



19-27 Cross Street, Double Bay

Peer Review - Urban Design

June 2021

Peer Review - Urban Design - 19 - 27 Cross Street, Double Bay | June 2021

All Rights Reserved. No material may be reproduced without prior permission. While we have tried to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, the Publisher accepts no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance on information in this publication.

PROJECT TEAM:

Atlas Urban Design & Strategy Pty Ltd
www.atlasurban.com

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
DESIGN PRINCIPLES	6
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL.....	7
PUBLIC DOMAIN STRATEGY	
OUTDOOR DINNING	10
CONNECTIVITY	11
WASTE MANAGEMENT	12
DESIGN RESPONSE	13
CONCLUSION	15



Render image (courtesy of Luigi Rosselli Architecture)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a review of the urban design of the proposal at June 2021. Please refer to architectural drawings by Luigi Roselli Architects 04.06.21 DA Modifications. The urban design peer review should be read in conjunction with GMU Urban Design Report, 28 August 2020.

The proposal bears the hallmarks of a lengthy process of investigation, design development and refinement. GMU has expertly completed a rigorous site and context analysis, which correctly identify the site's challenges. The master plan makes distinct moves that answer the challenges and reveal a set of design opportunities. Luigi Roselli Architects won the architectural competition, which was based on the GMU urban design. The winning design and the subsequent design development skillfully interpret the challenges and opportunities for this complex urban site.

There are two critical urban design considerations. Firstly, the site's role in forming the public domain, which is fine-grained and varied to the south of Cross Street but lacks integration and diversity on the north. Secondly, resolving the urban block between the intricate and low-scale of Transvaal Avenue and the blocky mass of the InterContinental Hotel, its awkward street profile is revealed in the blind eastern wall.

The difficulty of resolving the site is illustrated by the contradictory built forms shown in DCP 2017 and Draft Urban Design Strategy 2021 (not adopted by council). Each attempts to solve the massing with a generic extruded street profile. The former indicates a 4 storey street wall, setback to 5 storeys. The latter indicates a 2 storey street wall, setback to 6 storeys. Neither option extends the public domain and both propose minimal separation from the heritage streetscape. I agree with John Oultram and Stephen Davies that the proposed plaza separation is a superior interface. This illustrates the need for a non-generic and site-specific urban and architectural response.

The proposal solves these issues by understanding context, focusing on place-making and, adopting a bold architectural stance. It also creates opportunities for other sites to participate in the fine-grained and varied urban environment of Double Bay.

The primary design elements which make up this excellent urban response are:

- The strong circular corner resolves and completes the urban block, leading the eye and the visitor to the plaza and distinguishing the heritage streetscape
- Distinctive and coherent building hides the poor presentation of the large blind eastern wall of the Intercontinental Hotel along the entire shared boundary
- The clever resolution of the south eastern corner works with either a 2 or 4 storey street wall on the neighboring site. i.e. whether or not the InterContinental site is redeveloped
- The 4 storey street wall gives symmetry to Cross Street while the mansard roof avoids a zigurat and makes a distinctive skyline
- The new sunny plaza extends and diversifies the public domain, while serving both the subject and neighbouring sites
- The plaza creates potential for a pedestrian laneway to extend northward to Galbraith Walkway, thereby activating rear of the heritage properties
- The plaza creates potential for a pedestrian link into InterContinental which works whether or not the InterContinental site redevelops
- The landscaped plaza creates a green separation from the heritage streetscape with a variety of plants including a significant deciduous tree in a well and vegetation cascading from balconies.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

PART 17.3 - SEPP 65: DESIGN QUALITY OF RESIDENTIAL FLAT DEVELOPMENT DESIGN QUALITY PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Context and Neighbourhood Character

Principle 2: Built Form and Scale

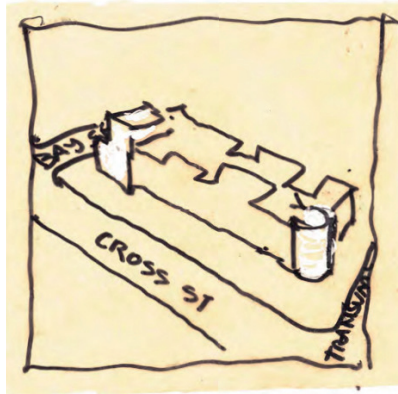
Principle 8: Housing diversity and social interaction

SEPP Design Quality is covered in the GMU report in Section 4 (pp 20 to 30). It is also covered in the Architect's statement on the facing page and in the diagrams below.

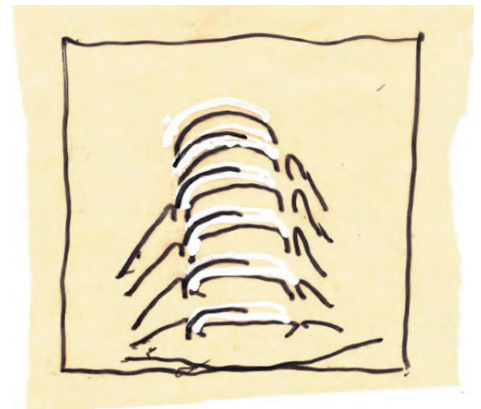
We support this position and note that additional refinement to the scheme further improves the performance of the design with respect to Principles 1, 2, and 8.



THE BOULEVARD:
COMMERCIAL FRONTAGE



ICONIC BOOKENDS TO THE URBAN
BLOCK



AN ICONIC CORNER



GREEN SEPARATION BETWEEN
DEVELOPMENT AND
NEIGHBOURING HERITAGE
BUILDINGS



LIFESTYLE OPPORTUNITIES
ACTIVATED COURTYARD
GARDEN



AN ICONIC LOBBY

Design Statement (courtesy of Luigi Rosselli Architecture)

Context, Scale and Built Form

The proposal's built form is derived from a careful analysis and deliberate response to context as set out in the GMU Report and as described above. The architect's statement explains the manner in which this is interpreted and informs the architectural design.

Architects Statement

The site is located at the corner of Cross Street and Transvaal Ave within the Double Bay Village. The site is 1,334sqm and neighbors the InterContinental Hotel, along Cross Street and a row of low density heritage terraces along Transvaal Ave. This prominent corner site requires a proposal that respectfully and elegantly negotiates between the scale and streetscape qualities of these two typologies.

The proposed design establishes an 'iconic book end' for the block respecting the scale and built form of the streetscapes. The variation in materials selections and facade treatment along Transvaal Ave and Cross Street facades and an additional setback on the Cross Street facade is a deliberate initiative to reinforce and to "talk" to the scale of the streetscape. On Cross Street, the building is designed to conform to the five-storey scale established by the 'InterContinental'.

Social Dimensions

The scheme integrates beautiful lobby and common spaces with active social and public spaces. This creates the environment for incidental social interactions between residents and the wider community.

The apartment mix includes formats that are appropriate for extended and blended families. Such as with separate living spaces and multiple aspects.

Architects Statement

The building includes important social meeting places for the occupants of the building. Apartment sizes and mix will also encourage a diverse range of occupants, from families to individuals.

The design achieves the desirable apartment mix .housing opportunities for young people and families to live in Double Bay.

The retail tenancies to Cross Street will invigorate what is currently an undercapitalized corner and engage both the eastern suburbs community, commuters and public generally with the capacity to hold destination food and beverage offerings as well as boutique fashion stores.

DCP

PART 19.5 - SECTION D5.4: STREET CHARACTER

Part D5.4.1 Desired future character

Part D5.4.7 Cross Street

Part D5.6.3: Urban Character - Building envelopes, height and setbacks

The DCP is addressed in the GMU report in Section 3 (page 17). We support this position and note that additional refinement to the scheme further improves integrates the built form by adopting the 4 storey street wall which is typical of the new developments at 16 to 34 Cross Street.

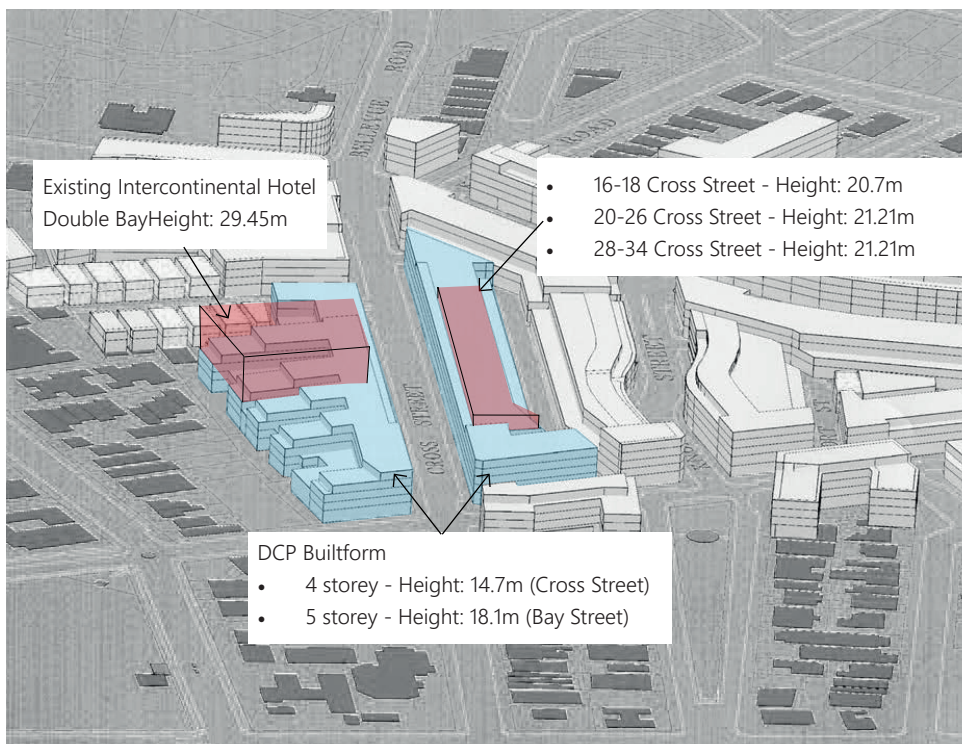


Figure 1: 3D view of building envelopes (Source: Woollahra Development Control Plan 2015)

The DCP envelope controls for the site are confused, and the planning strategy is inconsistent. As stated by GMU, *the current development pattern and height along Cross Street bears no resemblance to the current (DCP envelope) built form along Cross Street*. I also note that the recent approvals on the south side of Cross street have consistently breached the DCP.

GMU also note that the DCP diagram presents 4 storeys hard up against the street boundaries and heritage terraces at the street and then 2 storeys along the entire remainder of the side boundary,

which represents a poor relationship to the heritage streetscape. This view is also supported by John Oultram Heritage Response June 2021 and Stephen Davies, June 2021.

The DCP is contradicted by the Draft Double Bay Planning and Urban Design Strategy, which indicates a six-storey building on the site with a recessive corner. This consists of a 2 storey street wall facing Cross and Transvaal Streets and a large setback to 6 storeys.

PUBLIC DOMAIN STRATEGY

OUTDOOR DINNING

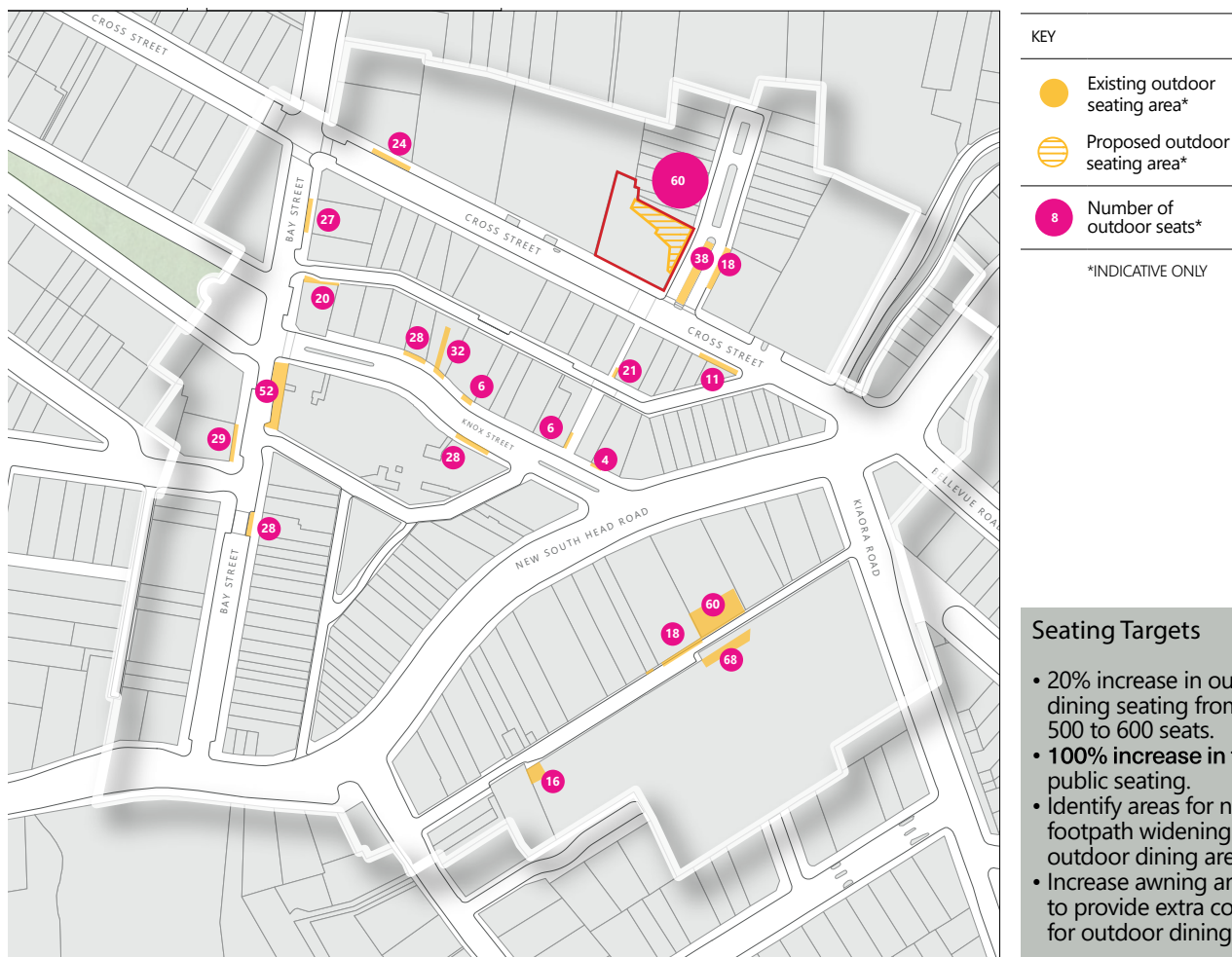


Figure 3: Outdoor Dining Location (Source: Double Bay Centre Public Domain Strategy, 2016)

- Proposed scheme offers approximately 60 outdoor dining seats in Double Bay Centre. This is 60% of the seating target in the Double Bay Centre Public Domain Strategy.
- Proposed scheme may offer fixed public seating if desired by Council
- The design offers footpath widening and new outdoor dining
- Cover is provided for the outdoor dining area with a colonnade

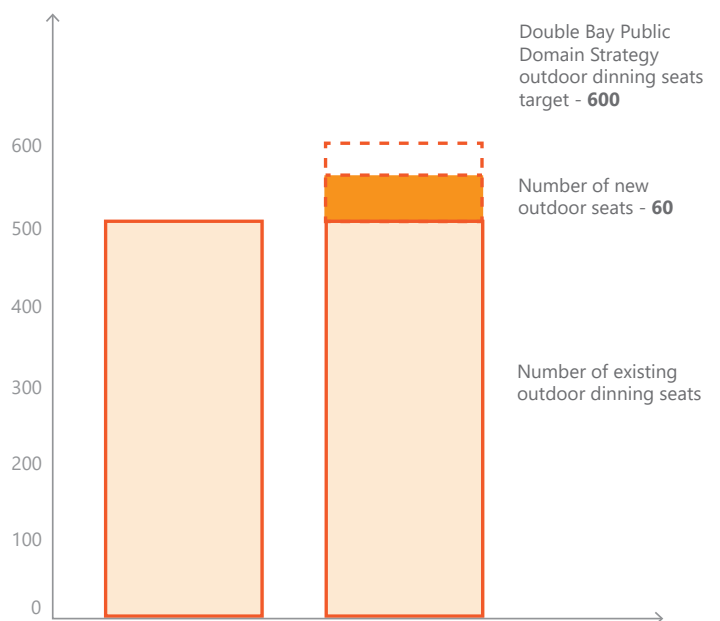


Chart: Number of Outdoor Dining Seats in Double Bay Centre

CONNECTIVITY



Figure 4: Laneways and Small Streets (Diagram based on Double Bay Centre Public Domain Strategy, 2016)

- Double Bay has a well established and fine grain pedestrian network. This is central to its identity and a characteristic which gives it urban depth and diversity.
- The block to the south of Cross Street it has an intersection density of 8 per Hectare (12 intersections in 1.5 Ha), whereas the subject block has only 1.4 per Hectare (6 intersections in 4.25 Ha). If the proposed link is realised, the ratio will increase to 2.1 per Hectare (9 intersections in 4.25 Ha).
- Proposed scheme transforms the southern edge of 2-3 Transvaal Avenue, instead of facing a service area, it faces an attractive public plaza
- The rear of 2 -16 Transvaal Avenue properties could be activated by the link to Galbraith Walkway
- InterContinental Site may connect to the new public plaza through existing arcade or if the site redevelops, it may turn to address the pedestrian link

WASTE MANAGEMENT

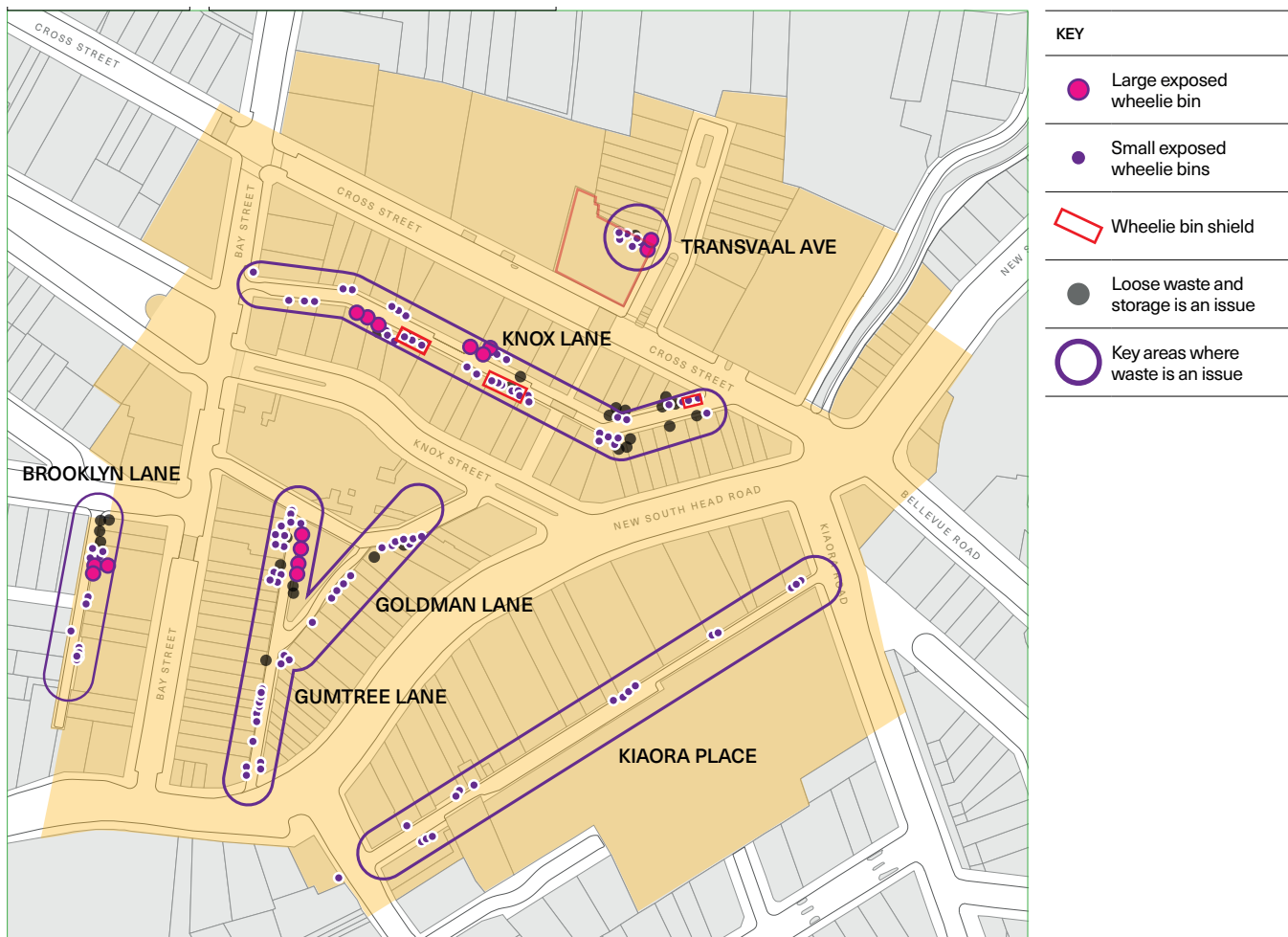


Figure 5: Waste Location (Source: Double Bay Centre Public Domain Strategy, 2016)

- The PDS identifies waste collection as a problem, since the plan seeks to improve the quality of the laneways.
- The subject site is the only identified waste location on a street all others in lanes.
- The proposed scheme will solve the waste collection issue by placing the garbage area in the basement
- Motorvehicle lifts will be used to transport waste to basement storage areas.



Large bins on Transvaal Avenue (Source: Double Bay Centre Public Domain Strategy, 2016)

DESIGN RESPONSE

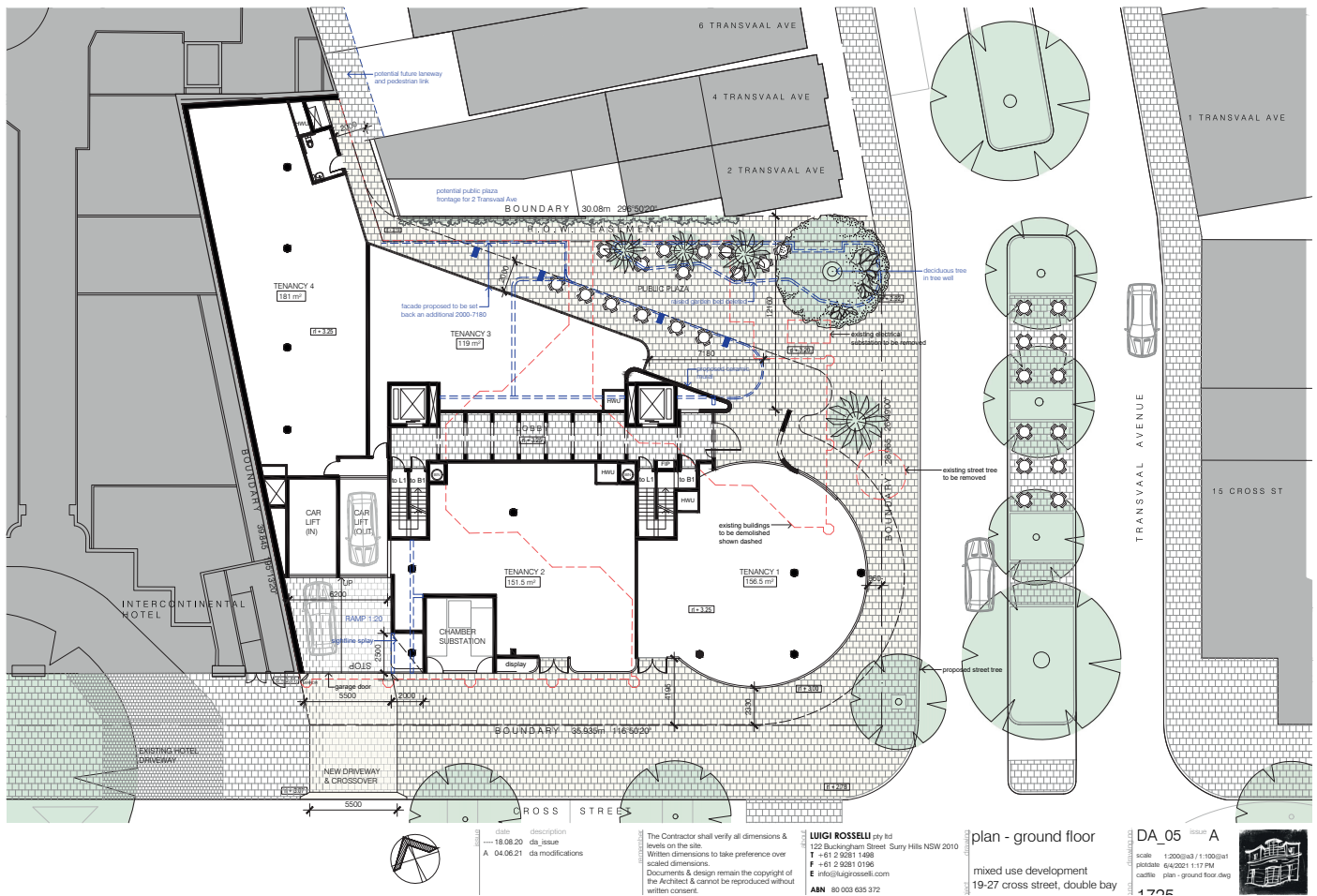


Figure 6: Ground Floor Plan (courtesy of Luigi Rosselli Architecture)

- The scheme consolidates vehicle access and servicing in a mid-block position adjacent to that of the Intercontinental
- Active frontage is maximised with retail display, shopfront and a graceful residential lobby
- The circular corner leads the eye and the visitor to the plaza
- The dining area on the median of Transvaal Avenue is effectively extended by the position of the proposed plaza
- The new plaza extends and diversifies the public domain, while serving both the subject and neighbouring sites
- The plaza creates potential for a pedestrian laneway to connect to the InterContinental or extend northward to Galbraith Walkway, thereby activating rear of the heritage properties
- The landscaped plaza creates a green separation from the heritage streetscape with a variety of plants including a significant deciduous tree in a well and vegetation cascading from balconies.

CONCLUSION

GMU accurately reflects the characteristics of the site's urban context, records the changing character of the precinct, and represents the impact of the proposal on Double Bay. The GMU report supports the original design proposal and has informed the proposal as amended by Luigi Roselli Architects in June 2021.

The proposal responds to the public domain opportunities for the site by increasing the variety of open space and introducing new outdoor dining. Furthermore, it contributes to the desired streetscape character by expressing the corner for the height of the building as seen in other recent development with a distinct curved corner and providing street and upper-level setbacks to Cross Street that align with the adjacent development.

The design resolves the dramatic scale interface along Transvaal Street with distinct separation. This allows the single-storey cottages to be read as a complete element on the two sides of Transvaal Street. The proposal presents simple horizontal and curvilinear lines with cascading greenery set behind a green courtyard.

The most recent modifications reflect the design philosophy which arose out of the design competition. Enlarging the courtyard ground plane extends the public domain. It also creates the potential to grow the fine-grained laneway system of Double Bay. The increased layback at the upper levels makes a distinct four-storey street wall to match the new buildings 16-18 Cross Street. The top-level avoids the ziggurat profile and creates diversity in the skyline with a standing seam mansard roof with distinctive curved dormers.

The proposed amended design should be strongly supported. The design represents an excellent architectural and urban response. It presents a non-generic place-making urban design response that solves its contextual issues while creating opportunities for other sites to participate in the fine-grained and varied urban environment of Double Bay.

Paul Walter 06 June, 2021