Attachment B3

Draft Inventory Sheet – 124 (part of 124-128 Oxford Street) Oxford Street, Darlinghurst -Palms Hotel

	ITEM DETAILS						
Name of Item	Palms						
Other Name/s Former Name/s	Kidman's, McIlrath Chambers, Beatle Village, Scooters.						
Item type	Built						
ltem group (if known)	Commercial						
Item category (if known)	Nightclub						
Area, Group, or Collection Name							
Street number	124 (part of 124-128 Oxford Street).						
Street name	Oxford Street						
Suburb/town	Darlinghurst	Postcode	2010				
Local Government Area/s	City of Sydney						
Property description	Lot 1 DP 900900.						
Location description	Northern side of Oxford Street between						
Owner	Private						
Current use	Nightclub						
Former Use	Commercial building (grocer, various)						
Statement of significance	124 Oxford Street derives its heritage significance building has historic significance as a componen Council of Sydney's resumption and widening of The site demonstrates the long-established com occupied by commercial premises from at least t prominent grocery companies, Kidman's and Mc a gay nightclub in the late 1970s, which it remain place lays chiefly in its consistent usage as a cor and entertainment space for the LGBTIQA+ com nightclubs, the building is important evidence of socially significant as an important focus of LGB ^T present day.	t of the streetscape shaped b Oxford Street in the early twe mercial nature of the street, h the 1880s to the present, inclu- ellraths. The basement of the l ns to the present day. The sig mmercial building, and as an imunity. For its role as Palms the development of Oxford St	y the Municipal entieth century. aving been uding two building became nificance of the important social and Scooters reet, and is				
Level of Significance	State	Local 🗵]				

	DESCRIPTION
Designer	John Reid (1913 building); Paynter & Dixon (1975 building)
Builder/ maker	W Williamson; Paynter & Dixon
Physical Description	The building at 124-128 Oxford Street is a simply detailed, flat-roofed brick commercial building, originally built in 1913 but substantially modified during 1975. It is comprised of two storeys with basement level. The face brickwork on the front façade is now painted in a rainbow colour scheme (and has been since around 2013), with brickwork unpainted to the rear. A bracketed and suspended awning covers the span of the building.
	The 5-storey 1913 building on the site was damaged by fire in 1974. Paynter & Dixon were engaged to carry out the 'reinstatement of the building,' with plans indicating the upper levels were entirely removed (assumed to have been due to the extent of damage), with remnant brickwork to the lower levels of the building retained (basement and ground). The original brick piers of the building are visible when viewed from rear, and internal supports survive in the basement. Other elements of the 1913 building are still visible in the planning of the building, today including the general arrangement of the front façade with two ground floor shopfronts, and access to the upper floor and basement via stair at the northern end of the building.
	The five sets of aluminium framed windows on the first floor were installed as part of the 1975 works, alongside new aluminium framed shopfronts, double doors and shop windows. The front façade at ground level has been further modified over time consistent with its ongoing commercial use.
	At rear, original brick piers with recessed bays for ground floor windows are visible from basement to ground floor. Some original brickwork remains, in multi-coloured darker tones, distinguishable from the 1975 additions in blond brick. A number of variously sized square and rectangular windows characterise the top floor and appear to match the new windows show on the 1975 plans. A new fire door has been added to the northern end beside the 1975 entry/exit.
	The interiors of the shops appear to have been progressively modified and altered since the initial construction of the building. Internal inspection of the building was not undertaken as part of this study.

Physical condition and Archaeological potential Construction years	Good Archaeological potential not assessed. Start year 1913 Finish year c1976						
Modifications and dates	 Modifications include the following works: Alterations to ground floor shopfronts in 1945. New toilets were installed on the first floor in 1963. Unspecified alterations and a new entrance to the basement were carried out in 1964. Alterations to basement in 1964. Upgrades to mechanical ventilation in 1965. Alterations to awning in 1966. Rectification of the building after fire damage in 1975. Installation of an illuminated vertical sign in 1976. Alterations to restaurant kitchen in 1980. Reinstatement of fire damaged premises in 1984. Alterations to shopfronts of both ground floor tenancies for use a restaurant and dining room in 1985. Alterations to the basement and additional toilets in 1985 Alterations and additions to the ground floor for a sushi restaurant and adult product shop in 1998. Alterations for a second-hand bookshop in 2002. 					dining	
Further comments	Heritage inventory sheets should be regarded as a general guide only. Inventory sheets are based on information available, and often do not include the social history of sites and buildings. Inventory sheets are constantly updated by the City as further information becomes available. Further research is always recommended as part of preparation of development proposals for heritage items and is necessary in preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Conservation Management Plans, so that the significance of heritage items can be fully assessed prior to submitting development applications.						

	HISTORY
Historical notes	Sydney is the traditional land of the Gadigal People. The area around Sydney was inhabited by the Gadigal People for thousands of years prior to European settlement, with their social, economic and spiritual structures supported by the plentiful natural resources of the area. Hunting, fishing and camping grounds were established and utilised around the harbour, with archaeological and other physical evidence of these uses surviving to the present day. The thoroughfare now known as Oxford Street follows an Aboriginal track ('muru') which led to the southern headland of Sydney Harbour. Despite the destructive impacts of European settlement, Gadigal culture and connection to the land has survived to the present day.
	Prior to the construction of the current building and its immediate predecessor, the site had been occupied by commercial buildings from at least 1855 according to available maps. It is likely the site was first built upon around this time, following the crown grant of the surrounding acre of land to William Baker in 1853. In 1883 the immediate predecessor of the current building was constructed for Mr James Kidman, one of the state's most well-known grocers and a household name in the period. This was the four-storey building, designed by a "Mr Lewis," later shown in pre-1910 photographs as McIIrath's Chambers. Upon its opening the building was remarked as a "very lofty and handsome one, with the front in the Italian style." Its address was recorded as 152 Oxford Street, prior to the renumbering of the street in the early twentieth century. It would appear Kidman also owned the adjoining premises at No. 150 described as his "old place of business."
	Following the death of James Kidman and the sale of his estate in 1899, the former 152 Oxford Street remained vacant for around two years before its acquisition by another prominent grocer, Hugh McIlrath. McIlrath had established his premises occupying Kidman's four-storey building by c1901, and purchased the property by March 1902. The first Sands directory entry for McIlrath Grocers is in 1902, confirming they occupied the premises by late 1901. The neighbouring site No. 150 was occupied by a provision merchant, John W Smith from 1900, replaced by Douglass Bros provision merchants in 1902. McIlraths expanded into the neighbouring site by 1908. They had several stores across Sydney and its suburbs, including another nearby on Oxford Street in Paddington.
	As a result of the substantial congestion of Oxford Street by the early twentieth century, proposals for its widening came to the fore. Architect John Barlow and Lord Mayor Allen Taylor were among those lobbying for the change. Coordination with the State Government allowed the City Council to gain increase powers of resumption, and following a Council delegation to the government in February 1908, a Royal Commission for the Improvement of Sydney and its Suburbs was appointed. It recommended the widening of Oxford Street from Liverpool Street to Paddington Town Hall. The process of resuming the northern side of Oxford Street between Hyde Park and Taylor Square began in January 1909 and included the subject site. Buildings were demolished and replaced with new structures further setback, several of which were designed by the Council's architectural staff, beginning in in 1910 and was largely complete by 1914. Footpath widening and removal of verandahs on the southern side of the street followed shortly after.
	McIlraths Ltd acquired the land comprising 150-152 Oxford Street back from the Council following the demolition and widening works in the area in late 1911. Plans for a new six-storey commercial premises for McIlrath's were designed by Architect John Reid and approved in June 1913, constructed shortly thereafter. Plans and photographs suggest the building was partially rather than fully demolished; drawings show existing walls depicted differently to new walls, and photographs show the truncated McIlrath's painted sign on the south (south-east) elevation of the building indicating this wall was partially retained.
	John Reid was a prominent Sydney architect, who was born in Scotland and emigrated to Australia in 1883. Reid completed his architectural training under George Allen Mansfield, initially employed as a clerk of works but later commencing practice as an architect in 1901. Reid completed a variety of significant buildings in Sydney and surrounds including residences, commercial premises, and churches. In 1914 Reid's son Frederick joined him as a partner in the practice until John's death in 1936.



(now 'Paynter Dixon') continues to offer building services to a wide range of sectors in the

present day.
Upon the reopening of the building, the basement area operated as a restaurant (name of business not known) and the upper floors were used to sell women's clothing, accessories and soft goods by Mr R H Cooper. In 1976 part of the building was in use as a coffee lounge (most likely ground floor), No. 126 was being used as an interior decorator shop, and another part of the building was being used a billiard club.
The gay venue of Palms opened circa 1977. In this year, an application was lodged for the erection of a portable stage at basement level, supporting this opening date. Palms was an underground cabaret venue which hosted the popular 'Cabaret Conspiracy' radical political drag show by c1979, celebrating sexual and gender diversity. The show was established by Johnny Allen, a local Sydney resident who had been inspired by the gay and cabaret scenes in San Francisco alongside the punk and political movements in New York. The show received acclaim from a variety of news outlets including the Daily Mirror, Sun Herald, Melbourne Age and Sydney Shout. The venue became known as a safe and supportive environment for those rejecting the gender and sexual norms of the period.
The street level shops appear to have been occupied by a seller of clothing and jewellery in early 1978, then a milk bar and takeaway shop later in the year. Another fire plagued the building in 1984, leading to a further application for reinstatement of the fire damaged premises to continue as "refreshment rooms." It is unclear which sections of the building were affected. Shortly after reinstatement, TGD Doung established a restaurant and dining room in the ground floor tenancies. Prominent photographer William Yang occupied office space in 126 Oxford Street in 1985.
By 1988, Palms had closed and a new bar was occupying the basement level of No. 124, trading as Scooters Bar and Diner. An application for change of use from this year described the use of the basement as an "amusement centre." The change in name resulted from a changed in ownership, but the place remained a nightclub with a restaurant. The opening of Scooters coincided with the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which led to the devastating loss of life of many members of the community, and solidified Oxford Street as an important place of gathering and belonging for the gay community. Public fear, slander and hysteria surrounding the HIV/AIDS epidemic was, however, often directed at the community on Oxford Street making it unsafe, which manifested in violent gay bashings and other crimes against the community. During the late 1980s and early 1990s party drugs also proliferated in the Oxford Street Scene, but Scooters emerged as a safer and more conservative, 'uncool' but endearing venue for those uninterested in these substances. Scooters closed around 1994.
The club was reopened as 'Palms' with new owners John Innes, Peter Inwood and Kevin Du Val in 2000. The place operated as a basement nightclub but did not have a restaurant. As a gay-owned bar, it aimed to be inclusive and welcoming to women as well as gay men, unlike other clubs on the street at the time which did not allow women in. The ethos of the club was to honour the gay legacy on Oxford Street as the area became increasingly gentrified and commercialised. In 2018, it was noted that Palms was the only gay owned and operated venue on Oxford Street.

THEMES							
National historical theme	State historical theme	Local theme					
3. Developing local, regional and national economies	Commerce	Activities relating to buying, selling and exchanging goods and services					
4. Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	Activities associated with creating, planning and managing urban functions, landscapes and lifestyles in towns, suburbs and villages					
8. Developing Australia's cultural life	Leisure	Activities associated with recreation and relaxation					

Historic significance SHR criteria (a)	APPLICATION OF CRITERIA 124 Oxford Street is of historical significance as evidence of the demolition, widening and reconstruction of the built form along the north side of Oxford Street from 1909 to 1914 by the Municipal Council of Sydney. It forms part of a streetscape on the northern side of the street with consistent setbacks and a similar scale of built form, illustrating the substantial city planning reorganisation and unification that took place within the period. The site also demonstrates the long-established commercial nature of the street, beginning with retail and commerce in the nineteenth century, evolving into retail and entertainment offerings to the present day. The site has been occupied by two prominent grocery stores, Kidman's and McIIraths, before becoming a gay nightclub in the late 1970s which it remains to the present day. For its role as Palms and Scooters, the building is important evidence of the development of Oxford Street as an important focus of LGBTIQA+ commercial and social activity from the end of the 1970s. 124 Oxford Street meets Criterion A at a local level.
Historical association SHR criteria (b)	The building at 124 Oxford Street was associated with John Reid who designed the building constructed in 1913 (incorporating elements of the 1883 structure), a prominent architect who completed a range of residential and commercial commissions in Sydney and surrounds. However, the earlier building has been substantially modified by the removal of four of its floors and the remodelling of its front façade by Paynter and Dixon in 1975 following fire damage to the building. As a result, the building does not have strong associations with either John Reid or Paynter and Dixon. 124 Oxford Street does not meet Criterion B.
Aesthetic / creative / technical achievement SHR criteria (c) Social, cultural, and spiritual SHR criteria (d)	As a 1913 building (incorporating elements of the 1883 structure) extensively modified in 1975 due to fire damage, the exteriors and interiors of the building exhibit little aesthetic significance. Whilst some elements of the earlier building remain legible, including most of the rear elevation, these are simply designed and utilitarian consistent with their function. 124 Oxford Street does not meet Criterion C. 124 Oxford Street has been associated with Sydney's LGBTIQA+ community, particularly the gay male section, since the opening of Palms Nightclub circa 1977. The place is most well- known for its initial operation as Palms (c1977-c1988) which was revived in 2000 and continues to the present day, though it remained a gay venue in the intervening period as Scooters Bar and Restaurant in the 1980s-1990s.
Research potential SHR criteria (e)	124 Oxford Street does not have substantial technical or research significance as an extensively modified building with layers dating to 1883, 1913 and 1975. None of the layers are known to have particular technical or research significance, though they could yield some limited information about the evolution of the building over time. 124 Oxford Street does not meet Criterion E.
Rare SHR criteria (f)	The building at 124 Oxford Street does not have particular rarity value as it is one of many extensively modified, layered buildings in the Sydney Metropolitan area. However, the site of 124 Oxford Street is a rare example of a LGBT nightclub that has operated almost continuously since the late 1970s. 124 Oxford Street meets Criterion F at a local level.
Representative SHR criteria (g)	 124 Oxford Street does not have representative value as a 1913 building, incorporating elements of the earlier 1883 structure, which was substantially modified in 1975. 124 Oxford Street does not meet Criterion G.
Integrity	The building has been subjected to various modifications and has not retained a high level of integrity.

HERITAGE LISTINGS					
Heritage listing/s	Oxford Street Heritage Conservation Area, Item C17, Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012				

	INFORMATION SOURCES					
Туре	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository		
Drawn	Paynter & Dixon	Building Application 312/75	1975	City of Sydney Archives		
Drawn	John Reid	Building Application 0408/13	1913	City of Sydney Archives		
Written	Dominique Pezzutto	'The sexual politics of clubbing: a feminist corporeal analysis of Palms, Oxford Street, Sydney Australia'	2019	University of Wollongong Honours Theses		
Written		City of Sydney Building Applications	Various	City of Sydney Archives		
Written		Certificates of title 2382-220 and 1514-165	Various	Land Registry NSW Historical Land Records Viewer at https://hlrv.nswlrs.com.au/		
Written		'James Kidman,' <i>Evening News,</i> 20 December 1895, Page 2.	1895	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/108885478		
Written		'Mr Kidman's New Store,' <i>Evenings</i> <i>News,</i> 8 May 1883, Page 3.	1883	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/111026694		
Written		'Mr Jas Kidman's New Establishment, Oxford Street,' <i>The Sydney</i> Daily Telegraph, 5	1883	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/238490632		

		May 1883,		
Written		Page 7. 'James Kidman's Estate,' <i>Evening News,</i> 16 May 1899, Page 7.	1899	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/113278996
Written			1918	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/14578786
Written	Anne Higham and Dr Noni Boyd for Australian Institute of Architects		2014	Australian Institute of Architects
Written	Hugh Liney and Frank Cotterell	Rock'n'roll Walk of Shame and Fame: Oxford Street	2020	https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/history/rock-and-roll-walks- fame-shame
Written		['] Catholic Women's Association,' <i>The Catholic</i> <i>Press,</i> 23 July 1914, Page 20.	1914	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/104383288
Written		'Catholic Women's Association,' <i>The Catholic Press</i> , 3 August 1916, Page 18.	1916	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/105185132
Written		'Comforts Funds,' <i>The</i> <i>Sydney</i> <i>Morning Herald,</i> 26 Feb 1916, Page 20.	1916	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/28782619
Written		'The Jewish Youth Theatre League,' <i>Sydney</i> <i>Morning Herald,</i> 20 March 1937, Page 10	1937	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/27986265
Written			1954	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/262674392

Written		Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales, 'Theatres and Public Halls Act, 1908, as amended – proclamation,' 26 June 1964, Page 2007.	1964	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/220381800
Written		'Kerry Yates joins Fan Club for the Beatles,' <i>The Australian</i> <i>Women's</i> <i>Weekly,</i> 1 April 1964, Page 7- 11.	1964	https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/55472130/5839937
	Paynter Dixon	Paynter Dixon – History	2022	https://www.paynterdixon.com.au/company/history/

	RECOMMENDATIONS
Recommendations	The property at 124-128 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst should be listed as a local heritage item in Schedule 5 of Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012.
	The following actions are recommended:
	 Surviving historic fabric, such as the rear elevation with expressed piers, surviving external walls, structural supports in the basement, and other interior or exterior features dating to the 1883 or 1913 phases, should be retained and conserved in any future development. The surviving c1913 plan of the building, with two ground floor shopfronts and entries
	to basement and first floor at northern end, should be retained and conserved in any future development.
	 All conservation, adaptive reuse and new works should be undertaken in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter).
	 The building has potential for adaptive reuse and sympathetic change because of the amount of change that has taken place internally and externally (to the front façade in particular).
	 The primary significance of the place lays in its continued use as a commercial premises for 140 years and for its strong links to the LGBTIQA+ community for the last five decades. The continued use of the place for commercial business alongside a nightclub catering to the gay community is the most appropriate option, and should be supported and encouraged.
	 Upper storey additions could be supportable given that this site has undergone extensive modification, and that it previously accommodated additional levels above the first floor. Any upper storey additions should, however, be considerate of the established scale of the existing streetscape and the significant heritage buildings which comprise the remainder of the block.

 Any future alterations or additions could take cues from and reinterpret the materiality and design of the 1883 and 1913 buildings on the site, which are well documented in archival drawings and photographs of the site.

	SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION							
Name of study or report	Oxford Street LGBTIQA+ Heritage Study. City Government Area, NSW.	Year of study or report	2023					
Item number in study or report	N/A							
Author of study or report	Tanner Kibble Denton Architects Pty Ltd.							
Inspected by	External inspection by TKD Architects.							
NSW Heritage Manual guidelines used?	Yes 🖂		No					
This form completed by	Roy Lumby, Olivia Turner	Date	April 2023					

IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption	mage captionCorner of Oxford and Bourke Streets, Taylor Square Darlinghurst, in 1910, showing the 1883 building as extant. (City of Sydney Demolition Books, Unique ID A-00039118)				
Image year	1910	Image by		Image copyright holder	City of Sydney



IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption	Corner of Oxford and Bourke Streets in 1914 after the rebuilding works had commenced. The truncated 'McIlraths' sign indicates that at least this south-eastern wall of the building was partially retained during demolition and rebuilding.				
Image year	1914	Image by		Image copyright holder	State Library of New South Wales



IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption				cIlraths Chambers to es, Unique ID A-000	
Image year	1961	Image by		Image copyright holder	City of Sydney



		IMAGES –	1 per page		
Image caption	Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, showing the McIlrath's building (1913) continuing to advertise the grocer on the south-eastern wall of No. 124-128 Oxford Street. (Australian National University: Institutional Repository identifier N417-655-159 at https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/252672)				
Image year	c1950	Image by	Tooth & Co	Image copyright holder	Australian National University



IMAGES – 1 per page						
Image caption			reet, then known as 'B shed in 1964, SLNSW			
lmage year	1964	Image by	David Cumming	Image copyright holder	State Library of New South Wales	



IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption		howing 124-128 O ue ID A-00014228)	xford Street to far rig)	ht of image. (City of	Sydney Reference
Image year	1985	Image by		Image copyright holder	City of Sydney



IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption	Promotional poster for Cabaret Conspiracy at Palms Cabaret, 124 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. (<i>The sexual politics of clubbing: a feminist corporeal analysis of Palms, Oxford Street, Sydney,</i> University of Wollongong Honours Thesis by Dominique Pezzutto, 2019)				
Image year	c1979	Image by	Johnny Allen, via Dominique Pezzutto	Image copyright holder	Johnny Allen



SOME QUOTES FROM THE PRESS

The only rule at Cabaret Conspiracy is that there are no rules.
 Daily Mirror, June

There are punks and spunks, hippics, has-beens, drag-queens, suffies, trendies, transvestites ... but don't get scared off.

There are mothers and kids and ordinary people like us as well

There are more and more people coming every week. Obviously Sydney has needed a verse like this for a long time.... Up until now, performers had nowhere to learn their trade. Their artistic teething was done in Central Railway turnel or in some dismal hotel back room.

There's so much Aussie talent - at last there's somewhere to display it!

Sun Herald, April.

Sydney's livliest alternative theatre group

58 Riley St. • P.O. Box 204 • Darlinghurst 2010

- National Times, October.

... off the besten trock, and I do mean off (in a glorious way) truly alternative entertainment.

- Campaing, October.

In these days of bacoming glazed of eye and mind before the tube, we forget that there are real live people out there with great talent.

- Melbourne Age, August.

If you haven't yet caught up with Sydney in the seventies and are nervous about the prospects of the eighties, get along to where members of the Caboret Conspiracy are playing.

A MEMBER OF THEATRE CO-ALITION Tel

They won't reassure you, but they'll sure as hell entertain you.

- Sydney Shout, August.

IMAGES – 1 per page						
Image caption	ge caption Advertisement for Doctor White at Palms Cabaret, 124 Oxford Street Darlinghurst. (<i>The sexual politics of clubbing: a feminist corporeal analysis of Palms, Oxford Street, Sydney,</i> University of Wollongong Honours Thesis by Dominique Pezzutto, 2019)					
Image year	c1979	Image by	Johnny Allen, via Dominique Pezzutto	Image copyright holder	Johnny Allen	



IMAGES – 1 per page						
Image caption	124-128 Oxford	Street in 2022.				
Image year	2022	Image by	Olivia Turner	Image copyright holder	TKD Architects	



IMAGES – 1 per page						
Image caption	Detail image of t	the entry to Palms	at 124 Oxford Street	in 2023.		
Image year	2023	Image by	Roy Lumby	Image copyright holder	TKD Architects	



IMAGES – 1 per page					
Image caption	Rear elevation of 124-128 Oxford Street in 2023. Piers in differing brickwork indicate the survival of the 1913 structure within the 1975 reinstatement works to the building after fire.				
Image year	2023	Image by	Roy Lumby	Image copyright holder	TKD Architects

