

State Significant Development Application

Application No SSD-32927319

Submission Date: 21 July 2022, 1pm

POWERHOUSE ULTIMO RENEWAL

OBJECTION

As a registered architect who was previously the chair of the AIA(NSW) Heritage Committee with a passion for exemplary architecture by local architects in Australia

I note the following Items of Concern relating to this SSDA:

The application Indicates the redevelopment area to include the Award winning, internationally recognised, Adaptive Reuse buildings of the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo completed 1988.

The scope of the SSDA appears to have increased and differs from the public consultation webinar provided by Ethos Urban with regards the proposed view from Pier Street:

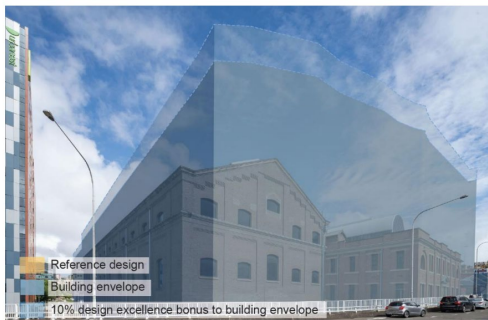


Figure 21 View 2: Pier Street – proposed view
Source: Virtual Ideas

With reference to other visualisations provided in the SSDA:

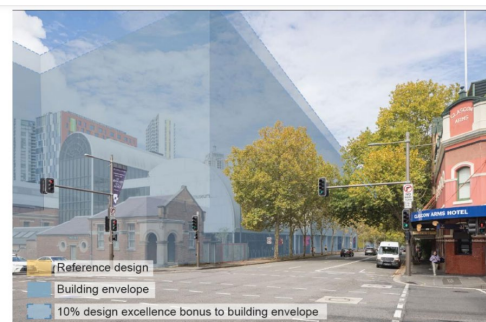


Figure 19 View 1: Harris Street and William Henry Street – proposed view
Source: Virtual Ideas

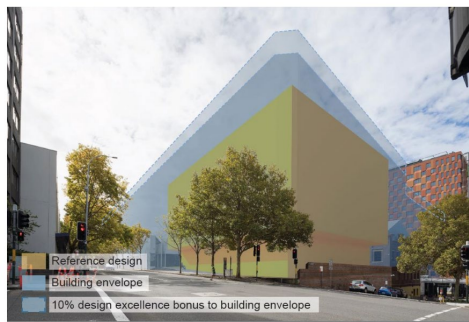


Figure 27 View 5: Harris Street and Macarthur Street – proposed view
Source: Virtual Ideas

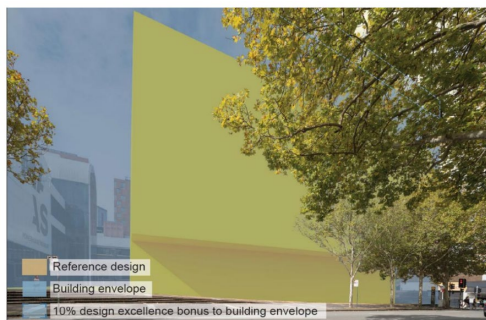


Figure 29 View 6: Harris Street – proposed view
Source: Virtual Ideas

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- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo is a Sulman Award winning project, receiving the Sir John Sulman Award in 1988, and is of significant importance to the architectural profession in NSW. The Sulman Award is the highest ranked award by the Australian Institute of Architects (known as the AIA) in NSW.
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo has also received the following awards:
The Presidents Award for Recycled Buildings – NSW Public Works Dept with Denton Corker Marshall
The Belle Interiors Award for Interior Design
The Sir Zelman Cowan Award Finalist
At the time, it was the first project ever to have been nominated in 3 categories in the National Architecture Awards.
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo is an exemplar of adaptive reuse, retaining original industrial fabric, and predates the Tate Modern in London (also an adaptive reuse of a Powerstation). It joins other eminent examples of adaptive reuse such as the Musee d'Orsay in Paris (an adaptive reuse of a railway station, opened in 1986).
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo is an example of the work of NSW Government Architect's Office with Lionel Glendenning as Principal Architect and JW Thomson, Government Architect
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo was the first of many significant buildings on Harris Street to fulfill the Masterplan concept of Harris Street as the technological conduit of Sydney. Its location and scale is also in keeping within the current Master Plan for the Pymont Ultimo area.

It not only forms a direct link with the Original Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences building on Harris St, but also generated the scale of buildings that followed:
eg the ABC headquarters, the Ultimo Community Centre and the Ian Thorpe Swimming pool.

- The current heritage listing for the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo is incomplete as it only includes 2 buildings on the site.
- The scope of the SSDA indicates high rise development along Harris St to replace the Wran Building, Galleria and Harris St Forecourt. This is not in keeping with the stated aims of the EIS principles on Urban Design: *"...maintain or increase the quality or quantity of the public domain on the site, and reveal and celebrate heritage fabric and spaces to the wider public domain"*
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo of 1988 adaptive reuse including the additions of the Wran Building and Galleria was designed in direct response to the unique and varied collection that it housed. The form and scale of the Wran Building and Galleria responded to the large objects such as significant railway engines and a direct rail link from Central Railway station.

I have gleaned from press regarding the Museum's collection, that the engines will be retained at Ultimo and therefore the Wran Building and Galleria must also be retained. As you know, the rail tracks from Central to the Powerhouse have been preserved under the new Goods Line redevelopment for future posterity and resurrection.

- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo (including the former Ultimo Tramways Powerhouse together with the 1988 adaptive reuse and Additions) is on the AIA (NSW) Register of Significant Buildings – which recognises architectural merit, high architectural qualities, and important works from leading architects and architectural practices.

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- The context and history of this place is significant to the history and development of Sydney and NSW.
- A recognisable presence in Sydney is important for Sydney to be acknowledge as an international player in Architecture, Adaptive Re-Use and Museums of Applied Arts and Applied Sciences.
- The visual impact of the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo has been significantly eroded by recent development at Darling Harbour. Whilst the reorientation of the entry toward Darling Harbour is welcome, the proposed height, scale and bulk of proposed development on Harris St is detrimental and insensitive to the existing streetscape, urban scale, existing buildings and amenity in the area.
- The Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo benefits the educational aspirations of current and future generations and is a tourist attraction.
- Removing buildings that are able to be renewed or further adapted to respond to current contexts and requirements is a deleterious action with regards environmental sensitivity, waste of resources & embodied energy, and reduction of the serious impacts of climate change.
- The proposed scope and bulk in the SSDA clearly demonstrates a detrimental visual impact to the important, existing buildings on the site.