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5 August 2016

Ms Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
22-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: Ben Lusher

Dear Ms McNally

**Sydney Opera House Building Renewal Program
Request for amended SEARs (SSD 7665) & SEARs for Function Centre and Related Works**

1 Introduction

We write to you on behalf of the Sydney Opera House Trust (SOHT) to advise of recent changes to the scope and staging of proposed works under the Sydney Opera House Building Renewal Program. As a result of these changes, we also request that the Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) issue:

- amended Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the proposed Accessibility and Additional Works (now known as the Safety, Accessibility and Venue Enhancement Works and Front of House Works– SSD 7665); and
- new SEARs for the proposed Function Centre and Related Works.

As indicated in the report "*Request for SEARs; Sydney Opera House Building Renewal, Joan Sutherland Theatre Accessibility and Additional Works and Front of House Works*", prepared by Dan Keary Urban Planning Pty Ltd and Michael Woodland Consulting Pty Ltd (April 2016), the SOHT is continuing to consider whether some elements of the proposed works may be exempt development and the appropriateness of de-coupling some elements of the proposed works into separate development applications (DAs).

The report further stated that should the scope of works outlined in the report change as a result of this ongoing review process, then DP&E would be consulted to confirm the process and the applicability of the SEARs. On this basis, SEARs (SSD 7665) were subsequently issued for these works on 10 June 2016.

In line with the above, we have recently contacted Departmental officers to discuss the proposed changes to the scope and staging of works through separate DAs. Following these discussions, it was agreed that we formally contact DP&E to outline the proposed changes and request consequential changes to the SEARs.

2 Proposed amendments to scope and staging of works

The works subject to the SEARs issued for SSD 7665 were previously known as the *Joan Sutherland Theatre (JST) Accessibility and Additional Works and Front of House Works* and comprised the following main components:

JST accessibility and additional works (current SSD 7665)	
Accessibility projects	<p>A range of accessibility upgrades including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility seating upgrades in rows A, B, & C and M, N, & P • New lift core 31 to provide access to the multiple levels in the northern foyers, not currently served by a lift. • Sanitary Facilities Upgrade (East/West) • Dressing Room Upgrade to provide two accessible dressing rooms for performers • Orchestra accessible access upgrade – widening of a staircase and installation of a wheelchair lift, and widening of existing doorways. • Addition of passageways linking the southern foyers to the northern foyers on Levels 2 and 3, providing wheelchair access to northern foyer bars and accessible toilets.
Control room upgrade	<p>Upgrades to make the control room spaces functional and ergonomic and to provide infrastructure to support audio, lighting, video and projection operation in all rooms. For all control rooms this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove carpeted floors and install hardwood flooring or similar to improve appearance, cleanliness. • Provide floor traps for temporary cabling to remove trip hazards and improve appearance. • Provide height adjustable work benches with underside equipment racking where appropriate • Improve lighting for general work and show states • Improve wall finishes and acoustics.
New access from stage to the auditorium	<p>Works to provide a means of access between the auditorium and the stage, including proposed stairs to access the eastern side of the stage, designed for quick deployment by SOH staff, to enable an individual to travel from stage to auditorium (during rehearsals) and from auditorium to stage (during curtain calls).</p>
New follow-spot room	<p>Construction of a new follow spot room to provide the operator with acceptable working conditions, and provide the correct angles for the spotlight to reach the back of stage. The new follow spot room is proposed at the rear of the auditorium, to provide the appropriate angle of light beam to reach the very rear of the stage.</p>
Seat refurbishment	<p>Refurbishment or renewal of the JST auditorium seating in order to provide improved fire rating of the seats. There are three options being considered for the seat refurbishment works:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reuse of metal parts (replacing only worn and broken items), refurbishment of plywood / veneer parts, and renewal of upholstery to achieve enhanced fire rating. 2. Reuse of metal parts (replacing only worn and broken items), renewal of plywood / veneer parts and upholstery to achieve enhanced fire rating. 3. Renewal of the complete seat <p>In addition, the condition of the existing brushbox timber floor will be assessed, and subject to funding and necessity, a further option to re-finish the floor will be investigated.</p>
Theatre & Events Offices	<p>The Theatre & Events teams will be re-located over two levels in the current JST winch power and dimmer rooms, which will become available following the implementation of the TMP works.</p> <p>Creation of new slot window along the eastern façade to provide natural light and amenity for the relocated offices.</p>

JST accessibility and additional works (current SSD 7665)	
Alterations to Fire Curtain	Alterations to existing fire curtain over stage due to its age. Options being considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> removal of the existing "flap" that covers the gap between stage and auditorium. replacement of the existing iron curtain with a new lightweight fabric curtain.
Front of House works (current SSD 7665)	
Entry Foyer	Refurbishment of the Entry Foyer including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfiguring the existing amenities including cloakroom, ticketing, seating, café, and merchandise shop to create more spacious circulation zones and better disabled access to all areas. Upgrading the traditional box office with contemporary customer-focused counter processing facilities. Provision of a new lift from the Box Office Entry Foyer on Level 1 to the JST Southern Foyer on Level 2.
Function Centre	Creation of a new Function Centre at the northern end of the eastern side of the building to provide new and enhanced business opportunities. Removal of the existing marquee to open up the Northern Broadwalk for greater public access and use.
Under the Steps (vehicle concourse)	Redefinition of this space as a primarily pedestrian space through improvements to its overall appearance including lighting, furniture, interpretive elements, signage and the removal of non-essential vehicle movements.

Table 1: JST Accessibility and Additional Works and Front of House Works (current SSD 7665)

As part of the on-going review process of the scope of works, the SOHT has now determined that the following components are exempt development, in accordance with *State Environmental Planning Policy (State Significant Precincts) 2005*:

- Control room upgrade; and
- New access from stage to the auditorium

Accordingly, it is now proposed to remove these elements from the works subject to SSD 7665.

Further, due to construction timing imperatives, the SOHT proposes to amend the above works proposed under the current SSD 7665 by:

- excising the proposed Function Centre works and progressing these through a separate DA; and
- excising the proposed Under the Steps works and progressing as part of a further, separate DA.

The description of the proposal has also been amended to reflect these changes, with the Accessibility and Additional Works now known as the *Safety, Accessibility and Venue Enhancement (SAVE) and Entry Foyer* works.

3 SEARs amendments requested

As outlined in Table 2, it is submitted that the SEARs issued for SSD 7665 require amendment and that new SEARs will be required to reflect the changes outlined above.

DA Name	Description	Status	Outcome
1. Safety, Accessibility and Venue Enhancement (SAVE) and Entry Foyer works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility projects • New follow-spot room • Seat refurbishment • Theatre and events offices • Alterations to fire curtain • Entry foyer <i>(All works as described in SEARs request dated April 2016)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered by SEARs issued for SSD 7665. • Amended SEARs required, in order to remove requirements specifically relating to the Function Centre (see below for further details) 	<i>Revised SEARs issued for SSD 7665 on the basis of this letter</i>
2. Function Centre and Rehearsal Room Relocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new Function Centre at northern end of eastern side of the building (as described in SEARs request dated April 2016) • Conversion of the existing rehearsal room to a new production kitchen supporting the Function Centre and other foyers and bars. • Relocation of the rehearsal room to a space currently occupied by a staff training room on the south-eastern side of the building (see Figure 1 below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New stand-alone SEARs, incorporating relevant requirements of the SEARs for SSD 7665, requested • Proposes additional works relating to relocation of Ballet Rehearsal Room (see below for further details) 	<i>New, stand-alone SEARs issued on the basis of this letter</i>
3. Under the Steps (vehicle concourse) <i>(subject to future SEARs request)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefinition of this space as a primarily pedestrian space through improvements to its overall appearance, including lighting, furniture, interpretive elements, signage and the removal of non-essential vehicle movements (works as described in SEARs request dated April 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to be integrated with other Building Renewal Program works and subject to future request for SEARs. 	<i>New, stand-alone SEARs issued following a future SEARs request</i>

Table 2: Changes to Accessibility and Additional Works and Front of House Works

As a result of these amendments, the works previously described in SSD 7665 will be subject to 3 separate DAs to align the proposed building works with the amended SOHT work program. This allows the SOHT to undertake the proposed works in a coordinated manner which better achieves construction and delivery milestones.

The proposed works to be outlined in the 3 new applications generally relate to the same works as previously identified in SSD 7665, except for:

- The removal of the *control room upgrade* and *new access from stage to the auditorium* as these have been categorised as exempt development; and
- The inclusion of the proposed relocation of the rehearsal room to the south-eastern side of the building in a space currently occupied by a staff training room.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Function Centre and rehearsal room relocation will be supported by a Heritage Impact Statement, a Building Code of Australia statement and other relevant reports including (but not limited to) noise, construction, and ecologically sustainable development.

As outlined in Table 2, it is considered appropriate to amend the SEARs issued for SSD 7665 to reflect the changes to the works and DA program. Specifically, it is requested that the SEARs be amended as follows:

- Change the description of works subject to the DA to *Safety, Accessibility and Venue Enhancement Works and Front of House Works*.
- Delete **Requirement No. 5 Use of Function Centre** and **Requirement No. 6 Noise**.

In parallel with the above amendments, it is requested that DP&E issue a specific set of SEARs for the Function Centre, incorporating relevant requirements of the SEARs for SSD 7665 and other relevant requirements identified by DP&E.

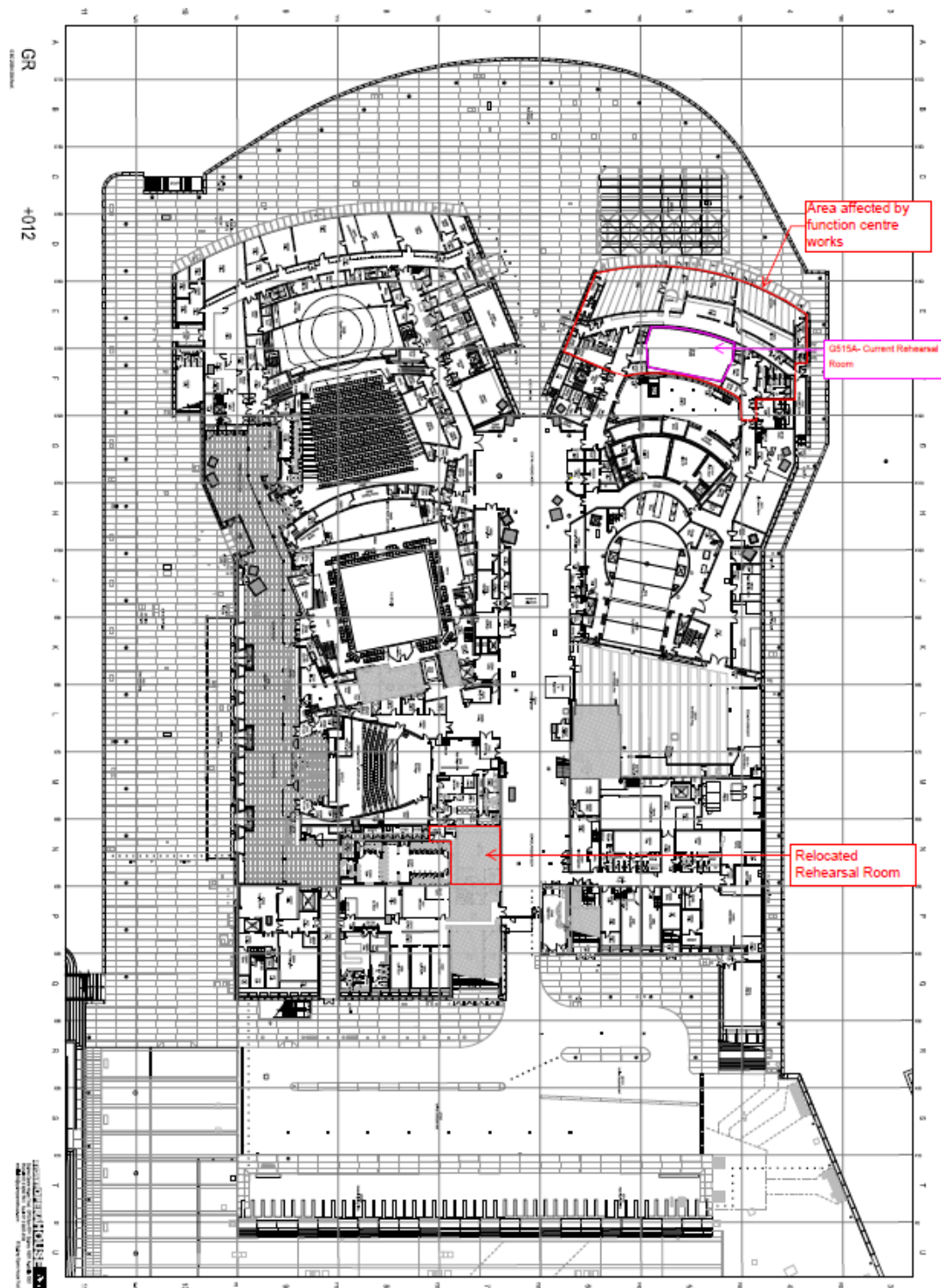


Figure1: Proposed Function Centre and relocation of Ballet Rehearsal Room (source: Sydney Opera House)

4 Consultation

The construction program for the proposed SAVE works and Function Centre / Ballet Rehearsal Room is dependent on the closure period (May to December 2017) for the JST for the Theatre Machinery Project and, accordingly, is subject to critical delivery timeframes.

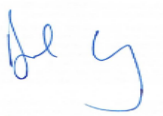
We understand that as part of the above process for SEARs amendments, DP&E will re-consult relevant agencies for their input. As the scope of works subject to the amended SEARs has not been substantially changed from those previously outlined and subject to the SEARs issued for SSD 7665, and therefore no new significant issues arise, it is respectfully requested that DP&E expedite this consultation process to ensure that revised and new SEARs can be issued at the earliest practicable date.

5 Conclusion

We trust that this letter provides sufficient details to enable the DP&E to issue amended SEARs for SSD 7665 and new SEARs for the Function Centre.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dan on 0429 565 291 or email dan@kearyurbanplanning.com.au in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



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Director



Michael Woodland BTP
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