



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES HERITAGE ADVISOR'S REFERRAL COMMENTS

ADDRESS:	46-54 Liverpool Road, Summer Hill
ADVISOR	Robert Moore
DATE:	16 March 2011

I refer to our inspection of "Carlton" yesterday with Don from NBRSP and Erin from Kennedy Associates. Having seen the interiors I was better able to interpret the plans and consider the heritage impacts which might be seen to flow from decisions made in developing the project. Having done so I would offer the following comments :

- Much of what is implicit in the development flows as a consequence of the site capacity statement issued by the Department of Planning, legitimizing the scale, density and expansiveness of the project, including its proximity to Carlton. Acknowledging this, what then flows in the preparation of the Statement as an explanation of the proposal, is careful, succinct, and easily comprehended. It is certainly one of the better reports of its kind that I have seen lodged in support of a heritage project in Ashfield.
- While acknowledging most of the conclusions of the report, much detail that will determine the success of the strategy for the heritage site and buildings is of necessity left to the closer details and response to the fabric that will flow from the preparation of detail work schedules and construction drawings. It will be essential that the heritage professionals engaged in the project remain as part of the documentation team, able to help shape the design and technical details necessary to ensure the proper realization of what has been planned to date.
- It was concerning yesterday to see that the house remains vulnerable to theft and damage, and despite efforts to secure it, one of the principal fireplaces has been damaged, its marble chimney piece stolen, and the distinctive cast iron grate and patterned glazed tiles removed in preparation for theft from the site. This continuing damage and loss must be thwarted by appropriate security measures.
- After review of the plans in the time available, there are several points that I have variously mentioned in previous discussions and which I did discuss again with Mr. Kennedy yesterday - and he kindly offered to review these and further discuss them :
- the car parking spaces shown on the access driveway to Carlton are located where they will intrude into the open spacious setting of the house and character of the garden around it; I would suggest again that if it cannot be relocated, this parking should not be emphasized by delineating hedges on the short section of approach drive, or against the car spaces, and the ground finish should be subtly differentiated from that of the driveway itself ; when the parking is not occupied it will thus present the most minimal intrusion to the house and garden setting - which the hedges would otherwise interrupt the front fence is shown as a modern steel palisade allowing through vision, with its bays separated by heavy masonry piers ; in my opinion the character imparted by the sheer number of piers is an inappropriate pattern for such a fence to such a house, and it would be preferable if masonry piers were used "traditionally" only at corners and at gates or points of entry ; lighter intermediate posts should be employed in interpretation of the traditional model ; the extent of the fence as proposed is sound, as it will emphasize the notion of the house surviving in its garden setting

● the pool courtyard adjacent to the former stables has, in the new context of the site, a difficult job to do in reconciling this major outbuilding with the house, with the pool itself, the surrounding pool recreation areas, and the circulation pathways between the component buildings of the site ; there is a challenge in "making sense" of a former stables/coachhouse once set in open paths and drives, in a basic manner ; with the objective of openness and simplicity, I would wonder if the proposed floating roof above the car park access stairs and pool sitting area/store could be made less obtrusive in this "central" space, perhaps by using a lower roof over the sitting area store, hidden by the enclosing wall, and a smaller, lower perhaps translucent roof over the carpark stairs

● there are two small additions to be made at the rear NW corner of the house where both will be visible from Liverpool Road; the smaller housing some amenities for the former billiard room is planned as a discreet masonry addition following traditional models while the larger is shown as an expressed, modern metal cladding covered box, separated from the house proper by glazing ; I would suggest this presentation of the addition is unnecessarily exaggerated by the cladding, and that a more quiet, responsive masonry treatment would mean this element was still readable as an addition, but not ponderously and obtrusively so; this quieter treatment would mean it did not dominate this aspect of the house as an intrusion, difficult for many people to understand, but would simply become a modern element within the complex character of this side of the building.

I would suggest that these are small amendments which might positively favour the best heritage outcomes achievable in the context, and look forward to some response, as discussed with Mr. Kennedy.

Robert Moore



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ADDRESS:	Liverpool Rd Ashfield (former Grosvenor Centre)
ADVISOR	Robert Moore
DATE:	29 November 2010

I refer to the site meeting with representatives of the project developers and architects and confirm the matters discussed relating to heritage :

- As previously raised, the car-parking spaces placed on the former approach/carriage drive were raised as a concern in that parked cars should not interrupt this most important part of the garden setting of the house ; Mr. Kennedy sought to explain that this was the preferred parking location for the occupants of the new apartments in the house, supporting a separate identity from the apartment buildings which would use the basement garages ; the driveway parking location would also support convenient entry via the existing rear side door of the house, to the central hall from which the apartments would be accessed; it was agreed that the application would provide supporting argument for the preferred location, and the design would explore minimal emphasis of the spaces by subtly differentiating the ground treatment and avoiding barriers etc.; hedges and planting to screen the parking would have the effect of breaking up/interrupting the open nature of the house grounds and should be reconsidered ;
- the landscape treatment of the house setting is a matter of critical importance to the project; its characteristic openness should be retained along with specimen plantings where possible;
- fencing to Liverpool Road was discussed, and a palisade is being considered, with screen planting inside; I suggested the emphasis should be placed upon accurate reconstruction and authenticity where possible, and if no evidence is found, then it would be best not to reconstruct a palisade style fence when none has existed there previously ; a contemporary design might be considered with very careful consideration of any piers employed, if indeed they were to be used; again this should be reviewed within the heritage impact statement after the discussion and consideration of any evidence;
- similarly to the entrance precinct of the garden, the former stables forecourt, which was originally empty and is now to be the site of the pool, needs to be given very careful consideration so that it does not become an inconsistent modern area making the old buildings seem somehow redundant and out of place; appropriate detailing of this area using the simple, almost quasi industrial techniques used for stables, should be considered.

- in regard to the house itself, I asked that detail drawings be provided for consideration during a brief internal inspection, which was not possible at the site meeting held;
- also discussed was a proposed departure from the Department's approved capacity plan for the site, in which a part 4/5 storey design would replace the approved 4 storey design; this would entail amongst other changes, a breach of the required setback from the rear boundary with properties in Sunning Place, some of which are heritage listed apartment buildings; a number of bedrooms over the ground, first and second floors of the amended design would extend corners into the 6 metre setback zone along with some window openings; in my opinion, this proposed proximity does not appear to raise any adverse heritage affectation, but the likelihood of future applications seeking to improve the amenity of the rear of the listed apartment buildings through adaptive works must be remembered, and the solar impact of the proposed new buildings (as amended) upon the heritage listed apartments must in particular be carefully assessed.