



HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

MEETING MINUTES – Approvals Committee

Tuesday, 31 October 2023 | 9:00 – 11:15 AM

via teleconference

ATTENDANCE

Members

Mr Ian Clarke	Chair
Dr Nicholas Brunton	Deputy Chair
Dr Caitlin Allen	Member
Mr David Burdon	Member
Ms Vanessa Holtham	Member
Dr Danièle Hromek	Member
Ms Julie Marler	Member
Mr David McNamara	Member
Mr Bruce Pettman	Member

Apologies

Mr Frank Howarth AM PSM	Heritage Council Chair / Alternate Member
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External Presenters

Mr Richard Francis-Jones	Director, FJC Studio (item 2.1)
Mr Johnathan Redman	Architect, FJC Studio (item 2.1)
Mr Stephen Davies	Director, Urbis (item 2.1)
Ms Samara Allen	Senior Consultant, Urbis (item 2.1)
Mr Stephen Hathway	President, Royal Automobile Club (item 2.1)
Mr Michael Harrison	Vice President, Royal Automobile Club (item 2.1)
Mr Mark Sheldon	Member, Property Committee, Royal Automobile Club (item 2.1)

Heritage NSW

Mr Tim Smith	Director Heritage Assessments
Mr Rajeev Maini	Manager Assessments (item 2.1)
Ms Mariyam Nizam	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.1)
Ms Lindsey Nguyen	Graduate, Customer Service (item 2.1)
Ms Elizabeth Thomas	Senior Secretariat Officer

1. Welcome and formalities

The Chair, Ian Clarke, opened the meeting at 9:00 AM.

- The Chair delivered an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed attendees.
- Apologies were noted for this meeting.
- It was confirmed that a quorum had been met.

1.1 Conflict of Interest Declarations

Danièle Hromek declared a potential perceived conflict of interest for *Item 2.1 Royal Automobile Club – prelodgement consultation* noting her work on with the Macquarie Street East Precinct which is located in the nearby vicinity. It was agreed no further action was required.

Moved by Caitlin Allen and seconded by Julie Marler

1.2 Out of Session Decisions

There were no out of session decisions made since the previous ordinary meeting.

1.3 Minutes from Previous Meeting – 3 October 2023

Resolution 2023-36

The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:

1. **Confirms** the minutes of the previous ordinary meeting (Tuesday, 3 October 2023), as a complete and accurate record of that meeting.

Moved by Vanessa Holtham and seconded by Bruce Pettman

1.4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1.5 Action Report

The Committee noted the action report. The register was updated to reflect further actions required.

2. External Presentations

2.1 Royal Automobile Club (SHR 00700) – prelodgement consultation

The Committee received a report from Heritage NSW and discussed the process for an incentive scheme approach and heritage floor space calculations.

FJC Studio presented the key aspects of the heritage listing and development proposal, noting:

- the options chronology, building envelope controls, structural elements, building profile, revised building setbacks and GFA, proposed massing, sightlines and concept plans
- the response to the Heritage Council's previous feedback and the significant building maintenance upgrades and ongoing maintenance needs to ensure the long term viability for the building
- the assessment of significance and the relationship to Macquarie Street and context considered in the proposed concept design.

Members questioned how the existing heritage building will integrate with the new build and discussed the pedestrian movement and location of lifts, lightwell, guest accommodation, function rooms and bar, restaurant and event spaces for patrons and proposed process for BCA approvals.

Members encouraged further engagement with the City of Sydney and welcomed the RACA's invitation to view the site together with the City of Sydney and the project's structural engineer.

The Committee thanked FJC Studio and the Royal Automobile Club of Australia (RACA) for the presentation and looked forward to further engagement as the IDA progresses.

Following the presentation, members discussed:

- the improvements to the street frontage and the overall design concept scheme
- the proposed building height
- the need for the retention of heritage fabric and the proposed level of intervention to be clearly articulated, and
- the need for more detailed design including the architectural landscape elements and how the design responds to the place and Connection with Country and culture.

The Committee emphasised the need to work collaboratively with the City of Sydney as the development application progresses and suggested the proposal also be considered by the Heritage Council's Technical Advisory Panel.

Resolution 2023-37

The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:

1. **Notes** the paper and the **thanks** the applicant for their presentation, and work to address the feedback on the previous proposal.
2. **Supports**, in principle, the proposed extension of the RAC building and its use as a hotel.
3. **Provides** the following comments to the applicant:
 - a. The Royal Automobile Club building is located within the boundaries of the National Heritage Listing of Governors Domain and Civic Precinct. It is also located in close proximity to the world heritage buffer zone and several prominent SHR listed places and plays an important role within the historic precinct.
 - b. Modifications to the RAC building require deeper consideration and reflection on the historically and aesthetically rich context and character of this precinct, and how the design responds to the place and Connection with Country and culture, particularly the proposed terrace, which is potentially an important new publicly accessible space.
 - c. Provide greater details around the proposed interventions to the current building such as the lightwell, the lift overrun, terrace design, configuration of existing rooms, BCA compliance and fire safety, and the building structural capacity.
 - d. Requests that the applicant engages with the City of Sydney Council together with the Heritage Council for further feedback prior to lodgement of an Integrated Development Application.
 - e. Refer the Integrated Development Application to the Heritage Council's Technical Advisory Panel to consider the impact on the existing structure, finishes of the heritage building and include adequate technical/structural feasibility analysis that would alleviate the concerns raised for the integrity of the building.
 - f. The Approvals Committee welcomes the opportunity for an onsite meeting and inspection to be held together with the City of Sydney and the project's structural engineer.

Moved by Vanessa Holtham and seconded by Bruce Pettman

David McNamara left the meeting at 10:30 AM

3.0 General Business

3.1 Forward agenda

The Committee noted the forward agenda.

Members held a broader discussion around the renewed pressure on housing targets for the state and the need for government to engage with the Heritage Council early in the planning phase to identify any potential impacts to heritage areas.

The Committee looks forward to participating in the *NSW Heritage Strategy* stakeholder engagement which is due to commence soon.

3.2 Consideration of ACH values

Members discussed how best to communicate the need for proponents to fully consider the heritage interpretation and ACH values for their proposals and noted that Heritage NSW is currently updating the ACH guidance material with the Heritage Council, including reference to the Government Architect's *Connecting with Country* policy framework.

The Committee suggested the guidance material also refer to the *National Standards of Competency* which seeks consideration of the health and wellbeing of Country and responses to impacts to Country. Danièle Hromek offered to provide input into any future guidance material with regard to consideration of ACH values.

4.0 Meeting Close

There being no further items of business, Ian Clarke, Chair, declared the Approvals Committee meeting closed at 11:15 AM



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Mr Ian Clarke
Chair, Heritage Council Approvals Committee
Date: 5 December 2023