

Mr Brendon Roberts  
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Department of Planning & Environment  
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SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Ms Michelle Nettlefold

By email: [Brendon.roberts@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Brendon.roberts@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Roberts

**Request for comment and recommended consent conditions for a Concept Proposal  
for the redevelopment of Cockle Bay Wharf (SSD 7684)**

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Reference is made to your correspondence received on 16 December 2016 requesting comment and recommended consent conditions from the Heritage Council of NSW (the Heritage Council) for the above proposal. This project includes demolition and existing site improvements, up to 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of public open space, building envelopes for a podium and tower up to 235m high and maximum gross floor area of 85,000m<sup>2</sup> for commercial and 25,000m<sup>2</sup> for retail development.

Several documents were reviewed to provide this assessment including:

- *Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Cockle Bay Wharf Redevelopment* prepared by JBA Planners, dated 2 December 2016;
- Appendix F - Historical Archaeological Assessment prepared by GML Heritage dated December 2016;
- Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Report, prepared by GML Heritage dated October 2016.

The proposed State Significant Development (SSD) site includes and adjoins State Heritage Register item Pyrmont Bridge (SHR no. 1618). It is situated over a section of the early Sydney harbour foreshore. That foreshore, as seen by archaeological investigations nearby at Barangaroo, was used intensively for harbour-side docking, wharves etc. It is highly likely that archaeological evidence of elaborate shipping-related activities and other industrial activities remain within parts of the subject site, under layers of later fill. These remains have been assessed as likely to be of both potential state and local heritage significance.

There is an inconsistency between the supporting EIS, which recommends it is appropriate to redevelop the site through full scale archaeological salvage and the Historical Archaeological Assessment, which recommends archaeological test excavation to identify significant deposits and guide the design to limit the impacts to significant fabric. There is also no discussion of an assessment of the maritime resources and their significance which may be impacted by the proposed development. In light of these issues, it is unclear how the overall concept approval will address the impact to state significant archaeological resources through the

redevelopment. Further comments and recommended conditions of consent are provided below for maritime archaeology and historical archaeology.

### **Maritime Archaeology**

The EIS and supporting historical archaeological assessment identified that there is potential for maritime archaeological evidence within the subject site. It is further noted the *Cockle Bay Marine Structures Renewal Project*, also an SSD project, has provided clear evidence that there is likely to be maritime archaeological resources will be impacted, require assessment, and therefore also require management during this project.

There are likely to be the remains of multiple layers of water-front occupation, both under reclamation and under water. It is unclear from the historical archaeological assessment whether the current waterfront areas are piled or based on solid reclamation grounds. It is also relevant that previous excavations in waterfront areas on this side of Darling Harbour (extending north to Barangaroo) uncovered extensive and highly significant remains of maritime infrastructure and other historical sites. The *Cockle Bay Marine Structures Renewal Project EIS* further states that there is a high potential for remains associated with previous wharves, jetties, and activities in Cockle Bay buried below sediment that has accumulated since the last dredging in the 1980s. These potential remains are likely to be representative of the earliest maritime infrastructure in Sydney Harbour and are considered to have State heritage Significance. The **potential state significant maritime resources includes** former seawalls, wharves, piers and jetties and also possible ship or boat wrecks (and associated relics) in these areas.

The supporting EIS and Historical Archaeological Assessment have not considered the impact on these resources and what appropriate mitigation measures can be adopted during the design and construction to prevent significant impact. Given the high likelihood of state significant sites and relics being discovered in this area, it is considered that a detailed maritime archaeological assessment of these areas should be undertaken as a matter of urgency to better inform the project.

Given that wharf and other maritime infrastructure sites were clearly located within the proposed development footprint, any excavation for demolition purposes should anticipate the possibility of maritime infrastructure sites and associated relics well below current reclamation surface levels and possibly as deep as the former seabed, the following consent conditions are recommended:

**The EIS should be revised and supported by an appropriately authored Maritime Archaeological Assessment as an addendum to the concept approval. This should address the following:**

1. A Maritime Archaeological Assessment should be prepared by a suitably qualified heritage professional who has demonstrated experience on state significant archaeological sites. This assessment should address the following:
  - a) Comprehensive assessment of the potential of this site for archaeological relics or resources including assessment of the level of significance; including assessment of any potential remains of crossings which may predate the Pyrmont Bridge/punt crossing sites; Specific assessment of any potential submerged Aboriginal sites or relics in current and formerly submerged sections of the site.
  - b) Remote sensing and/or diver surveys of the seabed under any piled areas that currently form waterfront or paved areas of the proposed development.

- c) Specific processes for the treatment of any newly-discovered archaeological sites, prior to the commencement of any works at the site, specifically how they would be:
  - investigated;
  - recorded;
  - conserved (including long term conservation and storage of relics and archival lodgement of the results of recording and investigations);
  - interpreted (i.e., meaningful incorporation of this heritage into the proposed public domain, including landscaping, artwork and internal heritage interpretation in publicly-accessible areas of the development. This will ensure future users and visitors are aware of this hidden waterfront heritage and would add greatly to the public benefit and enjoyment from redevelopment of the site. These works should be undertaken in accordance with current Heritage Council standards and guidelines where they apply.)
2. Demolition works and any proposed excavation works should be monitored by a suitably qualified and experienced maritime archaeologist.
3. All these works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced maritime archaeologist who has an understanding of the effects of dredging and reclamation process on former submerged maritime infrastructure sites.
4. There should be clear indication of what will be done if unexpected sites are discovered during the demolition process and how they will be recorded and or excavated, the conservation techniques to be employed, and if *in situ* preservation and interpretation can be undertaken.
5. Specific assessment of the visual impact of the proposed works on the identified heritage values of SHR-listed sites (e.g., Pyrmont Bridge). It is noted the *SS South Steyne*, which was moored at the opposite Harbourside wharves within Darling Harbour, may still sustain a visual impact because of this proposed redevelopment, when it is returned. The potential visual impact should be considered to this item in the supporting Statement of Heritage Impact and any mitigating measures clearly outlined to reduce negative impacts.

### **Historical Archaeology**

The Assessment prepared by GML Heritage has identified the study area is likely to contain historical archaeological resources of both local and state heritage significance, which will be impacted by the proposed activity.

Previous excavations from 2003 onwards for the redevelopment of the foreshore of Darling Harbour have confirmed intact archaeological resources exist along this corridor. The historical archaeological resources anticipated within the study area include:

- Remains of the original foreshore;
- Reclamation deposits and fills;
- Seawall and revetments which date from the 1830s onwards;
- Evidence of commercial and industrial buildings and their occupation deposits which date from c1830s onwards;
- Wharves dating from the 1830s onwards.

The impacts of previous developments both in and immediately surrounding the study area are unlikely to have removed evidence of these resources because of those construction impacts are understood to have been fairly limited. This means it is likely the redevelopment will directly harm these resources as currently designed, in particular the demolition of the Cockle Bay Wharf Commercial Tower and the Public Domain Podium/Deck. These resources can contribute information which is not available through other sources of information for the understanding of the development of industrial Sydney.

The impact to potentially state significant archaeological resources is not supported as best practice and should be avoided by the proposed development. However, the proposed approach as recommended by GML Heritage, to undertake test excavation in the first instance to clarify the location of significant archaeological deposits and to redesign to avoid them is supported by the Heritage Division.

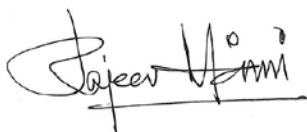
**The following conditions of consent are recommended to appropriately manage the historical archaeological resources located within the subject area through the life of this project:**

6. An archaeological consultant shall be nominated for the works. The consultant shall have appropriate qualifications and experience commensurate with the scope of the Major Project works. The name and experience of this consultant shall be submitted to the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage for approval prior to commencement of works.
7. All construction contractors, subcontractors and personnel are to be inducted and informed by the nominated archaeological consultant prior to commencing work on site as to their obligations and requirements in relation to historical archaeological sites and 'relics' in accordance with guidelines issued by the Heritage Council of NSW.
8. The Applicant must retain all state significant archaeological resources *in situ* and unharmed. Archaeological test excavation should occur in the first instance to guide redesign to avoid harm to these resources.
9. All affected historical archaeological 'relics' and/or deposits of Local heritage significance are to be subject to professional archaeological excavation and/or recording before construction works commence which will impact those 'relics'. A Research Design including an Archaeological Excavation Methodology must be prepared in accordance with Heritage Council guidelines. Those documents shall be prepared for the approval of the Department of Planning & Environment upon receipt of advice from the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment & Heritage.
10. At the completion of all archaeological works on site, a copy of the final excavation report(s) shall be prepared and lodged with the Heritage Council of NSW, the City of Sydney and the Department of Planning and Environment.
11. The information within the final excavation report shall be required to include the following:
  - a. An executive summary of the archaeological programme;
  - b. Due credit to the client paying for the excavation, on the title page;
  - c. An accurate site location and site plan (with scale and north arrow);
  - d. Historical research, references, and bibliography;
  - e. Detailed information on the excavation including the aim, the context for the excavation, procedures, treatment of artefacts (cleaning, conserving, sorting,

- cataloguing, labelling, scale photographs and/or drawings, location of repository) and analysis of the information retrieved;
- f. Nominated repository for the items;
  - g. Detailed response to research questions (at minimum those stated in the Department of Planning & Infrastructure approved Research Design);
  - h. Conclusions from the archaeological programme. This information must include a reassessment of the site's heritage significance, statement(s) on how archaeological investigations at this site have contributed to the community's understanding of the Site and other Comparative Site Types and recommendations for the future management of the site;
  - i. Details of how information about the excavations have been publicly disseminated (for example, include copies of press releases, public brochures and information signs produced to explain the archaeological significance of the sites).
12. A suitable repository for all historical archaeological artefacts recovered from the archaeological investigation shall be identified by the Applicant with the provision of the final excavation report. This location and facility must address the long term storage and conservation needs of these artefacts. Artefacts shall be appropriately catalogued to enable review by researchers in future.
13. The results of the archaeological fieldwork should be used to inform an Interpretation Plan to guide the future incorporation of the findings from the works in communicating the significance of the site to future visitors. This Plan shall include the results of any historical and maritime archaeological investigations undertaken at the site and whether any remains are retained *in situ*. The Interpretation Plan should be prepared in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Heritage Council of NSW. The Interpretation Plan should be prepared for the approval of the Department of Planning & Environment upon receipt of advice from the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment & Heritage.

If you have any questions regarding the above matter, please contact Stuart Read, Assessment Officer at the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage on telephone (02) 9873 8554 or by e-mail: [stuart.read@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stuart.read@environment.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**Rajeev Maini**  
A/Manager Conservation  
Heritage Division  
Office of Environment & Heritage  
**As Delegate of the Heritage Council of NSW**  
14 February 2016