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Government Architect's Office

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Nominated Architect Peter Poulet ARN 5754

Ms Sue Weatherley
Director, Strategic Outcomes
and Development
Parramatta City Council
PO Box 32
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Sue,

**DESIGN EXCELLENCE COMPETITION PARRAMATTA
189 MACQUARIE STREET**

I am writing to you in regards to the request for waiver of a new design excellence competition for the above site.

We understand that a design excellence competition was held for the 189 Macquarie Street site in 2013 with the scheme by Chris Taylor Architects being awarded design excellence. The building is now under construction (basement excavation only). In April 2015 the Parramatta City Council CBD Planning Strategy was adopted, allowing for a significant increase to the permissible FSR and height on the site. The proponent now wishes to change the design to accommodate this increase. The proponent has requested exemption from a new design excellence competition on the basis that a competition has already been held. They have proposed an alternative process whereby the original competition jury is reconvened to consider and endorse any revised design.

In considering this matter the GA's office has reviewed the design and planning information provided to us by Parramatta City Council, the Director Generals Design Excellence Guidelines and the Parramatta Council Design Excellence Guidelines. We understand that the original competition architects remain the design architects for the project.

The Parramatta City Council CBD Planning Strategy now allows for an FSR of up to 10:1 for this site (subject to testing), plus the Design Excellence bonus. The proponent is seeking an FSR of 11.5:1 (up from 6:1), and a height increase to a maximum of 167m (up from 91.3m)

The Director Generals Design Excellence Guidelines provide the following advice in regards to post competition processes:

*"To ensure that design quality continues from the development application stage through construction drawings and into physical completion of the building the competition jury will recommend a process to monitor design integrity. Generally, this will require the designer of the winning submission be nominated as the design architect. In some cases, the Jury may recommend a Design Integrity Panel monitor design excellence. Certification **that the design is substantially the same** and retains the design excellence exhibited in the winning submission will*

be required at key project milestones, including lodgement of the DA, issue of construction certificate and at completion of the project."

In this instance the Government Architect does not approve waiver of a design excellence competition on the following grounds:

- That the extent of design changes proposed and necessitated by the scale of height and density increase represent a substantial design change;
- That the proponent is seeking additional increased yield through Design Excellence (from 10:1 to 11.5:1);
- That the potential impacts of the proposed new building envelopes on key open spaces, streets, public institutions and adjacent buildings in terms of sun, wind and SEPP 65 compliance will necessitate a new approach to the urban design of the project and the architecture of the building, as opposed to an adaptation of the existing approaches;
- That the impact on traffic and urban domain of any further proposed increase to parking requires full and integrated design analysis.

Should the proponent elect to seek this additional FSR and height a new Design Excellence Competition will be required. The GA's Office recommends that should this take place, the current architects (who we understand to be Chris Taylor Architects, the original competition winners) are given the opportunity to participate. Further we seek confirmation that they have been paid for their work to date, prior to establishing any new competition process.

Given the scale of uplift sought over the site, and the precedent this project may set, we would also recommend that PCC consider commensurate public benefit, potentially negotiated through a Voluntary Planning Agreement.

Yours sincerely,



Olivia Hyde
Director of Design Excellence

Date: 27th November, 2015