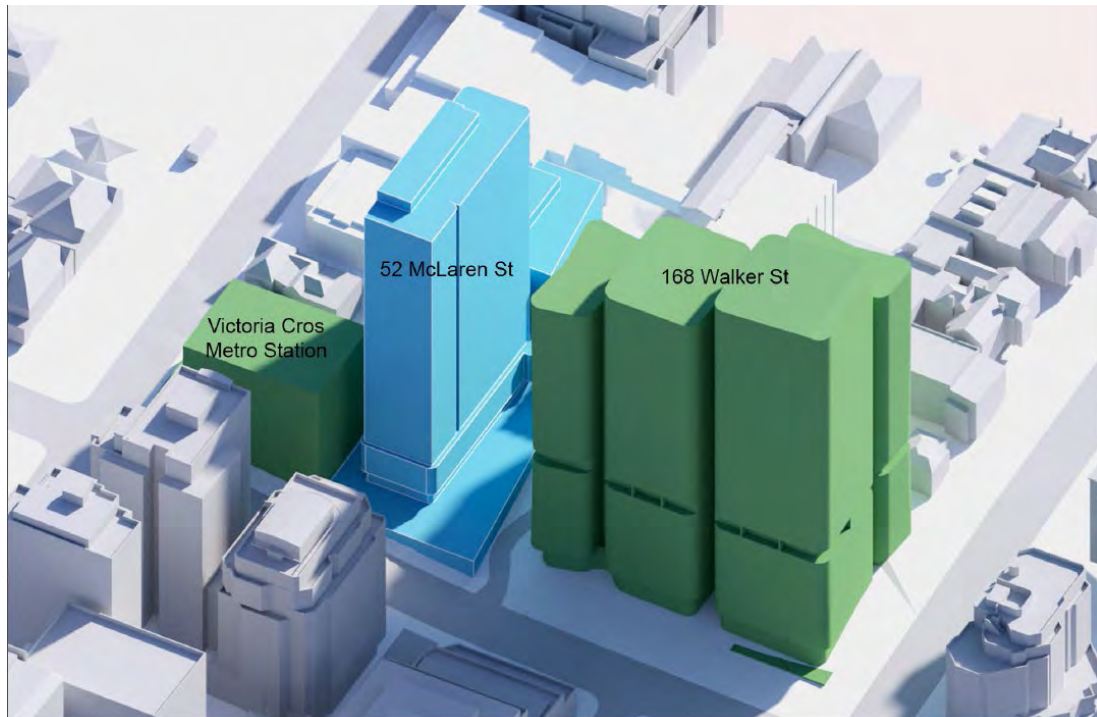


# HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

Planning Proposal



**52 McLaren Street, North Sydney**

8 AUGUST 2022

Cover Image: Graphic from the Visual Impact Analysis (Source: Virtual Ideas)

NBRS & PARTNERS Pty Ltd  
4 Glen Street  
Milsons Point  
NSW 2061 Australia

Telephone +61 2 9922 2344 - Facsimile +61 2 9922 1308

ABN: 16 002 247 565

Nominated Architects  
Andrew Duffin: NSW Reg No. 5602

This report has been prepared under the guidance of the Expert Witness Code of Conduct in the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules and the provisions relating to expert evidence

This document remains the property of NBRS & PARTNERS Pty Ltd.  
The document may only be used for the purposes for which it was produced.  
Unauthorised use of the document in any form whatsoever is prohibited.

ISSUED	REVIEW	ISSUED BY
7 July 2021	Draft for Review	S Polkinghorne
<b>20 July 2021</b>	Final Issue	S Polkinghorne
<b>28 July 2022</b>	Final Issue Updated sent as Draft for Review	C Moodie
<b>8 August 2022</b>	Final Issue	C Moodie

## CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	Background .....	4
1.2	Methodology .....	4
1.3	Site Location .....	5
1.4	Heritage Management Framework .....	5
1.5	Authorship .....	5
1.6	Limitations.....	6
1.7	Copyright .....	6
<b>2.0</b>	<b>DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Pre-European History .....	7
2.2	Development of North Sydney.....	7
2.3	History of the Subject Site And its Context .....	9
<b>3.0</b>	<b>PHYSICAL EVIDENCE .....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1	Site & Context .....	16
3.2	Existing Views.....	17
3.3	Recent Context – circa 2018 .....	18
<b>4.0</b>	<b>ESTABLISHED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE .....</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1	Heritage Status.....	19
4.2	Significance of the Conservation Areas in the vicinity .....	20
4.3	Significance of Items in the Vicinity .....	20
<b>5.0</b>	<b>THE PROPOSAL.....</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1	Project Description .....	24
<b>6.0</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT.....</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1	Introduction .....	25
6.2	Visual Impact Analysis.....	25
6.3	Evaluation Against the Civic Precinct Planning Study (CPPS) .....	35
6.4	Evaluation of the Guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division .....	38
6.5	Heritage Objectives of the <i>North Sydney LEP 2013</i> .....	39
6.6	Heritage Guidelines of the <i>North Sydney DCP 2013</i> .....	39
<b>7.0</b>	<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>40</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Street map with the subject site identified by the red dashed line. (Source: NSWLRS, SIX Maps, maps.six.nsw.gov.au) .....	5
Figure 2: Walker Street in 1897, showing the “business portion of Walker, from its intersection with Berry-street to Junction and Blue streets.” (Source: The Suburbs of Sydney – II. – North Sydney, Australian Town and Country Journal, 29 May 1897, p27).....	8
Figure 3: c1880s photograph of ‘Kedron’, likely showing members of the Palmer family sitting at the front. (Source: North Sydney Council, Stanton Library, LH REF PF533, 1181371) .....	9
Figure 4: Detail from 1892 subdivision sales poster for allotments on Miller, Walker and Ridge Streets, showing ‘Kedron’, the ‘Residence of C. Palmer, Esq.’ on McLaren Street. The footprint of the building shown on the plan did not correspond with that of the actual building. (Source: State Library of NSW, North Sydney Subdivision Plans, SP/811.1411/1892/5, c/050470056).....	10
Figure 5: ‘A fine old home in a picturesque setting’ – ‘Kedron’ in 1934, after having been transferred to Dr Erasmus Bligh. (Source: ‘ROMANCE of a WEDDING Brings Century-Old Kedron, the North Sydney Home of Dr. Erasmus Bligh and Mrs. Bligh, into the Limelight.’, Australian Women’s Weekly (1933 - 1982), 23 June 1934, 2, <a href="http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46468000">http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46468000</a> ) .....	11
Figure 6: Undated photograph of ‘Cobham House’. (Source: State Library of NSW, ‘File 015: Fairfax houses & furniture [ca 1914-1980], PXD 1491/vol. 15).....	11
Figure 7: 1943 aerial photograph, with the subject site outlined in red and shaded yellow. (Source: NSW LRS, SIX Maps, 1943 aerial imagery).....	12
Figure 8: Plan contained in Certificate of Title issued to Dr Winifred Gordon Bligh and Richard Geoffrey Bligh in September 1956, showing the extent of the ‘Cobham’ property at that time. (Source: NSW LRS, CT Vol. 7180 fol. 102).....	12
Figure 9: Plan contained in Certificate of Title issued to Dr Winifred Gordon Bligh and Richard Geoffrey Bligh in September 1963, showing the subdivision of the ‘Cobham’ property into two allotments, with Lot 2 being the subject site. (Source: NSW LRS, CT Vol. 9526 fol. 197) .....	13
Figure 10: Depiction of Georgian House Motor Inn, published the day after opening of the motel on 2 December 1964. (Source: Advertising, Sydney Morning Herald Archive, 3 December 1964, 13) .....	13
Figure 11: c1982 photograph of ‘Georgian House Retirement Centre’. (Source: North Sydney Council, Stanton Library, LH REF CPF755, 1059201) .....	14
Figure 12: August 1965 – aerial photograph showing the subject site (circled red) and ‘Kedron’/‘Cobham’ still standing. (Source: NSW Spatial Services, Historical Imagery).....	14
Figure 13: April 1978 – aerial photograph showing the subject site (circled red) and ‘Kedron’/‘Cobham’ replaced by high-rise towers. (Source: NSW Spatial Services, Historical Imagery).....	14
Figure 14 - View of the Victoria Cross Metro Station - Northern Portal (under construction) to the immediate west of the site. ....	16
Figure 15 - View of the site from directly across McLaren Street. ....	16
Figure 16 - View of the site from a lower vantage points showing it having been cleared.....	16

Figure 17 - View from the corner with Walker Street. Note the rear of the properties facing Miller Street at the top of the slope beyond the site.....	16
Figure 18 - Looking east from the hill in the Ted Mack Civic Park adjacent the North Sydney Council Chambers. This park area contributes to the open, landscaped character of the streetscape between Ridge and McLaren Streets. The tower forms of the North Sydney CBD, seen in the right hand of this image, lie to the south of the subject site.....	17
Figure 19 - View north along Miller Street showing the mature tree plantings on each side of the street. ....	17
Figure 20 - View south along Elliot Street, looking across the Rydges construction site; the trees are located along McLaren and Miller Streets.....	17
Figure 21 - View of the subject site from the southern end of Elliot Street looking south. The buildings to the right of the image are the rear of those fronting Miller Street and are in close proximity to the shared boundary with the site.....	17
Figure 22 - View from the top of Elliot Street with the subject site beyond the school pedestrian bridge. ....	18
Figure 23 - Looking south east along Miller street with the subject site lying behind the two and three storey buildings fronting Miller Street shown in the foreground.....	18
Figure 24 - View from the top of the park looking back across Miller Street towards the site. ....	18
Figure 25 – Views back towards the North Sydney CBD, again from the hilltop in the park. ....	18
Figure 26 - View of the heritage item at 255-257 Miller Street, now forming part of the Wenona School campus.....	18
Figure 27 - View of the heritage item at 243 Miller Street, adjacent the Victoria Cross metro station, northern entry.....	18
Figure 28: Excerpt from the North Sydney LEP 2013 Heritage Map, HER 002A. The subject site is marked in blue. Individual items are coloured brown, and HCAs are hatched in red.....	20
Figure 29: Simsmetal House. (Source: North Sydney Council) .....	21
Figure 30: North Sydney Council Chambers. (Source: North Sydney Council).....	21
Figure 31: North Sydney Council Chambers (including Wyllie Wing). (Source: North Sydney Council)....	22
Figure 32: Shop at 243 Miller Street. (Source: North Sydney Council) .....	22
Figure 33: House at 255-257 Miller Street. (Source: North Sydney Council).....	23
Figure 34 - Portion of the Location map with the site shaded red. This diagram also identifies the location of the Ward Street precinct immediately to the south.(Source: CPPS p5) .....	36
Figure 35 - Portion of the Land Use map with the site circled in red. (Source: CPPS p5) .....	36

## HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT FOR 52 MCLAREN STREET, NORTH SYDNEY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the standard guidelines of the NSW Heritage Division to accompany a Planning Proposal for the site at 52 McLaren Street, North Sydney.

The overarching purpose of this planning proposal is to facilitate the redevelopment of the site for a mixed use tower that is of high quality urban form, provides for public benefits in the form of a through-site link and delivers strategically important employment and residential floorspace in close proximity to existing transport networks and the future Victoria Cross metro station.

To achieve this desired outcome, three amendments to the North Sydney LEP are proposed:

- Amendment to Height of Buildings Map – Sheet HOB\_002A of *North Sydney LEP 2013*;
- Amendment to Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet FSR\_002A of *North Sydney LEP 2013*; and
- Amendment to Non-Residential Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet LCL\_002A of *North Sydney LEP 2013*.

Details of the planning proposal / reference design have been prepared by Ethos Urban, with a Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Virtual Ideas.

The subject property at 52 McLaren Street North Sydney is not listed as an item of local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the *North Sydney LEP 2013*, however it is located in the vicinity of a number of heritage items and Heritage Conservation Areas.

Accordingly, this Heritage Impact Statement reviews the proposal in terms of the relevant heritage provisions of the *North Sydney LEP 2013* and the requirements of the *North Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP) 2013*, and the Impact Assessment Criteria guidelines endorsed by the NSW Heritage Council. It is also assessed against the North Sydney Civic Precinct Planning Study (CPPS).

#### 1.2 METHODOLOGY

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out 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.

## 1.3 SITE LOCATION

The site is located on the northern side of McLaren Street, North Sydney. It is identified as Lot 2 of DP 218407 by the NSW Land Registry Services (LRS). The northern boundary of the site adjoins the southern end of Elliot Street.



Figure 1: Street map with the subject site identified by the red dashed line. (Source: NSWLRS, SIX Maps, maps.six.nsw.gov.au)

## 1.4 HERITAGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The subject property at 52 McLaren Street North Sydney is not listed as an item of local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the *North Sydney LEP 2013*, however it is located in the vicinity of a number of heritage items and Heritage Conservation Areas, including:

Item I0889	Simsmetal House 41 McLaren Street, North Sydney
Item I0902	North Sydney Council Chambers (incl fountain in park adjacent to Council Chambers) 200 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0903	North Sydney Council Chambers – Wyllie Wing 200 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0908	Shop 243 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0912	House 255-257 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0989	Wenona Girls School Group – Wenona 186 Walker Street (182 Ridge Street) North Sydney
HCA 19	McLaren Street Conservation Area
HCA 20	Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area

Other heritage listed items in the vicinity of the subject site are visually and physically separated from the site by intervening development, local topography, roadways and distance, and do not warrant assessment as part of this report.

## 1.5 AUTHORSHIP

This report was prepared by Samantha Polkinghorne, Director, with assistance from Christiane Moodie, Senior Heritage Consultant, both of **NBRS**, using research and a history written by Dr Martina Muller, Historian.

## 1.6 LIMITATIONS

This report is limited to the assessment of potential impacts on the European cultural heritage values of the site and does not include Aboriginal and Archaeological assessment. This report only addresses the relevant planning provisions that relate to heritage.

## 1.7 COPYRIGHT

Copyright of this report remains with the author, **NBRS**. Unless otherwise noted, all images are by the author.



## 2.0 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

### 2.1 PRE-EUROPEAN HISTORY

The Cammeraygal (or Gammaraigal) people are the traditional custodians of the North Sydney local government area, and one of the 29 clan groups of the Eora Nation. Historian, Dr Ian Hoskins, notes their territory 'is now thought to extend from Cremorne in the east, to Woodford Bay in the west, and probably to Middle Harbour'.<sup>1</sup> The Wallumedegal clan was also found on Sydney's north shore; their territory likely extending from Lane Cove to Parramatta.<sup>2</sup> One of the earliest mentions of the Cammeraygal clan appears in Governor Arthur Phillip's writings in 1790, in which he incorrectly characterises the clan as containing a 'chief'.<sup>3</sup>

*About the north-west of this harbour there is a tribe which is mentioned as being very powerful, either from their numbers or the abilities of their chief. The district is called Cammerra; the head of the tribe is named Cammerragal....*<sup>4</sup>

David Collins, the colony's deputy judge advocate, also described them in 1798:

*Of this last family or tribe we have heard Ben-nil-long [Woollarawarre Bennelong] and other natives speak (before we knew them ourselves) as of a very powerful people.... We afterwards found them to be by far the most numerous tribe of any within our knowledge. It so happened, that they were also the most robust and muscular, and that among them were several of the people styled Car-rah-dy and Car-rah-di-gang [clever men]....*<sup>5</sup>

The earliest radiocarbon dated material, discovered in today's Cammeray, provides evidence of Aboriginal presence in the area dating 5,800 years. The local government areas of Warringah, Willoughby, Lane Cove and North Sydney contain a combined 1,000 Aboriginal sites including middens, rock engravings, axe grinding grooves, carved trees and stone arrangements.<sup>6</sup> On Berry Island a sea creature, possibly a fish or whale, has been engraved. At Balls Head an engraving on a sandstone platform depicts a whale with a human figure, while rock paintings and hand stencils can also be found in some rock shelters in the area.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH SYDNEY

The area of North Sydney was first surveyed by Sir Thomas Mitchell in 1828, but it was not until after 1836, when a second survey was carried out, that a basic road structure of the town centre was laid out.<sup>8</sup> The structure followed the traditional 10-chain grid, with Miller and Walker Streets running north as the main streets. The survey had been carried in response to growing demand for land purchases in the area north of the harbour, with increasing ferry services providing connections to the city.

In 1838, forty-eight half-acre building allotments were offered for purchase by application, divided in three sections, and the area was formally gazetted as the Township of St Leonards. There were occasional sales of Crown lots, including some more substantial ones to the north and north-east of the St Leonards Reserve from the 1840s to the 1860s. The township developed largely as a residential area, with various cottages, terraces, villas and mansions being built on the allotments. Church buildings established during that time included St

<sup>1</sup> Ian Hoskins, *Aboriginal North Sydney*, Revised edition (North Sydney, NSW: North Sydney Council, 2019), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hoskins, 3; Arthur Phillip, 'Governor Phillip to Lord Sydney, 13 February 1790', in *Historical Records of New South Wales*, ed. Alexander Britton, vol. 1, Phillip 1783-1792 (Sydney, NSW: Charles Potter, Government Printer, 1892), 309.

<sup>3</sup> Hoskins, *Aboriginal North Sydney*, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Phillip, 'Governor Phillip to Lord Sydney, 13 February 1790', 309.

<sup>5</sup> David Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales: With Remarks on the Dispositions, Customs, Manners, &c. of the Native Inhabitants of That Country*, vol. 1 (London, UK: Printed for T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1798), 546.

<sup>6</sup> Hoskins, *Aboriginal North Sydney*, 2 and 6.

<sup>7</sup> Hoskins, 6; Sandra Bowdler, 'Balls Head: The Excavation of a Port Jackson Rock Shelter', *Records of the Australian Museum* 28, no. 7 (4 October 1971): 117–28.

<sup>8</sup> This and the following is based on Masson, L., 'North Sydney', *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2010, [https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/north\\_sydney](https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/north_sydney); Park, M., 'Milsons Point', *Dictionary of Sydney*, 2008, [https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/milsons\\_point](https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/milsons_point) (both accessed March 2018)

Thomas' in 1843 (Anglican), St Peter's in 1844 (Presbyterians), St Mary's in 1856 (Jesuit), and a Methodist church in 1863.

The Borough of St Leonards was formed in 1869 and with it the provision of utilities such as gas, water, roads, garbage collection etc. was administered by the local council. Three local boroughs, including St Leonards, Victoria and East St Leonards, amalgamated in 1890 to form the present council for which the new name 'North Sydney' was chosen.

The intersection of Miller and Mount Streets and Lane Cove Road became the commercial and civic centre of North Sydney by the mid-1880s. Banks, public buildings and shops were mainly located on Miller, Mount and Walker Streets. The Post Office, Court House and Police Station were all opened at the same time, in 1886, and the area was connected to the ferry wharf at Milsons Point by a cable tramway from Ridge Street that same year. In 1893, the railway line was extended to Milsons Point, providing another connection with the city. In 1897, the section of Walker Street between Berry and Blue Streets was described as follows:

*It is really a portion of the Lane Cove-road, a Government road, and has lately been taken over by the municipal council, with a grant of 500 to maintain it. For many years this was a favourite promenade for "doing the block" locally on Saturday afternoon and evening. People came in from miles beyond Willoughby and Gordon to shop in this quarter, and, although the Milson's Point railway now affords great facilities for shopping in Sydney, Walker-street still holds its own.<sup>9</sup>*



Figure 2: Walker Street in 1897, showing the "business portion of Walker, from its intersection with Berry-street to Junction and Blue streets." (Source: *The Suburbs of Sydney – II. – North Sydney*, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 29 May 1897, p27)

A public school was erected in Miller and Blue Streets in 1878, and by the 1910s, the North Sydney Girls' and North Sydney Boys' High Schools had been established. The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw stalling building activity due to two World Wars and a depression, with land values dropping and population levels remaining static. After World War II, despite construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932, the population actually decreased.

However, due to low land prices, various companies bought relatively inexpensive land and established their headquarters in North Sydney, including MLC Limited and AMP, and the area became known as the 'Twin City' to Sydney during the 1960s. Insurance, advertising, computing and banking businesses were now located in North Sydney, largely occupying substantial high-rise office buildings.

<sup>9</sup> *The Suburbs of Sydney – II. – North Sydney*, *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 29 May 1897, p29

## 2.3 HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

### 2.3.1 CHARLS M. PALMER'S 'KEDRON' (C1870-1934)

The subject site is located on part of the original property of Charles Mark Palmer, Esquire, and on part of Section 10 in the Town of St Leonards that had been granted to Didier Numa Joubert in 1852. Palmer's property also included land granted to William Tucker in mid-1853.<sup>10</sup> Palmer acquired the property in September and October 1868 and built a house on the site by June 1870 at the latest.<sup>11</sup>

On 23 June 1870, Charles M. Palmer's wife gave birth to a daughter at their house, 'Kedron', at what was then noted as St Leonards.<sup>12</sup> The property was also known as 'Keydron'. Charles Mark Palmer (1829-1916) had been born at Brighton, England, and studied law before embarking on a naval career.<sup>13</sup> In 1859, he quit the navy and migrated to Australia, where he joined the Bank of New South Wales and subsequently became the secretary and head manager of the bank. He retired in 1907, aged 78, after having served the bank for 48 years.<sup>14</sup> Palmer had married Wilhelma Sara Kerby in 1862, and when he died in 1916, he left three sons and four daughters from that marriage.<sup>15</sup>



Figure 3: c1880s photograph of 'Kedron', likely showing members of the Palmer family sitting at the front. (Source: North Sydney Council, Stanton Library, LH REF PF533, 1181371)

<sup>10</sup> NSW LRS, Certificate of Title (CT), Vol. 1858 fol. 136.

<sup>11</sup> NSW LRS, Primary Application (PA) 15045.

<sup>12</sup> 'Family Notices', *Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW: 1842 - 1954), 27 June 1870, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article13207479>.

<sup>13</sup> 'DEATH OF MR. C. M. PALMER', *Evening News* (Sydney, NSW: 1869 - 1931), 1 May 1916, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article115845167>.

<sup>14</sup> 'MR. CHARLES M. PALMER', *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, NSW: 1883 - 1930), 26 July 1907, 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article238068755>.

<sup>15</sup> 'DEATH OF MR. C. M. PALMER', 1; 'ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION', *New South Wales Government Gazette* (Sydney, NSW: 1832 - 1900), 7 November 1876, 4525, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article223097246>; 'Family Notices', *Sydney Mail* (NSW: 1860 - 1871), 15 March 1862, 1, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article166692861>.



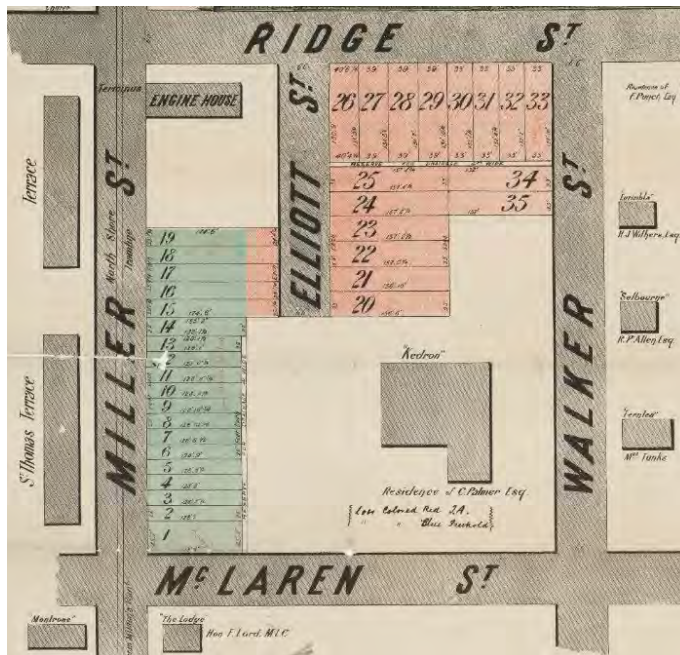


Figure 4: Detail from 1892 subdivision sales poster for allotments on Miller, Walker and Ridge Streets, showing 'Kedron', the 'Residence of C. Palmer, Esq.' on McLaren Street. The footprint of the building shown on the plan did not correspond with that of the actual building. (Source: State Library of NSW, North Sydney Subdivision Plans, SP/811.1411/1892/5, c/050470056)

After Charles M. Palmer's death in 1916, the property was transferred to his wife, Wilhelma,<sup>16</sup> who continued to live at the property with her son, William Harrington Palmer, official assignee at Sydney's Bankruptcy Court.<sup>17</sup> By that time, some of the land on Walker Street had been subdivided and sold off. After W. Harrington Palmer's death in 1929, and Wilhelma's death in 1931, aged 92,<sup>18</sup> the property was transferred to Erasmus Algernon Robert Bligh on 8 February 1934.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.3.2 BLIGH OWNERSHIP OF 'COBHAM' (1934-1963)

The *Australian Women's Weekly* of 23 June 1934 featured the property and its new owners. The article noted that Kedron owed "its Biblical name to the fact that a brook or creek once ran through the grounds, finding its way down to Careening Cove. When the Palmer boys were little lads they used to catch small crayfish there."<sup>20</sup> The creek was still said to run underground at that time, although covered by a "populous suburb" by then.

Dr Erasmus Bligh was a medical practitioner and a descendant of Admiral John Bligh, a cousin of Governor William Bligh.<sup>21</sup> Erasmus Bligh's wife was a descendant of the Rev. Hassall, curate at St John's Church in Parramatta. Their daughter Elizabeth married at 'Kedron' in June 1934.

<sup>16</sup> NSW LRS, CT Vol. 2089 fol. 183.

<sup>17</sup> 'LATE MR. W. H. PALMER', *Sun* (Sydney, NSW: 1910 - 1954), 22 November 1929, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article225148144>.

<sup>18</sup> 'OBITUARY', *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate* (NSW: 1876 - 1954), 28 November 1931, 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article135620575>.

NSW LRS, CT Vol. 2089 fol. 183.<sup>19</sup> {Citation}

<sup>20</sup> 'ROMANCE of a WEDDING Brings Century-Old Kedron, the North Sydney Home of Dr. Erasmus Bligh and Mrs. Bligh, into the Limelight', *Australian Women's Weekly* (1933 - 1982), 23 June 1934, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46468000>.

<sup>21</sup> 'ROMANCE of a WEDDING Brings Century-Old Kedron, the North Sydney Home of Dr. Erasmus Bligh and Mrs. Bligh, into the Limelight', 2.



Figure 5: 'A fine old home in a picturesque setting' – 'Kedron' in 1934, after having been transferred to Dr Erasmus Bligh. (Source: 'ROMANCE of a WEDDING Brings Century-Old Kedron, the North Sydney Home of Dr. Erasmus Bligh and Mrs. Bligh, into the Limelight.', Australian Women's Weekly (1933 - 1982), 23 June 1934, 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article46468000>)

The Blighs subsequently renamed their residence 'Cobham'.<sup>22</sup> The property is shown in the 1943 aerial photograph included below (Figure 7). The aerial photograph shows that the residence was located outside the subject site which was largely covered by mature trees at that time. By 1953, the Walker Street frontage was no longer part of Dr Bligh's property, after several earlier subdivisions (Figure 8).



Figure 6: Undated photograph of 'Cobham House'. (Source: State Library of NSW, 'File 015: Fairfax houses & furniture [ca 1914-1980], PXD 1491/vol. 15)

<sup>22</sup> 'Family Notices', Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), 18 August 1953, 7, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article18389672>.



Figure 7: 1943 aerial photograph, with the subject site outlined in red and shaded yellow. (Source: NSW LRS, SIX Maps, 1943 aerial imagery)

After the death of Erasmus Bligh in 1955,<sup>23</sup> his wife Winifred continued to live at 'Cobham' until at least August 1962, sharing ownership of the property with her son, Dr Richard Geoffrey Bligh from early 1956.<sup>24</sup>

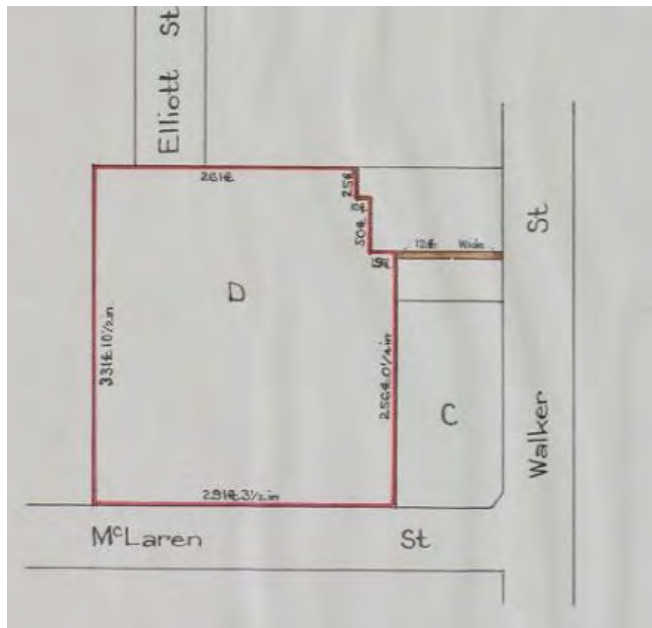


Figure 8: Plan contained in Certificate of Title issued to Dr Winifred Gordon Bligh and Richard Geoffrey Bligh in September 1956, showing the extent of the 'Cobham' property at that time. (Source: NSW LRS, CT Vol. 7180 fol. 102)

<sup>23</sup> Funerals, *Sydney Morning Herald* Archive, 7 March 1955, 18.

<sup>24</sup> NSW LRS, CT Vol. 6629 fol. 224; Inspection of Historic House being extended, *Sydney Morning Herald* Archive, 15 August 1962, 13.



The property was subdivided into two allotments in 1963, with a new Certificate of Title issued to the Blighs on 23 September 1963.<sup>25</sup> Lot 2 of the subdivision, being the subject site, was transferred to Inner City Motels on 24 October 1963.

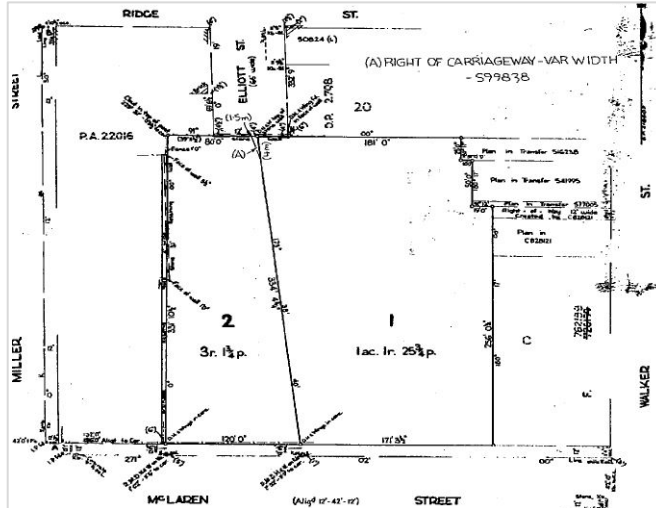


Figure 9: Plan contained in Certificate of Title issued to Dr Winifred Gordon Bligh and Richard Geoffrey Bligh in September 1963, showing the subdivision of the 'Cobham' property into two allotments, with Lot 2 being the subject site. (Source: NSW LRS, CT Vol. 9526 fol. 197)

### 2.3.3 GEORGIAN HOUSE MOTOR INN (1964-1978)

After acquisition of Lot 2 in October 1963, Inner City Motels constructed a new three storey motel at the subject site, opening on 2 December 1964.<sup>26</sup> The motel was known as 'Georgian House Motor Inn', and was advertised as a 'Sydney's Only Motor Inn', with rooms looking 'on to 100-year-old gardens' and containing the 'Bounty Room' restaurant, clearly a reference to the former owners of the site.<sup>27</sup> At that time, Georgian House was the central booking office for Town House Motels at Canberra, Wagga and Young.



Figure 10: Depiction of Georgian House Motor Inn, published the day after opening of the motel on 2 December 1964. (Source: Advertising, Sydney Morning Herald Archive, 3 December 1964, 13)

In October 1968, the property was transferred to the Mutual Life and Citizens' Insurance Co Ltd, and the motel became known as 'Noah's Georgian House Motor Inn'.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> NSW LRS, CT Vol. 9526 fol. 197

<sup>26</sup> Advertising, Sydney Morning Herald Archive, 30 October 1964.

<sup>27</sup> Advertising, Sydney Morning Herald Archive, 3 December 1964, 13.

<sup>28</sup> Advertising, Sydney Morning Herald Archive, 06 March 1974, 71.

## 2.3.4 'GEORGIAN HOUSE RETIREMENT APARTMENTS' (1978-2017)

In early 1978, the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust became the owner of the site,<sup>29</sup> and the motel became the 'Georgian House Retirement Apartments', with "80 modern Apartments set amongst giant trees in North Sydney's elegant McLaren Street."<sup>30</sup> It was later known under slightly different names, including more recently as 'Georgian Villages' and 'Georgian House Assisted Care Apartments'.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 11: c1982 photograph of 'Georgian House Retirement Centre'. (Source: North Sydney Council, Stanton Library, LH REF CPF755, 1059201)

The old 'Kedron'/'Cobham' was still standing in 1965 but was demolished in the early 1970s to make way for the new 'Noahs Northside Gardens Hotel' and Office Tower, a multi-storey development that was completed in 1973 as North Sydney's first Office/Hotel complex.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 12: August 1965 – aerial photograph showing the subject site (circled red) and 'Kedron'/'Cobham' still standing. (Source: NSW Spatial Services, Historical Imagery)

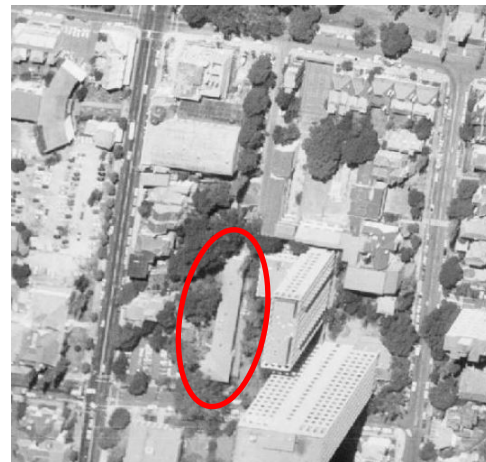


Figure 13: April 1978 – aerial photograph showing the subject site (circled red) and 'Kedron'/'Cobham' replaced by high-rise towers. (Source: NSW Spatial Services, Historical Imagery)

The aged care facility at 52 McLaren Street remained active at the site until recently. Uniting Care had acquired the adjacent 50 McLaren Street and gained approval for redevelopment of the overall site in 2011, before the site was acquired by the State Government in 2017, with

<sup>29</sup> NSW LRS, CT Vol. 9526 fol. 197

<sup>30</sup> For Active Retired People, *Sydney Morning Herald Archive*, 28 April 1979; cf. Advertising, *Sydney Morning Herald Archive*, 18 March 1978.

<sup>31</sup> 'Georgian Villages, North Sydney | The Australian Aged Care Guide', accessed 26 April 2021, <http://www.sanctuaryfarm.com.au/retirement-village/north-sydney-georgian.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Northside Gardens, *Sydney Morning Herald Archive*, 21 September 1972, 29.



plans for the site to be part of the Sydney Metro development.<sup>33</sup> Following the July 2011 approval to Uniting Care (DA 67/2011), some drainage works and demolition had commenced by 2016.<sup>34</sup> The 1963 building has since been demolished.

---

<sup>33</sup> 'Metro Derails \$91m Aged Care Plans', 29 June 2017, <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/mosman-daily/sydney-metro-derails-aged-care-plans-for-north-sydney/news-story/367c46d113010dfacdf767fab43708d>.

<sup>34</sup> North Sydney Council Reports, Item LS08, 21 March 2016, Subject: James Milson Village and Georgian House - Update

## 3.0 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

### 3.1 SITE & CONTEXT

The subject site lies to the north of the North Sydney CBD, low on the slope between Miller and Walker Streets. The surrounding character is a mix of low scale earlier development, recognized as contributing to the heritage character of North Sydney, alongside much taller tower developments. This relationship is typical of the pattern of development around the edges of the North Sydney CBD.

The site to the immediate east contained the former Rydges Hotel buildings, which have now been cleared for an approved tower redevelopment and to the south west is the northern portal of the future Victoria Cross Metro Station, currently under construction. The majority of the western boundary meets the rear of the properties that address Miller Street, including two heritage items, all of which sit above the site. To the north is the termination of Elliot Street and the location of the Wenona Girls School campus.

The subject site is currently vacant and cleared. The approved tower development on the adjacent former Rydges site in collaboration with the Northern entry portal to Victoria Cross Metro station extends the urban character of the CBD north of the McLaren Street and the Ward Street Precinct. The portion of Miller Street that lies in the vicinity of the site has a distinctive streetscape character; based on the low scale buildings along the western side of the street, the open park area sitting between the Council Chambers and the Public Library and the avenue of mature trees.



Figure 14 - View of the Victoria Cross Metro Station - Northern Portal (under construction) to the immediate west of the site.



Figure 15 - View of the site from directly across McLaren Street.



Figure 16 - View of the site from a lower vantage point showing it having been cleared.



Figure 17 - View from the corner with Walker Street. Note the rear of the properties facing Miller Street at the top of the slope beyond the site.

## 3.2 EXISTING VIEWS

The cleared site sits well below Miller Street to the west, with the following views demonstrating the mixed character of the surrounding context. The multistorey buildings of the CBD sit as a backdrop to the low scale, treed and heritage character of the Miller Street streetscape in views to the south and west.

Due to the topography of the immediate area, there are no notable views from the site at ground level; well above ground level there is likely to be views to the east.



Figure 18 - Looking east from the hill in the Ted Mack Civic Park adjacent the North Sydney Council Chambers. This park area contributes to the open, landscaped character of the streetscape between Ridge and McLaren Streets. The tower forms of the North Sydney CBD, seen in the right hand of this image, lie to the south of the subject site.



Figure 19 - View north along Miller Street showing the mature tree plantings on each side of the street.



Figure 20 - View south along Elliot Street, looking across the Rydges construction site; the trees are located along McLaren and Miller Streets.



Figure 21 - View of the subject site from the southern end of Elliot Street looking south. The buildings to the right of the image are the rear of those fronting Miller Street and are in close proximity to the shared boundary with the site.





Figure 22 - View from the top of Elliot Street with the subject site beyond the school pedestrian bridge.



Figure 23 - Looking south east along Miller street with the subject site lying behind the two and three storey buildings fronting Miller Street shown in the foreground.

### 3.3 RECENT CONTEXT – CIRCA 2018

The following images are of views across to the subject site from the area of the Council Chambers taken prior to the demolition works associated with the Rydges Hotel and Metro sites and describe the earlier existing character.

These images demonstrate that the character of the built environment in the vicinity of the subject site has included tower development in the recent past. Whilst this planning proposal does seek increased controls over future development, it does not propose to introduce new elements into views in and around the area.

These images were provided by Ethos Urban.



Figure 24 - View from the top of the park looking back across Miller Street towards the site.



Figure 25 – Views back towards the North Sydney CBD, again from the hilltop in the park.



Figure 26 - View of the heritage item at 255-257 Miller Street, now forming part of the Wenona School campus.



Figure 27 - View of the heritage item at 243 Miller Street, adjacent the Victoria Cross metro station, northern entry.

## 4.0 ESTABLISHED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 HERITAGE STATUS

The subject property at 52 McLaren Street North Sydney is not listed as an item of local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the *North Sydney LEP 2013*, however it is located in the vicinity of a number of heritage items and Heritage Conservation Areas, including:

Item I0889	Simsmetal House 41 McLaren Street, North Sydney
Item I0902	North Sydney Council Chambers (incl fountain in park adjacent to Council Chambers) 200 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0903	North Sydney Council Chambers – Wyllie Wing 200 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0908	Shop 243 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0912	House 255-257 Miller Street, North Sydney
Item I0989	Wenona Girls School Group – Wenona 186 Walker Street (182 Ridge Street) North Sydney
HCA 19	McLaren Street Conservation Area
HCA 20	Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area

Details of these items are included below.

Other heritage listed items in the vicinity of the subject site are visually and physically separated from the site by intervening development, local topography, roadways and distance.

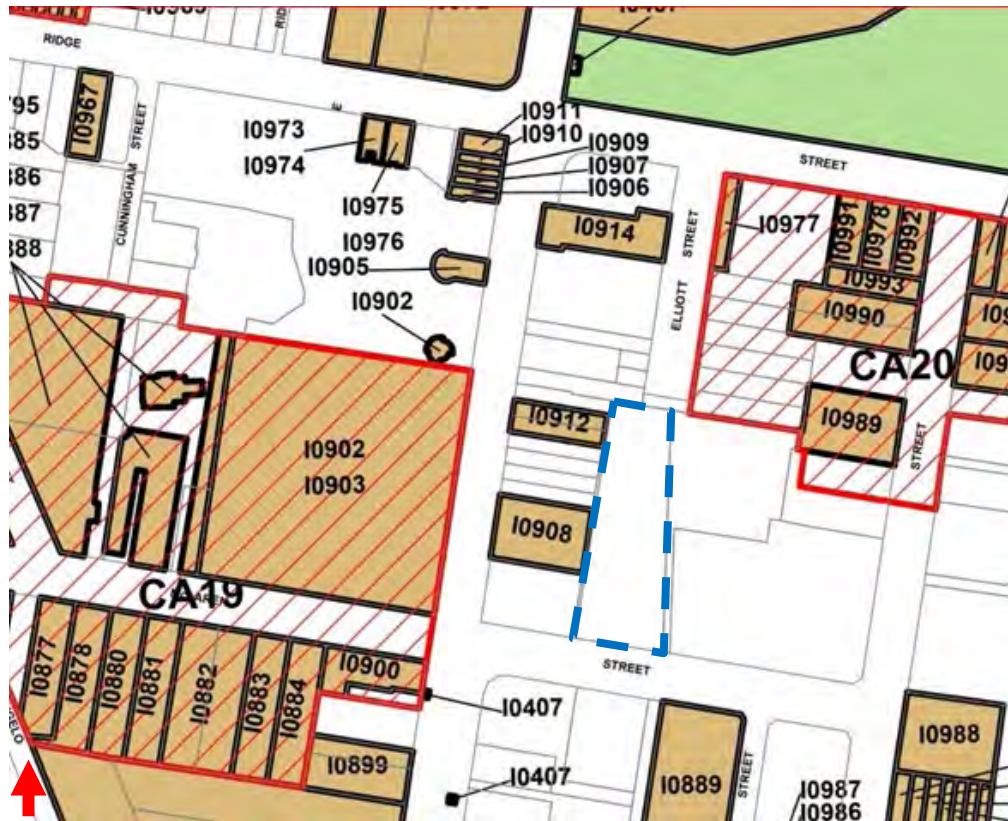


Figure 28: Excerpt from the North Sydney LEP 2013 Heritage Map, HER 002A. The subject site is marked in blue. Individual items are coloured brown, and HCAs are hatched in red.

## 4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREAS IN THE VICINITY

The following Statement of Significance for the McLaren Street Conservation Area is sourced from the North Sydney DCP:

*The McLaren Street Conservation Area is significant:*

- (a) As an area that is close to the centre of North Sydney that retains representative details from its development from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including street formation, buildings, gardens and fencing.
- (b) For its landmark qualities and associations with St Thomas' Church, North Sydney Council buildings, park and public court.

The following Statement of Significance for the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area is sourced from the North Sydney DCP:

*The Walker/Ridge Streets Conservation Area is significant: (a) For its late 19th and early 20th century character defined by the number of intact heritage items in the area.*

## 4.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF ITEMS IN THE VICINITY

The following Statement of Significance for the Simsmetal House is sourced from the NSW Heritage Database, reference number 2181326:

*A good example of a five storey, concrete framed office building in the Twentieth Century International style with strong horizontality in its elevations. An example of the work of the prominent Sydney architect, Harry Seidler. An office building of distinction which by its strong horizontality and the integration of much planting, is pleasant and attractive not only as streetscape but spatially as well.*





Figure 29: Simsmetal House.  
(Source: North Sydney Council)

The following Statement of Significance for the North Sydney Council Chambers (incl fountain in park adjacent to Council Chambers) is sourced from the NSW Heritage Database, reference number 2180851:

*Important example of the Federation Arts and Crafts style in a prominent corner location, associated with the Federation character of the McLaren Street Group (2180856). Significant association with the former Miller Street medical precinct prominent in the first half of the twentieth century as the former medical practice and hospital of Dr. Harold Selwyn Capper. Later associations from 1926 as Council Chambers and an important local public building, which has been altered extensively over its life to reflect the status of its changing ownership. The Council Chambers are significant as an example of the work of several prominent local architects including Edward Jeaffreson Jackson for the original 1903 structure, Albert Edmund Bates for the 1926 Council Chambers conversion and Rupert Villiers Minnett for the 1936 Miller Street expansion. See also listing for the adjacent Harry Seidler-designed 1977 Wyllie Wing (2181422).*



Figure 30: North Sydney Council Chambers.  
(Source: North Sydney Council)

The following Statement of Significance for the North Sydney Council Chambers – Wyllie Wing is sourced from the NSW Heritage Database, reference number 2181422:

*The Wyllie Wing is a physical record of the growth and stature of local government in North Sydney. For architectural historians, it also demonstrates an uncompromising modernist approach by one of Australia's most prominent modernist architects - Harry Seidler. It is a representative, rather than exceptional, example of a 1970s modernist style building.*



Figure 31: North Sydney Council Chambers (including Wyllie Wing). (Source: North Sydney Council)

The following Statement of Significance for the Shop at 243 Miller Street is sourced from the NSW Heritage Database, reference number 2180850:

*A very good example of a c.1897 two-storey house in the Federation Arts and Crafts style in a prominent location in area dominated by buildings of the same period. Example of the work of local architect George Matcham Pitt. Important stylistic and physical relationship to Council Chambers, and has a strong contributory association to the Federation character of the McLaren Street Group (2180856). Associated with the former Miller Street medical precinct prominent in the first half of the twentieth century as the former surgery of Drs. Bernard Newmarch, Erasmus Bligh, Richard Bligh, Harold Capper and Marjory Little.*



Figure 32: Shop at 243 Miller Street. (Source: North Sydney Council)

The following Statement of Significance for the House at 255-257 Miller Street is sourced from the NSW Heritage Database, reference number 2180849:

*Good example of c. 1912 Federation Arts and Crafts house with with high quality brickwork and decoration in a prominent location on Miller Street. It relates well to other*



*similar houses in the vicinity, such as Council Chambers and McLaren Street Group. Now part of Wenona School, it is associated with the former Miller Street medical precinct prominent in the first half of the twentieth century as the residence and surgery of Dr George Gatenby.*



*Figure 33: House at 255-257 Miller Street. (Source: North Sydney Council)*

There is no Statement of Significance for the Wenona Girls School Group – Wenona included on the NSW Heritage Database.

## 5.0 THE PROPOSAL

The following project description has been provided by Ethos Urban.

### 5.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The overarching purpose of this planning proposal is to facilitate the redevelopment of the site for a mixed use tower that is of high quality urban form, provides for public benefits in the form of a through-site link and delivers strategically important employment and residential floorspace in close proximity to existing transport networks and the future Victoria Cross metro station.

To achieve this desired outcome, three amendments to the North Sydney LEP are proposed:

- Amendment to Height of Buildings Map – Sheet HOB\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013;
- Amendment to Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet FSR\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013; and
- Amendment to Non-Residential Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet LCL\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013.

#### PROPOSED NORTH SYDNEY LEP 2013 AMENDMENTS

The North Sydney LEP 2013 sets out the planning controls that apply to the site. This Planning Proposal seeks to amend the North Sydney LEP 2013 to facilitate a better outcome for the site and support an uplift to meet the evolving role of North Sydney as a key strategic centre within Greater Sydney. The recommended amendments to the North Sydney LEP 2013 controls are outlined below.

**Table 1** Proposed North Sydney LEP 2013 Amendments

Planning Control	Existing Control	Proposed Control
Height of Building	RL 110m	RL 106.2m and RL 156m
Non-Residential Floor Space Ratio	0.5:1	1.1:1
Floor Space Ratio	Not assigned	TBC

#### PROPOSED PLANNING ENVELOPE DESCRIPTION

An indicative scheme has been prepared by GHD to inform revised planning controls for the site. The proposed envelope will both facilitate a podium and tower form, consistent with the provisions of the North Sydney DCP 2013. The scheme illustrates that the proposed amendments to the *North Sydney LEP 2013* are capable of supporting the delivery of a development with 8 and 24 storey residential buildings with a commercial podium and childcare facility at first floor. A breakdown of the scheme is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2** Planning Proposal Option

Residential North and South Towers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Tower 8 storeys + rooftop plant (RL 106.2m)</li> <li>• South Tower 24 storeys + rooftop plant (RL 156m)</li> <li>• Three basement levels, comprising 121 car parking spaces</li> <li>• Total GFA of 16,947m<sup>2</sup> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 13,487m<sup>2</sup> residential floor space</li> <li>– 2,573m<sup>2</sup> commercial floor space</li> <li>– 427m<sup>2</sup> retail floor space</li> <li>– 460m<sup>2</sup> internal and 450m<sup>2</sup> external childcare floor space</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 6.0 ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in relation to the following impact assessment criteria: the *North Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2013*, the *North Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP) 2013* and the New South Wales Heritage Office (now NSW Heritage Division) guidelines, *Altering Heritage Assets and Statements of Heritage Impact*, contained within the NSW Heritage Manual. This report also assesses the proposal against the principles identified in the Civic Precinct Planning Study, undertaken by North Sydney Council, and dated November 2020.

### 6.2 VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

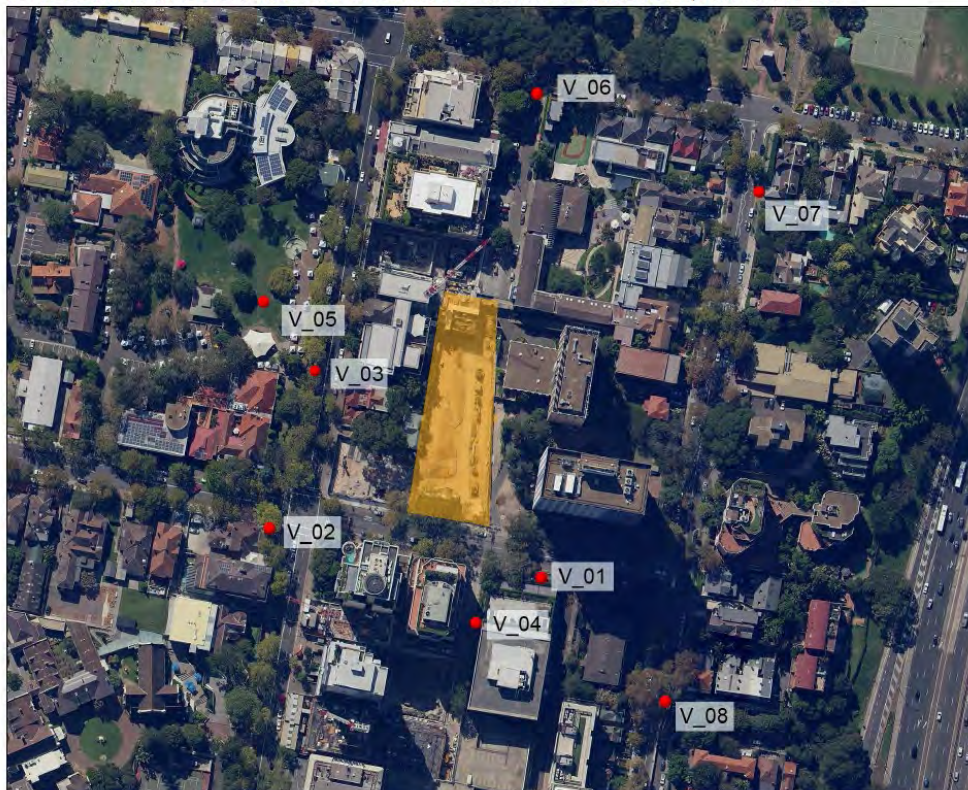
A Visual Impact Photomontage and Methodology Report was prepared by Virtual Ideas, to understand the potential visual impacts based on an envelope the size envisaged by the proposed control changes being sought. The following images have been sourced from that report and are accompanied here by Heritage commentary assessing the potential heritage impacts on views of the heritage items and conservation areas in the vicinity.

Each camera position included below provides the original image alongside the same image with approved development (in white) and the proposed planning proposal envelope (in blue) included.

The following aerial map identifies the locations from which the images were taken.

#### 4. MAP OF PHOTOGRAPHY LOCATIONS

PLAN ILLUSTRATING CAMERA LOCATIONS FOR VISUAL IMPACT PHOTOGRAPHY OF 52 MCLAREN ST, NORTH SYDNEY NSW



## 6.2.1 CAMERA POSITION 01 – MCLAREN STREET OPPOSITE THE SITE

### 5.1 CAMERA POSITION 01

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

This view demonstrates the steep nature of the slope in McLaren Street that affects the site frontage; this level also continues through at ground level across the site, well below Miller Street, and will assist in creating a through site link to Ennis Street. In the original image the location of heritage items facing onto Miller Street is marked by the red arrows. Rear views of these properties are generally not available from the public domain, with the rear of 255-257 Miller Street already being obscured by the Wenona school building that wraps around the rear of the heritage item.

Any development arising from approval of this Planning Proposal will not alter views of the rear of these properties from the south east.

Any proposed site through link will commence at this level, and as such there will be no opportunities to view the rear of the heritage properties from the public areas of any future development.

Due to the nature of the topography of the site and the character of the development lining the street, these views from McLaren Street are not included in the McLaren Street Conservation Area, and as such there is no heritage impact on the HCA.

There are no adverse heritage impacts arising from views from this location.



## 6.2.2 CAMERA POSITION 02 - CORNER MCLAREN AND MILLER STREET

### 5.2 CAMERA POSITION 02

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

The visual impact of any future development arising from this proposal will be read alongside the approved development, which in turn will be read in the context of the North Sydney CBD to the immediate south.

There will be no change to the appreciation or significance of the heritage items included in the Wenona School campus, nor or the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area.

There are no adverse heritage impacts arising from views from this location.

## 6.2.3 CAMERA POSITION 03 – STREETVIEW IN FRONT OF 243 MILLER STREET

### 5.3 CAMERA POSITION 03

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

The photomontage clearly demonstrates that a new structure at the rear of the heritage item does alter the setting of the two-storey former residence. At the same time, it does describe a setting that is already altered with the addition of existing and approved tower buildings evident in the background.

Whilst this is an adverse heritage impact, the following measures are available to mitigate the visual impact:

- Retention of the two tower forms in any future development application – this reduces the scale and avoids a solid 'wall' behind the item, also allowing sky views and sunlight through.
- Future detailed design, articulation of the form and fenestration combined with an appropriate material language in any future development can be developed, the principles for the design would include;
  - A podium form which acts as the backdrop to the item – its articulation, scale and materiality would read as secondary and recessive to the item in front.
  - The tower portion would read as separate and above, to support the podium as reading as a backdrop to the existing low scale development along Miller Street.

For this reason, the proposal has an adverse, but acceptable, heritage impact.

## 6.2.4 CAMERA POSITION 04 – LANEWAY OFF MCLAREN STREET

### 5.4 CAMERA POSITION 04

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

It should be noted that this location will generally be where the through site link will join with the through site connections envisaged as part of the Ward Street masterplan.

There are no adverse heritage impacts arising in views from this location.



## 6.2.5 CAMERA POSITION 05 – FROM TED MACK PARK

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



### Heritage Commentary:

The photomontage is similar to that at Camera Position 3. It demonstrates that new tower forms do alter views from the park. Miller Street also forms the eastern edge of the McLaren Street conservation area, so this addition would be visible as an altered visual edge to the conservation area. The panoramic image below demonstrates that the proposal (location indicated by the red arrow), whilst a new element, is not an unfamiliar one, with the precedents of the existing CBD buildings already evident in views across the conservation area. This same situation occurs to the south and the south west.



Whilst this is an adverse heritage impact, the following measures are available to mitigate the visual impact:



- The existing small-scale buildings of historic character and mature tree plantings will be retained and conserved, there will be no change to the appreciation of the character of Miller Street, the park or the McLaren Street Conservation Area
- Retention of the two tower forms in any future development application – reducing scale and allowing sky views and sunlight through.
- Future detailed design and articulation of the tower form.

For this reason, the proposal has an adverse, but acceptable, heritage impact.

## 6.2.6 CAMERA POSITION 06 – FROM ENNIS STREET

### 5.6 CAMERA POSITION 06

#### ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



#### PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

The visual impact of any future development arising from this proposal from Ennis Street and the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area will be read in the context of the North Sydney CBD backdrop.

There will be no change to the appreciation or significance of the heritage items included in the Wenona School campus, nor or the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area.

For these reasons the proposal has no adverse heritage impacts from this perspective.

## 6.2.7 CAMERA POSITION 07 – NORTHERN END OF WALKER STREET

### 5.7 CAMERA POSITION 07

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

The visual impact of any future development arising from this proposal from Walker Street will be read in the context of the North Sydney CBD backdrop and the approved adjacent developments.

There will be no change to the appreciation or significance of the heritage items included in the Wenona School campus, nor or the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area.

There are no adverse heritage impacts arising from views from this location.

## 6.2.8 CAMERA POSITION 08 – SOUTHERN END OF WALKER STREET

### 5.8 CAMERA POSITION 08

ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH



PHOTOMONTAGE OF APPROVED & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS



#### Heritage Commentary:

The visual impact of any future development arising from this proposal from the southern, and lower end of Walker Street will be read in the context of the North Sydney CBD backdrop and the approved adjacent developments.

There will be no change to the appreciation or significance of the heritage items in the vicinity nor on the Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area.

There are no adverse heritage impacts arising from views from this location.



## 6.3 EVALUATION AGAINST THE CIVIC PRECINCT PLANNING STUDY (CPPS)

The implementation of the wider Metro system was a significant driver in the preparation of the CPPS as the provision of this infrastructure will trigger accelerated development alongside changes in use and urban character. The CPPS is intended to guide development in a way which will support the retention of the desirable aspects of the character of North Sydney, an important aspect being the distinctive heritage character of the area.

The stated aims and objectives of the CPPS are as follows:

*The aim of the Civic Precinct Planning Study is to understand the impacts of new public transport infrastructure and transformations in surrounding areas and formalise an urban design framework for the future of the precinct. The study aims to establish the role of the Civic Precinct within the wider LGA context and develop a future vision. This vision and framework will then help determine any necessary changes to the area's built form and public domain and establish a criteria for any new developments. The study would also ensure that the Civic Precinct is aligned with the objectives and targets of the Greater Sydney Commission's Regional plan for Sydney<sup>35</sup>.*

**The objectives of the planning study are:**

- *To understand the community and stakeholders' visions and needs for future planning of the study area*
- *To develop a considered urban planning vision and strategy for the Civic Precinct, establishing a series of urban planning principles for the study area*
- *Achieve the objectives and actions identified in the GSC North District Plan*
- **Identify and retain the urban values of the precinct including its heritage, fine-grained structure and 'leafy' character**
- *Identify possible improvements in the public domain including pedestrian linkages, wayfinding, new public open space and improved amenity. These improvements will be consistent with the objectives and directions identified in the North Sydney CBD Public Domain Strategy (2020)*
- *Identify the existing and future 'high significance civic places' within the precinct and define their desired character*
- *Identify the appropriate density across the study area considering the existing opportunities and constraints, the location within the North Sydney LGA and current and future access to transport and public infrastructure*
- *Explore appropriate opportunities to review building heights and density within the precinct in light of the introduction of improved access to public transport*
- *Explore opportunities to deliver public benefit within, or on the periphery of, the study area as a result of redevelopment proposals*

<sup>35</sup> Civic Precinct Planning Study, Nov 2020. P.1

## 6.3.1 CONTEXT OF THE SITE IDENTIFIED IN THE CPPS

52 McLaren Street is located on the southern edge of the precinct, immediately adjacent the Northern Portal of the Victoria Cross Metro. It is also identified as lying within the 'Mixed Use' zone



Figure 34 - Portion of the Location map with the site shaded red. This diagram also identifies the location of the Ward Street precinct immediately to the south. (Source: CPPS p5)

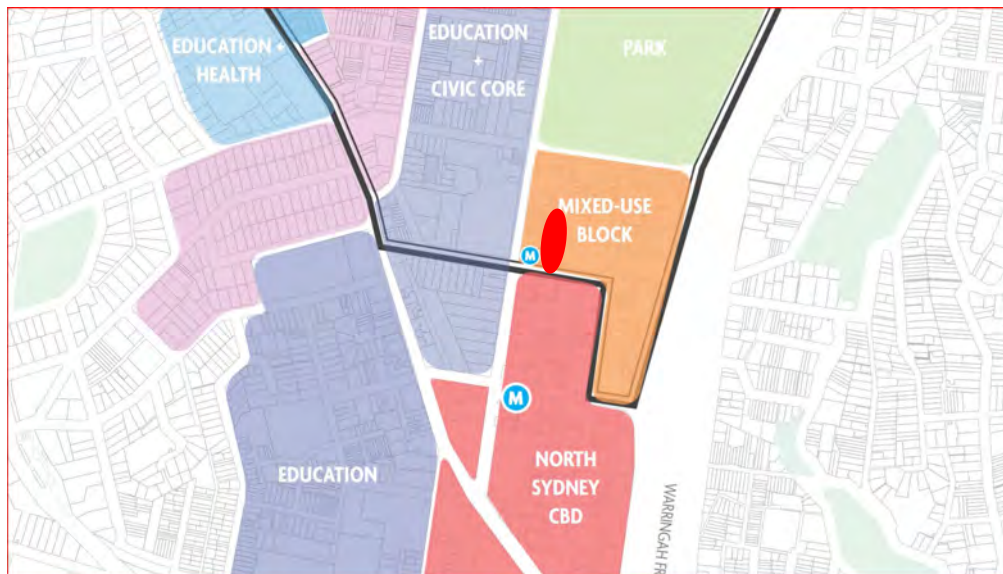


Figure 35 - Portion of the Land Use map with the site circled in red. (Source: CPPS p5)

## 6.3.2 EVALUATION AGAINST THE RELATED PRINCIPLES OF THE CPPS

From the study a series of Principles were established; based on community consultation, analysis of the planning study area and the defined vision for the Civic Precinct, these principles have been developed to guide the future planning of the precinct. The following Principles relate to Heritage:

1. *Preserve, enhance and strengthen the rich heritage of the precinct. Heritage buildings, Heritage Conservation Areas, streetscapes and contributory buildings will be protected and enhanced by restoration, adaptive reuse or, where appropriate, contemporary additions or infill development that respects the heritage character and scale*

### Comment:

There are no heritage items on the subject site, it is however in the vicinity of heritage items and

heritage conservation areas as demonstrated in Figure 28. The implementation of the proposed changes to the planning controls will result in no physical changes to any of the heritage items, nor are views of the items nor an appreciation of their architectural character from the public domain obscured.

The site has a minimal frontage to McLaren Street and is set well away from the McLaren Street Heritage Conservation Area. The properties fronting Miller Street further separate the site from the conservation area.

The proposed changes to the LEP are acceptable as whilst they do envisage new development, it is in line with the overall aims and objectives of the CPPS, and does not adversely impact the appreciation or significance of the heritage items and conservation areas in the vicinity of the site.

Future development applications would address detailed design, articulation of a building form, fenestration design alongside an appropriate material language.

2. *Maintain the small scale character and village feel of the precinct's core The Civic Precinct's low-scale urbanity and leafy streets will be retained. North Sydney Council Chambers and Offices, Ted Mack Civic Park, Stanton Library and nearby community facilities will remain at the precinct's core.*

**Comment:**

The proposed envelope does not break up the rhythm or understanding of any of the surrounding streetscapes as they are appreciated from the public domain. The appreciation of the low scale of the existing buildings and the tree plantings along Miller Street in particular, is retained.

Any future development arising from the proposed control changes will read alongside existing and approved tower development, however it will not alter the character or appreciation of the low scale buildings along Miller Street, the Council Chambers or adjacent park.

Further, the location of the site, and its steep topography, set any future development behind the Miller Street Heritage Items. Whilst this will result in a new structure at the rear of the properties, any future detailed design will address articulation, detailed fenestration design and develop an appropriate material language in relation to the retention of an appropriate setting.

In terms of impacts on the Wenona heritage items to the north east of the site, they are currently read as part of a mix of new and old campus buildings, and in views southward the proximity of the existing North Sydney CBD development is already evident.

3. *Manage growth and ensure development is of an appropriate scale and character Limit any potential significant development to the transport corridors and the transition zones (if and where appropriate) and ensure built form and scale transitions are sympathetic to the heritage items and conservation areas.*

**Comment:**

The proposed envelope sits between an approved tower development and the Northern portal of the Sydney Metro; this group is fringed by lower scale development to the north and east. This 'fringe', including a number of heritage items, provides the visual context that describes and demonstrates the heritage character of the surrounding streetscapes. This historic character is further supported by the McLaren Street heritage conservation area stretching west almost to the Pacific Highway.

The proposed two tower form in this context reduces the scale of the new development and assists in the transition between the adjacent streetscapes and the approved new developments.

6. *Increase public amenity within the precinct Public amenity within the precinct should be maximised. Existing trees and landscaped areas should be protected and additional landscaping and tree canopy promoted where possible. Capitalise on any potential public domain improvements and opportunities arising from the Victoria Cross metro station or any other future development.*

**Comment:**

The proposed changes to the controls will support the retention of the heritage items and conservation areas in the vicinity, while encouraging increased appreciation of these areas resulting from an increase in foot traffic from the Northern portal of the Metro and other future development.

## 6.4 EVALUATION OF THE GUIDELINES OF THE NSW HERITAGE DIVISION

The following assessment is based on the assessment criteria set out in the NSW Heritage Office (now Heritage Division) publication 'Statements of Heritage Impact', contained within the NSW Heritage Manual. The standard format has been adapted to suit the circumstances of this application.

*The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:*

- There are no adverse impacts to the understanding and interpretation of the significance of the heritage items or heritage conservation areas in the vicinity of the subject site from the proposed changes to the Planning Controls.

*The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on heritage significance. The reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimise impacts:*

- The addition of a future tower development in views west across the McLaren Street conservation area does alter the setting for the heritage item at 243 Miller Street, however the following measures are available to mitigate the visual impact:
  - Retention of the two tower forms in any future development application – this reduces the scale and avoids a solid 'wall' behind the item, also allowing sky views and sunlight through.
  - Future detailed design, articulation of the form and fenestration combined with an appropriate material language in any future development can be developed so as to provide a sympathetic backdrop for the building.

### 6.4.1 NEW DEVELOPEMT ADJACENT TO A HERITAGE ITEM (INCLUDING ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS AND DUAL OCCUPANCIES)

- *How is the impact of the new development of the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?*
- *Why is the new development required to be adjacent to 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 development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?*
- *Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (eg 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?*

**Comment:**



This proposal seeks to amend specific planning controls in the North Sydney LEP 2013, and as such in answering these questions only those aspects that relate to potential impacts on views of a future proposal are applicable. An assessment of those potential view impacts has been addressed in section 6.2 Visual Impact Analysis of this report.

These questions will be answered in detail as part of a future development application once a specific design has been developed and can be assessed in detail.

## 6.5 HERITAGE OBJECTIVES OF THE NORTH SYDNEY LEP 2013

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

- Retains views to and from the existing heritage items and heritage conservation areas in the vicinity.
- The distinctive streetscape character of Miller Street will be retained and conserved.
- There will be no adverse impact on the established heritage significance of the McLaren Street Conservation Area, or the nearby Walker & Ridge Streets Conservation Area

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be consistent with the relevant heritage objectives of the North Sydney LEP 2013, which are:

### *5.10 Heritage conservation*

#### *(1) Objectives*

*The objectives of this clause are as follows:*

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

## 6.6 HERITAGE GUIDELINES OF THE NORTH SYDNEY DCP 2013

The North Sydney DCP 2013 supports the North Sydney LEP 2013 by providing additional objectives and development standards for properties in the vicinity of Heritage Items and Heritage Conservation Areas.

### 6.6.1 GENERAL HERITAGE PROVISIONS

The proposal is generally consistent with the objectives of the North Sydney DCP 2013 that relate to heritage and are set out in the following DCP Sections;

#### *Section 13 – Heritage and Conservation*

##### *13.5 Heritage Items*

##### *13.6 Heritage Conservation area*

It should be noted, that any future detailed architectural design will be guided by, and assessed against, the specific DCP clauses as part of any future development application for the site.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

This planning proposal seeks to amend specific planning controls on the site at 52 McLaren Street North Sydney.

The three amendments sought to the North Sydney LEP are:

- Amendment to Height of Buildings Map – Sheet HOB\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013;
- Amendment to Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet FSR\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013; and
- Amendment to Non-Residential Floor Space Ratio Map – Sheet LCL\_002A of North Sydney LEP 2013.

There are no heritage items on the subject site, it is however in the vicinity of a number of heritage items and heritage conservation areas. The implementation of the proposed changes to the planning controls will result in no physical changes to any of the heritage items, nor are views of the items nor an appreciation of their architectural character from the public domain obscured.

The site has a minimal frontage to McLaren Street and is set well away from the McLaren Street Heritage Conservation Area. The properties fronting Miller Street further separate the site from the conservation area.

The proposed changes to the LEP are acceptable in heritage terms and whilst they do envisage new development, it is in line with the overall aims and objectives of the CPPS, and does not adversely impact the appreciation or significance of the heritage items and conservation areas in the vicinity of the site.

Future development applications would address detailed design, articulation of a building form, fenestration design alongside an appropriate material language. The option referenced in this proposal demonstrates that an acceptable solution for the site can be developed.

The proposed changes to the planning controls at 52 McLaren Street will result in a new development opportunity to the north of the North Sydney CBD, sited between the Victoria Cross Metro Station, Northern Portal entry and an approved tower building to the east. It will be read in this context.

All existing views of the heritage items in the vicinity, and the character of the McLaren Street and Walker/Ridge Streets Conservation Area will be retained and conserved.

For these reasons, the consent authority should have no hesitation, from a heritage perspective, in approving this Planning Proposal application.

Samantha Polkinghorne  
Director  
**NBRS**