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Mr Cameron Sargent
Team Leader – Key Site Assessments
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Email Andrew Hartcher [Andrew.hartcher@planning.nsw.gov.au]

Dear Mr Sargent

RE: Heritage Council comments on Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct (SSD 8671)

Reference is made to your correspondence received on 20 October 2017 inviting the Heritage Council of NSW (the Heritage Council) to provide comments on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Walsh Bay Wharves Precinct project.

I note that the above project is substantially the same as the previous SSDA 7689, with the exception of the waterfront square component which is excluded from this application. However, there are a number of additional proposed minor changes including the removal of additional fabric.

The Walsh Bay Wharves (SHR no. 00559) are of exceptional significance as part of the development of the Walsh Bay and of Sydney harbour generally. The wharves have a strong distinctive character created by the logical use of heavy timber construction and the regular grid layout of piles, columns, beams and infill cladding. Wharf 2/3 is one of the few large scale and open industrial wharf facilities in existence and remains the last undeveloped pier on the wharf.

Based on the above comments and a detailed review of the EIS documentation, the following conditions of consent are recommended by the Heritage Division.

1. DETAILED DESIGN

- a) The detailed design of building identification and wayfinding signage must be visually consistent and specifically designed to respect the integrity of the industrial character of the Precinct.
- b) It is understood that the proposed new stairs, lifts and gantries are critical operationally and for accessibility and egress. However limited information has been provided regarding the proposed external additions including stairs and lift shafts at Piers 2/3 and 4/5. A sympathetic and modest design approach must be adopted for all external additions to minimise impacts to the visual prominence and industrial character of the Wharves. The size of lift shafts must be reduced as much as possible to reduce 'clutter' on the wharf apron. Further design details for all external additions must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.

- c) It is unclear if the proposed roof plant will be screened, in particular on Wharf 4/5. It is recommended that plant equipment is not visible from the public domain. Further design details for plant screening must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- d) Limited information has been provided regarding the proposed strengthening of the structure to accommodate new performance spaces and mechanical services. The introduction of new structural members must be undertaken sensitively and with minimal impact to significant fabric and spaces. Further design details must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- e) It is noted that the proposed new internal partition walls are generally setback from the external walls. However, it is unclear how these walls will be connected back to the structure. Further design details for all internal additions, including mezzanine floors, must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project. In addition, details of materials and finishes should be submitted for assessment prior to approval of works to ensure that any adverse impacts to significant fabric.
- f) In areas where walls are proposed to be attached to external walls eg Bell Studio, consideration must be given to setting these walls back from external walls to minimise adverse impacts to significant fabric.
- g) Solid partitions are proposed to be introduced on the upper deck of Wharf 2/3. This will change the space's large volume and adversely impact on the building's original and significant spatial configuration as a former goods warehouse. Consideration must be given to utilising glazing to the upper portion of the new partition walls to retain the appreciation of the structure and full height of the space.
- h) The original 'dead horse' is proposed to be reused as a box office/cloak room. Limited details have been provided regarding any changes required to house these functions with the existing space. Further design details of this space must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- i) It is noted that some existing walls are to be upgraded to meet requirements of Section J of the BCA. It is unclear what works will be undertaken. Further design details of this work must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- j) It is unclear how proposed new external gantry/platforms features will be tied back to the wharf structure and if any additional strengthening of the wharf that is required. Further design details for these elements must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- k) The original ironbark flooring in both Wharves is proposed to be retained in-situ. However, new flooring is required in areas such as kitchens and toilet facilities. Further design details of how the ironbark flooring will be retained and protected prior to the new flooring structure being installed above must be provided to the Heritage Council for assessment prior to approval of this project.
- l) The introduction of new services must be undertaken sensitively and with minimal impact to significant fabric and spaces. This should be done in consultation with the nominated heritage consultant to ensure adverse impacts are minimised.

- m) There is a significant amount of original fabric that is proposed to be removed including original timber columns, timber trusses, brace beams and steel strong backs to obtain completely open areas in the theatres and rehearsal rooms. In developing the further design details, the adviser impacts to these components must be minimised. Any significant fabric that is removed and not proposed to be reused must be recorded, tagged and securely stored on-site for future use. A removal and storage methodology must be provided prior to the commence of works.
- n) Significant elements are to be adequately protected during the works from potential damage. Protection systems must ensure historic fabric is not damaged or removed.

2. NOMINATED HERITAGE CONSULTANT

- a) A suitably qualified and experienced heritage consultant must be nominated for this project. The nominated heritage consultant must provide input into the detailed design and shall inspect the demolition and removal of material to ensure that the heritage consultant must be briefed prior to the selection of appropriate tradespersons with experience in similar heritage structures, materials and methods, and must be satisfied that all work has been carried out in accordance with the conditions of this consent.
- b) The nominated heritage consultant is to provide ongoing advice to tradespeople undertaking the proposed works throughout the construction period. To ensure that significant fabric is not damaged during the works.

3. ARCHIVAL RECORDING

A photographic archival recording of all areas of the wharves must be prepared prior to the commencement of works, and following completion of works, in accordance with the NSW Heritage Division publication *How to prepare archival records of heritage items and Photographic Recording of Heritage Items using Film or Digital Capture*. The original copy of the archival record must be deposited with the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage, and an additional copy provided to the City of Sydney to ensure that the existing spaces are properly documented prior to modification and that copies of the archival recordings are kept with the relevant authorities.

4. FUTURE TENANCIES

Tenancy Fitout Guidelines must be prepared to make future tenants aware of the cultural significance of the Wharves and their requirements for their ongoing conservation and management. The guidelines should be informed by the 'Conservation Management Plan', Design 5 Architects, 2014 and the 'Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct Heritage Impact Assessment Report', prepared by Tropman & Tropman Architects, October 2017.

5. INTERPRETATION

- a) An interpretation plan for Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct must be prepared by an interpretive specialist to outline the approach to Interpretation at Piers 2/3, 4/5 and surrounding public domain areas affected by this SSD. The Plan should include indicative designs and locations for interpretive devices, a strategy for the reuse, storage and/or display of the movable heritage items currently stored within Pier 2/3, and incorporate the results of the archaeological monitoring program and evidence of the maritime archaeological potential and archaeological evidence within the site. The Plan should be prepared with regard to the 'Walsh Bay Wharves Precinct Interpretation Plan', 1999, and the 'Interpretation Strategy for Movable Heritage Items Pier 2/3 Walsh Bay', November 2016.

- b) The interpretation plan shall be prepared as an integral component of the final detailed design process and be provided to the Heritage Council of NSW and to the Department of Planning and Environment prior to the commencement of works. The plan must be implemented within 12 months of the completion of the works.

6. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The excavation works for utilities as part of this project should be archaeologically monitored, recorded and appropriately documented including any relics or intact archaeological features identified during this work in accordance with Section 7.4.2 of the 'Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct, State Significant Development Application SSDA 8671, Appendix 17: Archaeological Assessment' prepared by Cultural Resources Management dated September 2017. The results of this investigation must be documented in a report provided within 12 months of the completion of the archaeological work to the Department of Planning and Environment and the Heritage Library of the Place Management Division, Property NSW. Archaeological works need to be undertaken by a suitably qualified nominated Excavation Director who satisfies the Heritage Council's Excavation Director Criteria for undertaking works at State Significant historical archaeological sites in NSW.

7. MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGY

If the scope of works is altered in any way that will directly impact the seafloor within this area, including piling and any other services, then an assessment of the impacts must be undertaken by a suitably qualified maritime archaeologist in accordance with the Heritage Division guidelines.

8. CONSULTATION

The Heritage Council will appreciate an opportunity to provide any further comments to the Department of Planning and Environment on the Walsh Bay Arts and Cultural Precinct (SSD 8671) at the following stages:

- i. Response to Submissions;
- ii. draft conditions of consent; and
- iii. detailed design, including the interpretation plan.

If you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, please contact David Nix, Senior Heritage Asset Officer at the Heritage Division, Office of Environment and Heritage, on (02) 9895 6523.

Yours sincerely



Tim Smith OAM
Director Heritage Operations
Heritage Division
Office of Environment and Heritage
As Delegate of the NSW Heritage Council
25 November 2017