

Thursday, 15 February 2018

The General Manager
City of Parramatta
PO Box 32
Parramatta NSW 2124

Dear Sir,

RE: 286-300 Church Street, Parramatta – Heritage Advice Responding to Council's Letter of 15 November 2017

This letter of heritage advice is intended to be appended to the Statement of Heritage Impact (HIS) for this site by NBRSArchitecture, dated August 2017. The development design by PTW Architects has changed responding to the letter of advice from Parramatta City Council, dated 15 November 2017. The matters with heritage implications are discussed below, starting with the fabric of the subject site, and moving to broader urban design issues.

Heritage items I672 and I677

Following receipt of Council's issues letter dated 15 November 2017, a joint site visit with Parramatta City Council's Heritage Officer, Mr Zoran Popovic, was undertaken on 21 November 2017. During this site meeting it was discussed that there is some inaccuracy in the heritage inventories for these items on the State Heritage Register. However, we agreed that the two sandstone ashlar walls are the only visible above-ground features with heritage significance on the site of heritage item I672. In accordance with our discussions on-site, the applicant agrees to retain the sandstone ashlar walls perpendicular to Church Street.

The applicant agrees to retain and conserve the remains of the c1860s three-storey shop with a dwelling above at 300 Church Street (heritage item No. I677). It would be conserved according to *Burra Charter* principles. This includes reconstructing the missing detail from the sandstone façade, reconstructing the sash windows to early Victorian joinery design, and conserving the front two rooms on the first and second floors following the clues of the physical evidence.

Concerning the **archaeological potential of the neighbouring site at 302 Church Street**, on the corner with Phillip Street, this site has been built upon since at least 1822. The Parramatta plan of 1822 shows what was likely a small cottage on the corner of Church and Phillip Streets. While we have not seen anything on the site of 302 Church Street that appears to have heritage significance, there is a possibility of the site containing archaeological resources. We interpret the documentary evidence to say that there has never been any development common across 300 and 302 Church Street.

The above HIS for this site, dated August 2017, mentions that the sandstone wall adjacent to the boundary of No 302, but within the subject development, can be seen from the rear service yard of the shop at 302 Church Street. This wall is part of the heritage item at 300 Church Street that is a partly intact building from the 1860s. The applicant agrees that this wall will need to be conserved. This includes giving consideration to controlling water-borne salts in the lower part of the wall. The applicant will seek to control rising damp in the significant sandstone by working on the subject property. The concrete slab on the neighbouring property at No. 302 is likely to be exacerbating matters by withholding dampness in the soil until it can rise and evaporate through the sandstone wall. While problematic, a solution will be found to control damp rising through the wall at the foundation level, and will also include removing cement render from the sandstone wall, as far as can be advised as good heritage practise. After as much cement is removed from the wall as is

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appropriate, the wall will be conserved by inserting new sandstone blocks where the deterioration of a block threatens the integrity of the wall.

Façade Design

The proposed façade has been redesigned after discussion with Parramatta City Council. The revised design responds to the solidity of the nearby buildings along Church Street, which are at the same scale as the c1860s building. The wall openings respond to the geometry of the earlier building in a contemporary manner. The selected new façade material would be a contemporary response to the original sandstone. The revised podium facade is sympathetic to the heritage value of the retained building. The podium design will appropriately respond to the buildings with heritage significance along Church Street, namely a scale of two-to-three storeys, and masonry walls with vertically oriented openings.

Tower Setback

PTW Architects have prepared an updated urban design study, considering the implications of a 10m and 12m setback for the tower from Church Street. A 10m setback for the tower from the Church Street boundary has been shown to have much the same urban design quality as a 12m setback. A model of views along Church and Phillip Streets prepared by PTW Architects dated 13 February 2018 demonstrates from a heritage point of view that there would be negligible difference between a setback of 10 and 12 m for the tower, as viewed when looking down the centre of Church Street. A 10m setback for the tower is sufficient to make the podium a distinct urban form that blends with the traditional scale of commercial development along both sides of Church Street.

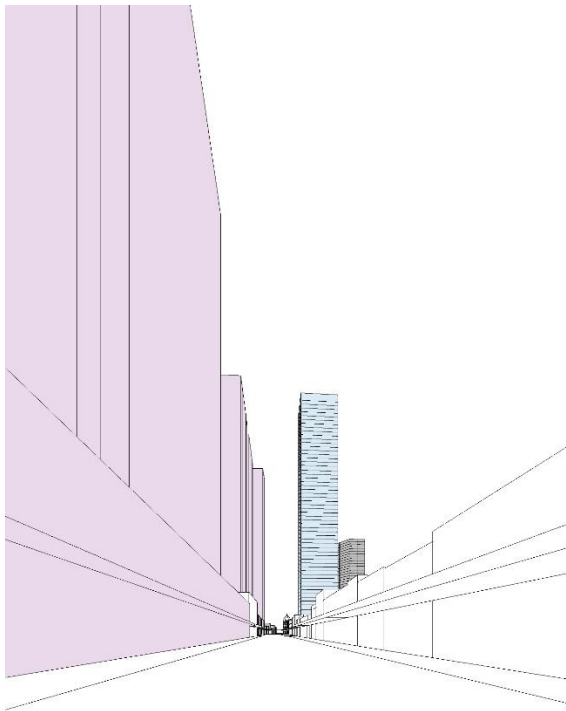


Figure 1 — northerly view along Church Street showing the proposed development massing (blue) with a 10m setback of the tower from Church Street, by PTW.

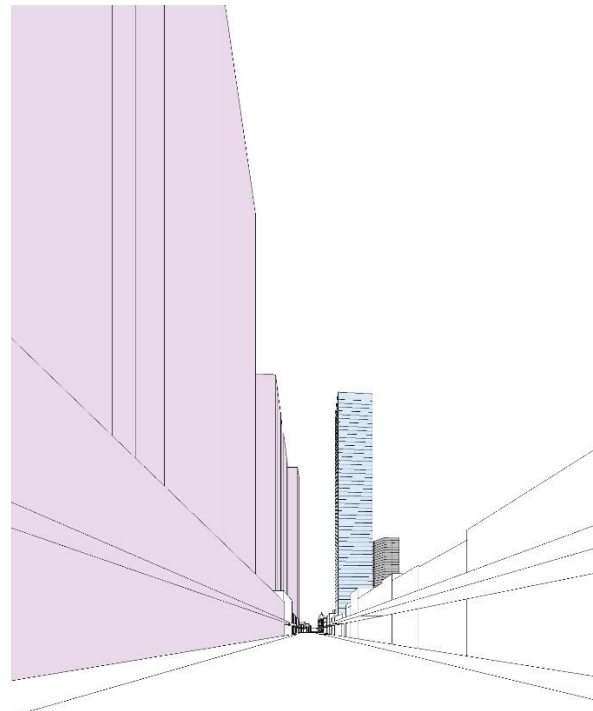


Figure 2 — northerly view along Church Street showing the proposed development massing (blue) with a 12m setback of the tower from Church Street, by PTW.

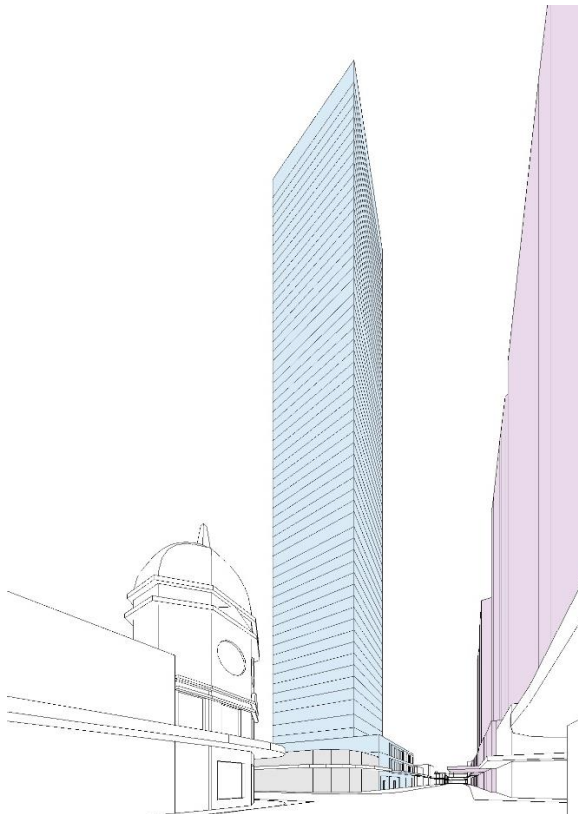


Figure 3 – southerly view along Church Street showing the proposed development massing with a 10m setback of the tower from Church Street, by PTW.

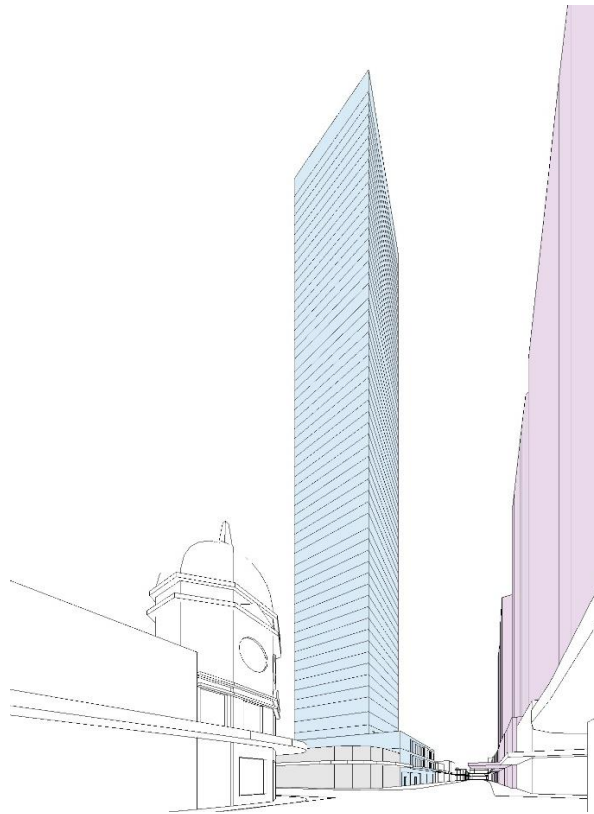


Figure 4 – southerly view along Church Street showing the proposed development massing with a 12m setback of the tower from Church Street, by PTW.

Podium Form

An urban design study has been prepared by PTW Architects concerning a **three-storey podium** along the Church Street frontage of the subject site, and extending around Phillip Street across the site of 302 Church Street. This demonstrates that a three-storey podium scale would be appropriate to continue the scale of the conserved heritage item at 300 Church Street, and fit into the wider streetscape of Church Street. It would also be an appropriate scale to retain the prominence of the domed heritage item on the north-east corner of Church and Phillip Streets. We believe that 302 Church Street is unlikely to achieve a floor space ratio of much more than 3:1 with regard to urban design. From a heritage point of view, the property at 302 Church Street has limited development potential.

If you have any questions about these matters, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Faithfully,
NBRSARCHITECTURE.

Brad Vale
Senior Heritage Consultant