



DESIGN 5

A R C H I T E C T S

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SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

FUNCTION CENTRE & BALLET REHEARSAL ROOM PROJECTS

Heritage Impact Statement ADDENDUM 13 February 2017

1.0 BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF ADDENDUM REPORT

Design 5 – Architects has been engaged by the Sydney Opera House Trust (SOHT) to prepare an assessment of the Heritage Impact of the proposed alteration of the existing Northern Function Room facility and adjacent spaces fronting the Northern Broadwalk to accommodate a new Function Centre, and the consequent re-location of the Ballet Rehearsal Room within the Podium.

A Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) dated 21 September 2016 was submitted with the Development Application, as required by Schedule 2 of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) for this application – Application No. SSD 7881, as issued 30 August 2016.

Since this application was submitted, further refinement of the design has taken place addressing issues raised in the original HIS. This Addendum assesses the updated documentation and revisits the recommendations and conclusions in the original HIS as they relate to these changes. It does not repeat all the recommendations and conclusions and must therefore be read in conjunction with the original HIS.

This addendum report has been prepared by Alan Croker (director) of Design 5.

2.0 SEARS REQUIREMENT

The requirements for this Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) are stated in Schedule 2 of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) for Application No. SSD 7881, as issued 30 August 2016. They were detailed in Section 2 of the original HIS and are not repeated here.

3.0 BASIS OF ASSESSMENT

Refer to Sections 3 and 6.3 of the original HIS.

3.2 Documents reviewed for this Addendum

The following documents prepared by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects:

Function Centre

Drawings – Sydney Opera House – Front of House – Function Centre
170203 DA ISSUE FUNCTION CENTRE_public.pdf (cover sheet dated 03 February 2017 – Rev B)

Changes since the original DA Issue have been clouded, noted as “B” and dated “02.02.17” or “03.02.17” on the documents.

4.0 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES

Changes proposed since the original HIS assessment are briefly described as follows:

4.1 Function Centre

The two original concrete radial walls separating the space into 3 double height volumes were shown fully removed in the original DA documents. These are now shown retained and strengthened with large openings cut into them. The detail and configuration of the operable doors within these openings have been further revised.

The artwork proposed for various door and lining panels within the Function Centre has been revised based on further discussions with Sydney Opera House.

The layout of Function Centre amenities to the south of Lift 8 has been revised on both Ground and Mezzanine levels.

4.2 Ballet Rehearsal Room

No revisions to the proposal.

5.0 ISSUES & CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

5.1 Function Centre

In the original HIS, issues were identified with the proposed removal of the original radial walls and recommendations made to review the proposal to minimise negative impacts on significant fabric. The structural issues have been further investigated and this revised documentation shows a solution that retains substantial sections of these walls.

The artwork / tapestry proposed in the original application has been further investigated and refined following stakeholder and consultant feedback. The revised proposal includes use of an artwork as a series of panels integrated with acoustic requirements for the space.

5.2 Ballet Rehearsal Room

The proposed location of the relocated Ballet Rehearsal Room has been arrived at through a detailed options analysis. The original HIS did not make clear that the proposed building works to both remove the existing Ballet Rehearsal Room and to relocate it are reversible.

6.0 HERITAGE LISTINGS & STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Refer to Sections 6 of the original HIS.

7.0 IMPACT ON WORLD HERITAGE VALUES OF THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

With regard to the changes proposed in the amended DA documents, Section 7 of the original HIS identified the following impacts (quoted in *italics* and followed by comments):

The proposed works for the Function Centre itself will involve substantial modifications to the system of load bearing concrete walls that support the northern end of this part of the Podium. This is not part of the unique structural system and technology that was developed for the folded and cranked beams and prefabricated ribbed shell structures.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed works in this application will have negligible impact on the Outstanding Universal Values that enshrine Sydney Opera House on the World Heritage List. The removal of the present marquee on the Northern Broadwalk will have a positive impact on these values.

The changes proposed in the amended documents indicate that the two main radial walls, originally shown entirely removed and replaced with new fabric, will now be substantially retained, strengthened on one face and exposed on the other. This considerably reduces the impact on the original structure.

This does not change the conclusion of ‘negligible impact on the Outstanding Universal Values that enshrine Sydney Opera House on the World Heritage List’ in the HIS.

8.0 IMPACT ON NATIONAL HERITAGE VALUES OF SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

With regard to the changes proposed in the amended DA documents, Section 8.2 of the original HIS identified the following impacts on the National Heritage Values (quoted in *italics* and followed by comments):

The internal alterations to the original structure to form the main spaces for the Function Centre affect significant elements within the Podium but not the unique folded and cranked beams or the ribbed shell roof structure. Further refinement of the design of these alterations should be undertaken to reduce their impacts in the design development stage.

The refinements proposed in the amended documents indicate that the two main radial walls, originally shown entirely removed and replaced with new fabric, will now be substantially retained, strengthened on one face and exposed on the other. This considerably reduces the impact on the original structure.

Original Utzon and Hall features and characteristics will be retained and respected in these works. These include the pink granite terrazzo paving in the Function Centre and the white birch moulded plywood ‘wobbly’ ceiling panels.

With the proposed retention and exposure of these original Utzon walls, the respect for Utzon’s work is strengthened. Hall’s work remains as it was assessed in the original HIS.

In summary, the proposed projects in this application will not have an adverse impact on the national heritage values of the Opera House.

This summary conclusion of impacts on the national heritage values remains appropriate.

9.0 IMPACT ON STATE HERITAGE VALUES OF THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

With regard to the changes proposed in the amended DA documents, Section 9.2 of the original HIS identified the following impacts on the State Heritage Values (quoted in *italics* and followed by comments):

The proposed design and fitout of the Function Centre will provide a space with majestic qualities and broad views towards the harbour on its north side. This will make it more consistent with the original spaces in the Opera House and retain and respect the work of both Utzon and Hall. Its success will be in large part dependant on the finesse of its detailed resolution and execution, and the selection of the signature artwork to be applied to the folding door arrangement on the south wall.

The distinctive Opera House qualities of this suite of spaces will be strengthened with the partial retention of the two main radial walls.

The selection of the artist for the signature artwork is yet to be confirmed, however a work by Lin Utzon, the daughter of Jørn Utzon – as suggested in the placeholder in the documents, would strengthen the Utzon connection with this space and support the significance of the Opera House more broadly. Regardless of the artist or work selected, it should be of a scale and presence that strengthens the character and quality of the space, whether it be viewed at close range or from the Broadwalk outside.

The alterations to form the three interconnected double height spaces for the Function Centre affect significant structure within the Podium but should retain the power and character of the off-form concrete structure. Further refinement of the design of these alterations should be undertaken in the design development and documentation stages to reduce impacts on the fabric.

The refinements proposed indicate that the two main radial walls, originally shown entirely removed and replaced with new fabric, will now be substantially retained, strengthened on one face and exposed on the other. This considerably reduces the impact on the original structure.

The Function Centre itself is not a performance venue, however it will host private events and may contribute to the Opera House's reputation and standing as a tourist attraction and to some degree to its sense of place.

Confirmation of the proposal to install a signature artwork within the space will enhance the connection of this facility with the Opera House, providing a venue worthy of the significance of the building and strengthening its sense of place.

10.0 COMPLIANCE WITH SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONSERVATION PLAN (CMP) 3RD EDITION

With regard to the changes proposed in the amended DA documents, Section 10.4 (Conclusion re CMP Compliance) of the original HIS, assessed the project and identified a number of impacts and issues that required further resolution or refinement. These are quoted below in *italics* and followed by comments:

The proposed design and configuration of the Function Centre will reintroduce a sense of the original majestic qualities and powerful structural forms that define this part of the Podium. The proposed design retains a very strong Opera House 'character', and should strive for excellence in its fitout and presentation. This excellence in design and its signature unique character make it worthy of being located on this site and should enable it to play an important role in the revenue stream for the place.

The refinement on the proposed retention of original walls and installation of a signature artwork will enhance the strong Opera House character of this facility.

The proposed alterations will have a range of impacts and it is recommended that further analysis and resolution be carried out in the detail design and documentation stage to minimise these. Discussions between this author and the project team since completion of the DA documentation indicate that these impacts will be reduced. This is particularly important in regard to the following:

- *The extent of removed walls and method of structural strengthening where original structure is cut or removed;*
- *Treatment of cut faces of original walls;*
- *Resolution of sliding wall / door panels;*
- *Resolution of curved door system on main south wall;*
- *Resolution of timber battened ceiling over the lower height spaces;*
- *Resolution of external ramped surfaces and handrails;*
- *The selection and design resolution of the temporary umbrellas and bollards (acknowledging that while selection of external furniture is also important, it does not form part of this application).*

The discussions referred to above and subsequent investigations confirm that the two main radial walls can be substantially retained, strengthened on one face and exposed on the other. The method for cutting and strengthening the new openings and penetrations has also been refined to retain the maximum amount of original fabric. This considerably reduces the impact on the original structure.

Other details including the sliding door panels separating the main spaces and lowered timber battened ceiling in the corridor, have been and will be further developed in accordance with the above recommendations.

The proposed tapestry / artwork cladding for the curved door system will provide an important focal art piece in the main function space. It is acknowledged that the commissioning and execution of such an artwork may extend beyond the timeframe for the completion of these works, however ideally it should be in place when this Function Centre is opened.

The Opera House has confirmed that the artwork cladding for the curved door system will proceed as part of the project, however the artist and details of the commission are yet to be confirmed. This signature artwork fully integrated with the architecture has the potential to make this a unique and sought after venue worthy of the Opera House, consistent with Utzon's design principles.

It is essential that all details for both these projects, including those listed above, be resolved in close consultation with the Opera House's heritage architect, Eminent Architects Panel and Conservation Council. Design excellence and adherence to the Utzon Design Principles and the CMP should be paramount considerations.

This project, like all of the Renewal Projects, continue to be reviewed and resolved in close consultation with the Opera House's heritage architect, Eminent Architects Panel and Conservation Council as per this recommendation.

11.0 COMPLIANCE WITH THE UTZON DESIGN PRINCIPLES

With regard to the changes proposed in the amended DA documents, Section 11 of the original HIS, assessed the project and made a number of conclusions. Relevant conclusions are quoted below in *italics* and followed by comments:

The proposed design and finishes for the Function Centre are intended to establish this facility as worthy of the Sydney Opera House. Its success will be in large part dependant on the finesse of its detailed resolution and execution, and the selection of the signature artwork to be applied to the folding door arrangement on the south wall. These could potentially differentiate it from other venues in the city, making it unique and much sought after, and consistent with Utzon's design principles.

The refinements proposed in the amended DA documents confirm that the above objectives are very likely to be achieved.

12.0 COMPLIANCE WITH SYDNEY LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN 2012 (SYDNEY LEP 2012)

No additional comments in relation to the proposed amended documents.

13.0 CONCLUSION

It is important that the comments below be read in conjunction with those in Section 13 of the original HIS.

The building works required to remove the existing Ballet Rehearsal Room (a secondary rehearsal room) and to relocate it to another space using the salvaged original fitout will be reversible. The original wall structures and configuration defining both these spaces are not fundamentally changing and the original Hall fitout comprises standardised prefabricated components that can be easily dismantled and re-assembled. The Main Rehearsal Room within the western side of the Podium remains unaltered.

The refinements proposed in the amended DA documents for the Function Centre indicate the impacts of the new openings on the original structure of the Podium have been reduced from those assessed in the original HIS, and the new works will support and strengthen the Utzon / Hall character of this facility.

The confirmation of the inclusion of a signature artwork along the southern side of the Function Centre, should result in a unique facility within the Podium that is available for significant events and celebrations and is worthy of this world renowned Opera House, strengthening its world, national and state heritage values.



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