### DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application No:</th>
<th>D/2016/1171</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date of Lodgement</td>
<td>22 August 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>HERITAGE 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>HERITAGE 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>ST GEORGE’S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Site:</td>
<td>201A CASTLEREAGH STREET, SYDNEY NSW 2000</td>
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<td>Proposal:</td>
<td>Proposed conservation and repair work to the sandstone spire, bell tower and facade of St George’s Church.</td>
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### SITE AND SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT

A site visit was carried out on 26 October 2016.

The site is rectangular, with an area of approximately 607sqm. It has a sole street frontage to Castlereagh Street and is located midway between the intersection of Castlereagh and Park Streets to the north; and Bathurst Street to the south. A two storey church with a high tower and octagonal spire is contained within the site.

St George’s Presbyterian Church dates to the mid-1800s and is constructed of Sydney sandstone. The Church has retained a high level of overall integrity, however the tower and spire have gradually deteriorated over time.

The site is heritage listed under the Sydney LEP 2012 (11707), and is described as having a heritage significant interior and forecourt area. The site is also listed as an archaeological item on the Central Sydney Archaeological Zoning Plan 1992 and is identified as an area of archaeological potential.

Surrounding development consists of multi-level commercial and retail uses.

Photos of the site and surrounds are provided below:
Figure 1: Aerial image of subject site and surrounding area

Figure 2: Subject site viewed from Castlereagh Street looking west
PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent for restoration works to the Church spire and tower. This consists of the removal and replacement of sandstone (from course 01 to 71). In some instances the whole stone is to be replaced, as well as half and part stones. The replacement sandstone will consist of the sandstone quarried from the excavation at 200 George Street (known as ‘200 George Street Sandstone’).

The proposal also seeks to ensure the structural stability of both the spire and tower in case of seismic activity and lighting strikes. Stainless steel framing is to be installed within the top of the tower and stainless steel straps to the backs of the gable walls; as well as the upgrade/replacement of the existing lightning protection system of the spire.

Additional works include:

- Conservation of leadlight windows (within courses 01-71);
- Installation of lead flashing;
- Introduction of lead weathering on the cornice;
- Core drilling of small corroded fixings and perform mortar patch;
- Conservation of timber framed windows and louvres; and
- Removal of corroded wrought iron cramps, and re-cramp with stainless steel;

HISTORY RELEVANT TO THE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Development Applications

There is no relevant development application history.

Compliance Action

On 11 January 2013, City of Sydney issued a Notice of Intention to Issue an Order due to the bell tower and spire of the Church being compromised (with evident cracks and collapsed sandstone, with a possible threat to public safety. The notice required remedial works (under the direction of a structural engineer and heritage specialist) to be carried out. Subsequently, scaffolding has been erected, removing any immediate threat.

ECONOMIC/SOCIAL/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The application has been assessed under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, including consideration of the following matters:
(a) Environmental Planning Instruments and DCPs.

**Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (Deemed SEPP)**

The site is located within the designated hydrological catchment of Sydney Harbour and is subject to the provisions of the above SREP.

The Sydney Harbour Catchment Planning Principles must be considered in the carrying out of development within the catchment. The key relevant principles include:

- Protect and improve hydrological, ecological and geomorphologic processes.
- Consider cumulative impacts of development within the catchment.
- Improve water quality of urban runoff and reduce quantity and frequency of urban run-off.
- Protect and rehabilitate riparian corridors and remnant vegetation.

The site is within the Sydney Harbour Catchment and eventually drains into the Harbour. However, the site is not located in the Foreshores Waterways Area or adjacent to a waterway and therefore, with the exception of the objective of improved water quality, the objectives of the SREP are not applicable to the proposed development. The development is consistent with the controls contained with the deemed SEPP.

**Sydney LEP 2012**

The site is located within the B8 – Metropolitan Centre zone. The proposal is for restoration works to an existing place of worship known as St George's Presbyterian Church, which is permissible with consent.

The relevant matters to be considered under Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 for the proposed development are outlined below.

<table>
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<th>Compliance Table</th>
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<td><strong>Development Control</strong></td>
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<td>4.3 Height of Buildings</td>
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and as such, will have no effect on the sun access plane.

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<th>4.4 Floor Space Ratio</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No increase in FSR is proposed.</th>
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| 5.10 Heritage conservation | Yes, subject to conditions | The site is identified has a heritage item known as 'St George’s Church including interior and forecourt' (11707).
A Statement of Heritage Impact, and a specification of works has been submitted with the application.
The proposal is for restoration and repair works to the existing bell tower, spire and sandstone facade. The proposed works will conserve the heritage significance of the Church, meeting the requirements of Clause 5.10 of the Sydney LEP 2012.
Whilst the conservation and repair works to the Church spire and bell tower are supported, there are concerns about whether the replacement of stonework will be undertaken in a manner that will provide an appropriate conservation outcome for the building.
Refer to Issues section for further discussion. |

Part 6 Local provisions—height and floor space

| Division 4 Design excellence 6.21 Design Excellence | Yes | The proposal seeks to restore the Church spire and bell tower, removing and replacing sandstone, and carrying out bracing and new jointing works.
The proposed works attempt to conserve and repair as much original stonework as possible to the Church bell tower and spire, whilst addressing safety issues to the public. All new material is to closely match the original heritage fabric.
Appropriate conditions are to be imposed to ensure that the replacement works result in a positive conservation outcome for the site.
The proposed development satisfies the requirements of this provision. |

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<th>Development Control</th>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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| **3.9 Heritage**    | Yes, subject to conditions | The existing building is heritage listed under the Sydney LEP 2012 (I1707).
A Heritage Impact Statement and specification of works schedule has been submitted with the application in accordance with Section 3.9.1 of the Sydney DCP 2012.
Whilst the conservation and repair works to the Church spire and bell tower are supported, there are concerns about whether the replacement of stonework will be undertaken in a manner that will provide an appropriate conservation outcome for the building.
Refer to Issues section for further discussion. |
| **3.10 Significant Architectural Building Types** | Yes, subject to conditions | Section 3.10.5 of the Sydney DCP 2012 requires alterations to public and community buildings (such as churches) to retain significant fabric and building elements and original design details.
The proposal seeks to undertake conservation and repair works to ensure that no further damage is caused to significant fabric of the Church.
Refer to Issues section for further discussion. |
| **3.14 Waste**      | Yes        | A condition has been recommended for the proposed development to comply with the relevant provisions of the City of Sydney Code for Waste Minimisation in New Developments 2005. |
## 5. Specific areas

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<th>Development Control</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
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<td>5.1.6 Building exteriors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The proposed conservation and repair works to the existing bell tower and spire will enhance the heritage significance of the Church, thereby positively contributing to the streetscape. Refer to Issues section for further discussion.</td>
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### ISSUES

St George’s Presbyterian Church is heritage listed under the Sydney LEP 2012 (I1707) and is described as having a heritage significant interior and forecourt. The Church was built in 1858 and is designed in the Victorian Academic Gothic style. It is historically and socially significant, as it is the only Free Presbyterian church remaining within metropolitan Sydney.

The Church facade and internal walls are constructed of sandstone (with plastered sandstone throughout the interior); with timber used for the joists, floorboards, ceilings, stairs and roof framing.

The application proposes restoration and structural works to the Church spire and tower to rectify damage sustained due to rising and falling damp; and to ensure the structural stability of both the spire and tower in case of seismic activity and lighting strikes. The proposal is accompanied by a Statement of Heritage Impact and a specification of works. There is no Conservation Management Plan for the site.

The specification of works submitted with the application details the program/scope of works, the timeframe, and project management of the proposal, and how the works will be carried out by the contractors on-site. The specification of works has been reviewed by Council’s Heritage Specialist who has advised that techniques outlined in the documentation pertaining to the sandstone work is not in accordance with best conservation practice.

A condition is recommended that requires the applicant to submit a specification of works relating to the conservation of the spire stonework. Additionally, further testing and research is required to establish the properties of the original sandstone and where it was quarried, to ensure that the replacement sandstone closely matches the original stonework. Although the application proposes the use of ‘200 George Street Sandstone’, it is likely to have a closer match to ‘Pyrmont Sandstone’.

Other minor testing of the building will need to be undertaken (such as testing of mortar for contamination, and paint scrapes), to ensure that the repair works will closely match the original. A lightning rod is also proposed at the top of the spire, but is not shown on the plans. Design modification conditions addressing these matters,
as well as the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan and general heritage conditions are to be imposed.

(b) Other Impacts of the Development

The proposed development is capable of complying with the BCA.

It is considered that the proposal will have no significant detrimental effect relating to environmental, social or economic impacts on the locality, subject to appropriate conditions being imposed.

(c) Suitability of the site for the Development

The proposal is suitable for the site. The proposed restoration works are considered appropriate.

(d) CONSULTATION

Internal Referrals

The conditions of other sections of Council have been included in the proposed conditions.

The application was discussed with the Heritage Specialist; Building Services Unit; and Surveyors who advised that the proposal is acceptable subject to the recommended conditions.

NOTIFICATION, ADVERTISING AND DELEGATION

In accordance with Schedule 1 of the Sydney DCP 2012, the proposed development is required to be notified. As such the application was notified for a period of 14 days, no submissions were received.

(e) Public Interest

It is considered that the proposal will have no detrimental effect on the public interest, subject to appropriate conditions being proposed.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

S61 CONTRIBUTION

The cost of the development is in excess of $200,000 and is therefore subject to a development levy pursuant to the Central Sydney (Section 61) Contributions Plan 2013.

However, as per Section 2.2 of the Central Sydney (Section 61) Contributions Plan 2013, not-for-profit development (undertaken on a cooperative or not-for-profit basis that provides a distinct community benefit – such as a Church) may be exempt. The applicant has provided a cost summary report and has requested in writing that the proposed works be exempt from the development levy in accordance with Sections 2.2 and 2.3.
In this instance, the exemption request meets the requirements of the Central Sydney) Section 61) Contributions Plan 2013, and a development levy will not be imposed.

CONCLUSION

Having regard to all of the above matters, it is considered that the proposal for conservation and repair works to the existing Church bell tower, spire and facade generally satisfies the relevant strategy, objectives and provisions of the Sydney LEP 2012 and the Sydney DCP 2012, is acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to conditions as shown in the attached Decision Notice.

The application is approved under delegated authority of Council.

The undersigned declare, to the best of their knowledge that they have no interest, pecuniary or otherwise, in this development application or persons associated with it and have provided an impartial assessment.

Report Prepared by: JESSICA SYMONS
Specialist Planner

Application determined by: NICOLA REEVE
Area Planning Manager