

09032
3 March 2010

Mr Daniel Keary
Director, Government Land and
Social Projects Assessments
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Daniel,

**ADDENDUM TO DARLING WALK ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (MP 09_0156)
BUSINESS IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE ASSESSMENT**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by JBA Urban Planning Consultants on behalf of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) as an addendum to the Environmental Assessment (EA) submitted for Darling Walk. This report relates to signage for the two commercial buildings at Darling Walk. There will be five signs in total, being building and business identification signs of varying type and size for the CBA.

This addendum is submitted with signage plans and photomontages prepared by Diadem (**Attachment A**).

The Preliminary Environmental Assessment detailed that signage would form part of the application and the Director General's Environmental Assessment Requirements subsequently issued required an assessment of the proposal against the relevant environmental planning instruments, which included:

- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 – Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64); and
- Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Policy 2009.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

Darling Walk is located within the Darling Harbour precinct. It is situated west of Harbour Street at the western edge of Sydney Central Business District (CBD), south of the Western Distributor fly over, north of the Chinese Garden and east of Tumbalong Park. Town Hall Railway Station is approximately 400m to the north-east and Central Station is approximately 800m to the south-east.

The area is characterised by large scale commercial, entertainment and residential buildings. The existing environment in the vicinity of the site contains a wide range of signage for different purposes, including building identification signage, business identification signage and directional signage for road and pedestrian users. The existing signs in the area are of varying sizes with varying degrees of illumination.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The proposal includes signage to identify the building and its main tenant (the CBA) and is integrated with the design of the building. A total of three high level building identification signs are proposed as part of this application. The signs will be located on the eastern elevation of the North building and the eastern and southern elevations of the South building. The signs will comprise the wording 'Commonwealth Bank' accompanied by the bank's diamond logo. During the day the sign lettering will be black in colour and when illuminated at night, will be white in colour.

In addition, two under awning business identification signs are proposed. The under awning sign on the north building will be for the 'Commonwealth Bank' and the other for Colonial First State (a subsidiary of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia) and are positioned at the main ground floor entrance to each building.

The objectives of the signage are to:

- ensure that the building is identifiable both at street level and from the CBD.
- announce building presence and purpose, particularly from a distance;
- identify site entry;
- provide tenancy details;
- integrate with building forms; and
- provide consistency of design and placement of signage.

3.1 Building and Business Identification Signs

The proposal consists of building and business identification signage to identify the building and occupants. The signage will be positioned on the facades of the buildings as well as under awning signage on the Harbour Street frontage of the two buildings. Details of individual signs are set out in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 - Proposed signage

Sign no.	Location	Size	Composition	Purpose
Sign 1	Southern facade of South building	Capital letters - 1,336mm high Lower case letters - 900mm high	Aluminium internally illuminated letters / flexface logo with internal illumination	Building identification. To be viewed by pedestrians and vehicles at long distance.
Sign 2	North-east facade of South building	Diamond logo - 1,850mm high		
Sign 3	North-east facade of North building	Total length of sign (including diamond logo) - 19,525mm		
Sign 4	East elevation of North Building	Capital letters - 290mm high Lower case letters - 207mm high Diamond logo - 750mm high Total length of sign (including diamond logo) - 4,584mm	Casocryl night and day acrylic faces to illuminate white at night.	Business identification and entry identification. To be viewed by pedestrians at close view.
Sign 5	Entry of South building	Height - 1,000mm Length - 3,025mm	Fabricated aluminium sign box with computer cut graphic	Tenancy identification and entry identification. To be viewed by pedestrians at close view.

4.0 COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING INSTRUMENTS AND CONTROLS

The following planning instruments are relevant to the signage:

- Darling Harbour Development Plan;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 – Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64);
- Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Policy 2009; and
- Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Technical Manual 2009.

The EA for the fit-out of the commercial tenancy at Darling Walk assesses the proposal, excluding signage, against the relevant statutory planning instruments, which includes Commonwealth legislation, State legislation, as well as other Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs). The signage does not give rise to additional assessment beyond that dealt with Section 4 and 5 below and in Section 6 of the EA.

The following is a detailed assessment of the signage against the relevant planning instruments.

4.1 Darling Harbour Development Plan No.1

The principal environmental planning instrument applying to the site is the Darling Harbour Development Plan No.1 (DHDP). Following recent amendments to the EP&A Act the DHDP is now taken to be a deemed

SEPP. The DHDP identifies development that is permitted within Darling Harbour. Permissible uses include tourist, recreational, entertainment, cultural or commercial facilities. Under clause 6(e) of DHDP, development incident or subsidiary to a permissible use is also allowed. Signage is considered to a permissible use in accordance with clause 6(e).

4.2 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 – Advertising and Signage (SEPP 64)

SEPP 64 applies to all signage that, under another environmental planning instrument, can be displayed with or without development consent and is visible from any public place or public reserve. Under SEPP 64 the signage proposed is defined as building and business identification signage and therefore only Parts 1, 2 and 4 of the SEPP applies.

Clause 8 of SEPP 64 states that a Consent Authority must not grant consent to an application to display signage unless the Consent Authority is satisfied:

- (a) that the signage is consistent with the objectives of the policy; and
- (b) satisfies the assessment criteria in Schedule 1.

The aims and objectives of SEPP 64 are:

- “(1) (a) to ensure that signage (including advertising):*
- (i) is compatible with the desired amenity and visual character of an area, and*
 - (ii) provides effective communication in suitable locations, and*
 - (iii) is of high quality design and finish, and*
 - (b) to regulate signage (but not content) under Part 4 of the Act, and*
 - (c) to provide time-limited consents for the display of certain advertisements.”*

The signage is consistent with the aims and objectives of SEPP 64 in that:

- they are consistent with the desired future character for the area and promotes the future amenity and vitality of the Darling Harbour precinct;
- they are of high quality design and fabrication appropriate to Darling Harbour and CBD location and the surrounding landscape and uses; and
- they effectively communicate the identification of the tenants within the building.

The impact assessment using the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of SEPP 64 is contained in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Assessment against Schedule 1 of SEPP 64

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
1 Character of the area		
Is the proposal compatible with the existing or desired future character of the area or locality in which it is proposed to be located?	The proposal is consistent with the desired future character of Darling Harbour. The immediate area is characterised by various commercial offices, restaurants, entertainment and exhibition venues.	Y
Is the proposal consistent with a particular theme for outdoor advertising in the area or locality?	The colour, style and font of the proposed signs are consistent with the existing other signage in the Darling Harbour precinct and the CBD.	Y
2 Special areas		
Does the proposal detract from the amenity or visual quality of any environmentally sensitive areas, heritage areas, natural or other conservation areas, open space areas, waterways, rural landscapes or residential areas?	The proposed signs will not materially affect amenity or visual quality of any significant landscapes and open space areas. In particular, the sign will not detrimentally impact on the foreshore character of the Darling Harbour precinct or nearby	Y

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
	residential apartments as the existing local environment includes a variety of signs and is a well lit environment at night.	
3 Views and vistas		
Does the proposal obscure or compromise important views?	The proposed signs will not be projected or suspended from the Darling Walk buildings, and as such will not obscure or compromise important views.	Y
Does the proposal dominate the skyline and reduce the quality of vistas?	The proposed signs do not dominate the skyline or reduce the quality of vistas.	Y
Does the proposal respect the viewing rights of other advertisers?	The signs do not obstruct views of any existing signage on or in the vicinity of the site.	Y
4 Streetscape, setting or landscape		
Is the scale, proportion and form of the proposal appropriate for the streetscape, setting or landscape?	The scale, proportion and form of the signs are appropriate for the setting and the building.	Y
Does the proposal contribute to the visual interest of the streetscape, setting or landscape?	The proposed sign will provide additional visual interest to the Harbour Street streetscape and will help to identify the Commonwealth Bank's offices.	Y
Does the proposal reduce clutter by rationalising and simplifying existing advertising?	The proposed signs are not advertising signs.	N/A
Does the proposal screen unsightliness?	The proposed signs do not screen unsightliness.	N/A
Does the proposal protrude above buildings, structures or tree canopies in the area or locality?	The signs are mounted on the facade and do not protrude above the building. Due to the height of the buildings, the sign are above the tree line on Harbour Street.	Partial compliance
Does the proposal require ongoing vegetation management?	The signs do not require ongoing vegetation management.	Y
5 Site and building		
Is the proposal compatible with the scale, proportion and other characteristics of the site or building, or both, on which the proposed signage is to be located?	The proposed signage is compatible with the character of the surrounding buildings and of the public domain of Darling Harbour.	Y
Does the proposal respect important features of the site or building, or both?	The proposed sign is complementary to the architectural design of the buildings.	Y
Does the proposal show innovation and imagination in its relationship to the site or building, or both?	The proposed signs appropriately relate to the building its location.	Y
6 Associated devices and logos with advertisements and advertising structures		
Have any safety devices, platforms, lighting devices or logos been designed as an integral part of the signage or structure on which it is to be displayed?	The signage will be illuminated by internal LED lights at night.	Y
7 Illumination		
Would illumination result in unacceptable glare?	Darling Harbour and the CBD are well lit environments at night. The	Y

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
	illumination of the proposed signs will not result in unacceptable glare.	
Would illumination affect safety for pedestrians, vehicles or aircraft?	The illumination of the proposed signs will not affect safety for pedestrians, vehicles or aircraft.	Y
Would illumination detract from the amenity of any residence or other form of accommodation?	The illumination of the proposed signs will not affect the amenity of residents in apartment buildings on the opposite side of Harbour Street.	Y
Can the intensity of the illumination be adjusted, if necessary?	The illumination is appropriate in its local context and building function and can be adjusted if required.	Y
Is the illumination subject to a curfew?	No.	N/A

8 Safety

Would the proposal reduce safety for any public road?	The proposed signs do not contain images, flashing lights, movable parts and the like which would impact on road safety. There is a passing view of the high level sign on the northern building, for motorists exiting the cross city tunnel westbound.	Y
Would the proposal reduce safety for pedestrians/cyclists?	The location and scale of the proposed signs does not pose any adverse impacts on pedestrian or cyclist safety.	Y
Would the proposal reduce safety for pedestrians, particularly children, by obscuring sightlines from public areas?	The proposed sign will not obscure sightlines from public areas.	Y

4.3 Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Policy 2009 (DHCSPP) and Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Technical Manual 2009 (DHCSTM)

The DHCSPP and DHCSTM set out general principles for the design of signage as well as provisions for sign types. The provisions include controls and objectives in relation to sign purpose, location, number, size, content, design, materials, illumination and materials and fixing.

In accordance with the DHCSPP the proposed signage is defined as building and business identification signage. Compliance of the proposed signage against the assessment criteria is set out in **Tables 3** below.

Table 3 – Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Policy Provisions

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
Common Provisions		
Each building will create and seek approval from the Authority for a building signage strategy relevant to their particular building.	The proponent has discussed the proposed signage with SHFA and they have approved the proposed signage.	Y
Signs will contribute to the legibility of Darling Harbour places through the use of clear simple messaging.	The proposed signs will contribute to the legibility of the Darling Walk building particularly from the CBD and Chinatown area.	Y
Commercial signs will present a high standard of design through careful integration of signage into the building fabric.	The proposed signs are simple with a high standard of design and are consistent with the proposed building and CBA corporate branding.	Y
Third party signage or advertising is not permitted unless specifically permitted elsewhere in this policy.	The proposal does not include third party signage or advertising.	Y

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
Flashing or moving lights will not be permitted for any type of signage.	The proposed signage does not include flashing or moving lights.	Y
The use of the Foreshore Authority's logo is only permitted with the Authority's approval.	The proposed signage does not include the Foreshore Authority logo.	N/A
Obscene, offensive, obnoxious, derogatory or defamatory material is not permitted.	The proposed signage does not include any obscene, offensive, obnoxious, derogatory or defamatory materials.	Y
A-frames within the public domain are not permitted.	The proposed signage does not include A-frames.	Y

Building Naming Signage Provisions

The building name must be the building owner of principal tenant.	CBA is the principal tenant.	Y
Naming signs should be positioned on a parapet or on blank panel elements of the building. In no cases will a 'sky sign' be permitted.	The proposed signs are mounted on blank panels on the parapet of the buildings however do not extend above the parapet. No sky signs are proposed.	Y
A maximum of two high level (above ground floor) naming signs per building is permitted but only one per frontage and the maximum height is of individual capital letters is 1.8m.	One high level building sign is proposed for the northern building and two high level building signs are proposed for the south building (one on the eastern elevation and one on the southern elevation). The height of the capital letters is 1.3m.	Y
A combination of upper and lower case letters is preferred	Upper and lower case letters are proposed	Y
Text and logos should be individually mounted, illuminated and raised off the face of the building. Colours can reflect corporate colour scheme.	Text and logos will be individually mounted, illuminated and raised off the face of the building	Y
The design and presentation of building name signs shall be the same for each sign.	The building naming signs are the same design	Y
A DA is required for building name signage	This Project Application satisfies this requirement	Y

Business Name Signage Provisions

Signs should be located above entrances to tenancies.	The proposed signs are located above the entrances to the CBA building.	Y
Signs must not be mounted on top of awnings, parapets or other peripheral elements of the building. In no cases will a 'sky sign' be permitted.	The proposed low levels signs are mounted under the awnings/ colonnade on the Harbour Street frontage.	Y
Signs should not obstruct windows or openings, unless part of a window display.	The signs do not obstruct windows or openings.	Y
Each business is permitted one sign per entry to the business unless on a corner location, where 2 signs may be permitted.	Each business has one entrance point and one sign.	Y
Only one business name sign will be permitted per tenancy.	The proposal includes one sign per building for the tenants.	Y
Business names should be in English, but where a second language is required; the name should appear in a smaller font below the English name.	The proposed signs are in English.	Y
Light boxes are permitted if the background is opaque or of a dark colour, to avoid creating a glare source.	The proposed signs will not include light boxes.	N/A
Maximum height of light boxes is	The proposed signs will not include light boxes.	N/A

Assessment Criteria	Comments	Compliance
600mm.		
A development application is required for business name signage and content.	This Project Application satisfies this requirement.	Y

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The impact of the signage needs to be considered in the context of the Darling Walk development and potential effects on the environment. This assessment involves an evaluation of the potential visual and lighting impacts that may result from the signage. The existing character of the surrounding area, including its land form and surrounding uses were taken into account is assessing the environmental impact. The assessment includes a visual assessment of signage and an assessment of the impact of proposed lit signage.

5.1 Visual Impact

The existing visual character adjacent to, and surrounding the Darling Walk site is described in Section 2 of the EA. In relation to signage, the landscape around the Darling Walk site contains a wide range of signage for multiple purposes of varying size and degrees of illumination. The provision of signage on the Darling Walk buildings would not introduce a new element to the visual environment of Darling Harbour and its immediate surrounds.

The site is situated within a commercial / residential / entertainment precinct which is dominated by large scale structures (many of which are illuminated at night time), road infrastructure (Western Distributor overpass), and the open spaces of the Darling Harbour public domain. The size and scale of the signage is appropriate to this context and the scale of the Darling Walk buildings.

The signage is fully contained within the profile of the buildings and therefore does not impact on views or vistas beyond the Darling Walk site. The signage will add visual interest to the building by articulating the building facades and assist in identifying the buildings.

The signage may be partially visible to west bound motorists exiting the Cross City Tunnel, however the sign will be at a high level and will not contain any flashing elements and is there not expected to have any adverse impacts. The signs will not be visible to east (city) bound traffic travelling on the Western Distributor.

5.2 Illumination

The existing Harbour Street and Darling Harbour environment already has a significant amount of lighting, including a well lit public domain. The location of illuminated signage is generally exposed to the Harbour Street frontage. However, it is not in the driver's direct line of sight for vehicles travelling along Harbour Street.

A small number of residences will have night time views toward illuminated signage, however views would generally be indirect or within the context of broader views that include other large scale illuminated signage and multiple night time light sources visible in the surrounding landscape.

Having regard to the characteristics of the Darling Walk development, the existing lit environment and surrounding land use, the signage is considered appropriate and will not provide disability glare to motorists, cyclists and pedestrians or adversely impact on surrounding residents.

CONCLUSION

The signage for the CBA tenancy at Darling Walk is appropriate for the site and its surrounds based on the following grounds:

- the signage is consistent with the relevant objectives contained in SEPP 64, the Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Policy 2009 and the Darling Harbour Commercial Signage Technical Manual 2009
- the signs relate to the commercial use of buildings which is consistent with the nature of the locality;
- the signage is of a dimension appropriate to the size and form of the buildings;

- the signs are integrated with the architecture of the buildings and are fully contained within the profile of the buildings and will add interest to the building facades;
- illumination of the signage does not result in unacceptable glare; and
- the illuminated signage will be in an already well lit environment.

The signage will consequently have a negligible impact on the surrounding environment and does not change the overall conclusions of the Environmental Assessment of the Darling Walk commercial tenancy fit-out.

In light of the above we recommend the signage be approved.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'K. Osborne', is displayed on a light blue rectangular background.

Kirk Osborne
Principal Planner

Enc. **Attachment A** – Signage plans and photomontages prepared by Diadem.