

ADAMSTOWN RSL & COMMUNITY CLUB

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

ADAMSTOWN RSL MEMORIAL HALL (FORMER)

278 BRUNKER ROAD, ADAMSTOWN

(LOT 2, DP 1002163, HERITAGE ITEM I6)

This statement forms part of the Statement of Environmental Effects for

ADAMSTOWN RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS

53 DATE ST (Lot 7 DP 668223)

55 & 57 DATE STREET (Lots A & B, DP 362716)

282 BRUNKER ROAD (Lot 1, DP 1002163)

59 DATE STREET (Lot 38 Section A DP 10602)

PROJECT NUMBER: 11.003

31 JULY 2012

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Design Partnership has been engaged by Adamstown RSL & Community Club to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact to accompany the Statement of Environmental Effects and Development Application for the proposed Adamstown residential apartments located at the intersection of Date Street and Victoria Street, Adamstown. An aerial photograph showing indicative boundaries of existing and proposed development is included as **Attachment 1**.

1.1 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall at Lot 2, DP 1002163 is listed as heritage item I6 in Newcastle LEP 2012. It meets the state heritage criteria for historical, aesthetic and social significance, and is identified as being of local significance. The statement of significance on the NSW Heritage Register states that:

The item is historically significant of the civic history of Adamstown and as [a] place of social importance associated with Memorial Halls in the early 20th century. The building has been sensitively adapted for use as a veterinary surgery. The front façade has been carefully restored under the guidance of a local heritage architect and this adds to its heritage significance and its contribution to the streetscape.

The foundation stones of the Memorial Hall were laid in 1928; the building itself was constructed in 1942. The building was sold in 2004 and converted into a veterinary surgery, which opened in 2007. Photographs of the facade before and after the conversion are included as **Attachments 2 and 3**.

The Heritage Register states that the conversion was supervised by a local heritage architect. It appears that the heritage restoration primarily involved works to the facade: replacement colonial style windows and modern glass doors to the exterior, cleaning of the facade, repainting of masonry, and repointing of brickwork. The interior and rear of the building have been converted in a modern style suitable to its use as a veterinary surgery. Consequently, the heritage significance of the building extends no further than the streetscape. A photograph of the visible gap between the facade and the rest of the building is included as **Attachment 4**.

1.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is the construction of 93 residential units and associated car parking facilities over six (6) levels (including basement parking levels). A Statement of Heritage Impact is deemed to be necessary for this development due to its location in the vicinity of the former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall. An aerial photograph showing the location of the subject sites is included as **Attachment 1**.

2.0 IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The biggest potential impact of the proposed development on the former RSL Memorial Hall is that the heritage item will be visually dominated by the new development. However, it is important to look at the site in its context.

Brunker Road generally follows the ridgeline, so the subject land has a gentle slope to the west, allowing for more storeys at the rear than at the street. The heritage item is one storey at the front, and two at the rear. The adjacent retail/commercial buildings are two storeys at the street and three storeys at the rear. The adjacent Adamstown Club is two storeys at the street and four storeys at the rear. Directly opposite the heritage item is a takeaway food outlet which presents to the street as a two-storey building, though it appears there is no usable space in the upper storey. This building is part of a modern retail plaza development arranged around a central car park.

The former Memorial Hall is already the shortest building in the vicinity, and yet the restoration works to the facade ensure that it stands out amongst the more modern surrounding development. A photograph of the building in its streetscape context is included as **Attachment 5**.

The NSW Heritage Branch sets out a number of questions to be answered for each type of development. The questions for new development adjacent to a heritage item are addressed below. The Heritage Branch specifies that a conservation plan is the minimum supporting documentation for this type of development. However, it is considered that this development is not adjacent (i.e. adjoining) a heritage item, but is in the vicinity of a heritage item, located to the rear and downslope from the heritage item. Consequently, a conservation plan for the heritage item in question is not deemed necessary.

How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?

A combination of boundary setbacks and the sloping nature of the site will minimise the impact of the new development on the former RSL Memorial Hall. The eastern setback of the development will be 10 metres, including an access laneway. The highest point of the proposed development – which will be approximately 22 metres from the boundary shared with the heritage item – will be approximately 3 metres taller than the rear of the existing Adamstown Club. A photograph illustrating the existing building heights is included as **Attachment 6**.

Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item?

The Lower Hunter Regional Strategy identifies Brunker Road as the Adamstown Renewal Corridor, an area which presents an opportunity for economic renewal. The site of the proposed development is within Precinct 2 of the Adamstown Renewal Corridor, which is to have a mixed use focus, and has a target of providing 300 new dwellings. The proposed development will provide a substantial proportion of those new dwellings. The majority of the subject site is currently used as a car park; parking facilities will be incorporated within the new development, which is intended to provide a more efficient use of the subject land.

How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?

There is no specific mention of curtilage in the heritage listing for the former RSL Memorial Hall; it must, then, have a lot boundary curtilage. The heritage significance of the item is generally confined to the Brunker Road frontage; this part of the building is approximately 50 metres away from the unit development. This ensures a significant distance between the former Memorial Hall and the proposed development, ensuring that impacts on the heritage item are minimised.

How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?

Due to the former Memorial Hall's location at the top of the ridgeline and the setbacks of the proposed development, it is unlikely that the proposed development will be visible when viewing the heritage item from Brunker Road. The view of the rear of the former Memorial Hall from Date Street will be affected. However, as the rear of the former Memorial Hall has been renovated in a modern commercial style, it is not recognisable as a heritage item from this aspect.

The easterly view from the heritage item to Brunker Road will be unaffected by the proposed development. The westerly view towards Date Street will be affected, as the proposed development will be visible from the rear windows. However, this is not considered to significantly detract from the heritage significance of the former RSL Memorial Hall.

Is the development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?

There are no known archaeological deposits on the proposed development site.

Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?

The proposed development is designed to be sympathetic to its surroundings, with setbacks at ground level and increased setbacks to upper levels. At the eastern boundary, which is shared with the lot on which the former Memorial Hall is located, the bottom two storeys of the proposed development will have a 10 metre setback, with higher storeys set back a further 5 metres. This, combined with the 21-metre parking area on the rear portion of the former Memorial Hall lot, will result in an adequate distance between the two buildings and minimise impacts on the heritage item.

Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?

The proposed development will not visually dominate the former RSL Memorial Hall. Based on Bruncker Road's position at the top of a ridgeline, and existing building heights in the vicinity, it is unlikely that the proposed development will be visible from Bruncker Road when observing the heritage item in its streetscape context.

As mentioned above, the heritage item is presently surrounded by modern retail and commercial development, and is not dominated by these buildings. The frontage of the former RSL Memorial Hall is visually striking enough that even if a small portion of the proposed development were visible from Bruncker Road, this would not detract from the heritage significance of the building.

Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?

The primary heritage significance of the former RSL Memorial Hall is the streetscape frontage. The rear of the building has been renovated in a modern commercial style. As the proposed development will be sited to the rear of the heritage item, and on a different land parcel, the public will still be able to view and appreciate the heritage significance of the building.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The heritage significance of the former RSL Memorial Hall is generally confined to the Bruncker Road streetscape, and extensive renovations have recently been carried out on the site. The proposed development is located to the rear of the heritage item, on an adjoining parcel of land and on a downwards sloping site with a generous setback. It is considered that the proposed development will have no negative impacts on the visual amenity or the heritage significance of the former RSL Memorial Hall.

4.0 REFERENCES

Bruncker Road Veterinary Centre
<http://www.brunckervets.com/about_us>

Heritage NSW, Database Entry
<http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=2170709>

Suters Architects, Newcastle City Wide Heritage Study 1996-1997
<http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/about_newcastle/history_and_heritage/heritage_publications>

War Memorials NSW, Database Entry
<<http://www.warmemorialsnsw.asn.au/details.cfm?MemNo=451>>

5.0 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Annotated aerial photo of the subject site showing indicative boundaries (source: NearMap)

Attachment 2 – The former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall in 2004 (source: War Memorials NSW/Robert McLardy)

Attachment 3 – The former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall in 2012 (source: The Design Partnership)

Attachment 4 – The gap between the heritage facade and the rest of the building (source: The Design Partnership)

Attachment 5 – Bruncker Road streetscape context (source: The Design Partnership)

Attachment 6 – Building heights as viewed from Date Street Car Park (source: The Design Partnership)

Attachment 1 – Annotated aerial photo of the subject site showing indicative boundaries (source: NearMap)



1 Proposed Development

2 Adamstown Club

3 Former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall

4 Retail Development

5 Commercial Development

Attachment 2 – The former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall in 2004 (source: War Memorials NSW/Robert McLardy)



Attachment 3 – The former Adamstown RSL Memorial Hall in 2012 (source: The Design Partnership)



Attachment 4 – The gap between the heritage facade and the rest of the building (source: The Design Partnership)



Attachment 5 – Brunker Road streetscape context (source: The Design Partnership)



Attachment 6 – Building heights as viewed from Date Street Car Park (source: The Design Partnership)

