



Ben Lusher
Director, Key Sites Assessment
Planning and Environment

Via email: Rebecka.Groth@planning.NSW.gov.au

Dear Mr Lusher

Additional Information Request – Alteration to Level 1 of the Rocks Centre (Penrhyn House) 22-26 Playfair Street, The Rocks (SSD 8307)

Thank you for your letter requesting additional information regarding the SSD application.

Please find below a detailed response, we trust that this will address the comments arising from the SSD submissions.

The two items of additional information requested relate to the following:

- The visibility of the proposed entry enclosure and its contents, in particular the prominence of the diagonal cross bracing of the bridge balustrade.
- The visual relationship between the proposed structure and the existing building, in particular the proposed siting in relation to the fascia and gutter.

Visibility – Bridge Balustrade Cross Bracing

The entry structure and its contents have been specifically designed to reduce the visibility, and in particular the solidity of the new structures. In the development of the design Welsh Major the design architects have worked closely with Shreeji Consultant structural engineers to design the lift structure and the trussed walkway as lightly framed structures clad in mesh. This allows for a level of transparency and a layering of materials that filters the appearance of the structure while maintaining views through to the original brick wall beyond. Overall this acts to reduce the visual impact of the new work.

The walkway bridge, and in particular the diagonal members, have been designed so that the balustrade is, in effect, a truss. This greatly reduces the depth of the walkway structure, and in particular the solid structural elements, allowing the walkway a much lighter appearance overall. The fine diagonal and vertical members of the truss are clad with panels of copper mesh that filter the view of the structure, while maintaining views through to the original masonry wall beyond. (please refer to notes on drawing SSDA.202 that show the elevational treatment). The diagonal bracing will only be directly viewed without mesh cladding over from the walkway itself (refer to sectional drawings SSDA.203 + SSDA.504).

In consultation with our design consultants, we believe that this treatment provides the best design solution for the bridge, generating a lightly framed structure that creates transparency and a layering of materials, with the definition of the structural frame being filtered by the copper mesh cladding.

This also allows the heritage significant brickwork wall beyond the walkway to be read as the dominant solid material within the stair and walkway zone.

The entry structure and its contents have been specifically designed to reduce the visibility, and in particular the solidarity

Visual Relationships – Height in relationship to Penrhyn House

The height of the new entry structure has been carefully considered during the collaborative design process with the Place Management NSW Strategic Planning and Heritage Team. A number of height options were reviewed and the overall height was also considered in relation to the predominant views of the structure along Playfair Street. The final design height was established on the following basis:

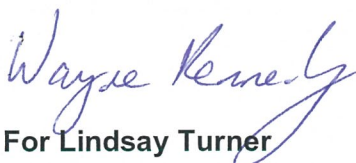
- The entry structure is designed to create a layering of materials and filtering of edges of the building. This reduces the apparent bulk and scale of the overall structure by blurring the defined edges.
- The proportions of the glazed entry structure, particularly when viewed along Playfair Street (the dominant view and the only elevation that can be viewed from a distance) have been designed to create a vertically proportioned element as a counterpoint to the predominant horizontal proportions and elements of the Penrhyn House. The vertical elongated proportions serve to reduce the apparent bulk of the entry structure and avoid a squat and blocky appearance that would detract from the surrounding heritage buildings.
- The alignment of the top of the glazed entry structure has been set at the top of the gutter of Penrhyn House with a lower recessed element separating the two structures as per best practice infill design principles for the adoption of new elements to heritage buildings. This has been specifically set at this height so that when viewed from along Playfair Street the gutter and fascia lines can be read continuing along through the gap between the two structures. (Refer to SSDA301 and Detail 1 on SSDA.505)

In consultation with our design consultants we believe that the proposed height provides the best design solution for the entry structure, with the apparent bulk and scale of the new structure reduced by its vertical proportions and the layering of elements, while still allowing for the important horizontal alignments of Penrhyn House gutter and fascia to be appreciated and read as continuous elements. This approach has now also been discussed directly with the heritage specialist at City of Sydney.

In summary, we consider that both elements have been well thought thru and carefully designed and detailed by our structural engineers and design architect with heritage overview and input from Place Management NSW's Strategic Planning and Heritage Team.

If you require any further information please contact Wayne Kennedy on 0468 317 322.

Yours sincerely



For Lindsay Turner

Project Director

Public Works Advisory