



Mercantile Hotel Refurbishment SSDA 25 George Street, The Rocks Transport Impact Assessment

Client // HBMS Pty Ltd
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Cover Image Source: <http://www.themercantilehotel.com.au/>, accessed 27 October 2017

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Project

The site, known as The Mercantile Hotel, is located at 25 George Street, The Rocks. The site is triangular, approximately 420 square metres in size and is legally known as Lot 10 in DP 258607. It is bound by a frontage to George Street to the east, Gloucester Walk to the west, and a group of State Heritage listed terrace houses which are currently used as offices to the south.

The building is an item of State Heritage significance. It comprises a three-storey hotel/ pub, which was originally built in 1914. At the north end of the building, the three storeys are reduced to two.

The proposal primarily incorporates the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing land uses and are more extensively described in Section 3.1.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

GTA Consultants (GTA) was engaged by Welsh + Major on behalf of HBMS Pty Ltd to prepare a transport impact assessment for a proposed redevelopment of the Mercantile Hotel, located in The Rocks. This report sets out an assessment of the anticipated transport implications of the proposed development, including consideration of the following:

- i Existing traffic and parking conditions surrounding the site
- ii Suitability of the proposal from a traffic and transport perspective
- iii Service vehicle requirements
- iv Pedestrian and bicycle requirements
- v Traffic generating characteristics of the proposed development
- vi Transport impact of the development proposal on the surrounding road network.

This traffic and transport impact assessment has been prepared by GTA in response to the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) dated 5 September 2017 (SSD 8665) for the Mercantile Hotel refurbishment.

The construction impact of the proposed development has been addressed in a separate Construction Pedestrian and Traffic Management Plan (CPTMP) report, which was also prepared by GTA as part of this State Significant Development Application (SSDA).

The operational transport requirements set out in the SEARs are detailed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Transport SEARs (operation) requirements

Consent description	Relevant sections of this report
Details of access and parking on site	Section 4
Servicing, including loading and unloading	Section 3.3
An assessment of impacts to the local road network, public transport operation, pedestrians and cyclists during operation	Section 5
Relevant policies and guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide to traffic generating developments ○ Sydney City Centre Access Strategy ○ EIS Guidelines – Road and related facilities ○ NSW planning guidelines for walking and cycling ○ Guide to traffic management – Part 12: Traffic impacts of development (AUSTROADS) 	Referenced throughout the report and used as the basis for this assessment as appropriate.

1.3 References

In preparing this report, reference has been made to the following:

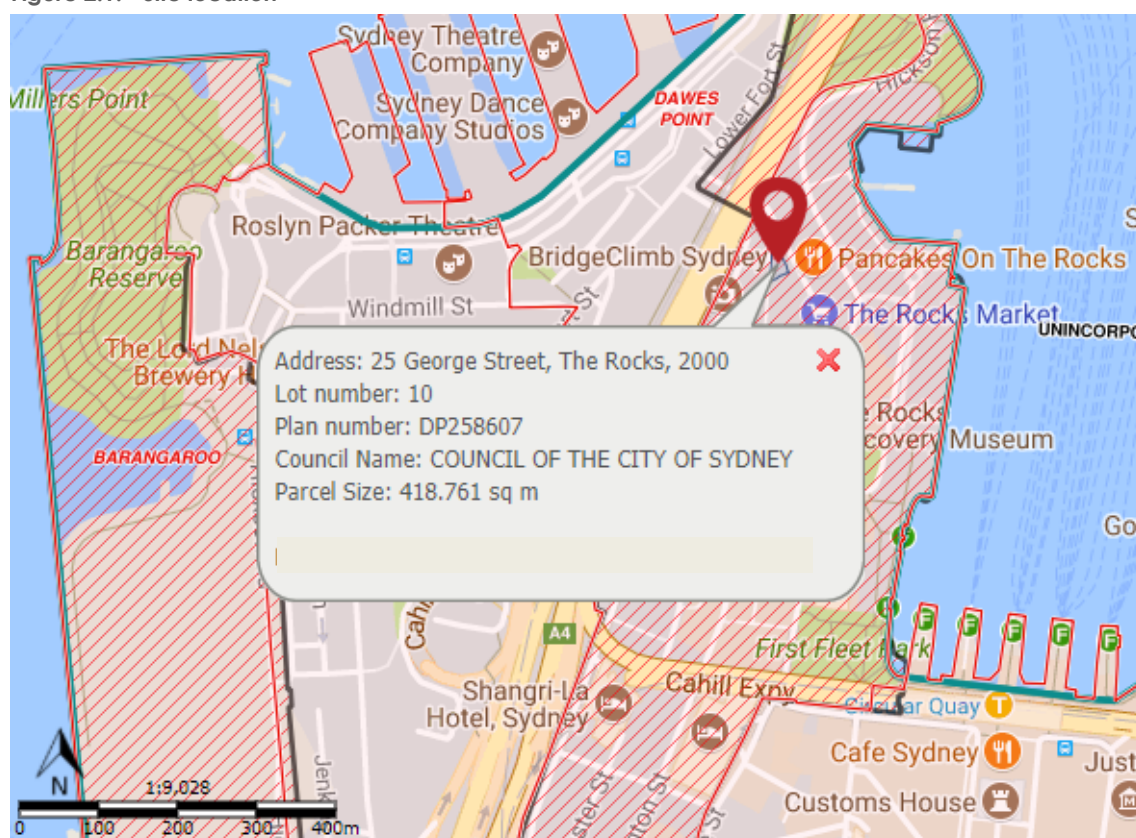
- *Sydney City Centre Access Strategy* (Transport for NSW [TfNSW], 19 December 2013)
- *Sustainable Sydney 2030* (City of Sydney, 2017)
- City of Sydney 2012 Local Environment Plan (LEP)/ Development Control Plan (DCP)
- *Guide to Traffic Generating Developments* (Roads and Maritime Services, 2002)
- Environment Impact Statement Guidelines - Road and Related Facilities (Department of Planning and Environment)
- NSW Planning Guidelines for Walking and Cycling
- Guide to Traffic Management - Part 12: Traffic Impacts of Development (AUSTROADS)
- Plans for the proposed development prepared by Welsh + Major Architects, drawing numbers SSD101 to SSD402 dated 20 October 2017
- A site visit undertaken by a representative of GTA during the PM peak period on 30 November 2017
- Other documents and data as referenced in this report.

2. Existing Conditions

The Mercantile Hotel (the site) is located at 25 George Street, The Rocks. The site is legally defined as Lot 10 of DP258607 and covers an area of 418 square metres. The site has a frontage to George Street and Gloucester Walk. The site is located within the City of Sydney Local Government Area, but under the State and Regional Development State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 2011, the site is located within The Rocks State Significant Development Site, and therefore the Department of Planning and Environment is the consent authority. The location and context of the site is shown in Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2.

The Rocks precinct is one of the most prominent tourist precincts in Sydney and is located close to the historic areas of Millers Point, Circular Quay and the Sydney Opera House. The Barangaroo redevelopment precinct is located immediately to the south-west of the site.

Figure 2.1: Site location



Source: https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/find-a-property/property/2782814_25_George_Street_10_The_Rocks_DP258607, accessed 26 October 2017

Hatching shows extent of State Significant Development Site

Figure 2.2: Aerial context



Source: SixMaps, accessed 26 October 2017

The Mercantile Hotel was originally constructed in 1914 and opened in 1915 as an iconic hospitality premise. Under its current consent, it has operational hours of 5am to 1am (the next day) Monday to Saturday and 10am to midnight Sunday. It currently operates as a pub with ancillary function spaces and hotel accommodation space.

The site currently operates with 865 square metres gross floor area (GFA) for pub uses, plus 16 hotel rooms. The site has a maximum capacity for 431 patrons and up to 15 staff during peak periods. Maximum capacity is most likely to be during Friday night and on weekends, and during other special event periods (for example, when a ship docks at the Overseas Passenger Terminal).

Correspondence provided to GTA indicates that under existing conditions, the site generates approximately 55 service vehicle movements per week. The existing traffic movements are further described in Section 2.6.

2.1 Road Network

George Street

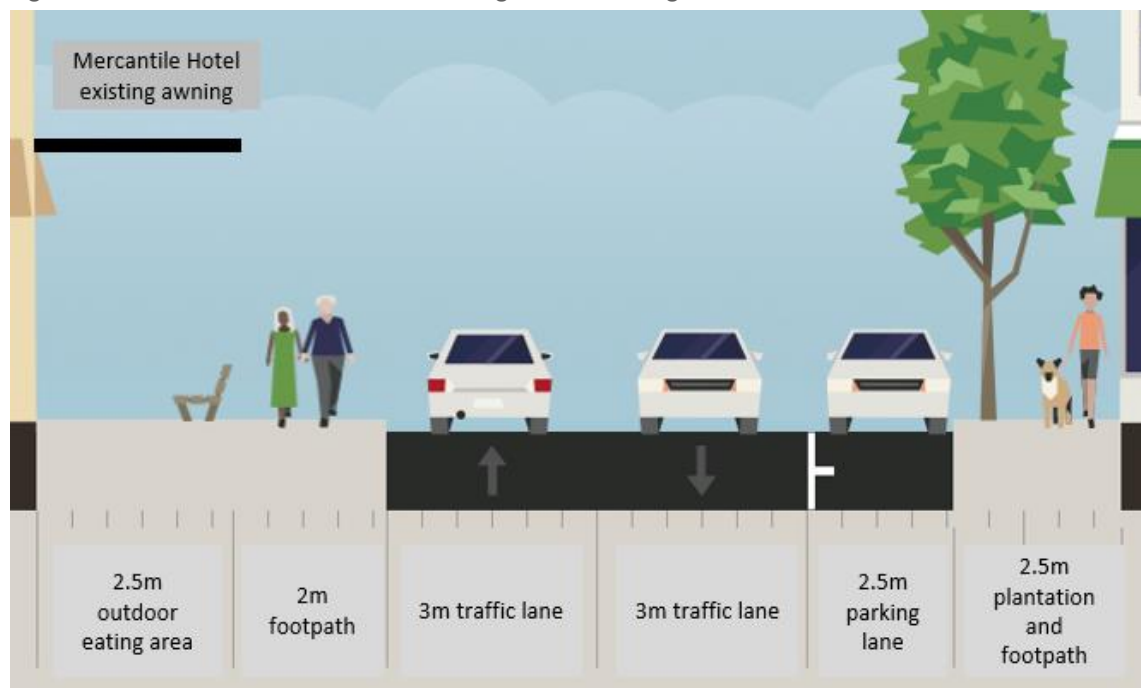
The Mercantile Hotel has a frontage to George Street. This area of George Street operates substantially differently to George Street further south. This section of George Street is a peninsular, therefore, access tends to be local traffic only with relatively low volumes overall.

Immediately adjacent to the site, there is a road corridor which is estimated to be approximately 8.5 metres kerb-to-kerb, within a 15.5-metre wide road reserve. The configuration includes one traffic lane in each direction and a southbound kerbside parking lane. An indicative cross section of George Street at the site is shown in Figure 2.3, with an image of the site shown in Figure 2.4.

Extensive access restrictions are present adjacent to the Mercantile Hotel, with a range of loading zone, no parking zones, taxi zones and restricted parking areas. The northbound traffic lane has a designated loading zone period.

There is a weekend market place on a section of George Street adjacent to the Mercantile Hotel. This is in place between 9am and 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Figure 2.3: Indicative Cross Section of George Street looking north



Source: Streetmix

For illustration purposes only, surveys not undertaken and based on visual estimates

Figure 2.4: Mercantile Hotel frontage to George Street



2.2 Surrounding Intersections

The following key intersections exist near the site:

- George Street/ Lower Fort Street (Unsignalised)
- George Street/ Hickson Road (Unsignalised).

Both intersections are subject to low volumes of traffic and were observed to operate satisfactorily and without delays during the site visit.

2.3 Car Parking

There is limited on-street car parking near the site, with the opposite side of George Street having a range of parking restrictions. Examples of parking restrictions are shown below in Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6. On-street parking was generally observed to be approximately 50 per cent occupancy during a PM peak period site visit on 30 November 2017.

Figure 2.5: Parking restrictions on opposite side of George Street



Figure 2.6: Parking restrictions adjacent to Mercantile Hotel



2.4 Public Transport

The site is located within a typical walking catchment of Circular Quay transport interchange (of approximately 10 to 15 minutes). The site is serviced by the route 311 bus, which operates between The Rocks and Elizabeth Bay along George Street, directly past the site.

Circular Quay provides bus access to the eastern suburbs, south-eastern suburbs, inner west areas and northern suburbs. Circular Quay is on the City Circle rail loop and provides access to the western and south-western suburbs. It provides access to Central and Town Hall, where the remainder of the Sydney Trains network can be accessed. Circular Quay is the focal point for Sydney's ferry services and provides services to a range of harbourside suburbs. The density of public transport services is evident as shown in Figure 2.7 and Figure 2.8.

It is expected that a majority of patrons of the Mercantile Hotel utilise public transport services as part of their journey.

Figure 2.7: Northern and western bus guide

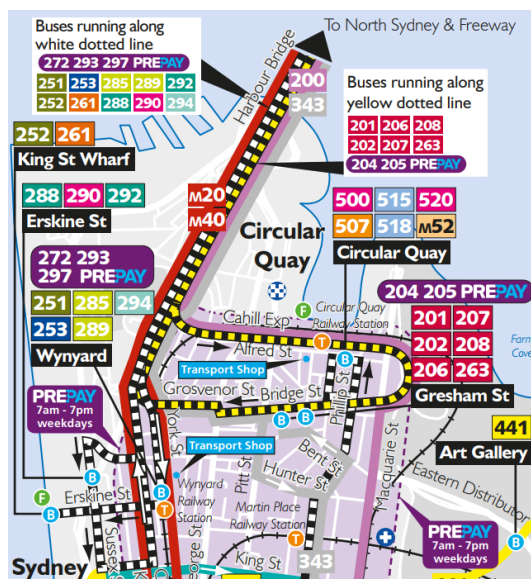
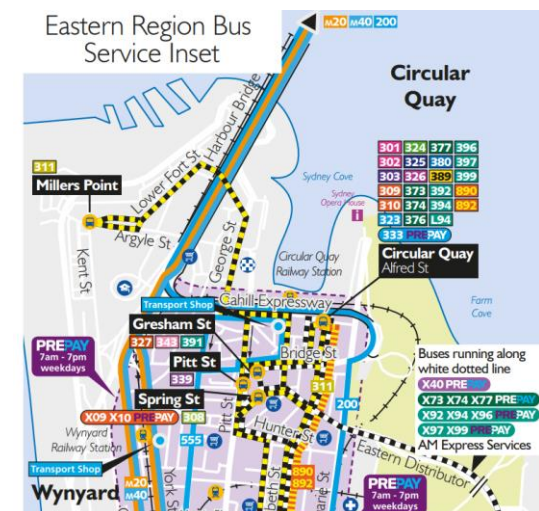


Figure 2.8: Southern and eastern bus guide



Source: <https://transportnsw.info/document/1697/region-guide-sydney-north-shore-west.pdf>, accessed 6 November 2017

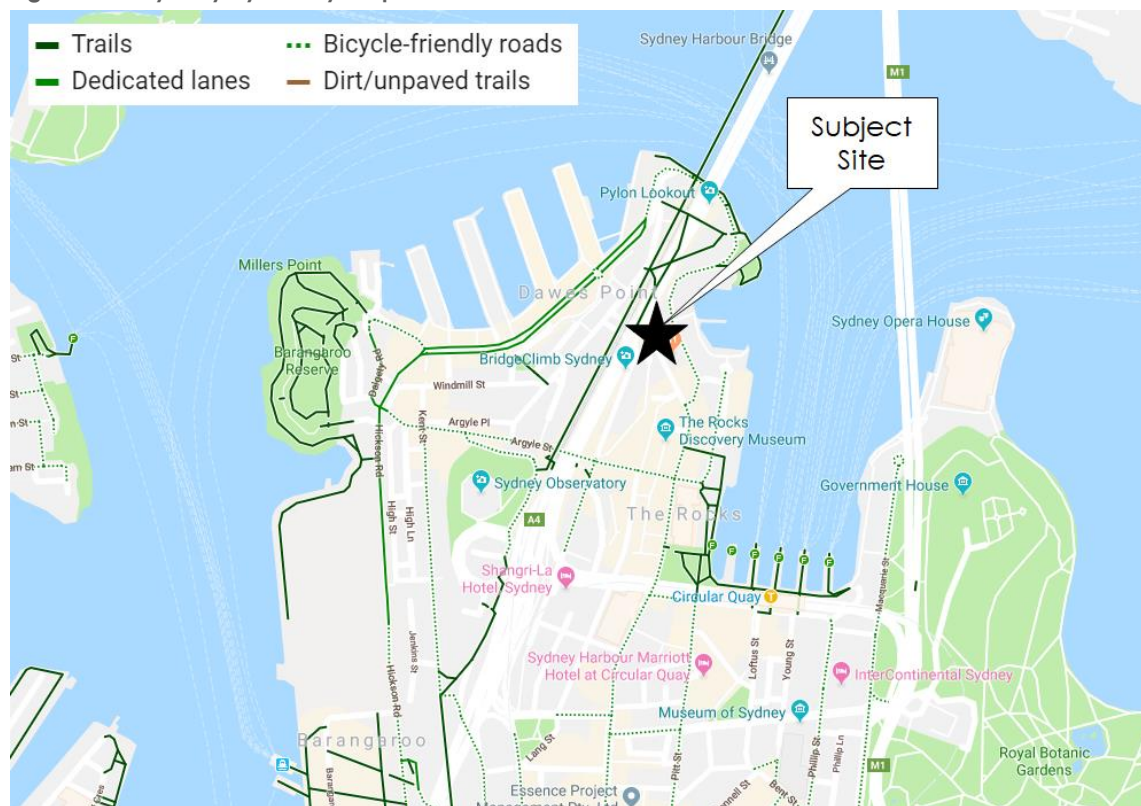
Source: http://www.100roads.com/images/australia/sydney/sydney_transport_eastern_map.pdf, accessed 6 November 2017

2.5 Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure

Pedestrian footpaths are established on most of roads surrounding the site, noting that historical planning may result in some non-standard footpath widths and DDA access issues on some pathways, for example, Gloucester Walk is only accessible by stairs. Notwithstanding, there is satisfactory link from Circular Quay transport interchange along George Street to the site, which would likely function as the primary desire line for pedestrian movements.

The Kent Street cycleway is located close to the site. North of Gas Lane, traffic volumes substantially decline, and mixed traffic riding is likely suitable for staff and patrons who may elect to cycle to or from the site. The Sydney cycleway map is shown in Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9: Sydney cycleway map



Source: <https://www.google.com/maps/>, accessed 13 December 2018

Figure 2.10: During peak hour, a number of cyclists were observed



2.6 Traffic Generation

Two primary forms of traffic are currently generated by the site. Firstly, there is operational activity generated by the patrons and staff. Secondly, there is the service vehicle activity generated by the supply and removal of supplies associated with the activities of the premises. Cumulatively, the existing operational activity and loading activity is relatively low and described in the following sections.

2.6.1 Operational Activity

During the site visit undertaken by GTA, the site was observed to generate a small number of vehicular trips. These were primarily associated with the taxi rank opposite the site and pick-up and set-down activity, although no trips were observed during the site visit. A high proportion of patrons were observed to travel to/ from George Street by foot.

The Roads and Maritime Services (Roads and Maritime) *Guide to Traffic Generating Developments* does not have a traffic generation rate for hotels. For clubs, a peak traffic generation of 10 vehicles per hour is assumed, however, these surveys are considered outdated and do not reflect the likely generation for the site due to the spatial and geographical characteristics of the site.

Overall, it is estimated that the site generates a nominal number of vehicular journeys, primarily through point-to-point trips, with a majority of these occurring outside of road network peak times (usually concentrated at closing times of around midnight).

2.6.2 Loading Activity

It is understood that the site currently generates approximately 55 service vehicle movements per week. This can be largely attributed to keg pick-up/ drop-off, kitchen supplies and garbage collection. Correspondence provided to GTA indicates the following characteristics:

- Food deliveries: 40 per week (excludes Sunday)
- Beverage deliveries: 10 per week (excludes weekend)
- Consumables/ repairs/ maintenance: 5 per week (excludes weekend).

Based on the above, assuming uniform distribution of deliveries, it is generally expected that the site generates no more than 10 service vehicle movements per day, which is less than one service vehicle per hour.

2.7 Strategic Context

2.7.1 Transport Mode Studies

There are some key transport studies that inform the future planning of the transport network for Sydney. The following documents have specific influence on how people currently travel and will be likely to travel to The Rocks in the future:

- *Sydney Centre Access Strategy* (TfNSW, December 2013)
- *Sydney's Bus Future* (TfNSW, December 2013)
- *Sydney's Cycling Future* (TfNSW, December 2013)
- *Sydney's Walking Future* (TfNSW, December 2013).

The *Sydney City Centre Access Strategy* (TfNSW, December 2013) outlines transport principles for the Sydney CBD area over the coming years, including the redesign of transport networks following the commencement of the light rail construction in October 2015.

The access strategy considers all transport modes and their networks. The integrated transport system aims to:

- Make interchange between modes easier
- Improve reliability of surface public transport (buses, light rail and taxis)
- Improve safety for all users
- Reduce conflict between modes.

Specific actions, as they relate to The Rocks precinct include:

- *Improving visitor information including wayfinding and signage to other CBD destinations and transport hubs in major visitor precincts such as Circular Quay including the Overseas Passenger Terminal, the new Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct, and the new Barangaroo development (pg. 24)*
- *Extending the existing bi-directional separated Kent Street cycleway to Liverpool Street and implementing related improvements through The Rocks to connect to the Harbour Bridge (pg. 44).*

3. Development Proposal

3.1 Redevelopment

The proposal includes primarily a reconfiguration of existing floorspace, with the addition of a rooftop bar the most considerable proposed item of work.

This SSDA will seek consent for the following building alterations¹:

- General upgrades to fire safety and circulation including new fire stair and lift.
- Upgrade and reconfiguration of ground, first and second floors, including:
 - **Ground floor:**
 - New amenities.
 - Refurbishment of main bar area.
 - Introduction of new bistro space including access to a new outdoor courtyard space.
 - **First floor:**
 - Relocation of kitchen and kitchen prep areas to the first floor, including the installation of a dumbwaiter system.
 - New fire stair arrangement, including new (formalised) egress stair to Gloucester Walk.
 - Rearrangement of bedroom/bathroom areas to ensure each bedroom has an en-suite.
 - **Second floor:**
 - Rearrangement of bedroom/bathroom areas to ensure each bedroom has an en-suite.
 - **Roof (note: this level has existing built fabric, including storage rooms):**
 - Addition of rooftop bar which includes accessible toilet facilities and server area.
 - The roof area will include acoustic screening.

No other changes are proposed as part of the development.

The proposed overall land use schedule is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Land Use Schedule

Land Use	Existing	Proposed	Change
Pub	865 m ²	995 m ²	+130 m ²
Hotel	16 rooms	11 rooms	-5 rooms

3.2 Population and Patronage

Noting a maximum capacity of 431 patrons and up to 15 staff as outlined in Section 2, it is proposed that there will be no change to the patron capacity. An increase to up to 25 total staff (from the existing 15) is anticipated.

¹ Extracted from Request for SEARs (pg. 4) prepared by Urbis, dated 2 August 2017, https://majorprojects.accelo.com/public/ecabee03b7cfbdd4e96e1f25b41d4056/The%20Mercantile%20Hotel_%20Request%20for%20SEARs.pdf, accessed 26 October 2017,

3.3 Loading Area

It is proposed that the existing loading arrangements be retained, with a temporal loading zone in place on George Street out the front of the site.

Design drawings provided to GTA show that a bin store is to be provided at the rear of the site with the waste collection activities to occur from the George Street loading zone. This is unchanged from existing waste collection for the site.

4. Parking and Loading

4.1 Vehicular Parking

As noted previously, the site is not under the direct planning control of the City of Sydney, and parking levels are stipulated through a public transport accessibility map. As the site is not under the planning control of the City of Sydney, no guidance is provided. For the purposes of this assessment, the closest land parcel was assumed to be the same for the development site. Other properties on Cumberland Street near the site are regarded as Level F.

For hotel accommodation, there is to be a maximum of one space for every four rooms. For retail land use in Level F public transport accessible land, a maximum of one space per 50 square metres GFA can be provided. A summary is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Car parking

Land use	Rate	Maximum parking provision
Hotel Accommodation	1 per 4 rooms	3
Pub	1 per 50 m ² GFA	19
TOTAL		22

As the parking provision is a maximum, no parking is proposed for the development and this is consistent with the City of Sydney's and Transport for NSW objectives for the area in promoting sustainable transport options, particularly in and around the Sydney CBD area.

4.2 Loading Area

The City of Sydney 2012 DCP outlines 'waste collection and loading is to be accommodated *within* new development'. There is an existing loading zone on George Street, which is proposed to be retained. Gloucester Walk is subject to significant gradients and considered largely unsuitable as a loading space. Further, a loading bay within Gloucester Walk would mean that entry and exit would not both be in a forward direction as guided by paragraph 1c of Section 3.11.13 of the DCP.

Due to the overarching heritage nature of The Rocks, providing loading and waste collection within the development is not feasible nor practical. Retaining the existing loading arrangements is considered satisfactory.

4.3 Bicycle Parking

The site does not currently have any bicycle parking and no bicycle parking demand was observed during the site visit. Patron numbers are not going to increase as a result of the proposal and consequently, there is expected to be a negligible demand for bicycle parking facilities.

5. Traffic Impact

5.1 Operational Traffic Impact

Noting that the proposal primarily incorporates the redevelopment of existing land uses, the operational traffic impact of the proposal is expected to be negligible compared to existing conditions. Journeys to the site are expected to be predominantly walking access to the Circular Quay transport interchange, as well as point-to-point journeys with taxis and ride sharing services (for which there is a taxi rank directly opposite the site).

5.2 Construction Traffic Impact

More significant traffic impacts can be expected to occur during construction activities arising from the proposed redevelopment. GTA has also been engaged to prepare a Construction and Pedestrian Traffic Management Plan, which forms another appendix to the SSDA.

6. Conclusion

- A State Significant Development Application is to be lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment for a proposed redevelopment of the Mercantile Hotel located at 25 George Street, The Rocks.
- The site has good access to public transport services at Circular Quay transport interchange.
- The redevelopment largely retains existing land uses and areas and therefore there are negligible net impacts of the development in terms of its operational impact.
- The City of Sydney 2012 LEP stipulates a maximum of 22 parking spaces for the specified land uses. The development is providing zero parking spaces and is compliant with this requirement.
- A loading area is currently provided on George Street and is proposed to be retained.
- A draft Construction and Pedestrian Traffic Management Plan should be prepared to consider the construction impacts of the proposal.

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