

Flour Mill 2-32 Smith Street, Summer Hill

Statement of Heritage Impact



Prepared for

EG Funds Management
by
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Executive summary

The Mungo Scott flourmill at Summer Hill was until recently owned by Allied Mills Pty Ltd. It has been made redundant by the construction of a new mill on the railway line at Picton on the outskirts of Sydney. The Summer Hill mill is no longer operational and the milling machinery has been sold. It was the last user of the adjacent goods railway line that links Glebe Island with the main line at Dulwich Hill. The reservation for the goods railway line is proposed to be adapted for use as a corridor for use by the light rail system. It was one of numerous mills built in Sydney in the 1920s. EG Funds Management, the current owners of the site, propose to adaptively reuse several of the most culturally significant of the buildings in a residential and mixed-use development.

Purpose of this document

This document accompanies an application by HASSELL on behalf of EG Funds Management for approval of a Concept Plan for the site of the former Mungo Scott flour mill to facilitate its redevelopment for residential and commercial purposes. The document assesses the heritage impact of the proposal. It should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Assessment of the site prepared by John Graham & Associates dated 10 March 2011 and drawings attached to the Concept Plan prepared by HASSELL.

Strategy for developing the site

It is intended to develop the site using distinct architectural strategies.

The western part, which faces the Quarantine Ground Conservation Area, will be developed in an orthogonal manner that relates to the established subdivision pattern of the main part of the Summer Hill town. It will be primarily residential and scaled to complement the Conservation Area. The proposal to develop it at a similar density and with a similar orthogonal form will ensure it is integrated into the established subdivision pattern of the town. The western part of the site contains the c1964 Milling and Baking Technical Centre which is located on the corner of Smith and Edward Streets. It is representative of institutional and administrative architecture from the first half of the 1960s and provides evidence of the consolidation of the mill in this period but is otherwise of little significance. Its demolition will permit the extension of residential development along the full length of Edward Street.

The eastern part, which faces Hawthorne Canal and the railway easement, will adopt the alignment of the mill, which is at an angle of about 30 degrees to the Summer Hill grid. It will be a mixed use development that incorporates as much of the old mill structure as practical. This includes retention of the original brick Mungo Scott mill buildings and two sets of concrete silos used for bulk wheat storage. The wooden bins and the adjoining General Store 2, will be dismantled and their fabric harvested for reuse. They will be replaced with a new building of fire-proof construction having a similar bulk and footprint. The steel silos used for storage of bulk flour will be demolished as their form and material preclude adaptive reuse, however the steel fabric will

be recycled. Their footprint will be exposed and form part of the site interpretation. Several small sheds in the southern part of the site, will be demolished.

New development proposed in the northern end of the site (east of Hawthorne Canal) will be separated from the rest of the site by 20th century plantings of Wine Glass palms, Brushbox, Ficus Hillii and Camphor Laurel that line Smith Street. These plantings will be retained and used to form a pocket park at the heart of the development.

The Hawthorne Canal will not be adversely impacted by works associated with the Concept Plan.

The strategy maximises the retention of fabric related to the former mill use and reinforces the established built form.

The heritage impact of works associated with the proposed redevelopment of the site to facilitate its use for residential and commercial purposes.

An outline of the proposed works is described below in plain text. The heritage impact of the works and any comment is provided in italics.

Generally

Allied Mills' flour milling activities were transferred to a new facility at Picton on the outskirts of Sydney in March 2009, enabling more efficient production and distribution of its products and rendering the operation at Summer Hill redundant. Over the next 12 months the milling machinery was removed from the old site in Summer Hill and as Allied Mills was the last user of the goods rail line, it too was decommissioned. *Although the site has no active heritage listing, it contains several structures that are important to the local community. It is proposed to retain these, and as much of the infrastructure of the former flourmill as is practical. The site also contains several structures particular to its former industrial use that are of cultural significance but for which it is not possible to devise an alternative use. It is proposed to demolish and either recycle or provide appropriate interpretation of these elements. Separate from the proposed change of use of the site, the NSW State Government plans to reactivate the easement occupied by the goods rail line and use it as a route for an extension of Sydney's light rail and bicycle systems.*

Among the structures of cultural significance proposed for demolition are the wooden bins and the rail sidings. The reason for their demolition, and a strategy for their interpretation, is set out below.

Wooden Bins and General Store (15, 16)

The wooden bins formed an integral part of the original mill. The structure in which they are contained is approximately 9 storeys high and constructed from timber (clad in corrugated iron for durability). The bins themselves are also timber and are of 2 sizes. They have an area of between 7 and 9 square metres each and run vertically through the building in one volume.

The small cross sectional area of the bins, their flammable construction and

great height precludes their adaptation for new uses. They are likewise difficult to preserve and to interpret insitu in a meaningful way. *The proposal to dismantle the bins and recycle their timber in the proposed new development, or as furniture, is considered an appropriate response to a difficult problem. The proposal to construct a new building in the same position as the bins, of the same height and proportion, is also considered an appropriate response that will aid interpretation of the site at large.* Their close association with the adjoining rail siding is discussed below.

The rail sidings

The sidings consist of covered lean-to structures attached to the wooden bins and the mill. Like the wooden bins, they are visible in the photo on the cover of the Heritage Assessment. They provide shelter from the elements for the shipping in of wheat and the shipping out of flour. The lean-to structures cover the tracks and contain various mechanisms. The sidings are located on land belonging to RailCorp and are partially built over the Hawthorne Canal. They had separate functions. The one adjacent to the wooden bins provided a point for delivery of wheat from the farm. The siding outside the Mungo Scott building was used for despatching finished product. Two sets of doors opened onto the platform, which was elevated above the tracks for convenient loading. Sets of points provided flexibility for the movement of rolling stock.

It is not proposed to retain the sidings for the following reasons:

1. They do not form part of the site of the former mill but occupy part of a reservation for drainage and rail lines that is in the control of others.
2. Their former function will be obscured by both the removal of the railway line and the (necessary) demolition of the wooden bins.

Retention of the roof over the delivery siding is not considered desirable as the replacement building will have a new and different use. The chute, grillage and weighbridges could be left in place but would deteriorate due to their exposure to the elements. Their removal is recommended if a suitable program of interpretation that describes the process of receiving wheat and despatching flour is developed. Prior to any demolition, an archival record of the place will be made.

While demolition of the roofed siding adjacent to the Mill is also proposed, the platform itself will be retained as it does not encroach on land owned by RailCorp and its retention will aid interpretation of the method of despatch.

Sub station (1)

It is proposed to retain the substation. *Retention of this building (of Moderate significance) is a positive heritage outcome.*

Amenities building (9)

It is proposed to adaptively reuse the amenities building (former stables) as a focal point for site interpretation. The adjacent weighbridge, that was constructed in response to the shipment of bulk flour by road, will also be retained. *Retention of this building (of High significance) is a positive heritage outcome.*

Warehouse and Packing (13)

It is proposed to adaptively reuse the warehouse and packing building as a mixed commercial development. The external form of the building, including the former mill offices and the high level signage, will be retained. *Retention of this, the most prominent building on the site and of High significance, is a positive heritage outcome.*

Mill Building (14A , 14B)

It is proposed to adaptively reuse the flour mill and the screening room as a mixed commercial development. The external form of the building, will be retained. *Retention of this building, which is formally so closely related to the adjacent warehouse and packing building, is a positive heritage outcome.*

Dust Control Building (14C)

It is proposed to demolish this building. *The dust control building is a later addition to the complex and not strongly related in essential function nor form to the adjacent Mill. Its demolition is acceptable.*

Bulk Wheat Storage Silos (18)

Constructed circa 1950, these were the first concrete silos to be erected on the site. It is proposed to adapt them for residential use. *Although of little cultural significance their retention and adaptive reuse will aid interpretation of the site.*

Bulk Wheat Storage Silos (20)

Constructed in 1968 to the design of MacDonald, Wagner and Priddle, these were the second concrete silos to be erected on the site. It is proposed to adapt them for residential use. *Although of little cultural significance their retention and adaptive reuse will aid interpretation of the site.*

Planting

It is proposed to retain the Interwar planting of Brushbox, Ficus Hillii and the line of palms along the Smith Street frontage, and the Chinese Weeping Elms north of the present Milling and Baking Technical Centre. This planting will form the nucleus of a new public open space connecting Smith Street to the "Greenway" and light rail corridor. Remnant planting of camphor laurels will be removed, as will the Silver Birches in the courtyard of the Milling and Baking Technical Centre. *Retention of the bulk of the planting that fronts the public realm, and its incorporation into a new public open space is a positive heritage outcome.*

Hawthorne Canal

The route of the Hawthorne Canal broadly follows the "Greenway Corridor" proposed in the *Marrickville Urban Strategy*. The corridor will incorporate the proposed light rail system as well as paths for cycling and walking. The section of the canal within the site of the former flourmill is not part of the "Greenway" *The proposed development will not affect the heritage values of the Canal.*

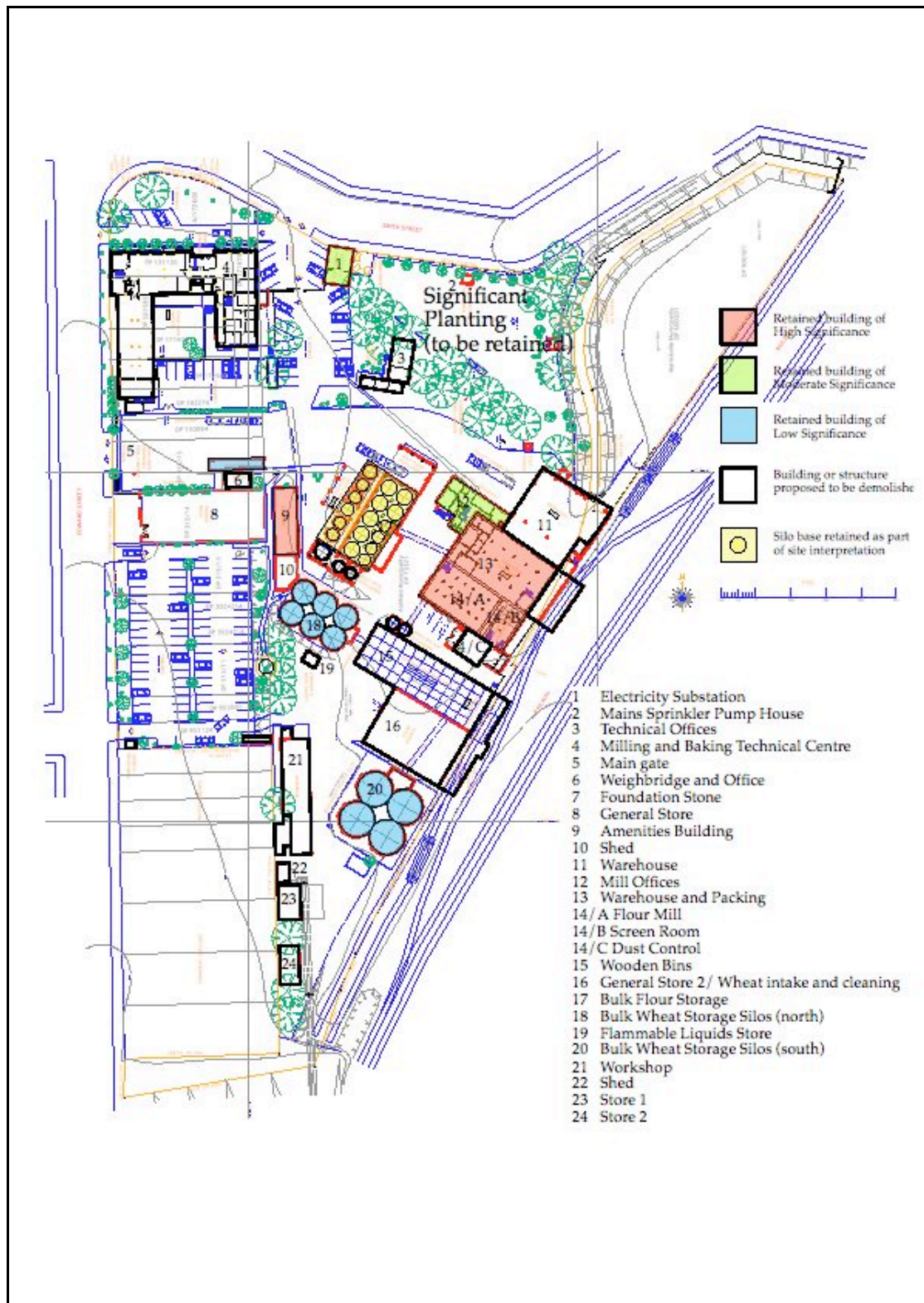


Figure 1: Site Plan showing buildings and structures to be retained or demolished. (Adapted from a survey provided by Allied Mills)

Conclusion

The approach taken by HASSELL on behalf of EG Funds Management in the planned redevelopment of the site of the former Allied Mills site at Summer Hill is, in the author's opinion, exemplary in the understanding and respect it pays to the culturally significant fabric of the place. Little fabric of significance will be lost. The remaining fabric will ensure the former use of the place will remain evident after redevelopment.



John Graham