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# **HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT**

Adina Central, Former Parcels  
Post Office, 2 Lee Street,  
Haymarket

Prepared for  
**TOGA PTY LTD**  
26 November 2020

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The subject site is located at 2 Lee Street, Haymarket and is listed as an item of local significance under Schedule 5 of the Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012, 'Former Parcels Post Office including retaining wall, early lamp post and building interior', Item 855 and is also included within the Central Railway Station State heritage listing, Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group, SHR 01255. The site is not listed independently on the State Heritage Register.

The proposed works are detailed in Section 1.6. TOGA (the proponent) is proposing to redevelop their land holdings in the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct, immediately adjoining Central Station, for a mixed-use development including a world-class hotel, commercial floorspace, and high-quality retail floorspace. The development is proposed in conjunction with the designation of Central Station as a State Significant Precinct (SSP) and the identification of the Western Gateway Sub- Precinct (of which the subject site is part) as the first sub-precinct identified for renewal within the SSP. The intent of the renewal is to deliver an innovation and technology precinct. In October 2019, Transport for NSW (TNSW) submitted a Planning Proposal to rezone two of the three 'Blocks' within the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, including amending planning controls to allow for maximum buildings heights and floor space. The Planning Proposal was placed on public exhibition between 16 October 2019 and 27 November 2019 and gazetted 13 August 2020.

This Heritage Impact Statement is submitted in support of a rezoning application for Block C of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct (as set out in section 1.6).. The rezoning facilitates a future SSDA for works to the subject site which will include the restoration of the heritage-listed hotel building on the site, new commercial floorspace and public domain improvements that will collectively deliver the Government's vision for an iconic technology precinct and transport gateway. New diverse public spaces will connect the city, and improved pedestrian connectivity will provide efficient modal changes aligned with NSW Transport objectives.

The proponent has considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form. The proposed tower envelope is partly built over the heritage item and partly over the plaza to the south. This offset form of separation and suspension creates a physical and visual curtilage for the former Parcels Post building and enables the building and tower to be read independently, with the heritage item maintaining its prominence in the streetscape and views. The proposed development of the subject Block C is consistent with the strategic vision for the future redevelopment of the station and surrounds in terms of scale and will form part of a new urban node of city scale development. The proposed envelope has been assessed and is supported having regard for the robust nature of the building, the restrained and modified interiors and previous structural interventions for the roof addition. The form also enables the 'heritage ensemble' of buildings at the George, Pitt, Quay St and Broadway intersections, including Marcus Clarke, to read with distinction, with the new tower (and associated development of Blocks A and B of the subject Western Gateway) forming a backdrop.

The proposal also presents a significant opportunity to enhance the site via the conservation of the building façades which are in poor condition, reinstatement of the significant open plan interiors and through enhanced public access and activation, as well as heritage interpretation.

The potential cumulative impacts of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct development have been considered in section 6.5. It is acknowledged that the setting of the Parcels Post building will be irrevocably altered in conjunction with the proposed development of the western gateway sub-precinct, public domain and future OSD, however its historical associations and visual connections will remain apparent and are able to be interpreted. The respective Block A and B assessments have generally found that while the prominence of the Parcels Post would be reduced by larger taller buildings adjacent to it, impacts were able to be mitigated by siting, massing, materials and articulation in accordance with the heritage design guidelines – for instance in the application of a lower scale podium for Block B which responds to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century datum of development.

Future development will be subject to a Design Competition and Design Excellence process. A State Significant Development Application will be submitted and will include a Conservation Management Plan (CMP), Heritage Interpretation Strategy, Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA). A Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) has been submitted with this HIS (see section 6.8) and should inform development of the CMP and future development proposal for the site.

Future detailed design should seek to further mitigate impacts including (but not limited to) consideration of setbacks and modulation of the tower form within the envelope, façade design, materiality, interface to new tower cores, structural solutions and works to the ground plane. The proposal and broader precinct

development also presents opportunities for conservation, improved activation and interpretation of the Parcels Post and the broader precincts significant cultural heritage values.

The subject rezoning proposal has been subject to consultation with the Design Review Panel as well as the City of Sydney Council and Heritage NSW (as outlined in section 1.7). Consultation has informed the planning proposal and will continue to inform future development of the scheme (an outline for future engagement is provided in section 1.8).

The proposal provides for the retention of the heritage item, as part of a larger redevelopment of the site and responds to the strategic objectives for growth in the southern CBD, the Central Precinct Renewal Program and the nomination of Central Precinct as a State Significant Precinct (SSP) as well as the gazetted rezoning for Blocks A and B of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct.



# 1. THE SUBJECT PROPOSAL IS SUPPORTED ON HERITAGE GROUNDS, SUBJECT TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED IN SECTION 7.1.INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

Urbis has been engaged by Toga Pty Ltd to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement. TOGA is the long-term Crown leaseholder of the site within the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct of the Central Station State Significant Precinct (Central Precinct). It is understood that this HIS would form part of a submission to Transport to NSW (TfNSW) to inform the preparation of a planning framework and rezoning application for Block C of the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct.

## 1.2. SITE LOCATION

The site is located at 2 Lee Street, Haymarket (Figure 1). The site is legally described as Lot 30 Deposited Plan 877478. Haymarket is a suburb located at the southern end of the Sydney central business district. The site is an irregular quadrilateral shape and is located adjacent to Central Station.



Figure 1 – Locality map with approximate location of subject site indicated by highlight

Source: NSW LRS, SIX Maps 2019 NSW LRS, SIX Maps 2019

## 1.3. HERITAGE LISTING

### 1.3.1. Statutory Listings

The subject site is listed as an item of local significance under Schedule 5 of the Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012, 'Former Parcels Post Office including retaining wall, early lamp post and building interior', Item 855 (refer to Figure 2).

The site is also included within the Central Railway Station State heritage listing, Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group, SHR 01255 (refer to Figure 3). It is not listed independently on the State Heritage Register.

The site is located in proximity to a number of heritage items as listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Heritage items in proximity to site

Item Name	Address	Significance	Item No.
Central Railway Station group including buildings, station yard, viaducts and building interiors	-	State	1824*
Former warehouse "Canada House" including interior	822 George Street	Local	1181
Former Bank of NSW including interior	824–826 George Street	Local	1182
Railway Square road overbridge	George Street	State	1180
Marcus Clark Building, Sydney Technical College (Building W) including interior	827–837 George Street	Local	1850*
Former commercial building "Orchard's Chambers" including interior	793–795 George Street	Local	1847*
Commercial building group including interiors	767–791 George Street	Local	1844*
Former Lottery Office including interior	814 George Street	Local	1848*
Commercial building (851–855 George Street) including interior	732 Harris Street	Local	12038

Additionally, it is noted that Prince Alfred Park is located to the south of Central Station, (Item 1406, Local Significance). Whilst this item is not located in the immediate vicinity of the site, the impact assessment (refer to Section6) discusses that the potential impact of the proposal on this public open space.

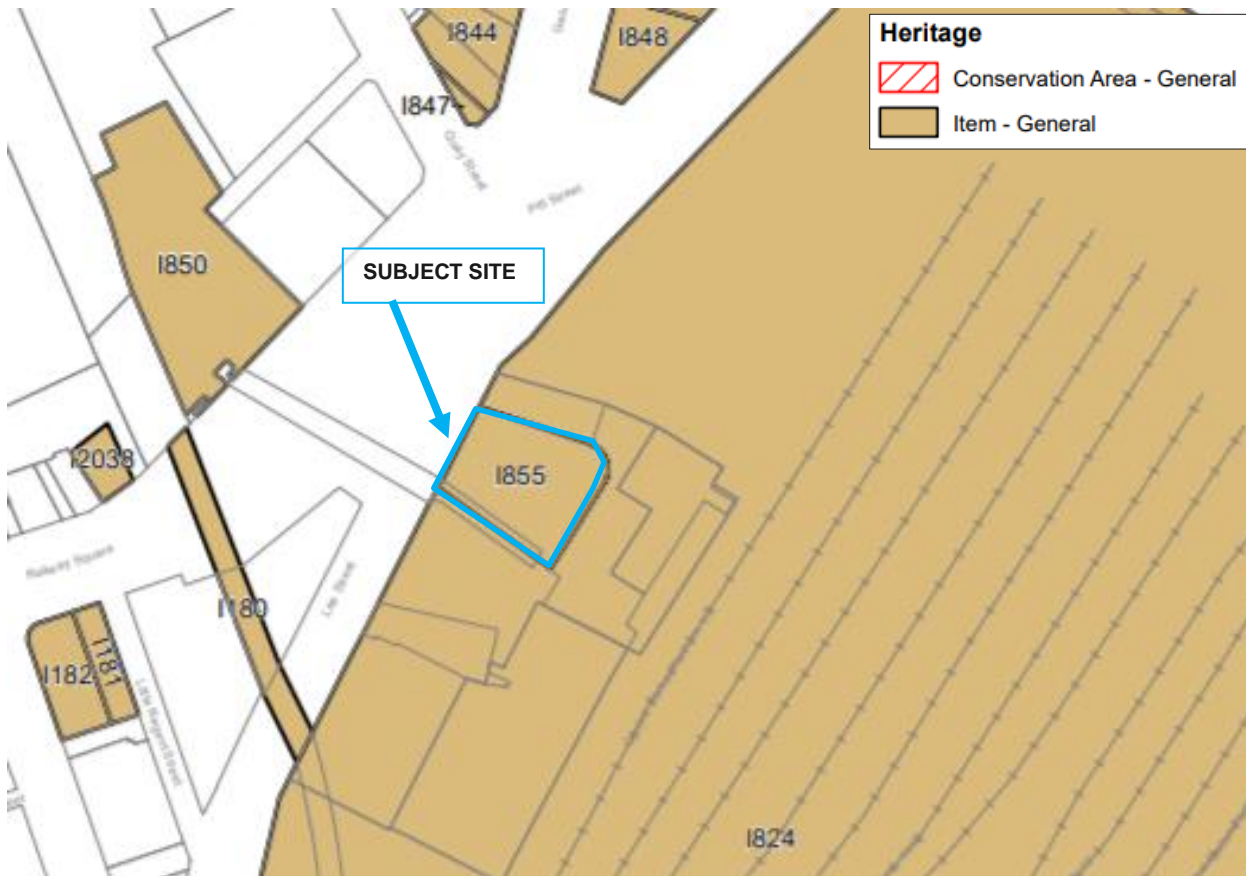
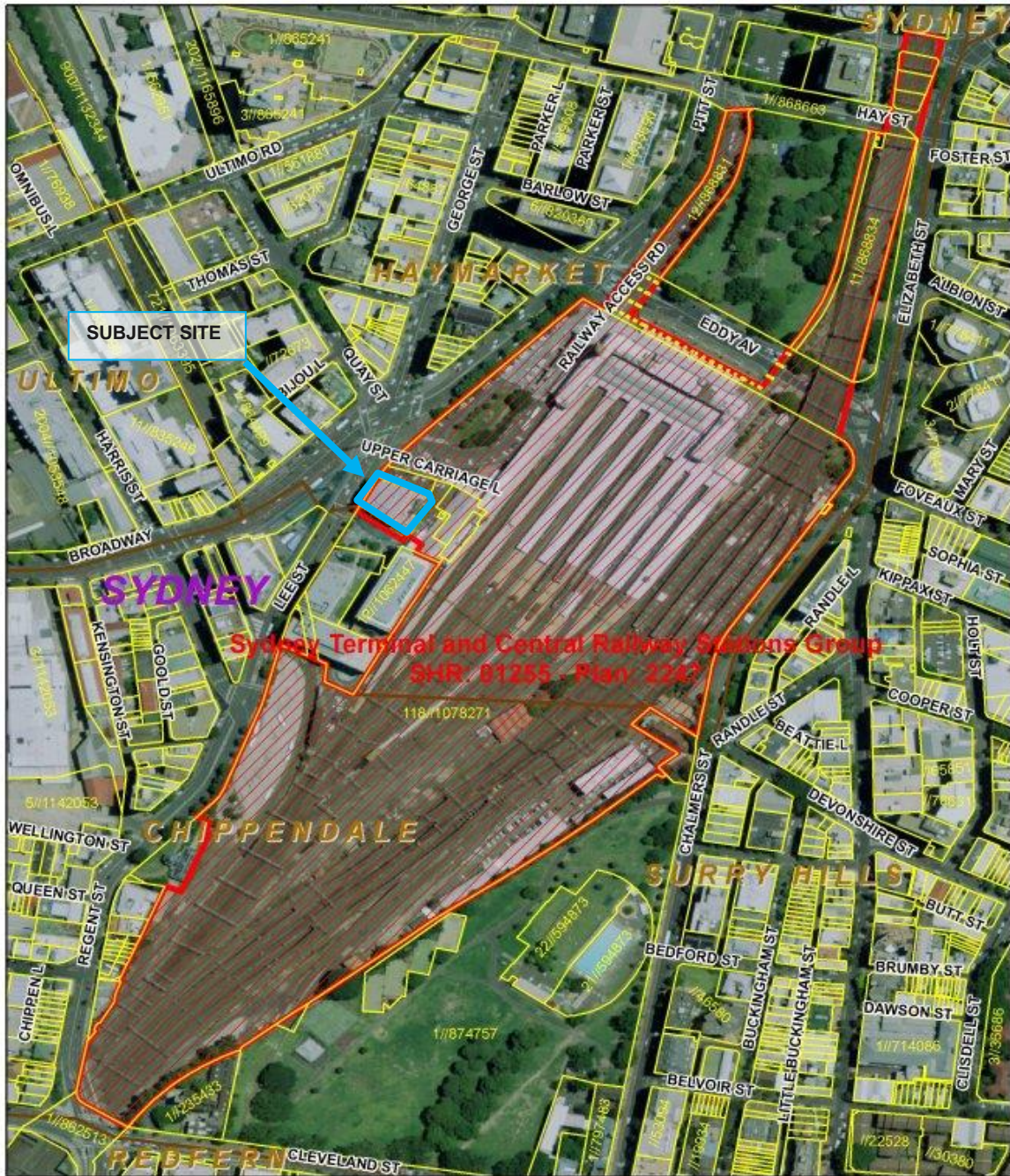


Figure 2 – Extract of heritage map HER\_016 with location of subject site indicated

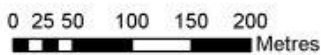
Source: Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012, Heritage Map HER\_016 Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012, Heritage Map HER\_016





State Heritage Register

Gazettal Date: 2 April 1999



Scale: 1:5,000

Produced by: Michelle Galea

Legend

- SHR Curtilage
- Land Parcels
- LGAs
- Suburbs



Figure 3 – Curtilage of the state heritage listing of Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group, approximate location of subject site indicated by blue outline

Source: Heritage Council of NSW, Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group SHR 01255Heritage Council of NSW, Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group SHR 01255

### 1.3.2. Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area

The site is partially located within the Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area as shown in Figure 4. The special character area is not a statutory listing; however, it is an identified locality as in Sydney Development Control Plan 2012.

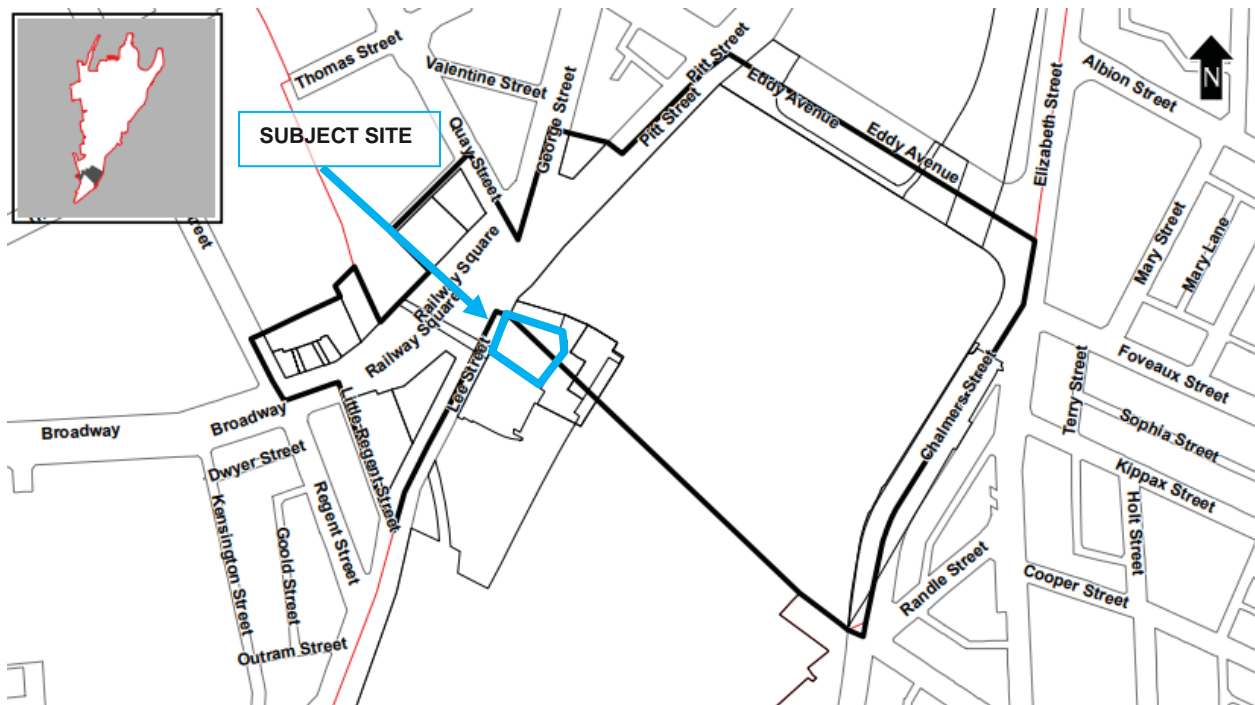


Figure 4 – Location of subject site (partly) within the Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area

Source: Sydney Development Control Plan 2012, Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area Sydney Development Control Plan 2012, Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area

The Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character Area character statement is reproduced in full:<sup>1</sup>

*Railway Square is the major visual and functional gateway to the city from west and south. The intersection of George and Pitt Streets is one of Sydney’s busiest and largest intersections, which has traditionally dispersed traffic and pedestrians into and out of the city. The original intersection was of a Y shape and was formed in 1807 by the junction of the old and new connection between George Street and Parramatta Road. The continuation of George Street to the south (Lee Street) in 1843 created the existing X shape of the Square.*

*The Square has functioned for over 150 years as a railway station and still acts as a major transport interchange node, allowing change between buses, and heavy and light rail. Historically, it has an association with the first railway line and terminal opened further south in 1855 and also has symbolic importance as the focus of a rail system, which has had a great influence on the development of NSW.*

*The Central Railway Station was opened in 1902, but was not in a complete form at that time. The station was fully completed in 1921 by the addition of the clock tower, which today acts as a landmark contributing strongly to the visual prominence of the Square. The civic heritage of the Central Railway precinct provides historic continuity and physical links to the precinct’s past.*

<sup>1</sup> Sydney Development Control Plan 2012, Railway Square/ Central Special Character Area

*The area is typified by a concentration of low-medium scale (3–7 storeys) heritage buildings and streetscapes, a series of varied interrelated open spaces and a rich mix of uses and activities, including commercial, industrial, institutional, residential and hotels. The predominant built form is the multi-storey warehouse typology, as opposed to the tower form, which prevails in the City centre to the north of the area.*

## 1.4. METHODOLOGY

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Division guidelines 'Assessing Heritage Significance', and 'Statements of Heritage Impact'. The philosophy and process adopted is that guided by the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter* 1999 (revised 2013).

## 1.5. AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION

The following report has been prepared by Fiona Binns (Associate Director).

Unless otherwise stated, all drawings, illustrations and photographs are the work of Urbis.

## 1.6. THE PROPOSAL

TOGA is proposing to redevelop their land holdings in the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct, immediately adjoining Central Station, for a mixed-use development including a world-class hotel, commercial floorspace and high-quality retail floorspace.

The restoration of the heritage-listed hotel building on the site, new commercial floorspace and public domain improvements will collectively deliver the Government's vision for an iconic technology precinct and transport gateway. New diverse public spaces will connect the city and improved pedestrian connectivity will provide efficient modal changes aligned with NSW Transport objectives.

The specific proposal for the site, will be submitted for inclusion within a TfNSW rezoning application for the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct to be assessed by the Department Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE). The proposal should also be considered in the context of the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Rezoning Proposal submitted by TfNSW in 2019 (refer to section 2.2 below). This proposal is the second stage rezoning proposal, with the stage 1 rezoning for Block A & B gazetted on August 13<sup>th</sup> 2020.

The subject proposal includes:

- Retention of the B8 Metropolitan Centre zoning of the site which enables the delivery of commercial premises, retail premises, business premises, and hotel and motel accommodation on the site.
- Provision of new development standards applying to the site to enable:
  - Demolition of contemporary additions to the existing Adina Hotel building;
  - Conservation works and additions to the existing Adina Hotel building, and continued use of the building for hotel and motel accommodation within the new addition above;
  - Construction of a mixed-use hotel and commercial office tower above the Adina Hotel building that includes:
    - A maximum building height of RL211.981 defined by the Prince Alfred Park Sun Access Plane including lift overrun and plant;
    - A maximum 41,000sqm gross floor area within the tower and former Parcels Post. Plus 2,000sqm retail gross floor area within Henry Deane Plaza. This equates to a total 43,000sqm GFA for Block C. Refer to the associated planning report for details of proposed calculations;
    - Delivery of a revitalised public domain across the site that is coordinated with adjacent development, including a new north-south thoroughfare adjacent to the YHA site, and an expanded and improved public plaza linking the Devonshire Street Tunnel and Railway Square (Lee Street).

- Establishment of a planning framework to guide the future development of the site and surrounds to ensure an integrated public domain and development outcome is achieved across the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct.

## 1.7. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The subject rezoning proposal has been subject to consultation with the Design Review Panel as well as the City of Sydney Council and Heritage NSW. The proponent has considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form, resulting in the subject building envelope. Stakeholder consultation included the following:

- Central Precinct State Design Review Panel meetings (Session 1:11/ 07/2019, Session 2: 25/07/2019, Session 3: 08/08/2019, Session 4: 29/10/2019, Session 5: 28/11/2019,) Meeting with Tim Smith, Heritage NSW (Director Heritage Operations) (26/09/2019)
- Meeting with City of Sydney Council (03/10/2019). It is also noted that City of Sydney was represented on the project working group/ Design Review Panel.
- Site C, State Design Review Panel Lite (chair: Government Architect) Session 1: 08/05/2020, Session 2: 29/5/2020, Session 3:19/06/2020, Session 4: 25/09/2020
- Heritage Council presentations 8/07/2020 and 30/09/2020

Consultation will continue to inform future development of the scheme as outlined in section 1.8 below.

## 1.8. HERITAGE FRAMEWORK

This Heritage Impact Statement is submitted in support of a rezoning application for Block C of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct (as set out in section 1.6). A State Significant Development Application will be submitted and will include the following documentation. 1) A separate Conservation Management Plan (CMP) is to be prepared and submitted with the future SSDA for development of the Parcels Post site. The CMP and any future development of the site should be informed by the CMS herein (refer to section 6.8).

2) A Heritage Interpretation Strategy should be prepared and submitted with the future SSDA for the Parcels Post. The Heritage Interpretation Strategy will detail how the heritage values of the place will be communicated to the public. This will include identifying themes and narratives for interpretation including Aboriginal and historic/ European themes, as well as identifying potential locations, media and content for interpretation. The Interpretation Strategy must be informed by, complement and build upon (but not duplicate) any precinct-wide strategy or initiatives. TOGA will also engage with Atlassian, Dexus/Frasers and Transport for NSW (TNSW) to develop an overall heritage overlay of comparable depth and scale across the precinct.

Urbis understands that Transport NSW will provide a statement in relation to the precinct Heritage Interpretation Strategy, setting out and committing to a process for how and when this will be prepared.

3) A Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) will be prepared to investigate the archaeological potential. Preliminary assessments have determined potential to be low-moderate.

The future SSDA will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders including Heritage NSW. It is anticipated that the City of Sydney will be involved in the design competition for the site and that this will likely include representation of planning and heritage experts on the jury panel. GANSW is required to approve the design excellence brief and process.

Further Consultation should include:

- Briefing to the Heritage Council (or its Delegate) immediately following the announcement of the winning design competition scheme
- Coordination of a series of workshops with Heritage NSW at key stages of design development. This may include workshops for façade design, structure, public domain and heritage interpretation, conservation of building facades etc. This program is subject to development and will be guided by heritage advice.

- Presentation/s to the Heritage Council
- Ongoing consultation with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and the proponents of Blocks A and B



## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

### 2.1. SUBJECT SITE

The subject site is located at 2 Lee Street, Haymarket. The site is legally described as Lot 30 Deposited Plan 877478. The site excludes the ramp/ elevated road to the YHA, which is not within the legal lot boundaries (refer to Figure 6 and Figure 7). The site is owned by Toga Pty Ltd in association with other land holdings, including the majority of the Henry Deane Plaza (refer to Figure 5), and partial basement beneath the YHA.

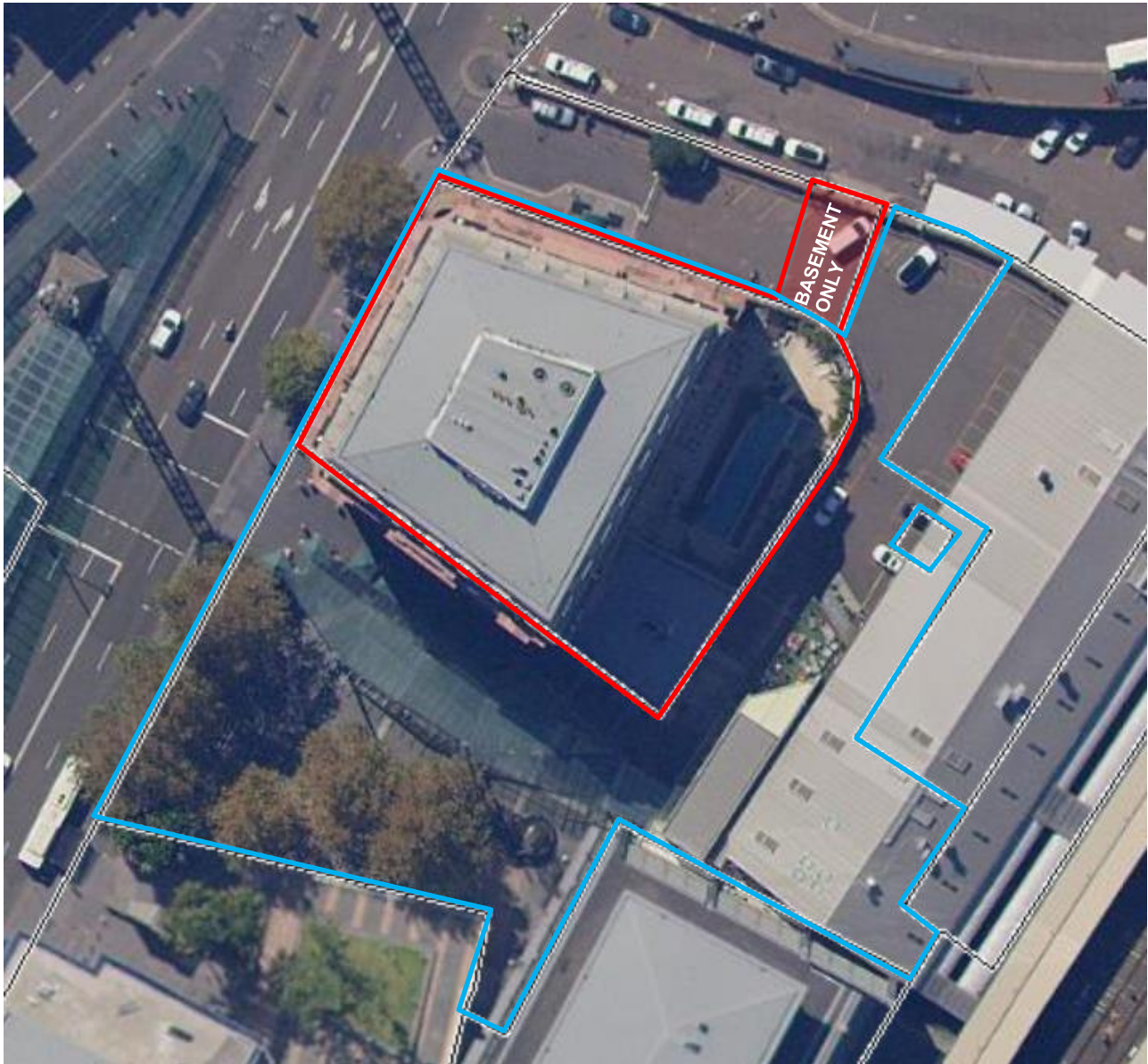


Figure 5 – Subject site for purposes of this report outlined in red and approximate legal boundaries of site outlined in blue

Source: Six Maps with Urbis overlay, 2019Six Maps with Urbis overlay, 2019

## 2.2. WESTERN GATEWAY SUB-PRECINCT PLANNING PROPOSAL

In defining the setting of the site, it is pertinent to note that the Parcels Post sits within a State Significant Precinct (Central SSP) and the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, the planning of which defines a strategic vision for the future redevelopment of the station and surrounds.

On 12 July 2019, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces nominated the Central Precinct a State Significant Precinct (Central SSP), which comprises approximately 24 hectares of land in and around Central Station. Within this nomination was the identification of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct which could be considered for early rezoning. The Parcels Post site is located within the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, as well as the broader Central SSP.

In October 2019, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) submitted a Rezoning Proposal to rezone two of the three 'Blocks' within the Western Gateway Sub-precinct. The Rezoning Proposal was placed on public exhibition between 16 October 2019 and 27 November 2019 and was gazetted in August 2020.

The Rezoning Proposal sought to amend the existing planning controls to enable the following:

- Amend the Sydney LEP 2012 by introducing a site specific provision for the sub-precinct that:
  - Seeks to incentivise development for non-residential uses through the provision of greater building height and gross floor area controls.
  - Requires a competitive Design Excellence process that has been approved by the NSW Government Architect, in addition to Council's existing policy; include reference to Design Guidelines to inform future development of the sub-precinct and enable the arrangements for the provision of State infrastructure.
- Amend the Sydney LEP 2012 maps to:
  - Apply the B8 Metropolitan Centre zone to the entire Western Gateway sub-precinct;
  - Remove the Western Gateway sub-precinct area from the Special Character Areas Map.
  - Identify the Western Gateway sub-precinct on the Locality and Site Identification Map Foreshore Building Line Map – including the labelling of Blocks A, B & C within the sub-precinct (see Figure 7 below).

The following site specific provisions included:

Despite clause 4.3, development consent may be granted to development that results in either or both of the following:

- (a) the height of a building in Block A exceeding the maximum height shown for Block A on the Height of Buildings Map, but only if the height of the building will not exceed RL 200.2 metres,
- (b) the height of a building in Block B exceeding the maximum height shown for Block B on the Height of Buildings Map, but only if the height of the building will not exceed RL 205.8 metres.
- (7) Despite clause 4.4, development consent may be granted to development that results in either or both of the following—
  - (a) the floor space ratio for a building in Block A exceeding the maximum floor space ratio shown for Block A on the Floor Space Ratio Map, but only if the gross floor area of all buildings in Block A will not exceed 77,000 square metres,
  - (b) the floor space ratio for a building in Block B exceeding the maximum floor space ratio shown for Block B on the Floor Space Ratio Map, but only if the gross floor area of all buildings in Block B will not exceed 155,000 square metres.

A provision requires future development for new buildings to demonstrate Design Excellence (no design excellence bonuses will apply) . Future development will need to:

- Undertake a competitive design process in accordance with the City of Sydney's Competitive Design Policy; or
- Undertake a design excellence process that has been agreed with the NSW Government Architect



- Include reference to Design Guidelines to inform future development of the sub - precinct and enable the arrangements for the provision of State infrastructure.
- Include more stringent overshadowing controls to apply to future development within the sub-precinct. This will ensure nearby parks, in particular Prince Alfred Park, will continue to be protected from overshadowing at specified times (in this case, from 10am – 2pm throughout the year).
- A provision disapplying the requirement for a Development Control Plan in Clause 7.20 of the Sydney LEP 2012

A key outcome of the proposed amendment is to deliver on the Premier’s commitment to establishing a globally competitive Technology Central and the contribution to strategic State, metropolitan and local policies to provide 220,000sqm of employment floor space and 25,000 additional jobs.

This has implications for the setting of the Parcels Post (Block C), specifically that it will irrevocably change the character and setting of the site.



Figure 6 – Map of the Central Precinct SSP study area

Source: Transport for NSW <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/central-precinct-renewal>



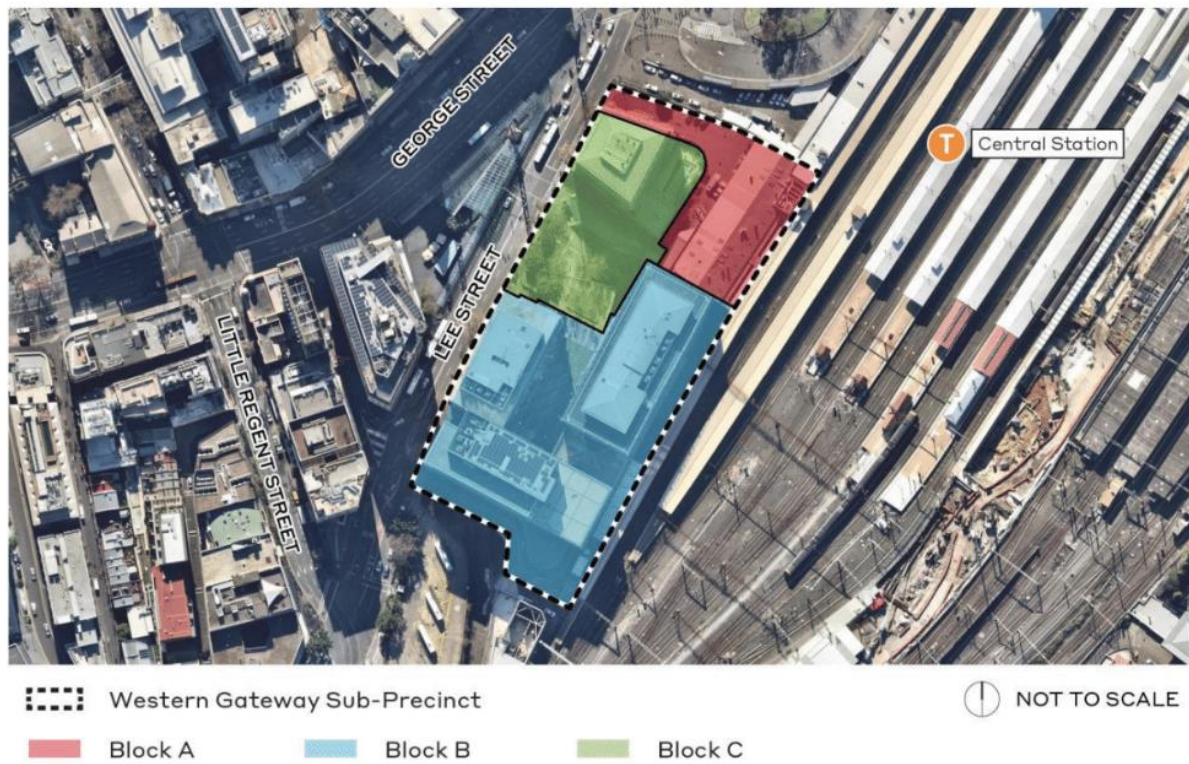


Figure 7 – Aerial photograph of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct and Blocks within. The subject site is identified as part of Block C

Source: NSW Government, *Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Explanation of Intended Effect*, October 2019 (Figure 2)

Transport for NSW's submitted Planning Proposal (October 2019) included amended provisions for Blocks A and B to enable the below.

#### **Atlassian and Technology Central (Block A)**

Atlassian are partnering with NSW Government to anchor the precinct as part of the NSW Technology & Innovation Precinct. Atlassian has a lease arrangement with TNSW for the Site, and ultimately seeks to create a unique opportunity to accommodate a significant tech ecosystem in the precinct.

Atlassian are seeking to deliver the first building in the new Tech Central Precinct and also provide space to accommodate tech-Startup companies and entrepreneurs within the establishing precinct.

The development will contribute to achieving the precinct goals, providing the initial anchor tenant for the precinct, delivering approximately 77,000sqm of gross floor space, including space to accommodate Startup and early stage companies, and supporting approximately 4,000 innovation jobs. The amendment also allowed for a maximum building height of RL200.2m (an increase from 7.5m).

This requires the redevelopment of the site of the Inwards Parcels shed (refer to section 2.3 below). The proposed SSDA will facilitate the development of a new mixed-use development comprising 'tourist and visitor accommodation' (in the form of a 'backpackers') and commercial office space within the tower form with retail, lobby and food and drink premises at the Lower Ground level and Upper Ground level. The new building will be purpose built to accommodate the new Atlassian Headquarters and new Railway Square YHA backpacker's accommodation. In addition, there will be additional commercial floorspace to support Tech Start-ups.

#### **Dexus and Frasers Property Henry Deane Plaza (Block B)**

The proposal by Dexus and Frasers Property Australia ("the Partnership") is to redevelop the Henry Deane Plaza (Block B). The gazettal allows for a maximum building height to RL 205.8m (increased from 35m) and a maximum floor space provision up to 155,000sqm.

Future proposals involve a detailed proposal for redeveloping Henry Deane Plaza into a large scale mixed-use development integrating a transport and pedestrian access solution.

## **2.3. THE PARCELS POST - SETTING AND CURTILAGE**

The former Parcel Post was designed in the Government Architects office by Gorrie McLeish Blair under the supervision of Walter Liberty Vernon, in the Federation Free Classical architectural style. It was initially designed in 1910 and opened in 1913. It was constructed in response to the need for expansion of the parcels facility at the GPO which was overcrowded. As the majority of parcels at that time were sent by rail, it was determined to lease the subject site, which was ideally situated, for the construction of a specific purpose built parcels post office, being located adjacent to the new (1906) Central Terminus on 'a portion of Railway land, fronting George Street and bounded on the south by Devonshire Street subway...' The Parcels Post worked in conjunction with the inward and outward parcels platforms in the western yard precinct (which includes the former inward parcels platform, now the YHA), with parcels being brought to and from the trains, via a network of underground passages.

The scale of the building is indicative of the importance of shipping parcels by rail in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the subject site documents the historical association of the site with Central station and railway postal services.

The former Parcels Post also forms an important part of the physical setting of Central Station's Western Forecourt and Railway Square. It encloses the southern extent of the Western Forecourt and addresses the western façade of the main terminus building and the clocktower, across the sloped western forecourt area. To the south it encloses Henry Deane Plaza and fronts onto the access to the Devonshire Street tunnel. The former Parcels Post building is also an important building within Railway Square. The Square was historically formed by the confluence of George, Pitt and Lee Streets and Broadway. It was the nexus for the electric tramways, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was at the heart of the retail district (enhanced by its proximity to the station). The Parcels Post building is a landmark building designed to be visually prominent in its surroundings. Having regard for this and its important aesthetic qualities and historic associations, it must be considered in a broader setting which includes Central Station and specifically the western forecourt and former Western Yard Precinct and the Devonshire Street Tunnel, as well as important civic space such as Railway Square.



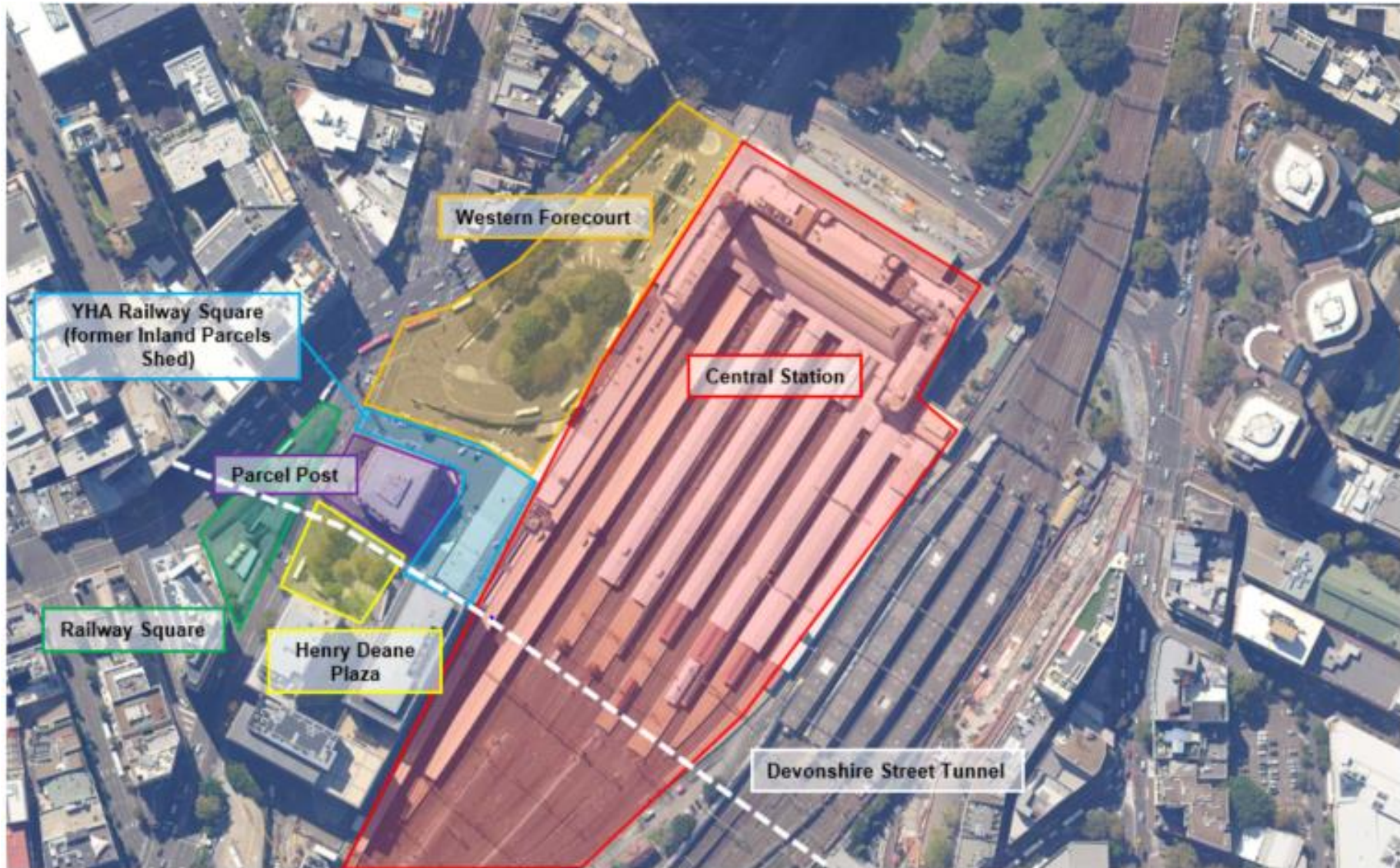


Figure 8 – Aerial of the site and locality with elements contributing to the setting of the site identified

Source: Six Maps with Urbis overlay, 2019

### 2.3.1. Central Station

Central Station is the key rail terminus for Sydney and NSW. The approximate boundaries of the complex are Eddy Avenue to the north, Chalmers Street to the east, Devonshire Street Tunnel to the south, and Pitt and Lee Streets to the west. There is an array of built forms that constitute Central Station, however the Main Terminal Building (particularly the western frontage) and associated clocktower constitute key components in the visual setting of Parcel Post. The Main Terminal Building and clocktower are landmarks within the locality on account of their elevated position, grand sandstone form and prominence. The Main Terminal Building is the central core of the site listed in 1999 on the State Heritage Register, under Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Stations Group (including the subject former Parcels Post building). Central Station is the site of the first Sydney Terminal and is the starting point from which the NSW rail network grew. The site has continually been in use as a railway since 1855 and its development has been undertaken in phases reflecting the continuous and ongoing use of the station. The construction of the Parcel Post building in proximity to Central Station reflects the historic importance of rail in the delivery of parcels.



Figure 9 – Sydney Terminal and clocktower as viewed from Western Forecourt

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 10 – Sydney Terminal and clocktower as viewed from Pitt Street

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



### 2.3.2. Western Forecourt

The Western Forecourt refers to the open space with a large central garden located to the north of the subject site, and to the west of the Central Station Main Terminal. The forecourt is bounded to the south by Lower Carriage Lane and the Parcels Area of the station and abuts the intersection (north west corner) with the porte cochère of Central Station. The forecourt mainly comprises of a bitumen surface as it carries vehicular traffic around the central garden either northward over the western approach ramp or southwards out of the Railway Square entrance (and vice versa). There are car parks around the perimeter of the forecourt. Archaeological testing in the Western Forecourt in 2009 confirmed the presence of the 1820s Benevolent Asylum and Christ Church Parsonage. The archaeological potential of the western forecourt, particularly the gardens is high. The open space of the forecourt facilitates the visual connection between the subject site and the Main Terminal Building and clocktower that has been identified as a significant view.



Figure 11 – Western Forecourt hard landscaping and parking

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 12 – Western Forecourt facing south, central landscaped element obstructed by barricade

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 13 – Western Forecourt with view to YHA Railway square and Adina Central

Source: Urbis 2019Urbis 2019



Figure 14 – Gradient of ramp access to Western Forecourt as viewed from Pitt Street

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



### 2.3.3. The Devonshire Street Tunnel

The Devonshire Street Tunnel was the first subway in Australia and an integral part of Henry Deane's overall plan for the development of the Central Station site. The pedestrian tunnel was built during the main construction phase of the Central Terminal between 1903 and 1906, and followed the alignment of former Devonshire Street, running in an east-west direction. The tunnel provides an unimpeded pedestrian link underneath the railway lines at Central Station, connecting the Ibero-American Plaza (on Chalmers Street) and the Henry Deane Plaza (on Lee Street). The western point of the tunnel converges within a covered public space containing a number of retail tenancies and take-away food outlets within Henry Deane Plaza, south of the former Parcels Post Office. Since its inception, the tunnel interior has been constantly modified. The pedestrian link was extended in the 1970s. Currently the pedestrian link continues below railway square, terminating on the western side of George Street where the thoroughfare connects with the Goods Line.

Historic images of the extension of the Devonshire Street Tunnel and are available - refer to Figure 166 and Figure 167.



Figure 15 – View to Devonshire Street tunnel from within Henry Deane Plaza

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 16 – View to later extension of Devonshire Street tunnel viewed from within Henry Deane Plaza

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.3.4. Henry Deane Plaza

Henry Deane Plaza, named after Henry Deane, a prominent engineer for the NSW railways and Engineer in Chief from 1891 - 1906 and during the development of the first phase of the Station, was historically the site of the Western Yard (former Parcels precinct). That part of the yard immediately south of the Devonshire Street Tunnel and the subject Parcels Post building, now occupied by the Henry Deane Plaza, contained for most of the twentieth century a number of structures including the West Carriage Shed, support offices, demountable workshops; and a store. These buildings and features were demolished for the construction of Henry Deane Plaza which was constructed between 1998 and 2000. At the entrance to Devonshire Street Tunnel is a large public sculpture and a glazed structure covers the walkway leading into Railway Square. This area forms part of the busy pedestrian connection from Central Station to Railway Square and on to George and Pitt Streets, and pedestrian subways.

Refer to Figure 150 for a historic aerial view of the site that indicates the relationship between the subject building, former Inwards Parcels Shed (now YHA Railway Square), Central Station, and Western Forecourt.



Figure 17 – View of Henry Deane Plaza from the entry to the Devonshire Street tunnel

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 18 – Henry Deane Plaza, note the level changes  
Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 19 – Henry Deane Plaza  
Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 20 – Henry Deane Plaza sculpture with view of Adina Central in background

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



### 2.3.5. YHA Railway Square (former Inwards Parcels Shed)

The Inwards Parcels Shed was built in c. 1906 as part of the development of the new Sydney Terminus and served as a clearing shed for parcels which were dispatched all over NSW. The shed was located towards the end of Platform 1, on the western side, and was a corrugated metal building designed by Gorrie Blair of the Government Architect's Office (Blair also designed the subject Parcels Post building). The design used iron trusses and columns recycled from the demolished Redfern Station.<sup>1</sup> A loading dock and yard were situated on the western side of the building. The former inwards parcels shed is accessed by a ramp/ road from Lee Street (refer to Figure 25, Figure 26 and Figure 102), which encloses the subject Parcels Post building on the northern side. At the lower ground level, the two sites were historically connected by a tunnel opening in the curved section of the rear yard wall, at the northeast corner of the site.

In the 1996 CMP the shed was noted as being configured into three sections: The Inwards Parcels Office; a large lift lobby; and a cashiers' office. It is not clear when the shed was abandoned, but the site was sold in 2004 to TOGA group which also purchased the former Parcels Post Office. SJB Architects were subsequently commissioned to convert the shed into backpackers' accommodation with a brief to retain the overall structure. The site is now readapted for use as the Railway Square YHA.

The former Inwards Parcels Shed is located within the curtilage of Central Station, of which the following heritage listing apply:

- 'Central Railway Station group including buildings, station yard, viaducts and building interiors' – Sydney LEP 2012, State Significance Item 824
- 'Sydney Terminal Group and Central Railway Stations Group' – State Heritage Register 01255



Figure 21 – View west towards Lee Street from the forecourt of the Inwards Parcels shed

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 22 – YHA Railway Square and associated hard landscaping and carparking

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 23 – View east towards the Inwards Parcels shed from Lee Street with the Parcels Post at right

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 24 – Sandstone element marking the entrance to the YHA Railway Square

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 25 – The northern façade of the subject Parcels Post building and the ramp/ vehicle access to upper level of the neighbouring Inwards Parcels building

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 26 – View towards central station and the vehicle access to the rear yard of the parcels post building, and showing the ramp to the Inwards Parcels building on the far right

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 27 – Lower ground level of the former Parcels area – off Ambulance Lane

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.3.6. Railway Square

The Square was historically formed by the confluence of George, Pitt and Lee Streets and Broadway. It was formerly the nexus for the electric tramways, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was at the heart of the retail district, enhanced by its proximity to Central station. The key transportation node was physically defined by several significant landmark Federation era buildings associated with commerce and the development of the Central Railway and Station including the subject Parcels Post building, and the former Marcus Clark department store (to the north of the site at 814 George Street).

In the mid 1980's the Department of planning produced urban design guidelines from Broadway which identified the role of Railway Square as a gateway. The gateway theme was taken up in an ideas competition conducted by the Institute of Architects which produced a wide range of proposals for Railway Square, Central Station and the locality. The Square was refurbished but still forms a major visual and functional gateway to the city centre from the west for both public transport and road traffic. The Square maintains views to Central Station and contained views in other directions, including easterly views to the subject site and other remaining significant Federation era buildings which continue to enclose the Square.

Historic images of Railway Square have been included in Section 3.2, refer to Figure 125, Figure 135, and Figure 144.





Figure 28 – Glass awnings of Railway Square  
Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 29 – View to Railway Square and Adina Central  
Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.4. BUILT ELEMENTS

### 2.4.1. Construction/ Structure

The parcels Post Office has a steel and concrete structure which facilitated wide column spacings and the use of large windows. The structure consists of steel stanchions with primary and secondary beams all encased in concrete, with a concrete floor. The structural drawings show no external steel stanchions thus the external brick columns take vertical loads, with steel channels performing as lintels. The exterior of the building is masonry, yet the large glazed panels used in the centre of each façade would indicate that the walls between piers were not designed to be sheer walls and are infill only. The more solid corners of the building and the solid stair core may have been used as stiffening elements. The semi rigid frame would thus transfer lateral loads to the more solid corners and the solid stair core which act as stiffening elements.

### 2.4.2. Exterior

The former Parcel Post was designed in the Government Architects office by Gorrie McLeish Blair under the supervision of Walter Liberty Vernon, in the Federation Free Classical architectural style. It was initially designed in 1910 as a four storey building, (plus basement), with a further 2 storeys added in revisions to the plans in 1912. It was constructed in a single phase and opened in 1913. It was expanded in the late 1990s with a contemporary two storey roof addition, in conjunction with its adaptation for the Medina Hotel (now known as the Adina). The building footprint of the former Parcel Post building now Adina Central, is a quadrilateral form with the east (rear) elevation being wider than the west (primary) elevation.

The various architectural features present that define the style as defined by Apperly, Irving and Reynolds<sup>2</sup> include the following:

- Contrasting materials and textures;
- Parapet concealing the roof;
- Giant order;
- Entablature;
- Pediment;
- Piers treated as pilaster;
- Ground floor treated as a base;
- Rustication reminiscent of the Mannerist style;

<sup>2</sup> Robert Apperly, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, Sydney 1989

- Circular openings; and
- Non-semicircular openings.

As noted above, the primary form of building was designed in two stages, the first stage finished with the cornice above the third level, the second stage, designed before completion of stage one, completed the building with two more storeys and a concealed hipped roof behind a parapet. The addition of the contemporary mansard roof addition removed the historic hipped roof form and roof lantern. The mansard addition has a grey clad finish and internally is a single storey with loft.

The building is constructed of red face brick in an English bond, with trachyte base and sandstone detailing. The roughly square plan shape has convex corners up to the third floor on the Lee Street façade, with concave corners to the upper floors on all sides. The ground floor is treated as the base to the building with a rusticated trachyte stone plinth. A bold sandstone entablature wraps around the building between the third and fourth floors, with stone balusters and heavy dentilled cornice. The top of the building is finished with a parapet that is broken through by sandstone pediments above the corner and central windows to each façade.

The main entry is via the western Lee Street façade. The entrance is marked by a semi-circular arch of rusticated trachyte with a sandstone coat of arms above. The recessed entry vestibule originally had three sets of double entry doors which have been replaced with contemporary sliding doors. Above the entry, the principal western façade is dominated by a recessed three storey porch flanked by giant order Ionic columns (2.5 storeys in scale) and surmounted by the sandstone entablature and decorated with a royal monogram 'G/R' and a high relief garland. A series of three flag poles are positioned on the primary (west elevation) above the entablature. The fourth floor features a central recessed balcony, with stone semi-arched opening.

Façade design is generally consistent for the northern and southern facades. The façades are symmetrical, articulated into bays with pilasters, heavy rusticated masonry to the outer bays, and upper two floors, and simple English bonded brick with expressed piers to the lower first, second and third floors within the central bays. The facades are surmounted by a central classical sandstone pediment. The eastern façade is simpler, lacking the circular windows. The east façade has also been modified by the addition of two parcel lifts (early 20<sup>th</sup> century) and a large rear extension (c.1969), which has since been removed and the façade reconstructed similar to the original.

Large bronze windows are used on the ground floor with steel framed windows predominantly used for the remainder of the building. An exception is the east elevation where a number of window and door frames have unsympathetic aluminium frames installed (in conjunction with the removal of the 1969 addition). A wide variety of window forms has been utilised with round porthole windows to the corners at the third floor and large segmental arched openings in the centre of each façade on the fourth floor.

At the ground level, the basement was lit by glazed tiles in the pavement which remain in-situ on the northern and western frontages although some have been covered over with paving. Ground floor windows also incorporated stallboard lights in the stone plinth which also allowed light into the basement and were protected by a wrought iron balustrade.

Minor modifications have been made to the ground floor. A secondary access has been added to the northern façade in conjunction with the Hotel conversion for a level access (c.1999). this included modifications to the central window for a new door entry. The ground floor of the southern façade originally comprised an entry at the eastern most bay, with two additional window bays. The two bays have been converted to shopfronts consistent with the eastern bay (modified), with the addition of a central doorway. The southern portion of the ground floor is utilised by various retail premises that have been modified throughout the years in accordance with the changing requirements of respective tenants. The shopfronts assist to activate the plaza. The ground floor of the eastern façade originally incorporated large open vehicle docks. The original arched openings have been retained and infilled with glazing.

'Post Office' signage is extant on the north and west elevations however, contemporary illuminated 'Adina' signage has also been installed on these elevations. Additional signage including horizontal projecting wall signs, window signs, and top hamper signage has been installed on the west and south elevations to advertise the various retail tenancies.

Fabric awnings have been installed on the north and south elevations of the site. On the north elevation the awning is a semicircular fixed form, in a dark green fabric finish that projects from the central accessible entrance. On the south elevation, the awnings are dark green fabric, retractable and function to shield the retail tenancies from the elements.

A series of downlights have been installed on the fourth floor of the west elevation that illuminate and accentuate the architectural features of the building at night. A number (or muntz metal) downpipes with rainwater heads on each façade however some down pipes have been replaced in PVC.



Figure 30 – Primary (west) elevation of the site as viewed from Railway Square

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 31 – Primary (west) elevation of the site as viewed from Railway Square

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 32 – North and west elevations as viewed from Railway Square

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 33 – Entrance to the site from the west elevation (Lee Street). The entry has been modified.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019





Figure 34 – North elevation of subject building as viewed from Ambulance Avenue. Note the sandstone piers and brick wall defining the level changes and ramps

Source: Urbis, 2019



Figure 35 – Awning and accessible entrance of the north elevation. Note the extant stallboard and pavement lights.

Source: Urbis, 2019



Figure 36 – East elevation as viewed from the YHA Railway Square. Note the brick retaining wall that defines the rear yard.

Source: Urbis, 2019

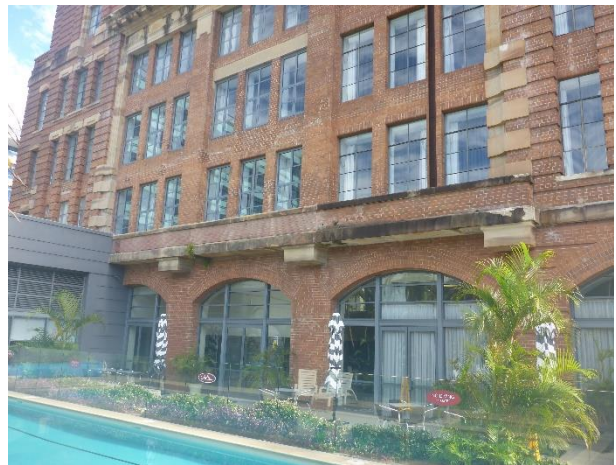


Figure 37 – The former vehicle dock openings on the east elevation have been infilled with aluminium framed glazing/ doors

Source: Urbis, 2019

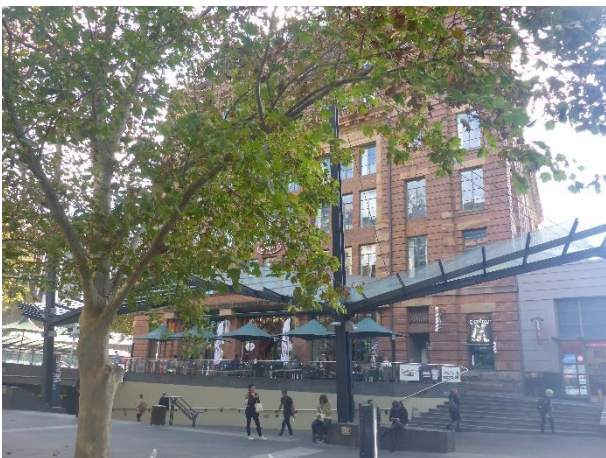


Figure 38 – South elevation as viewed from Henry Deane Plaza

Source: Urbis, 2019



Figure 39 – Shopfronts on south elevation. Note the retractable awning.

Source: Urbis, 2019





Figure 40 – Corner of west and south elevation.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 41 – Shopfronts on south elevation.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 42 – Shopfront on south elevation.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 43 – Shopfront on south elevation. Note the extant stallboard lights and intact fenestration

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 44 – Contemporary addition on south elevation. This element operates as retail tenancies to the south (as shown) and as the gym for Adina Central to the north.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 45 – Roof space utilized as balcony

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 46 – Façade glazing to the c.1999 mansard addition

Source: *Urbis, 2019*



Figure 47 – View from the rooftop to Central Station and Western Forecourt

Source: *Urbis, 2019*



### 2.4.3. Interior

The 1999 adaptive reuse of the subject site transformed the former Parcels Post Office to a contemporary hotel. Hotel facilities include a heated swimming pool, gym, spa and sauna, as well as two event/ conference rooms.

Documentation suggests that in its original form, the building had a simple interior. The ground floor public facing area was known to feature a terrazzo and mosaic floor and cedar joinery. The upper floors were generally open plan, with the structural grid expressed. The floors were variously altered to facilitate different uses and some partitioning was incorporated. The current interior of the site provides little indication of the former use of the site and internally minimal significant fabric remains extant. Within the hotel lobby on the ground floor the columns that were an integral part of the original structural system of the building remain in situ, albeit clad in marble with the splayed capitals obscured by dropped ceilings. The retention of the columns does allow for the original grid like formation to be interpreted, although some appear to have been removed with the insertion of the new lift core and fire stair (potentially two on each floor). The original western stair was removed. The addition of various partition walls to form offices, conference rooms, and facilities has disrupted what would have largely been an open space. A visual inspection of the building does not indicate that there are any original or early finishes extant however, more intrusive investigation may reveal features including ceiling mouldings, column capitals, and terrazzo flooring to the west of the ground floor.

The upper floors of the site function as hotel rooms. A new lift core has been constructed in the centre of the building to provide access. Little early or original fabric was observed on the upper levels which present as contemporary hotel rooms through the addition of partition walls and contemporary finishes and fitout. It is considered that there is the potential for remnant fabric to be present following intrusive investigation. Columns are present on the upper levels however some may have been removed or may be encased in contemporary fitout/ partitions.

The internal images included within this report present a visual survey of the ground floor lobby of the subject site and representative examples of the accommodation rooms located on the upper floors. All rooms were not inspected on account of occupancy and the site being a functional hotel. The rooms inspected and images included provide an indicative representation on the internal fabric and condition of the site.

#### Lobby: Ground Floor



Figure 48 – Lobby with view to arched doorway that forms the entrance to the building via the west elevation

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 49 – Reception desk and lobby with view to accessible entrance via the north elevation

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 50 – Lift core and view of extant columns  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

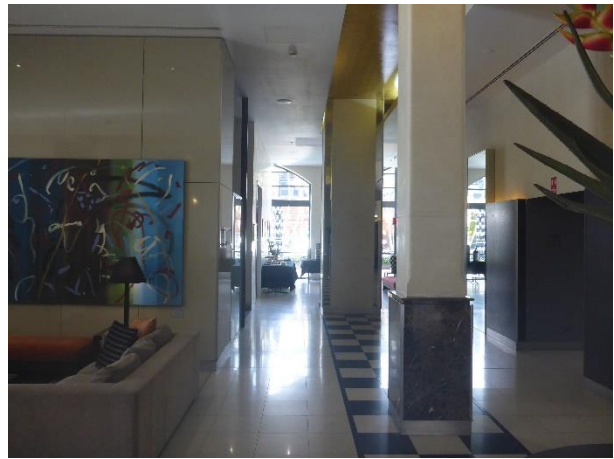


Figure 51 – View of the lobby showing some of the remnant columns (later finishes)  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 52 – View from lobby to lift core  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

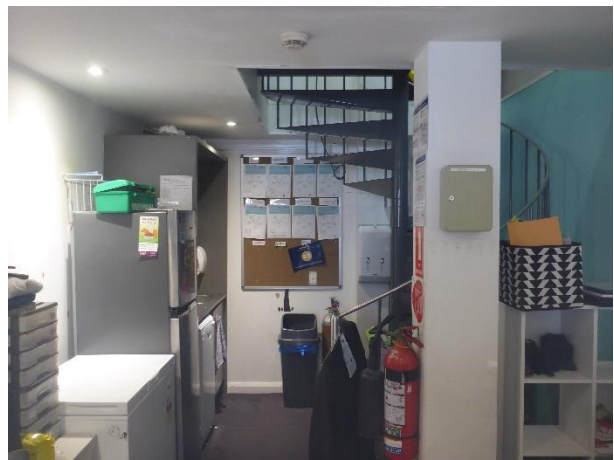


Figure 53 – Office located behind reception (with mezzanine above)  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

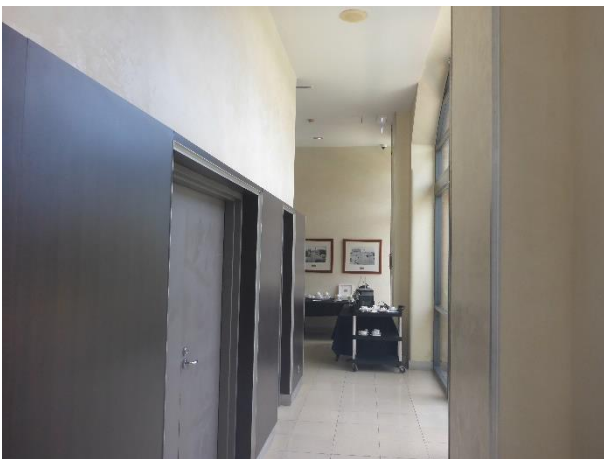


Figure 54 – The rear of the ground floor in the area of the former vehicle dock  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 55 – The rear of the ground floor in the area of the former vehicle dock  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 56 – View east showing the former vehicle dock opening and yard beyond

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 57 – Kitchen to service conference rooms

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 58 – Bathroom facilities

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

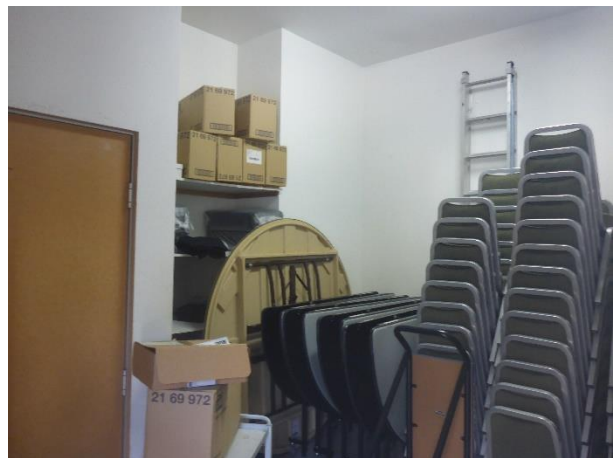


Figure 59 – Storage space

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## Hotel Rooms

The hotel features 98 accommodation rooms, with a variety of one and two bedroom serviced apartments and studio rooms. Each of the apartments have fully equipped kitchens, in-room laundries, and separate living and working spaces. Indicative rooms were inspected. Fitout in the rooms is generally consistent, with partitions for bedrooms and bathrooms, contemporary kitchen and bathroom finishes, new floor coverings and suspended ceilings throughout. Some of the windows feature double glazing. Penthouse apartments are located on the uppermost floor – level 6. These comprise two storey apartments within the contemporary mansard roof addition and feature private roof terraces, behind the original building parapets.



## Typical Room: Level 5 (Room 55)

General views of Room 55 are provided below.



Figure 60 – Room entrance

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 61 – Bathroom and living area beyond

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 62 – Bathroom

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 63 – Laundry

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 64 – Bedroom  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 65 – Open plan kitchen and living room. Note the protruding element in left of frame, potential for remnant structure/ column  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 66 – Kitchen  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 67 – Living room and kitchen with bedroom beyond  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

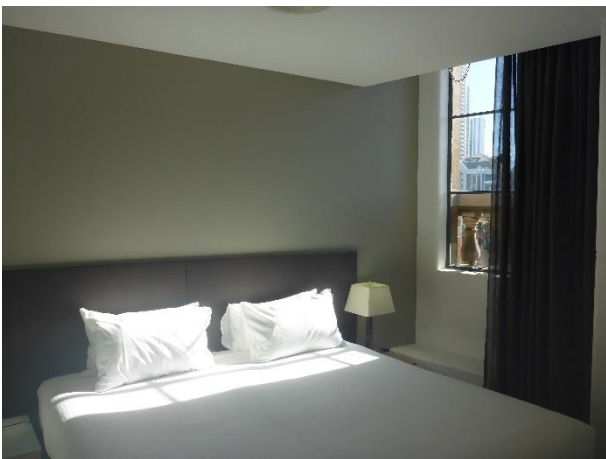


Figure 68 – Main bedroom with the original window  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

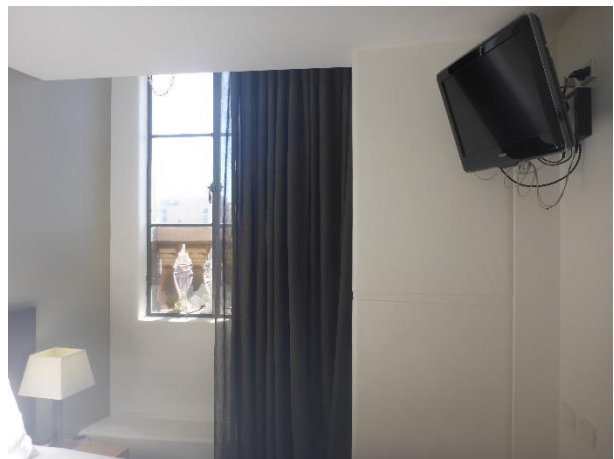


Figure 69 – The bedroom wall and window – note the recessed window  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 70 – Ensuite bathroom  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 71 – Detail of the steel framed windows, wall detail (dado) and external sandstone detail (baluster)  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

**Typical Room: Level 5 (Room 54)**

General views of Room 55 are provided below.

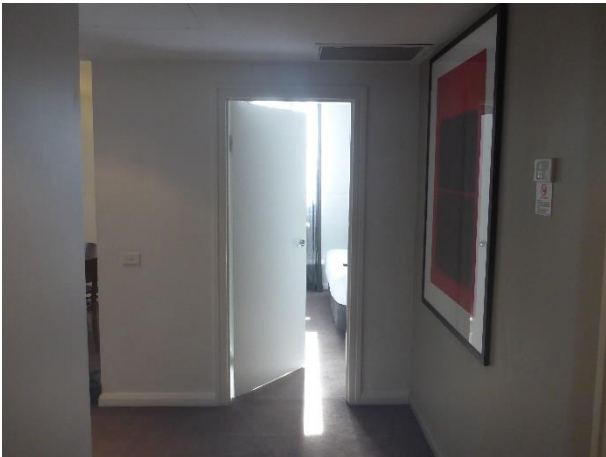


Figure 72 – Entrance hallway with view to bedroom  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 73 – Bedroom and entry beyond  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 74 – The main living area  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 75 – Lounge room, note the distinction between earlier structural wall and the later addition  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019





Figure 76 – Bedroom with view to window  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 77 – Bedroom wall. Note the interface with the original structure and the later partition  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 78 – Detail of the inner face of the external wall  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

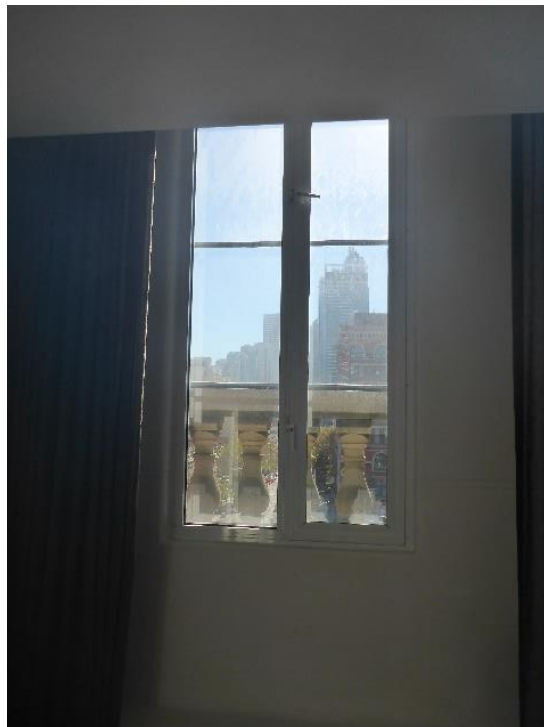


Figure 79 – View of window with internal sound insulation (double glazing) and balustrades beyond  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 80 – Detailed view of dropped ceiling and window  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 81 – Kitchen, note the potential for extant columns beneath fit out  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 82 – Sandstone façade balusters  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 83 – General view of the bathroom  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## Typical Room: Level 8 (Room 85)

General views of the penthouse room 85 are provided below.

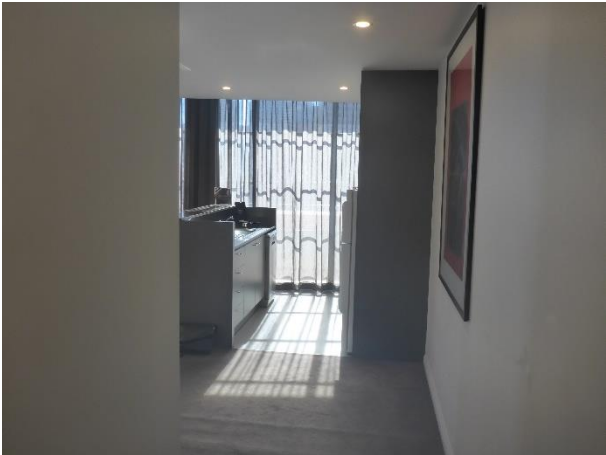


Figure 84 – Entrance hallway

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 85 – Lounge room and stair to bedroom

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 86 – Kitchen

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 87 – Staircase and study

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

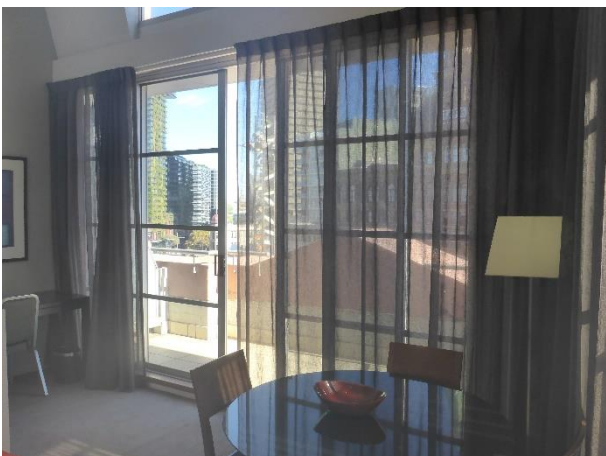


Figure 88 – Windows in the mansard roof addition

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

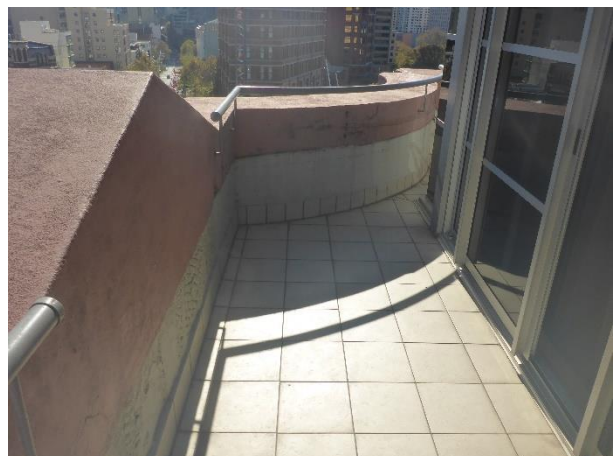


Figure 89 – View of the roof terrace and internal face of the original parapet

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019





Figure 90 – Loft bedroom within the mansard roof addition

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 91 – View of window in mansard addition

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 92 – Bathroom

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 93 – Laundry

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## Roof Plant Room

A plant room is located at the top of the roof addition. It is accessed via a concrete stair in the central core. The plant room features metal roof capping and louvres to all four sides.



Figure 94 – View of staircase to plant room

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 95 – Plant room

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 96 – Plant room

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 97 – Plant room

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.4.4. Rear Yard

The rear yard is located to the east of the site and is defined by the brick boundary wall. The wall in turn is defined by the ramp access and boundary of the adjoining elevated former Inwards Parcels Shed (now YHA) to the east of the subject site, which pre-dated the construction of the subject building. Within the yard the wall presents as double height while at the upper deck of the YHA, it presents as a low height wall enclosing the deck. The wall is constructed in masonry, of a similar dark brick as the Parcel Post Building, also of English bond, with a moulded brick stringcourse and sandstone capping. Arc lamps are located atop the wall.

The rear yard comprises a pool and contemporary landscaping. The yard is set at ground level (although the level was modified with the addition of the pool). Access to the yard has been modified. It was originally accessed via the driveway from Ambulance Lane (refer to section 2.3.5), below the access ramp (on the north side), this has been modified to provide vehicle access to the basement and the former opening infilled in the yard. Similarly, the former opening at the northwest corner in the curved wall, which accessed the inland parcels area and tunnels to the station may have been infilled or obscured by plant.

The southern side of the yard is enclosed by a 1-2 storey contemporary extension, which houses the hotel gym and a retail tenancy (fronting onto the Henry Deane Plaza to the south). The masonry addition attaches



to the eastern façade of the Parcels Post building and partly infills one of the arches to the former vehicle dock.



Figure 98 – View within the rear yard of the swimming pool and double height wall

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 99 – View north showing the yard wall and evidence of the infill of the former access and level changes

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 100 – The contemporary addition and interface with the former vehicle dock opening

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 101 – The eastern façade and boundary wall as viewed from the YHA

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.4.5. Basement

While the original Parcel Post had a basement, it was limited to the footprint of the building and did not have a vehicle access. The extant basement was extended below the eastern yard in conjunction with the conversion to the Hotel c.1999.

Vehicle access to the basement is via the former rear yard entry, through the subway below the ramp to the YHA, from Ambulance Avenue. The sandstone arch dates to the construction of the Parcels Post building in 1912. The external sandstone arch remains intact however the drive now ramps down to access the basement. The entry is flanked by heavily rusticated sandstone piers, with a segmental arch and decorative keystone bracket. The decorative wrought iron gates remain extant.

Currently the basement is primarily used as a carpark. The original form of the columns and spatial arrangement is able to be observed within the carpark as a number of the columns are not obstructed by fitout or cladding. Within the basement are a number of staff rooms and storage areas. The lack of fit out within these areas provides visual access to the pavement lights, in which it is apparent that a number are extant and have been paved over at street level.

The southern section of the basement has been opened up to Henry Deane Plaza/ the Devonshire Street Tunnel, currently operating as a retail premises and the current tenant being 'Basement Books'. The tenancy has a contemporary fit out however several columns are present.



Figure 102 – Vehicle entry to the basement level. Note the ornate sandstone framing.

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

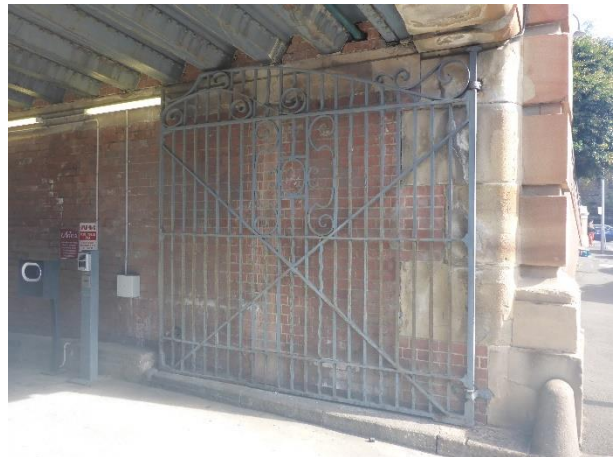


Figure 103 – Wrought iron gates located on the vehicle entry

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 104 – Exposed column capital

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 105 – Pavement lights

Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019





Figure 106 – Basement view  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 107 – Arched form in storage room  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 108 – Staff room with exposed side lights and remnant pavement light (tiled over)  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 109 – Tiled over pavement light  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 110 – Entry to basement tenancy  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019



Figure 111 – Interior view of basement tenancy  
 Source: Urbis, 2019Urbis, 2019

## 2.5. SITE PLANS AND ELEVATIONS

Site plans and elevations are provided below.



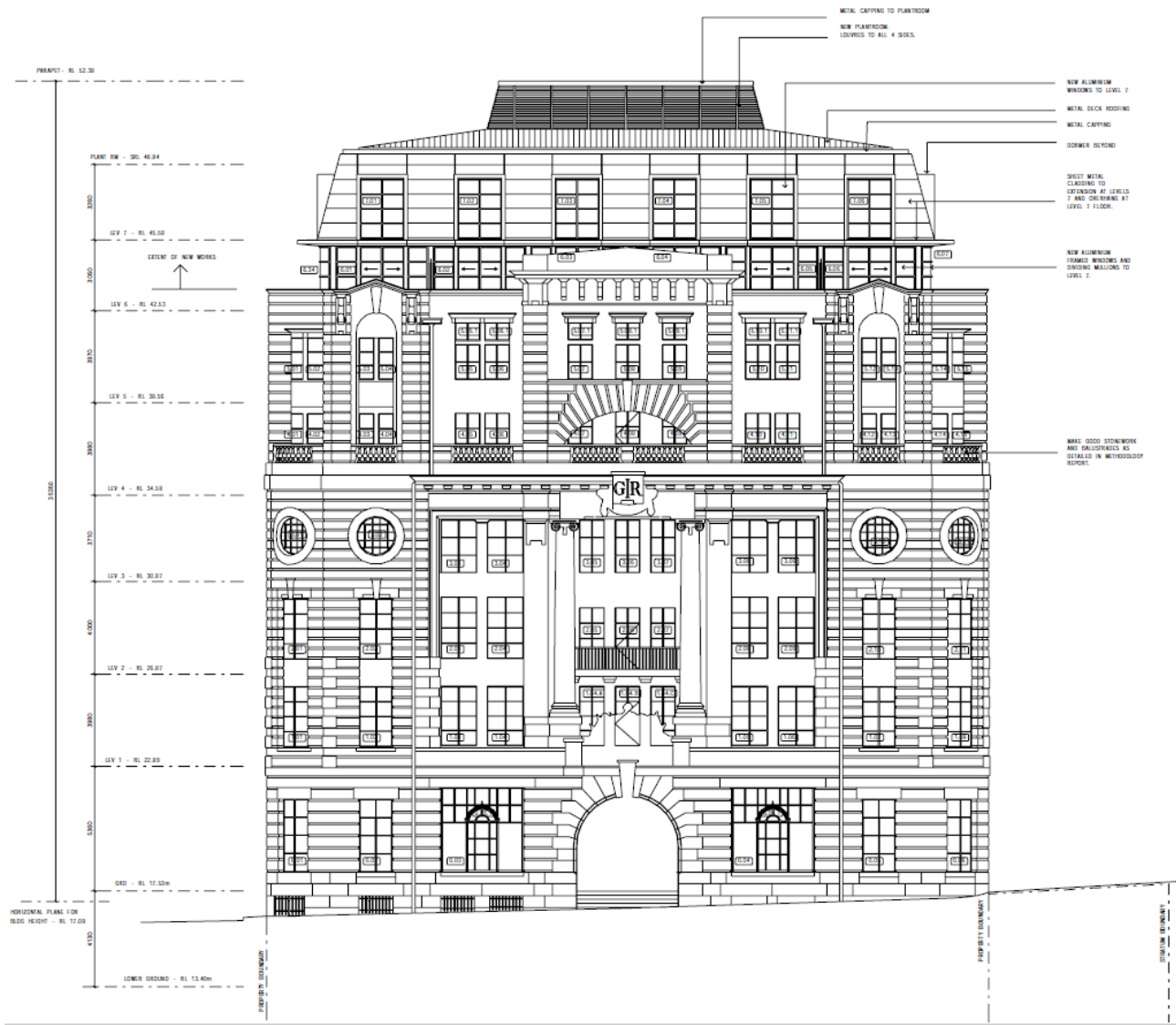


Figure 112 – The principal western façade

Source: TOGA TOGA

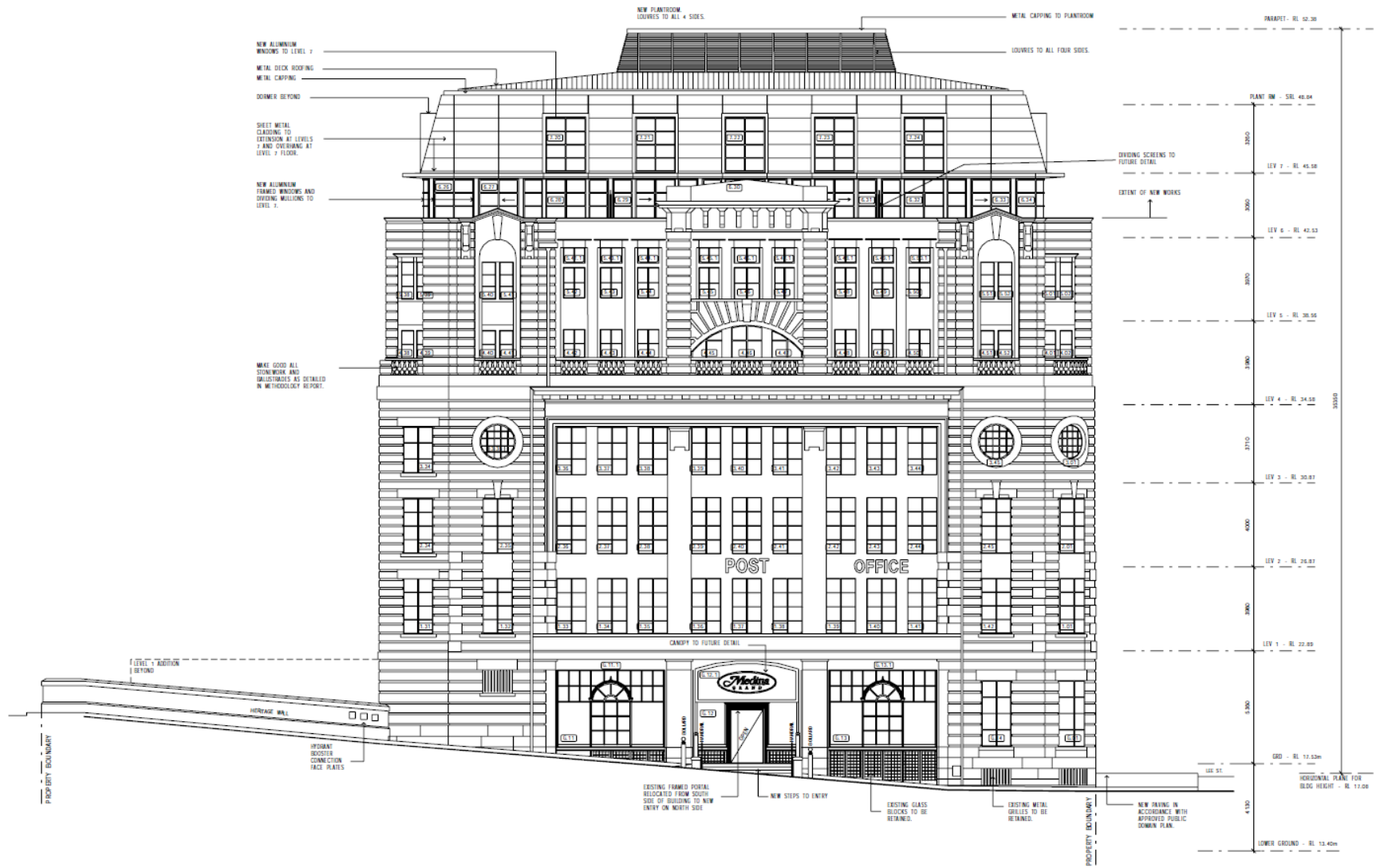


Figure 113 – Northern façade

Source: TOGA TOGA







## 2.6. CONDITION ASSESSMENT

### 2.6.1. Exterior Condition Assessment

An inspection of the building was undertaken by Traditional Stone Masonry Pty Ltd via industrial rope access. During the inspection approximately 800 kgs of stone was removed for safety reasons, considered to be outside the normal range for a building of the size and age of the subject building.

The short form report has identified that approximately 50% of the original sandstone embellishments are in a poor to very poor condition and detailed that most of these stones will require small indents or whole stone replacement of the exposed face in the long term. The stone is very soft and friable and is affected by salt migration and falling damp caused by leaking gutters and membranes. Bricks have been found to be clad in a single skin against stone without any tothing or other form of restraint tie, in other cases large cracks have been found which are the result. Where this risk was imminent, Traditional Stonemasonry removed the bricks. Furthermore, the report identified that external rainwater heads and downpipes were no longer active and were operating as overflows that was contributing to the decay of masonry and steel windows on site.



Figure 116 – Broken Bricks

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*  
*Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 117 – Stack bonded cladding with no ties

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*  
*Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 118 – Sandstone embellishment before removal

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 119 – Sandstone embellishment after removal

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 120 – Corroded steel fixing

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 121 – Typical condition of steel windows

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 122 – Delamination on stone

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*



Figure 123 – Styrofoam precast being eaten by cockatoos

Source: *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019* *Traditional Stone Masonry, 2019*

## 2.6.2. Interior Condition Assessment

The public areas of the site and accommodation rooms are generally in very good condition and appear to have undergone regular maintenance however water penetration was observed in the room located within the mansard roof addition. Basement and back of house areas do not appear to have undergone the same level of maintenance as observed elsewhere in the building however no major defects were observed, and the condition is good overall.

## 3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 3.1. ESTABLISHMENT

Prior to 1901, when the Commonwealth Post and Telegraph Act transferred the administration of all postal and telecommunications services to the Commonwealth Government and established the Commonwealth Postmaster-General's Department, each state was responsible for the operation of postal and telegraphic services. Following the passing of the Act to Regulate the Postage of Letters in New South Wales in 1825, post offices began to expand, and a Parcels Post was first opened in 1886 as part of the Mail Branch of the General Post Office (GPO) and occupied only a small area of the Martin Place premises.

In 1893, the Inland and Intercolonial Parcels Post was established and located in separate rented premises in Castlereagh Street, and during 1902 and 1903 those premises became known as the Chief Parcels Office, as the Parcels Post section of the Mail Branch also relocated there from the GPO. During 1904, the Chief Parcels Office was removed from Castlereagh Street to the basement of the George Street end of the GPO.<sup>3</sup>

In 1906, overcrowding in this area caused complaints from merchants and the public. At least double the space then occupied was required for parcels handling, prompting officials to seek premises outside the GPO building. In July 1908, the Chief Commissioner for Railways and Tramways agreed to lease, for a period of ninety-nine years, to the Postmaster-General's Department, the by then vacant former site of the Benevolent Asylum. The site was described as "a portion of Railway land, fronting George Street and bounded on the south by Devonshire Street subway, with an area of approximately 90ft by 120ft", for an annual rental of £600, later increased to £650 per annum, commencing on 1 January 1909. This site is illustrated in Figure 114. As the majority of parcels were sent by rail and many Sydney department stores ran mail order catalogues sending goods to country NSW, the site was ideally situated for the location of a specific purpose parcels post office.<sup>4</sup>

The indenture of lease was formalised in May 1911 between the Chief Commissioner for Railways and Tramways and the Commonwealth of Australia. The lease stipulated that the lessee "at its own expense erect complete and finish upon the said land a building convenient and suitable for a Postal Depot". The agreed rental, now £650, with quarterly payments of £162/10 commenced on 1 April 1909.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Graeme Aplin, S.G. Foster, Michael McKernan, Ian Howie-Willis eds., *Australians: A Historical Dictionary*, Broadway, 1987, p.330; *The Australian Encyclopaedia*, Volume VII, pp. 239-240.; NAA: Series C3898, Item 63/3 "Mail Branch Parcels Post," 1913, np; Series C3893, Item 63/1 "Mail Branch Chief Parcels Office," 1959, p.1

<sup>4</sup> NAA: Series 394/1 Item NL 1917/2491 Assistant Supervisor, Postal Parcels Branch, paper, 9 April 1907; Series 305/1, Item B1948/3433, Indenture between Chief Commissioner for Railways and Tramways and the Commonwealth of Australia, 1 May 1911, p.1.; Series SP857/2, Item PA843 Part 1, Minute of Department of Home Affairs, 3 August 1908; Department of Public Works and Services, Heritage Group, State Projects, "Sydney Central Station Conservation Management Plan," 1996, p.111.

<sup>5</sup> OST BK 936 No 985, NSW LRS



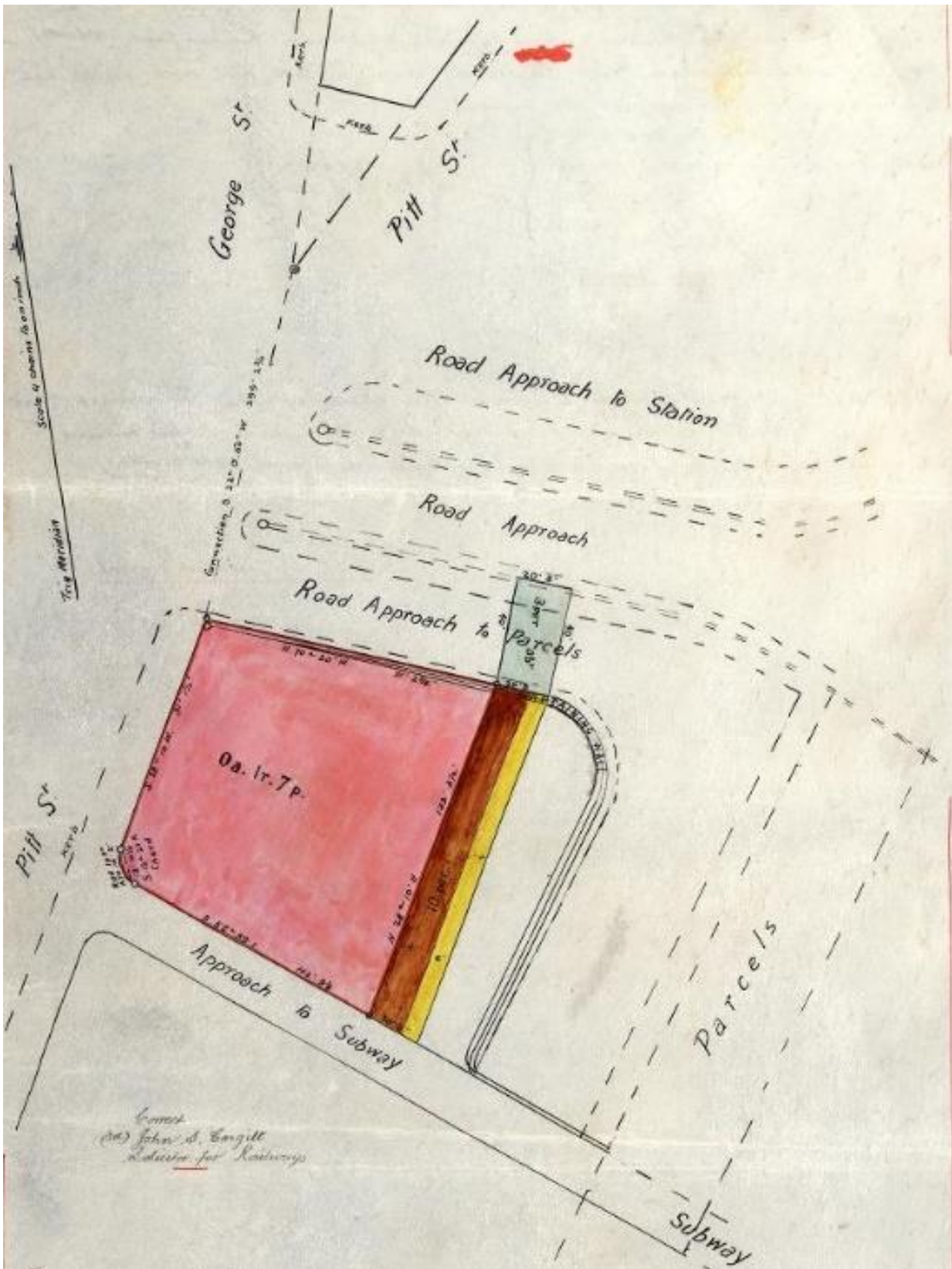


Figure 124 – Subject land leased to Commonwealth for Parcels Post Office building.

Source: NSW LRS, Bk 936 No 985 NSW LRS, Bk 936 No 985



Figure 125 – Railway Square, c.1906-1911. Site of future Parcels Post Office shown in this view as vacant land with hoarding to George Street frontage (centre right).

Source: FlickrFlickr

## 3.2. CONSTRUCTION

With the site chosen and the lease agreement in process, in August 1909, the Postmaster-General announced that plans were being prepared for the erection of a parcels post office on the subject site; they were completed the following month.<sup>6</sup>

The Minister of Home Affairs announced in January 1911 that tenders were to be called immediately for the construction of a new parcels post office building near Sydney Central Railway Station.<sup>7</sup> Three months later, the Department of Public Works announced that seven tenders were received for the erection of the new parcels post office, however all were above the departmental estimate. The tender was awarded in May to Conrad Harris of Burwood for the price of £50,000.<sup>8</sup> Work commenced on the site before August (Figure 124), but progress on erecting the building suffered a setback two months later when the extensive scaffolding/gantry on the site collapsed during a gale.<sup>9</sup> By mid-December, the basement and light area walls were almost complete and the builders had commenced the setting of the trachyte parts of walls of the ground floor.<sup>10</sup>

The building was originally designed in 1910 by G M Blair under the supervision of W L Vernon to consist of a basement and three floors (refer to Figure 115 – Figure 120). In 1912, plans for an additional two storeys were prepared by G M Blair and E L Drew under Government Architect, George McRae. The first stage terminated at the cornice above the oeil-de-boeuf or porthole windows. Conrad Harris, the contractor for the

6 "Buildings and Works", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 February 1911, p4

7 "Parcels Post Office for Sydney", *Sunday Times*, 8 January 1911, p12

8 "Government Gazette Tenders and Contracts", *Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales*, 17 May 1911, p2834

9 "Scaffold blown down", *Daily Telegraph*, 9 October 1911, p6 and "Scaffold wrecked", *The Sun*, 9 October 1911, p2

10 "The congested GPO", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 1911, p13



first six floors, was awarded the tender in November for the addition of two extra floors for the sum of £18,234/13/11. It was simultaneously decided to construct a subway.<sup>11</sup>

Designed by Blair in two stages under the supervision of two Government Architects, the building was erected in one construction phase. The building was officially opened on 29 November 1913, and on 6 December 1913 the Parcels Post section of the GPO moved into the new premises.

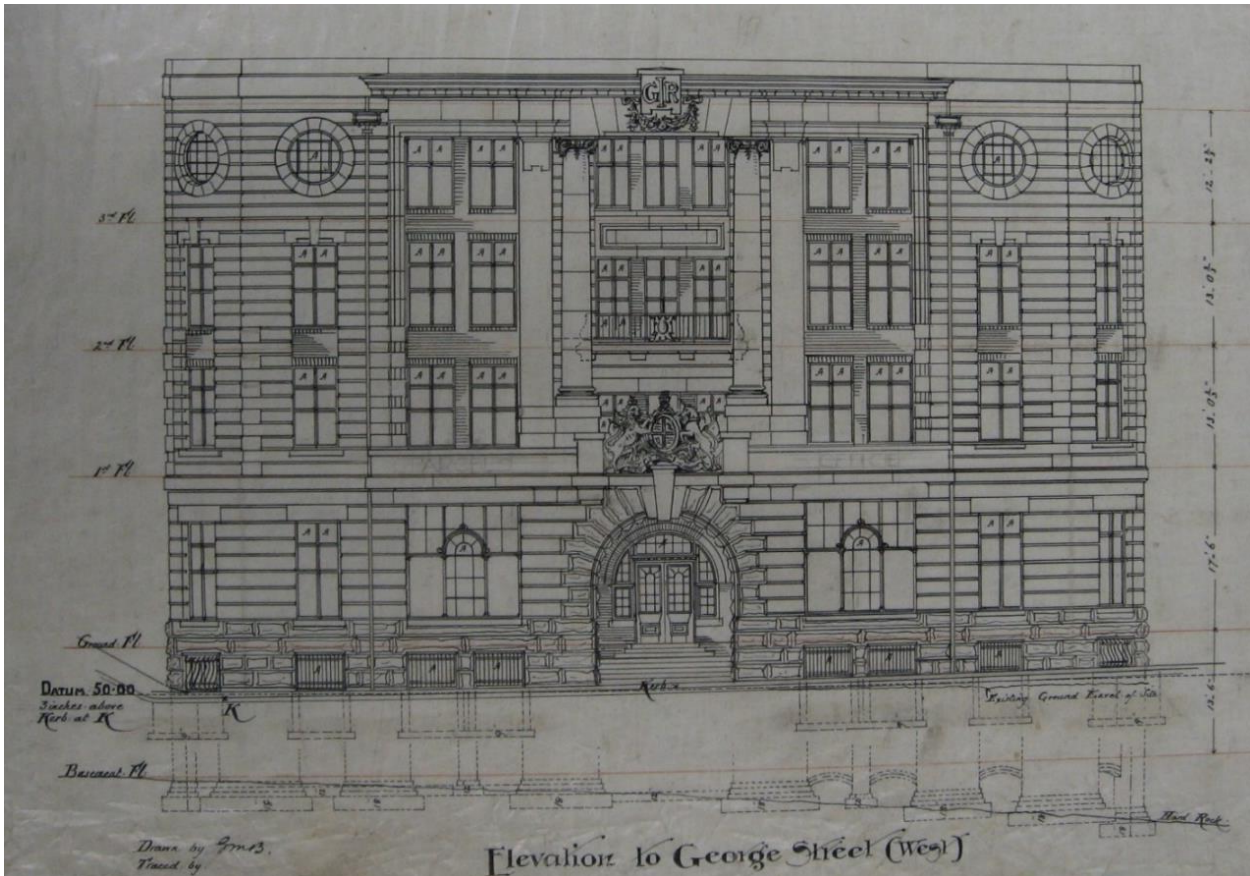


Figure 126 – New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station: Elevation to George Street (west), 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4

<sup>11</sup> "Postal parcels office", *The Sun*, 22 October 1912, p10 and "Building & Construction parcels post office", *Daily Telegraph*, 19 November 1912, p5

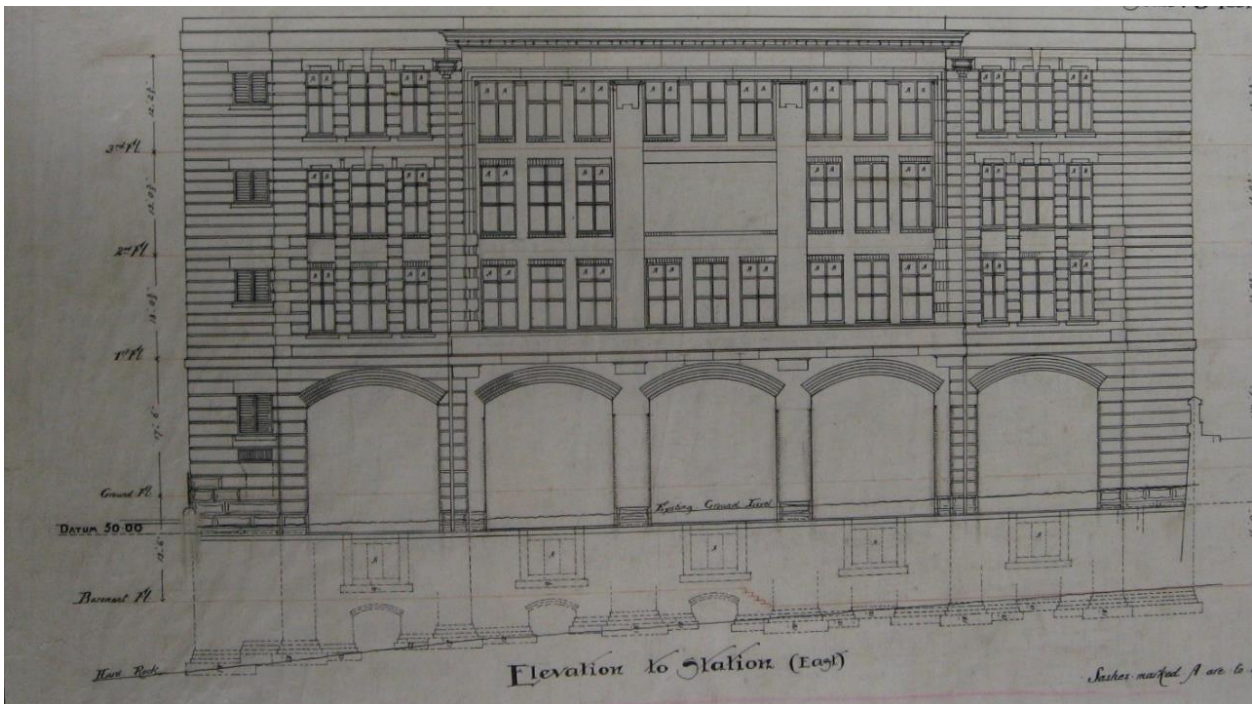


Figure 127 – New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station Sydney: Elevation to Station (east), 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4

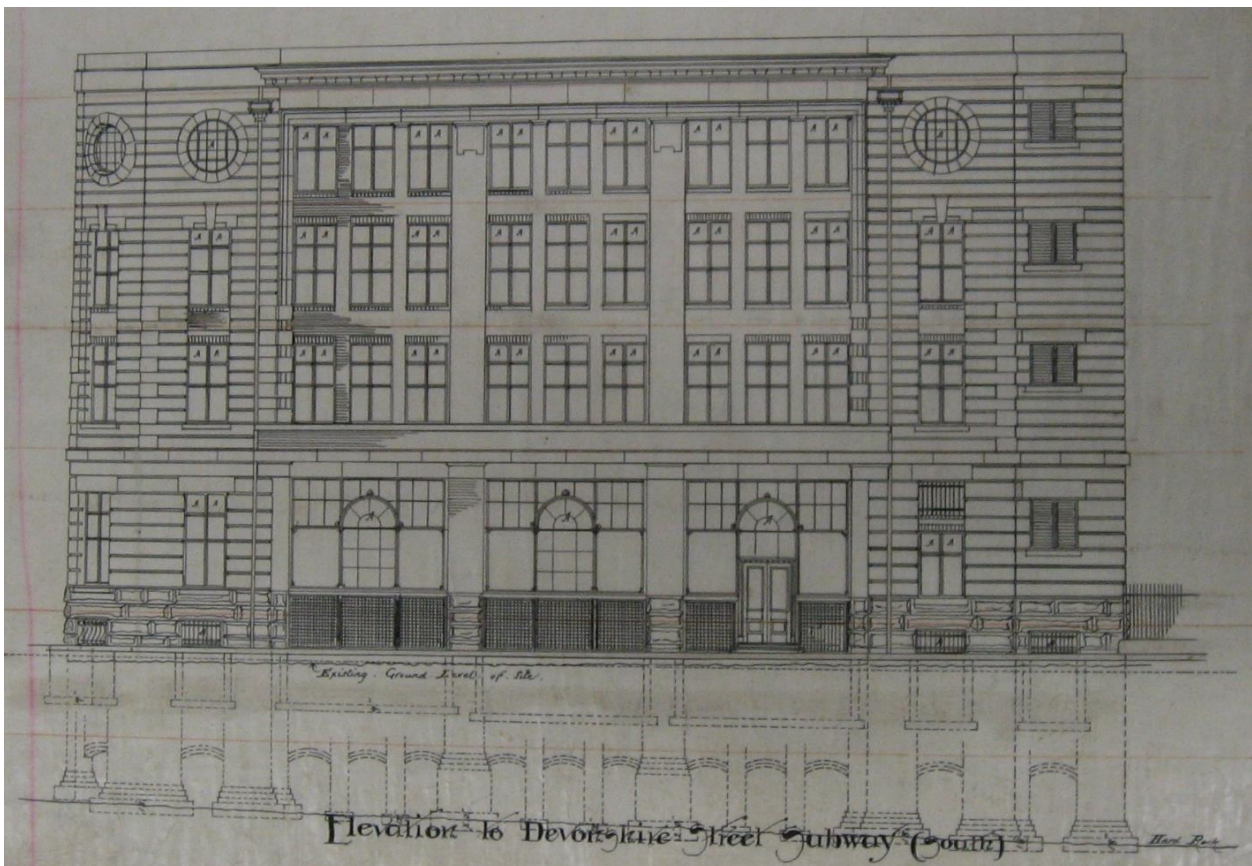


Figure 128 – New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station Sydney: Elevation to Devonshire Street Subway (south), 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4





Figure 129 - New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station Sydney: Elevation to Devonshire Street Subway (north), 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4NAA: SP1107/1, 362/4

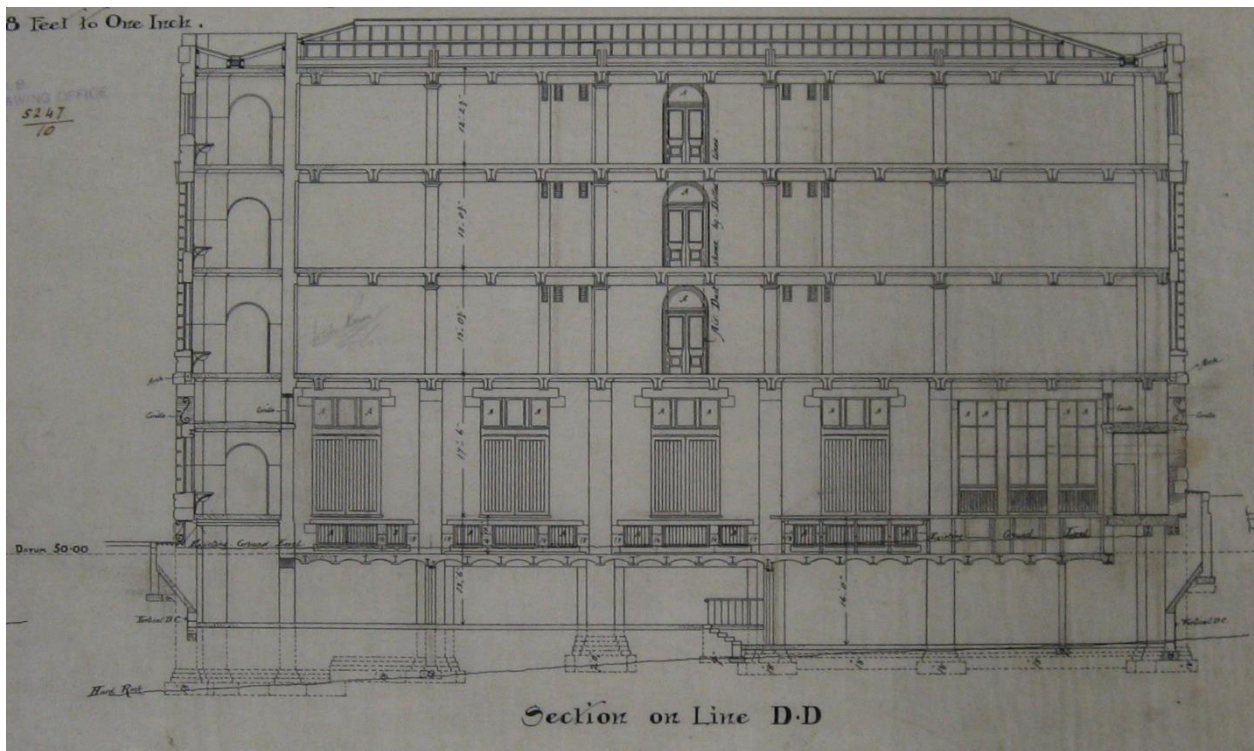


Figure 130 - New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station Sydney: Section on Line D-D, 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/5NAA: SP1107/1, 362/5



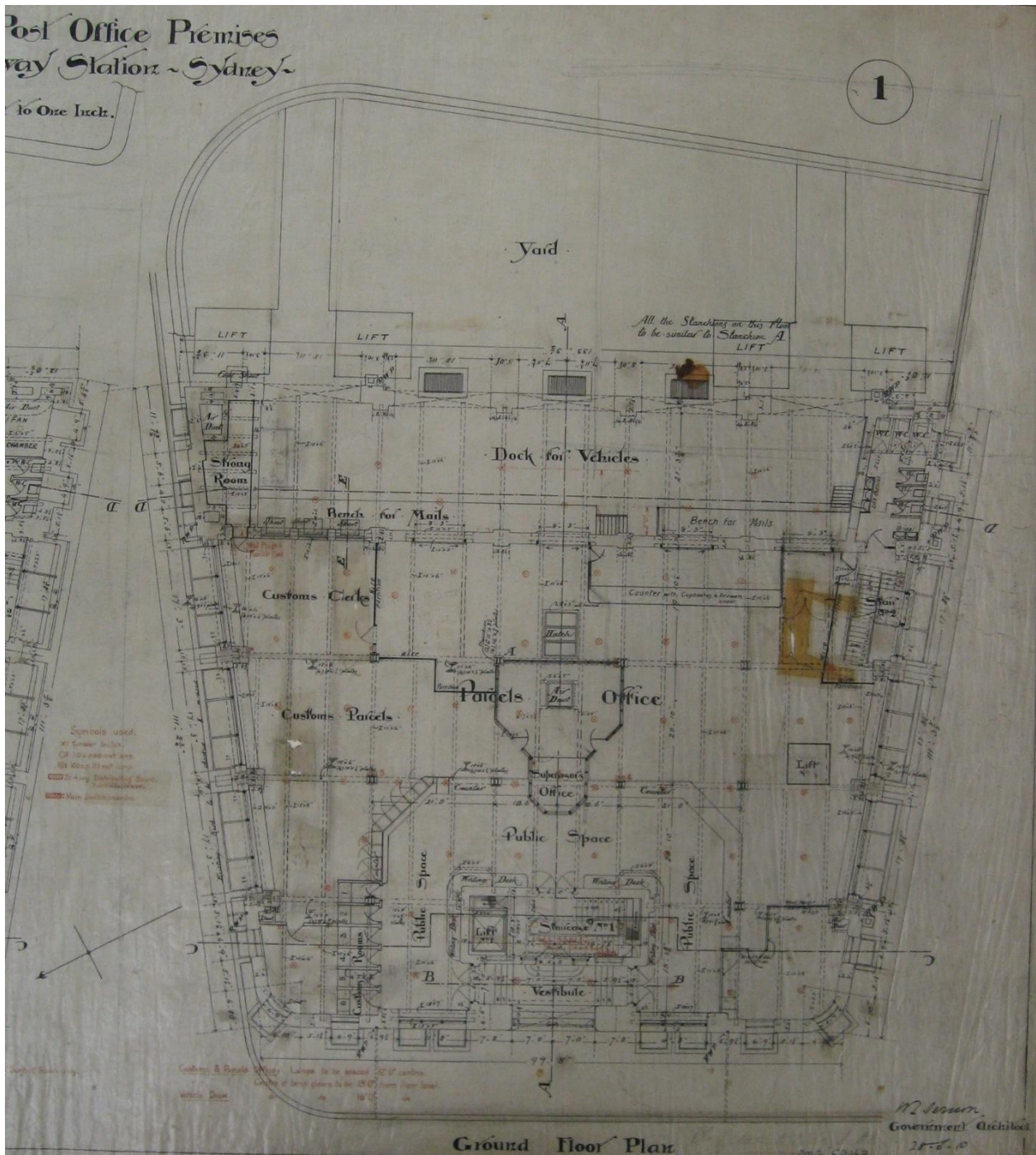


Figure 131 – New Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station Sydney” Ground Floor Plan, 1910.

Source: NAA: SP1107/1, 362/1NAA: SP1107/1, 362/1



Figure 132 – Elevation to George Street (west) - Parcels Post Office premises at the Central Railway Station, Sydney. Plans of additional storeys (Sheet 3), May 1912.

Source: NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11

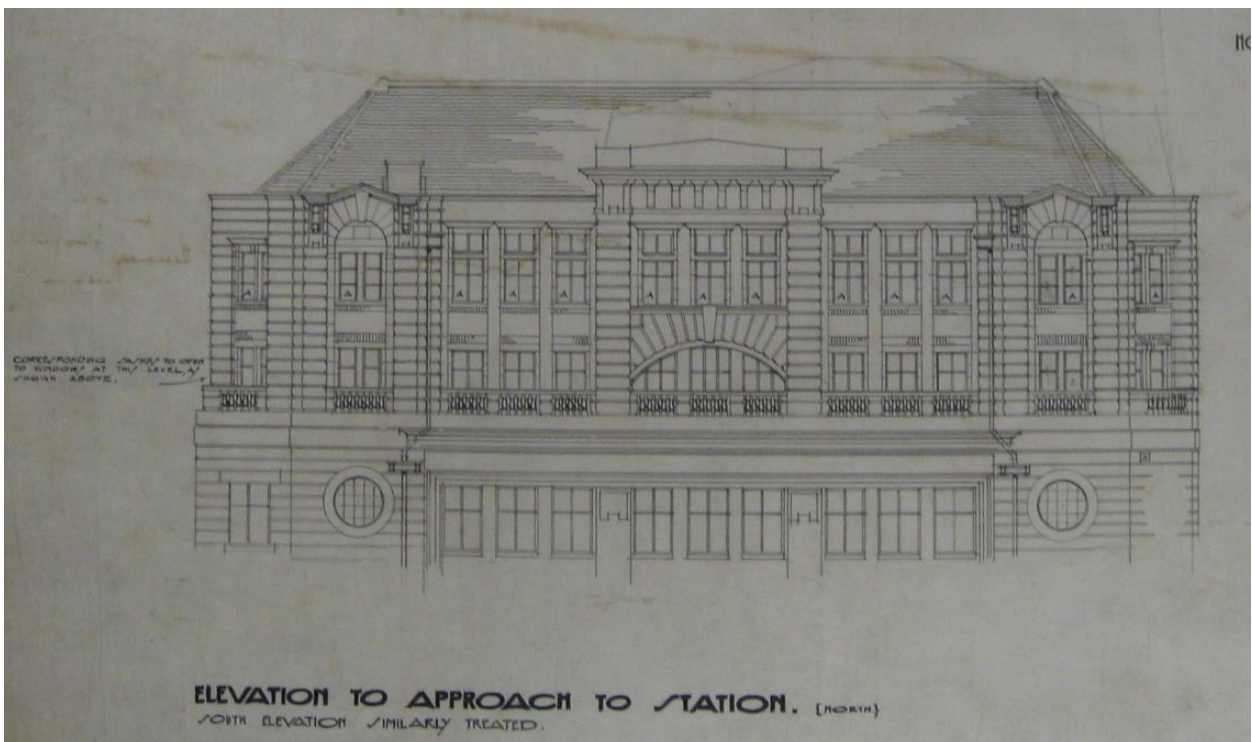


Figure 133 – Elevation to Approach to Station (north and south) - Parcels Post Office premises at the Central Railway Station, Sydney. Plans of additional storeys (Sheet 3), May 1912.

Source: NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11



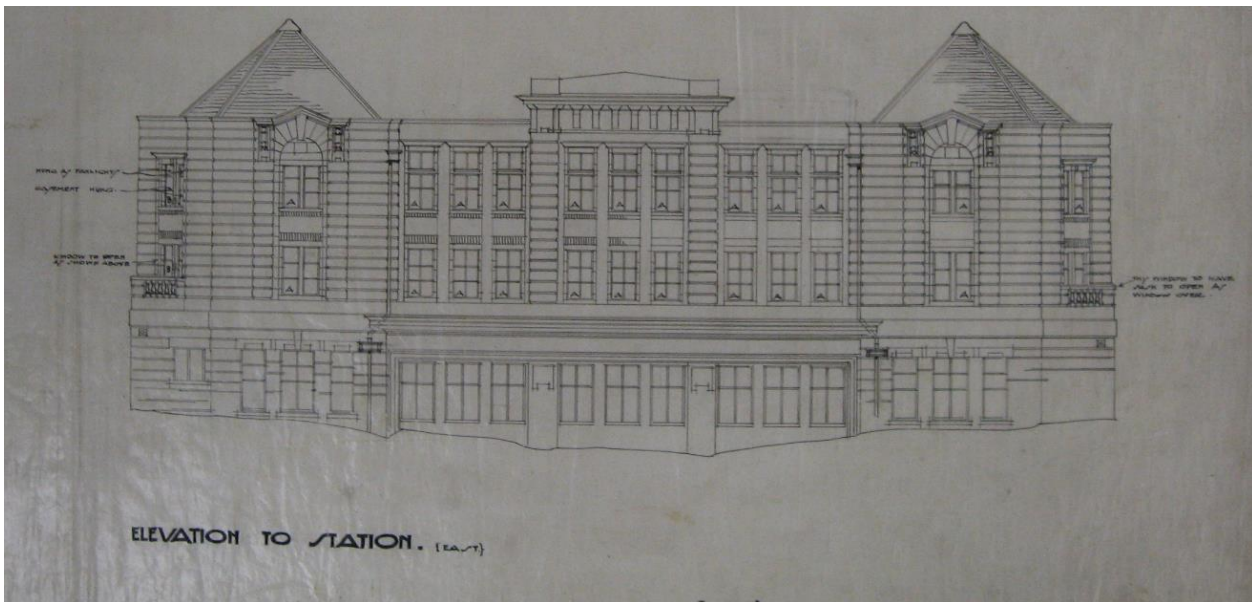


Figure 134 – Elevation to Station (east) - Parcels Post Office premises at the Central Railway Station, Sydney. Plans of additional storeys. Sheet 3, 7/5/1912.

Source: NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11NAA: SP 1007/1, 362/11



Figure 135 – Railway Square before the Central Railway clock tower was built, 1911. In this view (at far right) scaffolding and gantry on site of future Parcels Post Office building.

Source: SLNSW, hood\_07383h.jpgSLNSW, hood\_07383h.jpg



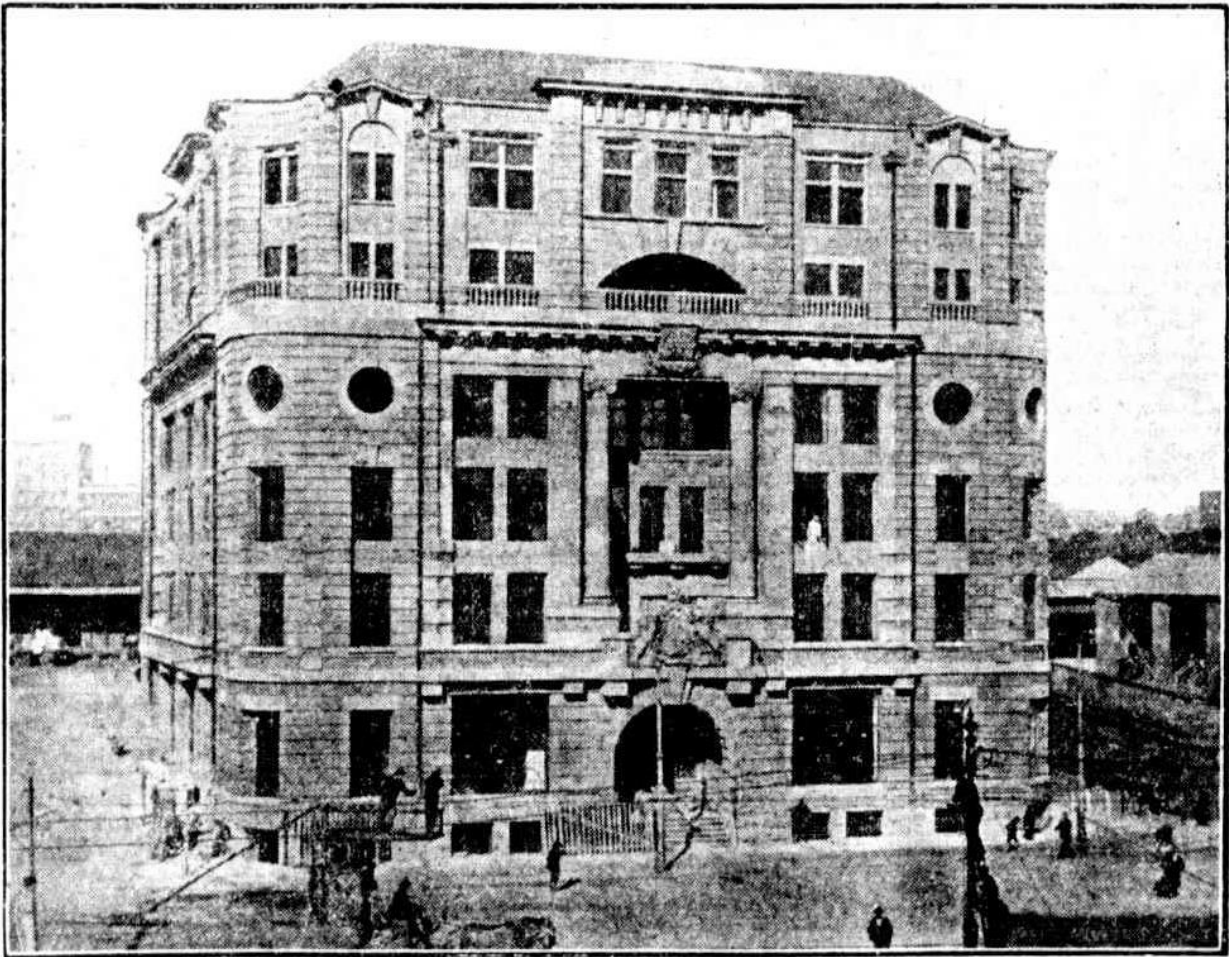


Figure 136 - The New Parcels Post Office.

Source: *The Sun*, 18 August 1913, p5 *The Sun*, 18 August 1913, p5

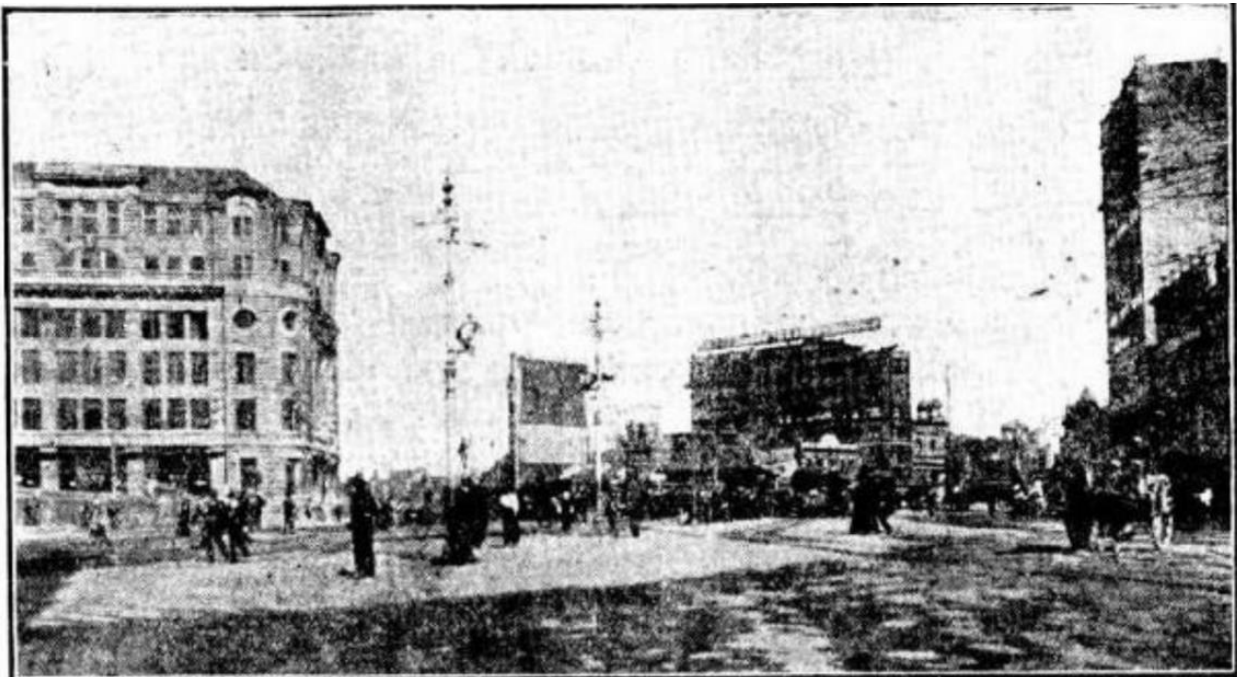


Figure 137 - The New Parcels Post Office and Railway Square.

Source: *The Sun*, 18 August 1913, p5 *The Sun*, 18 August 1913, p5

A lengthy description of the building and its facilities was furnished in *The Sun* on 18 Aug 1913 p5 (accompanied by the illustrations at Figure 125 and Figure 126) including the following extract:

*...Two years ago the Federal Government authorised the building of a parcels post office in the square at the Central Railway Station. The structure is all but completed, but the business to be transacted there has already outgrown the purposes of the building, and the floor space of approximately 87,805 square feet will not accommodate all who require to go in there. The original plan was for a four story building finished off with a stone balustrading: but two additional stories have been added, and the balustrading adds to the effect of the structure, which has been carried out to a well-balanced design in brick, with stone facings...The elevation is carried out in red open-kiln bricks from St. Peters.*

*In the front facing the square the main entrance is through a massive stone arch surmounted by the Royal Coat of Arms. From this arch there rises a beautiful centre feature in stone work. This is carried to the parapet of the building. Two columns 25ft by 3ft rise from the arch. These are surmounted by Ionic caps. Without obtruding, these give quiet dignity to the building. The steps are of polished trachyte. The entrance porch and the whole of the ground floor are paved with terrazzo, with colour effects in mosaics in the centre. The ground floor will be used for office and Customs purposes. The fittings are of polished cedar, with nickel furnishings, whilst in the Customs portion of the place there are reinforced concrete recesses abutting on to the counters, and in these places the public will be able to conduct their business with the officials without eyes being on them, and without being heard. There is also on this floor a huge strong-room, the walls of which are of concrete reinforced with 3in. by 3/4 spiral steel bars, to a width of 14in.*

*The building has a frontage of 100ft. to Railway-square, and 150ft. at the back, the sides being 110ft., and the height is nearly 100ft.*

*In the interior there are two shafts running from the basement to the top of the fourth story. On each floor there are louvres, the laths in which can be shifted to any angle. These are the watch-towers for the detectives.*

*The new Parcels Post Office is practically fireproof. The whole of the interior, with the exception of the fittings, is of reinforced concrete. The floors are of concrete 7 Inches thick, reinforced with blue metal and steel. The weight of each floor can be gathered from the fact that over 600 tons of blue metal reinforcement was used in the construction. The massive stanchions and girders are of steel surrounded by reinforced concrete. There are two staircases, one of reinforced concrete, with ironite treads, and in the other made completely of iron. The two top stories, which will be used by the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs, have been treated in exactly the same way as regards the material for construction: but the floors have been divided- into offices, some of the rooms being 72ft. in length by 22ft. in breadth. There is also a basement, which is as light as any of the upper floors— a proper arrangement of prismatic glass and opalite tiles giving such effective lighting that it will be possible to abolish artificial lighting even in the remotest corners during the day. An added fire-resisting security is found in the window frames, which are of metal throughout, the front windows on the ground floor being very handsomely framed in gun metal.*

*The lighting is perfect. The two top floors, in addition, to the windows are lit by a central light area 40ft. x 20ft., which will possibly be used as a refectory by the officers.*

*The roof is reached by a manhole opening into one of the hip roofs and then by means of a door on to a large flat area covered with reinforced concrete. The two hip roofs are partly covered with tiles and partly with corrugated iron.*

*The building is fitted with machinery for the expeditious handling of the mails. The parcels are shot into the basement on to an endless conveyor, which distributes them to other conveyors, lifting them on to the various sorting floors. All these conveyors are worked by electric power. Other machinery consists of a ventilating process which delivers hot air to the floors during the winter and cool zephyr-like breezes in the summer. The air is sucked in down a shaft to a huge furnace, and by an arrangement of fans is blown up into the building. In the summer time the air is purified and filtered by means of a huge drum covered with gauze, which revolves in a stream of water, and as the air is cooled it is sent up a shaft to the various floors.*

*It was originally intended to connect the office by means of a tunnel to the railway station in order to facilitate the transit of the parcels, but this idea has been abandoned. An overhead tramway from the first floor to the railway platform is now contemplated. A large opening has been left in the building*

*where it faces the railway platform, and the aerial railway will be taken out from this point over the tops of some of the adjacent platforms.*

*The designs for the building were prepared in the office of the State Government Architect, and the work carried out under that department's supervision on behalf of the Commonwealth Government. The cost of the building was £70,000. Mr. Harris was the contractor, and he has carried out the work in a manner creditable alike to himself and those he had in his service.*

*The stone came from Green's Quarry, Little Coogee. The iron and steel from Scrutton and Co.'s. Dobson, Franess, and Co. supplied the steel frame and metal windows. The glazing was done by James Sandy and Co. The sculpture work in the front was executed by Sheriff Brothers.*

*The building will be ready for occupation in a month's time.*

It was almost universally heralded a "very fine building". One newspaper was however critical of the use of corrugated iron on the major part of the roof, possibly arising from cost savings, as only a small section of the roof was tiled near the street front of the building behind a high parapet.<sup>12</sup> The *Sunday Times* in August 1914 praised the new Parcels Post Office building as representing "a type of the useful, yet attractive in architecture" based upon the Georgian style of architecture. The newspaper compared it favourably to several of Sydney's more prominent buildings of the last 20 years.<sup>13</sup>

Review of original and early plans indicate that the basement housed mail and parcels sorting rooms and featured a long conveyor belt for sorting. The ground floor was open to the public, accessed via the main entry from Lee Street with a long service counter to the parcels office and customs areas while there was a vehicular dock to the yard at the rear. The original plans for the first and second floors do not indicate a specific use or occupation, but they appear as unobstructed open spaces punctuated with toilets, staircases and lift. Also, on the first and second floors were detective galleries, presumably to allow for supervisors to watch the staff on the floor. The building was designed with male toilets only, indicating the nature of the work force -at the time. The third floor of the building was designed for Inland Letters and Wrapper Sorting. The 1912 plan set shows the fourth floor subdivided into seven offices, an open are, two messenger offices, an enquiries office and vestibule. The floor above was set aside for foreign parcels (at the rear of the building), the registration section and mail opening sections, occupying the majority of the floor on either side of an open area with the assistant superintendents office, bag room, strong room and store room near the No 1 staircase at the front of the building, The two existing staircases and the lift next to No. 1 staircase continued to the fourth and fifth floors. Figure 127 – Figure 132 comprise a selection of images of various floors of the building in this period.

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<sup>12</sup> "Tin roofs: deterioration of government buildings", *The Sun*, 12 May 1913, p5

<sup>13</sup> "20 years of building", *Sunday Times*, 2 August 1914, p3



Figure 138 – Ground floor, Central Square Building, c.1910s.

Source: NAA: B5919, 4/267NAA: B5919, 4/267



Figure 139 – First floor, Central Square Building, c.1910s.

Source: NAA: B5919, 4/268NAA: B5919, 4/268



Figure 140 – Second floor (newspaper sorting), Central Square Building, c.1910s.

Source: NAA: B5919, 4/270NAA: B5919, 4/270



Figure 141 – Third floor (primary letter section inland) Central Square Building, c.1910s.

Source: NAA: B5919, 4/272NAA: B5919, 4/272



Figure 142 – Fourth floor (ship section), Central Square Building, c.1910s.

Source: NAA: B5919, 4/274NAA: B5919, 4/274



Figure 143 – Central Square, Sydney

Source: NAA: Series B5919, 4/172



In this period, retailers of the city were gradually moving westwards to Railway Square, “the main artery of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the city”. The Parcels Post Office was one of several “fine buildings...lending dignity to the architectural surroundings of Railway Square”. Other landmark buildings and businesses nearby included Marcus Clark’s new premises, Mr Bowen’s tailoring shop, the Canada Buildings, incomplete Daking House [and] the recently built jewellery establishments of Saunders and Orchard.<sup>14</sup>



Figure 144 – Railway Square, c1914.

Source: *City of Sydney Archives, SRC24659*City of Sydney Archives, SRC24659

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<sup>14</sup> “Trade moves westward; busy Railway Square a maelstrom of traffic”, *The Sun*, 18 August 1913, p5

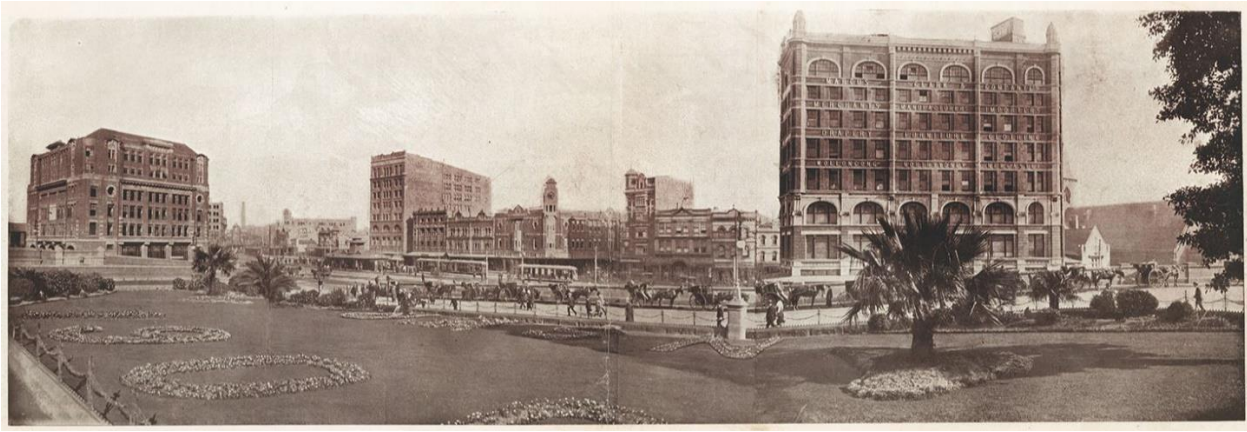


Figure 145 – Central Square from the Railway Station, 1915. Parcels Post Office at far left.

Source: State Archives & Records, Digital ID: NRS20499\_a050\_000016 State Archives & Records, Digital ID: NRS20499\_a050\_000016



Figure 146 – Railway Station & Parcels Post Office, Central Square, Sydney, c1916-17.

Source: NMA, 1986.0117.5688NMA, 1986.0117.5688



Figure 147 – Railway Square, post-1916. Parcels Post Office on far right of image.

Source: City of Sydney Archives, SRC 994.441 PHI: Sydney and Surroundings NSW, (H Phillips, Willoughby NSW, nd)City of Sydney Archives, SRC 994.441 PHI: Sydney and Surroundings NSW, (H Phillips, Willoughby NSW, nd)



### 3.3. MAIL BRANCH

Initially, the additional two storeys were intended to house Federal Departments but by 1914 it was decided to use these for mail sorting although the design was unsuitable for mail work. Lifts suitable for mail handling were not provided and had to be erected outside, much to the disgust of the editors of *Building*, who criticised the external lifts as an “architectural disfigurement” (refer to Figure 137). Partitions had to be removed to provide the necessary Mail Branch space.<sup>15</sup>

It was anticipated that the bulk of mail sorting would be carried on in the new building to relieve congestion at the General Post Office (GPO). During the year ended 30 June 1915, the fitting up of the new premises was completed and the bulk of the mail work had been removed from the GPO building.<sup>16</sup>

In 1920, overseas mail, except parcels, was opened on the fifth floor. All local mail arriving between 9am and 7pm was also opened there as the main staff was present on the third floor during those times.<sup>17</sup> The letter portion of the English mail was opened on the third floor in the early morning.<sup>18</sup> If they arrived about midday when the main staff were present, the bags were opened at some distance away from where the staff were working.<sup>19</sup>

The newspaper mail from the United Kingdom and America were opened on the second floor as they were required for sorting.<sup>20</sup> The proximity of the receiving and despatching work allowed more efficient handling of mail matter and better supervision, as the staff engaged on opening work were able to be utilised to better advantage during the lulls in the arrival of mail.<sup>21</sup> In the Registration section all registered mail was opened at a table where the remainder of the work was in progress.<sup>22</sup> In the parcel section all parcel mail was opened in the working sections, inland and interstate on the first floor, where all the despatching work was done, and overseas on the ground floor, where parcels are received from the public and where the delivery of Customs parcels took place.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> NAA: Series C3898 Item 63/1 “Mail Branch Chief Parcels Office” 1959, p2; Series SP1411/1, Item B66/1528, Director, Engineering to Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, 1965

<sup>16</sup> NAA: Series SP305/1, Item B48/3433, Plan of site

<sup>17</sup> NAA: Series SP820/1 Folder 20 Item PMG7860, “New Parcels Office Proposed Alterations to Stairs No. 1”, 10 October 1911

<sup>18</sup> NAA: Series SP19/1 Item IB20/1084, “Suggested Improvement in Working Conditions of Sorters in Mail Branch G.P.O and Central Square, Sydney, 23 March 1920, p.4

<sup>19</sup> NAA: Series SP821/1 Item PMG7854, “New Parcels Post Sydney Subway to Yard”, 5 March 1912

<sup>20</sup> NAA: Series SP1107/1 Item PMG2973, 7 May 1912, Sheet 1 “Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station, plans of additional storeys”, 7 May 1912; Series SP1107/1, Item PMG3503, “Parcels Post Office Premises at the Central Railway Station, Sydney Part Elevation North Front, Section B-C and Part Elevation Central Portion George St Front”, 30 May 1912: Department of Public Works and Services, *op. cit.*, p71

<sup>21</sup> NAA: Series C3898 Item 63/1 “Souvenir in Commemoration of Opening of Parcel Post Premises Central-Square, Sydney, 29 November 1913”; “Mail Branch Chief Parcels Office”, 1959, p2’ Series C3898 Item 634/3 “Mail Branch Parcels Post”, 1913, np

<sup>22</sup> NAA: Series SP19/1 Item IB20/1084, “Suggested Improvement in Working Conditions of Sorters in Mail Branch G.P.O and Central Square, Sydney,” 23 March 1920, p.4

<sup>23</sup> NAA: Series SP1107/1 Item PMG4833



Figure 148 – “Architectural Disfigurement, the New Parcels Post Office, at Sydney Railway Station. The above is a glaring example of the inconsistency of Government methods. A public building, having a fine stone façade, costing thousands of pounds, is turned into an eyesore by the addition of shoddy external lift construction”.

Source: *Building*, Vol 17 No 98, 12 October 1915, p59

## 3.4. PARCEL POST

Between 1917 and 1920 problems were encountered with ventilation: air ducts were not working due to mail bags being opened against them and many shutters being kept closed. In winter, the heating system resulted in "hot, smelly air (being) belched forth throughout the building." Several requests were made by the Sorters' Union for improvements to ventilation to clear foul air and dust since opening windows created excessive draughts. In September 1919, Dr. Ludowici, Acting Commonwealth Medical Officer inspected the building and concluded that working conditions at Central Square compared favourably with those of any large factory or shop.

Over six hundred were employed when the original plan was for offices with small staffs.<sup>24</sup> Alterations carried out during the 1920s consisted mainly of modifications to the third, fourth and fifth floors, involving the creation of new areas for Wrapper Sorting and Canvas Workers.

The transfer of mail at Central Station to the Post Office in 1929 was described as follows, "all incoming and outgoing Country and Interstate mails are taken over by the Railway Department in the Custodian's Room. The Railway Department then transports these mails through its own tunnel, a distance of approximately 800ft by its own labour, and in its own lifts takes the mails to and from the platforms. But some years ago, an arrangement was made by the Central Office by which the Department received suburban mails on the platform and not in the Custodian's Room."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> NAA: Series SP19/1 Item IB20/1084 "Opening of Fanlights over Windows in Central Square Building. Summary of Action Taken," n.p; Postal Sorter's Union of Australia New South Wales Branch to Deputy Post-Master General 26 May 1919, n.p; Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Works and Railways, Completion Return, 5 May 1921, n.p; "Suggested Improvement in Working Conditions of Sorters in Mail Branch G.P.O and Central Square, Sydney," 23 March 1920.p.2

<sup>25</sup> NAA: Series SP19/1, Item IB33/1065 Part 1, Correspondence from Superintendent of Mails to Deputy Director, 12 December 1929, p.7.





Figure 149 – Mail truck, Central Square, 1936.

Source: NAA: C4078, N795NAA: C4078, N795

The inadequacy of the mail handling facilities at Central Railway was again opened for consideration in 1933. It was noted that the mail handling methods were slow, resulting in poor service to the public, as it took up to 18 minutes for suburban mails to travel between the platform and Custodian's section. Also, manual handling was expensive and the danger of theft from mails was greatly increased with manual handling. However, financial circumstances prevented further action.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 150 – Aerial of locality c. 1920-1938. Note the relationship between the subject site and former Inwards Parcels Shed (now YHA Railway Square), Central Station, and Western Forecourt.

Source: SLNSW, Digital Order No. c111190008.jpg SLNSW, Digital Order No. c111190008.jpg

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<sup>26</sup> NAA Series: 19/1, Item IB33/1065 Part 2, Correspondence from Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs to Secretary, Commissioner for Railways, 18 May 1933; Acting Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs, to Post Master-General's Department, 8 November 1933.



Figure 151 – Central Square Parcels Office, heaped bags, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3005FNAA: C4078, N3005F



Figure 152 – Central Square Parcels Office, heaped parcels, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3005FNAA: C4078, N3005F



Figure 153 – Central Square Parcels Office, heaped bag, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3005DNAA: C4078, N3005D



Figure 154 – Central Square Parcels Office, heaped bag, 1936.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3836NAA: C4078, N3836





Figure 155 – Automatic loader and mail bags at yard at the rear of Central Square, 1947 (showing the subject rear yard and opening through to the inward parcels area).

Source: NAA: C4078, N2843DNAA: C4078, N2843D



Figure 156 – Automatic loader and mail bags at Central Square, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N2843ANAA: C4078, N2843A

Congestion on the ground floor continued to be a problem into the 1950s. The Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs stated in 1950 that “the increase in inwards parcels traffic has rendered the space behind the counter on the ground floor so congested that it appears that alternative arrangements for handling the initial sort in the basement may have to be made”.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.5. THE CUSTOMS SECTION

In 1929 complaints were received by the Department of Trade and Customs regarding unsatisfactory overseas parcel delivery at Sydney with delays causing inconvenience and damaging the interests of the business community.

The Collector of Customs at Sydney stated that until further accommodation was made available for the Customs officers at the Parcels Post Office, it would be impossible to cope with the increasing volume of business and congestion. The increased accommodation required was not expected to be available until the end of the year, when it was anticipated that certain branches of postal activities would be transferred to the General Post Office. To provide immediate relief, alterations to the present counter accommodation were recommended.<sup>28</sup> Several options were explored involving rearrangement of space within the existing premises and the removal of certain operations to alternative locations.

<sup>27</sup> NAA: Series SP1411/1, Item B52/78, Correspondence from Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs to the Director of Works, 6 December 1950.

<sup>28</sup> NAA Series: SP305/1, item B1948/3433, Correspondence from Department of Trade and Customs to Postmaster-General, 28 March 1929.

It was expected that the Mail Branch would be transferred to the G.P.O. and that as soon as this was effected, arrangements would be made for additional accommodation for parcels and Customs work at the Parcels Post building.<sup>29</sup> While some relief was obtained in 1939, overcrowding in Customs remained a problem into the 1950s. Despite the overcrowding in certain sections the financial situation meant that it was not practicable for the Department to make use of the whole of the space in the Sydney Central Square Building as intended. An offer was made to the Department of Works, in 1930, for use of the third, fourth and fifth floors for other Departments' activities for two years.

This proposal would have involved changes such as transferring the Foreign Parcels Post Section from the fifth floor to the second floor and moving the Canvas Workers' Section and the machinery from the fourth to the second floor. However, the space was not able to be used by other Commonwealth Departments, due to existing lease commitments. At one stage it was proposed that these floors be used as a broadcasting studio. However, these plans did not eventuate.<sup>30</sup>

In 1947, it was intended to erect a building at the rear of the present building to give much needed additional space for use by the Postmaster-General's Department and the Customs Department. The Department of Posts and Telegraphs did not have any legal rights over the yard on which it wanted to build.<sup>31</sup> Conditions in the Customs Section remained congested and inefficient, the situation exacerbated by the increase in the size of parcels handled from ten to fifty pounds weight.

Such parcels were handled previously by the Customs Department.<sup>32</sup> The Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs argued that conditions could not be improved until the Postal Training School was removed from the building.<sup>33</sup>

A small selection of these photographs dated to 1947 and 1952 are reproduced below at Figure 145 – Figure 148.



Figure 157 – Central Square, customs sub-section office area, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3003ANAA: C4078, N3003A



Figure 158 – Central Square, customs sub-section office area, 1947.

Source: NAA: C4078, N3003ENAA: C4078, N3003E

<sup>29</sup> NAA: Series SP305/1, Item B1948/3433, Correspondence from Department of Trade and Customs to Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs, 29 May 1930.

<sup>30</sup> NAA: Series SP857/2, Item PA843 Part 1, Memorandum from Postmaster-General's Department to Department of Works, 6 December 1930; Memorandum from Department of Works to Postmaster-General's Department, 17 January 1931.

<sup>31</sup> NAA: Series SP305/1, Item B1948/3433, Correspondence from Deputy Director Posts and Telegraphs, "Sydney Chief Parcels Office, Central Square." 1947.

<sup>32</sup> NAA: Series SP857/2, Item PA1165, Correspondence from Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs to Surveyor and Property Officer, Department of the Interior, 31 December 1947.

<sup>33</sup> NAA: Series SP857/2, Item PA1165, Correspondence from Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs to Surveyor and Property Officer, Department of the Interior, 31 December 1947.



Figure 159 – Central Square mail branch, first floor customs section – public space, 1952.

Source: NAA: C4078, N4188ANAA: C4078, N4188A



Figure 160 – Central Square mail branch, first floor customs section – public space, 1952.

Source: NAA: C4078, N4188CNA: C4078, N4188C

### 3.6. GENERAL POSTAL SERVICES

In the 1930s services were extended to include a Post Office section providing the following services: money orders and postal notes; registration of letters; sale of postage stamps and acceptance of telegrams. The Post Office was opened on 1 November 1933, at which date the name of the building was changed to The Chief Parcels Office N.S.W. Services provided at this date comprised:

- Telegrams
- Money orders
- Postal notes
- Sale of stamps
- Registration of letters and other articles
- Parcels post
- Insured and registered parcels
- Commonwealth Savings Bank business

The inclusion of general postal facilities resulted in an accompanying decrease in the areas utilised for parcel handling. The establishment of the Post Office and the relocation of the Money Order section of the Accounts Branch from the GPO necessitated modifications and the reallocation of space at Central Square. In terms of the layout of accommodation for Post Office business, it was considered important that post office counters be accessible to the public from the main hall so that the public would not be forced to go outside the building and enter a separate entrance to reach the Post Office.

Since many members of the business community met with the Supervisor, it was also necessary that his office occupy a position close to the main hall or the main entrance.<sup>34</sup> By 1947, the Post Office provided facilities for money order and savings bank, acceptance telegrams, trunk line calls, registration of letters and parcels.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> NAA: Series SP1411/1, Item B52/78, Correspondence from Superintendent of Mails to Senior Inspector, 11 June 1934, p.3

<sup>35</sup> NAA: Series SP1411/1 Item B52/78, Postmaster-General's Department to Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs, 25 September 1933; Superintendent of Mails to Senior Inspector, 1 June 1934; Acting Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs, to the Hon. J.A. Beasley M.P., 23 October 1933; District Inspector to Superintendent, Postal Services, 30 September 1947; Series SP19/1, Item IB37/1185, Accountant to the Deputy Director, 18 May 1936.



In the late 1940s and 1950s proposed changes at the Chief Parcels Office were prompted by the continuing need to relieve congestion in the building. Proposals included moving the Post Office from the Chief Parcels Office to an alternative site or rearranging the Parcels Section activities to make more space available on the ground floor. The location of the Post Office was considered unsatisfactory as it was not in the shopping area and had a dangerous traffic approach.<sup>36</sup> However, by 1952 it had not been possible to find suitable premises to which the Post Office section could be removed, and congestion continued to be a problem.

In 1955 plans were made for the installation of private box facilities extending over the full depth of the building on the ground floor.<sup>37</sup>



Figure 161 – Two view of public counter area on ground floor of the Chief Parcels Post Office building, 1960.

Source: NAA: C4078, N15236 (left) and C4078, N15239 (right) NAA: C4078, N15236 (left) and C4078, N15239 (right)

### 3.7. TRAINING SCHOOL

In 1942, preparations were made for the use of the fifth floor of the building as a training school for postal clerks and telegraphists. Instruction was to be provided in Morse operating, postal knowledge, counter duties, mail work etc., and classrooms were to be equipped with facilities similar to those installed in an actual post office. It was expected that the greatest portion of trainees' time would be spent in manipulative telegraphy (morse code).

By February 1944, two classes of eight females each were already in training and it was anticipated that this number would increase to forty-two by March. Selection of male trainees had been finalised and it was expected that thirty-eight would commence training as soon as possible. In May a contract was entered into with SJ Zealey of Miranda for alterations, repairs<sup>38</sup> and renovations for an amount of £2,583.<sup>39</sup>

After World War II, as ex-servicemen began returning to the workforce, it was anticipated that additional space would be required for training and that training was expected to form an effective part of rehabilitation. New premises were considered to provide 8,000 square feet of floor space for the training of an additional one hundred Telegraphists and/or Postal Clerks to meet staff requirements for 1948; training of six hundred Postal Officers about to be appointed to the Commonwealth Public Service; "in-service" training of over two hundred clerks and induction training of Junior Postal Officers.

<sup>36</sup> NAA: Series SP1411/1 Item B52/78, Superintendent of Mails to Superintendent, Postal Services, 6 October 1948; Superintendent Postal Services to the Deputy Director, 1 November 1948.

<sup>37</sup> NAA: Series SP1411/1 Item B52/78, Correspondence Superintendent of Mails to Superintendent, Postal Services, 6 October 1948; Series SP1411/1, Item B52/68, Correspondence from Superintendent Postal Services to the Deputy Director, 1 November 1948; Series SP366/1, Item B50/2670, Superintendent, Buildings to Assistant Director, Postal and Transport Division, 6 June 1955; Director Posts and Telegraphs to Director of Works, 20 September 1955.

<sup>38</sup> "Tenders Called", *Construction*, (Sydney:31<sup>st</sup> May 1944), p.6

<sup>39</sup> NAA Series: SP366/1, Item B49/45, "Recruitment and Training of Postal Clerks and Telegraphists," Appendix C, 1942, pp1,4; Series SP36

The Training School, continued to occupy the Chief Parcels Office, despite plans in the 1950s to remove it completely to a Postal Training School at Strathfield. Correspondence in 1964 indicates that the fifth floor of the Chief Parcels Office was occupied by a number of classrooms and a machinist training school. The Australian Postal Institute made use of these rooms for courses conducted in the evenings.<sup>40</sup>



Figure 162 – Mr Jones of the Postal Training School, 1946.

Source: NAA: C4078, N2656NAA: C4078, N2656



Figure 163 – Class 5, Postal Training School, Railway Square, 1949.

Source: NAA: C4076, HN1434NAA: C4076, HN1434

### 3.8. DEMISE OF THE PARCELS POST FUNCTION

In the 1960s, plans were being made to vacate the Chief Parcels Office in 1965. Operations were to be moved to the new Mail Exchange at Redfern. It was proposed that the first and second floors of the building be allocated to two depots of the Telegraph Division, the Telegraph Subscription Service Depot and the Telegraph Installation Depot.

It was anticipated that when the Mail Exchange Branch parcels handling was removed from the building, considerable extra business would be handled by the Post Office. Alterations were made accordingly. The Post Office was to be named “Railway Square Post Office” after the removal of parcel handling activities, and two new signs were to be provided, one visible from Marcus Clark’s and the other visible from the Central Railway Station.<sup>41</sup>

Following the progressive vacation of the premises by the Mail Exchange Branch and the Customs Department, it was proposed to occupy the building in the following manner:

*Yard area: To be available for the use of mail transport vehicles and some engineering vehicles.*

*Basement area: to be provided at the rear of the basement to allow vehicles access for the parking of approximately 25 vehicles used by the Engineering groups occupying the building.*

*Ground Floor: Existing Post Office to be rearranged to provide for additional area, locker rooms, showers, lunch rooms and other amenities for Travelling Post Office staff and Custodian of Mails staff.*

*First Floor: Telegraph Subscribers’ Service Depot. Space urgently required for installation of exchange equipment.*

<sup>40</sup> NAA Series: SP857/2, Item PA1165, Correspondence from Deputy Director, Posts and Telegraphs to Surveyor and Property Officer, Department of the Interior, 31 December 1947; Series 1411/1, Item B66/1528, Superintendent, Personnel Branch to Executive Engineer, Services Branch 26 August 1964.

<sup>41</sup> NAA Series: Sp1411/1, Item B66/1528, Superintendent Planning and Development Branch, Postal and Transport Services Division to Superintending Engineer, Services Branch 29 July 1964; Superintending Engineer, Country Branch to Superintending Engineer, Services Branch, 23 July 1964; Superintendent, Planning and Development Branch, Postal Services Division to Superintending Engineer, Services Branch, 15 July 1965.

*Second Floor: Telegraphic Installation Depot. Lunch room for staff occupying first, second and third floors.*

*Third Floor: Two District Works Divisions and Equipment Service Division.*

*Fourth Floor: Material Testing Division.*

*Fifth Floor: Approximately 1600 square feet to be used for Material Testing Division. Balance of floor to be used as classrooms for first and second year technicians-in-training.<sup>42</sup>*



Figure 164 – Working conditions in Chief Parcels Office, Central Square, 1960.

Source: NAA: C4078, N15271NAA: C4078, N15271

### **3.9. NEW USES, POST 1965**

It has been difficult to locate records pertaining to the occupancy and use of the building from 1965 to the 1990s. This has been complicated by the availability and lack of access to departmental records at Commonwealth and State Government levels. In 1975, the Post-Master General's Department (later known as Australian Postal Commission and then Australia Post) was broken up and some of its functions absorbed into the Australian Telecommunications Commission (ATC), trading as Telecom Australia. Records from this period are held in the National Australian Archives but are not available to the public owing to date restrictions. Similarly, State Government freehold ownership of the site has been variously listed under differing departments/organisations related to railways and transport. Tracing departmental records in the 'modern era' has not been straightforward, with missing records or files not available for public access under date restrictions.

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<sup>42</sup> NAA Series: SP1411/1, Item B6/1528, Correspondence from Director, Posts and Telegraphs to Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, 1965.



Consequently, this section of the report has been pieced together from information gleaned from a variety of sources, including government gazettes, newspapers and annual reports. A press release dated 23 December 1969 announced a contract was awarded to Darcy Bros Pty Ltd for alterations and additions to the building comprising “alterations to the second, third and fourth floor providing offices, laboratory and photographic facilities, and lecture rooms, as well as provision of three lifts and installation of air conditioning and ventilating systems”.<sup>43</sup> In accordance with the Civil Works Program, during the financial year 1969/70, the Postmaster-General’s Department spent \$54,763 of a budget of \$568,987 for “alterations and additions to Chief Parcels Office (stage 2)”. By mid-1974, there was a balance of \$3,539, indicating the works had largely been completed. No plans have been located for these works.

In the 1975/76 financial year, the Department authorised a further \$124,893 to undertake alterations to the third floor. Following the dismantling of the Postmaster-General’s Department, the ATC allocated \$44,000 to provision of “material testing laboratory”.<sup>44</sup> In this post-1965 period, the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette contains tender notices and awards of contracts for miscellaneous building works and various maintenance activities to the building. These included “alterations and additions to 3rd floor” (31 May 1973), “provide fume controller on roof” (19/3/1975), “supply and fix mineral fibre ceiling between concrete beams and walls to lunchroom, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor” (4/12/1979), “provision of steel support structure and access platform from 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level to stone lintel at main entrance façade, etc (2/9/1980), ground floor toilet, remove urinal and repair leaks” (25/1/1983), “alterations and additions to Terc Area, 1<sup>st</sup> floor” (27/10/1984)<sup>45</sup> and “external repairs and maintenance” (6/5/1987). No plans have been located for any of these works, though it is possible some may survive in departmental files in the National Archives of Australia.

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<sup>43</sup> Minister for Works, “\$500.000 contract for alterations to P.M.G. Building, Sydney” [press releases],

[https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/media/pressrel/807885/upload\\_binary/807885.pdf;fileType=application/pdf#search=%22p.m.g.%20building%20sydney%22](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/media/pressrel/807885/upload_binary/807885.pdf;fileType=application/pdf#search=%22p.m.g.%20building%20sydney%22), viewed 27 May 2019

<sup>44</sup> *Parliamentary Paper No 172/1976 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Australian Telecommunications Commission Service and Business Outlook for 1976-77*, August 1976, p

<sup>45</sup> TERC stands for Transport Emergency Response Centre.

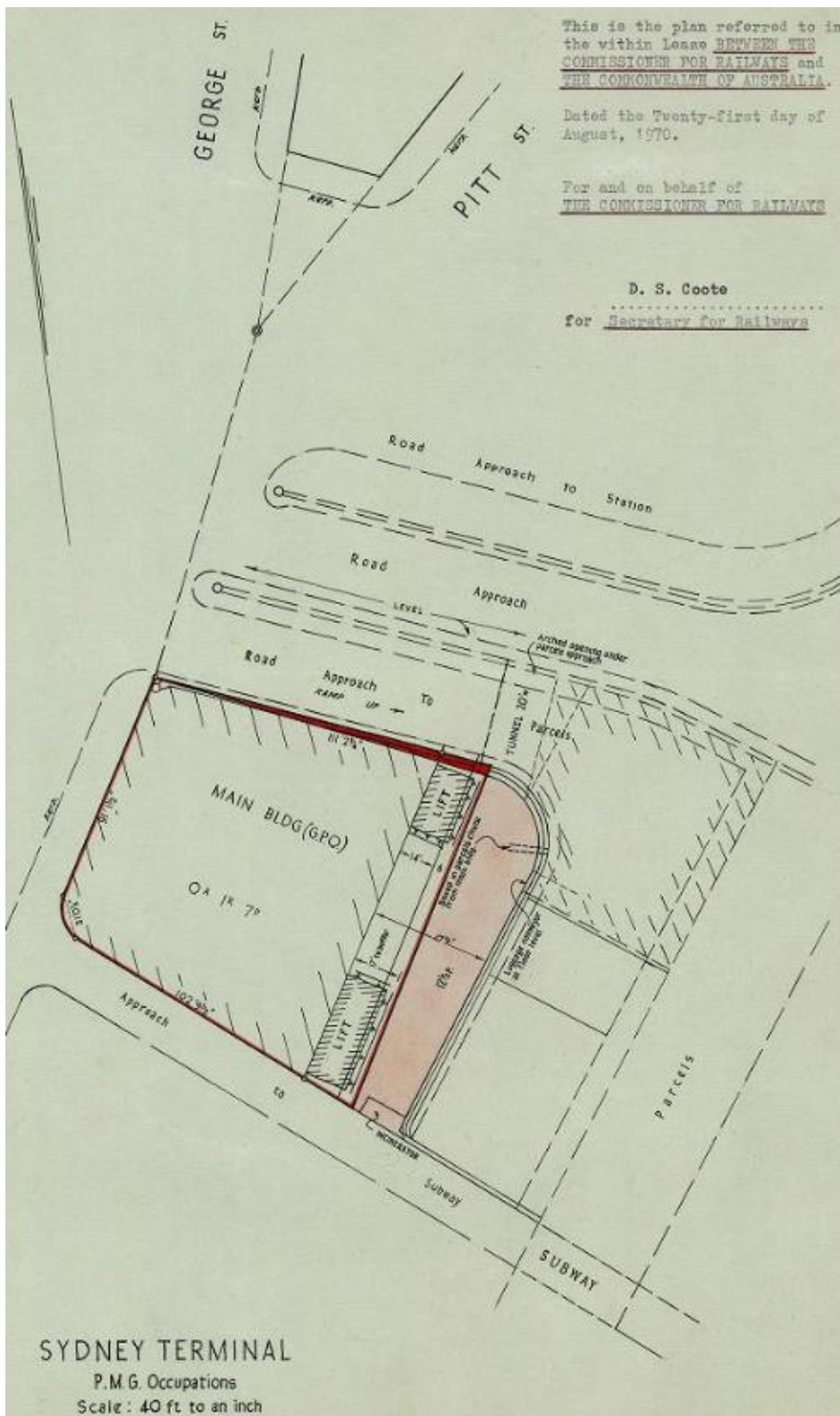


Figure 165 – Sydney Terminal, PMG occupations outlined in red plus area shaded pink leased to the Commonwealth, 21 August 1970.

Source: NSW LRS NSW LRS

Between 1971 and 1973, the Postmaster-General's Department commissioned a series of photographs of the building, primarily external with some basement views.

From 1965 to 1993, the ground floor of the building was occupied by the "Railway Square Post Office". It was officially closed at the end of May 1993.



Figure 166 – Devonshire Tunnel construction, Railway Square, 1974

Source: *City of Sydney Archives, SRC11113* *City of Sydney Archives, SRC11113*



Figure 167 – Devonshire Tunnel construction, Railway Square, 1975

Source: *City of Sydney Archives, SRC11125* *City of Sydney Archives, SRC11125*



### 3.10. CONVERSION OF PARCELS POST BUILDING TO MEDINA EXECUTIVE SYDNEY CENTRAL

The building was largely vacant after 1993 when the Post Office closed at Railway Square. According to an unauthorised Property Australia journal article (Property Council of Australia, August 1999, p39), the building had been “unoccupied for more than a decade”. By this date, most of the internal fabric of the building had been lost through a combination of building alterations, neglect, physical deterioration and disuse over time.



Figure 168 – Subject building and Henry Deane Plaza, c. 1993. Note deteriorated condition of subject building, intrusive awning (since removed).

Source: provided by TOGA provided by TOGA

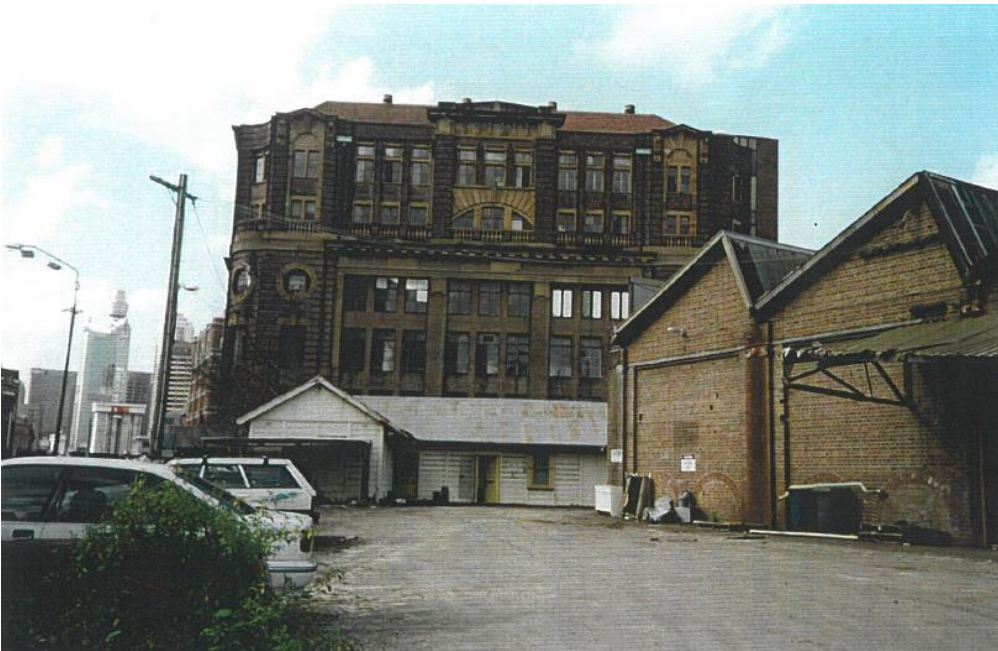


Figure 169 - Subject building and Henry Deane Plaza, c. 1993. Note deteriorated condition of subject building.

Source: provided by TOGA provided by TOGA

In 1994/95, the NSW Department of Public Works (DPWS) undertook the Central 2000 Strategic Asset Plan for the State Rail Authority (SRA), “for progressive redevelopment of the Central precinct to the year 2000 and beyond...create a world class transport interchange within the heritage context of the precinct as a whole, using private sector financing for a major part of the works”<sup>46</sup> The master plan contained a provision for the restoration, refurbishment and hospitality-related adaptive reuse of the Parcels Post Office building. It also formulated plans for the redevelopment of a government owned office building located slightly to the south of the subject property along Lee Street. Both buildings were to become part of what would be known as the Henry Deane Place and Western Gateway sub-precinct.

*The Western Gateway plan was one part of the overall Central 2000 master plan, and it called for the creation of a series of public plazas between these two buildings. The adjoining Devonshire Street Pedestrian Tunnel and the nearby Lee Street / George Street pedestrian underpasses were also to be comprehensively upgraded, along with the Bus / Rail Interchange at Railway Square. Central Railway Station was similarly comprehensively upgraded as part of the overall Central 2000 master plan. The presence of these substantial upgrades to the immediate surrounding environment at Railway Square and Central Station constituted a considerable enhancement in the future commercial potential of the local precinct. These comprehensive Precinct proposals, plus the creation of specific guidelines by the Department of Public Works and Services for the heritage restoration of the Parcels Post Office Building, contributed significantly to Toga's decision to commit to the subject redevelopment project, according to Mr Vidor.<sup>47</sup>*

DPWS invited private sector submissions by tender in late 1996 to develop the Former Parcels Post Office building and Western Gateway as part of the overall Central Station redevelopment project for the SRA. Simultaneously, the Heritage Group within DPWS, prepared a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square, which was published in July 1997. Serviced apartment operator and developer, The Toga Group, submitted its preliminary development tender in December 1996. The following year, it was announced as the preferred bidder for the Western Gateway, providing for a new office development of the order of 35,000 sqm and the conversion of the Former Parcels Post Office building to a hotel or service apartments.<sup>48</sup>

In February 1998, Toga submitted a development application (DA) and heritage conservation management plan (based upon the guidelines contained in the DPWS CMP July 1997). The DA included an application for an award of heritage floor space (HFS). It also controversially included the addition of a two-storey mansard roofed structure atop the existing six storey building, to accommodate 20 serviced apartments and plan rooms. In March 1998, Rod Howard prepared a heritage impact statement (HIS) for the adaptive reuse of the building as the Medina Central Serviced Apartment Development. Howard concluded:

*The proposal by the Toga Group to adapt the former Parcels Post Office building for use as a block of serviced apartments generally respects the established heritage qualities of the building. The scheme will allow for the external conservation of the masonry walls and windows in accordance with established conservation policies. The proposed treatment of the interior of the building and the rear yard will involve some demolition of original fabric and a substantial amount of physical change. The proposed addition at the top of the building is considered to be appropriate in both heritage and urban design terms.*

The major structural changes proposed were as follows:

- lateral extension of the basement under part of the new plaza and the consequent removal of sections of existing external wall
- partial excavation of the existing rear courtyard to enable level access to the basement for vehicles
- installation of two new lift shafts and new plant rooms
- covering over of the rear courtyard with a new slab to create an outdoor terrace/ recreation area

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<sup>46</sup> DPWS, *Annual Report 1994/95*, p89

<sup>47</sup> Dominy, Colin (New South Wales Division of the Australian Property Institute) 2001, *Part B, The impacts of heritage requirements on the financial viability of individual development proposals*

<sup>48</sup> “Toga on right track for Central”, *Australian Financial Review*, 29 September 1997, np



- removal of the existing 1960s addition at the rear
- removal of section of the rear wall at ground level
- addition of two new floors in place of the existing roof and the consequent construction of a new roof and rooftop plant room.

In addition, pedestrian access was to be from Lee Street and Ramp Road while car parking and service vehicle access would be facilitated from Ambulance Avenue, with entry through the existing tunnel at the north-western corner of the building. Car parking for 39 cars is proposed of which 14 x 2 spaces will be in a vertical stack formation and 1 space will be allocated for use by the disabled.

Toga subsequently commissioned Godden Mackay to prepare a HIS in June 1998 to accompany the DA for the refurbishment of the building as serviced apartments, in accordance with plans prepared by Synman Justin Blalek (SJB) Architects in association with SA Smits & Associates, Urban Planners. Godden Mackay generally favoured the scheme on the grounds that it was in general sympathetic to the heritage significance of the site. They acknowledged that the proposal did have some major adverse heritage impacts, but these were, in part, offset by the “generally sensitive treatment of the adaptation, the opportunity for conservation works, including the restoration of the facades and the benefits of the ultimate retention and conservation of the Parcels Post Office”.

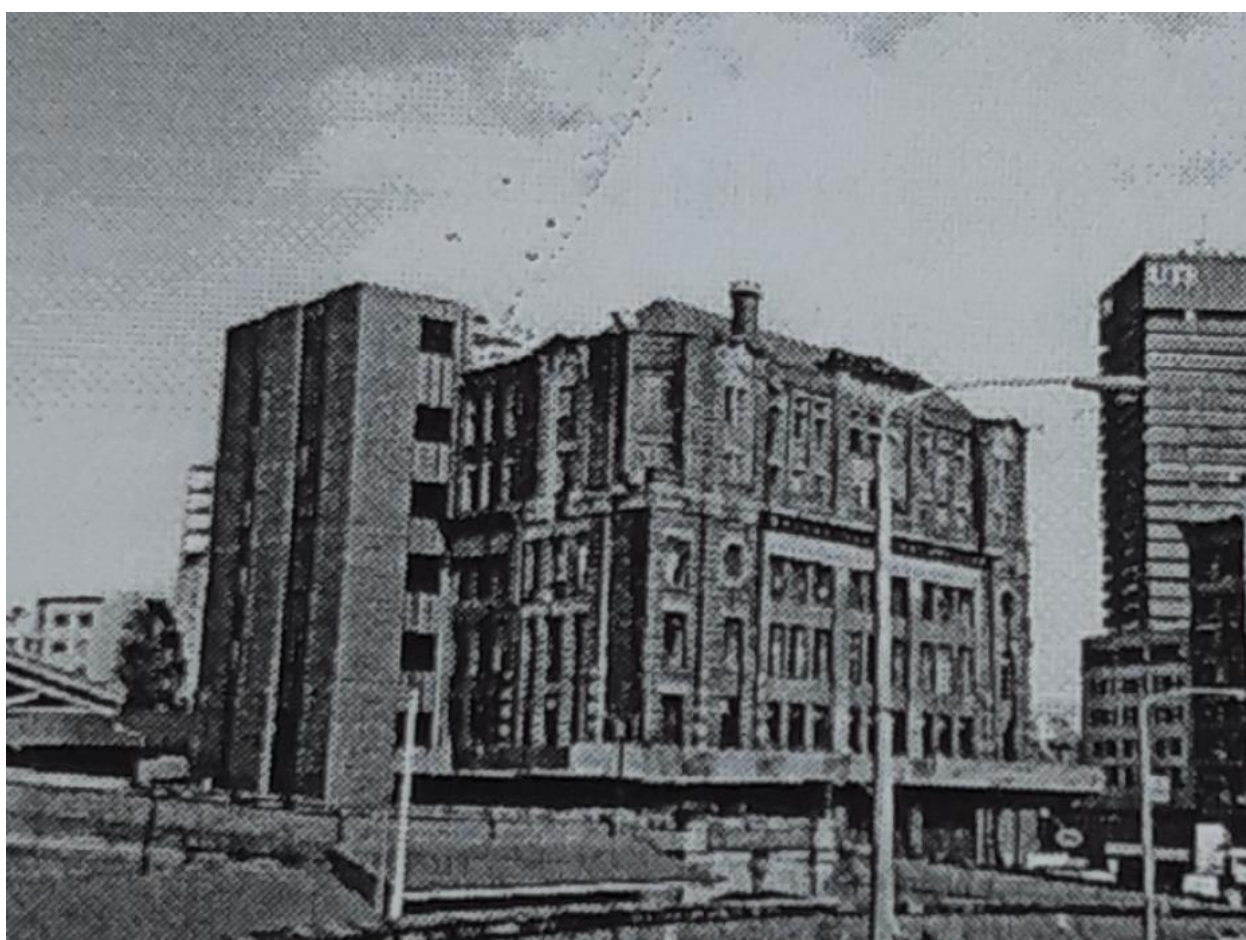


Figure 170 – Subject building with c. 1960s addition located on east elevation c. 1998

Source: GML, *Heritage Impact Statement: Former Parcels Office, June 1998* GML, *Heritage Impact Statement: Former Parcels Office, June 1998*

One month later, the City of Sydney issued development consent for the adaptation project and ‘in principle’ consent for the two-storey rooftop addition. City of Sydney Council records show that the developer withdrew their application for an award of HFS in July 1998. The DA consent also provided for a substantial retail adaptive re-use on the ground floor to complement the main serviced apartment use in the upper floors. In addition, the Council approved construction of a single storey retail addition to the rear ground floor area on



the southern side of the building, which provided for the exposure of several shop tenancies directly to the refurbished Devonshire Street Pedestrian Tunnel. During this period, Toga entered into negotiations for a 99-year lease over the Former Parcels Post Office site, which was finalised in September 1998.

Project construction commenced in early 1999 and was completed in mid-2000, in time to capitalise upon the advent of the September 2000 Sydney Olympics. Throughout the project, Godden Mackay supervised conservation and restoration works and provided heritage advice to the architects and builders. This included methodologies and scope of works to significant fabric, namely:

- Stonework, including sandstone and trachyte
- Brickwork
- Steel windows
- Rainwater goods, and
- other metalwork.

At this date, Godden Mackay prepared a set of plans identifying fabric of high significance proposed for removal or modification and fabric to be reconstructed to original detailing (Figure 154 - Figure 164). As depicted on the below drawings, the works included the following:

- Removal of some internal walls within the basement, and along the southern boundary to facilitate connections with the basement plaza. This likely included the removal of some of the southern pavement lights
- Modifications to the ground floor southern façade to create the entries to the retail tenancies and alterations to the principal northern entry
- Modifications for the new lift core
- Reconstruction of two of the recessed central bays of the eastern façade between levels 1-5 and including the parapet
- Modifications for plant and services throughout including new risers
- Reconstruction of select windows on the northern façade (Level 1 and Level 3) (5 windows in total)
- Reconstruction or general repairs/ modifications to select windows on the southern façade (Level 1, 2, 3 and 5) (9 windows in total)
- Modifications/ repairs to the three southernmost windows on the eastern façade at levels 1,2 and 3
- Reconstruction or general repairs/ modifications to select windows on the principal western façade (Ground floor, Level 1 and Level 4) (7 windows in total) including one of the large ground floor windows
- Reconstruction of the decorative sandstone entablature and Royal monogram on the principal western façade

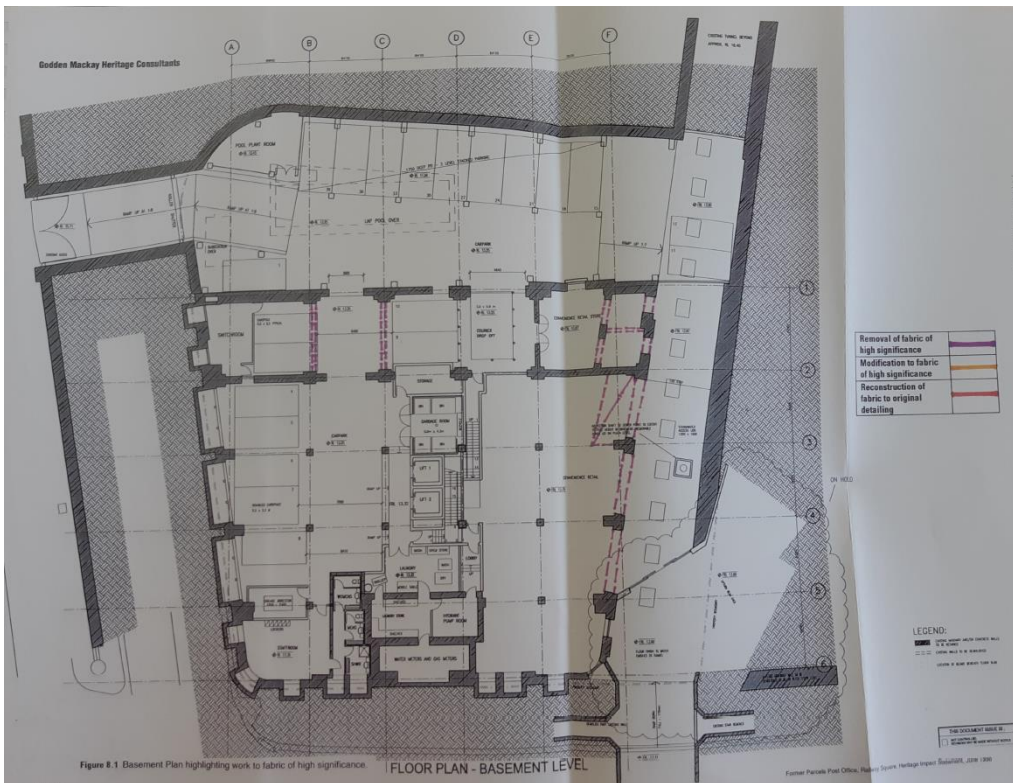


Figure 171 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Basement Plan highlighting work to fabric of his significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

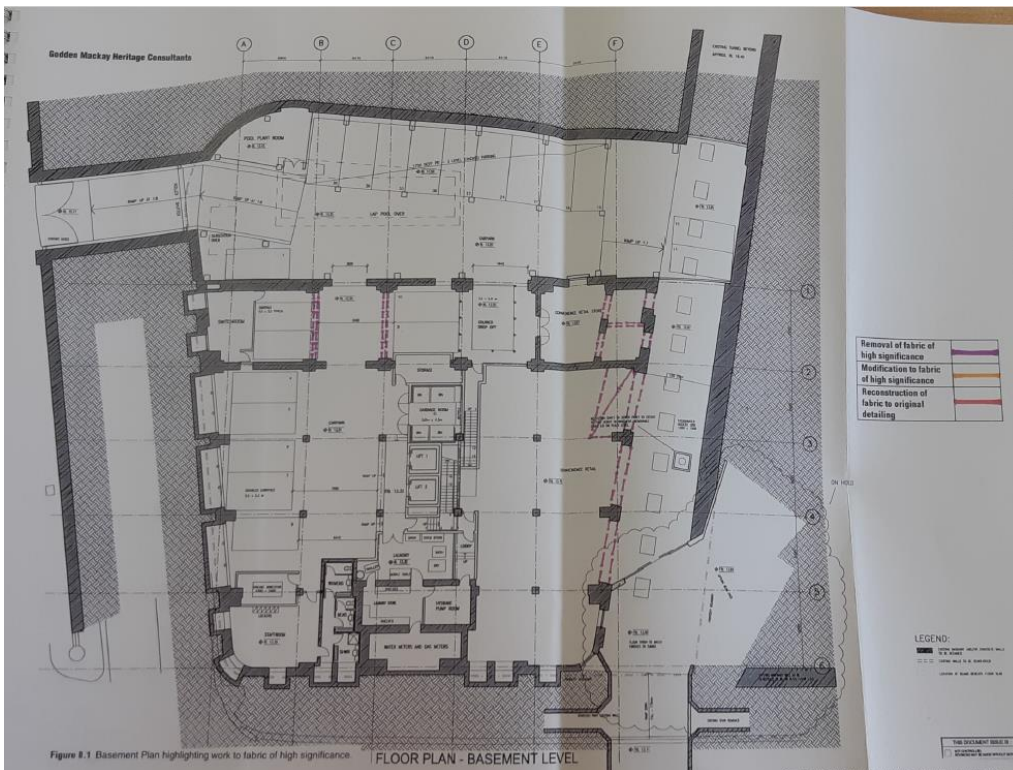


Figure 172 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Basement Plan highlighting work to fabric of his significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

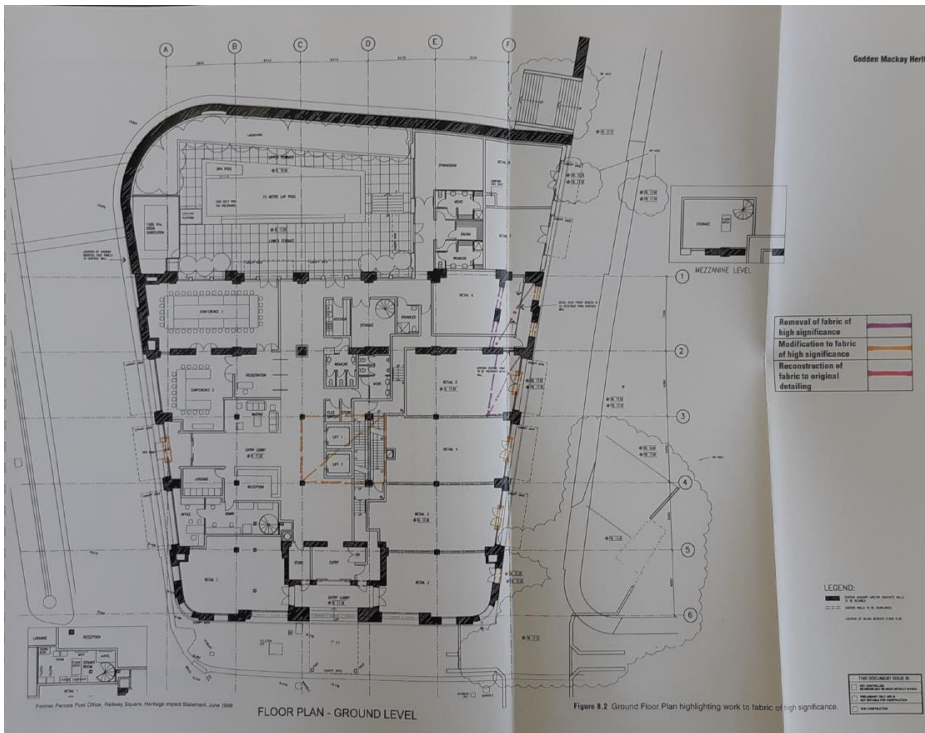


Figure 173 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Ground floor plan highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement



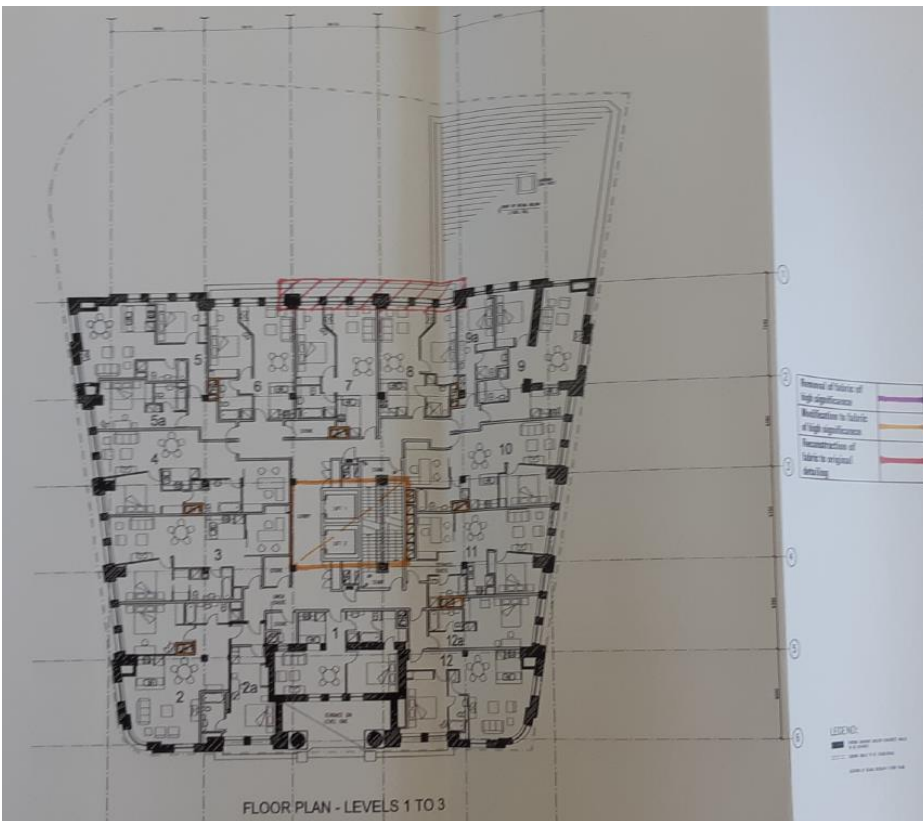


Figure 174 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Levels 1 to 3 highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

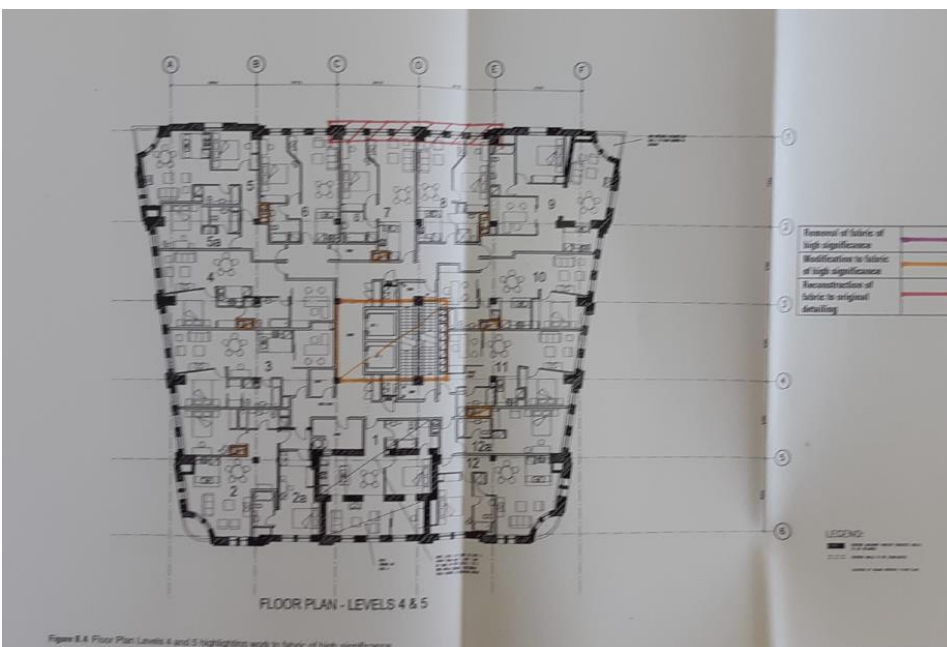


Figure 175 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Levels 4 and 5 highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

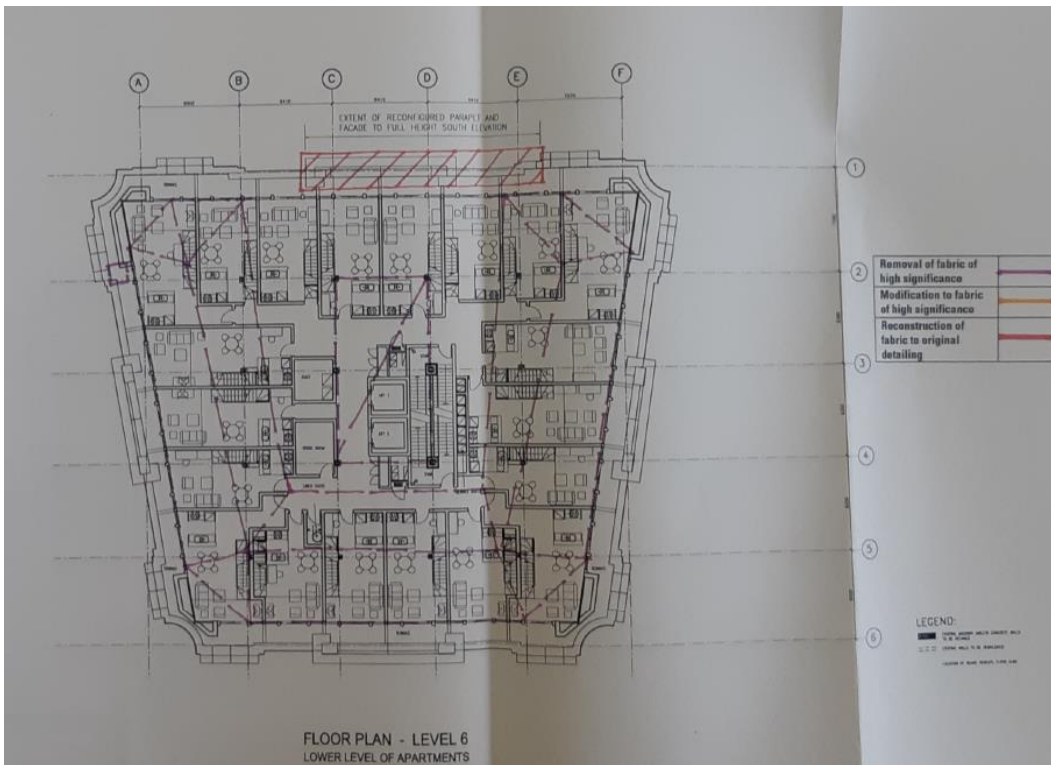


Figure 176 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Floor Plan Level 6 highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

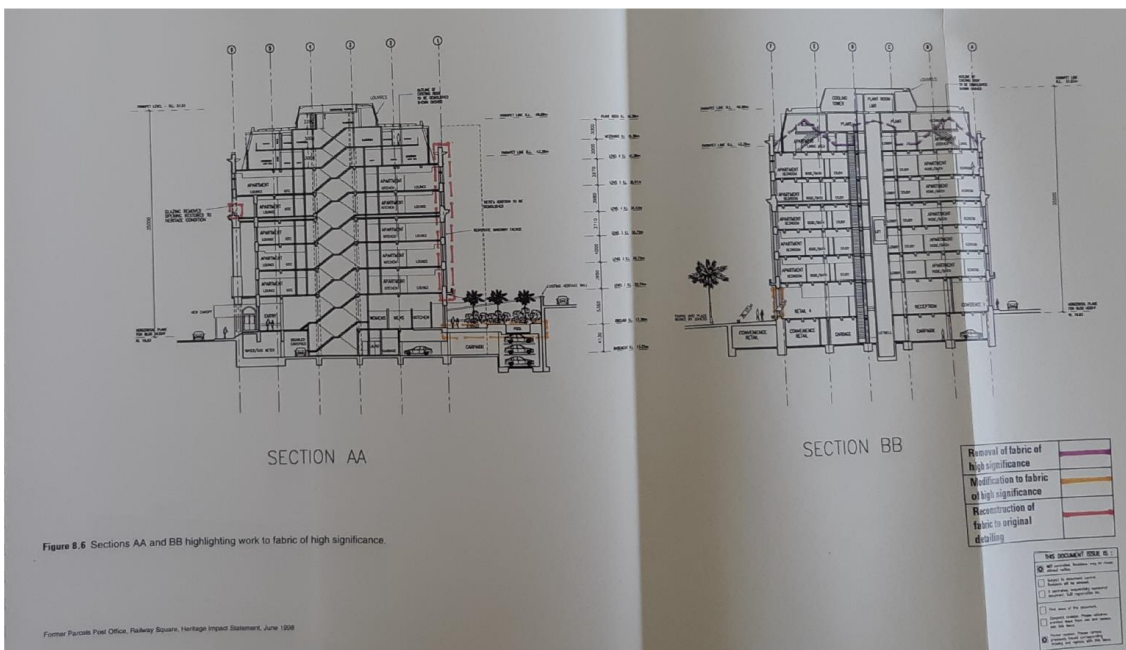


Figure 177 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. Sections AA and BB highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

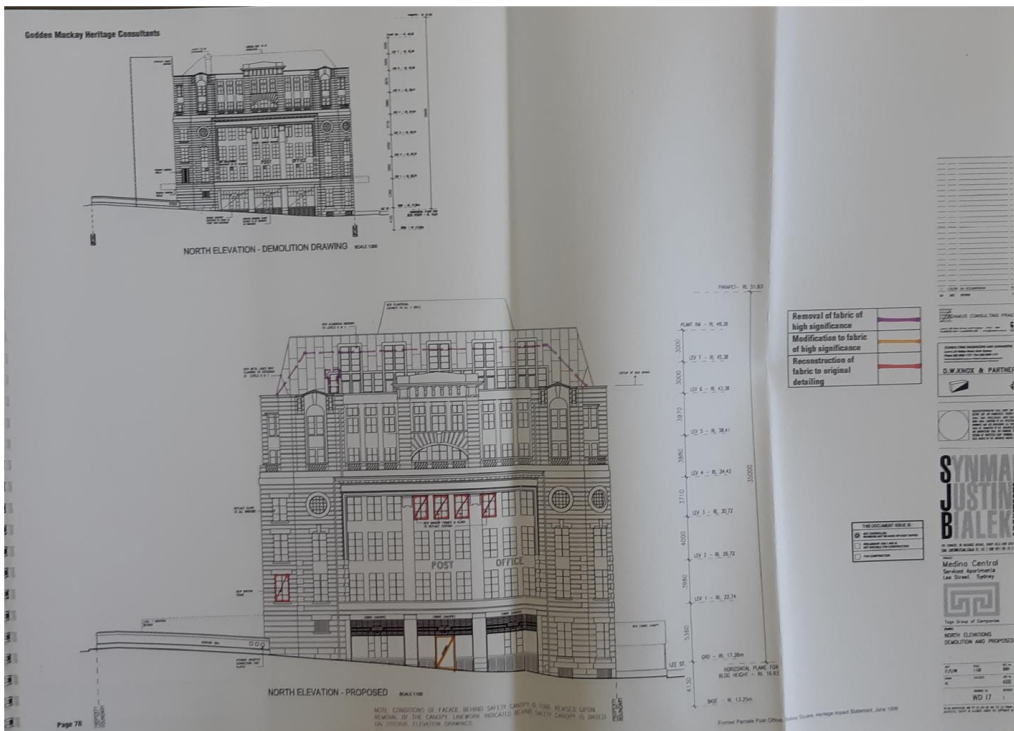


Figure 178 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. North Elevations showing demolition, highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

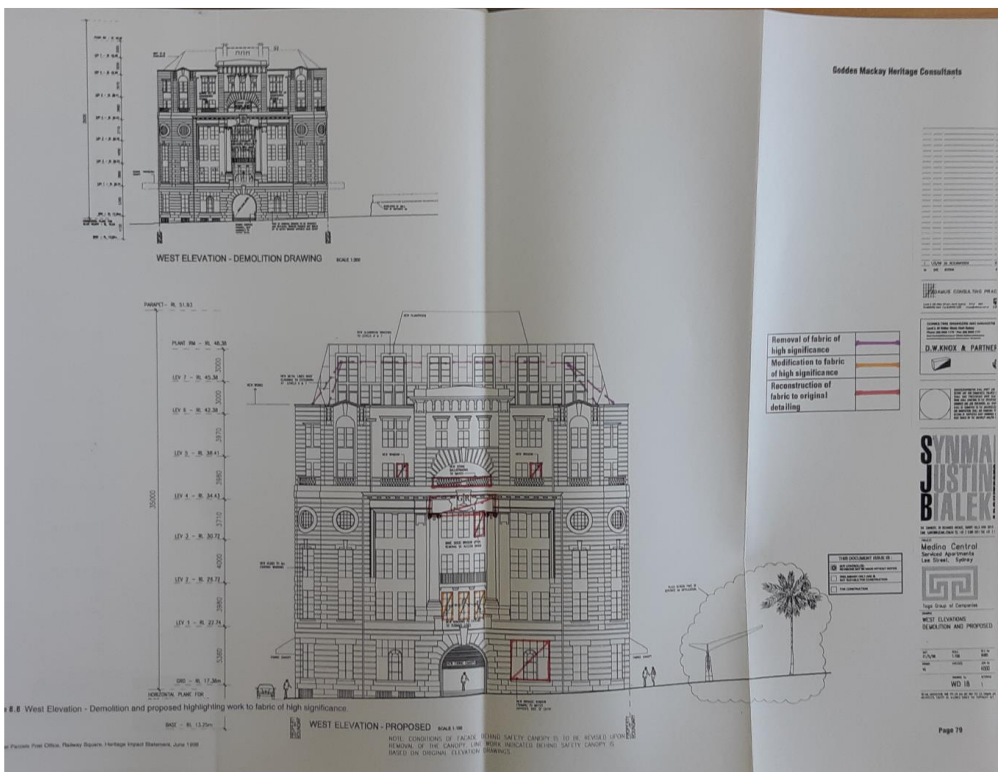


Figure 179 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. West Elevation – demolition and proposed highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement



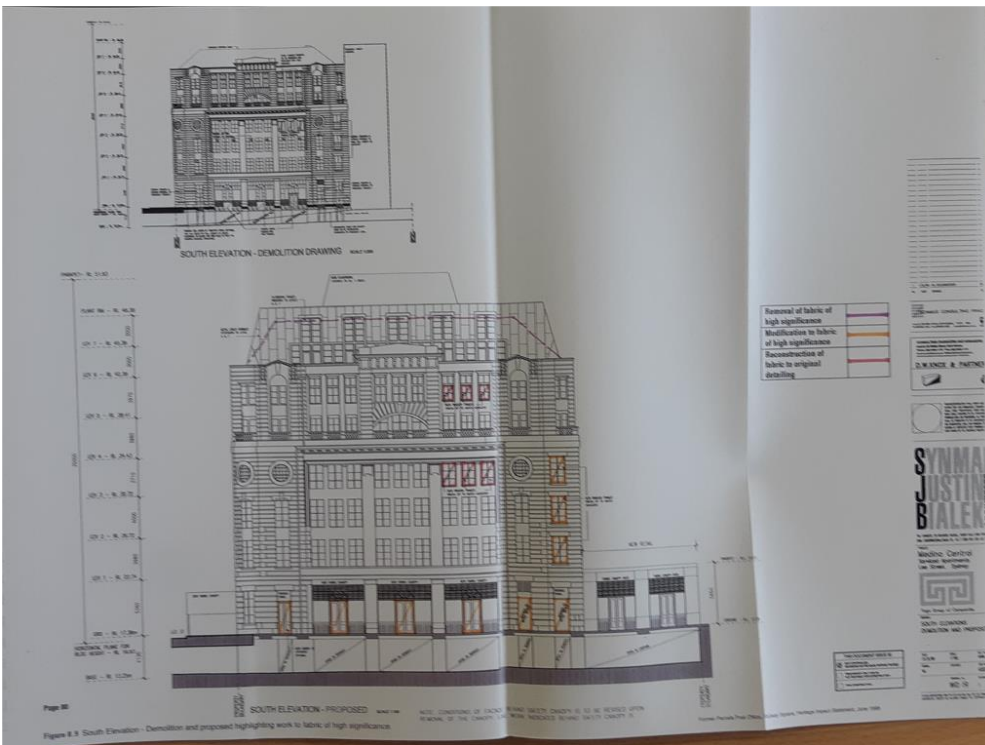


Figure 180 - Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. South elevation – demolition and highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

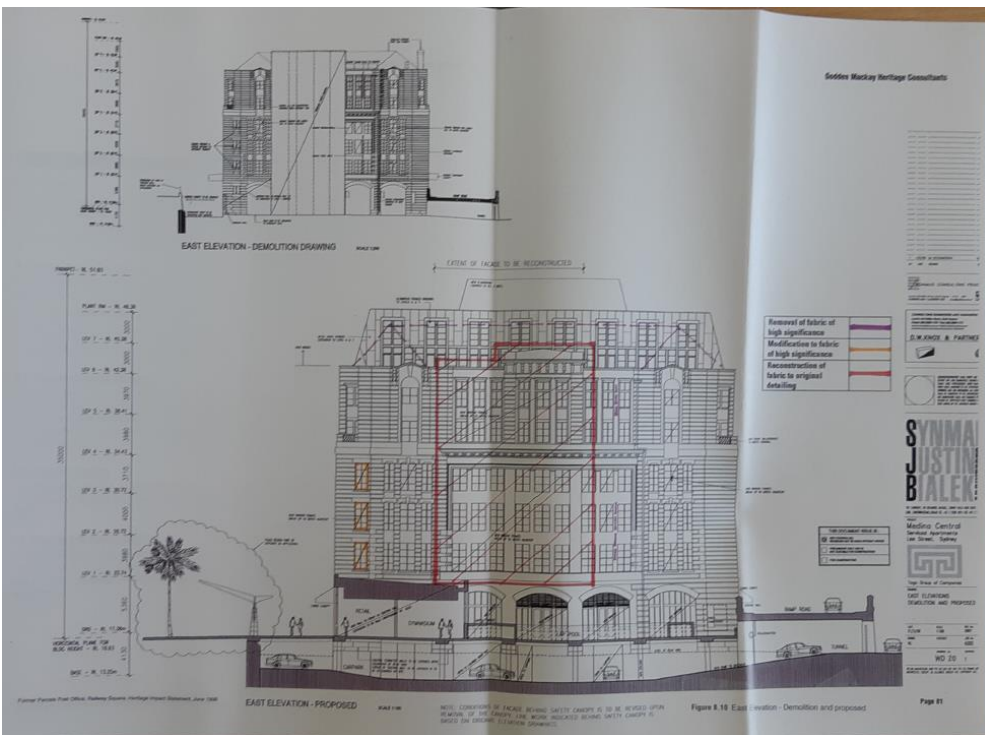


Figure 181 – Synman Justine Bialek Architects: Medina Central Services Apartments Lee Street, Sydney. East Elevation – demolition and highlighting work to fabric of high significance.

Source: Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement  
 Reproduced in Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants 1998, Former Parcels Post Office Railway Square Heritage Impact Statement

The building was opened in 2000 as the Medina Executive Sydney Central. It comprised 98 serviced apartments with 18 studio units, 58 one-bedroom units and 22 two-bedroom units, together with supporting facilities comprising bistro, function rooms, spa, sauna, gymnasium, swimming pool and basement carparking, and several retail shops. The total project cost of the Parcels Post Office redevelopment project was in the order of some \$27 million. In January 2013, Toga Hotels announced the rebranding of 187 Medina Apartment Hotels to Adina Apartment Hotels and four Medina Apartment Hotels to Medina Serviced Apartments. Accordingly, the property was renamed Adina Apartment Hotel Sydney, Central.

## **4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1. ABORIGINAL OBJECTS DUE DILIGENCE**

An Aboriginal Object Due Diligence Assessment has been undertaken by Urbis Archaeology, and separately submitted. A summary of this report and findings has been included below.

The Aboriginal Objects Due Diligence Assessment (DDA) was prepared to investigate the presence or absence of Aboriginal object and/or places within the Subject Area, and whether any proposed development will have the potential to harm those Aboriginal objects that may exist and inform proposed development of any Aboriginal archaeological constraints. The DDA was prepared in accordance to the Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales (DECCW, 2010) ('Due Diligence Code'), and included the following:

- Comprehensive background research of the AHIMS register, statutory and non-statutory heritage listings.
- Analysis of landscape features and their potential to retain Aboriginal objects.
- Analysis of historical land use and its impact on the subject area.
- The DDA concluded that:
  - There are no registered Aboriginal objects and/or places located within or in close proximity of the subject area.
  - The Subject Area is generally highly disturbed, with the removal of the upper part of natural soils for the subsurface structures relating to both the Devonshire Street Tunnel and the Adina Apartment Hotel (formerly the Parcels Post Office). However, deeper, less disturbed soil deposits can still have potential for Aboriginal archaeological resources.
  - The deeper, undisturbed soils under existing structures and below existing disturbance associated with historical land use has low-moderate archaeological potential regarding Aboriginal heritage objects.

Based on the above conclusions, proposed development can proceed with caution in line with the following recommendations:

1. This DDA should be kept providing proof for the Due Diligence Process applied for the subject area.
2. Due to low-moderate potential for Aboriginal objects within soil profiles below existing land disturbance, it is recommended that an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) and consultation with relevant Aboriginal stakeholders is carried out to investigate, assess and manage both tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage resources within the subject area.
3. The ACHA should consider the application of intrusive archaeological investigation in the form of test and if archaeological resources found salvage excavation.
4. The ACHA should be prepared prior to the submission of the proposed State Significant Development Application (SSDA) to inform the proposed development of any Aboriginal archaeological (tangible) and cultural heritage (intangible) resources that may exist in relation to the subject area. The consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) prior to the submission of the SSDA would also inform the development of any opportunities for interpretation of tangible and/or intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

### **4.2. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

This section presents an assessment of the potential for archaeological resources to be present within the subject area. Archaeological resources may exist 'in-situ', or in disturbed, secondary context, below or above ground, and also within the cavities of existing structures. Such resources may be protected under various legislative controls and also have the potential to provide insight into the use and occupation of the site that is not identifiable through other resources.

#### **4.2.1. Phases of occupation**

This section will summarise the historical overview and provide a simple understanding of phases of European occupation and utilisation of the land.



#### **4.2.1.1. Sydney Benevolent Asylum**

The subject area first housed the Benevolent Society Asylum, which was commissioned by Governor Macquarie in 1819. The asylum opened in 1821 and remained open until 1902. The Asylum building lands encompassed the current subject area. This land was resumed in c.1900 for the construction of Central Railway Station.

This was the end of the first phase of occupation of the subject area. The structures associated with the asylum were demolished and it is unlikely that any remnants of these structure remain in the present day (refer to Table 2).

#### **4.2.1.2. Central Railway Station**

The second phase of occupation at the subject area is associated with the Central Railway Station. Station construction commenced in the early 1900s, with the first stage of the Terminus completed in 1906. Railway construction included the establishment of the underground Devonshire Street Subway, the entrance of which was located in the southern portion of the subject area.

After the demolition of the Benevolent Asylum, the majority subject area became a vacant lot, with the Devonshire Street Subway entrance in the southern portion. The rest of the subject area was used as green space and storage to support the railyards.

Even at this phase of occupation, historic images show high levels of disturbance within the subject area. While the Devonshire Street Subway entrance is at street level, the vacant lots to either side of the tunnel are much higher than street level. In the present day, these areas are lower, with Henry Deane Plaza stepping down below street level.

In 1908, the Chief Commissioner for Railways and Tramways agreed to lease the vacant lot fronting George Street to the north of the Devonshire Street Subway to the Postmaster General's Department. This ended the Railway phase of occupation at the subject area. Although the use of this space for storage would indicate the potential for archaeological deposits to occur, the excavation of the soil profile for the construction of the 2 m deep Parcel Post building basement makes archaeological materials highly unlikely (refer to Table 2).

#### **4.2.1.3. Parcels Post Building**

In May 1911 construction of the Parcels Post Building commenced on the former railway lands to the north of the Devonshire Street Subway, the current subject area. The Parcels Post building was crucially important for the processing of mail and training of clerks in the early-late 1900s.

In the 1960s, plans were made to vacate the Chief Parcels Office, with operations to be moved to the new Mail Exchange at Redfern. The building was intended to take on a new function, with the extension of the basement to allow for vehicle access and parking. The ground floor of the Parcels Post building continued to operate as the Railway Square Post Office until 1993, although the function of the rest of the building is difficult to trace.

The basement level of the Parcels Post building was constructed in the first phase of development in May 1911. The implementation of the basement, which is at least 2 m below street level from Lee street, has resulted in the removal of some part of the soil profile below the Parcels Post building, decreasing the archaeological potential of the subject area (refer to Table 2).

#### **4.2.1.4. Adina Apartments and Henry Deane Plaza**

The subject area is currently occupied by the former Parcels Post building and Henry Deane Plaza. The Parcels Post building is currently utilised as hotel/apartment complex.

Beneath the former Parcels Post building is the Devonshire Street Tunnel, which was extended further west under Railway Square and George street to connect with the Goods Line in the 1970s. Within the tunnel are a number of retail stores which extend under the current subject area.

Henry Deane Plaza is located in the south section of the subject area and resides upon the previously built up greenspace adjacent to the Parcels Post building. This plaza is a retail and commercial space and is approximately 2.8 m below street level. This is a testament to the level of disturbance within the subject area, as early historic photos show the space currently occupied by Henry Deane Plaza as considerably higher than street level.

## 4.2.2. Assessment of Archaeological Potential

Historical archaeological potential is defined as:

*The degree of physical evidence present on an archaeological site, usually assessed on the basis of physical evaluation and historical research. (Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 1996)*

Archaeological research potential of a site is the extent to which further study of relics likely to be found is expected to contribute to improved knowledge about NSW history which is not demonstrated by other sites, archaeological resources or available historical evidence. The archaeological potential of the Study Area is assessed based on the background information presented in Section 2, and graded as per:

- **Nil Potential:** the land use history demonstrates that high levels of ground disturbance have occurred that would have completely destroyed any archaeological remains. Alternatively, archaeological excavation has already occurred, and removed any potential resource.
- **Low Potential:** the land use history suggests limited development or use, or there is likely to be quite high impacts in these areas, however deeper sub-surface features such as wells, cesspits and their artefact-bearing deposits may survive.
- **Moderate Potential:** the land use history suggests limited phases of low-moderate development intensity, or that there are impacts in this area. A variety of archaeological remains is likely to survive, including building footings and shallower remains, as well as deeper sub-surface features.
- **High Potential:** substantially intact archaeological deposits could survive in these areas.

The potential for archaeological relics to survive in a particular place is significantly affected by land use activities that may have caused ground disturbance. These processes include the physical development of the site (for example, phases of building construction) and the activities that occurred there. The following definitions are used to consider levels of disturbance:

- **Low Disturbance:** the area or feature has been subject to activities that may have had a minor effect on the integrity and survival of archaeological remains.
- **Moderate Disturbance:** the area or feature has been subject to activities that may have affected the integrity and survival of archaeological remains. Archaeological evidence may be present, however it may be disturbed.
- **High Disturbance:** the area or feature has been subject to activities that would have had a major effect on the integrity and survival of archaeological remains. Archaeological evidence may be greatly disturbed or destroyed.

Table 6 includes preliminary, high level assessment of archaeological potential. More detailed investigation in the form of an Historical Archaeological Assessment should be carried out for detailed understanding of potential and significance.

Table 2 – Assessment of the potential archaeological resource and likelihood of survival at the subject area

Phase and Date	Potential Archaeological Resource	Integrity of Archaeological Evidence	Archaeological Potential
Sydney Benevolent Asylum, 1821-1902	Structural remains of buildings and artefacts associated with the Asylum.	Moderate to high disturbance. This phase of occupation was levelled for the Central Station Railway in the 1900s, with the Devonshire Street Subway running through the southern portion. Parts of the subject area remained vacant until the construction of the Parcels Post building and Henry Deane Plaza and so had the potential to contain intact archaeological deposits, but this potential was further impacted when the vacant lots were	Low to Moderate

		excavated for the Parcels Post building and Henry Deane Plaza. However, archaeological deposits with various level of integrity might have still survived.	
Central station railway, 1902-1909	Remains of structures and artefacts associated with use of the area as storage	Highly Disturbed. While this phase of occupation would have archaeological potential given the use of portions of the subject area for railyard storage, the excavation of soils for the construction of the basement of the Parcels Post building and Henry Deane Plaza has impacted the potential for intact archaeological deposits.	Low to Moderate
Parcels Post Office, 1911-1993	Artefacts associated with the development of the Postal system in Sydney, structural elements.	Building still present and in use. Below the street level, the basement extends to a depth of two metres, with further disturbance related to retails spaces within the Devonshire Street Tunnel. These structural elements could have been disturbed all previously accumulated archaeological deposits.	Low to Moderate

### 4.2.3. Summary of Archaeological Potential

Overall, there have been multiple, continuous development phases of the subject area since the mid-19th century that would have had the potential of the accumulation of archaeological deposits. However, the last set of developments with the construction of the Parcels Post building and later the subsurface tunnel, basement and associated infrastructure could have impacted on the survival and integrity of those archaeological resources. The impacts could have removed the accumulated archaeological deposits to various extent.

The excavation of soils down at least 2 m across the whole of the subject area for the basement of the Parcels Post building, the Devonshire Street Tunnel and the Henry Deane Plaza has greatly reduced the likelihood for archaeological materials associated with earlier phases of occupation to occur within those areas. As a result, the archaeological potential for those parts of the subject area is considered to be low. However, areas with less disturbance and outside of major underground structures have retained potential for the survival of archaeological resources.

In light of the above summary, the following recommendations are made for managing historical archaeology within the subject area:

1. Prior to SSDA submission, further investigation and preparation of a Historical Archaeological Assessment is warranted to assess the potential and significance of any historical archaeological relics within the subject area.



# 5. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

## 5.1. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

The Heritage Council of NSW has developed a set of seven (7) criteria for assessing heritage significance, which can be used to make decisions about the heritage value of a place or item. The following assessment of heritage significance has been prepared in accordance with the NSW heritage Division's 'Assessing Heritage Significance' guidelines.

Table 3 – Assessment of Heritage Significance

Criteria	Significance Assessment
<p><b>A – Historical Significance</b></p> <p><i>An item is important in the course or pattern of the local area's cultural or natural history.</i></p>	<p>The subject site historically was part of the grounds of the Benevolent Asylum, an institution ran by the Benevolent Society of NSW. The asylum was constructed in 1821 and was funded by the government, operating along the lines of a workhouse for the aged, infirm, blind or destitute. The asylum building was located further to the north (in the area of the Western Forecourt) however the subject site lands formed part of the asylums extensive grounds. The government had retained the title of land on which the asylum was located and resumed the land at the turn of the last century.</p> <p>The development of Central Station was planned as a transport interchange, and the site of the Parcels Post office was defined during the first phase of construction of the station however a specific use for the site had not been defined.</p> <p>The development of the Parcels Post building reflects the importance of shipping parcels by rail in the early 1900s and the subject site documents the historical association of the site with Central station and railway postal services. As the majority of parcels at that time were sent by rail, the subject site was ideally situated, for the construction of a specific purpose-built parcels post office, being located adjacent to the new (1906) Central Terminus on 'a portion of Railway land. The Parcels Post worked in conjunction with the inward and outward parcels platforms in the western yard precinct (which includes the former inwards parcels platform, now the YHA), with parcels being brought to and from the trains, via a network of underground passages.</p> <p>Historically the building was a working building, used as a Parcels Post Office from 1913 to the 1960s and as a Post Office from 1933 to the 1990s. The training use of the building continued through to the eventual relocation out of the building by the postal service in the 1990s.</p> <p>The Parcels Post building has historic significance at a local level, for its association with the development of Central Station and for its association with railway postal services in the early 1900s.</p>

<b>Criteria</b>  <u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shows evidence of a significant human activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is associated with a significant activity or historical phase <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<b>Significance Assessment</b>  <u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>
<b>B – Associative Significance</b>  <i>An item has strong or special associations with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the local area's cultural or natural history.</i>	<p>The subject building was designed in the Government Architects Office by Gorrie McLeish Blair in 1910, under Walter Liberty Vernon. It is associated with the GAO and Blair. Blair was also responsible for the detailing of the first and second stages of Central Station. Both Blair and Vernon reached the office of Government Architect, Vernon between 1890 and 1910, and Blair between 1923 and 1926. Within this role Blair and Vernon are responsible for many prominent civic buildings.</p> <p>On account of the historic use of the site, the Parcels Post Building has associations with the NSW Railway and Postal Service however no specific individuals have been identified to have a significant association with the building.</p> <p>The site has associative significance at a local level on account of the connection with the Government Architects Office, and the notable Government Architects Vernon and Blair.</p>
<u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shows evidence of a significant human occupation <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important people or events <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>

Criteria	Significance Assessment
<p><b>C – Aesthetic Significance</b></p> <p><i>An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area.</i></p>	<p>The design of the building can be seen to have been influenced by trends in American commercial buildings at the time, noticeably those designed by the Chicago School.</p> <p>The former Parcels Post building is a fine example of the Federation Free Classical architectural style. The building has a number of distinct external features that are attributed to the style, including the contrasting brick and rusticated stone, the giant order Ionic columns to the principal façade, the heavy sandstone entablature, pediments and oeil de boeuf windows</p> <p>The building reflects the former Federation and early 20<sup>th</sup> century character of the locality, of which it was a centrepiece. It is a fine example of civic building of the period as demonstrated by the prominence, scale and decorative detail of the building. The aesthetic qualities of the building continue to make a positive contribution to the Western Forecourt of Central Station and Railway Square. The building is a landmark, prominent in views of Railway Square, Pitt Street and Broadway, and terminating vistas from George Street.</p> <p>The original design intent of the building as a centre for mail distribution and meant that internal features of the building were understated. Decorative features would have been limited to the ground floor public areas with utilitarian finishes to the upper floors that were working floors. The historic vacancy of the building, and the adaptive reuse as a hotel has resulted in the loss of the majority of the original internal features and architectural detail. The columns and the structural grid formation continue to be interpreted however the current contemporary fitout largely obscures the character of the building.</p> <p>The former Parcels Post building may also have some technical significance as a relatively early example of the use of partial steel framework, encased in concrete to maximise internal floor areas. At the time of the buildings construction fully framed buildings were not permitted and as a result the façade is load bearing masonry.</p> <p>The exterior of the subject site has been assessed to have aesthetic significance at a local level.</p>



Criteria	Significance Assessment
<p><u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is aesthetically distinctive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has landmark qualities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is not a major work by an important designer or artist <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has lost its design or technical integrity <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• its positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark and scenic qualities have been more than temporarily degraded <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>
<p><b>D – Social Significance</b></p> <p><i>An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.</i></p>	<p>The building is a prominent building in the context of Railway Square and the Western Forecourt and contributes to the collective values of the Central Station precinct. However, no significant associations with particular community groups have been identified. The site does not meet the criterion for social significance at a local or State level.</p>
<p><u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is important for its associations with an identifiable group <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is important to a community's sense of place <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is only important to the community for amenity reasons <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>
<p><b>E – Research Potential</b></p> <p><i>An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the local area's cultural or natural history.</i></p>	<p>The former Parcels Post building is a relatively early example of the use of partial steel framework, encased in concrete to maximise internal floor areas. At the time of the buildings construction fully framed buildings were not permitted and as a result the façade is load bearing masonry. As an early example of the development of this construction process, the site may have some research potential.</p> <p>An archaeological assessment of the site has been undertaken and the potential is considered to be low to nil. The site does have some limited research potential at the local level as a reasonably early example of the use of partial steel framework.</p>
<p><u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is an important benchmark or reference site or type <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has little archaeological or research potential <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>

Criteria	Significance Assessment
<p><b>F – Rarity</b></p> <p><i>An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the local area’s cultural or natural history.</i></p>	<p>The subject building is rare as a purpose-built Parcels Post building. It is the first of only two large metropolitan parcels offices constructed (the other being the Melbourne Mail Exchange) between 1910 and 1920. Within Sydney and NSW more broadly the site is rare for its historical association with and as a part of the Central Station precinct. The size of the building and its deliberate location adjacent to the western parcels precinct, indicates the importance of shipping parcels by rail and the volume of parcels that the department was expected to process during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building was extended during the initial phase of construction with the upper levels initially intended to operate as office spaces. The entire building was however soon taken over by post office functions which had expanded to the extent that the entire building was required. The size and prominence of the building is indicative of the significance of both the postal service and the railways in the early twentieth century however the connection between the two department is uniquely represented in the Parcels Post building.</p> <p>The site has been assessed to meet the criterion for rarity at a local level.</p>
<p><u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is the only example of its type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is not rare <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is numerous but under threat <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>

Criteria	Significance Assessment
<p><b>G – Representative</b></p> <p><i>An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSWs (or the local area's):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>cultural or natural places; or</i></li> <li>• <i>cultural or natural environments.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The subject building is representative of a period of expansion of the postal service in NSW during the early twentieth century.</p> <p>The development of post office buildings is linked to the development of the state. Typically constructed of brick and stone, the growth of post offices across the state is representative of expansion and growth. The development of Parcels Post buildings in the early twentieth century was a new typology. The subject site has been assessed to be a fine example of the postal building type. However, the grandeur of the building and the location in proximity to Central Station does differentiate the building from the bulk of the postal building constructed during the period.</p> <p>The building is also representative of the Federation Free Classical architectural style and of civic buildings designed in the Government Architects Office and of the work of GM Blair.</p> <p>The site has been assessed to meet the criterion at a local level.</p>
<p><u>Guidelines for Inclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is a fine example of its type <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is a significant variation to a class of items <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>	<p><u>Guidelines for Exclusion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is a poor example of its type <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type <input type="checkbox"/></li> <li>• does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul>



## 5.2. STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### 5.2.1. Existing Statement of Significance

The following Statement of Significance has been sourced from the NSW Heritage Database entry for the site:<sup>49</sup>

*“Parcels Post Office is a six-storey concrete encased steel structure institutional building constructed in the Federation Academic Classical style and occupies a prominent position within Railway Square. The building has high historic significance as the only purpose-built building of its type and scale which reflects the importance of the rail location, the Postmasters General Office and the Government Architect’s Office in shaping the city at that time. The building has high aesthetic significance as an outstanding example of an institutional building with outstanding potential to be restored/reconstructed, and which continues to form a significant contribution to the Railway Square precinct and city town planning.”*

### 5.2.2. Proposed Statement of Significance

The former Parcels Post Office is of heritage significance for its historic, associative, aesthetic and representative values and for its rarity.

The Parcels Post building is historically significant for its association with the development of Central Station and connections with the NSW rail and postal services in the early 1900s. At that time, the majority of parcels were sent by rail, and the location of the site adjacent to the station reflects the importance of shipping by rail. The Parcels Post also worked in conjunction with the inward and outward parcels platforms in the western yard precinct (which includes the former inwards parcels platform, now the YHA).

Designed by the Government Architects office, the building has been assessed to have associative significance on a local level, for its association with the GAO broadly and more specifically with Gorrie McLeish Blair, to whom the design was attributed, and Walter Liberty Vernon, who was then the Government Architect. The building is designed in the Federation Free Classical architectural style and is an exemplar of the style, and a centrepiece in the locality. The building has a number of distinct external features that are attributed to the style, including the contrasting brick and rusticated stone, the giant order Ionic columns to the principal façade, the heavy sandstone entablature, pediments and oeil de boeuf windows. The interior however is acknowledged as restrained in its original form and has been modified in conjunction with the Hotel (Adina) conversion including structural modifications for a new lift core. The former Parcels Post building may also have some technical significance and research value as a relatively early example of the use of partial steel framework, encased in concrete to maximise internal floor areas.

As one of only two large metropolitan parcels offices constructed (the other being the Melbourne Mail Exchange) in the early twentieth century, the site has been assessed as rare. The size and prominence of the building is indicative of the significance of both the postal service and the railways in the early twentieth century however the connection between the two department is uniquely represented in the Parcel Post building.

The former Parcels Post Office is representative of expansion and growth in the early twentieth century. However, the scale and grandeur of the building does differentiate the building from the bulk of postal buildings constructed during the period. The building is also representative of the Federation Free Classical architectural style and of civic buildings designed in the Government Architects Office and of the work of GM Blair.

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<sup>49</sup> NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, *Former Parcels Post Office including retaining wall, early lamp post and building*, <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=2424235>, accessed 9 August 2019

### 5.3. LEVELS & GRADINGS

The Heritage Council of NSW recognises four (4) levels of heritage significance in NSW: Local, State, National and World. The level indicates the context in which a heritage place is important (for example, local heritage significance means the place is important to the local area or region). Heritage places that are rare, exceptional or outstanding beyond the local area or region may be of state or national significance.

In most cases, the level of heritage significance for a place has a corresponding statutory heritage listing and responsible authority for conserving them.

Different components of a place may contribute in different ways to its heritage value. The gradings of significance adopted for this report are based on those definitions as developed by the Heritage Council of NSW, and have been modified as follows:

Table 4 – Gradings of Significance

<b>Grading</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Status</b>
Exceptional	Rare or outstanding elements that directly contribute to the place’s overall heritage significance; they retain a high degree of integrity and intactness in fabric or use; any change should be minimal and retain significant values or fabric	Fulfils criteria for local or state listing
High	Element demonstrates a key aspect of the place’s overall heritage significance; they have a high degree of original fabric or they retain their original use; alterations do not detract from significance	Fulfils criteria for local or state listing
Moderate	Element contributes to the place’s overall heritage significance; they may have been altered but they still have the ability to demonstrate a function or use particular to the site; change is allowed so long as it does not adversely affect the place’s overall heritage significance	Fulfils criteria for local listing
Little	Element may be difficult to interpret or may have been substantially modified which detracts from its heritage significance; change is allowed so long as it does not adversely affect the place’s overall heritage significance	Does not fulfil criteria for local or state listing
Neutral	Elements do not add or detract from the site’s overall heritage significance; change allowed	Does not fulfil criteria for local or state listing
Intrusive	Elements are damaging to the place’s overall heritage significance; can be considered for removal or alteration	Does not fulfil criteria for local or state listing

Each element’s significance has been graded having specific regard to its contribution to the overall significance of the place, its period of construction and its condition. We have identified the corresponding time period and condition status for the elements as follows:

### 5.4. SCHEDULE OF SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

Various elements of the place have been graded below in relation to their contribution to the overall heritage significance of the place. Elements include buildings, structures, landscape and other elements that are located within the curtilage of the site.

Table 5 – Definitions of time and periods of construction and major alterations to the Parcels Post Building

Acronym	Corresponding time and period of construction
OC	Original construction phase (c.1910-1915)
TC	Twentieth Century (c. 1916-1998)
LA	Later addition and/or fit out (c. 1999)

Table 6 – Schedule of Significant Elements

Structure, space or elements	Phase	Grading
<b>Exterior</b>		
Overall form, facades, composition and materiality	OC	High
Mansard roof addition	LA	Neutral
Balustrade on parapet	LA	Neutral
Stone, trachyte and brick work (generally)	OC	High
Steel framed windows (generally)	OC	High
Aluminium framed windows and doors (generally)	LA	Intrusive
Aluminium framed doors (east elevation)	LA	Neutral
Reconstructed steel framed windows	LA	Neutral
'Post Office' signage	ETC	Moderate
'Adina' signage (north elevation)	LA	Intrusive
'Adina' signage (west elevation)	LA	Neutral
Awnings	LA	Neutral
Modified components of entries/shopfronts ie. new doors (north and south elevation)	LA	Neutral
Contemporary shopfront signage	LA	Neutral
Lighting	LA	Neutral
Security cameras	LA	Neutral
Pavement lights/ stallboard lights	OC	High
Grills protecting windows	OC	High
Flag poles	LA	Neutral
West elevation entry	TC	Intrusive
Steel and bronze framed windows	OC	High
<b>Interior</b>		
Steel encased structural grid including floors and columns	OC	Moderate



<b>Structure, space or elements</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Grading</b>
Contemporary hotel fit out (inclusive of ground floor lobby, conference areas and accommodation as well as all contemporary kitchen and bathroom fitouts)	LA	Intrusive
Lift core	LA	Neutral
Plantroom	LA	Neutral

# 6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## 6.1. SYDNEY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2012

Table 7 – Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012

Clause	Discussion
<p><b>5.10 Heritage Conservation</b></p> <p><b>(1) Objectives</b></p> <p>The objectives of this clause are as follows:</p> <p>(a) to conserve the environmental heritage of the City of Sydney,</p> <p>(b) to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views,</p> <p>(c) to conserve archaeological sites,</p> <p>(d) to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.</p>	<p>Transport for NSW has submitted a proposal for rezoning of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct (Blocks A and B) which facilitates the renewal of Central Station Precinct, having nominated the locality as a State Significant Precinct (SSP). The proposal was gazetted in August 2020. Within this precinct the Lee Street edge has been identified as the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct, of which the site forms part. Having regard for the strategic location of the site it is acknowledged that the density of the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct will increase (see discussion of the PP in section 2.2). The subject proposal is consistent with the TfNSW Rezoning Proposal.</p> <p>The proponent has considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form. The proposal has been subject to extensive consultation with the Design Review Panel as well as the City of Sydney Council and Heritage NSW as outlined in section 1.7. Consultation has informed the proposal and will continue to inform future development of the scheme.</p> <p>This assessment predominantly considers the principle of allowing development above the heritage item. The reference scheme provides for a tower footprint, maximum height, RL for the highest floor level and maximum GFA, as set out in Section 1.6. The proposed envelope allows for an offset tower form, built partly over the heritage item and partly over the plaza to the south with a diagonal tower footprint which aligns with a diagonal set from the NE corner to the SW corner of the heritage item. The subject envelope has been designed to have regard for the Parcels Post building. This is achieved through a considered envelope which incorporates generous setbacks, an asymmetric form and 3 storey vertical separation which enables the parcels post building to be read independently and as a separate prominent volume.</p> <p>The proposal does not involve any physical works and pertains to a proposed envelope only, with development to be subject to future applications and heritage advice. The proposal provides for the retention of the heritage item, as part of a larger redevelopment of the site. The proposal retains the significant elevations and form of the subject building, whilst providing an opportunity for more public uses and activation of spaces within the subject building and associated public domain, as well as interpretation of the significant fabric and use of the heritage item. The proposal also provides an</p>

Clause	Discussion
	<p>opportunity to undertake much needed conservation works to the building, noting that the building requires substantial repairs to stonework and likely structural intervention to mitigate issues. The reference scheme also identifies the opportunity to reinterpret the original roof form which would have a positive heritage impact. There is also an opportunity to reinterpret the interiors via removal of the fitout and restoring the open plan interiors.</p> <p>A detailed assessment of the proposed envelope is provided below.</p> <p>The proposal seeks approval for a tower envelope with a detailed design application to follow. The proposed tower would be subject to a design excellence competition and to a later application for works. The proposed envelope considers the requirements of the solar access plane and has been designed to ensure that there are no impacts on the solar access to Prince Alfred Park.</p> <p>The proposal also considers the prominence of the Parcels Post building in it the locality, and retains its contribution to the Western Forecourt, Railway Square and streetscape views (subject to further detailed design). This is partly achieved by the setback form of the envelope with significant setbacks from the northwest (the building aligns with a diagonal set from the NE corner to the SW corner). Review of potential impacts to identified significant views and vistas has been set out below.</p> <p>In retaining and conserving the heritage item, as well as interpreting the historic use of the site, the proposal retains the visual connections and important historical associations with Central Station and the site's contribution to the state heritage listed Central Station precinct. Detailed assessment of potential impacts to other proximate heritage items are detailed in Part 5 of the LEP provisions below.</p> <p>. The Due Diligence report assessed the Aboriginal archaeological potential as low-moderate due to moderate potential for Aboriginal objects within soil profiles below existing land disturbance. Historical archaeological potential is assessed as low, however, areas with less disturbance and outside of major underground structures have still potential for the survival of archaeological resources. Reference should be made to the submitted report and recommendations therein.</p>
<p><b>(2) Requirement for consent</b> Development consent is required for any of the following: (b) altering a heritage item that is a building by making structural changes to its interior or by making changes to anything</p>	<p>Whilst the proposed is a concept only and does not seek approval for any physical works potential impacts have been assessed herein in accordance with an assessment of the proposed envelope. Consent is required for works to heritage items in accordance with the provisions set out in Section 2.</p>

Clause	Discussion
<p>inside the item that is specified in Schedule 5 in relation to the item,</p> <p>(c) disturbing or excavating an archaeological site while knowing, or having reasonable cause to suspect, that the disturbance or excavation will or is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged or destroyed,</p> <p>(d) disturbing or excavating an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,</p> <p>(e) erecting a building on land:</p> <p>(i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or</p> <p>(ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance,</p> <p>(f) subdividing land:</p> <p>(i) on which a heritage item is located or that is within a heritage conservation area, or</p> <p>(ii) on which an Aboriginal object is located or that is within an Aboriginal place of heritage significance.</p>	
<p><b>(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance</b></p> <p>The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned. This subclause applies regardless of whether a heritage management document is prepared under subclause (5) or a heritage conservation management plan is submitted under subclause (6).</p>	<p>The former Parcels Post Office is of heritage significance for its historic, associative, aesthetic and representative values and for its rarity. A statement of significance is provided at Section 5.2</p> <p>The proposal seeks approval for an envelope only with the opportunity to develop the tower form as part of future proposals (within the approved envelope) and in line with design excellence requirements. This will include consideration of materiality, setbacks and vertical separation which will assist to mitigate impacts of scale. The proposed envelope retains and conserves the exterior and principal facades of the building. The provision of a tower form would necessitate the removal of the later mansard roof addition. This element was constructed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and has been assessed as having neutral significance. As such the demolition of this element has been assessed to in no way diminish the heritage significance of the site. There is also an opportunity to reinterpret the original roof form (based on documentation) as highlighted by the reference scheme.</p> <p>The proposed envelope provides a significant and substantial setback to the northwest corner and the northern and western facades. This ensures that the heritage item is able to be read independently and creates a sense of separation between the</p>



Clause	Discussion
	<p>tower and heritage item. Future detailed design proposals should ensure that any proposed tower or vertical addition allows the tower and heritage items to be read as separate elements ensuring that the heritage item maintains its visual prominence in views from the western forecourt and George Street.</p> <p>It is noted that the proposed tower envelope encourages an asymmetric volume and is partly built over the Henry Deane Plaza. Whilst the offset form enables the heritage item to be read independently, detailed design of the tower (in particular the tower structure and base, and any interface components in particular to the southern façade and within the vertical separation/ structural support zone) should have regard for the classical symmetry of the Parcels post façade and the significance of the building facades.</p> <p>The proposed building envelope allows for additions to, or development in proximity to the eastern façade, which is considered appropriate having regard for the previous alterations to this façade. Future detailed design proposals should seek to mitigate impacts by sympathetically locating additions such that the form of the original building and the eastern facades remains able to be read and interpreted.</p> <p>It is a recommendation of this report (refer to Section 7) that future proposals and detailed design of any tower or additions within the subject envelope enable the original form and return facades to be read and interpreted.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that any proposed tower within the proposed envelope must consider the interface with the heritage item, which may include modulation for setbacks to the core and vertical separation, as well as consideration of overall bulk and scale and materiality to ensure that the heritage item remains visually prominent and that the tower and item remain as distinct elements. Accordingly, the future development proposal will have been subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed maximum envelope and be subject to heritage advice.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the development within the proposed envelope would likely necessitate significant structural intervention including provision of a new lift and fire stairs, as well as structure for the tower. The reference scheme incorporates an external core to the south and a second eastern core which requires intervention to the eastern façade, noting that this has previously been altered. The extant steel and concrete encased structural grid including floors and columns within the building are assessed to have moderate significance. It is acknowledged that the structure has been modified in conjunction with the conversion for the Hotel, including the new lift core and roof addition. The full extent of</p>

Clause	Discussion
	<p>modifications to the structure for the Hotel conversion is unknown and requires more invasive investigation to determine. The current fit out of the building is assessed to be intrusive, with removal recommended.</p> <p>Structural intervention to facilitate development in line with the tower envelope is able to be supported in principle, having regard for the restrained and altered nature of the interior and where future development proposals can demonstrate that sympathetic solutions have been sought i and intervention has been minimised. An appropriate structural solution is a critical aspect of future design proposals and it is recommended (refer to Section 7) that the advice of a structural engineer with heritage experience is sought to mitigate against any undue impact. Future proposals should seek to minimise structural intervention and allow for reinforcement and reinterpretation of, rather than wholesale demolition of the structural grid, allowing for reinterpretation of the original character and spatial qualities of the building.</p> <p>An inspection of the building was undertaken by Traditional Stone Masonry Pty Ltd via industrial rope access. The inspection identified considerable issues with the façade stonework with approximately 50% of the original sandstone embellishments being in a poor to very poor condition. The subject proposal thus presents a considerable opportunity to conserve and reinterpret the heritage item, and further to improve activation with the public domain. Extensive conservation works would form part of any detailed application as recommended in Section 7.</p> <p>Detailed design and future proposals should also consider the opportunity to reconstruct lost or missing elements where possible, such as reinstating the original western façade entry. The reference scheme also highlights the opportunity to reinterpret the original roof, which would have a positive heritage impact.</p>
<p><b>(5) Heritage assessment</b></p> <p>The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:</p> <p>(a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or</p> <p>(b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or</p> <p>(c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b), require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage</p>	<p>This Heritage Impact Statement satisfies this clause. Detailed assessment is set out above and below. The site is located in the vicinity of a number of heritage items as listed in Table 1 of Section 1.3.</p> <p>The site forms part of the SHR curtilage of Central Station and the historical and visual connections between the site and Central Station are of primary importance. The site is also adjacent to the Inwards Parcels Shed. While the parcel shed it is not an individually listed heritage item, it does contribute to the setting and significance of the Central Railway Station group. This site is proposed to be redeveloped with a new mixed-use development. The new building will be purpose built to accommodate the new Atlassian Headquarters and new Railway Square YHA backpacker’s accommodation. In</p>

Clause	Discussion
<p>significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.</p>	<p>addition, there will be additional commercial floorspace to support Tech Start-ups. The subject rezoning is not considered to further impact on the contribution of the Inward Parcels Shed.</p> <p>The subject proposal retains the heritage item and its historical significance and associations remain legible. A design excellence process should seek to mitigate any impacts and ensure that the proposed envelope would not diminish the physical and visual relationship or dominate significant views and vistas between the station and the Parcels Post. This is able to be achieved through detailed design including (but not limited to) consideration of setbacks and vertical separation, materiality, scale and form. It is considered that the proposed offset envelope, incorporating substantial setbacks from the northwest corner and encouraging a splayed form (approx. 13m minimum setback) and 12.6m vertical separation above the heritage item, serves to mitigate impacts of scale and further enables the heritage item to be read independently and to create a sense of visual separation between the heritage item and the tower.</p> <p>This proposal seeks approval for a proposed envelope only with detailed design subject to a design excellence competition and to a further detailed application. The proposed envelope considers the requirements of the solar access plane and has been designed to ensure that there would be no additional overshadowing of the heritage listed Prince Alfred Park.</p> <p>The site is also in proximity to a number of heritage items. The proposed tower will not impact on said items as identified in Section 1.3.1 and will form part of a backdrop of development behind these items, with the heritage items maintaining visual prominence in the Railway Square/ Central Station streetscape. Vicinity items principally include the Marcus Clark Building, Sydney Technical College (Building W), the Commercial building group and the Former Lottery Office all of which are located at and define the edges of Railway Square. These buildings (developed in the early 1900s) set a datum of development typically up to 8 storeys of redbrick and sandstone materiality. The proposal however retains the Parcels Post building and respects the principal datum, with the tower above, and vertical separation of minimum 12.6m enabling the Parcels Post to be read independently.</p> <p>Generally, it is noted that the site sits within an area of the CBD which is proposed to be significantly altered having regard to potential over station development and also responds to strategic implications of the Central Precinct Renewal Program and the nomination of Central Precinct as a State Significant Precinct (SSP) as detailed in section 2.2 of</p>

Clause	Discussion
<p><b>(6) Heritage conservation management plans</b></p> <p>The consent authority may require, after considering the heritage significance of a heritage item and the extent of change proposed to it, the submission of a heritage conservation management plan before granting consent under this clause.</p>	<p>this report. The locality is subject to probable increase in density as part of the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct within the Central State Significant Precinct. The subject rezoning and tower envelope is not considered to have a significant further impact on the legibility of the setting, the heritage item or its contribution to Railway Square and the proximate items as the proposed envelope preserves the independent and robust character of the building</p> <p>A Conservation Management Plan will be prepared for the subject site known as the Adina Central or Parcel Post Building, prior to or concurrent with the SSDA. Significance of the site and component elements has been assessed herein (refer to section 5).</p>
<p><b>6.53 Western Gateway Sub-precinct</b></p> <p>4) Development consent must not be granted to development in the Western Gateway Sub-precinct unless the consent authority has taken into consideration any guidelines made by the Planning Secretary relating to the design and amenity of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct.</p>	<p>The future SSDA will be assessed against an endorsed Design Guide for the Western Gateway Sub-precinct.</p>

## 6.2. SYDNEY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2012

Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 includes controls for development within the Railway Square/ Central Station Special Character. The site was formerly included within the character area however has been excluded with revision to the character area boundary under Sydney LEP 2012. This is also consistent with the Draft Design Guide – Western Gateway Sub- Precinct, June 2020. The provisions therefore have not been assessed herein.

The general heritage provisions of the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 have not been specifically addressed as it is considered that these objectives and provisions have been addressed elsewhere in this report.

## 6.3. DRAFT DESIGN GUIDE (WESTERN GATEWAY SUB-PRECINCT)

In accordance with Clause 6.53(4) of the SLEP2012, a draft guideline has been prepared for the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct. The purpose of this Design Guide is to supplement the provisions of the SLEP 2012 by providing more detailed provisions to guide development on land within the Western Gateway Sub-precinct. The Draft Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Design Guide (the Design Guide) has been prepared by TfNSW in consultation with DPIE, City of Sydney Council and the key stakeholders for Blocks A and B. The Design Guide was exhibited with the Planning Proposal for the rezoning of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, and an amended version was prepared in June 2020. The Rezoning application proposes changes to the draft Design Guide as it relates to Block C. The future SSDA will be assessed against an endorsed Design Guide for the Western Gateway Sub-precinct.

## 6.4. VIEWS AND VISTAS

The Parcels Post building was designed to be read in the round with views from George and Pitt Streets and approaches, Railway Square, longer distant and radial views and views to and from Central Station and the



landmark clocktower, as well as views between Parcels Post and the Inwards Parcels shed. Views have changed with gradual development.

The planning envelope provides for a tower footprint, maximum height, RL for the highest floor level and maximum GFA, as set out in Section 1.6. The proposed envelope allows for an offset tower form, built partly over the heritage item and partly over the plaza to the south with a diagonal tower footprint which aligns with a diagonal set from the NE corner to the SW corner of the heritage item. The envelope anticipates cores to the east and south.

It is acknowledged that the tower will alter the setting of the Parcels Post in views, as will the development of Blocks B and C and future over stations development, which seeks to reimagine Central Station by creating a new commercial, and public precinct. The proposed tower envelope has however been designed to enable the Parcels Post building to remain prominent in views and to be read as independent of the tower. It is considered that the proposed offset envelope, incorporating substantial setbacks from the northwest corner and encouraging a splayed form (approx. 13m minimum setback) and minimum 12.6m vertical separation above the heritage item, serves to mitigate impacts of scale and further enables the heritage item to be read independently (particularly in primary views from the north on George and Pitt Streets) and to create a sense of visual separation between the heritage item and the tower (refer to Figure 184 and Figure 185). Similarly, the Parcels Post building will remain dominant in views from the west and southwest (George Street) having regard for the setbacks and vertical separation. It is acknowledged that the southern core has the potential to alter the symmetrical character of the building, however this is mitigated by the setback of the tower core and is able to be further mitigated by considered materiality and façade design. Potential impacts on the southern façade are able to be mitigated by a considered interface between the core and the original façade. The building remains able to be viewed in the round.

Views are maintained between the Parcels Post and the clocktower as are the views to the clocktower from George Street owing to the retention of the western forecourt and the setback of the tower envelope (refer to Figure 182 and Figure 183).

It is acknowledged that the eastern tower core will partially obscure views to the eastern façade of the Parcels Post from the Inwards Parcels Shed, however the façade will remain partially visible. Future development of the public domain should also enable and enhance the interpretation of the important physical and historical associations between the Parcels Post and the Inwards Parcels shed.

Detailed design of the future SSDA will assist to further mitigate visual impacts, including consideration of façade treatment, setbacks and vertical separation, materiality, scale and form, as well as the interface between the cores/ new lobbies and the heritage building facades as well as the extent of any alterations or demolition.

A Visual Impact Assessment was prepared by Urbis and submitted with the application. Reference should be made to that document.



Figure 182 View northeast from George Street towards the clocktower and the Parcels Post

Source: [Urbis VIA]



Figure 183 View northeast with the reference design envelope

Source: [Urbis VIA]



Figure 184 View south towards the Parcels Post from the Central station concourse and clocktower

Source: [Urbis VIA]



Figure 185 Proposed view south from the station concourse with the reference design envelope

Source: [Urbis VIA]

## 6.5. SUB-PRECINCT ANALYSIS

As outlined in Section 2.2, Parcels Post sits within a State Significant Precinct (Central SSP) and the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, the planning of which defines the strategic vision for the future redevelopment of the station and surrounds (comprising approximately 24 hectares of land in and around Central Station).

The Western Gateway sub-precinct is intended to be a gateway to Central Sydney and act as a visual marker for Central Precinct, through city-scale buildings that create a focal point for the proposed innovation and technology hub. A cluster of significant commercial office towers are proposed for this sub-precinct, creating a major new urban node and a western edge to the broader Central Station Precinct. This will be further expanded in the future with additional buildings to be located above the existing station, referred to as the Over Station Development (OSD). These buildings may include commercial, retail, active uses, education, student accommodation, hotel and other uses, creating a new and vibrant mixed-use precinct in the heart of central Sydney

Stage 1 rezoning for Blocks A and B of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct was gazetted on August 13<sup>th</sup> 2020. Proposed development includes a new technology hub for Atlassian (Block A) to a height of RL200.2m and a new tower for Dexu and Frasers Property Australia (“the Partnership”) with a maximum building height to RL 205.8m (Block B). Although this HIS is limited to Block C, submitted reporting for the adjacent Blocks A and B has assessed the potential impacts on the Parcels Post building with findings summarised below.

## Block A Heritage Impact Assessment

A Heritage Impact Statement was submitted in conjunction with a technical package to inform the preparation of a self-repealing SEPP for the Western Gateway Sub-precinct proposal for the Western Gateway Sub-precinct Block A, prepared by Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning (2019). The intended outcome of the self-repealing SEPP was to create Australia's first 'Innovation Precinct' adjacent to Sydney's Central Railway Station, by introducing new built form controls for Block A to support the development of an iconic commercial office tower for the new global headquarters of Atlassian. Block A is the site of the Inwards Parcels shed and forms part of the State Heritage Registered curtilage of the Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Station Group. The Inwards Parcels Shed worked as part of a well organised system of mail and parcels delivery in conjunction with the Parcels Post Office.

The HIS assessed the potential impacts to the Inwards Parcels Shed and the Parcels Post. The reference scheme retained the shed along with the understanding of the platform. The HIS assesses that the northern vistas to the shed, Parcel Post and Central station are maintained, while the southern and southeastern views to the Parcels Post building would be altered. The historic narrative of the use and understanding of the relationship to the Parcels Post building was intended to be highlighted via a comprehensive interpretation strategy, and thus the significance of the Parcels Post Office would be identified and enhanced by the Planning Proposal.<sup>50</sup>

## Block B Heritage Impact Statement

A Heritage Impact Statement was also submitted with the Western Gateway Sub-precinct proposal for Block B, prepared by GML Heritage (October 2019). The HIS assessed the potential impacts to proximate heritage items and in relation to the Parcels Post found that while the prominence of the building would be reduced by larger taller buildings adjacent to it, impacts were able to be mitigated by siting, massing, materials and articulation in accordance with the heritage design guidelines<sup>51</sup>. In relation to cumulative impacts the HIS found that:

*Public domain appreciation of the heritage buildings and Railway Square is that of the established scale. Tall buildings behind this street-wall would have less impact on the heritage values of the building and square if they are designed as towers emphatically set back from the enclosing street-wall/podium. Incrementally setting back additional height above and parallel to the street-wall can lead to a loss of appreciation of the established scale and definition of the square.<sup>52</sup>*

## Public Realm Strategy

Principles for the development of the public domain of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct are to be set out in the Public Realm Strategy. This strategy will define a unified approach to the public realm of the sub-precinct and represents a partnership of interested parties to ensure a precinct that is high quality, activated and which creates opportunities for conversation and collaboration, transit and relaxation. The Western Gateway sub-precinct will contribute to a uniform connected public realm which will include heritage integration and interpretation to inform the public of the unique heritage and cultural values of the area.<sup>53</sup>

## Precinct Analysis

It is acknowledged that the setting of the Parcels Post building will be irrevocably altered in conjunction with the proposed development of the western gateway sub-precinct, public domain and future OSD, however its historical associations and visual connections will remain apparent and are able to be interpreted. The assessments have generally found that while the prominence of the Parcels Post would be reduced by larger taller buildings adjacent to it, impacts were able to be mitigated by siting, massing, materials and articulation in accordance with the heritage design guidelines – for instance in the application of a lower scale podium for Block B which responds to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century datum of development.

The proposed development of the subject Block C is consistent with the strategic vision for the future redevelopment of the station and surrounds in terms of scale and will form part of a new urban node of city scale development. It is acknowledged that a tower above the heritage item has the potential to impact on the visual prominence of the heritage item, however the subject proposal, informed by extensive consultation has sought to mitigate impacts of scale by modulating the tower form as detailed above. The proponent has

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<sup>50</sup> Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning 2019 p53

<sup>51</sup> GML 2019 p.55

<sup>52</sup> Ibid p46

<sup>53</sup> Transport for NSW, October 2020, p.5

considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form, resulting in the subject building envelope. Future detailed design should seek to further mitigate impacts including (but not limited to) consideration of setbacks and modulation of the tower form within the envelope, façade design, materiality, interface to new tower cores, structural solutions and works to the ground plane. The proposal and broader precinct development also presents opportunities for conservation, improved activation and interpretation of the Parcels Post and the broader precincts significant cultural heritage values.

## 6.6. CONSERVATION POLICIES – CENTRAL STATION CMP (2013)

The subject site is subject to the Conservation Management Plan: Central Station (Rappoport, 2013), including item specific policies in Section 3.19 (Parcels Post Office – Medina Hotel), Policies 1-11. These policies have been reviewed and Urbis contends that the proposal is generally consistent with the intent of said policies. Future detailed proposals for the site should consider the policies of the Central Station CMP in more detail.

## 6.7. HERITAGE DIVISION GUIDELINES

The proposed works are addressed in relation to relevant questions posed in the Heritage Division’s ‘Statement of Heritage Impact’ guidelines.

Table 8 – Heritage Division Guidelines

Question	Discussion
<p>The following aspects of the proposal respect or enhance the heritage significance of the item or conservation area for the following reasons:</p>	<p>The proponent has considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form. The proposal has been subject to extensive consultation with the Design Review Panel as well as the City of Sydney Council and Heritage NSW. Consultation has informed the planning proposal and will continue to inform future development of the scheme.</p> <p>The proposed envelope is considered to respect the heritage item and identified heritage significance for the following reasons:</p> <p>The proposal provides for the retention of the heritage item, as part of a larger redevelopment of the site. The proposal retains the significant elevations and allows for the interpretation of the form of the subject building. The proposed envelope incorporates setbacks and a clear vertical separation of a minimum of 12.6m to the bulk of the tower, with an offset tower form. The envelope assists to mitigate impacts of scale and ensure that the heritage item and tower remain as distinct elements, with the heritage item retaining visual prominence. It is noted that future development proposal/s will be subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed maximum envelope and be subject to heritage advice.</p> <p>The proposal also provides significant opportunities to enhance the heritage item in the context of the broader precinct renewal.</p> <p>Whilst the conversion for the Adina (then Medina) Hotel provided an important adaptive reuse for a derelict building, it has also resulted in internal fitout which obscures the significant interiors. Proposed redevelopment presents an opportunity for renewal of the interiors in a more sympathetic manner, which strips the Hotel fitout and reinterprets significant fabric and spaces.</p>



Question	Discussion
	<p>In its original function as the Parcels Post Office, the building originally had a more public function and the subject proposal provides an opportunity for more public uses and activation of spaces within the subject building and associated public domain, as well as interpretation of the sites significant Aboriginal cultural heritage values, its significant built heritage fabric and use of the heritage item and its historical association with and physical connections to Central Station.</p> <p>The subject proposal also presents a significant opportunity for necessary and substantial façade renewal, in accordance with specialist advice. The façade is in poor to very poor condition, with much of the stone embellishments requiring repair or replacement, and structural remediation required to mitigate concerns arising from the original construction method. Failing rainwater goods are also contributing to the poor condition of the stone and decay of steel windows. Extensive conservation works would form part of any detailed application.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to reconstruct lost or missing elements where possible, such as reinstating the original western façade entry and the original roof form (based on documentation) noting that the proposed envelope anticipates removal of the non-significant hotel roof addition.</p>
<p>The following aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on heritage significance.</p> <p>The reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimise impacts:</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that development above a heritage item has the potential to overwhelm or dominate the heritage item. The proposed envelope however has been assessed and is considered appropriate having regard for the robust nature of the building and the previous modifications to the interior and the roof.</p> <p>As detailed above, the proposed envelope is supported as it incorporates setbacks and a clear vertical separation of a minimum of 12.6m to the bulk of the tower, with an offset tower form aligning with a diagonal from the SW to the NE corner which creates a generous setback from the NW. The envelope assists to mitigate impacts of scale and ensure that the heritage item and tower remain as distinct elements, with the heritage item retaining visual prominence. It is noted that future development proposal/s will be subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed maximum envelope and be subject to heritage advice. Future detailed design will also serve to further mitigate potential impacts through sensitive interface design, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the interface with the southern and eastern facades for new cores,</li> <li>• vertical separation to the tower,</li> <li>• refining massing and consideration of overall bulk and scale,</li> <li>• consideration of materiality and façade treatments to the tower,</li> </ul>

Question	Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treatment of tower cores and lobbies adjacent to the heritage item (to the south and east) to have regard for the symmetry of the principal western façade, and to ensure the original form and facades remain able to be interpreted,</li> <li>• minimising intervention, particularly to the highly intact southern façade, and</li> <li>• further refinement within the tower envelope, guided by heritage and specialist advice.</li> </ul> <p>It should also be noted that the site sits within an area of the CBD which is proposed to be significantly altered having regard to potential over-station development and the TfNSW Proposal submitted in October (see section 2.2). The proposed envelope responds appropriately to the strategic implications of the Central Precinct Renewal Program and the nomination of Central Precinct as a State Significant Precinct (SSP).</p> <p>It is also acknowledged that development above the heritage item will necessitate further structural intervention to facilitate the tower redevelopment. The structural solution is subject to detailed design however the reference scheme includes new structural cores to the south and east (the southern core is external to the building) and new/ internal columns positioned to reinforce the existing structural grid. This is able to be supported in principle, having regard for the altered nature of the building and where future development proposals can demonstrate that sympathetic solutions have been sought and intervention has been minimised. Future proposals should seek to sympathetically retain and strengthen the extant column structure where possible (rather than removing it), allowing for reinterpretation of the original character and spatial qualities of the building. Specialist structural advice should be sought from an engineer with experience working on heritage sites.</p>
<p><b>Major partial demolition</b></p> <p>Is the demolition essential for the heritage item to function?</p> <p>Are particular features of the item affected by the demolition (e.g. fireplaces in buildings)?</p> <p>Is the detailing of the partial demolition sympathetic to the heritage significance of the item (e.g. creating large square openings in internal walls rather than removing the wall altogether)?</p> <p>If the partial demolition is a result of the condition of the fabric, is it certain that the fabric cannot be repaired?</p>	<p>This proposal pertains to a proposed envelope only and excludes physical works. A reference structural scheme has been prepared and detailed in the Structural Viability Report prepared by Robert Bird Group (9 September 2020). The report provides confirmation that the proposed building envelope is structurally viable and identifies areas that will need to be revised and validated in future design stages. Detailed design and future applications will be subject to further assessment including materials investigation. The report also advises that in future design stages a column layout within the Parcels Post building will be developed that respects the existing heritage constraints.</p> <p>Future development in line with the proposed tower envelope will necessitate demolition including removal of the contemporary mansard roof addition and intervention to the building and structure, subject to further heritage, engineering and other specialist advice. Demolition of the roof addition is supported.</p>

Question	Discussion
<p>How is the impact of the addition on the heritage significance of the item to be minimised?</p> <p>Can the additional area be located within an existing structure? If no, why not?</p> <p>Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item?</p> <p>Is the addition sited on any known or potentially significant archaeological deposits?</p> <p>Is the resolution to partially demolish sympathetic to the heritage significance of the item?</p> <p>If the partial demolition is a result of the condition of the fabric, is it certain that the fabric cannot be repaired?</p>	<p>Structural intervention in line with the Structural Viability report is able to be supported in principle, having regard for the restrained and altered nature of the interior and where future development proposals can demonstrate that sympathetic solutions have been sought and intervention has been minimised.</p> <p>Alterations and additions to the eastern façade, having regard for previous extensive interventions and replaced fabric, are also supported.</p> <p>Future development proposals should be subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed maximum envelope and be subject to heritage advice.</p> <p>Potential impacts of the tower envelope have been assessed above.</p> <p>European Archaeological potential is assessed herein and a separate Indigenous Archaeological Assessment has been submitted with the subject application. The Due Diligence report assessed the Aboriginal archaeological potential as moderate due to moderate potential for Aboriginal objects within soil profiles below existing land disturbance. Historical archaeological potential was assessed as low, however, areas with less disturbance and outside of major underground structures have still potential for the survival of archaeological resources. Reference should be made to the submitted reports and recommendations therein.</p>
<p><b>Major additions</b></p> <p>How is the impact of the addition on the heritage significance of the item to be minimised?</p> <p>Can the additional area be located within an existing structure? If not, why not?</p> <p>Will the additions tend to visually dominate the heritage item?</p> <p>Are the additions sited on any known or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative positions for the additions been considered?</p> <p>Are the additions sympathetic to the heritage item?</p> <p>In what way (e.g. form, proportions, design)?</p>	<p>This assessment considers the principle of allowing development above the heritage item. The subject proposal provides for a tower footprint, maximum height, RL for the highest floor level and maximum GFA, as set out in Section 1.6. The proposal does not involve any physical works and pertains to a proposed envelope only, with development to be subject to future applications and heritage advice. Future applications are to be subject to a design excellence process and must work within the proposed maximum envelope and be subject to heritage advice.</p> <p>The potential impact of the tower envelope has been assessed above.</p> <p>Refer above regarding the archaeological potential.</p>

## 6.8. CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The purpose of this Conservation Management Strategy is to provide guidance for the conservation of the Parcels Post building as part of a future site development so that its cultural significance (established in Section 5) is maintained and conserved. The following conservation principles are provided to inform any future proposal and will form the basis for a future CMP. A Conservation Management Plan (CMP) will be prepared and submitted with the future SSDA for development of the Parcels Post site.

### Conservation Principle 1: Heritage Interpretation

- Interpretation should be an integral part of the overall design and should be coordinated across the entire precinct, in particular the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, led by Transport for NSW, with ongoing consultation and input from Heritage NSW and other stakeholders.
- An Interpretation Strategy should be prepared which interprets the significant use and historical values of the site. The strategy should consider the significance of the site, Aboriginal cultural heritage values, the previous site history for the asylum, the development and significant use of the site as the Parcels post, as well as its broader connections in the context of Central Station (both physical and functional) and mail delivery across the state. The strategy should consider future uses, ongoing maintenance of proposed interpretive media, audiences and public access, amenity issues and ordinance compliance.

### Conservation Principle 2: Heritage Significance

It has been assessed that the site is of local heritage significance for its historic, associational, aesthetic, research and representative values and for its rarity. It also forms part of and contributes to the State heritage listed Central Station Precinct.

Policy for managing a place must be based on an understanding of its cultural significance. One of the key objectives therefore, of contemporary conservation practice is to retain as much of the **significant** original fabric as possible, in order to preserve the essential integrity of the heritage resource. However, it should be noted that this does not preclude change, rather it is intended to guide appropriate management of change, informed by an understanding of significance and with consideration for the necessary ongoing use of the place.

#### General Principles

- The Statement of Significance embodies the core heritage values of the buildings and all future decisions and works to the buildings must be guided by the statement of significance and the identified significant spaces, fabric and building elements identified in this report, together with any additional detailed research and assessment. The significance is defined in Section 5 of this document and includes a Schedule of Significant Elements. Significant building elements, spaces and fabric, both internally and externally should be retained and conserved, in accordance with the gradings of significance and those definitions as developed by the Heritage Council of NSW.
- Owners, occupiers and stakeholders responsible for and involved in the maintenance and management of the site should be aware of the identified significance of the spaces and aim to conserve and enhance this significance as well as identified significant internal and external fabric.
- Any future works to the place should seek to conserve highly significant fabric and spaces (as guided by historical documentation) and to recapture lost or missing fabric where possible and where reasonable, accommodating its continued use

### Conservation Principle 3: Conservation and Maintenance

It is understood that the building is generally in good condition however the façades and associated stone and brick work are currently in an overall poor condition. A detailed Condition Report and Schedule of Conservation Works should inform the ongoing conservation and management of the place or any major program of works.



## General Principles

- Any works (for maintenance, conservation or new works) should be informed by an understanding of the significance, grading and contribution of the item or element to the significance of the place.
- The significant fabric of the building should be maintained by the implementation of a cyclical maintenance program. As a necessary minimum, the ongoing maintenance should include works that will ensure that each element retains its current level of significance and not allow the loss of significance due to the deterioration of fabric. Maintenance should be in accordance with the Heritage Division/ Heritage Council Guidelines.
- Management and maintenance of the asset should aim to conserve its heritage significance to the greatest extent feasible, whilst accommodating its continued use. Maintenance or conservation works should be sympathetic to highly significant fabric and repairs should be undertaken over replacement, if possible. In-situ repairs are preferred where possible. New materials should be distinguishable from the original fabric upon close inspection.
- Maintenance works should be undertaken on a regular basis to avoid substantive conservation works
- Any repair, conservation or reconstruction works to significant elements or facades should be undertaken with appropriate supervision by a suitably qualified heritage consultant /architect and/ or relevant materials specialist/s or conservator.
- Reinstatement of missing fabric or reconstruction should be based on documentary evidence and only take place within the context of retention or enhancement of cultural significance of a specific element and of the building generally.
- Consultants, tradespeople and associated staff appointed should be suitably qualified in their respective fields and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sound conservation practices and the significance of the site.

## **Conservation Principle 4: Managing Change**

In accordance with Principle 2 any proposed new work must be based upon an understanding of the cultural significance or the place. Section 5 of this report provides an assessment of significance for component and collective elements of the site and a schedule of significant external elements and fabric that should inform the basis of approach for all works. Reference should be made to the Schedule of Significant Elements, as well as historical documentation and fabric analysis, prior to any works.

## General Principles

- Modifications to the building are subject to undertaking a formal heritage impact statement and appropriate legislation/ approvals.
- New works, alterations or maintenance should be sympathetic to the heritage significance of the façades and identified significant fabric.
- Any identified intrusive elements should be removed and made good.

## Façades

- The principal western, northern and southern façades of the site are identified as being of high heritage significance and should be retained and conserved. Any works to these façades should be limited to conservation or reconstruction works or sympathetic alterations and additions as set out in the guidelines herein.
- The eastern façade has been variously modified including introduction of parcel lifts in c. 1915 and for the later extension c.1969 (and its subsequent removal). The majority of the façade therefore has been modified or reconstructed. Some reconstruction works following the removal of the 1969 addition were undertaken inappropriately and are now failing. Therefore, where alterations and/or additions or partial removal are required, there is an opportunity for works to be located on the eastern façade having regard for the modified fabric, and subject to heritage advice.

- All façade stonework, including high relief decoration should be retained and conserved to the highest extent feasible. Where reconstruction is required (by condition) exterior stonework and masonry should be reconstructed to match the original, guided by documentation.
- The pattern of fenestration and the existing window openings contribute to the significance of the façade and should not be enlarged or concealed. There should be no new openings and no alteration to fenestration to the north, south and western facades, except where required by condition or where permitted by the guidelines herein (i.e. for activation of the ground plane).
- Some windows to the eastern façade have been replaced with aluminium windows and these should be replaced with steel to match the original where possible or in conjunction with major works to the site.
- Any proposal for major works to the site should seek to enhance the heritage significance of the site through the conservation of the façade and reinstatement of lost or modified elements of the principal façades (in accordance with historical documentation).

### Shopfronts at Ground Level

- The southern façade shopfronts assist to activate the plaza and may be retained in their current configuration, having regard to original fabric and necessary contemporary requirements for services and building compliance as well as use of the site. Significant original fabric such as stallboard lights, toplights, and steel / bronze framing should be retained and conserved where possible. Where the shopfronts are no longer required the stallboard lights should be reinstated to original detail
- The eastern most bay of the southern façade should be retained as (or appear as) an entrance in accordance with the original design intent.
- Where the eastern façade is retained, the original arched openings to the former vehicle docks on the eastern façade should be retained, conserved and interpreted. Sympathetic modifications (such as glazed infill) are permissible in this area subject to further heritage advice.
- The northern entry currently provides the only accessible entry and is able to be retained in this capacity. Sympathetic alterations are permissible and encouraged, including removal of the awning. There should be no further modifications to the remaining northern façade bays.
- There is an opportunity to enhance the heritage character of the principal western façade entry by reinstating or reinterpreting the original arrangement of the door and associated side and toplights based on historical documentation.
- Proposed services should be minimised where feasible, sympathetically located and not impact on any fabric of significance. Any proposal for major works to the site should seek to enhance the heritage significance and character of the streetscape by reinstating and conserving the pavement lights and basement windows and grills which remain extant on the northern and part of the western facades. It is noted that this may not be achievable where level access is required for DDA or where works to the public domain are proposed. Further investigation is required to determine the extent of the remaining pavement lights in the basement tenancy. The contemporary extension to the southeast of the site is identified as being neutral significance and is not required to be retained.

### Roof

- The mansard roof is a contemporary addition (dating to the 1999/ 2000 redevelopment of the site for the Adina Hotel) that is of neutral significance and as such, sympathetic modifications or removal of this element are supported from a heritage perspective.

Any new roof services and/ or plant proposed to the mansard roof form should be sympathetically located to minimise visual impacts from the public domain. Roof additions should not dominate the heritage character of the building and its significant facades.

### Interior Elements and Spaces

- Significant internal elements, fabric and spaces, as identified in Section 5, that are of high or potentially high heritage significance should be retained and conserved or where possible retrieved.
- The current fit out has resulted in the loss of the spatial characteristics of the building, this includes open plan and large volumes, views of the columns and the legibility of the expressed structural grid. These qualities should be reinstated where feasible.

- The present fit-out is generally regarded as being of little or no significance. Alterations and additions in conjunction with the continued Hotel and commercial uses, including light weight, reversible partitions and fit-out are appropriate so long as works do not further impact on significant fabric, spaces and façades as identified herein, and with consideration for required services. Any internal works should not compromise the significant facades of the buildings. Where new uses or redevelopment is proposed, there is an opportunity to retrieve the original character, by reinstating a more open plan and removing suspended ceilings.
- There is potential for original fabric and finishes to survive beneath the current fitout, such as remnant terrazzo and mosaic in the ground floor former public spaces. Where specific potential is identified, further investigations should be undertaken in conjunction with heritage advice. Where original fabric is uncovered during building works, works should cease and heritage advice should be sought.

### Structure

- The original columns and the grid alignment of the structure should generally be retained and conserved. Some removal may be considered in conjunction with sympathetic adaptive reuse or redevelopment however must consider any structural implications. Where required, structural reinforcement of the columns may also be appropriate, subject to heritage and specialist engineering advice.
- Any additional structure required in conjunction with redevelopment should be sympathetic to the original expressed structural grid and should be apparent as a new insertion, without compromising the legibility of the original grid and any significant spatial characteristics. Reinforcement of the existing original grid may be preferred, subject to engineering and heritage advice.
- Where seismic strengthening is required for upgrades, or triggered by proposed redevelopment or adaptive reuse, the aim should be to reduce the building's vulnerability, while minimising impact on the building's integrity and the heritage significance of identified fabric and spaces. The building code and standards provide for degrees of intervention based on defined categories. The appropriate level should be determined through consideration of relevant factors, including heritage and the nature of the building and its fabric. Professional advice (including specialist engineering and heritage advice) should be obtained.
- Any structural works are subject to development of appropriate structural engineered solutions that demonstrate retention and conservation of the significance of the site. Any structural solutions should be informed by a structural engineer with appropriate experience in heritage.

### New Development

- New development at the site and in the vicinity should be sympathetic to the heritage character of the place and should provide adequate setbacks and vertical separation.
- Having regard for the robust nature of the building and the previous modifications to the interior and the roof, vertical extensions or cantilevered development above the heritage item may be permissible, subject to heritage advice. Any substantial vertical extension or cantilevered forms should ensure that adequate separation is provided, such that the original building remains legible and visually prominent.
- Any major redevelopment including additions or new development above the site, should be subject to Design Excellence and should recognise and enhance the unique qualities, significance and prominence of the site.
- Siting and location of any proposed new tower or vertical extensions must consider the heritage significance of the site and necessary structural intervention/solutions.
- Where major redevelopment or development above the item is proposed, the removal of the 1990s roof addition should be considered. There is an opportunity to reinterpret the appearance of the original pitched roof based on documentation (original plans, elevations, photographs etc) noting that the roof was built varied from the original drawings.
- Any proposed redevelopment of the site should facilitate and enhance public access to the former Parcels Post building, particularly to the former public facing ground floor.
- New works/ fitout to the interiors presents a significant opportunity to reinterpret the original design intent of the interiors, characterised by large open plan volumes and exposed structure. There is also an

opportunity to reinterpret known original finishes such as terrazzo flooring, polished cedar, and nickel finishes, in a contemporary form.

#### Setting and Views

- The significant façades and overall form and landmark quality of the building should be retained and conserved whilst acknowledging the opportunities to accommodate change, new uses and compliance.
- Any proposed redevelopment and/ or new works should have regard for identified significant views and vistas including views to and from Central station, the station clocktower and views from Pitt and George Streets, as well as Railway Square.
- Where vertical extensions or redevelopment of the Parcels Post or immediate surrounds are proposed, the heritage item and proximate items should retain their visual prominence, in the context of the new development.

#### **Conservation Principle 5: Use/ Adaptive Reuse**

The original use of the building was as a mail sorting and parcel distribution centre. Upon the closure of the Post Office at Railway Square the building remained unoccupied for over a decade, with the adaptive reuse of the site into the Adina Hotel occurring in the late twentieth century. Any future uses of the building must demonstrate consideration of the original historic use of the site and its identified heritage significance relative to the required interventions and potential heritage impact. Other uses may be permissible and may in fact provide a better opportunity to enhance the interpretation of the building's identified significance, via the reinterpretation of the original character of the interiors. Any proposed reuse should not require substantial or unreasonable intervention to facilitate the proposed use.

#### General Guidelines

- Any future adaptive reuse of the building should be compatible with its conservation and heritage significance (see section 5). Uses should enhance the appreciation of the site's values and significance and ensure the conservation of the identified significant building elements, fabric, spaces and context. Any change of use should be guided by the advice of a heritage consultant or architect;
- Where new internal fit outs are undertaken, it is preferable that existing intrusive fabric, or fabric that obscures significant fabric, including false ceilings, services or partitioning / wall linings, are removed where possible. New works should aim to maximise exposure of original fabric, features, and reinstate significant spaces, including the retention and reinterpretation of the original open plan character.
- New uses should accommodate the activities, services and fittings which are essential to the use without damaging significant spaces, elements or fabric. Uses which require substantial interventions or upgrades to facilitate the use, may not be considered appropriate. New services required (e.g. fire safety provisions, lift, air conditioning, toilets, etc) for a potential new use should seek to minimise any damage and impact to significant elements of the building not cause damage, destroy or compromise the building, significant facades or any interior spaces, elements and fabric of significance. New services should ideally be restricted to areas of little significance or previously modified spaces.



## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The subject proposal provides for a tower footprint, maximum height for the highest floor level and maximum GFA, as set out in section 1.6. The proposal does not involve any physical works and pertains to a proposed envelope only, with development to be subject to future applications and heritage advice.

The proponent has considered a number of options with detailed investigations into the optimal built form including an option that directly extruded above the heritage item which was found to be unacceptable. The proposed tower is partly built over the heritage item and partly over the plaza to the south. This offset form of a minimum of 12.6m of vertical separation and suspension creates a physical and visual curtilage for the former Parcels Post building and enables the building and tower to be read independently, with the heritage item maintaining its prominence in the streetscape and views. The proposed envelope has been assessed and is supported having regard for the robust nature of the building, the restrained and modified interiors and previous structural interventions for the roof addition. The form also enables the 'heritage ensemble' of buildings at the George, Pitt, Quay St and Broadway intersections, including Marcus Clarke, to read with distinction, with the new tower (and associated development of Blocks A and B of the subject Western Gateway) forming a backdrop.

The proposal has been subject to consultation with the Design Review Panel and consultation with the City of Sydney Council and Heritage NSW (section 1.7). Consultation has informed the planning proposal and will continue to inform future development of the scheme. The proposal provides for the retention of the heritage item, as part of a larger redevelopment of the site and responds to the strategic objectives for growth in the southern CBD, the Central Precinct Renewal Program and the nomination of Central Precinct as a State Significant Precinct (SSP) as well as the gazetted TfNSW Proposal for Blocks A and B of the subject Western Gateway Sub-Precinct. The proposed development of the subject Block C is consistent with the strategic vision for the future redevelopment of the station and surrounds in terms of scale and will form part of a new urban node of city scale development.

The potential cumulative impacts of the Western Gateway Sub-precinct development have been assessed. It is acknowledged that the setting of the Parcels Post building will be irrevocably altered in conjunction with the proposed development of the western gateway sub-precinct, public domain and future OSD, however its historical associations and visual connections will remain apparent and are able to be interpreted. The respective Block A and B assessments have generally found that while the prominence of the Parcels Post would be reduced by larger taller buildings adjacent to it, impacts were able to be mitigated by siting, massing, materials and articulation in accordance with the heritage design guidelines – for instance in the application of a lower scale podium for Block B which responds to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century datum of development.

The future development proposal will be subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed envelope. Future detailed design will also serve to further mitigate potential impacts through sensitive interface design, including (but not limited to) the interface with the southern and eastern facades for new cores; vertical separation to the tower; refining massing and consideration of overall bulk and scale; and consideration of materiality and façade treatments to the tower; as well as treatment of tower cores and lobbies adjacent to the heritage item (to the south and east) to have regard for the symmetry of the principal western façade, to ensure the original form and facades remain able to be interpreted and to minimise intervention, particularly to the intact southern façade. This will include further refinement within the tower envelope, guided by heritage and specialist advice.

It is also acknowledged that development above the heritage item will necessitate further structural intervention to facilitate the tower redevelopment. A reference scheme has been prepared by Robert Bird Group. The RBG report provides confirmation that the proposed building envelope is structurally viable and identifies areas that will need to be revised and validated in future design stages. Detailed design and future applications will be subject to further assessment including materials investigation. Structural intervention is able to be supported in principle, having regard for the altered nature of the building and where future development proposals can demonstrate that sympathetic solutions have been sought and intervention has been minimised. Future proposals should seek to sympathetically retain and strengthen the extant column structure where possible (rather than removing it), allowing for reinterpretation of the original character and spatial qualities of the building. Structural advice should be sought from an engineer with experience working on heritage sites.

The proposal and broader precinct development also presents opportunities for conservation, improved activation and interpretation of the Parcels Post and the broader precincts significant cultural heritage values. The proposal provides significant opportunities to enhance the heritage item in the context of the broader

precinct renewal. Proposed redevelopment presents an opportunity for renewal of the interiors in a more sympathetic manner, which strips the Hotel fitout and reinterprets significant fabric and spaces. The proposal also provides an opportunity for more public uses and activation of spaces within the subject building and associated public domain, as well as interpretation of the sites significant Aboriginal cultural heritage values, interpretation of the significant fabric, spaces and use of the heritage item as well as its historical association and physical connections to Central Station.

The façade is in poor to very poor condition and the subject proposal also presents a significant opportunity for necessary and substantial façade renewal, in accordance with specialist advice as well the opportunity to reconstruct lost or missing elements where possible.

The subject proposal is supported on heritage grounds, subject to the following recommendations.

## 7.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The future development proposal should be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders including Heritage NSW (recommended consultation is included at section 1.8).
- The future development proposal should be subject to a design excellence competition and must work within the proposed maximum envelope.
- Future detailed design must be subject to heritage and other specialist advice and incorporate sensitive design to mitigate visual impacts and to ensure that any development does not dominate the heritage item. This should include (but is not limited to) the interface with the southern and eastern facades for new cores; vertical separation to the tower; refining massing and consideration of overall bulk and scale as well as setbacks; and consideration of materiality and façade treatments to the tower; as well as treatment of tower cores and lobbies adjacent to the heritage item (to the south and east) to have regard for the symmetry of the principal western façade, to ensure the original form and facades remain able to be interpreted and to minimise intervention, particularly to the intact southern façade.
- Future proposals should have regard for the Conservation Management Strategy herein, and the heritage significance of the site and component elements. . Modifications to the building are subject to heritage advice and the preparation of a formal Heritage Impact Statement to accompany the SSDA.
- An appropriate structural solution is a critical aspect of future design proposals. Whilst intervention and demolition is anticipated, future proposals should seek to allow for reinforcement and reinterpretation of, rather than wholesale demolition of the structural grid, allowing for reinterpretation of the original character and spatial qualities of the building. The advice of a structural engineer with experience in dealing with heritage sites, should be sought.
- Future detailed design should incorporate essential conservation works to be undertaken in accordance with specialist heritage advice (refer to the Traditional Stonemasonry Consulting P/L report appended to the CMP).
- Any future redevelopment of the site should increase public access to the former Parcels Post building, particularly to the former public facing ground floor.
- A view analysis should accompany any detailed application. Any future development should not disrupt significant identified views, notably the visual connection between the site and Central Station, in particular the landmark clocktower, as well as having regard for Railway Square and ensemble of proximate heritage items.
- Future redevelopment would allow for renewal of the interior in a more sympathetic manner and allow for the original design intent of the interior to be interpreted. Where significant works or redevelopment of the site is proposed, there is a considerable opportunity to retrieve or restore identified significant fabric and spaces. Proposed new works to the interiors should seek to reinstate the open spatial characteristics of the building and enhance visibility to the grid pattern of the internal columns through the removal of contemporary fit out which obscures these elements. Any future proposal should seek to reinterpret known original finishes, (in a contemporary form) as well as reinstating and interpreting significant spaces and volumes.
- Any future adaptive reuse of the building must have regard for significant original fabric and the original character of the place and should be compatible with its conservation and heritage significance.

- There is an opportunity to reconstruct lost or missing elements where possible, such as reinstating the original western façade entry and roof form. Future proposals should seek to reconstruct or reinterpret lost or missing fabric, in accordance with documentation. Any identified intrusive elements should be removed and made good.
- Where possible, any alterations and /or additions to the eastern and southern façades should minimise intervention to original fabric where possible. Any additions or redevelopment should allow the building to be read in the round as an independent structure and should allow the original form to be interpreted.
- A Heritage Interpretation Strategy should be submitted with the future SSSA for the Parcels Post. The Heritage Interpretation Strategy will detail how the heritage values of the place will be communicated to the public. This will include identifying themes and narratives for interpretation including Aboriginal and historic/ European themes, as well as identifying potential locations, media and content for interpretation. The Interpretation Strategy must be informed by, complement and build upon (but not duplicate) any precinct-wide strategy or initiatives. It is understood that Transport for NSW will lead a coordinated approach to interpretation in the Western Gateway Sub-precinct, with ongoing consultation and input from Heritage NSW and the respective proponents of Blocks A, B and C.
- Future proposals and/ or redevelopment should have regard to the setting of the heritage item, notably the rear yard and provide for the interpretation of the yard and connections to the adjacent inward parcels area.

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### **Miscellaneous**

McKillop, Century of Central

## **PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES**

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C4076, HN107

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C4078:N4188a-L (not I)

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### **State Library NSW**

hood\_07383h.jpg

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### **MAAS**

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*[Note: Some government departments have changed their names over time and the above publications state the name at the time of publication.]*





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