

ANKA (Civic Centre) Pty Ltd
Level 3
171-191 New South Head Road
EDGECLIFF NSW 2027

Dear Sirs

Proposed Redevelopment Development 23-37 Lindfield Avenue & 11 Havilah Lane, Lindfield Heritage Response (MP08_0244 MOD 1)

Further to our recent discussions and a review of the relevant material from Ku-ring-gai Council and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, we have pleasure in providing this additional heritage impact commentary regarding the modified proposal.

Letter from DOPI to ANKA (Civic Centre) Pty Ltd, dated 25 March 2013

This letter required that the Proponent respond to issues raised by the submissions made during the public exhibition of the modified project. This letter deals specifically with the following points contained in Schedule 1 attached to the DOPI letter:

Setbacks, Building Form and Design

Whilst the Lindfield Avenue elevation is considered to be an improvement on the approved design, the Department requests that further analysis in relation to its composition and articulation is undertaken and amendments made to improve the relationship with the adjacent heritage item and the form and height of the existing streetscape character.

As part of this analysis, the following matters should be addressed:

- 1. Justification for the departure from the setback requirements of the upper levels on the Lindfield Avenue frontage as originally approved, being 2.0m between RL 113.5 and RL 119.5 AHD and 4.0m above RL 119.5 AHD. The setback requirements were imposed to ensure the new building form related appropriately to the height lines of the adjacent heritage building at 1-21 Lindfield Avenue; and*
- 2. Consideration of a redesign of the access to the retail area, specifically the relocation of the access ramp across the street frontage on Lindfield Avenue which provides a disconnect between the footpath and the proposed retail tenancies and is contrary to the principle of streetscape activation. The retail tenancies should have a direct interface with the Lindfield Avenue footpath and opportunities for the access ramp to be internalised should be investigated.*

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Setback from Kochia Lane

Council has expressed concern about the encroachment of the upper levels of the building into the 4m setback to Kochia Lane and has requested that all encroachments into the area be eliminated. The Department notes that this strip of land is to be dedicated to Council to facilitate the widening of the laneway, consistent with Council's Public Domain Plan.

Further justification of these encroachments into the setback area and their impact on the future amenity and functionality of the space (having regard to Council's intentions for Kochia Lane), is required.

The Department's letter refers to the submission from Ku-ring-gai Council. The key component of that submission, in heritage terms, was contained in Part 8, where it expresses concern that, while the modification is an improvement on the approved design, "it fails to relate to the adjacent heritage building at 1-21 Lindfield Avenue in terms of the visual scale of the street frontage elements." The submission then details these concerns:

- *The three storey street wall appearance to tie in with the height lines of the adjacent heritage building, achieved by complying with the setback requirements to Lindfield Avenue as in the Project Approval Report*
- *Stepping up the awning to raise its level at the Lindfield Ave/Kochia Lane corner to align with and match the height of the adjacent heritage building awning*
- *Creating a street frontage to the entire front of Lindfield Avenue that opens directly off the footpath, reflecting the access pattern of the adjacent heritage building by removing the ramp that creates a barrier between the shops and the footpath*

Heritage Issues Responses

Redesign of the Ramp on the Lindfield Avenue frontage

As shown on the revised Ground Floor Plan, Dwg No. 1004 Rev B, the originally proposed ramp has been removed, reconfigured and relocated to enter the site directly from Lindfield Avenue, adjacent to the main entries of the building. Accordingly, the shops facing onto Lindfield Avenue will relate directly to the street frontage and have a much improved streetscape presence.

Encroachments above Kochia Lane

We have been advised that there are no functional reasons why Council should be requesting the removal of the cantilevered section of the new building from above Kochia Lane. The cantilever is sufficiently high to provide adequate pedestrian and vehicular clearance and thus meet Council's access and public domain objectives.

We do not believe that the proposed high level encroachment over Kochia Lane raises any adverse heritage impact issues in relation to the adjacent heritage building at 1-21 Lindfield Avenue. The dynamic energy imparted to the façade, and three dimensional composition of the new building by the cantilevered balconies, adds enormously to the success of its architectural composition and the way it relates to the adjoining building.

The heritage item at 1-21 Lindfield Avenue is a large three storey building, stretching for some distance along the frontage and filling an entire street block. It is a confident and dynamic composition in its own right, combining bold colours and contrasting features between the red brick of the façades and the bright white architectural trim. This robust composition and large scale means that the building, in our considered opinion, is more than powerful enough in the streetscape to withstand visual competition or domination by any large building to the immediate north, across Kochia Lane.

If the Department considers that the Council request for no encroachment over the Lane at high level is warranted, it should take account of the poor quality outcome that would result for the façade composition of the new building.

In our understanding, there is no justification for the removal of the cantilevered section of the new building.

Alignment of the new awning

The Lindfield Avenue awning of the proposed amended design has been stepped up higher than the existing awning to better align with the awning of the historic building across Kochia Lane.

The RL of the awning of the nearby historic building is RL 104.22. The existing shopping centre awning is RL 102.44. The proposed shopping centre awning is RL 103.55, which is 1.11m higher than the current awning on the subject site. Given the historic building is located on the crest of the hill with a footpath level higher than the subject site, the awning relationship is acceptable and matches the traditional relationships between buildings that step up sloping topography.

We are fully in support of that amendment on heritage and streetscape grounds.

Setbacks for the façade of the new building

The request for an imposition of the original setback recommendations is based primarily on an assumption that the massing of the new building should be closely aligned with the streetscape scale of the adjoining historic building. This is a false assumption in the circumstance of the composition of the proposed amendment, particularly as the new building is not located hard against the old in a dense urban setting, but is separated by Kochia Lane and its general suburban town centre setting.

The most important factor in the relationship between any new building and a nearby or adjacent heritage building is for each to retain or achieve its own architectural quality and integrity. As discussed above, the historic building is robust, well resolved and self confident in its relatively large scale and architectural presentation. The amended scheme for the subject site was carefully formulated through a close collaboration between architects and heritage consultants, taking into account the need to respect the adjoining building while achieving its own contemporary expression and composition. As the heritage consultants, Graham Brooks and Associates prepared a thorough analysis of the setting of the new building and of the need for it to relate to the adjacent heritage item. A review of that analysis, as requested by the Department has led us to conclude that the current design should be maintained and implemented.

The amended proposal, as it was submitted to the Department does, in our considered opinion successfully and respectfully relate to the adjoining heritage building. The imposition of the setbacks referred to in the Department's letter and requested by Council would only serve to weaken the whole composition and degrade the integrity and success of the new composition. When one looks back to the original scheme, with its comparative lack of respect for the heritage item, one can appreciate why the request for setbacks for the upper levels would be generated.

The suggestions inherent in the requested setbacks, once studied in sketch form by both the architects and the heritage consultants, would have significantly devalued and degraded the success of the current façade and massing composition.

In our opinion, the totally revised composition of the amended scheme has achieved these same objectives in a fresh and vigorous manner, and without the consequent need to introduce meaningless setbacks to relate orthogonally to the adjoining building.

Recommendations

The Department should accept that the requested reconsideration of the façade composition and massing of the amended proposal has been undertaken in good faith by the architects and the heritage consultants.

In addition, the Department should accept that the conclusions arising from this analysis are heavily in favour of retaining the current façade design and massing, with the exception of the relocated ramp and the realigned awning height.

Accordingly, the Department should not hesitate, on heritage and streetscape grounds, to approve the current amended proposal.

Yours faithfully
GRAHAM BROOKS AND ASSOCIATES

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Brooks', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the bottom left.

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