

22 December 2015

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NSW Planning and Environment
23-33 Bridge Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention Mr. Ashley Cheong
Email: ashley.cheong@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ashley,

RE: SSD 7056 – Remediation, Renewal and Adaptive Re-Use of “The Campbell’s Stores”, 7-27 Circular Quay West, The Rocks

I refer to the Department’s exhibition of a State Significant Development Application (SSD DA) for Campbell’s Stores in The Rocks. It is understood that the SSD DA seeks consent for:

- Removal of intrusive exterior elements and removal of internal fit-out works with little heritage significance;
- Conservation and reconstruction works including subfloor drainage and ventilation, forecourt pavements, replacement of slate roofing and reconstruction of internal wall and floor openings;
- Adaptive re-use and revitalisation via improvements to access arrangements, new amenities and services for intended land uses; and
- Removal of a single storey glazed pavilion to the north of the site and replacement with a new glass block building.

The City of Sydney is not the consent authority for the application and provides the following comments to assist in the Departments assessment of the project.

It is also understood that the proposed works complement and work in tandem with public domain works proposed by Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority for Campbell’s Cove. The City commented on draft Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements for Campbell’s Cove in September 2015. An SSD DA is yet to be lodged for those works. However, the City supported the intent of those works, subject to qualifications.

The City of Sydney (the City) has had an opportunity to review the Applicant’s Environmental Impact Statement and associated plans and specialist reports.

Notable features of the proposal include improved pedestrian access to and through the site, activation of Hickson Road, achieving heritage conservation objectives and producing ‘finer grain’ use of the building relative to the existing limited tenancies and limited public access.

The following commentary is made regarding the proposed development, grouped into key issues.

city of villages

Design quality issues and resolution of design issues

The roof and underside of the soffit to the northern “Bay 12” building need to be approached as fifth and sixth elevations of the building due to their high visibility from the public domain and surrounding buildings. The materials and finishes will need to be high quality. Glass floors or glass blocks in the floor of the building, visible to pedestrians looking up, is unlikely to be resolved satisfactorily. Lighting requires careful integration with the soffit. Public art opportunities are present.

Whilst the design for the waterfront seating area is well intentioned in terms of transparency and openness, the existing weather protection infrastructure at the site, including plastic covers and solid awnings, is indicative of a future outcome. Should the proposed planter beds with retractable screens be ineffective and the clear glass awning not provide sufficient sun protection, which the City believes will be the case, a secondary layer of ad hoc weather protection is expected.

Tenants having their own umbrellas below the awning or tenants having their own plastic side covers should be avoided (and would be counter to the Conservation Management Plan) by careful consideration at this stage through weather modelling and strengthening the defensiveness of the infrastructure.

Planning and assessment issues

Plans, elevations and renders are not aligned and require greater coordination. For example, the glass block finish for the “Bay 12” building is shown in the round in most images. However, internal renders show large slotted windows for views to the Opera House and back to Campbell’s Stores. These slot windows have a very different architectural styling to the glass block vision. Clarification should be provided on the direction and objectives for the building.

The Department should carry out an independent view loss assessment for properties to the west of the proposed “Bay 12” building. A fundamental consideration of the assessment is the reasonableness of the proposed height of the building, including lift overrun, service risers and plant, when considered against the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Area Scheme. While the structure, subject to the Department’s other assessment consideration, may be found to have reasonable visual, heritage, sustainability and other impacts, the view loss assessment may show unreasonable impacts from non-compliance with the planning controls.

The internal renderings of the Bay 12 building include clear glazed windows that indicate a framed view of the Opera House. The structure therefore is likely to block rather than share this view with properties to the west.

The EIS indicates that a Tenant Fitout Guide and Tenancy Signage Strategy is to be prepared for the building prior to the issue of an Occupation Certificate. However, the City contends that these documents should be prepared now to give certainty to the proposed scope of works and extent of heritage and visual impacts of the development. In particular, the full range of heritage impacts arising from the reasonable construction and implementation of the development should be assessed. For example, mechanical ventilation equipment and risers are required and should be integrated into the building at the least visible locations possible.

A signage strategy should be prepared at this stage for the waterfront tenancies to give a consistent approach to restaurant name signs, menu boards and regulatory signs such as patron capacity and licensee details.

The tenancy fitout guide should also include guidance on outdoor furniture selection, branding of furniture and fixed versus relocatable infrastructure.

The EIS should address the NSW Government's Liquor Act amendments for the Sydney CBD Entertainment Precinct.

Heritage issues

The large LED sign toward the south-western corner of the site is not supported and should be re-evaluated. It is not compatible with the heritage significance of the site and will compete with the Overseas Passenger Terminal vehicle access for attention. The sign appears 4-5m high and is said to be an interpretation of the location and dimensions of the original bay, now demolished. A low key, softly lit, sign respecting the heritage attributes of the site should be provided closer to the building, perhaps attached to the rebuilt low sandstone wall along Hickson Road. It also appears that the proposed sign is located on the Overseas Passenger Terminal land owned by Newcastle Ports Corporation.

Any building identification signage should form part of a well-considered Signage Strategy, including matters raised in relation to tenancy signage in this submission.

Public Domain issues

Footway widening to the west of the building is supported. However, the existing trachyte stone kerbs should be retained in-situ to reference the original kerb lines, as has been the approach for other roads within The Rocks and Millers Point Village. Notations on the Landscape Plan of "existing trachyte kerb removed and reused on site" are not acceptable to the City. New kerbs should be built to the City's specifications.

The use of cobbled stone for the proposed pedestrian crossing raises issues for general accessibility, especially for wheelchair users and visually impaired persons. Further detail is required on the proposed specification and finish of the cobbles.

Noise issues

The City has fielded three complaints relating to excessive amplified sound being emitted from the existing use affecting surrounding residents.

Maximum recommended noise levels have been provided relative to existing background noise levels. However, the EIS and Acoustic Report suggest that individual tenants will lodge their own DA and those DAs will be accompanied by acoustic assessments.

Providing individual acoustic assessments for each tenancy is likely to cause inconsistent or unfair outcomes. Having tenants provide their own acoustic assessments at varying dates may allow significant noise to be created from one tenancy and cause another tenant to be unfairly restricted in their operations. For example, the City has experience in one premises having achieved approval for live music and a high number of patrons and other surrounding tenants being unfairly restricted in seating numbers and/or amplified sound so that cumulative noise goals may be reached. In this type of scenario, restaurants and other entertainment businesses may be pressured to compete with each and disregard established noise goals, leading to complaints and sanctions.

Individual tenancies should be given a calculated maximum sound level that may be emitted from that premises before any tenant DAs are considered. This should be established now. It will also assist in choosing internal fitout/layout and materials and, if necessary, the type of entertainment suitable to a particular tenancy.

The suitability of the site for noise generating uses, such as a function centre or live music or theatre venue, should be established with reference to acoustic performance requirements and their associated heritage impacts. The DA suggests that a tenancy fitout guide will direct tenants how to install additional acoustic absorption/insulation to floors and walls. However, this defers the consideration of the suitability of the site for the development and may have the unintended consequence of endorsing greater heritage impacts than highlighted and assessed. The full range of environmental impacts require assessment at this stage.

Traffic and Transport issues

Any changes in parking restrictions, road traffic signage and pedestrian crossing(s) will require a separate submission to the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee via the City's Infrastructure and Traffic Operations Unit. The proposed pedestrian crossing would be required to meet Roads and Maritime Services standards for crossing facilities.

Should there be a loss of on-street car parking spaces, the development may require referral to the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee, the CBD Coordination Office and Transport for NSW.

Tree Management and Landscaping issues

A number of proposed construction activities are proposed within close proximity of the Hills Weeping Fig to be retained. The tree is listed on the City's Register of Significant Trees and is a semi-mature specimen planted in 1988 to commemorate the Bicentennial. Construction proposed around the tree includes:

- New "Bay 12" building with surrounding modified public domain;
- Modifications to the garden area, including removal of a low sandstone wall 4m to the west of the tree and removal of sandstone flagging; and
- Installation of a stormwater drainage system.

A series of recommended tree management conditions can be provided once the proponent has responded to submissions.

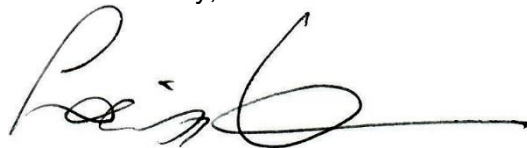
Health and Food Premises issues

Given the large sizes of commercial kitchens associated with the future restaurants and proximity to surrounding hotel patrons, residents and the public, the proposal needs to include provision for enhanced mechanical filtration at this stage. Ducting needs to be future-proofed to allow for additional enhanced smoke and odour mitigation.

A series of recommended health related and food premises conditions can be provided once the proponent has responded to submissions.

Should you wish to speak with a Council officer about the above, please contact Russell Hand, Senior Planner, on 9246 7321 or rhand@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Louise Kerr
Acting Director
 City Planning | Development | Transport