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Brendon Roberts
Acting Team Leader - Key Site Assessments
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Roberts

Heritage Council recommended SEARs for Stage Significant Development - Stage 2 DA for tourist and visitor accommodation at the Lands and Education Buildings (SSD 7484)

I refer to your letter received by the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), on 1 February 2016, seeking the Heritage Council of NSW input into the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for SSD 7484.

It is understood that the proposal involves:

- Alterations to the Lands and Education Buildings to facilitate their adaptive reuse for the purposes of 'hotel or motel accommodation', with ancillary licensed food and drink premises and retail premises;
- Construction of additional floors above the Education Building up to the height limit;
- Provision of a subterranean space located approximately 10m below street level, to allow a pedestrian linkage between the two buildings;
- Provision of main hotel drop-off and entrance to the Education Building from Farrer Place.
- Potential drop-off zone for the Lands Building on Bent Street.

As a delegate of the Heritage Council I have reviewed the following draft SEARs prepared by the Department of Planning:

The EIS shall include a Heritage Impact Assessment which addresses:

- *all heritage items (State and local) on the subject site and any surrounding sites, setting out why these are of heritage significance, what impact the proposed use, fit out and operation will have on the heritage significance, what measures are proposed to mitigate negative impacts, and why more sympathetic solutions are not viable;*
- *impacts of the proposed adaptive reuse on the internal and external character and heritage features of the building, and the historical association with government uses;*

- *impacts of the potential changes to the public domain, including access, pedestrian movement and landscaping, and in particular the implications of the proposed drop-off zone on the heritage character of Farrer Place;*
- *demonstrate how the proposal is consistent with the endorsed Conservation Management Plan(s) for the two buildings, addressing the proposed use, including measures to minimise impacts of future development of the site; and*
- *an archaeological assessment of the potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage, European cultural heritage and other archaeological items on the site, how such archaeology would be impacted by the proposal, and potential mitigation, in-situ conservation and interpretation measures for any archaeological resources uncovered during the works.*
- *a Conservation Report prepared by a materials conservator that details the treatment needed for all internal and external heritage fabric, and movable objects.*

The Heritage Council supports the above draft SEARs. It is also requested that the applicant be required to provide the following additional information:

1. Proposed modifications to the Lands and Education Buildings

- a. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) must assess any new or upgraded fire safety measures, new amenities and services, and modifications to meet the National Construction Code required as part of the proposed use;
- b. The HIA must include a discussion of other options that have been considered and discounted in order to demonstrate that the final proposal is the best option with least heritage impacts.
- c. The EIS must include measured drawings showing the existing interior layout and external elevations of both buildings.
- d. The architectural drawings must clearly indicate all new fabric, including any new or upgraded services throughout the buildings, and any signage.

2. Additional floors on the Education Building

- a. A Visual impact assessment of the proposed addition must be included as part of the Heritage Impact Assessment using photo montages (showing before and after shots) and three dimensional representations. These photomontages should include views from all significant view points and from any tall buildings in the vicinity;
- b. The HIA must address how the proposal complies with the Stage 2 Approval Conditions and detailed design recommendations previously provided by the Heritage Council. It should address how the proposal:
 - a) gives consideration to increased setbacks and articulation within the building envelope, particularly from the southern façade to minimise visual impacts of the addition from Farrer Place and maintain the visual prominence of the existing building, and the legibility of its composition, architectural style, form and features;
 - c) presents as a contemporary projection of the existing building and be visually subservient to the existing building;
 - d) uses materials and detailing that respect and are submissive to the heritage sandstone facades of the Education Building; and
 - e) maintains the legibility of the existing light well as a central element with clear views to the sky.
- c. The height and setback of the addition must be clearly identified in the architectural drawings.

3. Significant Historical and Aboriginal Archaeology

This part of Sydney, being close to the First Government House site, is highly significant as retaining potential evidence of 1788 colonial settlement in NSW as well as incorporating documented evidence of post contact interaction with members of the local Aboriginal community.

Phase 1 comments on this project from the Heritage Division identified the significance of potential historical and Aboriginal archaeological evidence which may be retained in this location, albeit potentially not substantially intact. The Heritage Division understands that detailed historical archaeological and Aboriginal archaeological assessment was deferred until Stage 2 of the project. Consequently the following requirements are recommended most strenuously to DPE to satisfactorily address these elements within the new proposal.

- a. A detailed historical and Aboriginal archaeological assessment must be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced historical archaeologist and submitted as part of the HIA. This assessment should discuss the likelihood of significant archaeology being present on site and how such archaeology will be impacted as part of this project. This assessment should also include mitigation measures to ameliorate the impact of the proposed works. The detailed design of the subterranean space should provide for in-situ conservation of state significant relics. The EIS should also incorporate appropriate interpretation of archaeology within a suitable interpretation plan.
- b. This archaeological assessment should inform the detailed design. The HIA should include discussion of any other options that have been considered and discounted to demonstrate that the final proposal is the best option with least archaeological impacts.
- c. In addition to an archaeological assessment, where impact is proposed to significant archaeological relics, a research design and excavation methodology must be prepared to inform the design. This must identify an excavation director for suitable expertise at a state significant level under the Heritage Council's Excavation Director criteria.

4. Public Domain

- a. The HIA must address how the proposal would impact on the visual character of the Macquarie Street precinct, comprising a group of historically and architecturally significant buildings.
- b. Any potential changes to the public domain including physical changes, traffic changes and landscaping changes must be discussed in the HIA and documented in the architectural drawings.

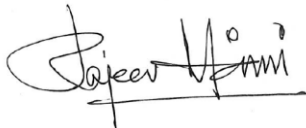
5. Moveable Heritage Items

- a. The buildings contain a significant collection of moveable heritage items consisting of furniture, fittings, fixtures, artworks, artefacts and other items associated with the Government use over a long period of time. The HIA must:

- i. assess compliance with the moveable heritage policies contained in the relevant sections of the endorsed CMPs; and
 - ii. identify any impacts to the significance of moveable heritage items arising from the proposed change of use.
- b. A Collections Management Plan, providing detailed recommendations for the future management of the moveable heritage items identified in the endorsed CMP, must be submitted as part of the EIS.

If you have any questions regarding the above matter please contact Nina Pollock, Heritage Assets Officer, at the Heritage Division, OEH, on (02) 9873 8520 or by email at nina.pollock@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rajeev Maini', with a horizontal line drawn underneath.

Rajeev Maini
Acting Manager, Conservation
Heritage Division
Office of Environment & Heritage

As Delegate of the Heritage Council of NSW 12 February 2016