

11 December 2009

Rice Daubney  
110 Walker Street  
North Sydney NSW 2060

Attention: Mr Paul Reidy

Dear Paul,

**Re: Commercial/Retail Development at 86-96 & 100 Mount Street, North Sydney  
Heritage Impact**

Further to our Statement of Heritage Impact (Part 3A Environmental Assessment) for a Commercial Development 100 Mount Street, North Sydney (14 May 2009), we have reviewed your drawings which were prepared in response to comments arising from exhibition.

The comments of the Department of Planning and submissions received relating to the heritage impacts principally concern the Walker Street Podium and the void and structural frame above it. These are set out below. It should be noted that supportive comments relating to heritage impact were also made in the submissions but only those at issue and which have informed the design revisions are set out below.

**Department of Planning**

*"Walker Street Podium Setback*

*The Department is concerned with the setback treatment of the proposed building along Walker Street between levels 8 and 12. Further design resolution of the exposed structural frame (concrete columns) is required. This may involve consideration of other design options for this area."*

**Design Excellence Panel**

*"The Panel also has considerable concern with the setback treatment of the building between levels 8 and 12. The recess above the two levels fronting Walker Street with the very assertive exposed structural frame is inappropriate in this context. This is not justified and is grossly out of scale with the building's setting."*

**North Sydney Council  
Conservation Comments**

*"The podium of the proposed development is designed to sympathetically match that of the Firehouse Hotel providing an appropriate scale to respect the heritage item. The proposed off-form concrete columns, however, are not considered to be sympathetic to the Firehouse Hotel. The massive scale of the columns is overwhelming when compared to the Italianate detailing on the Firehouse Hotel. It is recommended that the columns are not expressed on the Walker Street façade such that the significance of the Firehouse Hotel is retained.....As noted above, the massing of the off-form concrete columns on the Walker St frontage are considered massively out of scale with the Firehouse Hotel, and the success of the glazed podium is lost by their aggressive assertiveness. The Walker St façade of the proposed tower is considered to be impolite and insensitive...The detailing of the glazed podium is simple and will allow the decorative features of the Firehouse to dominate the immediate streetscape when viewed from the western side of Walker St. The 1.4m diameter concrete columns that support the proposed tower, however, are considered to be vastly over scaled and will dominate the heritage item when viewed from the eastern footpath*

and across the intersection. It is recommended that the columns are not expressed on the Walker St façade. It is recommended that:

- Detail drawings at 1:50 or 1:20 scale that label the alignment and relationship of the decorative features of the Firehouse Hotel...be submitted.
- The angled off-form concrete columns are not to be expressed on the Walker St elevation so that the massing and scale of the development is appropriate to the height, massing and scale of the delicate and finely detailed Firehouse Hotel.
- A Schedule of Finishes to be submitted.”

Amendments to the exterior form of the design with potential heritage impacts include a revision to the treatment of the north and east elevations of the podium. The podium has been modulated on its eastern elevation and in plan to reflect the street rhythm set by the adjacent heritage item – the former Fire Station. This has been achieved by breaking the elevation into two equal parts and stepping one forward and one back and by further articulating the façade by the use of timber horizontal louvres/brise soleil. Minor changes have been proposed to the junctions and finishes of the expressed structural frame that crosses the void above.

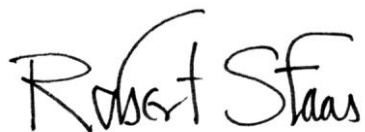
Our conclusion on the heritage impacts of the earlier scheme was that:

*‘the proposed project does not significantly, adversely impact upon the identified heritage significance of the adjacent or adjoining heritage items nor heritage items or conservation areas further afield. The former North Sydney Fire Station is currently surrounded by tall buildings and the impact of a new high-rise development in the immediate vicinity will not alter the ability of the public to appreciate the heritage significance of the heritage item. The podium of the new development generally maintains the parapet height of the heritage item on the Walker Street frontage.’*

The amended design further refines the relationship between the proposed building and the former Fire Station by repeating the vertical rhythm of the street and earlier subdivision pattern. More detailed design of the Walker Street elevation to ensure alignment of the elements of the existing and proposed would ensure mitigation of impacts in the execution of the work. The structural frame of the void and the scale of the void itself are expressed above the height of the former Fire Station and the key elements that would be perceived between it and the proposed building are limited to the lower levels of the podium interface. The expressed structural frame above would be outside the immediate perception of the relationship between the new building and the heritage item. The design of the structural frame or other support for the tower above the void are issues of an architectural and urban design nature rather than heritage issues per se. Consequently, the void and frame should be considered in light of the wider existing and proposed context and in light of the building as a whole.

We confirm that the design, as amended, has a minor and acceptable impact upon the former North Sydney Fire Station and other heritage items.

Yours sincerely,  
NBRS+PARTNERS



Robert Staas  
Director/Heritage Consultant