

## PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

AT

**19-27 CROSS STREET,  
DOUBLE BAY, NSW**

## HERITAGE RESPONSE



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 THE BRIEF

The following report has been prepared in response to the heritage assessment prepared by Woollahra Council for a development application (DA/321/2020/1) for the redevelopment of existing property (known as Double Bay Plaza) at 19-27 Cross Street, Double Bay, NSW. The report has been prepared on behalf of Tri-Anta Pty Limited, the owners of the property.

The development application was supported by a Heritage Impact Statement prepared by this office dated August 2020.

### 1.2 THE STUDY AREA

The study area is Lot 100 in DP 617017 at Double Bay in the Municipality of Woollahra, Parish of Alexandria and County of Cumberland (Figures 1.1 & 1.2).

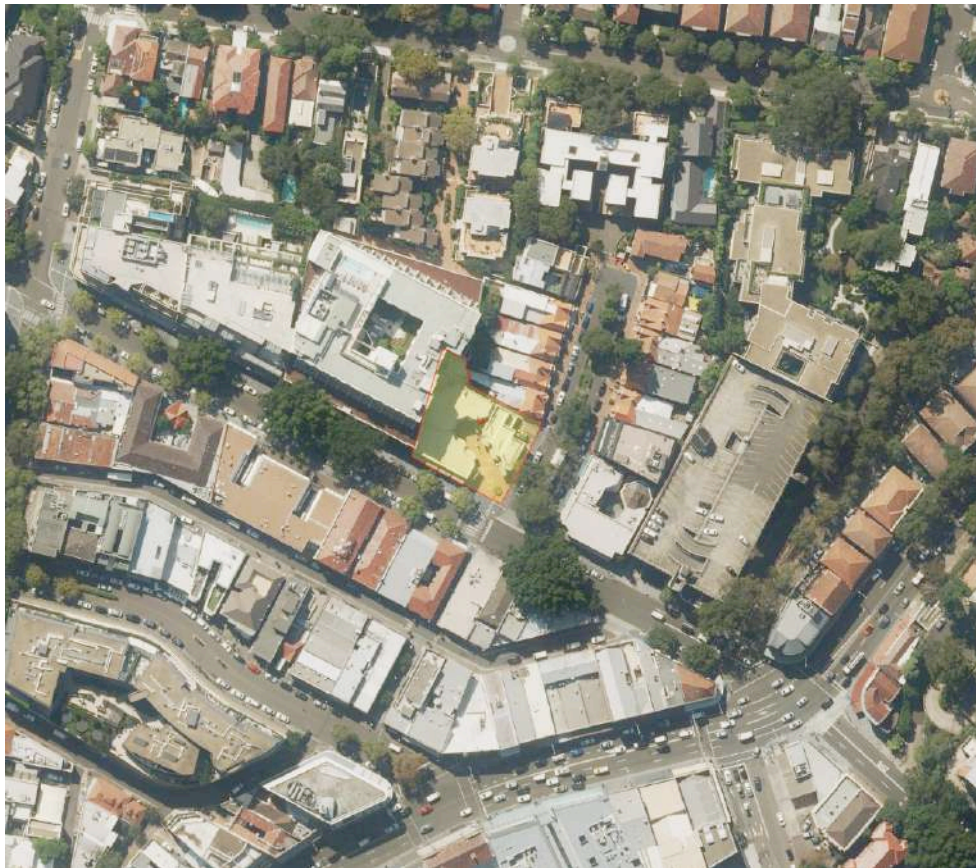


Figure 1.2 The Study Area

Source: Six Maps

### 1.3 LIMITATIONS AND TERMS

The report only addresses the European significance of the place. The terms *fabric*, *conservation*, *maintenance*, *preservation*, *restoration*, *reconstruction*, *adaptation*, *compatible use* and *cultural significance* used in this report are as defined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter.

#### 1.4 COUNCIL REPORT

Council's comments are set out in the Woollahra Council Assessment Report dated 27 May 2021 (AR).

#### 1.5 AUTHORS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report, including all diagrams and photographs, was prepared by John Oultram of John Oultram Heritage & Design, unless otherwise noted.

## 2.0 HERITAGE CONTROLS

### 2.1 LOCAL AUTHORITY

The local authority for the area is Woollahra Municipal Council. The property is not listed as a heritage item in Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014* (WLEP) and is not within a heritage conservation area.

The property is in the vicinity of a heritage item at:

REF	ADDRESS	ITEM	RANKING
227	William Street	Moreton Bay Fig	Local

The property is in the vicinity of an archaeological heritage item at:

REF	ADDRESS	ITEM	RANKING
A2	Cross Street, cnr Jamberoo Lane	Double Bay Compressed Air Ejector Station	State

The property is also in the vicinity of the Transvaal Avenue Heritage Conservation Area C7.

The heritage provisions of the WLEP relating to development in the vicinity of a heritage conservation area would apply.

Council may also take into consideration the heritage provisions of the *Woollahra Development Control Plan 2015* (WDGP) that contains detailed objectives and controls for development in Double Bay, and particularly Chapter D5 *Double Bay Centre*.



Figure 2.1 Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014 Heritage Map HER\_003A

Heritage items are coloured brown

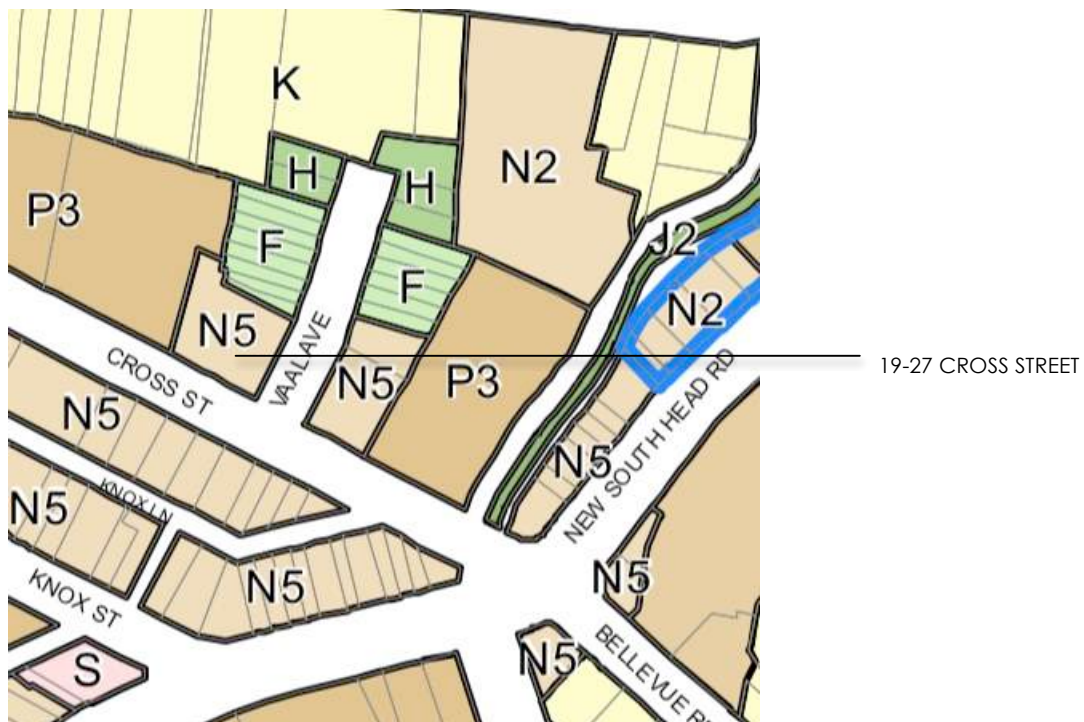


Figure 2.2 Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014 Height of Buildings Map HOB\_003

The site is zoned N5 – 14.7 metres

Source: Woollahra Council



### 3.0 THE CURRENT PROPOSALS

#### 3.1 CURRENT PROPOSALS

The current owner would like to redevelop the site for a mixed-use, retail and residential development

The proposals are shown on Drawings Nos. 1725 DA\_00 to DA-33 dated August 2020 and prepared by Luigi Rosselli Pty Limited.

The proposals include:

- Demolition of the current building
- Excavation for basement parking, service rooms, lifts and stairs
- One level of retail with service areas off including apartment lobby, lifts and stairs
- Five levels of apartments
- Pool, plant and service area to the roof

The building has retail frontages to Cross Street and Transvaal Avenue (including to the central lobby) with the car access from Cross Street to the basement via a car lift. The entry to the apartments is off a covered lobby off Transvaal Avenue.

The ground floor retail is largely glazed to the street with an awning over formed by the balconies and spandrels to the upper levels.

The upper floors have a partly curvilinear plan with a cylinder shaped element to the street corner to draw people into the pedestrian plaza. The shape is reinforced with expressed floor plates, banding and partly curved, balcony balustrade. The north elevation is angled to Transvaal Avenue with curved and flat terraces to Cross Street and the inner elevation.

The west elevation is set to the boundary. The topmost level and plant areas are set partly within a folded roof with arched, dormer windows to the Cross Street mansard. The curved section to the street has a flat roof that extends along the angled section to the north.

The building is to a contemporary design with heavily articulated facades to the main streets with horizontal banding to the main floors amplified by the partly curved balustrades to Cross Street and the curved corner.

The building is in rendered masonry with off form concrete to the expressed floor plates and projecting bands. The windows are divided with off form concrete panels with metal, sliding screens. The roof is in standing seam metal.

## 4.0 RESPONSE TO COUNCIL'S ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 GENERALLY

19-27 Cross Street is an undistinguished example of a single and two storey, late Twentieth Century development of no heritage significance and makes little contribution to the local streetscape. The demolition of the current buildings on the site is not at contention.

*The proposed demolition of the existing building on the subject site is therefore supported.*

AR p. 48

The development of the site is part of the ongoing trend to increase residential density in suburban areas particularly where sites are close to transport and local services.

The WDCP includes increased heights and density along the roads and some of the laneways with heights up to 18.1 metres. The area is seeing a gradual implementation of the WDCP through the development of existing sites.

### 4.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT- RESPONSE TO THE HERITAGE ISSUES

#### 4.2.1 Transvaal Heritage Conservation Area

*"...In its current form, the proposed 6-7 storey development does not provide a sympathetic transition to the single storey character of the HCA. It is considered the proposal would diminish the setting of and would dominate the contributory single storey Gothic style cottages in the vicinity and would result in an adverse impact on the conservation area. Detailed discussion of the impact of the proposal on the Transvaal Avenue HCA is provided below against the Woollahra LEP 2014 (Part 5.10) and Woollahra DCP 2015*

AR p. 48

The PR also sets out the heritage significance of the conservation area in the WDDCP:

*The Transvaal Avenue retail strip provides a physical record of a significant historical phase in the evolution of the Double Bay Commercial Centre.*

*The group of buildings provides physical evidence of the working class residential boom at the end of the 19th century by a renowned local developer, Edward Knox Harkness, who was responsible for many fine Federation styled semi-detached cottages within the Double Bay area.*

*The quality and distinction of the architectural decoration of the turn of the century buildings exemplifies the economic boom in that period and the expansion of residential development after the introduction of the tram service to the City in 1894 and from Rose Bay in 1898.*

*The area provides an historical record of the time through the naming of each of the properties and the avenue after the victories of the British force in the South African Boer War. Transvaal is the alternate name of the South African Republic. The consistency and relative intactness of the cottages with their fine Federation but Gothic style brick and tile construction, stucco details and timber fretwork creates a distinctive and aesthetically pleasing character.*



*The uniformity of form and scale within the Harkness development of the single storey brick and tile semi-detached cottages contributes to the unique qualities of the housing group within the Double Bay commercial precinct.*

*The streetscape has high aesthetic value which is enhanced by the closed vistas and the carefully maintained street trees and landscape works at the northern end. The area has social significance to the local community, demonstrated through the involvement of the local community during the 1980s when the area was granted heritage conservation area status after the number of objections raised to the proposed redevelopment of the group.*

WDCP Chapter D5 Appendix 1.4

**Response:**

It should be noted that not all buildings in the HCA are single storey and two storey buildings are allowed in the HCA under the WLEP. The aesthetic qualities of the conservation have been diluted by the loss of detail to many of the period buildings and the later development that has replaced some of the early buildings.

The subject site is not within the HCA but directly abuts it to the south. The development will have no direct impact on the HCA and its built elements but will have some impact on its setting. The setting of the HCA within the broader Double Bay context is not discussed in the statement of significance nor the role of buildings fronting Cross Street that flank the entry to Transvaal Avenue.

Comment:

*Collectively, the early 20th century housing in Transvaal Avenue represents an important historic element reflecting the early development of Double Bay. The uniformity of scale and form of the single storey Gothic Revival style cottages, which are generally around 6 metres in height, coupled with their architectural detailing has resulted in the distinctive 'fine grain' streetscape character and aesthetic value of the Transvaal Avenue HCA.*

AR p. 49

**Response:**

The character of the HCA is not in dispute though it should be noted that all of the former residences are now in commercial use and many have been altered with elements to their frontages removed and the interiors remodelled. None of the former residences are intact though most retain their original form including their roof form and some of their distinctive roof details and decorated front gables. Some of the early houses have been redeveloped with post war, commercial development, some in a two storey form (see Figure 4.1).

The buildings clearly read as commercial buildings due to the extent of signage and shop front detailing. The group is quite robust architecturally and the development to the east, north, west and south is modern providing a strong, visual curtilage to the HCA.

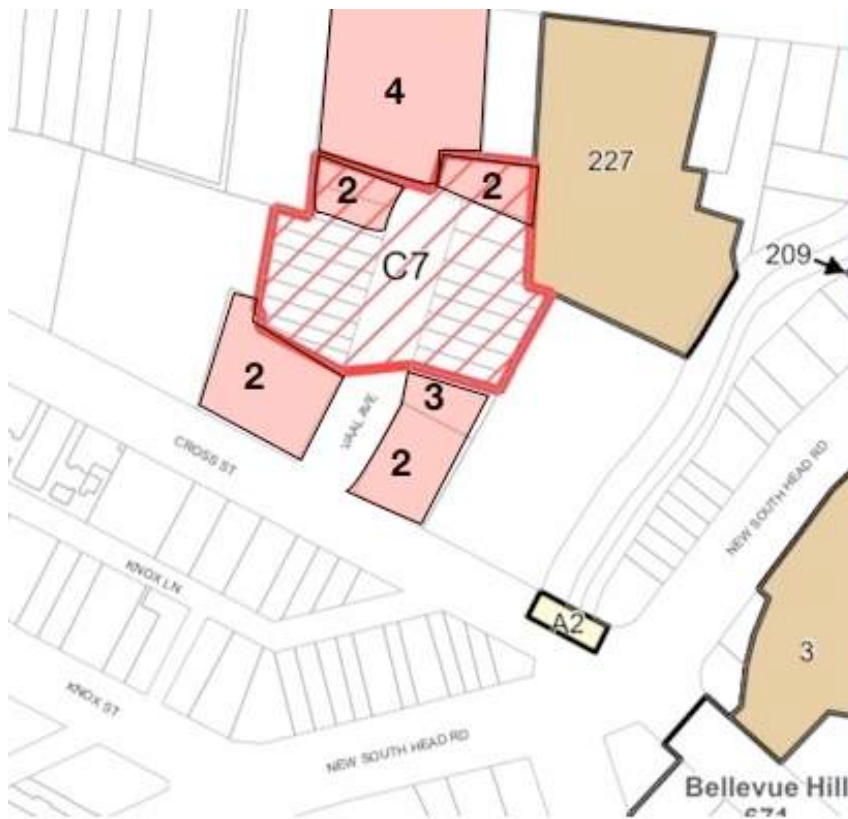


Figure 4.1 Heritage Map HER\_003A with developed areas within and close to the HCA marked in red with heights of infill development

**Comment:**

*The proposal is for a 6-7 storey shop-top housing development adjacent to the low-height historic development within the Transvaal Avenue HCA. At its greatest setback, the proposal includes a setback distance of around 9.6 metres from the northern boundary of the site (adjoining the Transvaal Avenue HCA) and inclusion of an open plaza and seating area.*

*While the setback provided by the open plaza and seating area is considered to be positive,.....*

AR p 49

**Response:**

We would concur with this. The WDCP controls for the subject site anticipated a development against the first of the period buildings in Transvaal Avenue up to height of four storeys. The proposals have been specifically developed to avoid this and provide instead for an open plaza that provides a separation to the adjoining building in a usable plaza that forms part of the entry area to the apartments. The isolation of this section from the development area has led to a higher development to the corner of Cross Street to provide equivalence in floor space.

This principle is not an unusual approach and the HIS used the development at the former CUB site at Haymarket as a comparison demonstrating the use of higher scale elements where retention of heritage elements and other planning issues, (such as the desire to provide public, open space and a coherent street plan) led to a reduction of developable area and resulted in higher scale development on other sections of the site than were contemplated under the relevant planning controls.

Comment:

*....from a heritage perspective the scale of the proposed shop-top housing development would dominate the Transvaal Avenue HCA. The 6-7 development would exceed the height of the historic single storey cottages within the adjacent conservation area by over 17 metres (including roof terrace and lift overrun). The lower 6 storeys of the development have a uniform setback distance from the northern boundary of the site that would exceed the predominant height of cottages within the Transvaal Avenue HCA by 13.5 metres. This is not considered to provide an appropriate transition in terms of scale, bulk and height between the new development and the conservation area in the vicinity.*

AR pp. 49 & 50

#### Response:

The DCP anticipated a four to five storey building on the site with the four storey frontage along Transvaal Avenue with development set close to the first building in the HCA.

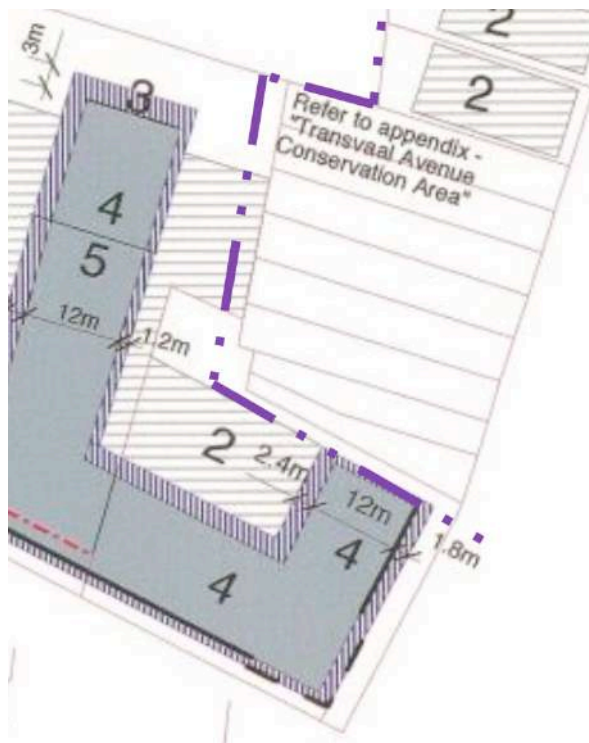


Figure 4.2 Control Summary for the northern side of Cross Street. Note the limited setback to the Transvaal Avenue buildings. Note the proximity of the developed area to the Transvaal Avenue shops.

Source: WDCP Section 5.5.7 Control Drawing 3

The impact of this has been modelled by the architects.

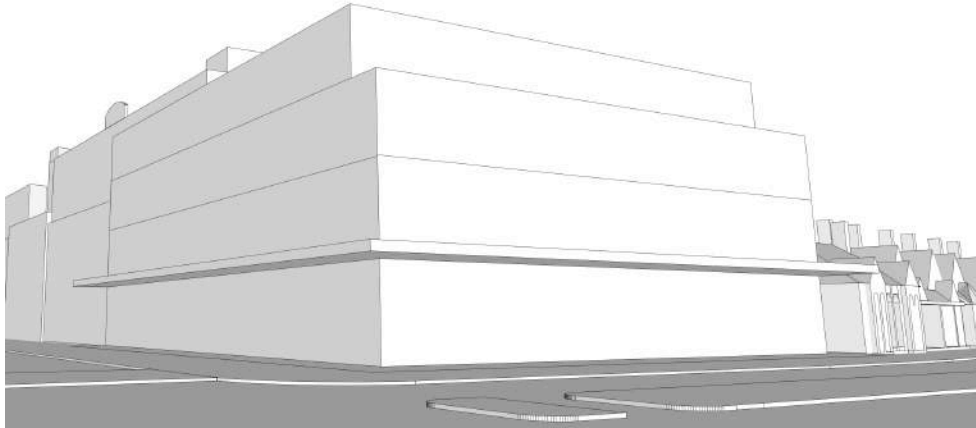


Figure 4.3 View to complying scheme from Cross Street looking northwest

The proposed scheme introduces a plaza to the shops and the corner element is curved allowing the side elevation and form of the first of the shops to be seen in the round and limit the impact of bulk and scale. The proposed scheme also allows a wider view angle to the shops.

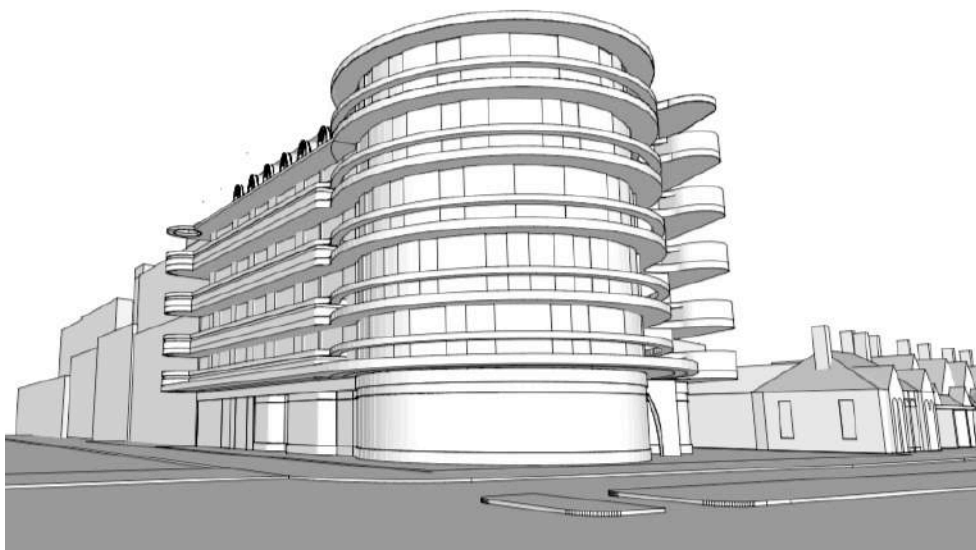


Figure 4.4 View to proposed scheme from Cross Street looking northwest

The cylindrical corner element is designed to draw people physically and visually into the pedestrian plaza to the north of the subject site and allow views to the buildings in the HCA.

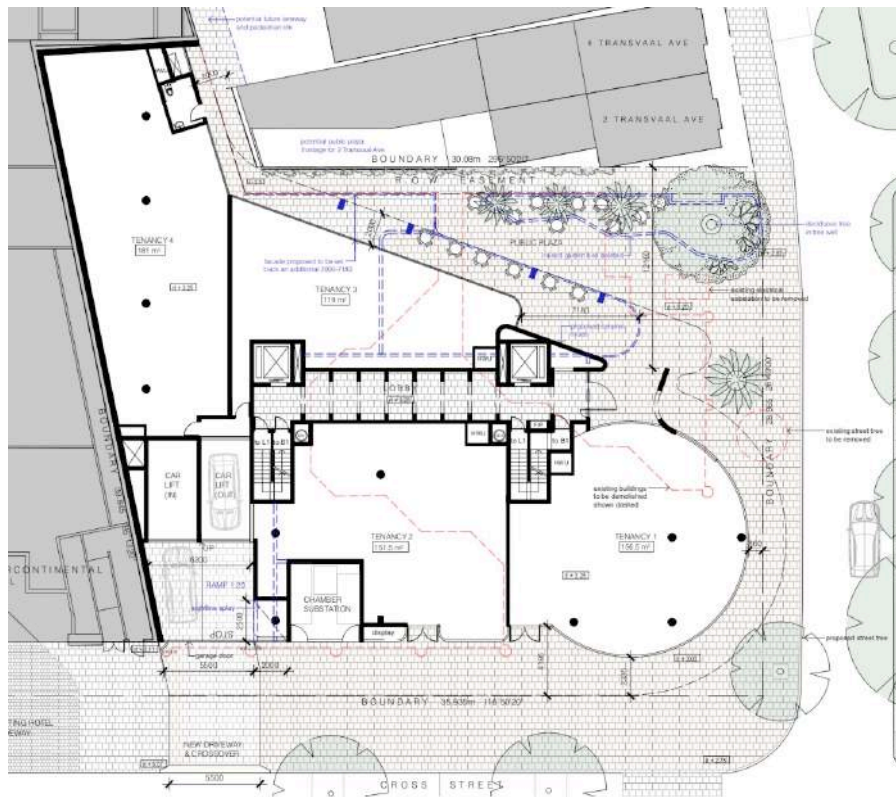


Figure 4.5 Ground floor plan and view to proposed scheme from Cross Street looking northwest



The effect of the setback and rounded forms can also be seen in more direct views from Transvaal Avenue.



Figure 4.6 View to complying scheme from Transvaal Avenue looking west



Figure 4.7 View to proposed scheme from Transvaal Avenue looking west

We consider this is a far better outcome than a complying scheme and that the increased height of the development is justified.



**Comment:**

*It is considered that the setting of the Transvaal Avenue HCA would be compromised by the proposal. In particular, the prominence of the modest single storey contributory items located at the southern extent of the conservation area on the western side of Transvaal Avenue (as viewed looking south-west from the northern end of Transvaal Avenue) would be diminished against the 'plane' of the continuous 6 storey northern elevation of the proposed development. It is noted the late 20th century Intercontinental Hotel located to the west of the Transvaal Avenue HCA pre-dates the Woollahra DCP and is not considered precedent development for the proposal within the context of the heritage conservation area.*

AR p. 50

**Response:**

The setting of the HCA is urban and there are higher forms to Cross Street, to William Street and to the east (the Cross Street car park) that can be seen in views from Transvaal Avenue. The period buildings in the HCA are now commercial and are robust in detail particularly when taken as a group.

The proposal does not use the Intercontinental Hotel as a precedent and is a very high quality piece of modern architecture. The new building will effectively limit views to the overbearing and blank elevations to the Intercontinental from Transvaal Avenue improving its setting. This is amplified by the introduction of a plaza to the north of the subject site that replaces the undesirable loading dock with a well-crafted, public open space.



Figure 4.8 View along the service lane at the junction of the subject site with Transvaal Avenue. Note the visibility of the Intercontinental Hotel

As noted above, the proposed development improves on the DCP development template by providing an open plaza at the junction with the first shop in Transvaal Avenue and the positive effect of this is recognised in the assessment (see above).

The development will not block views to buildings in the HCA and the curved form to the corner and the open plaza will allow a greater view angles. The higher form to the corner of Cross Street and Transvaal Avenue will have no greater impact on views than a four storey frontage.



Figure 4.9 View looking north along Transvaal Avenue. The development will not encroach on this view

The proposed building will read as part of the higher development along Cross Street not as part of Transvaal Avenue as it does not have a 'frontage' to Transvaal Avenue as anticipated in the DCP. It will act as a gateway to the HCA and read as part of the general pattern of development in the area.

Comment:

*The proposal should be refined on the northern elevation to minimise the impact on the adjacent conservation area. A 'stepped form' incorporating a lower built form to the street and increased setbacks on the northern elevation to upper levels would assist in providing a more sympathetic transition to the adjacent single storey character of the Transvaal Avenue HCA.*

AR p. 50

**Response:**

Based on the above, we consider that using a stepped form will not materially improve the proposals but simply introduce a complexity to the design that is not required.

Comment:

*In its current form, the proposal does not provide a sympathetic transition to and would dominate the single storey character of the Transvaal Avenue HCA. As such, it is considered the proposal would adversely impact the heritage significance of the Transvaal Avenue HCA, including associated setting and views. The proposal therefore does not comply with Clause 1(a) and (b) of Part 5.10 of the Woollahra LEP 2014.*

AR p. 50

**Response:**

We consider that the proposals are a very good response to the local context and the setting of the HCA.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

### 5.1 SUMMARY

Overall, we consider that the proposed development is a well-considered response to the development of a mixed use site and the current planning controls applying.

The proposed design is well articulated and scaled and uses appropriate materials and details. It will revitalise the site and provide for a high quality development in a prominent location without impacting detrimentally on the Transvaal Avenue Heritage Conservation Area.

In heritage terms, we maintain our position that, in heritage terms, the development should be approved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Oultram'.

JOHN OULTRAM