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HERITAGE ADVISORY MEMO

No. 122

date: 25 July 2023

ITEM 1: Proposed Inverell Aquatic Centre replacement – 69 Evans St, Inverell (DA-87/2023)

A request was made by Chris Faley (Council officer) to provide advice on the proposed Inverell Aquatic Centre replacement at 69 Evans Street, Inverell.

The request was made outside of the normal Heritage Advisor visit and therefore information was provided to the Heritage Advisor via two (2) emails – the information consisting of a (email 1) Statement of Environmental Effects prepared by Facility Design Group – Architects, June 2023, and a Statement of Heritage Impact prepared by Heritage Consultant - Noel Thomson Architecture Pty Ltd., May 2023, and (email 2) Architectural Plans and Civil Plans.

Background

On 20 October, 2021 I provided preliminary guidance advice to Council on the possible adaptive reuse of or alteration and additions to the main building or construction of any new building within the site of the swimming pool complex.

It should be noted that the **main building** referred to in the following comments is the existing main building of the swimming pool complex.

My comments were general only and included:

- *Any alterations and additions to the main building or any new building to be behind, not in line with nor protrude forward of the main building so that the main building remains prominent and is not visually dominated by alterations and additions or any new building.*
- *The height of any alterations and additions to the main building to be no higher than the main building.*
- *The height of any new building should not visually dominate the main building.*
- *The form of the façade and brick surrounds of the main building to remain intact. The external brickwork should remain unpainted. Windows should not be widened, in-filled or consolidated.*
- *Any original windows, doors, joinery and other internal features, including honour rolls, within the main building be retained in situ and conserved.*
- *Existing entry tiles of the main building and honour roll area be retained. Missing or damaged tiles should be replaced to match existing. A possible source for tiles could be: The Discontinued Tile Factory 21 Stanley St, Peakhurst. NSW 2210.*
- *Public access to the main building and honour roll area should be retained.*

- *New uses, associated with any adaptive reuse of the main building, should be chosen for their suitability to the size of the building so that overwhelming changes are not required.*
- *Any adaptive reuse or alterations and additions to the main building should respect and complement the built form character of the item in terms of scale, setback, siting, external materials, finishes and colour.*
- *Additions which are obviously out of character with the original design of the main building may be removed.*
- *Enclosure of the rear south facing later extensions to the main building, which have been partially enclosed by Perspex roller shutters, is acceptable. This is perhaps best done by replacing the shutters with glass panels designed to be uncomplicated and sensitive in scale and character to the main building. Consideration should be given to floor to ceiling glass panels that can be opened and closed and benefit from the natural light entering from the south.*
- *Any new building should have good separation from the main building but be easily connected via pathways, atrium etc to the main building.*
- *Service utilities such as water heaters, air conditioning ducts and units, exhaust vents, skylights, TV antennae, solar panels and satellite dishes must not be located on nor be visible on the main (street) elevation of a building.*

This advice was provided as no plans had been sighted at that time.

Since providing those comments a Photographic Archival Recording, prepared by Port Macquarie Hastings Heritage (May 2023), has been provided to Council and all structures, except for the main building, have been demolished.

The Memorial pool complex is identified as an item of environmental heritage in Inverell LEP 2012 (I107). The description in the LEP includes the pools (since demolished), main building (remains) and associated buildings including plant room (since demolished).

On the same property, in the vicinity of the pool entrance, is the war memorial which is also identified as an item of environmental heritage in the LEP (I108).

Neither item is within a Conservation Area, however, both are listed on the NSW War Memorials Register.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the retention of the heritage listed "Inverell Memorial Pool" with the new redeveloped Inverell Aquatic Centre being constructed on the existing facility site, behind the Memorial Pool building.

As described in the Statement of Environmental Effects, the new indoor/outdoor swim complex will include the following components:

- Main pool 50m x 20m (8 lane x 2.5m wide) outdoor/ indoor pool, including a swim wall, providing a FINA compliant, 50m competition pool and 25 m indoor competition pool for short course competition. This pool will include an access ramp to the northern end. The pool development requires the added winterisation features of a permanent roof over the shallow end and large 'door' opening to enable the northern, shallow end, 25m segment of the pool, to be enclosed during winter months.

This will require specialist features including:

- The hinged swim wall to be located at the 25m mark and a suitable fixing system to the large door above, during the winter period.
 - A two-zone filtration and pool water heating system to enable the southern 25m outdoor pool to be closed off when the northern 25m pool is operating indoors in winter mode.
 - A one zone pool hall heating system for the northern 25m pool hall when in winter mode.
 - Suitable Environmentally Sustainable Design and plant and equipment, to reduce energy loss when in both summer and winter mode.
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- Integrated 20m x 10m warm water, indoor program pool, with a spiral lift, moveable floor (fully moveable to same depth, as well as articulating floor, with three integrated depth zones, meeting all pool access safety transition requirements). Access to this pool will be by way of moveable stair with isolated concourse platform lift). The warm water program pool will be located in its own pool hall, to ensure its environmental water and air temperature requirements can be met.
 - Indoor zero depth water play equipment and splashpad with adjacent toddlers pool. This facility will be located adjacent to the northern end of the 25m pool, so it is enclosed all year round.
 - New foyer, front of house, shared reception/ café, and moveable display retail areas. Café to be supported by wet lounge (adjacent to water play/ splash pad) and dry lounge (located off foyer) areas.
 - Administration and office areas.
 - Range of change rooms, shower and amenity areas, servicing different wet and dry zones.
 - Multipurpose activity room with capacity to be divided into two separate activity spaces.
 - Wellness/ consulting rooms.
 - Associated plant and building services/ infrastructure necessary to operate the facility.
 - Landscaping.

I have now had the opportunity to review the documentation forwarded by Council and provide the following comments.

My comments in this report address my earlier comments in regards to any new building and its relationship to the existing main building of the swimming pool complex (an item of environmental heritage in Inverell LEP 2012 (I107) these being as follows:

- ***Any alterations and additions to the main building or any new building to be behind, not in line with nor protrude forward of the main building so that the main building remains prominent and is not visually dominated by alterations and additions or any new building.***
- ***The height of any new building should not visually dominate the main building.***

The Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) that accompanies the Development Application states:

The new Aquatic Centre development does not visually dominate the Heritage Item (I107) "Inverell Memorial Pool" due to its siting behind and away from the original pool/baths building.

Fig.1 below shows the proposed new building in relation to the existing main building (the heritage item) when viewed from Lawrence Street. Although the new building does not protrude forward of the existing main building (the heritage item) it is clearly larger and taller (for the most part) and tends to dominate the heritage item.

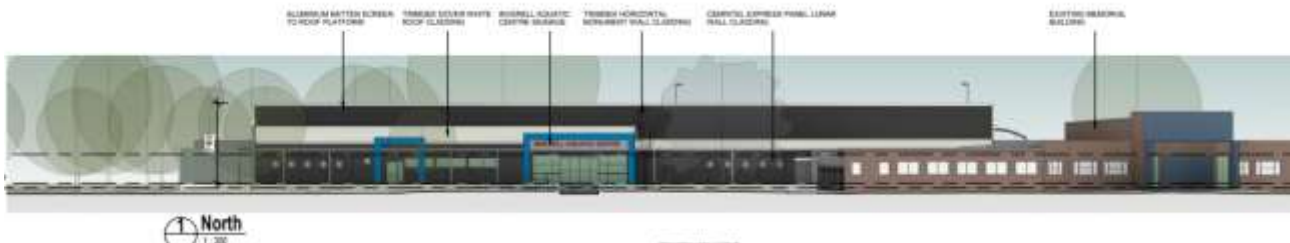


Fig. 1 North Elevation (Lawrence Street).

Source: Architectural drawings prepared by FACILITY DESIGN GROUP – DA – Drawing No. A.500 Rev. A – Date 20-02-2022

Fig. 2 below shows the landscape concept plan for the Lawrence Street frontage. The plan shows mass shrub planting (low shrubs) within a defined landscape edge along the Lawrence Street property boundary with two other plantings (one Red Maple and one Pink Magnolia) within the grassed area between the proposed new building and the existing main building (the heritage item).



Fig. 2 Landscape Concept Plan

Source: FACILITY DESIGN GROUP – For DA – Drawing No. A.014 – Date 22-05-2023

It is my opinion that the new Aquatic Centre does visually dominate the heritage item when viewed from Lawrence Street. However, this dominance could be reduced by increasing the landscaping (shrub and tree planting) between the new building and heritage item (the area shown in red above).

- ***Any new building should have good separation from the main building but be easily connected via pathways, atrium etc to the main building.***

The Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) that accompanies the Development Application states:

The form and proportion of the new aquatic facility is to be long/narrow with the front façade location setback and behind the original main pool/baths memorial building, that has been designed with 'contemporary' Lawrence Street elevation to assist in the separation/distinction between the old and new buildings.

I concur with this comment.

Fig. 3 below shows that there is good separation between the new building and the existing main building (the heritage item).



Fig. 3 Site Plan
Source: FACILITY DESIGN GROUP – For DA – Drawing No. A.010 Rev A. –
Date 22-02-2022

- ***Service utilities such as water heaters, air conditioning ducts and units, exhaust vents, skylights, TV antennae, solar panels and satellite dishes must not be located on nor be visible on the main (street) elevation of a building.***

From the documentation reviewed no service utility will be visible from the main street (Lawrence Street) elevation.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "M. McKay".