

**HERITAGE ADDENDUM  
(SD 17\_8665)**

**MERCANTILE HOTEL**

**25-27 GEORGE STREET,  
THE ROCKS 2000**

**URBIS**

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Job Code	SA 6771
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

Urbis has been engaged by Welsh & Major to prepare the following heritage addendum pertinent to the refurbishment works and rooftop terrace proposed at the Mercantile Hotel, The Rocks (SSD 17\_8665).

The subject site is identified as a State listed heritage item under the Heritage Act (SHR01560), is located within the Rocks Conservation Area, and is listed on the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority's s170 Heritage and Conservation Register.

This report responds to the submissions as relating to heritage that have been received in relation to the application:

- City of Sydney Council, dated 24 July 2018;
- Office of Environment and Heritage, dated 11 July 2018;
- Heritage Council of NSW, dated 3 August 2018; and
- Property NSW, dated 15 August 2018.

As there has been an overlap in the comments provided, this report has been structured in accordance with the scope of work discussed.

## 1.2. SITE LOCATION

The site is located at 25-27 George Street, The Rocks as shown in Figure 1 below. The subject site is legally defined as Lot 10 DP 258607.

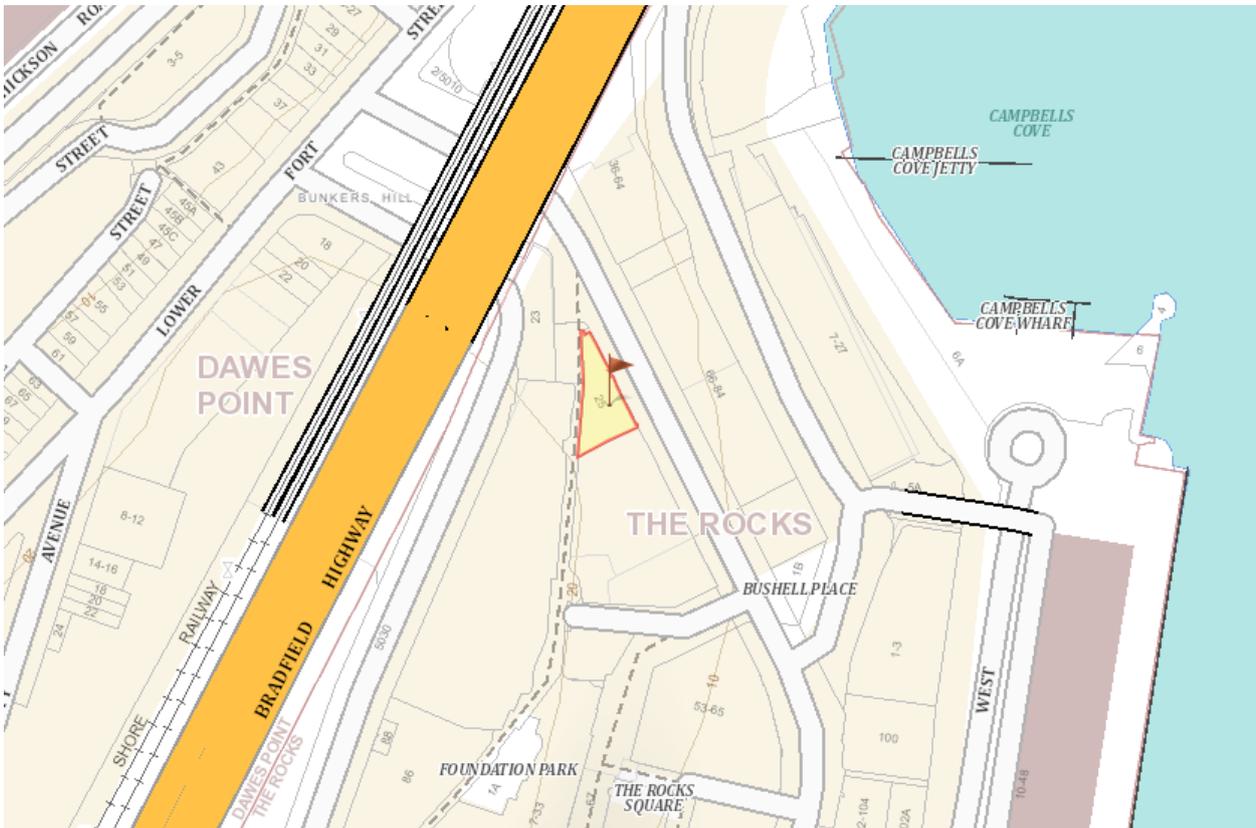


Figure 1 – Locality map with approximate location of subject site indicated by highlight

Source: Six Maps, 2018

### 1.3. HERITAGE LISTING

The subject site is a state listed heritage item on the State Heritage Register (SHR) (Listing No. 01560). Additionally, the site is located within the Rocks Conservation Area as listed on the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority's (SHFA) (now Government Property of NSW [GPNSW]) s170 Heritage and Conservation Register.



State Heritage Register - SHR 01560, Plan 3154  
 Mercantile Hotel  
 25-27 George Street, The Rocks  
 Gazettal Date: 10 May 2002



**Legend**

- SHR Curtilage
- Land Parcels
- Railways
- Roads
- LGAs
- Suburbs

Figure 2 – SHR Curtilage Map for the Mercantile Hotel  
 Source: NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Heritage Inventory



Figure 3 – Heritage items in the vicinity of the subject site

Source: Six Maps and Urbis, 2017

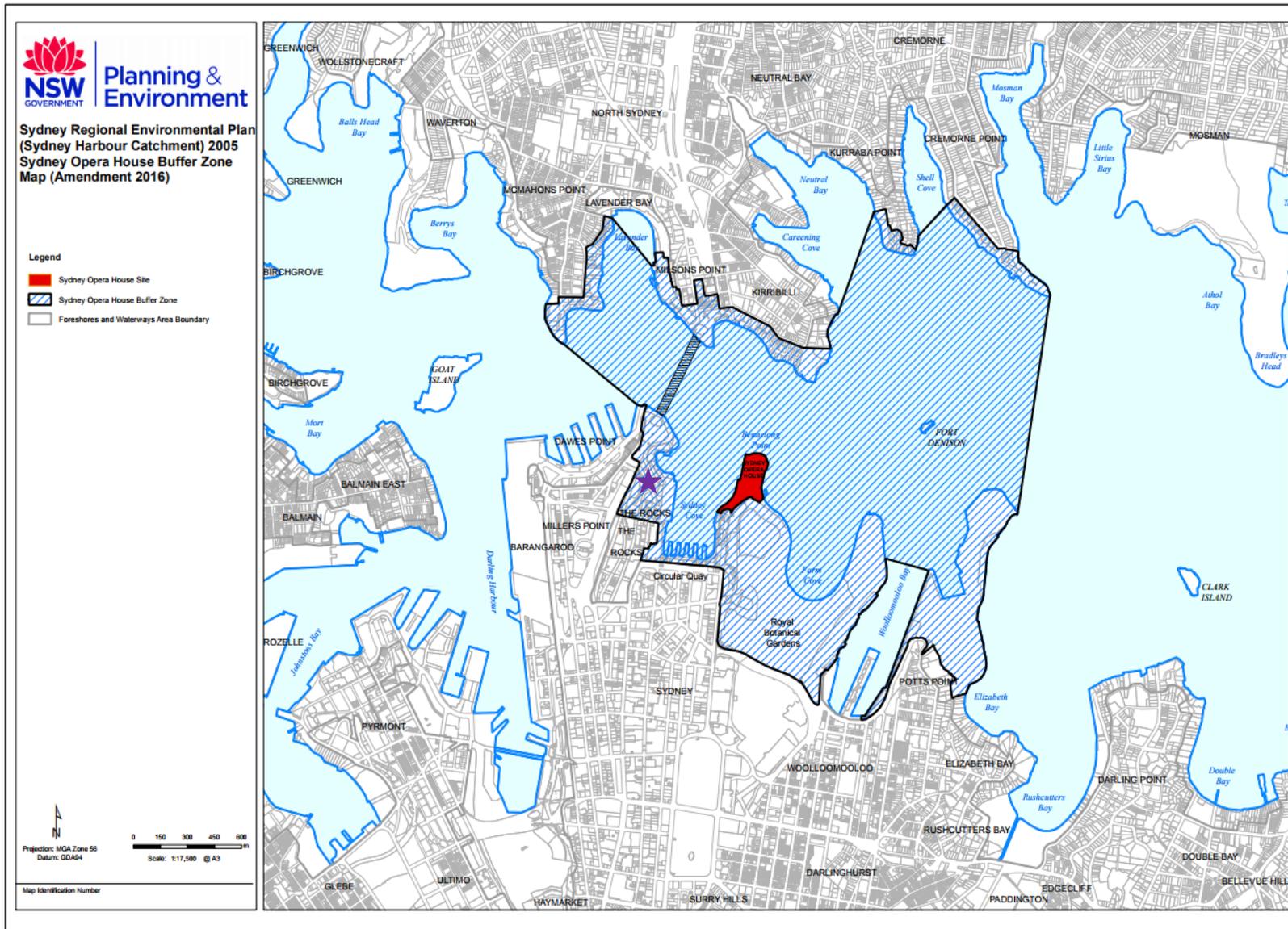


Figure 4 – Sydney Opera House Buffer Zone Map, approximate location of subject site is indicated by the purple star

Source: Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 and Sydney Opera House Buffer Zone Map (Amendment 2016)

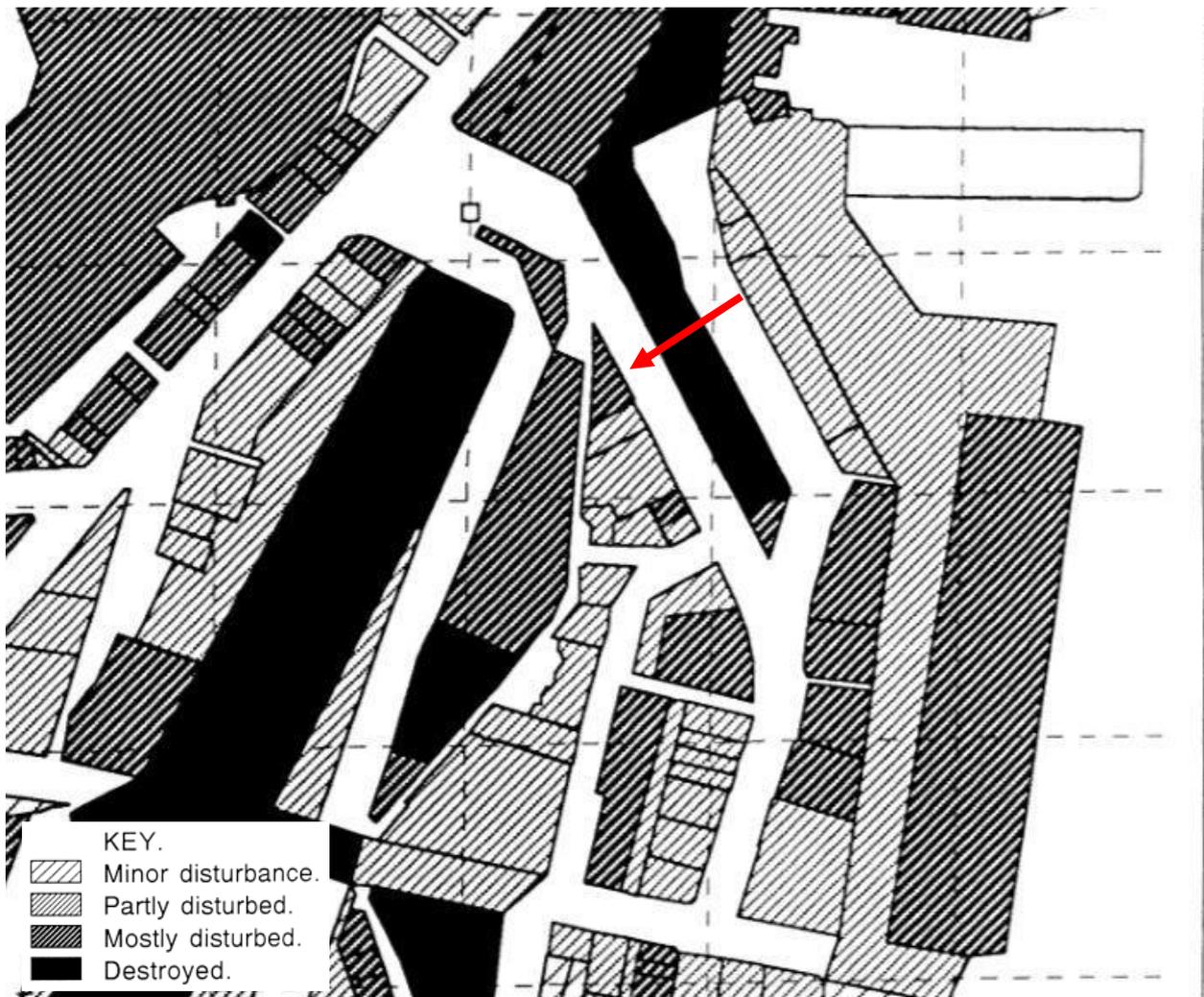


Figure 5 – Extract of Archaeological Management Plan with the subject site assessed to be ‘mostly disturbed to destroyed’, subject site indicated by red arrow

Source: Higginbotham, *The Rocks and Millers Point Archaeological Management Plan in: Casey and Lowe, Mercantile Hotel, December 2017*

## 1.4. METHODOLOGY

This report sets out and responds to the pertinent heritage comments that have been received in relation to the application (SSD 17\_8665)

This report does not include a site description or historical overview. Refer to the Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Urbis dated 4 May 2018.

## 1.5. AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION

The following report has been prepared by Alida Eisermann (Consultant- Heritage). Kate Paterson (Director- Heritage) has reviewed and endorsed its content.

Unless otherwise stated, all drawings, illustrations and photographs are the work of Urbis.

## 1.6. THE PROPOSAL

In May 2018, Urbis prepared a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) for the works proposed under the application SSD 17\_8665 which relate to the Mercantile Hotel. The proposed works included refurbishment and the provision of a rooftop terrace. The works that were assessed in the HIS were defined as follows:

- An extension of the building envelope on ground floor to the western elevation (below Gloucester Walk) to facilitate an updated amenities area;
- Internal modifications on ground, first, and second floors, including
  - The insertion of ensuite bathrooms to existing accommodation rooms;
  - Extensive relocation and upgrade to the kitchen on the first floor with new dumb waiters across all levels;
  - Removal of the recent bar area to the southern extension and modification of the rear to allow better access to the courtyard and appreciation of the Gloucester walk retaining wall;
- Installation of a new lift to the rear externally; and
- Provision of a roof top bar with shade and acoustic structure, fire stair and associated amenities to the existing flat roof.

## 2. RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

### 2.1. SCOPE OF WORKS

#### Submission Received

##### Property NSW

*The description of works on page 36 does not include BCA and fire services upgrades, materials colours etc.*

#### Urbis Heritage Response

Please find below an amended scope of works which now references BCA and fire services upgrades, along with the proposed materials and colours.

#### Proposed BCA and fire services upgrades

- Sprinkling of the whole building;
- Acoustic and fire separation of accommodation floors and rooms;
- Dedicated egress from the proposed rooftop and upgraded egress from accommodation floors; and
- Accessibility upgrades including accommodation rooms and equitable access to the ground floor, accommodation and rooftop levels.

#### Proposed materials and colours

- Zinc standing seam roofing and cladding;
- Steel with a mid-grey micaceous oxide paint;
- Pavers with a neutral cream finish; and
- Steel framed fixed glass.

### 2.2. SERVICES

#### Submissions Received

##### City of Sydney

*The internal alterations are considered acceptable in principle, however there appears to be insufficient services information, relating to matters such as the proposed sprinkler system, fire separation and acoustic separation measures, new plumbing and mechanical exhausts, submitted with the application to entirely determine heritage impacts. This should be further developed with input of the applicant's heritage consultant whose involvement throughout the planning and construction stages of the project is crucial for ensuring impacts of the proposed works on significant fabric and spaces are minimised.*

*Details have not been submitted, and only an indicative location and size of the exhaust is shown on the submitted drawings. Details of new kitchen mechanical exhaust and associated ducting should be developed in consultation with the applicant's heritage consultant with the aim of minimising visual and physical heritage impacts. These details should be submitted for consideration prior to determination of this application.*

##### Department of Planning and Environment

*Provide further information in relation to the provision of services, including mechanical, electrical and hydraulic, stormwater drainage, communications and data fixings, fire separation and acoustic separation measures, new plumbing and mechanical exhausts, in order to determine the extent of heritage impacts. This shall include information on removal of existing services and provision of proposed services, including any proposed fire upgrades and services being introduced onto the roof.*

Provision of the above information shall include updated drawings showing the Hotel's varying floor and wall structures, brick, concrete or timber, in order to understand the impact of works relating to the above mentioned provision of services.

The HIS shall be revised to address the following proposed works and their associated impacts:

- Proposed kitchens and bathrooms and associated services and exhausts and vents

## Property NSW

The impact assessment on pages 66-77 does not address the following proposed works:

- Kitchens and bathrooms and associated services and exhausts and vents;
- Air conditioning upgrades to the building, duct runs, risers, plant etc;
- Fire upgrades – does not discuss penetrations through fabric, the significance of fabric, or the impacts; and
- Additional services elements being introduced onto the roof – exhaust, mechanical plant including air conditioning, vents and flues etc, and their location and potential visual and heritage impacts from these works.

## Office of Environment and Heritage

The Heritage Impact Statement advises that timber floor boards will be lifted to install services. This solution is reasonable only when it is used sparingly. There is concern that the extensive reticulation of new services will adversely affect the floors particularly when the floors feature old tongue and groove boards which are likely to split when lifted. Therefore, the extent of opening up services work affecting the floors should be shown on the general arrangement plans.

The Heritage Impact Statement (p. 71) advises that the ensuites will be inserted as pods. There is concern that the Heritage Impact Statement underestimates the actual physical impacts of the structural work and services. Therefore, detailed sections of the proposal wet areas, ensuites, kitchen, new bars should be requested to show how the new false walls, floors, ceilings and fitouts will be constructed, supported and stiffened including their interface and impact on the existing floors, existing timber joinery, skirtings, doors and windows, their architraves sills etc. and any plaster decoration.

## Urbis Heritage Response

In preparing this response, Urbis Heritage has been provided with the following plans by Welsh + Major. The plans have been amended to include detailed sections of the proposal wet areas, ensuites, kitchen, and the new bar. A detailed services plan for all floors has also been included for this submission and has informed this response to submissions.

Table 1 – List of amended plans

Drawing No.	Title	Date
-	Title, Finishes Schedule, Area Calculation, Location Plan	December 2018
SSDA.101	Proposed site plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.102	Proposed ground floor plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.103	Proposed first floor plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.104	Proposed second floor plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.105	Proposed roof terrace plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.106	Proposed roof plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.107	Proposed ground floor RCP	11 January 2019

<b>Drawing No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
SSDA.108	Proposed first floor RCP	11 January 2019
SSDA.109	Proposed second floor RCP	11 January 2019
SSDA.110	Proposed roof terrace RCP	11 January 2019
SSDA.201	Proposed section A	11 January 2019
SSDA.202	Proposed section B	11 January 2019
SSDA.203	Proposed section C	11 January 2019
SSDA.204	Proposed section D	11 January 2019
SSDA.301	Proposed east elevation – George Street	11 January 2019
SSDA.302	Proposed north elevation	11 January 2019
SSDA.303	Proposed west elevation – Gloucester Walk	11 January 2019
SSDA.304	South elevation	11 January 2019
SSDA.401	Typical ensuite details	11 January 2019
SSDA.417	Typical kitchen details	11 January 2019
SSDA.418	Typical roof details	11 January 2019
SSDA.419	Proposed signage	11 January 2019
SSDA.501	Proposed ground floor services plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.502	Proposed first floor services plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.503	Proposed second floor services plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.504	Proposed roof bar services plan	11 January 2019
SSDA.601	GFA plans	11 January 2019

The services drawings included as part of this updated package have been included overleaf for reference. The full-size plans accompanying this response should be consulted for any details.



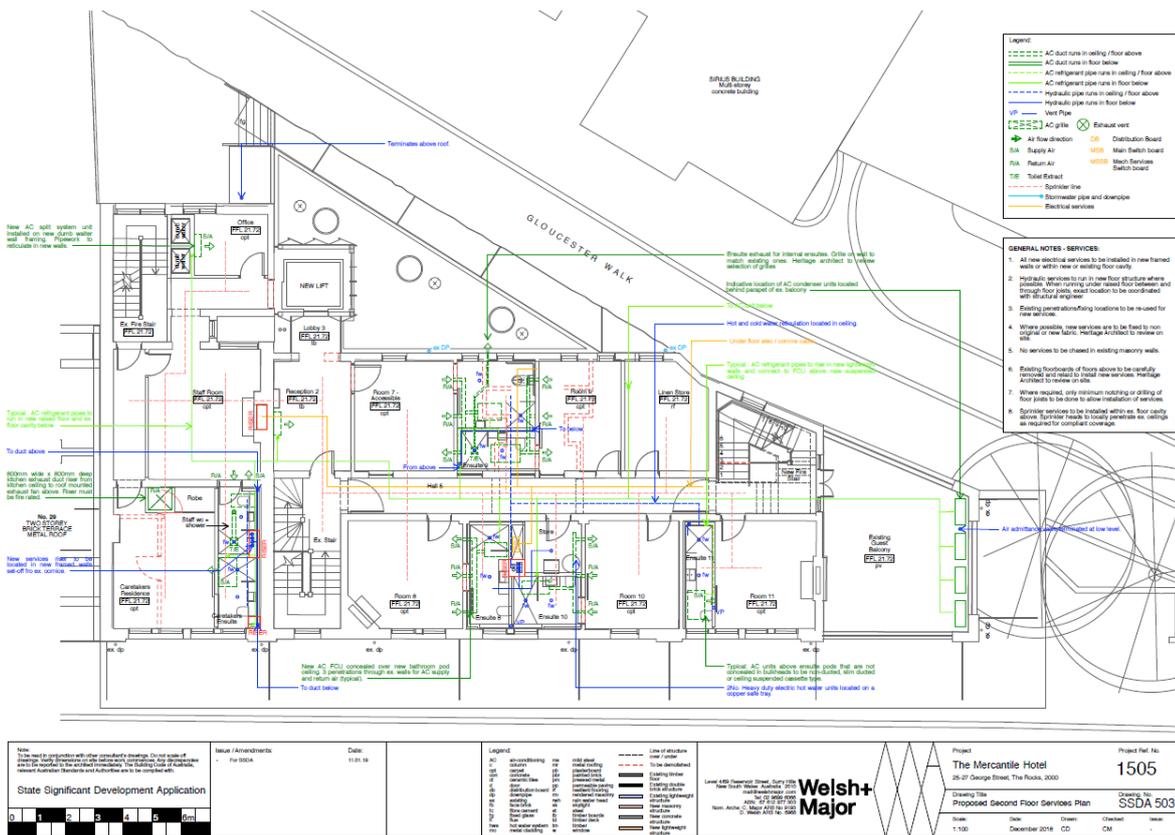


Figure 8 – Proposed second floor services plan

Source: Welsh + Major, SSDA.503, Proposed second floor services plan, 11 January 2019

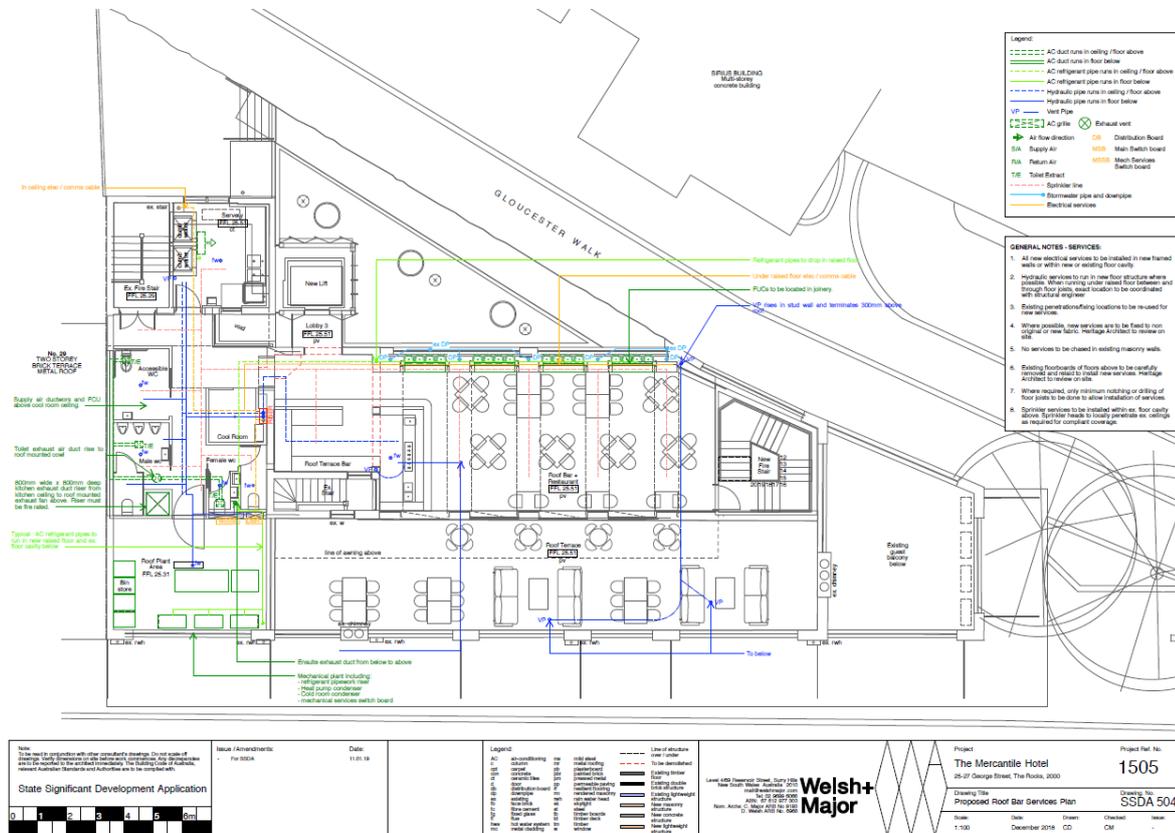


Figure 9 – Proposed roof bar services plan

Source: Welsh + Major, SSDA.504, Proposed roof bar services plan, 11 January 2019

## Fire Protection

The proposed fire protection measures include the installation of a sprinkler system, the upgrading of door leaves and the application of intumescent paint. These measures have been developed in consultation with Urbis Heritage. The building would have compliant coverage, whilst there would be minimal impact on the heritage significance of the site, an acceptable heritage outcome.

It is proposed to install sprinkler services within the existing floor cavity, sprinkler heads would locally penetrate existing ceilings in a single location, as required for compliant coverage. Sprinkling of the whole building is a fire engineered solution to suitably protect the building and its occupants without having to extensively modify internal fabric to comply with BCA/NCC fire regulations. Installation of sprinklers to heritage buildings is a widely practiced engineered solution to heritage buildings to prevent substantial modification to existing fabric and achieve a suitable fire protection solution. Installation of fire sprinklers would require minimal intervention to significant fabric (a single penetration for the head and running of small diameter pipes approx. 40mm in diameter) compared with other very invasive options and allows protection of the whole building and occupants to a suitable level. The installation of a sprinkler system is supported from a heritage perspective as it has minimal intervention to fabric whilst providing protection to the building and occupants.

The existing accommodation door leaves would be fire upgraded through the installation of perimeter smoke seals, self-closers and application of intumescent paint. It is understood that these measures would allow for the retention of the extant doors of high significance, a positive heritage outcome. The interventions required in order to provide an acceptable fire protection solution has been assessed as having no impact to the fabric and is therefore acceptable from a heritage perspective.

As a fire protection measure, intumescent paint would be installed to the ceilings. The use of intumescent paint as a passive fire resistance measure is acceptable from a heritage perspective, as there is no physical impact would be required. The visual integrity of the extant decorative ceilings would be wholly retained, a positive heritage outcome.

## Acoustic Treatment

Generally acoustic insulation would be installed in the existing floor cavity. In order to facilitate this acoustic treatment, the existing floor boards would have the nails cut and the boards carefully raised. Within the proposed hotel bedrooms, a 4mm acoustic impact layer would be laid under the existing floorboards with new carpet to be installed above. In order to facilitate the installation of these acoustic measures the lifting of extant floors would be required. The removal of the extant timber floor boards would be facilitated through the cutting of the nails. The cutting of the nails would allow for the lifting of the boards and would mitigate the chances of the boards to split. It is noted that the floor boards were installed as a substrate and are understood to have been carpeted throughout much of the building's history.

An acoustic panel would be installed above the existing ground floor stage. The acoustic treatment would involve the installation of a new acoustic suspended ceiling panel that would also conceal the AC cassette unit. The installation of the acoustic suspended ceiling panel would be acceptable from a heritage perspective, as a suspended ceiling, the installation of this element would be reversible with the extant ceiling retained. Additionally, the installation of this acoustic treatment would house the AC cassette, mitigating any undue visual impact of the installation of this element. It is understood that these modifications are required in order to provide necessary updates to the subject building. The installation of AC and appropriate acoustic treatment is required for the comfort of patrons and essential for the ongoing use of the site as a pub and hotel.

## Plumbing, Electrical and Data Upgrades

It is proposed that the plumbing pipework for the proposed ensuites would be installed between the raised floor cavity and the existing floor joists, whilst the pipework would reticulate in the proposed new pod walls, central supply is from new central risers with a small central distribution zone with the hallway floor cavity. Within the kitchen it is proposed that the waste drainage pipe would run along a cavity between the extant floor and proposed new floor. These proposed means of installing the required upgrades have been designed in consultation with Urbis Heritage. Minimal intervention into significant fabric is required as the pipes are housed within the cavities within the new ensuite pods. It is considered that the proposed installation responds appropriately to the heritage significance of the site and has been assessed as having minimal impact to fabric due the contained pod design and is acceptable from a heritage perspective.

It is understood that all new electrical services would be installed in new framed walls or within existing or new floor cavities and risers as shown on the drawings. As such, it is considered that the installation of updated electrical and data services would be acceptable from a heritage perspective, would require minimal intervention into heritage fabric and would in no way diminish the heritage significance of the site, surrounding heritage items or heritage conservation areas.

## **Mechanical Services**

The proposed updating of mechanical services at the site would involve the installation of a new mechanical exhaust riser for the kitchen, and mechanical exhausts for bathroom amenities. The proposed kitchen riser would run from the ground floor kitchen to a roof mounted exhaust fan, and would be 800mm wide and 800mm deep. The installation of the shaft would require minor penetrations on all levels of the building however this impact has been assessed as acceptable as it is understood that the installation of the riser is required from an operational standpoint to facilitate the ongoing historical use as a hotel. The proposed location of the riser has been developed in consultation with Urbis Heritage and has been positioned to minimise any impact to fabric, the proposed detailing would mitigate the visual impact of the addition. The visual impact of the installation of the new mechanical exhaust has been assessed as acceptable. The exhaust fan would be located on a secondary roof plane and set back from the primary elevation of the building. The scale of the proposed exhaust would be subservient to the extant chimney, and the exhaust would be finished in a recessive grey colour further mitigating the visual impact (refer to Figure 10). The location of the exhaust on the roof is bound by setbacks to boundaries etc. and is therefore quite limited. The location will not be visible from the street at pedestrian level due to the setback from the façade. The installation of this element would in no way detract from the significance of the site, surrounding heritage items or heritage conservation areas.

As part of the upgraded amenities new mechanical exhausts would be installed to service the proposed bathrooms. The exhaust would be discharged through the wall through localised penetrations. A grille would be installed to match the style of extant grilles. The selection of the proposed grille would be determined in consultation with the designated heritage consultant. The proposed interventions and visual impact of the installation of mechanical services in relation to the updating of the bathroom amenities has been assessed as minor and acceptable. The minor impacts are offset by the positive impact of the updates in allowing for the continued use of the site as a pub and hotel offering, when many of the historic pubs in the locality have lost their accommodation offering. It is understood that in order to facilitate the ongoing use of the site, modifications are required in order to update the site in accordance with the expectations of contemporary patrons.

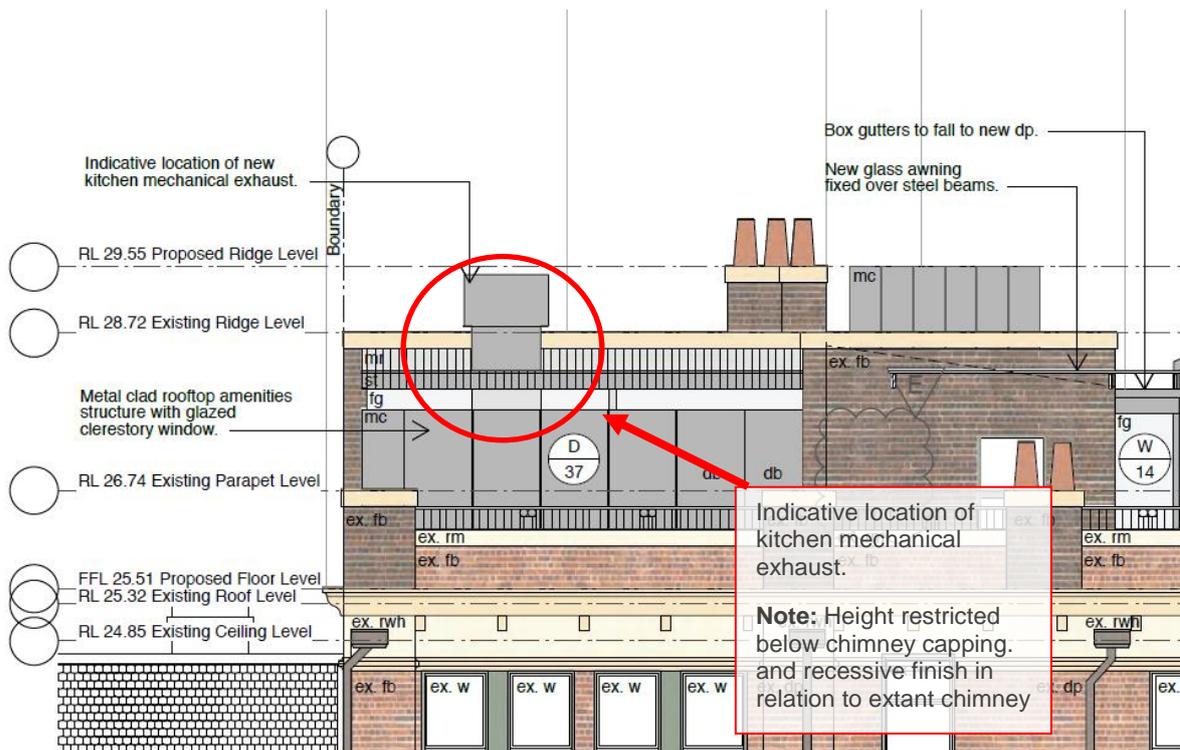


Figure 10 – Location of proposed kitchen mechanical exhaust indicated

Source: Welsh + Major, 2018



Figure 11 – Existing view north up George Street showing approximate location and minimal view of kitchen exhaust

Source: Urbis, 2018



Figure 12 – Existing view south down George Street illustrating exhaust not visible from street

Source: Urbis

## Air-conditioning

The proposed air-conditioning system is an external compressor and internal air handling unit with reticulation pipes only within identified service runs, not ducted. The air-conditioning units would be installed above the ensuite pods with outlet and return air servicing two rooms per pod installation. The proposed penetrations have been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective. The installation of air-conditioning units is required to update the accommodation rooms at the site in line with expectations of contemporary patrons and to facilitate the ongoing historic use and occupation as accommodation rooms. As the proposal seeks the retention of the accommodation rooms located at site, this intervention has been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective.

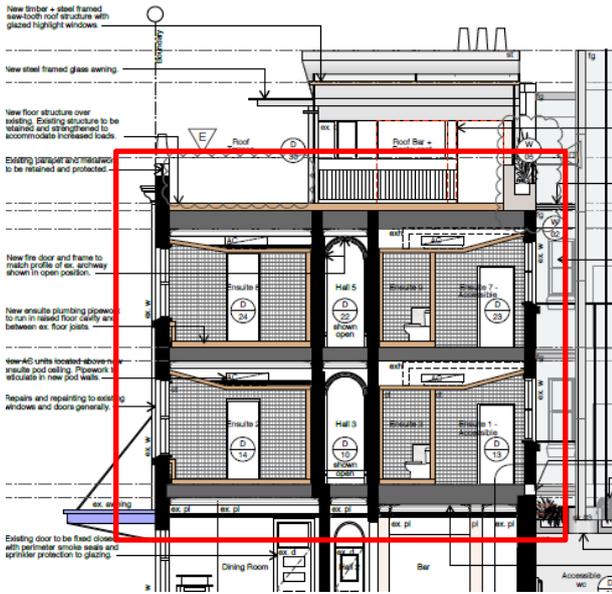


Figure 13 – Section C, note the installation of AC units in void between pod and extant ceiling

Source: Welsh + Major, 2018

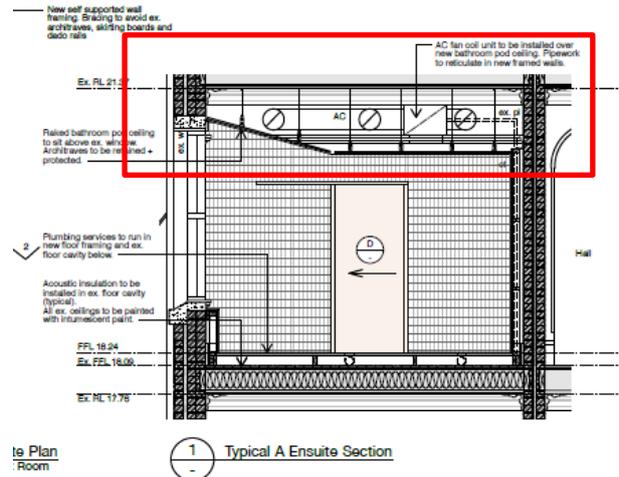


Figure 14 – Ensuite A section, note the installation of AC in void between pod and extant ceiling

Source: Welsh + Major, 2018

### Treatment of Timber Floor Boards

The removal of the extant timber floor boards would be facilitated through the cutting of the nails. The cutting of the nails would allow for the lifting of the boards and would mitigate the chances of the boards to split. It is noted that the floor boards were installed as a substrate and are understood to have been carpeted throughout much of the buildings history. The installation beneath the floor boards has been assessed as acceptable and preferable to installation with the ceiling cavity, as shown in Figure 15 and Figure 16 the ceiling is largely intact and has been assessed as more significant from a heritage perspective. For the above reasons, the installation of the services beneath the floor boards has been assessed to be acceptable from a heritage perspective.



Figure 15 – View of carpeted floor boards and ceiling detail

Source: Urbis, 2018



Figure 16 – View of carpeted floor boards and ceiling detail

Source: Urbis, 2018

## 2.3. GROUND FLOOR BAR

### Submissions received

#### Department of Planning and Environment

*The HIS shall be revised to address the following proposed works and their associated impacts:*

- *Proposed changes to the ground floor main bar and how this will retain and enhance the existing bar character.*

#### Property NSW

*The impact assessment on pages 66-77 does not address the following proposed works:*

- *Proposed changes to the ground floor main bar and how this is retaining/enhancing the existing bar character and atmosphere.*

### Urbis Heritage Response

As discussed in Section 2.1 of this report, the proposed changes to the ground floor bar area (refer to Figure 17) would include:

- Existing bar fit out is to be retained, with refinishing and repair to timber panelling.
- Existing floor boards to be retained and protected with new timber overlay floor installed over.

### Updated Assessment

The proposed works to the ground floor main bar have been designed to retain and enhance the significance of this central area in the building. The extant floor boards are to be retained and protected, it is proposed that a new timber overlay is installed over this element. The retention and protection of the extant timber flooring has been assessed as a positive heritage outcome. This fabric would be retained and protected, and would allow for an updated floor finish in a heavily trafficked location. It is proposed to retain, refurbish and

refinishing the timber panelling in the ground floor bar area. This has been assessed as necessary restoration work and would have a positive heritage outcome, it is recommended that heritage tradespersons with experience in restoration works is engaged.

In order to facilitate the installation of the new services risers for the upper floor bathrooms the columns located within the ground floor bar area would be enlarged. In order to mitigate against any undue impact to the visual presentation of the main bar area the enlargement of the columns would match the existing cornice and dado detailing. It is understood that the service risers are required to be installed in order to facilitate necessary refurbishment works at the site, the proposed treatment would be acceptable from a heritage perspective and has been assessed as sympathetic to the significance of the site.

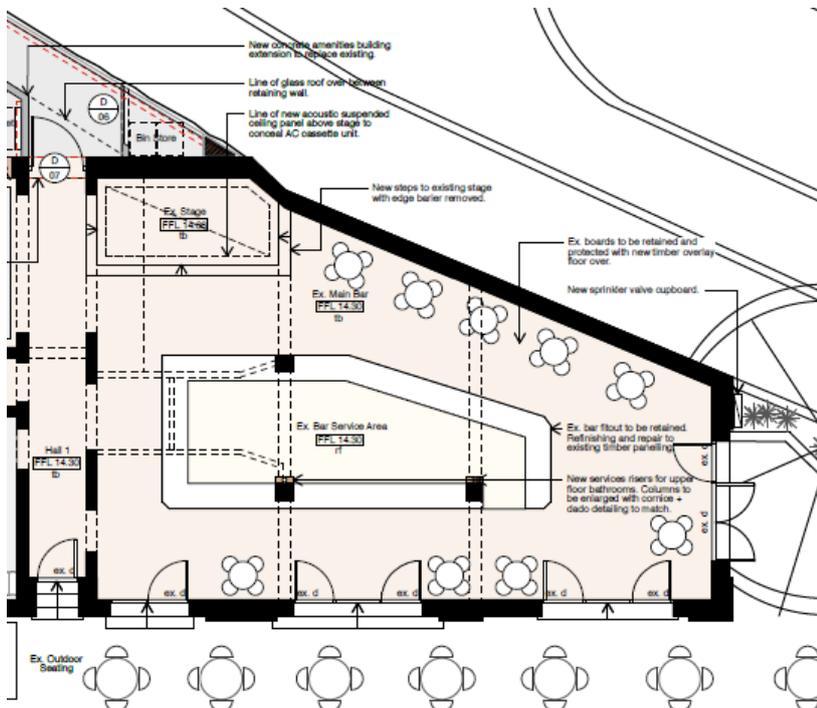


Figure 17 – Extract of floor plans with a focus on the ground floor bar area

Source: Welsh + Major, 2019

## 2.4. VARYING LEVELS

### Submission Received

#### Office of Environment and Heritage

*Information should be submitted to show how the roof levels, roof floor structure, stormwater drainage and trafficable surfaces will be resolved, taking into account structural and code compliance, the existing floor levels and the outdoor terrace.*

#### Urbis Heritage Response

Refer further to the updated architectural package showing detailed resolution of all floor levels and integration of new services that has been resolved in detail in collaboration and based in the advice of Urbis Heritage (heritage consultant/heritage architect). It is understood that the proposed levels have been resolved remain largely the same as the existing internally generally. Where new bathroom ensuites are located a new floor structure (set up) is installed to allow required falls and servicing to be located without any change to the existing floor structure and minimal (pipe penetration only) intervention to the existing floor making them largely reversible. Externally the roof level which is wholly obscured externally by parapet walls consists of a new floating trafficable surface that sits on top of the existing to facilitate the existing drainage system to be retained and minimal intervention. These works have been assessed to be acceptable from a heritage perspective with minimal impact to fabric of lower significance being floors (currently carpeted)

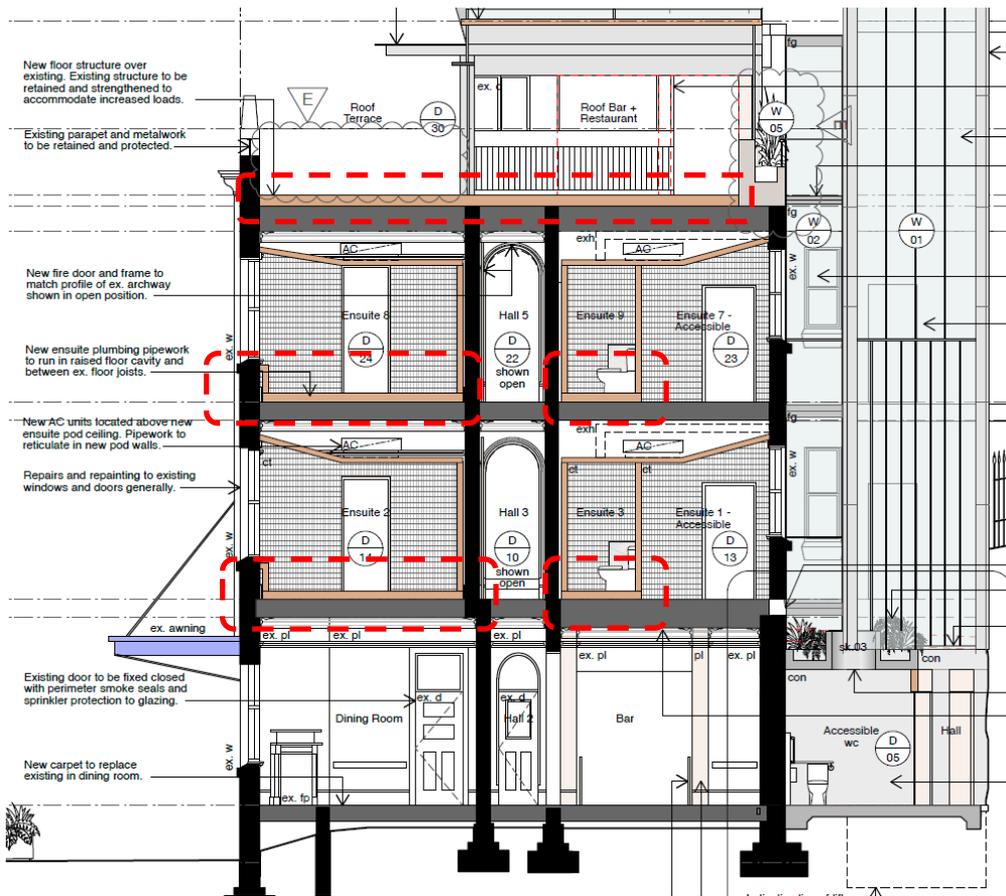


Figure 18 – Section showing floor levels hatched in orange and highlighted in red)

Source: Welsh and Major SSDA.203

## 2.5. FORMATION OF OPENINGS

### Submission received

#### Office of Environment and Heritage

*Information should be submitted to show how the proposed demolition for enlarged openings and any boxings will affect existing plaster decoration and timber joinery and how these new elements will be designed to avoid competing with or overwhelming any internal decoration and finishes.*

#### Urbis Heritage Response

Proposed new openings feature finishes that are sympathetic to the heritage qualities of the site whilst clearly discernible as contemporary, so as not to overwhelm or compete with the existing original heritage features and fabric of the site. In instances where there would be an opening in the existing wall, these are generally door openings only and due to the ceiling heights of the spaces significant header courses are retained up to the existing cornices and ceilings (plaster decoration), therefore there is no impact to this plasterwork. Walls adjacent are hard set plaster and the new openings are finished with simple plastered reveals. Where doors are present to new ensuites they are simple contemporary sliding doors allowing the opening to be simple and clearly distinguishable as new in conjunction with the bathroom.

Where enlarged existing openings are proposed to the ground floor affecting joinery they are within the existing reveal size and therefore retain the reveal, highlights and architraves with a modification to the joinery suite (shown at items A and B in Figure 19 overleaf ).



## Urbis Heritage Response

Further assessment has been completed and it has been assessed that the amount of joinery to be removed is minimal, therefore it is likely that any salvaged joinery will be reused for repairs and maintenance to the existing extensive existing retained joinery on site and we do not foresee their being any remnants for storage. It is proposed that any salvaged brickwork, which is not a substantial amount be utilised as a new wall on the new ground floor extension housing the bathrooms adjacent to the new fabric as an interpretive feature.

## 2.7. MATERIALS AND FINISHES

### Submissions Received

#### City of Sydney

*Information provided on the proposed materials and finishes is inadequate, particularly given the building is a heritage item. A full schedule of materials, finishes and colours, keyed to elevations is required.*

#### Property NSW

*The impact assessment on pages 66-77 does not address the following proposed works:*

- *Proposed materials and colours and appropriateness to the heritage character of the interior and exterior of the buildings.*

#### Office of Environment and Heritage

*Highly reflective external surfaces, large areas of unshaded glass and bright white finishes should be avoided. External colours should be subdued and take inspiration from the Mercantile Hotel's existing materials and colours. This is to minimise the visual impact of the alterations on the Mercantile Hotel's character setting and significant views.*

## Urbis Heritage Response

As discussed in Section 2.1 of this report, the proposed materials and finishes (refer to Figure 20) would include the following:

- Zinc standing seam roofing and cladding;
- Steel with a mid-grey micaceous oxide paint;
- Pavers with a neutral cream finish; and
- Steel framed fixed glass.

The proposed materials and finishes has been assessed as sympathetic to the heritage significance of the site. The finishes would be clearly discernible as contemporary ensuring that the proposed new works would be clearly discernible as such. The proposed finishes would be neutral and recessive in tone as well as utilising a heritage pallet where appropriate and would in no way compete with or overwhelm the established heritage qualities of the site, proximate heritage items or the Rocks Heritage Conservation Area.

## FINISHES SCHEDULE

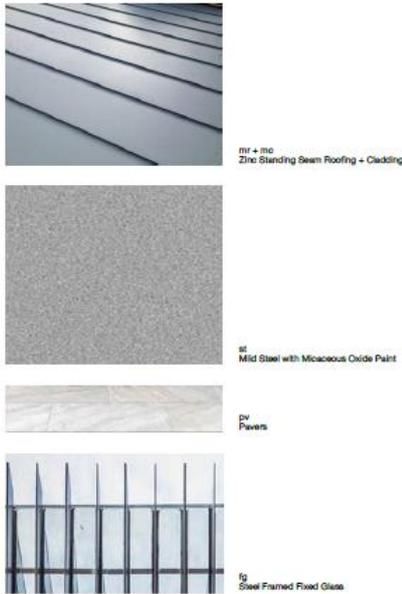


Figure 20 – Proposed finishes schedule

Source: Welsh + Major, 2018

## 2.8. VISUAL IMPACT

### Submissions Received

#### City of Sydney

*The height of the proposed lift will be to the base of the terracotta chimney pots of the rear chimney which is identified in the CMP as being of exceptional significance.*

*Whilst the principle of provision of a lift is accepted, it would have far less visual impact if it was more slender and lower – the scale relationship with the existing chimney should ideally be such that the prominence of the chimney is retained. The proposed lift will also be visible from parts of Gloucester Street and Gloucester Walk resulting in some visual impacts. The applicant should be requested to investigate the possibility of a more slender and lower lift.*

*The additions at roof top level will be clearly identifiable as new works and will appear largely as a roof top terrace with saw tooth roof. The roof sections proposed have excessively large overhangs to the glazing which add unnecessarily to the scale and bulk of the roof top additions. As the roof top additions will be clearly seen from a number of vantage points, lessening their visual impact of the saw tooth roof should be further considered by the applicant's architect and heritage consultant. This could be done, for example by reducing the pitch of each individual roof element and by minimising any overhang which would lower the overall height. It should be noted that traditional saw tooth roofs did not have overhangs to the glazing.*

#### Department of Planning and Environment

*Consider revising the height and scale of the proposed lift and saw tooth roof, in order to reduce visual impact.*

#### Office of Environment and Heritage

*The roof terrace should not have planter beds and plants. While screening to maintain patron's comfort is acknowledged, the planters will seem incongruous with the character of the Hotel's robust architecture.*

## **Urbis Heritage Response**

### **Terracotta chimney pots and visual impact of the lift**

It is noted that the addition of the proposed lift would have a minor impact on the prominence of the terracotta chimney pots. It is understood that the proposed dimensions of the lift are required to be maintained by current code requirement (clearance at the top of the lift shaft principally) and in order to facilitate universal access across the site. This impact has been assessed as acceptable as the visual prominence of the lift has been mitigated through the use of lightweight materials and transparent glazing that would facilitate continued visual access to the chimney pots (refer to Figure 22). Furthermore, the location of the proposed lift has been externally sited as during the design and heritage consultation process, this location was determined to be the preferred option from both an accessibility and heritage perspective. Should the proposed lift be internally located, there would need to be substantial interventions into significant fabric. The proposed external lift has been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective as minimal intervention to a rear secondary facade or penetrations to significant fabric would be required, as such a minor visual impact on the prominence of the terracotta chimney pots has been assessed as acceptable.

### **Sawtooth roof form**

As noted in the received submission, the proposed sawtooth roof form has been designed to be clearly discernible as a contemporary element. As such the proposed form, angle and finishes of the sawtooth roof has been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective. The proposed angle of the roof has been designed to maximise views up to the Harbour Bridge from key locations on Gloucester Walk and from within the enclosure. The sawtooth roof form has been designed in order to create a rhythm that would reduce the apparent scale of the structure and allow it to visually recede within its context, alluding to the rhythm of the existing building façade and the fine grain context of the area.

The highlight glazing of the sawtooth form would create transparency through the structure when viewed from the bridge itself. The north facing highlight glazing is protected from the sun by a fine steel overhanging eaves that would minimise reflection and any apparent solidity and provide depth and articulation when the viewed from the bridge. The proposed steel elements of the structure would be finished in a mid-grey micaceous oxide paint finish, a reference to the dominant form of the adjacent Harbour Bridge. The structure of the enclosed seating area would not be visible from George Street, allowing the existing George Street elevation including parapet wall to remain unimpacted. The proposed form, angle and finishes of the sawtooth roof has been designed to mitigate against any undue heritage impact. The proposed sawtooth roof has been assessed as an addition that responds to the heritage context of the site, proximate heritage items, and heritage conservation areas. The impact of the addition of the sawtooth roof form has been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective.

### **Planter beds**

The planter beds were understood to be a landscape element intended to provide a welcoming environment for patrons of the rooftop terrace and were considered to have a positive impact on the visual presentation of the site through the provision of landscaping. It is understood that this element can be removed in accordance with the submission received.

The proposed planters that are located at the rear of the site are built in elements. It is understood that these planters would be retained as they provide a visual screen between the subject site and the adjacent Sirius Building. The retention of this minor landscape element is supported from a heritage perspective as it is located to the rear in a current utilitarian area and would therefore not detract from the significance of the site, proximate heritage items or heritage conservation areas.



Figure 21 – CGI image of proposed rooftop works

Source: *Welsh + Major, 2018*

## 2.9. BETTER PLACED: DESIGN GUIDE FOR HERITAGE

### Submission Received

#### Department of Planning and Environment

*Give consideration to the draft Better Placed: Design Guide for Heritage*

### Urbis Heritage Response

#### Better fit

The proposed works would in no way alter the established siting of the building. The external additions proposed respond sympathetically to the character, grain, scale and form of the site and the locality. The proposed design of the lift and the rooftop terrace would be clearly discernible as contemporary and would respond sympathetically to the significance of the site, proximate heritage items, and heritage conservation areas.

#### Better performance

The proposed works have been with respect to the heritage significance of the site and has implemented the following sustainable design elements:

- The proposed lift and rooftop would be constructed of high-quality materials suitable for the semi-marine environment to ensure durability, low maintenance requirements and a long life-cycle.
- The proposed timbers that would be used would be sustainably harvested.
- Elements of the interior have been designed as an assembly of “loose fit” pieces capable of adaptation to future uses of the premises. This philosophy aims to reduce the potential redundancy of the fit out as the use of the premises evolves over time.

#### Better for community

The site has a historic connection to the Irish community, however there are no identified community groups that have been consulted as part of the submission. As discussed, the proposed works would ensure the ongoing economic viability of the site as a public place, providing upgraded amenities in line with the expectations of contemporary patrons. The continued historic use of the site as a pub and accommodation venue is a positive heritage outcome.

### **Better for people**

The proposed works have been designed so as to provide required updates to a historic pub and accommodation venue in order to sympathetically address the requirements of contemporary patrons. The provision of a rooftop bar would facilitate public access to a unique view of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and The Rocks. The improved amenities including a lift facilitate extensive equitable access to the site including the roof, and the ongoing economic viability of the site would ensure the continued historic use, a positive heritage outcome.

### **Better working**

Part of the significance of the site is it is one of the more intact survivors of late-19th and early-20th century The Rocks Pubs, having operated continuously since its opening in 1914 and retaining much of its original character, fabric and functions. The proposed works have been designed to ensure that the significance of the site is retained and that there is a continuity of use. In order to facilitate this works have been proposed that update the offerings of the site, in accordance with the expectations of contemporary patrons and guests to ensure the viability of the site into the future.

### **Better value**

In The Rocks, the subject site is one of the few pub buildings that has retained its accommodation rooms on the upper levels. Many similar sites have had the accommodation rooms modified to operate as function spaces or the like. It is proposed that ensuite bathrooms and air conditioning are installed in order to update the accommodation facilities at the site, in accordance with the expectations of contemporary guests. The proposed works have been designed to mitigate against an undue impact through sympathetic and creative design solutions. The works are understood to be essential in order to ensure the site remains economically viable.

### **Better look and feel**

The proposed works have been designed in order to reinvigorate the site and update the facilities in order to ensure the ongoing use of the building as a pub and accommodation venue. The spatial qualities of the site would be retained with no subdivision or major alterations to significant spaces proposed. The external presentation of the building would be retained, with the proposed new works designed to be clearly discernible as contemporary and in no way competing with the significant detailing and finishes of the site.

## **2.10. PROXIMATE HERITAGE ITEMS AND ROCKS HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA**

### **Submission Received**

#### **Department of Planning and Environment**

*Give further consideration to the impacts of the proposal on the Rocks Conservation Area, and on other nearby listed items.*

### **Urbis Heritage Response**

The proposed external works would have an acceptable degree of impact on the heritage significance of the proximate heritage items and The Rocks Heritage Conservation Area. The proposed works are proposed on secondary elevations and would be minor alterations when considered holistically that would have an acceptable visual impact. Works proposed include the removal of the recent bar area to south extension and modification to allow access to the courtyard and appreciation of the Gloucester walk retaining wall an area previously inaccessible, extension of the building envelope on the west elevation at ground level (below Gloucester Walk), installation of a new lift to the rear externally, and addition of a rooftop bar.

The proposed external lift and rooftop would alter the presentation of the subject building and established views to and from the site and the proximate heritage items and The Rocks Heritage Conservation Area. The minor impact of these contemporary additions has been assessed to be acceptable from a heritage perspective, as the design of these elements has given careful consideration to the historic context of the site and surrounding area. The visual prominence of the lift has been mitigated through the use of lightweight materials and transparent glazing that would ensure this addition would be visually recessive. This design would facilitate the retention of established views, whilst facilitating equitable access across the site. The proposed angle of the sawtooth roof has been designed to maximise views up to the Harbour Bridge from

key locations on Gloucester Walk and from within the enclosure. The proposed form would reduce the apparent scale of the structure and allow it to visually recede within its context. Furthermore, the highlight glazing of the sawtooth form would create transparency through the structure when viewed from the bridge itself. The proposed steel elements of the roof structure would be finished in a mid-grey micaceous oxide paint finish, a reference to the dominant form of the adjacent Harbour Bridge. The proposed sawtooth roof has been assessed as an addition that responds to the heritage context of the site, proximate heritage items, and heritage conservation areas.

The site is located in the vicinity of multiple heritage items of local and state significance, is located within The Rocks Heritage Conservation Area (HCA), and within the buffer zone of The Sydney Opera House (refer to Section 1.3 for all pertinent heritage listings). The proposed works have been assessed to have an acceptable impact on the surrounding heritage items and HCA. The works are minor and have been designed to be clearly discernible as contemporary and of a high standard. The proposed materials and finishes proposed finishes would be neutral and recessive in tone, and would in no way compete with or overwhelm the established heritage qualities of the site, proximate heritage items or the Rocks Heritage Conservation Area.

## 2.11. SIGNAGE

### Submissions Received

#### Department of Planning and Environment

*Provide detailed plans and drawings of the proposed signage, including colour, materials and dimensions, and an assessment against the relevant provisions of the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012.*

#### Property NSW

*The impact assessment on pages 66-77 does not address the following proposed works:*

- *Proposed signage and heritage impacts.*

### Urbis Heritage Response

#### Reinstatement of External Signage

It is proposed that the Mercantile Hotel signage graphic is restored. The 'Mercantile Hotel' signage would be painted on the existing southern masonry wall. There is historical precedent for this signage and the reinstatement of this feature would have a positive heritage impact on the significance of the site.

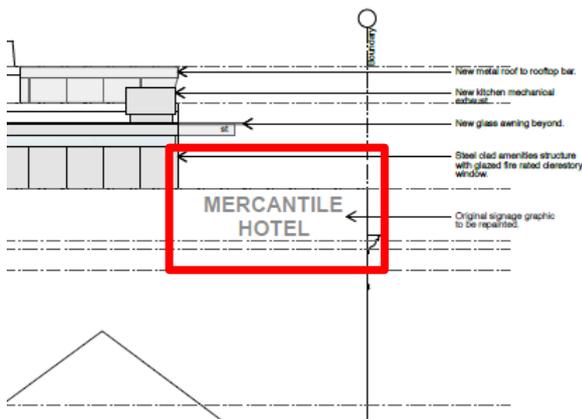


Figure 22 – Extract of architectural plan with proposed placement and form of signage

Source: *Welsh and Major, 2018*



Figure 23 – Historical image of the site that has informed the to be reinstated signage

Source: *State Library of NSW, Sam Hood, South side approaches, Home and Away - 5255*

## Proposed Internal Signage

As part of the proposed works it is proposed that the internal amenities and information signage is updated. The indicative signage is represented below in Figure 24. The signage would utilise standard pictograms and colours. The addition of these signage elements is acceptable from a heritage perspective as it is understood that these details would require updating in accordance with contemporary identification of amenities and in order to present required information pertaining to the operations of the hotel.

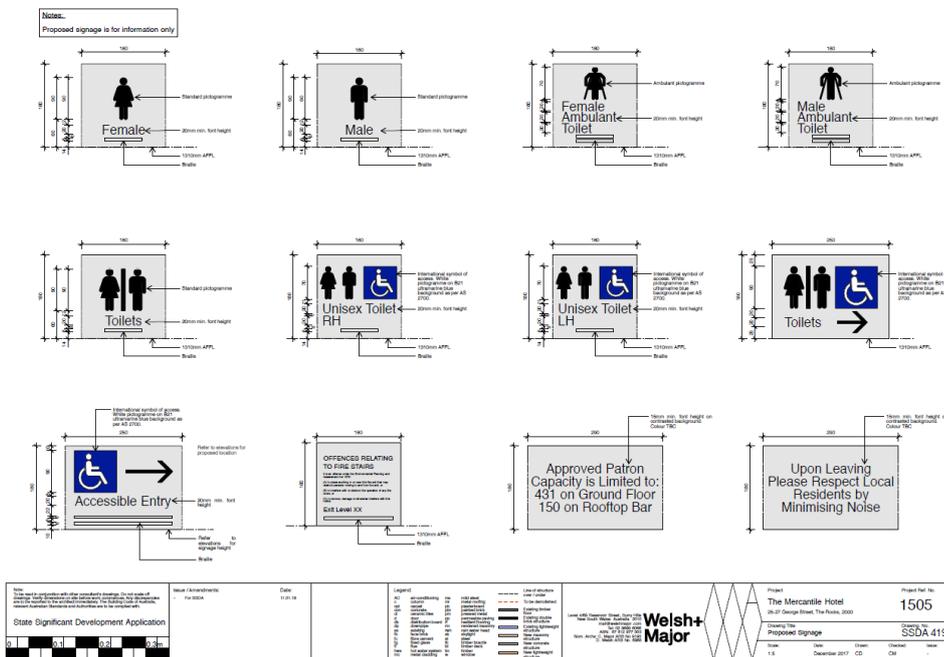


Figure 24 – Proposed signage

Source: Welsh and Major, 2018

## 2.12. ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT

### Submissions Received

#### Department of Planning and Environment

The HIS shall be revised to address the following proposed works and their associated impacts:

- Archaeological impacts of basement works. The Department notes there is a separate archaeological report included in the SSD, however the HIS should include a summary statement and assessment of the archaeological impacts.

#### Property NSW

The impact assessment on pages 66-77 does not address the following proposed works:

- Archaeological impacts of the works to the basement (there is a separate archaeological report included in the SSD) – however the HIS should include a summary statement and assessment of the archaeological impacts.

### Urbis Response

The following archaeological reports as relating to the potential Indigenous and Historical Archaeological impacts of the proposed works were included as part of SSD 17\_8665:

- Casey and Lowe, Historical Archaeological Assessment: Mercantile Hotel, December 2017.
- Unearthed Archaeology and Heritage, Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment: Mercantile Hotel, October 2017.

These reports should be referred to for any details. A summary of the archaeological assessment is as follows:

### **Historical Archaeological Assessment**

The rocky nature of the site made its use largely impracticable in the early occupation of the Rocks area until the second half of the nineteenth century when it was partially levelled and the rock at the rear of the site cut back and the wall supporting Gloucester Walk built. Once the area had been levelled, the site was used as a yard, storage or stables area rather than a permanent building. The c. 1903 photograph of the stables on the site shows extensive exposed bedrock. The rising nature of the bedrock towards Gloucester Walk and the uniform height of the ground floor level through the hotel and into the rear yards would indicate that the bedrock level was cut into the rear of the site to create a level building platform. The assessment contained within the report has concluded the site has been cut down in order to build the current hotel, and there is unlikely to be any artefactual or other remains in the area to be impacted by the proposed works. Any remains that are present are likely to be related to the provision of services and would not fulfil the criteria for heritage significance.

### **Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment**

No Aboriginal objects or sites were recorded during the site inspection. An AHIMS search dated 4th October 2017 indicated that no Aboriginal sites had previously been recorded within the study area. Historic descriptions and the SHR listing for the Mercantile Hotel indicate that historically the study area was comprised of a series of rocky ledges with a 'sharply angled rock wall snaking through it'. Between 1872 and 1914 the study area was levelled, sandstone may have been quarried from the rock wall and the sandstone retaining wall that is still present on the site was constructed. These activities of levelling and quarrying the sandstone would have removed any evidence of Aboriginal occupation, including artefacts, middens or rock engravings. Any Aboriginal sites that may have existed within the study area have been destroyed or removed by the historic levelling and quarrying of the property. Therefore, it is not expected that any evidence of Aboriginal occupation or any Aboriginal objects exist within the study area.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The impact of the proposed works to the subject site has been assessed in detail in the Heritage Impact Statement by Urbis Heritage, dated 4 May 2018 and this Heritage Addendum. This Heritage Addendum report responds to the submissions relating to heritage made to the application (SD 17\_8665) and were received from the following entities:

- City of Sydney Council, dated 24 July 2018;
- Office of Environment and Heritage, dated 11 July 2018;
- Heritage Council of NSW, dated 3 August 2018; and
- Property NSW, dated 15 August 2018.

In accordance with the submissions received this Heritage Addendum has expanded upon the Scope of Works (refer to Section 2.1), to include BCA and fire services upgrades and proposed finishes.

Section 2.2 of this report has responded to the request for services detail and an associated heritage assessment. The proposed installation of services and fire protection measures have been developed in consultation between Urbis Heritage and Welsh + Major, the proposed works have been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective whilst facilitating the necessary upgrade works required to facility the ongoing historic use as a pub and accommodation into the future in a viable manner.

Section 2.3 of this report responds to comments relation to the treatment of the ground floor bar. The ground floor bar is a prominent feature within the building and it is proposed that the existing bar fit out is retained, with refinishing and repair works to the timber panelling. Additionally, the existing timber floor boards would be retained and protected with the installation of a timber overlay installed over the extant floor. The proposed treatment has been assessed to be acceptable from a heritage perspective.

Discrepancy in the various levels (refer to Section 2.4) has been resolved in the updated architectural package and the proposed formation of openings (refer to Section 2.5) responds to the significance of the site. As discussed in Section 2.6, the proposed storage of removed fabric has been reconsidered in accordance with the comments received.

Proposed materials and finishes have been discussed in Section 2.7, and the visual impact of the proposed works in Section 2.8. The proposed sawtooth roof form has been designed in order to create a rhythm that would reduce the apparent scale of the structure and allow it to visually recede within its context. Whilst it is noted that the addition of the proposed lift would have a minor impact, it is understood that the dimensions of the proposed lift are required to be to be maintained in order comply with current lift codes that facilitates universal access to all levels as well as operational access removing heavy use of the original stairs. The visual prominence of the lift has been mitigated through the use of lightweight materials and glazing and has been assessed as acceptable from a heritage perspective, furthermore the lift is located to the rear of the building and is an improvement on the current presentation and usage of this area rather than the ad hock services located across the rear boundary. The impact of the proposed works on proximate heritage items and The Rocks Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) is discussed in Section 2.10. The works are minor in their impact on fabric when considered as a whole considering the amenity they provide and have been designed to be clearly discernible as contemporary and are of a high design quality by a reputable award-winning architect with extensive heritage experience in the rocks. The proposed works have been assessed to have an acceptable heritage impact on the surrounding heritage items and HCA.

Discussion of the proposed works in accordance with the *Better Placed: Design Guide for Heritage* has been included in Section 2.9.

The proposed signage at the site (refer to Section 2.11) would consist of the reinstatement of the historic Mercantile Hotel signage graphic, of which there is a historic precedent, the reinstatement of this element would be a positive heritage outcome. Additionally, it is proposed that the internal amenities and information signage is updated. The signage would utilise standard pictograms and colour and is a necessary update in accordance with contemporary operating standards and is considered acceptable from a heritage perspective.

The archaeological potential of the site has been assessed as low. As detailed in the submissions received, a summary of the following archaeological reports has been included in this Heritage Addendum (Section 2.12):

- Casey and Lowe, Historical Archaeological Assessment: Mercantile Hotel, December 2017.
- Unearthed Archaeology and Heritage, Aboriginal Archaeological Assessment: Mercantile Hotel, October 2017.

The proposed works have been assessed to be acceptable from a heritage perspective, as the proposed works would provide for universal access to the site, and extensively update the amenities in line with the expectations of contemporary patrons and guests in order to facilitate the long term ongoing historic use as a pub and hotel. The proposed works would facilitate this ongoing use through the upgraded back of house and amenities and provision of ensuite bathrooms and air conditioning for accommodation rooms, the retention of which is becoming rare. The provision of a roof terrace bar provides a further utilisation of the existing space and allows public appreciation of historic views to the surrounding precinct.

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