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Ref: DOC16/316742  
Your Ref: SSD 7372

Ms May Banh  
Planning Officer  
Social & Other Infrastructure  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Sent by email to [Maytien.banh@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Maytien.banh@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Ms Banh

**Re: Heritage Council comments on State Significant Development Application (SSD) for the New O'Connell Street Public School, Parramatta: SSD 7372.**

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I refer to your email dated 28 June 2016 inviting the Heritage Council of NSW (Heritage Council) to comment and provide recommended conditions of consent on the above SSD.

It is understood that the SSD proposes the following:

- Demolition of various internal building elements and ground floor slabs of Buildings E, F & H
- Change of use as a primary school including before and after school care;
- Refurbishment of Building A to accommodate administration and office spaces;
- Refurbishment of Building B to accommodate a new library and resource centre and 'home base' classrooms;
- Refurbishment of Building C to accommodate staff areas, a canteen, home base classrooms and common learning areas;
- Refurbishment of Building D to accommodate 'home base' classrooms and practical activity spaces;
- Construction of a new hall and a covered outdoor learning area;

**Works will also include:**

- Services upgrade;
- A bus pickup/drop off area on Marist Place;
- Reconfiguration of the existing parking areas off O'Connell and Marist Place;
- Remediation works (Category 1) to remove an existing underground storage tank;
- Construction of new security fencing including along the oval;
- Tree removal and new landscaping for passive and active recreation areas;

Review of a number of technical papers which supported the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by JBA Planning dated June 2016 were reviewed to provide the comments in this letter including:

- An Statement of Heritage Impact Historical Archaeology prepared by Extent Heritage dated April 2016;
- a statement of heritage impact prepared by TZG Architects dated 01 June 2016;
- a visual impact assessment prepared by TZG Architects dated 04 April 2016;
- a design statement prepared by TZG Architects dated 28 April 2016;
- An arboricultural assessment prepared by TLC Tree Solutions dated 08 June 2016;
- Architectural plans by TZG Architects;
- Landscape plans by Spackman, Mossop and Michaels;
- Photomontages by TZG Architects;
- Stormwater report, stormwater plans and a services statement; and
- A detailed site investigation prepared by SMEC considering land contamination issues.

The following comments and recommended conditions of consent are provided based on review of the above documents:

### **Built Heritage:**

The proposal involves physical modifications the former Kings School which is listed on the NSW State Heritage Register. The proposal outlining the adaptive reuse for the site involves major intervention to the site and will include the demolition of several structures and significant modification to others. The matter was referred to the Heritage Council of NSW for comment in the past who provided guidance to the proponents.

The proponents have modified several contentious aspects of the proposal to satisfy the recommendations of the Heritage Council of NSW including reducing the height and location of the fence running the perimeter of the of the sports oval and removing the connection of the fence to the historical fabric of building B.

The proposal is generally considered to be positive resulting in the adaptive and ongoing use of the former school as an educational facility and is generally in line with the policies outlined in the Conservation Management Plan for the site. However, there are several components of the proposal that should be carefully managed in order to reduce the impacts of the proposal on the heritage significance of the site.

The proposal involves construction of new built elements which could potentially impact on the setting of the school which is considered to be highly significant, The proposal to demolish modern intrusive elements is supported and encouraged, however the demolition of the internal elements of building D (the dormitory) will potentially have a detrimental impact to the heritage significance of the school and should be managed in order to reduce the impacts as much as possible.

The former King's School site has considerable historical significance to the State of NSW and the impacts of the proposal should be carefully managed so as to preserve the significance with a high level of integrity. Therefore ongoing consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW is requested as the proposed works are further developed.

### **Landscape:**

The Arboricultural assessment did not consider relevant previous Arborists reports including a 2010 report prepared by Earthscape and a 2014 report prepared by Naturally Trees. These

documents are relevant to consider the overall health of the Western Carob Tree (scheduled for removal) and its capacity to recover from disturbance related to the proposed works.

### **Historical Archaeology:**

The SEARs required an archaeological assessment which considered information from specific documents including the 1994 CMP and an archaeological assessment prepared by GML in 2004.

However, the Extent report contains no detailed significance assessment and identifies areas as having a level of archaeological 'potential' for that level of significance. The document contains no further discussion or comparative analysis to further the information from the GML 2004 Assessment to justify Extent's arguments of significance at the levels stated, in particular the threshold for local versus state significance. Review and amendment of this document would provide greater clarity for the development impacts.

In addition, the Extent assessment (such as Figure 15) does not clearly show all areas of proposed impacts against the areas of assessed potential/significance, specifically decontamination of land and service upgrades are missing from this consideration. The Extent assessment is also unclear what impacts to subfloor deposits may occur within Buildings A, B and C1, which have been clearly identified in the 1994 CMP and 2004 Assessment as to be retained unharmed *in situ*. Impact to subfloor deposits in these areas should be avoided during the works.

Based on the above the existing Assessment fails to satisfy the SEARs. To resolve this it is recommended the existing assessment be revised in these areas (significance assessment and impact assessment).

In terms of impact assessment on the potential archaeology, the main impacts appear to be to locally significant archaeological evidence for the construction of the new Hall and car parking area south of the New Hall. Provided these areas are appropriately archaeologically mitigated through excavation and recording, these impacts are acceptable.

Two areas have potential to contain state significant archaeological deposits where impact is proposed. These include the refurbishment of the Marist Place carpark and the new covered sports court north of Building C. The impact to the two items identified within the carpark in Figure 14 as items 12 and 14 should be avoided during the refurbishment, and protection systems positioned to ensure this. The new covered sports court north of Building C has the potential for local and state significant relics in this area, although previous disturbance through the services in this area and the underground storage tank decontamination works may have impacted this resource to an uncertain degree.

Given the potential for local and state significant archaeology, it is appropriate to test excavate as an initial component of approval to inform appropriate levels for this building. If state significant archaeology is identified this information should be used to adjust the development footings to avoid harm. This is recommended as it is understood this new building will be an enclosed sporting facility and as such may not require deep excavation, provided it satisfies other site constraints related to height as a result of any footing modification.

It is recommended that SSD 7237 is approved subject to the following recommended conditions of consent to manage the heritage issues regarding built heritage and landscape as outlined above:

#### **NOMINATED HERITAGE ARCHITECT**

- 1. An appropriately qualified and experienced Heritage Architect and historical archaeologist with experience in excavation of State Significant archaeology is to be appointed for the project.**
- 2. The Heritage Architect and historical archaeologist are to monitor the works to ensure no significant fabric is damaged or removed without approval.**

#### **PROTECTION OF SIGNIFICANT FABRIC**

- 3. Site Induction: 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.**
- 4. Significant building fabric and elements are to be protected during the works from potential damage. Protection systems must ensure historic fabric is not damaged or removed. All tradesmen and workers on site shall be made aware of the significant fabric in the vicinity of the proposed works.**
- 5. Any damage to heritage fabric is to be repaired under the direction of the nominated Heritage Architect.**
- 6. Appropriate ground protections systems are to be in place to prevent damage to any unidentified sub surface archaeology resulting from the use of heavy machinery, particularly within the Marist Place carpark. This will include heavy duty matting which is adequate for the weight and size of the machinery being used.**
- 7. Vibration monitoring, performed by a suitably qualified vibration consultant, is to be performed on all heritage items in the vicinity of the proposed demolition.**
- 8. In the event that harm to heritage items is identified, vibratory activities are to cease and alternative work methods are to be implemented.**
- 9. Tree protective measures shall be maintained during the period of the works. If access to the area within any protective barrier is required during the works, it shall be carried out under the supervision of a qualified arborist. Alternative tree protection measures shall be installed as required by the arborist.**
- 10. Removal of tree protection, following completion of the works, shall be carried out under the supervision of a qualified arborist and shall avoid both direct mechanical injury to the structure of the tree and soil compaction within the canopy or the limit of the former protective fencing, whichever is the greater.**

#### **CONSERVATION**

- 11. The detailed design of building D (the former dormitory) and the new School Hall replacing building F (the former gymnasium) is to be designed in consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW.**

12. Where early or significant building elements are uncovered during the works, these elements are to be retained wherever practicable.
13. The proposed removal of the Western Carob Tree as documented by the Arboricultural Assessment should be revised in light of previous studies which have considered the overall health and capacity for this tree to recover dated 2010 and 2014. On this basis the following additional consideration is recommended:
  - a) That this western carob tree not be removed, but be retained for a five-year trial period and within that time a recommended pruning regime is followed (e.g., removing competing new trunks growing from its base to a single, straight new trunk, only; mulching, irrigation, fertilising for each of the five years concerned);
  - b) The tree's root zone / branch fall zone be fenced off to keep children and staff at bay and out of any risk of failed branch drop;

#### **HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

14. The SOHI Historical Archaeology should be amended prior to approval of this project to include a detailed significance assessment with consideration of comparative analysis where necessary. This should inform any revision of Figure 14. Figure 15 and the section of impact analysis should also include consideration of impacts from other portions of the project such as services upgrades where new trenches are proposed and activities required to decontaminate land.
15. Impact should be avoided to subfloor areas which contains a state significant archaeological resource which should be protected and retained *in situ* within Buildings A, B and C1 during the redevelopment.
16. Test excavation prior to confirming the detailed footing design for the new covered sports court north of building C should be undertaken to confirm the presence of local and state significant archaeological evidence; the level at which such evidence exists and its integrity. Where state significant relics are identified, footing options for the new building should be amended avoid harm to these remains and they should be retained *in situ* unharmed.
17. All affected historical archaeological deposits of Local 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 should be prepared for the approval of the Secretary, Department of Planning & Environment upon receipt of advice from the Heritage Division, Office of Environment & Heritage.
18. A final excavation report shall be prepared within 12 months of the completion of archaeological works on site. It should also include details of any artefacts recovered, where they are located and details of their ongoing conservation and protection in perpetuity by the land owner. The final report shall be lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment, the Heritage Council of NSW and the Parramatta City Council Local Studies Unit.

## **INTERPRETATION**

- 19. A detailed interpretation strategy outlining the historical development of the site from its early days as an experimental farm for the Colony, through its history as a school and then as a rehabilitation centre and its restoration as the office of the NSW Heritage Council is to be prepared. This interpretation strategy shall include relevant results from the historical and Aboriginal archaeological investigations on site. It is to be implemented within 12 months of the occupation certificate for the school being issued.**

Please note that these comments do not relate to Aboriginal archaeology because it is understood that the project has been separately referred to relevant sections of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) for specific review.

If you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, please contact Gary Hinder, Heritage Officer at the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage, at [gary.hinder@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gary.hinder@environment.nsw.gov.au) or (02) 9873 8547.

Yours sincerely



**Katrina Stankowski**

Acting Manager, Conservation  
Heritage Division  
Office of Environment & Heritage

**As Delegate of the NSW Heritage Council**

15 August 2016