

PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL

7 March 2012

HWL Ebsworth Lawyers
Level 14, Australia Square
264-278 George Street
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: David Baird

Our Ref: 12-0111dbl1

ANNEXURE
"C"

Re: Australian Catholic University (ACU), Strathfield—Heritage Opinion

Dear Mr Baird

We refer to your request that we provide you with advice regarding potential heritage impacts associated with a Part 3A Application for the ACU sites in Strathfield.

GML has examined the relevant documentation forwarded for review, and in particular the Concept Plan Environmental Assessment prepared by Hassell, and the Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Weir Phillips. David Logan and Rod Howard carried out an inspection of the Main ACU campus and its environs on 5 March 2012.

In our opinion, the Heritage Impact Statement contains a reasonably thorough analysis of the historical development of both sites (Main Campus and the School of Exercise Science) as well as sound assessments of the significance of these sites and the heritage values of their various component elements.

The Concept Plan designates specific areas (precincts) of the Main Campus as sites for future development. It proposes envelopes for a number of new buildings, makes provision for increased parking facilities on the site, rationalises vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns within the site, and contains recommendations for new landscaping.

The Concept Plan generally respects the settings of the more significant heritage buildings on the Main Campus. The lot boundary curtilage recommended in the Heritage Impact Statement (p 205) is considered to be appropriate for this site, and is supported. Most of the existing structures earmarked for removal under the Concept Plan have little or no heritage significance, so their demolition would have little or no heritage impact.

In summary, it is our view that the Concept Plan generally respects the established significance of the ACU site and its components. With the exception of one particular portion of Precinct 1 (addressed below), it generally represents a well-considered response to key heritage constraints.

We provide the following more detailed comments in relation to the Concept Plan:

Siting for Future Development:

The zones / precincts identified as sites for future buildings and structures are generally in the most suitable locations for siting new development on the ACU Campus. These

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precincts are all physically and visually separated (i.e. located quite some distance away) from the more significant heritage buildings and spaces. Notwithstanding its separation distance, Precinct 1 is within the visual setting of the most significant part of the site. It thus requires careful consideration and, in our opinion, some modification of the proposed building development envelope.

Our comments in relation to the Concept Plan proposals for each of the four precincts designated as sites for future buildings are set out below.

Precinct 1 (South Eastern Precinct):

Precinct 1 is located on the site of an existing carpark in the southwestern corner of the Main Campus. The northwestern corner of this area comes within the visual setting of the most significant buildings and spaces on the property. The northwestern edge, and in particular the western corner of the proposed Library building envelope occupies a highly sensitive part of the site because this western 'leg' of the building envelope is in close proximity to the Edmund Rice Building and borders the southern side of the significant view corridor between Albert Road and the tower of Mount Royal. The proposed envelope would have potential adverse impacts upon this significant view corridor and upon the visual setting of Mount Royal, the Edmund Rice Building and the Barron Chapel due to its small setback from the existing tree-lined avenue and its four storey scale at this end. In our opinion the building footprint should be further set back by at least another three metres from the former alignment of Albert Road to minimise its visual impact (encroachment) upon the view corridor. An increased building envelope setback on the northwestern side would better respect the original alignment of Albert Road and the existing setbacks of residences along the southern side of this Road.

It is considered that a building height of four storeys in this location would encroach upon and dominate the important view corridor and that a reduction in the height of the building envelope (by one storey) at the northwestern corner of Precinct 1 would achieve a better scale relationship with the adjacent historic buildings. The heights of the existing three storey scale buildings establish an appropriate reference point for the heights of future buildings in the more sensitive central area of the Main Campus. The proposed four storey scale at the western end of the western 'leg' of Precinct 1 would create a dominant new scale of development within this sensitive area. Therefore it is out view the proposed building should be reduced to three storeys at this end.

Further, the proposed footprint of the future Library building in this Precinct comes quite close to two highly significant Araucaria trees (Bunya Pines) located near the gateway on the eastern boundary of the site. These trees once formed part of the early landscaping in front of the Victorian villa Ardross, and the Heritage Impact Statement recommends that they be retained in situ. The northern corner of the footprint is in very close proximity to at least one of these trees. In our opinion, the footprint should be modified to increase the distance (separation) between the future building and the canopies of the Bunya Pine trees and also the nearby gateway.

Precinct 2 (Eastern Precinct):

This area is located near the eastern edge of the site in a zone that has little heritage significance. It is physically and visually separated from the major heritage buildings and spaces near the central part of the Main Campus by buildings erected during the second half of the twentieth century (including the Gleeson Auditorium / Mullens Building and the St. Edmunds Building) which have relatively little – moderate heritage values.

A new building with a maximum height of four storeys is proposed for this precinct as part of the Concept Plan. This would necessitate the demolition of the more recent BioMechanics Building (2005) and the existing Early Childhood Learning Centre incorporating former handball courts. The works carried out to convert the former handball courts to their new use have completely altered their original character, so they are no longer intact or recognisable as former open courts.

In our opinion, a building having the massing and scale proposed for this precinct would have minimal heritage impacts on the overall significance of the ACU property. It would not affect the settings of any existing significant building on the Campus or any identified view corridors. A future building in this precinct is unlikely to have any

adverse heritage impacts upon locally listed heritage items in the vicinity of the ACU Campus (including the Brother Hickey Building in the grounds of St. Patrick's College) or the Draft Merley Road West Conservation Area due to the distance between Precinct 2 and these items.

Precinct 3 (Western Precinct):

This precinct occupies the southwestern corner of the Campus which is well away from any significant heritage buildings and their important settings. It is just to the south of the site for the proposed underground carpark beneath the western portion of the sports fields. The precinct has been used as an ancillary area and currently contains a car park. It does not form part of any identified view corridor, and contributes little to an appreciation of the history and significance of the site.

The Precinct 3 development site provides an ideal opportunity to introduce a substantial new free-standing building of some architectural distinction without any resulting negative impacts upon existing structures. The proposed massing and maximum three storey height for a future (Arts and Sciences) building in this precinct would not be incompatible with the scale and height of existing buildings in the vicinity.

Precinct 4 (Central Precinct):

This precinct adjoins part of the southern side of the sports field near the northwest corner of the Brother Stewart Library (Scholasticate). Existing structures in this area include some single storey demountables of no heritage value and the Store (former handball courts erected in 1908) that has been converted to a storage facility. The Concept Plan proposes the replacement of these ancillary structures with two new two storey buildings of modest scale.

The proposed removal of the former handball courts which is assessed as having high social and historical values is considered to be an acceptable heritage impact given its low aesthetic significance and the difficulty of adapting the structure to accommodate a suitable new function. The proposal will have minimal heritage impacts upon the overall significance of the ACU Campus.

Landscaping Works:

The predominantly formal planning layout of the proposed landscaping within major spaces and along thoroughfares reinforces what currently exists. Future landscape planting generally has been located to enhance, complement and connect the future buildings, open spaces, courtyards and thoroughfares envisaged as part of the Concept Plan. There appears to be considerable scope / opportunity for new planting to help soften the visual impacts of future new buildings.

Much of the existing driveway on the western side of the gateway near the end of Albert Road was formerly part of Albert Road (prior to the relocation of these gates in the early twentieth century).

The original garden areas in the immediate vicinity of Mount Royal were informally laid out and planted in the picturesque manner typical of grand Victorian residences set amid extensive grounds. Little visible evidence of this early garden planting survives. Archaeological evidence related to the early garden layout of Mount Royal may be present beneath the existing ground level in the area in front of Mount Royal.

The intended creation of the main vehicular accessway, car parking zone and bus drop off / pick up area on the southeastern side of Mount Royal as envisaged in the Concept Plan would increase the expanse of hard paving in this area, and necessarily restrict the amount of landscaping / planting that could be put there. This zone formed part of the original Victorian landscaped garden setting around Mount Royal and included gravel pathways, arbours, garden beds and shrubs. Implementation of the Concept Plan would preclude reinstatement of a gardenesque setting at the front of Mount Royal. However, given what currently exists, the proposed bus drop off in front of this building, while not ideal from a heritage viewpoint, is nevertheless considered to be acceptable.

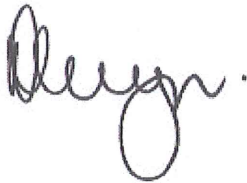
Conclusion:

GML generally concurs with the heritage assessments and the conclusions contained within Section 11 of the Heritage Impact Statement by Weir Phillips in relation to the Concept Plan proposal. We do however have some concerns about the proposed building envelope at Precinct 1. In our opinion, this aspect of the Concept Plan should be reviewed and modified in order to reduce the likely heritage impacts resulting from the proposed Library building.

Should you wish to discuss these matters further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Logan', with a large loop at the end.

David Logan
Partner