

## **STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney

July 2017



---

**4-6 BLIGH STREET, SYDNEY**

---

ISSUE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	ISSUED BY
A	Draft for Review	06/06/17	LG
B	Draft for Review	14/06/17	LG
C	Issue for Planning Proposal submission	24/07/17	LG

---

GBA Heritage Pty Ltd  
Level 1, 71 York Street  
Sydney NSW 2000, Australia  
T: (61) 2 9299 8600  
F: (61) 2 9299 8711  
E: [gba@gbaheritage.com](mailto:gba@gbaheritage.com)  
W: [www.gbaheritage.com](http://www.gbaheritage.com)  
ABN: 56 073 802 730  
ACN: 073 802 730  
Nominated Architect: Graham Leslie Brooks - NSW Architects Registration 3836

# CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	REPORT OVERVIEW	4
1.2	REPORT OBJECTIVES	4
1.3	METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE	5
1.4	HERITAGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK	5
1.5	SITE IDENTIFICATION	5
1.6	AUTHORSHIP	5
1.7	REPORT LIMITATIONS	5
1.8	COPYRIGHT	6
<b>2.0</b>	<b>SITE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>ESTABLISHED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1	ESTABLISHED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SUBJECT SITE	10
<b>4.0</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT</b>	<b>14</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION	14
5.2	OVERVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS	14
5.3	CONSIDERATION OF THE GUIDELINES OF THE NSW HERITAGE DIVISION	14
5.4	HERITAGE OBJECTIVES OF THE SYDNEY LEP 2012	16
5.5	CONSIDERATION OF S117 DIRECTIONS FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION	17
<b>6.0</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1	CONCLUSIONS	18
6.2	RECOMMENDATIONS	18
<b>7.0</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>20</b>

# 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 REPORT OVERVIEW

This report has been prepared to accompany a Planning Proposal, to amend the current FSR controls of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP)* applicable to 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney.

The indicative architectural scheme (Reference Design) and urban design scheme prepared by Architectus for submission with the application indicates how the subject site may be developed to a higher density.

The report does not address a defined future development, only an indicative architectural scheme. The indicative scheme is only one option and may be subject to change in the future during the detailed design resolution process that will form part of a later development application process for the site, and will require additional review from a heritage perspective, once finalised.

Should *Sydney LEP 2011* be amended as a result of this or other Planning Proposals, the heritage aspects of any future development applications for the subject site will be assessed against the appropriate heritage controls of the relevant planning controls.

This report concludes that, subject to the recommendations made, the Planning Proposal has the capacity to deliver a development on the subject site to the proposed maximum controls, within an acceptable heritage impact.

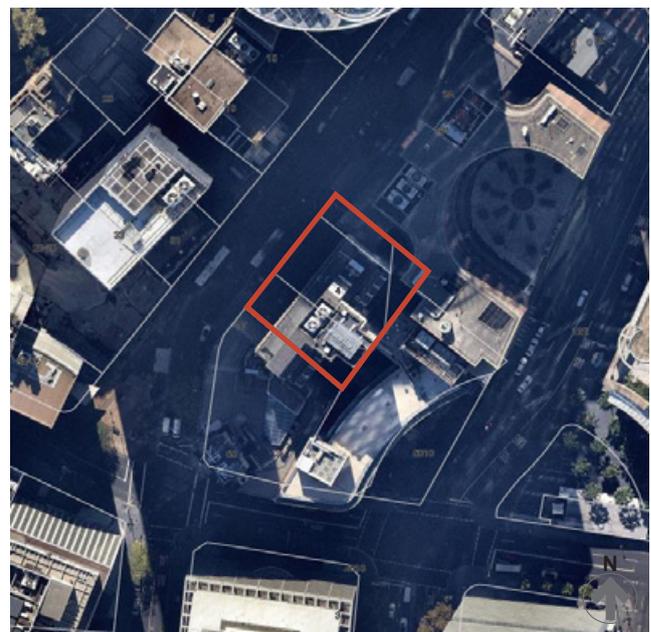
### 1.2 REPORT OBJECTIVES

The objective of this report is to review the Planning Proposal and consider the implications, from a heritage perspective, of the proposed amendment to the maximum FSR applicable to the site.

It considers the impact of potential future development in relation to the relevant provisions established by the City of Sydney Council and the guidelines endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council, based on the indicative urban design scheme documented by Architectus, on the understanding that this may be subject to change at a later point.



**Figure 1.1**  
Location map showing the subject site outlined in red and shaded yellow  
Source: NSW LPI SIX Maps Website



**Figure 1.2**  
Aerial photograph showing the subject site outlined in red  
Source: Nearthmap 6 May 2017

The analysis in this report is based on review of the urban design diagrams and observations made during inspections of the locality.

### 1.3 METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in accordance with guidelines outlined in the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013*, known as *The Burra Charter*, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) publication, *NSW Heritage Manual*.

*The Burra Charter* provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words *place*, *cultural significance*, *fabric*, and *conservation*, is as defined in Article 1 of *The Burra Charter*. The *NSW Heritage Manual* explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.

### 1.4 HERITAGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

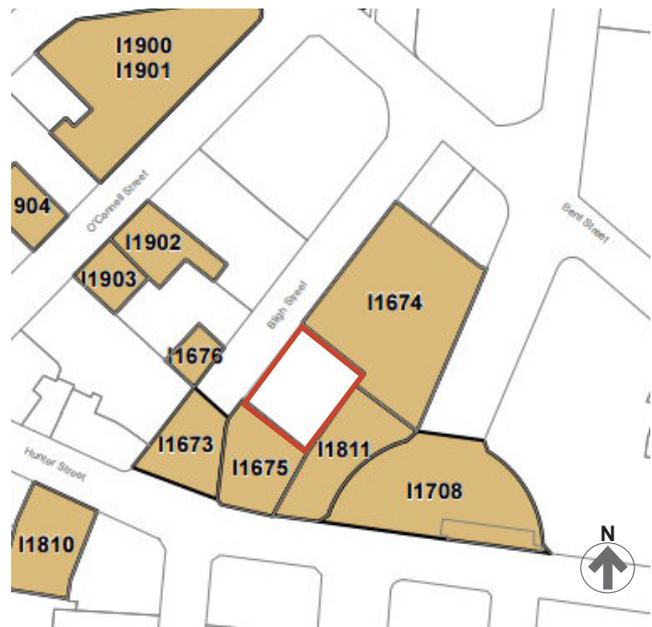
The subject property is **not** listed as an item of heritage significance in any statutory instrument.

However, it is located in the vicinity of the following items listed in Schedule 5 of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012*, as items of local heritage significance:

- Item 1673: Richard Johnson Square at Bligh Street
- Item 1674: Sofitel Wentworth Hotel at 2 Bligh Street
- Item 1675: Former City Mutual Life Assurance Building at 10 Bligh Street
- Item 1676: Former NSW Club Building at 31 Bligh Street
- Item 1811: Former Qantas House at 1 Chifley Square
- Item 1708: Chifley Square at Chifley Square

As the proposal is classified as State Significant Development (SSD) (being a new hotel of greater than one hundred million dollars capital investment value) the *Sydney DCP 2012* does not apply.

Any future development would be subject to the heritage provisions of the *Sydney LEP 2012* under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The City of Sydney Council must take into consideration the potential impact of any proposed development on the heritage significance of the listed items in the vicinity of the subject site.



**Figure 1.3**  
Excerpt from the *LEP Heritage Map 014* showing the subject site outlined in red and heritage items shaded brown  
Source: *NSW Government Legislation Website*

### 1.5 SITE IDENTIFICATION

The subject site at 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney, is located on the eastern side of Bligh Street, near the intersection with Hunter Street. It is described by NSW Land and Property Information (LPI) as Lot 1, DP 919932; Lot 1 and 2, DP 134866; Lot A, DP 184770.

### 1.6 AUTHORSHIP

This report has been prepared by Lara Goldstein, Heritage Consultant, of GBA Heritage and has been reviewed by the Director, Graham Brooks. Unless otherwise noted, all of the photographs and drawings in this report are by GBA Heritage.

### 1.7 REPORT LIMITATIONS

While this report is limited to the analysis of European cultural heritage values, GBA Heritage recognises that for over forty thousand years or more Aboriginal people occupied the land that was later to be claimed as a European settlement.

Recommendations have been made on the basis of documentary evidence viewed and inspection of the existing fabric.

Archaeological assessment of the subject site is outside the scope of this report.

This report only addresses the relevant heritage planning provisions and does not address general planning or environmental management considerations.

## **1.8 COPYRIGHT**

Copyright of this report remains with the author, GBA Heritage.

# 2.0

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located in the north eastern part of the Sydney CBD which is characterised by its layered development history. This development history extends over most of the twentieth century and is represented by a mix of commercial developments of a variety of types and scales. This includes a number of multi storey high rise towers built as stand alone developments, or as additions to earlier buildings, in the later half of the twentieth century and early years of the twentyfirst century.

The existing building on the subject site 'Bligh House' was completed in 1964. It is a 18 storey commercial office building with a base podium built to the site boundaries and a tower setback above.

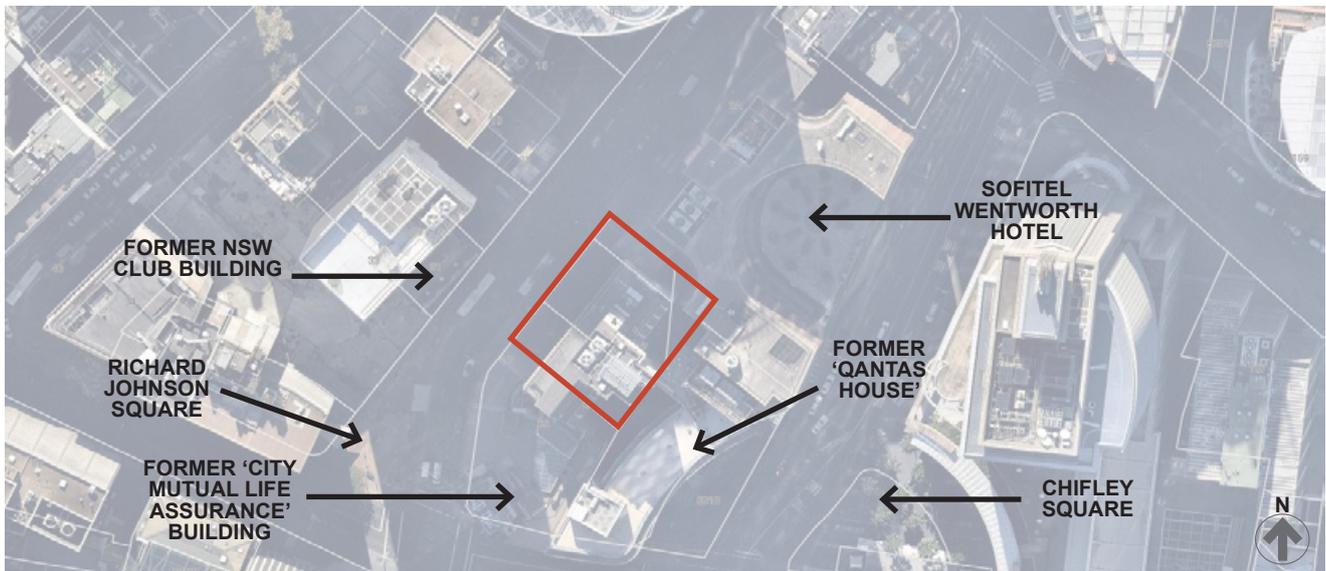
Bligh House was constructed as part of the post World War Two development boom in the Sydney CBD, facilitated at least in part by the lifting of the 150 foot height limit imposed on the city since 1912. Upon its completion it was the eighth tallest skyscraper in Sydney rising to 240 feet.

The building was designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker (PTW), a local Sydney architectural firm that developed a reputation in 1960s and 70s for their high-rise commercial buildings.<sup>1</sup>

It is designed in the Post War International Style. The light warm coloured pre-cast concrete facade finish to the facades was achieved with acid etching applied to the concrete surface Recessed windows with grey coloured glazing accentuates the contrast to the concrete surrounds.<sup>2</sup>

It comprises a three storey podium with the high rise component set back from the facade lines of the two adjoining heritage items.

Although Bligh House was designed by a prominent architect credited with making a significant contribution to the post war Sydney city skyline, it is considered to be a restrained example of its type. It exhibits fairly common style characteristics to other modernist city buildings of the same era in terms of form, scale and materials.



**Figure 2.1**

Aerial photograph showing the subject site outlined in red, with the heritage items in the vicinity indicated with arrows and annotated in black  
Source: Nearmap, 6 May 2017

<sup>1</sup> Goad, P, Willis, J, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, 2012, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, Victoria

<sup>2</sup> Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 24 November 1964, £1,600,000 Office Block Third In Seven Years, pg 22



**Figure 2.2 (Top Left)**

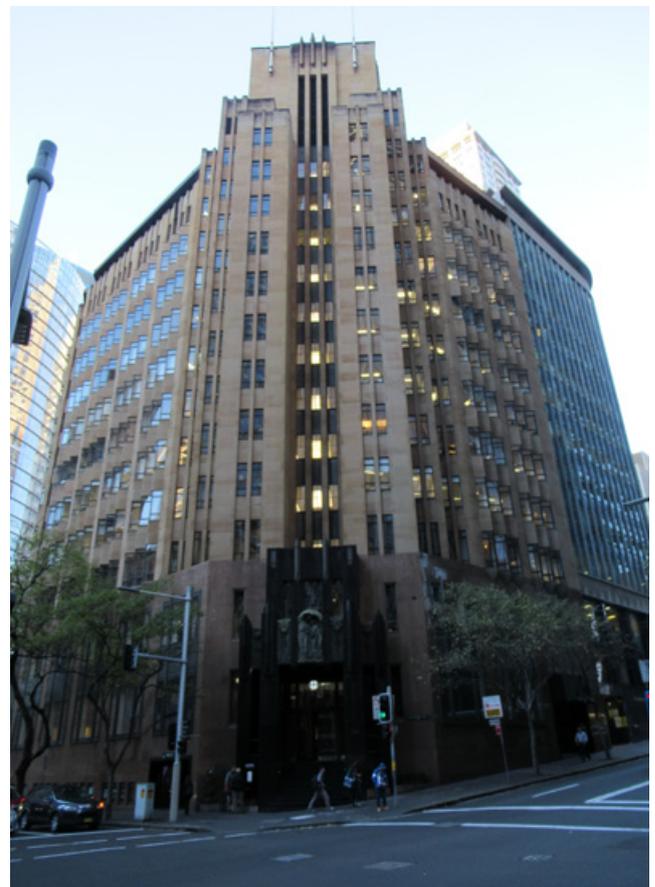
The existing building on the subject site at 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney, known as Bligh House

**Figure 2.3 (Bottom Left)**

Looking south west from Bligh Street towards the subject site, visible between the heritage listed Sofitel Wentworth Hotel on the left, and the heritage listed Former 'City Mutual Life Assurance' building on the right

**Figure 2.4 (Bottom Right)**

The heritage listed Former 'City Mutual Life Assurance' building at 10 Bligh Street located directly to the south of the subject site, as viewed from the intersection of Castlereagh Street and Hunter Street

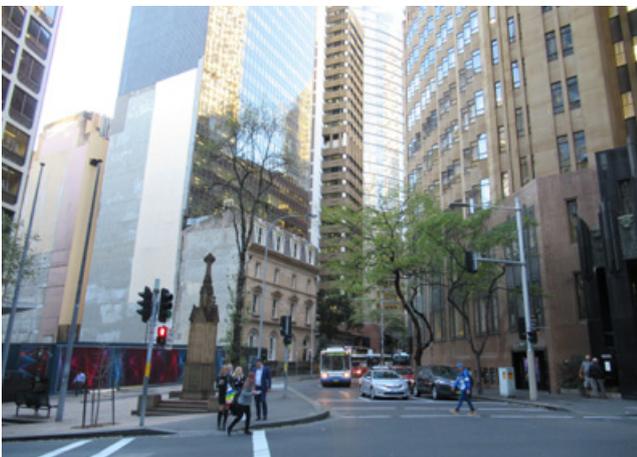




**Figure 2.5**  
Looking north along Bligh Street showing the existing streetscape character. The heritage listed Former NSW Club Building at 31 Bligh Street is visible on the left



**Figure 2.8**  
The heritage listed Former 'Qantas House' at 1 Chifley Square located directly to the south east of the subject site, as viewed from Chifley Square



**Figure 2.6**  
Looking north from the intersection of Castlereagh Street and Hunter Street towards Bligh Street, showing the existing context and setting of the heritage items Richard Johnson Square, Former NSW Club Building, and Former 'City Mutual Life Assurance building



**Figure 2.9**  
The heritage listed Sofitel Wentworth Hotel at 2 Bligh Street located directly to the north of the subject site, as viewed from Phillip Street



**Figure 2.7**  
Looking west from the intersection of Castlereagh Street and Hunter Street showing the existing setting of the heritage item Richard Johnson Square

# 3.0

## ESTABLISHED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 3.1 ESTABLISHED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SUBJECT SITE

There are a number of individually listed heritage items in the vicinity of the subject site. These are listed as items of local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the *Sydney LEP 2012*.

The analysis in this report focuses on the impact of the proposed development (if any) on Richard Johnson Square, the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Former City Mutual Assurance building, the Former NSW Club Building, and the Former Qantas Building, being the closest items. Other listed heritage items in the wider locality are physically and visually separated from the subject site by intervening development/distance/roadways/buildings/public domain.

The following Statements of Significance for the individually listed items within the vicinity of the subject site have been sourced from the NSW Heritage Inventory.

**Richard Johnson Square** at Bligh Street, Item number 1673 in Schedule 5 of *Sydney LEP 2012*:

*Richard Johnson Square is historically and culturally significant as an important example of 20th century civic planning.*

**Sofitel Wentworth Hotel** at 2 Bligh Street, Item number 1674 in Schedule 5 of *Sydney LEP 2012*:

*The Wentworth Hotel facing Chifley Square is a twenty storey tower of Post-War Minimalist Style. It is of historic importance for its association with QANTAS and QANTAS House. The hotel is important as the only Australian work by Skidmore Owings and Merrill, and as the oldest major Sydney Hotel. The Wentworth Hotel is aesthetically significant for the huge copper canopy over the entrance, which at the time of construction, was one of the largest completely fabricated awnings in the world. The distinctive horse shoe design of the Wentworth Hotel, and as the venue for the annual Black & White Ball,*

*the major fundraising event of the Black & White Committee, the most patrician of Sydney's charity groups. The building is scientifically significant for the largest air conditioning system, column free ballroom, and as the largest brick structure in the southern hemisphere. The building contains a rare example of a vertical passenger lift spanning four floors.*

**Former City Mutual Assurance** at 10 Bligh Street, Item number 1675 in Schedule 5 of *Sydney LEP 2012*:

*The City Mutual Building is one of the most impressive and innovative of Australia's Interwar Art Deco commercial office buildings and a notable exemplar of its style and period. The building is recognized as the finest achievement in this style of its notable architect, Emil Sodersten, and the high quality of its design is matched by its fabric and fine detailing, both internally and externally. Features of particular note and rarity include the elaborate scagliola work in the Assurance Chamber and the bronze relief sculptures over the entry. The sculpture's central figures are a reinterpretation of Benetton's "Flight from Pompeii", with flanking bas relief panels of indigenous flora, including banksias and flannel flowers, by renowned sculptor Rayner Hoff over the main entry. The relatively high degree of intactness of the building's important facades and interior spaces, particularly the entry hall and former Assurance Chamber, are also notable and enhance the site's overall significance.*

*The building's dramatic exploitation of its important corner site and the importance this gives to the building in its context is also an important aspect of the building's aesthetic significance, it serving as a backdrop to Richard Johnson Square and a local landmark in local streetscape views.*

*Since its completion in 1936 the building has been a symbol of the Mutual Assurance Society and though no longer owned or occupied by them it remains a reminder of the Society's role in the evolution of Sydney's commercial life and building development.*

**Former NSW Club Building** at 31 Bligh Street, Item 1676 in Schedule 5 of Sydney LEP 2012:

*The remnant building is of significance as the sole surviving example of a nineteenth century Sydney gentlemen's club, then as important and influential institution in Victorian colonial society in Australia.*

*The remnant(sic) building is of significance as on(sic) of surviving, albeit altered, examples of the works of the Victorian-era architect, William Wilkinson Wardell. The restrained classical elegance of its original Bligh Street facade is influenced by Italian Renaissance palazzo. Behind the facade are spacious Victorian-era and Federation-era rooms, all with high ceilings and tall windows overlooking Bligh Street. These rooms contain elaborate joinery and marble chimney pieces, and a rich, masculine, painted and stencilled decorative scheme on the walls and ceilings, with remnants of embossed wallpaper of importance.*

*The remnant building is also of significance because it demonstrates, by means of its surviving form, fabric and finishes the evolution of building conservation during the 1970's.*

**Former Qantas House** at 68 Hunter Street, Item 1811 in Schedule 5 of Sydney LEP 2012:

*The former Qantas building is historically significant, reflecting the importance of international travel as an expression of increasing middle-class affluence in post-war Australia. The sweeping curve of this twelve storey Post War International style building was dictated by the proposed extension of Elizabeth Street and the formation of Chifley Square, a major town planning initiative of the late 1950s. It is an important building in the professional work of the architectural partnership of Rudder, Littlemore and Rudder for which they were awarded the 1959 RIBA Bronze Medal. It is aesthetically significant for its well resolved detailing to its interior and exterior, its unique use of a curved plan form and its early use of curtain wall facade system incorporating aerofoil shaped aluminium framing, double glazing with green tinted glass and teal blue enamelled steel spandrel panels. It is important as one of the last one hundred and fifty feet buildings to be built. The building is socially significant for its powerful embodiment of the self-confident nationalist stance of Australia in international affairs in the 1950s. The building is scientifically significant as an early and unique use of curtain walling.*

**Chifley Square** at Chifley Square, Item 1708 in Schedule 5 of Sydney LEP 2012:

*Chifley Square is of historical and aesthetic significance as an early 20th exercise in city planning to create a new public open space, and for its naming to honour J.B. Chifley, Australia's prominent and well loved wartime Prime Minister 1945-1949. The construction of the heritage-listed 1957 Qantas House (designed by Rudder Littlemore and Rudder) at 68-96 Hunter Street was integral to the creation of Chifley Square, and adds to the historical and aesthetic significance of the Square.*

# 4.0

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The documentation submitted with the proposal includes an Indicative Architectural Scheme (Reference Design), and a Building Envelope and Urban Design Study, prepared by Architectus. These documents demonstrate how the proposed changes could be implemented with the development of the subject site.

Architectus has provided the following description of the proposal:

*The Planning Proposal seeks to increase the maximum Floor Space Ratio (FSR) applicable to the site at 4-6 Bligh Street Sydney in the Sydney Local Environmental Plan (SLEP) 2012, from a base FSR of 8:1 plus bonuses, to a maximum FSR of 22:1 including bonuses. This would be facilitated through a site-specific SLEP clause which would allow for additional floorspace if it is for the purpose of 'commercial premises' and 'hotel or motel accommodation'.*

*The accompanying indicative architectural scheme provides for a new mixed use hotel and commercial building with height of 55-storeys or 205 metres / RL 225.880, and FSR of 20.3:1. An additional floorspace efficiency factor is to be allowed for during the design competition which will bring the maximum FSR to 22:1.*

*The indicative architectural scheme comprises:*

- 10 storey podium, including hotel entrance lobby, commercial lift lobby, food and beverage facilities, plant, commercial offices, meeting/conference rooms, gym space, and landscaped podium with formal hotel lobby
- 37 storeys of hotel (each level including 11 rooms, with a total of 407 rooms)
- 4 levels at rooftop including hotel club lounge, function space, restaurant and bar, and publicly accessible landscaped terrace
- 4 basement levels including 17 car parking spaces, 2 loading spaces, plants, end of trip facilities and waste management facilities

The aim of the overall proposal is to introduce a contemporary building into an evolving dense urban landscape that responds to and is complementary to the heritage items in the vicinity without attempting to replicate historic features.



**Figure 4.1**  
Urban Design diagram with an indicative concept proposal for the subject site  
*Source: Architectus*

# 5.0

## ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in relation to the following impact assessment criteria, the *Sydney LEP 2012*, and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) guidelines, *Altering Heritage Assets* and *Statements of Heritage Impact*.

This section of the report provides a detailed analysis of the statutory controls applying to this site, with regard to heritage.

### 5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS

This report is limited to an assessment of the heritage impacts that the current proposal may have on adjoining heritage items. The detailed design development of the site will be subject to a separate development application process that will include a formal design competition.

Given the nature of the proposal and the heritage items located in the vicinity of the subject site, a number of potential impacts need to be considered. Specifically impacts on the setting, views to and from the heritage items, and potential physical impacts on the significant fabric of the items in the vicinity, particularly on those items located adjacent to the site, namely the Former City Mutual Assurance building (south), Former Qantas House (east) and the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel (north).

Given the existing high density urban setting, heritage items in the wider vicinity are unlikely to be adversely affected by the proposal.

The development application process will provide the opportunity for a detailed design resolution to identify, consider and develop mitigation measures to address any additional potential adverse impacts.

### 5.3 CONSIDERATION OF THE GUIDELINES OF THE NSW HERITAGE DIVISION

The NSW Heritage Office (now the Heritage Division of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage) has published a series of criteria for the assessment of heritage impact. The relevant 'questions to be answered' in the *NSW Heritage Manual* 'Statements of Heritage Impact' guidelines relating to development adjacent to a heritage item have been considered in the preparation of the following commentary; they are:

- *The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:*
- The proposal comprises a complete redevelopment of the site, enabling the overall design to respond to the existing street wall scale of Bligh Street while the tower responds to the wider urban composition of the Sydney CBD
- The proposal will not adversely affect the significance of the adjacent heritage items or those in the vicinity
- The proposed building envelope identified in the reference design package addresses the adjacent heritage items and items in the vicinity by limiting the height of the base podium to that of the adjacent buildings, and matching setbacks of the adjoining items
- Setting the proposed tower element back from the base podium footprint will minimise the visual impact of the development by relating the bulk and scale of the building to those adjoining in Bligh Street. It will allow for the retention of a comfortable pedestrian scale at street level
- Extending the lightwells from the adjacent sites into the subject site will retain and protect the contribution that these elements make to the adjacent heritage items
- Landscaping of the proposed base podium will soften the visual impact of the new building by further breaking up the bulk and scale of the building envelope

- The proposed new maximum FSR is in keeping with the desired future character for the locale – Sydney Central Business District.
- *How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?*
- *Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item?*
- *How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?*
- *How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?*
- *Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?*
- *Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?*
- *Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?*

The existing building on the subject site is a multi storey commercial building with a 3 storey base podium built across the full width of the site, and a tower setback above. A new building of a similar, albeit contemporary, design (with base podium built to the height of the existing street wall and setback tower above) on the subject site is therefore consistent with the existing and likely future character of this part of the Sydney CBD.

The subject site is located in part of the Sydney CBD that is characterised by a layered development history extending over most of the twentieth century and represented by a mix of commercial developments of a variety of types and scales including a number of multi storey high rise towers. The heritage items in the vicinity of the subject site reflect this layered development history including the very well established early twentieth century layer of zero setback built form generally at a maximum height of approximately 45m (150ft).

The former “Qantas House” building, former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building, and Sofitel Wentworth Hotel are located directly adjacent to the subject site (to the east, south and north respectively). Any proposed new building on the subject site will have an impact on the views to and from these heritage items. However the proposal should not be assessed as if it is an extension above a heritage item as the proposal is for a new building that responds to both the street level and the city wide contexts.

The indicative architectural scheme proposes to replace an existing commercial office tower and therefore should not adversely impact on the

significance of these items as it will be replacing a twentieth century architecturally designed tower form with a new built element of the same nature, albeit taller. The existing context of the heritage items is an evolving dense urban landscape, and this character will be retained.

The indicative architectural scheme proposes a building footprint that presents to Bligh Street with an approximately 10 storey infill base podium built to the street frontage and with two lightwells at the north eastern and south eastern corners of the site. A tall tower of approximately 37 storeys, with an additional 4 levels of rooftop, is proposed to be built above, setback on all sides. The proposed building envelope under this indicative scheme is consistent with the scale and height of the existing and likely future development in this part of the Sydney CBD.

Under the indicative architectural scheme the tower element is proposed to have setbacks of 8m to the west (street front), 6m to the east (rear), and 3m to the north and south (sides) from the base podium. The proposed setbacks of the tower are sufficient and satisfactory in heritage terms as they advocate the distinction between the streetscape context (base podium) and the city view context (tower).

Current City of Sydney Council and Heritage Council policies suggest that any potential future vertical extensions would be limited as the heritage listings applying to the adjacent buildings (to the north, south and east) mean that any additional development potential on top of these buildings will be considerably constrained. It would be unlikely that vertical additions to any of the adjacent buildings would be permitted in the future as the individual State Heritage Inventory forms for the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building, and the Former “Qantas House” specify that there shall be no vertical additions to these items.

Therefore the likely impact of the proposed new building on the subject site would be limited to the interfaces between the new base infill building and the adjacent historic buildings. A number of mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposal in order to minimise any potential adverse impacts on the established heritage significance of the adjacent heritage items and those in the vicinity.

Additionally, the proposed building envelope responds to the adjacent heritage items by limiting the height of the base podium (street frontage height of the building). The proposed height of the podium is comparable with that of the adjacent heritage item Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” (directly to the south), and is substantially lower than the adjacent item (Sofitel Wentworth Hotel) situated directly to the north.

By limiting the height of the base podium and setting the tower above back on all sides the proposal will retain a human/comfortable scale of contemporary built form directly adjacent to the identified heritage items that will not visually or physically overwhelm the historic structures.

The base podium also addresses the adjacent heritage items in terms of setbacks, having been designed to align to the Bligh Street elevation of the Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building to the south, and stepping in near the northern site boundary to align with the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel to the north.

The proposed tower envelope under the indicative architectural scheme is considered an appropriate response from a heritage perspective. It retains the legibility of the adjacent heritage items and will help to mitigate the dominance of the new structure over the heritage listed buildings. The reference design proposes a contemporary tower design with a multi faceted glazed façade that references the art deco design of the Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building located directly to the south.

The proposed building envelope will accommodate a tower form capable of responding to the surrounding urban complexity with its strong early twentieth century scale as well as subsequent building volumes.

The heritage items located to the south west of the subject site, namely the Former NSW Club House Building and Richard Johnson Square, are physically separated from the subject site by Bligh Street. To the south east of the subject site, the heritage item Chifley Square is physically and visually separate from the site by intervening development. The proposed development on the subject site will be partially visible from the heritage items however it will not adversely impact the established significance of these items as they will continue to retain their legibility and context as historic built form and landscaping within an evolving dense urban city.

The proposal will introduce a contemporary building into the area, contributing a new layer of development to an area characterised by its layered development history. The contemporary design is considered an appropriate response from a heritage perspective as it will ensure that this building is legible as a new element and complementary to the heritage items in the vicinity without attempting to replicate historic features.

In addition to those above, the following questions have been formulated in determining the heritage impact of changing the LEP controls for the site:

- *What are the likely consequences of the Planning Proposal?*
- *How can adverse heritage impacts be mitigated?*

It is proposed to increase the maximum FSR applicable to the subject site to 20.3:1. The likely consequence is that the subject site will be developed up to the maximum allowable new controls under the approved Planning Proposal. Although the proposed new FSR extends beyond the maximum control in the *Sydney LEP 2012*, it is in keeping with the desired future character for the site and the locality. The intention is to amend the framework for the way the subject site can be developed and ensure that any future development on the site reflects the intended future use and character of the area.

In the context of the subject site it is considered that potential impacts of a new tall development on the context and settings of heritage items in the vicinity, and in particular directly adjacent to the site, can be mitigated with the delivery of a well designed new development that responds to the surrounding built form.

The indicative architectural scheme prepared by Architectus shows that the site can be developed to the proposed new maximum FSR controls with an acceptable heritage impact by remaining consistent with the objectives of *Sydney LEP 2012* Clause 5.10, ensuring the contexts and settings of the four heritage items in the vicinity of the site are protected. The detailed design of any future development will need to be the subject of a detailed design process that will, in turn, form part of a future Development Application.

Being State Significant Development (SSD), the future redevelopment of the site will require the approval of the Minister or his delegate and will be subject to the heritage provisions of the *Sydney LEP 2012* and will be assessed accordingly.

An archaeological assessment has not been made as part of this report.

## **5.4 HERITAGE OBJECTIVES OF THE SYDNEY LEP 2012**

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable, from a heritage perspective, for the following reasons:

- Consistent with the existing and identified future character of the Sydney CBD

- Sympathetically designed to complement the established heritage significance of the adjacent heritage items
- Retains the settings and contexts of the adjacent heritage items and those in the vicinity
- No significant views to or from heritage items are impeded
- The legibility and existing significance of the heritage items are retained and protected

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be consistent with the relevant heritage objectives of the *Sydney LEP 2012*, which are:

#### **4.3 Height of buildings**

*(1) The objectives of this clause are as follows:*

*(b) to ensure appropriate height transitions between new development and heritage items and buildings in heritage conservation areas or special character areas,*

#### **5.10 Heritage conservation**

*(1) Objectives*

*The objectives of this clause are as follows:*

*(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of the City of Sydney,*

*(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*

## **5.5 CONSIDERATION OF S117 DIRECTIONS FOR HERITAGE CONSIDERATION**

The current update to Section 117 (S117) Direction 2.3 Heritage Conservation, issued under s117 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A Act) 1979* on 1 July 2009, requires the following in relation to European Heritage:

*(4) A planning proposal must contain provisions that facilitate the conservation of:*

*(a) items, places, buildings, works, relics, moveable objects or precincts of environmental heritage significance to an area, in relation to the historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic value of the item, area, object or place, identified in a study of the environmental heritage of the area,*

The potential impacts on the heritage item on the subject site and in the locality have been considered and there are no changes proposed to *Sydney LEP 2012* heritage schedule or mapping, or the compulsory heritage provisions in Clause 5.10 Heritage Conservation, as part of this Planning Proposal. It is considered that the Planning Proposal is consistent with the S117 Directions in relation to European Heritage.

# 6.0

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- The existing building at 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney is **not** listed as an item of heritage significance in any statutory instrument.
- It is located adjacent to the listed heritage items Sofitel Wentworth Hotel at 2 Bligh Street, Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building at 10 Bligh Street, and Former “Qantas House” at 1 Chifley Square, and in the vicinity of the listed heritage items Former NSW Club Building at 31 Bligh Street, Richard Johnsons Square, and Chifley Square.
- Other listed heritage items in the wider locality are separated from the subject site by intervening development/distance/roadways/buildings/public domain, and have no direct visual connection to the site.
- The proposal as identified in the indicative architectural scheme is for a new building comprising a multi storey base that responds to the existing street wall height in Bligh Street, and a well modulated tower that responds to the wider urban scale of the Sydney CBD.
- The Planning Proposal is limited to an amendment to the FSR controls currently applying to the site, with the likely outcome that the subject site will be developed up to the maximum allowable new controls under the approved Planning Proposal.
- The proposed new site specific FSR controls are in keeping with the intended future use and character of the area.
- The significance of the heritage items in the vicinity and their ability to contribute to the streetscape, will be retained.
- The proposed development does not generate any unacceptable impacts, as the contexts and settings of the four heritage items in the vicinity of the site are retained and protected.
- The proposed building envelope has been designed and sited to minimise visual dominance and respect the heritage items directly adjacent and in the vicinity, while being in keeping with the existing and intended future urban scale and character of the area.
- There are no views between the subject site and the heritage items in the vicinity that have been identified as contributing factors to the cultural heritage significance of any of these places.
- The proposed development is consistent with the heritage requirements and guidelines of the *Sydney LEP 2012*
- Being SSD, future development of the site will require the approval of the Minister or his delegate and will be subject to the heritage provisions of the *Sydney LEP 2012* and will be assessed accordingly.
- It is considered that the potential adverse heritage impacts of future development can be adequately mitigated with the delivery of a well designed new development that responds to the surrounding built form.
- The Planning Proposal is considered acceptable from a heritage perspective.

### 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The design brief for any future Development Application and design competition should advise design teams of the sensitive heritage nature of all adjacent buildings (Sofitel Wentworth Hotel at 2 Bligh Street, Former “City Mutual Life Assurance” building at 10 Bligh Street, and Former “Qantas House” at 1 Chifley Square) and the need to minimise any adverse impacts on their architectural character and streetscape presence.

- The detailed design of the interface between the new development and the adjacent heritage items at 2 Bligh Street, 10 Bligh Street, and 1 Chifley Square, should be prepared in consultation with a heritage architect, to minimise the heritage impact of the proposed works. Conservation works may be required to the facades of the adjoining items where the existing building, namely 4-6 Bligh Street, is removed.
- Photomontages should be prepared to accompany the development to allow the consent authority to assess the visual impact of the new building.

# 7.0

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ARCHIVAL SOURCES

NSW Land and Property Information, Real Property Register

City of Sydney Archives

### BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

Apperly R, Irving R, Reynolds P, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, NSW, Angus & Robertson, 2002

City of Sydney Council, *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*, Sydney, City of Sydney Council, 2012

City of Sydney, draft Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 - Central Sydney Planning Review Amendment, Sydney, City of Sydney Council, 2016

City of Sydney, *draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy 2016-2030*, Sydney, City of Sydney Council, 2016

City of Sydney Council, *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012*, Sydney, City of Sydney Council, 2012

Goad, P, Willis, J, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, 2012, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, Victoria

ICOMOS Australia, *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)*, Australia ICOMOS, 2013

Mayne-Wilson W, *Heritage Curtilages*, NSW Heritage Office and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, NSW, 1996

NSW Heritage Office and Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, *NSW Heritage Manual*, Sydney, 2001

NSW Heritage Office, *Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Guidelines*, NSW Heritage Office, 2005

### WEBSITES

Fortius Funds Management, 2016, <http://www.fortius.com.au>

National Library of Australia - Trove, <http://trove.nla.gov.au>

Nearmap, <http://maps.au.nearmap.com>

NSW Government Legislation, [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)

NSW LPI SIX Maps, [www.six.nsw.gov.au](http://www.six.nsw.gov.au)

NSW Heritage Inventory, <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/heritagesearch.aspx>

State Library of NSW - Manuscripts, Oral History & Pictures Catalogue, [www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au)