces and landscapes' of the GCMP (Figure 4) ranks the group of trees around the southern edge of University Oval No 1 (Landscape Element) as having 'exceptional' significance. This diagram has been described in the GCMP as follows:

... show the core elements, exceptional, high and moderate, of the campus and should be retained in the existing layout and complemented by new works rather than construction of new work involving the removal of elements ranked exceptional, high or moderate.

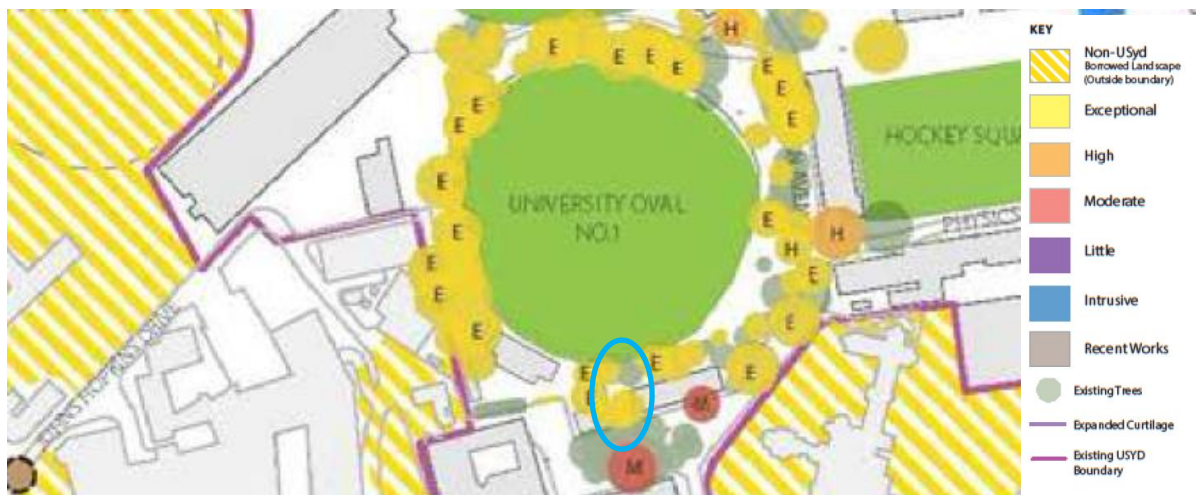


Figure 4 – Cultural Soft Landscape Significant Trees. The location of the trees effected is indicated in blue.

Source: Ground Conservation Management Plan (revised), Clive Lucas, Stapleton and partners Pty, Ltd. Figure 4.4, Drawing No. A03, dated 7/7/2014.

Statement of Significance – “Landscape in response to buildings”

The following statement of significance has been sourced from the *Grounds CMP* (2017).

The grounds of the University of Sydney campuses are culturally significant as evidence of the historical development of the University’s architecture, landscape and urban design.

The grounds contain significant trees, some of which date back to the late 19th century and the mass planting of shrubberies dispatched from the Botanic Garden in the 1860s and 1870s. These trees represent the first attempts at creating a suitable landscape and setting for the university campus, the campus gardens also contain many plants dating from the 1920s and 1930s, a period which saw the first comprehensive use of planting and gardens to beautify the university.

Strongly associated with Professor Leslie Wilkinson and the implementation of his 1920 master plan, the University grounds, more than any other site, reflects Wilkinson’s work in beautifying and unifying buildings and their settings. This pursuit of beauty can also be seen in the work of Professor Eben Gowrie Waterhouse, who made a significant contribution to the planning and planting of gardens in the Camperdown Campus in the Inter-war years.

The university grounds have a distinctive aesthetic quality. The architecture, courts and vistas combine to form an environment of immense appeal. The mature trees and gardens are a vital part of this aesthetic.

The rarity of the University grounds lies within its cultural landscapes, plantings of botanical collections and scientific origins such as camellia plantings by Waterhouse and rare cultural landscape groupings of significant trees.³

The GCMP does not incorporate a specific schedule of significant trees and the subject trees are not specifically assessed (although the trees on the southern side of the oval are collectively graded as being of exceptional significance as detailed above). We understand the trees are approximately 30-40 years of age and therefore do not date to the significant phases noted in the above statement. Therefore Urbis considers that the subject trees principal contribution is in the contribution to the landscaped character of the no.1 Oval rather than their individual value.

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Removal of trees 557 and 693 is proposed to enable the SSD works with access being required to the concrete loading and materials handling location on site. The tree removal was considered in conjunction with the project Arborist Tree IQ who found the following:

The trees are of low value and are not listed in the City of Sydney’s Significant Tree Register or recorded as significant or high value within the University’s Tree Management Plan 2017.⁴

It is acknowledged that the trees are part of a collective landscape group that is considered to be of exceptional significance in the GCMP, and the removal therefore inevitably has some impact, however Urbis considers that the value of the trees is primarily in their contribution to the broader landscape

³ GCMP, pg. 97.

⁴ Tree IQ, op.cit. pg. 1.

setting of the oval, rather than their individual value. This loss is able to be mitigated by the replacement of the trees with suitable mature replacement plantings as proposed. It is proposed to replace the removed trees with two additional native *Angophora Costata* (400L). The species is consistent with other new plantings as approved by SSD7974 (indicated in green at Figure 1 above) and these collectively will serve to reinforce the landscaped character of the oval. Therefore whilst the individual trees are removed, the overall impact of the approved works and the mitigating tree replacement subject to this modification, is an enhanced landscape character and retention of the overall significant values as identified in the GCMP.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me on 02 8233 7610.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Fiona Binns', with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Fiona Binns
Associate Director