

7 June 2012

Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001
Attention: Mr Chris King

Dear Chris

Royal Far West, Manly

Preferred Project Report Submission: Response to Heritage Matters

This letter assesses the heritage impacts of the amended concept plan for the Royal Far West redevelopment and responds to heritage related comments made in submissions to the Concept Plan Application by Manly Council and the Heritage Branch of the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Urbis prepared a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) in August 2011 that assessed impacts of the works in relation to heritage items on the site and in the vicinity.

The proposed changes are illustrated in the plans dated May 2012 and include:

- Setback along Wentworth Street, corner South Steyne and new outdoor seating area
- Revised building massing.

Height and Massing

The Heritage Branch commented in their submission to the Concept Plan Application regarding height of the hotel as 12 storey. This was an error in the HIS submitted with the Concept Plan Application, with the original height of the hotel proposed to be nine storeys, as shown on architectural plans. The Preferred Project Report (PPR) scheme still proposes the hotel to be nine storeys. Therefore, the overall bulk and scale of the development in relation to the smaller scale heritage items being retained on the site is considered appropriate along with proposed setbacks from the heritage buildings and new changes to massing.

Manly Council raised concern in their submission in relation to the overall massing and scale of the development and impact on the character of the heritage buildings. The PPR scheme now proposes to setback Building E on Wentworth Street, which will improve views to and from Drummond House.

The change in massing of Building E/F along South Steyne is more in-keeping with existing development in the vicinity to the street edge. Building E/F is one storey higher than the existing four-storey Norman Drummond Building. The nine storey hotel (Building C) is setback from the street behind Building E/F. Building F is setback from the north elevation of the Terraces, which will minimise impacts on views to the heritage item. The proposed new covered area between the Terraces and the new building is on the ground floor only and does not include any new openings in the northern elevation of the Terraces.

The HIS by Urbis (2011) recommended further consideration of the articulation of the façade of the proposed new buildings as part of future design works. It is further recommended that the link between the Terraces and Building F has further heritage advice to ensure there are no adverse impacts to the Terraces, such as the covered area could have free standing posts, ensuring no intrusions into the built fabric of the Terraces.

Significance

Manly Council raised concern in their submission to the Concept Plan Application regarding non-compliance with several policies in the CMS by Urbis. The CMS policies were prepared to guide the site's development and conservation of significant built fabric and other values.

Several policies in the CMS refer to the significance of Drummond House and the Terraces, and ways to minimise impacts by future works. Policy 6 refers to works not adversely affecting other heritage items in the area and should remain as is. Policy 15 and 17 in the CMS relate to visibility and connections with the Terraces. The proposed concept plan retains the significance of the two heritage items. Any potential adverse impacts can be minimised through further design resolution of the works.

Additional Information Required

The Heritage Branch noted that an Archaeological Assessment should be undertaken for the site. This was also a recommendation in the HIS by Urbis, knowing the diverse site history and nature of the proposed works that would impact upon the potential archaeological resource. It is recommended that the Archaeological Assessment and subsequent archaeological investigations of the subject site are undertaken as a commitment to the Major Project Approval.

The letter from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure dated 30 January 2012 requested further information on the concept plan in relation to any mitigation measures to assist in reducing impacts on existing heritage items on the site.

Mitigation measures were provided in the executive summary of the HIS by Urbis. In relation to reducing the impacts to existing heritage items on the site they included:

- any link from Drummond House to the new eight storey RFW building should be designed to be light weight in form and should aim to minimise the impact on fabric (brickwork and openings) and the overall built form of the building
- if new services or signage are proposed to Drummond House and the Terraces (heritage listed buildings) as part of future design development works, it should include a heritage impact assessment
- any new plantings should not obscure principal façades of Drummond House and the Terraces (heritage listed buildings) or be located directly adjacent to the buildings where they may cause long-term water damage (unless protection measures are in place).

In addition to these mitigation measures, conservation policies in the CMP by Urbis were prepared to guide changes at the site. In relation to existing heritage items on the site they included:

Policy 4. Painting of the external elevations of the Terraces and Drummond House should be in colour tones and highlights for various elements (e.g. bargeboard and timber balcony of Terraces and concrete lintels and columns on Drummond House) that are appropriate for their age and architectural style.

Policy 5. The Terraces and Drummond House should have repairs to significant fabric undertaken (as necessary) to conserve the overall significance of these buildings, in addition to cyclical maintenance. Original fabric should be repaired rather than replaced with advice from qualified heritage consultants and works undertaken by builders with experience working on heritage properties.

Policy 8. There should be no roof additions or dormers on Drummond House.

Policy 9. Any re-roofing of Drummond House should be Marseilles tiles on the same roof profile.

Policy 10. The spaces that form the ground floor entry lobby and open-lounges to the first and second floor balconies [of Drummond House] should not be further [partitioned] to retain access and views to windows and doors along the building's northern side.

Policy 11. Internal walls and fabric within Drummond House can be changed without impacting on the significance of the place (and with reference to other policies for the building), with the exception of window and door joinery, external openings and the lift and lift cage, which are significant elements that should be retained and conserved.

Policy 13. Any connections to Drummond House should be a narrow lightweight link towards the rear of the building or its rear addition (not the original building).

Policy 14. The loggias on the primary elevation (north) and bays on both sides (west and east elevations) [of Drummond House] should not be infilled.

Policy 16. Any changes to the Terraces should not further reduce the legibility of its original room configuration, and should not include further additions.

Policy 17. There should not be any connections added from the Terraces to any existing or new buildings on the site.

Policy 18. Consideration should be given to reinstatement and reconstruction of missing elements to improve the integrity of the Terraces, such as the tower roof (pitched roof should be reinstated with finials).

Policy 19. The use of the Terraces should remain as a commercial or residential premise to minimise impact upon extant significant fabric and retain a sense of their original spaces.

These conservation policies should guide further design resolution of the works to reduce potential impacts to existing heritage items on the site.

Summary

In summary, the PPR Scheme provides improved views to and from Drummond House and better responds to the existing street edge built form in the area. Further design resolution in the next phase of works should include heritage advice to ensure potential adverse impacts are minimised to the heritage buildings on the site and in the vicinity. The PPR Scheme is supported on heritage grounds.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Lindsay
Senior Heritage Consultant