

3-17 Darling Point Road, Darling Point - Statement of Heritage Impact

12 February 2021

The General Manager
Woollahra Municipal Council
PO Box 61
Double Bay NSW 1360



Dear Sir/Madam

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT 3-17 DARLING POINT ROAD, DARLING POINT

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared to accompany a development application for proposed alterations and additions to 3-17 Darling Point Road, Darling Point.

The report evaluates the proposed development, designed by Scott Carver. It concludes that the proposal will have an acceptable heritage impact.

REPORT OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Statement of Heritage Impact is to determine the suitability of the design and the heritage impact of the proposal in relation to the provisions established by Woollahra Council and Heritage NSW (in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet) guidelines.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

This Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013, known as The Burra Charter, and Heritage NSW (formerly the Heritage Office in the Heritage Division) publication, NSW Heritage Manual.

The Burra Charter provides definitions for terms used in heritage conservation and proposes conservation processes and principles for the conservation of an item. The terminology used, particularly the words place, cultural significance, fabric, and conservation, is as defined in Article 1 of *The Burra Charter*. The *NSW Heritage Manual* explains and promotes the standardisation of heritage investigation, assessment and management practices in NSW.

SITE IDENTIFICATION

The subject site is located on the east side of Darling Point Road near the intersection with New South Head Road. It is described by NSW Land Registry Services (LRS) as SP4680.

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Figure 1
Aerial image of the location with the subject site shaded yellow
Source: SIX maps



HERITAGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The subject site at 3-17 Darling Point Road, Darling Point is **not** listed as a heritage item in Schedule 5 of the *Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014*, (LEP) as an item of local heritage significance. It is however, located in the vicinity of a number of listed heritage items and as noted below.

As such, the property is subject to the heritage provisions of the *Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014* and the *Development Control Plan (DCP) 2015* under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Woollahra Council must take into consideration the potential impact of any proposed development on the heritage significance of the heritage items.

REPORT LIMITATIONS

While this report is limited to the analysis of European cultural heritage values, GBA Heritage recognises that for over forty thousand years or more Aboriginal people occupied the land that was later to be claimed as a European settlement.

Recommendations have been made on the basis of documentary evidence viewed and inspection of the existing fabric. Archaeological assessment of the subject site is outside the scope of this report. This report only addresses the relevant heritage planning provisions and does not address general planning or environmental management considerations.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The site is located on the east side of Darling Point Road, back from the corner of New South Head Road. Darling Point Road rises quite steeply from the New South Head Road intersection, and thus the elevated site affords a commanding position in the area. The area is located near the Edgecliff Centre and railway station.

The site at 3-17 Darling Point Road is known as 'Ranelagh', the name of the original 1850's three storey stone residence. The present 31 storey tower replaced 'Ranelagh' in the late 1960's and was completed in December 1969. The 9,300m² site also contains a historic sandstone residence near the east boundary, however it is not heritage listed.

The existing high-rise tower has a facade configuration with a vertical emphasis, consisting of a mixture of off-white panels/columns, light brown panels and glazed voids with various window shades. The result is a highly patterned visual appearance.

ESTABLISHED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ITEMS IN THE VICINITY OF THE SUBJECT SITE

There are a number of individually listed heritage items in the vicinity of the subject site (Figure 2). These are listed as items of Local heritage significance on Schedule 5 of the *Woollahra LEP 2014*.

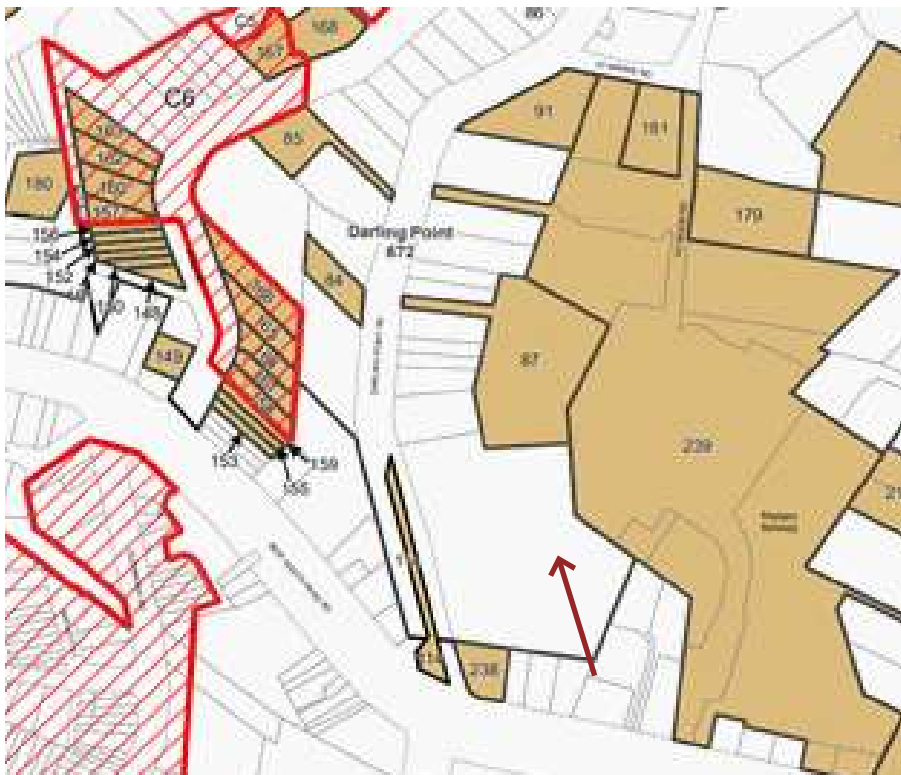


Figure 2
LEP heritage map with the subject site indicated with a red arrow. The Local heritage listed items are shaded brown and the Conservation Areas are cross-hatched and outlined in red
Source: Legislation NSW website, Heritage map HER 003

The NSW Heritage Inventory contains the following Statements of Significance for these items:

Building and Interiors (Item 238)
136 New South Head Road, Edgecliff
Database entry number 2711280

No Statement of Significance in the Inventory

Concrete Balustrade (Item 114)

Corner of Darling Point Road and New South Head Road

Database entry number 2710210

The concrete balustrade and retaining wall dividing Darling Point Road into two levels is significant for its association with early road works in the Woollahra Municipality. It has aesthetic significance for its style and detail and as an example of the decorative form given to road works in the district.

Ascham school precinct (Item 239)

188 New South Head Road, Edgecliff

Database entry number 2711281

Ascham School is one of the oldest independent private schools for girls in Australia. Distinguished by its innovative educational method (the Dalton method), the precinct is a microcosm of European history of Darling Point. It contains the Octagon (designed by Ambrose Hallen in 1832), considered the first building on the point and other early houses such as Dower House (1850) and Fiona (1864), both designed by Architect J.F. Hilly, Glenrock (designed by David MacBeath, 1874), Raine House (formerly Yeomerry, by Maurice Halligan, c1909), Hillingdon (Herbert Wardell, 1909), Holmwood (1910) and Duntrim (Maurice Halligan, 1911).

The site is associated with notable persons of New South Wales – Colonial Architect Ambrose Hallen, the eminent Architect John Frederick Hilly, the prominent figure of Sir Edward Knox, the educator Margaret Bailey and the Littlejohn family.

The precinct contains a rare collection of architecturally fine houses with historic, aesthetic and representative significance, most of which are intact with their intact original front garden spaces. The Octagon is a distinguished work of Georgian colonial architecture, the only known extant example of the work of Ambrose Hallen, Colonial Architect. Fiona is an exceptional Italianate villa by leading Victorian architect J. F. Hilly.

The precinct, including its buildings, trees, memorials, archives and ephemera, provides a unique resource into the history of the school. As one of the oldest non-denominational girls' schools in Sydney, established in 1886, it is held in high esteem by students, staff and parents, past and present. The site, its buildings and grounds, together with the Ascham archives held on site, are an important resource for the history of the education of girls in NSW and Australia. The introduction of the Dalton Plan to the school in 1922, and its continued use in educating Ascham students is unique in NSW, and possibly Australia.

'Duntrim' - building and interiors (formerly a house) and grounds (Item 87)

37 Darling Point Road, Darling Point

Database entry number 5067388

Built in c1911 for William Taylor Macpherson, Duntrim has historical, representative and associative significance as demonstrating Darling Point's historic subdivision of the Glanworth Estate, a c.1852 house that was demolished soon after the 1908 subdivision. Duntrim is a late Federation dwelling (c. 1911) that was erected directly over Glanworth's sandstone walls.

Duntrim has associative significance with various individuals and organisations. Glanworth was built for William Taylor Macpherson (1865-1922) who was managing partner of hardware firm Holdsworth,



Figure 3

The subject high-rise apartment building from New South Head Road towards the east. The heritage listed items in the vicinity are the light coloured Interwar former bank (Item 238) on the corner with Darling Point Road, and the concrete balustrade in the foreground (Item 114) Note the colours of the subject tower, the right hand light brown vertical panel is more recessive than the lighter coloured, centre left panel
 Source: Nearmap



Figure 4

New South Head Road towards the west, with the heritage listed property of Ascham School on the right. Note the light brown panel of the subject tower is more compatible with the sandstone of the school building that is behind the shops
 Source: Nearmap



Figure 5

Darling Point Road towards the south, with the north elevation of the tower building and the garden of the subject property. Note the heritage listed concrete balustrade in the foreground, the dark coloured bricks of the Interwar flats on the left, and the use of sandstone for property boundary walls

Source: Nearmap

Macpherson and Co. Macpherson named the property Duntruim after the area in Scotland from which they originated. It was designed by Architect Maurice B. Halligan or architectural firm Halligan and Wilton, well-known for designing large dwellings for prominent families in the early 20th century. It is also associated with the Cohen, a well known early family of Darling Point who purchased it in the 1920s and held it until 1950s when they sold it to NSW Health.

Exhibiting substantial scale, landmark location, mature historic garden setting, representative Arts and Crafts features, and substantially intact interiors, Duntrim is a substantial representative example of the Arts and Crafts style of Maurice B. Halligan. The 1920's additions and the more recent alterations are generally either sympathetic or reversible. As a rare intact Arts & Crafts house in Darling Point, it has aesthetic and representative significance. The building is part of a group of extant substantial landmark mansions and historic buildings which sit atop the crest of the Darling Point peninsula. As a historic group they contribute to a historic precinct which reflects the early subdivisions, grand mansions and historic character of the area.

The building was used by Sydney Hospital as a nurses' home from 1954 until 1981, after which it became the State Government's Sydney Dialysis Centre until the present time. It has been a community health facility for over 50 years. The site has social significance to the staff, patients and families during its use as the Sydney Hospital and the Sydney Dialysis Centre, and to relatives of the Macpherson and Cohen families. The building and grounds are also recognised by the local community as a landmark site of historical value to the local area.

The Norfolk Island pine is a landmark in the local area and is listed on Woollahra Council's Register of Significant Trees. The pine and other mature trees on the site contribute to its aesthetic landscape setting.

The site has archaeological potential in relation to the former Victorian Mansion Glanworth, on which Duntrim was built on, and the cultural and structural remains of early Duntrim occupation.

A few trees are of heritage significance. Two trees are typical of the late Victorian period and may have been planted in association with Glanworth house:

- Ficus Macrophylla (Moreton Bay Fig), very high landscape significance, high retention value;*
- Araucaria heterophylla (Norfolk Island Pine), significant landscape significance, high retention value;*

Six trees are typical of Federation period and probably planted in association with Duntrim (c1910-20)

- Magnolia grandiflora (Bullbay Magnolia), high landscape significance, moderate retention value*
- Phoenix canariensis (Canary Island Palm), moderate landscape significance, moderate retention value*
- Schefflera actinophylla (Umbrella Tree), low landscape significance, low retention value*
- 3 Howea forsteriana (Kentia Palm), high landscape significance, moderate retention value.*

Other listed heritage items in the wider locality are separated from the subject site by intervening development/distance/roadways/buildings/local topography/public domain, and have little direct visual connection to the site.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The development application has been prepared by Scott Carver. The proposal is detailed in the plans and Statement of Environmental Effects that accompany this application. It includes the external refurbishment of an existing residential high-rise tower:

- Re-cladding the tower in new materials with a new colour scheme of dark tones of sandstone and grey
- Enlargement of windows to full height
- Balcony/facade reconfiguration
- A new port-cochere at the entrance to the building
- A new DDA access lift from the carpark levels to the lobby.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

OVERVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL HERITAGE IMPACTS

The proposed refurbishment of the existing residential tower in the context of heritage listed items would have a positive impact based on the following:

- The heritage items, and the precinct in general, have a colour palette of brown stone/brick and grey shades with an overlay of mature trees and vegetation
- The existing tower has solid elements predominately of light coloured materials that tends to stand out more than the darker voids of window openings and the brown vertical panels. The existing colour composition has greater contrast between light and dark, than the proposal that has a consistency of dark colour tones.
- The proposed use of darkish colours for the re-cladding, not only relates more to the colours of the built environment, but are recessive in context. This established approach of the use of recessive colours, is usually more suitable in terms of heritage conservation, with the new structures recessive appearance as a form of mitigation relative to the heritage items in the vicinity.

CONSIDERATION OF THE GUIDELINES OF HERITAGE NSW

Heritage NSW (formerly the Heritage Office in the Heritage Division) has published a series of criteria for the assessment of heritage impact. The relevant 'questions to be answered' in the *NSW Heritage Manual* 'Statements of Heritage Impact', provided below, have been considered in the preparation of our assessment:

The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the adjacent items for the following reasons:

- With the use of dark colours of sandstone and shades of grey, including grey tinted glass, the refurbished facade will present as a more visually recessive structure in the urban landscape.
- The proposed palette of colours has less contrast than the existing facade, thus reducing visual 'clutter'.
- The proposed colour tones relate to the colour shades of the heritage items, that is sandstone and greys.

New Development Adjacent to a Heritage Item

- *How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?*
- *Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item?*
- *How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?*
- *How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?*
- *Is the development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?*
- *Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?*
- *Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?*
- *Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?*

Comments:

- The proposed refurbishment colours would reduce the visual impact of the existing contrasting colours of the subject tower, including from a light colour to more consistently dark tones.
- The high-rise tower at 3-17 Darling Point Road was completed in 1969, and therefore has an established presence in the precinct. This was at a time before any of the nearby properties were heritage listed and before applicable legislation. Thus in the decades later with the assessment of heritage significance of the adjacent buildings, the Council would have had to take into account the existence of the subject tower in the listing criteria of the items.
- The curtilage of the heritage listed items does not change, nor do the location of any alterations and additions, impact views to or from the heritage items.
- The proposed refurbishment of the facade materials and colours would improve the appearance of the tower, presenting a more recessive, uniform background to the heritage items in the vicinity.
- In the context of a high-rise tower, the proposed improvement to the building entrance with a porte cochere would have little impact, given its elevated position in the urban topography. Similarly the proposed DDA lift will have little heritage impact as it is relatively concealed.
- The proposed refurbishment of the subject property has no bearing on the fabric or presence of the heritage listed items, and therefore they will still be able to be appreciated by the users and public.

HERITAGE OBJECTIVES OF THE WOOLLAHRA LEP 2014

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable, from a heritage perspective, for the following reasons:

- The proposal does not have any fabric or adverse visual impact on the heritage items in the vicinity.
- The re-cladding of the tower, with a recessive colour scheme, will improve the setting of the property.
- Retains views to and from the adjacent heritage items.

The proposal is, therefore, considered to be consistent with the relevant heritage objectives of the *Woollahra LEP 2014*, which are:

5.10 Heritage conservation

(1) Objectives

The objectives of this clause are as follows:

- (a) to conserve the environmental heritage of Woollahra,*
- (b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,*

HERITAGE GUIDELINES OF THE WOOLLAHRA DCP 2015

The proposed development is generally consistent with the guidelines of the *Woollahra DCP 2015* that relate to the development of properties adjacent to heritage items.

The site is located in the *Darling Point Precinct (B1.2)*, which is characterised by:

The built environment is notable for the wide variety of architectural styles and housing types. (p5)

Although the precinct has a large number of heritage items, the DCP recognises the diversity of building types and accepts that:

Where an existing building does not comprise historic or aesthetic value, sympathetic contemporary design is permitted.

The analysis in the preceding sections of this report demonstrates that the proposal is consistent with these objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

- 3-17 Darling point Road is **not** listed as an item of local heritage significance in Schedule 5 of the *Woollahra LEP 2014* nor on any statutory instrument.
- It is located adjacent to the listed heritage items at 136 New South Head Road, Concrete Balustrade on the corner of New South Head Road and Darling Point Road, Ascham School, and 37 Darling Point Road.
- All other listed heritage items in the wider locality are separated from the subject site by intervening development/distance/roadways/buildings/local topography/public domain, and have little direct visual connection to the site.
- The proposed alterations and additions to 3-17 Darling Point Road will have an acceptable impact on the heritage significance of the adjacent properties identified above.

- There are no views between the subject site and the heritage items in the vicinity that have been identified as contributing factors to the cultural heritage significance of any of these places.
- The proposed alterations and additions to 3-17 Darling Point Road are limited to the exterior facade of the building, the front entrance and a DDA lift.
- The proposed development is consistent with the heritage requirements and guidelines of the *Woollahra LEP 2014* and the *Woollahra DCP 2015*.
- Should any unexpected relics be disturbed during excavation of the site, they must be managed under the Archaeological provisions of the *NSW Heritage Act*.
- The proposed refurbishment is for an existing building, which predates the heritage listing of the properties in the vicinity.

RECOMMENDATION

Council should have no hesitation, from a heritage perspective, in approving this development application.

Yours faithfully,
GBA Heritage Pty Ltd



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