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Neville Osborne
Manager – Energy Projects
Infrastructure Projects
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attn: Jahangir Alam

Dear Mr Osborne

The Heritage Council has received an invitation via letter (received on the 29 February 2012) to provide a submission on the Environmental Assessment for the Sydney CityGrid Stage 2A(ii) project which is currently on exhibition. It is noted that comments have previously been provided regarding various stages of this overall project in 2009, 2010 and 2011

Attached to the letter were electronic and hard copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and its accompanying Appendices which include a Statement of Heritage Impact by NBRS+Partners (Appendix P- dated October 2011) and a letter by archaeological firm Casey & Lowe (Appendix Q- dated January 2011).

Accordingly, these documents have been considered and the following comments and recommendations are presented below.

1. It is noted that considerable effort has gone into creating a design for the City East Zone Substation and commercial development (which is the subject of this Major Project application) which is sympathetic to the many State and locally listed heritage buildings within its immediate proximity. However, several aspects of the proposed works have a potential to impact on the significance of this heritage.
2. These buildings include the State Heritage Listed Former NSW Club Building next door at 31 Bligh Street, the locally listed AFT House next door on the O'Connell Street site (16-18 O'Connell Street), the State Heritage Listed CML Building opposite the site on Bligh Street and Richard Johnson Square on the corner of Bligh and Hunter Streets which contains potentially State significant archaeology as the location of the first Church in Sydney, erected in 1793.
3. It is considered that aspects of the design for the building proposed at 33 Bligh Street, specifically the proposed external fire staircases, on the Bligh and O'Connell Street elevations has the potential to impact visually on the architectural character of the surrounding historic buildings.

The relationship between the proposed rounded fire stairs and the rectilinear walls of the adjoining historic buildings needs further design resolution. In this context a right

angled external staircase could be a better option in place of the currently proposed rounded stairs.

In addition, the junction between the proposed stairs and the historic buildings should be as light and transparent as possible. It is considered that the current design of the proposed fire stairs does not form an acceptable junction with a heritage building in terms of geometry and material.

4. The letter supplied by Casey & Lowe (Appendix Q) outlines that whilst the works to 33 Bligh Street are unlikely to impact on any archaeology due to the nature of previous development on site, excavations within the footpath envelope of Bligh Street and within Richard Johnson Square have the potential to impact on archaeology relating to the site of the first Church in Sydney which if it exists is potentially of State significance.
5. Given the potential significance of this archaeology it is considered that an archaeological assessment which includes an assessment of the significance of this potential resource should be undertaken for this site and archaeological testing may be required to determine if any archaeological remains related to the Church and subsequent uses of the site are present. If they are and are deemed to be of State significance a redesign of the proposed cabling works may be necessary so these remains are left undisturbed.
6. The proposed landscaping works for Richard Johnson Square should also take into consideration any archaeological remains left in situ and ensure that they are not impacted by these works.
7. The proposed Excavation Director undertaking the works in relation to non-Indigenous archaeology should demonstrate that they meet the Heritage Council Excavation Director Criteria for works on State significant sites.
8. Points 5-7 above should be specifically listed in the Draft Statement of Commitments in place of the current draft Commitment No. 3.
9. The five Draft Statement of Commitments relating to non-Indigenous heritage state that any non-indigenous heritage would be managed in consultation with OEH. This should more properly state that they would be managed in consultation with the NSW Heritage Council. In addition, draft commitment five states that should any unexpected historic relics be encountered OEH would be notified in accordance with the Heritage Act. This should be amended to reflect Section 146 of the Heritage Act which states that the Heritage Council will be notified in the event of the discovery of any 'relics'.

If you have any questions regarding the above advice, please feel free to contact Katrina Stankowski at Katrina.Stankowski@heritage.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



15/03/2012

Vincent Sicari

Manager – Conservation Team
Heritage Branch
Office of Environment & Heritage

As Delegate of the NSW Heritage Council