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SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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14 July 2020

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
NSW Government, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
320 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT PROPOSED DESIGN MODIFICATIONS - EDUCATION BUILDING 35-39 BRIDGE STREET, SYDNEY S4.55 APPLICATION TO MODIFY SSD7484

INTRODUCTION

This concise Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to assess the impact of the proposed design modifications to the approved proposal for the Department of Education Building (Education Building) located at 35-39 Bridge Street, Sydney. The proposed design modifications, the subject of the S4.55 Application to Modify SSD7484, are required because of:

- Design Modifications to non-heritage elements

The S4.55 Application is being submitted following approval of State Significant Development (SSD) Stage 2 Application Number SSD 7484, for the adaptive reuse of the Lands Building, located at 23-33 Bridge Street, Sydney, and the Education Building, located at 35-39 Bridge Street, Sydney as a hotel facility. Both buildings have been described as the "Sandstone Precinct".

We understand that this Heritage Impact Statement will be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment. Overall, we consider that the proposed design modifications will have no heritage impact in the context of the major adaptive reuse works that have been approved.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013, known as *The Burra Charter*, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) publication, *NSW Heritage Manual*.

The Burra Charter provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words place, cultural significance, fabric, and conservation, is as defined in Article 1 of

The Burra Charter. The *NSW Heritage Manual* explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.

SITE IDENTIFICATION

The Education Building (35-39 Bridge Street, Sydney) is located on the south side of Bridge Street and occupies a whole block bounded by Young Street to the east, Loftus Street to the west, and Farrer Place to the south. It is described by NSW Land and Property Information as Lot 56, DP 729620.

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The statutory heritage management framework of the Education Building is as follows:

- Listed on the NSW State Heritage Register under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (SHR No. 00726)
- Listed in Schedule 5 of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012* (Item I684) as a State heritage item - Department of Education building including interior.
- Partially included (northern portion) in the Bridge Street/Macquarie Place/Bulletin Place Special Character Area identified in the *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*.
- Partially included (southern portion) in the Farrer Place Special Character Area identified in the *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*.

REPORT LIMITATIONS

Archaeological assessment of the subject site is outside the scope of this report.

This report only addresses the relevant heritage planning provisions and does not address general planning or environmental management considerations.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Education Building Conservation Management Plans (CMP) prepared by GBA Heritage dated May 2017 and endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council in June 2017.

ESTABLISHED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUBJECT SITE

The following Statement of Significance for the Education Building, located at 35-39 Bridge Street, Sydney is drawn from the updated and endorsed CMP for the Education Building prepared by GBA Heritage in 2017, which in turn was drawn from the 2015 CMP:

Statement of Significance:

The Department of Education building has been synonymous with the provision of universal public education in New South Wales since its construction in 1915 and is still used for its original purpose. [As part of the approved lease and adaptive reuse of the building, this association is to imminently cease]. The Department's association with the site dates from its establishment under the Public Instruction Act 1880. The southern half of the building, the former Department of Agriculture offices,

demonstrates that Department's importance in the development of scientific agriculture and support for primary production when this was a major industry in the state in the first half of the 20th century.

The architectural style of the building, a restrained form of Federation Free Classical with plain facades highlighted by ornamentation at the entrances and upper floor entablature, is representative of contemporary tastes demonstrating external materiality and scale of the building in its original design by George McRae with Stage 2 (for the Department of Agriculture) being completed by a private firm, John Reid & Son.

The Department of Education building is a fine example of early 20th century government offices combining elements of their historic 19th century predecessors, with a concern for contemporary office design. Built in two stages 1912-15 and 1929-30, the building demonstrates rapidly changing methods in building construction of the early 20th century. The 1994-95 refurbishment by noted architect Ken Woolley provided a rational and elegant solution to the historic problems posed by key planning differences between the two stages of construction and resulted in efficient circulation and improved accommodation to contemporary standards.

Although the second stage of the building (1915 and 1930) was designed by a different architect using a different, more technologically advanced form of construction, the external architectural presentation of the two stages is remarkably unified or consistent. Occupying the of the city block bounded by Bridge Street, Loftus Street, Young Street and Farrer Place, the building is a key element in the built landscape of Bridge Street, in the surrounds of Macquarie Place and in Farrer Place to all of which it makes a notable contribution. It is part of an important group of late 19th and early 20th century government offices that represent the continuing association of this area with government and administrative activities since 1788. The site is part of a street plan that reflects the earliest development of the city of Sydney.

The Department's Art Gallery is unique in government offices and its student art collection, William Wilkins Memorial Art Collection, is the oldest in Australia.

The building is associated with key personalities in the history of education in New South Wales including Peter Board and Sir Harold Wyndham. It is also associated with Government Architect George McRae, who is considered as a key practitioner of the Federation Romanesque, Anglo-Dutch and Free Style in Sydney and whose work played a dominant role in the evolution and spread of Federation architecture throughout Australia.

The building has been the symbolic headquarters for generations of teachers and administration staff who have worked in the NSW education system since 1915.

The heritage significance of the Education Building is enhanced by the collection of movable heritage including furniture and war memorials. The movable heritage of the building has an ongoing and continuous association with the government function and demonstrates the building's association with public service. The collections of furniture and fixtures associated with public service and government administration demonstrate superior quality in local design, manufacturing and materials. The war memorials are of particular social significance for its commemoration of the role of Department of Education employees in war.

The site also has high potential for surviving archaeological remains of State significance including the site of the Judge-Advocate's residence, and gardens, boundaries and setting for the residences of the

Judge-Advocate and the Colonial Secretary. These remains may survive below the Loftus Street vehicular entry and the northwest corner of the site.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposed modifications to non-heritage elements, the subject of the S4.55 Application to Modify SSD7484, are required as a result of design development and include:

1. The louvres adjacent to the guest lift core (FTE03b) on the West courtyard elevation have been recessed into the façade and are covered by perforated cladding to conceal the louvres and maintain design intent.
2. The glass spandrels next to the louvres in item 1 (only on levels 5-8 of FTE03b) have changed from glass to recessed louvres covered by perforated cladding in order to match the adjacent louvres and maintain design intent.
3. The remaining glass spandrels next to the guest lift core (FTE03b) on the west courtyard elevation have changed to perforated cladding with backpans behind to retain a consistency in the design of the spandrel panels across the West courtyard façade.
4. The louvres on level 9 Western elevation of the courtyard (FTE09) have been replaced by glass spandrels to maintain design intent in the courtyard. They have relocated to the external elevation of the external façade (FTE11 – Loftus Street face) and are covered by perforated fluted cladding to conceal the mechanical louvres.
5. The louvres on level 9 East elevation of the courtyard (FTE09) have been replaced by glass spandrels to avoid any visible louvres on the glass facade. To avoid visible louvers on the full height glass facade, the required louvres have been located to the furthest north glass panels of the east elevation. The proprietary mechanical louvres are concealed by perforated fluted cladding which matches the level 9 cooling tower facade adjacent.
6. Two awning panels have been removed on every level on the East courtyard elevation from levels 2-7 (one on each side of current awnings – 2 awnings on 6 levels = 12 awning panels removed) and a new awning consisting of 10 panels has been introduced. In order to retain the same design language as the lower levels and to complete the 'mirrored' glass box concept' an awning was introduced to level 8.
7. The louvres on level 2 of the Eastern elevation of the courtyard (FTE03b) have each moved one panel to the right to create symmetry and even airflow through the level 2 corridor.
8. The Northern external face of the façade (FTE11) has changed from fluted perforated cladding to fluted solid cladding, as the plant room does not require the North side to be perforated for air flow.
9. The plant room door on level 9 of the external Eastern elevation of the façade (FTE10) has been relocated a few panels South due to the internal room layout. The louvres have been relocated slightly North and are laid over 7 panels on their side. They are also covered by perforated fluted cladding to conceal the mechanical louvres and maintain the design intent.

10. Louvres have been introduced to the Northern and Southern faces of the guest lift core from levels 5-9 due to design development for air flow purposes and are covered behind perforated cladding to conceal the mechanical louvres and match the design of the East face of the lift core on level 2.
11. The internal corners of the courtyard on the west elevation have changed from curved glass corners to squared corners as the 1500mm curved glass radius would clash with the louvres.
12. The radius of the curved glass and cladding to the internal courtyard (FTE03) and all external façades (FTE08 & FTE11) has changed to 1500mm, as the previous glass radius could not physically be made with the low e coating by any supplier/manufacturer globally. This has also forced the mullion set out to change in these areas, with the mullions around each curved glass corner shuffling slightly with minimal visual impact to fit the new glass size.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

Urbis has continued to work with the design team to manage heritage impacts. Overall the modifications, designed by Make in association with Webber, to alter the louvres, cladding and the proposed radius of the curved glazed corner elements of the courtyard and the vertical extension, are considered to have no adverse heritage impact in the context of the major adaptive reuse works. The changes are relatively minor and will not have an impact on heritage fabric or an appreciation of this important heritage building that is entering a new phase of use as a hotel.

Further, the modifications to the approved proposal are in accordance with the following policies identified in the endorsed CMP. The endorsed CMP for the Education Building prepared by GBA Heritage in May 2017 identifies the following policies for the courtyard and vertical extension to the Education Building:

6.11 VERTICAL EXTENSION

Policy 6.11.1 BUILDING FORM

Retain the existing sandstone-clad component of the historic building when seen from the public domain.

Policy 6.11.2 VERTICAL EXTENSION

Vertical extensions up to the height identified in the Stage 1 Approval SSD 6751 (or its approved modifications) approved envelope are permissible.

Policy 6.11.3

Any roof top additions must be designed in a well articulated manner, and to be scaled and sited such that they do not challenge the architectural scale, power and dominance of the main building volume.

Policy 6.11.4

Any vertical additions should be designed to be setback from the stone parapet in a manner that respects and complements the building's significant architectural style, features, form and significant views.

Policy 6.11.5

Additions involving any adverse intervention to the roof top sky lanterns, located over the Gallery, Annex and eastern spaces, should not be permitted.

Policy 6.11.6

Any roof top additions must be of contemporary design, be of design excellence and must employ superior construction materials that are sympathetic to the significance and appearance of the historic building and its significant views.

6.12 COURTYARD LIGHT WELL BACKGROUND

The form of the building with its central courtyard light well is a significant and integral feature of the design of the building. It was once critical to the amenity of the building in terms of natural lighting and ventilation. Currently it is highly modified, utilitarian and aesthetically disappointing.

In the context of the Stage 1 Approval SSD 6751 approved change of use, there may be opportunities to further modify the courtyard light well. There may be opportunities to explore a creative interpretation of the initial design concept for a formal landscaped courtyard setting.

Policy 6.12.1

There is an opportunity to undertake sympathetic works in the modified courtyard area to increase its amenity and usefulness in the context of the new use.

Policy 6.12.2

The light well courtyard should be retained, however the courtyard light well may be redesigned and fabric sensitively altered to better support the new approved use and, potentially, to creatively interpret the initial design concept for a formal landscaped courtyard setting.

Policy 6.12.3

Any alterations and additions to the courtyard light well must be of design excellence and employ superior construction materials that are sympathetic to the significance and appearance of the historic building.

This letter confirms that the proposed modifications are in accordance with the endorsed conservation policies.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed modifications, the subject of the S4.55 Application to Modify SSD7484, are required as a result of design development. Modifications relate to minor changes to the louvres, cladding and radius of the curved glazed corner elements of the courtyard and the vertical extension.

Overall, the modifications, designed by Make in association with Webber, are considered to have no adverse heritage impacts in the context of the major adaptive reuse works.

The modifications have been developed with Urbis' heritage input to manage heritage impacts.

The modified proposal is in accordance with the intent of the endorsed CMP prepared by GBA Heritage. The proposal is also considered to be in accordance with the relevant heritage requirements of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012* and the guidelines of the *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*.

Overall, the proposal is considered to have no adverse heritage impact on the significance of the Education Building in the context of the major adaptive reuse work.



RECOMMENDATION

The proposed modifications will have an acceptable impact in the context of the major adaptive reuse works approved by SSD7484 to adapt the building to hotel use. On this basis we recommend that the Department should have no hesitation, on heritage grounds, and approve the S4.55 Application to Modify SSD7484.

Should additional information be required, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Jonathan Bryant
Director Heritage