



527 Gregory Terrace, Fortitude Valley

Heritage Impact Statement

March 2015

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS
referred to in the PDA APPROVAL

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1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

Urbis Pty Ltd has been commissioned by Cromwell Property Securities Ltd to prepare and lodge a development application over the site of 527 Gregory Terrace, Fortitude Valley, for a new residential and mixed use development.

The site is described as Lot 22 on RP 202547.

The subject site of the proposal shares a common boundary with the former Water Street Army Depot, 342 Water Street Fortitude Valley. The former Army Depot is a heritage listed site and is entered in the Queensland Heritage Register of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) under the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*. The former Army Depot site is also subject to the Local Heritage Overlay of the Brisbane City Plan 2014.

The former Water Street Army Depot site is gradually being developed for new residential uses as the Central Village development. A number of the heritage buildings on the site are being retained and redeveloped for new uses as part of this redevelopment.

The subject site of the proposal is also located opposite the former Queensland Museum, which is also entered in the Queensland Heritage Register of the DEHP and also subject to the Local Heritage Overlay of the Brisbane City Plan 2014, which is located at 480 Gregory Terrace Fortitude Valley. However these sites are separated by the Gregory Terrace road alignment and there is no shared boundary between them.

1.2 THE FORMER WATER STREET ARMY DEPOT

The former Water Street Army Depot is located at 342 Water Street, Fortitude Valley.

The former Army Depot site is subject to the Heritage Overlay provisions and the Heritage Planning Scheme Policy of the Brisbane City Plan 2014, as a place of local heritage significance. The site was first listed in by the Brisbane City Council in January 2004.

In December 2011 three of the buildings within the Depot site (the former drill hall, the caretaker's cottage and the orderly room) were entered in the Queensland Heritage Register as a State heritage place under the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* (Drill Shed, Caretaker's Cottage and Orderly Room (former), Water Street, QHR ID # 602797).

The former Water Street Army Depot site is also included in Map 4 (List of Heritage Places) in the Development Scheme for the Bowen Hills Priority Development Area (PDA) of Economic Development Queensland (EDQ). The EDQ did not create its own heritage listings in the preparation of the Development Scheme for this PDA. The existing heritage listings in this area were adopted by the EDQ in the Development Scheme. Specific heritage provisions are provided in the Development Scheme for these places in the PDA and these provisions override those of the State Development Assessment Provisions concerning heritage and the City Plan 2014.

The former Water Street Army Depot is located to the south of the development site. Two of the heritage buildings at the depot site, the former drill hall and caretaker's cottage, are in close proximity to the boundary of these sites.

1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

The subject development application lodged over the site of 527 Gregory Terrace, Fortitude Valley, is a PDA Development Permit for a Material Change of Use for Multiple Residential, Business, Food Premises, Indoor Entertainment, Medical Centre, Office and Shop.

The proposal involves the construction of two high rise towers (30 storeys and 25 storeys) within the site, containing 521 residential units, as well as the range of uses identified above.

As the site of the proposed development is adjacent to the heritage listed former Water Street Army Depot, the proposal is assessable for heritage considerations and impacts of the proposal on the cultural significance of the drill hall site. The Development Scheme contains specific provisions which apply to development on a site adjacent to a heritage place.

The proposed development is not assessable for heritage impacts and considerations for the site's proximity to the former Queensland Museum.

As the site is located in the Bowen Hills PDA, the development application is assessed by officers of the DSDIP as assessment manager and approved under the *Economic Development Act 2012*. The IDAS processes of the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* do not apply and neither the DEHP nor the BCC are involved in the assessment of the development application for cultural heritage impacts. The application is assessed by officers of the DSDIP, with the benefit of specialist heritage advice.

1.4 THIS REPORT

This report has been written in support of the proposed development at 527 Gregory Terrace, Fortitude Valley, and acts as the heritage impact statement for the development application.

The report briefly sets out the cultural significance of the surviving evidence of the former Water Street Army Depot, describes the views to the site and buildings, and describes how the proposed scheme for the development on the subject site will improve views and access to the drill hall, and how the interface between the development site and the heritage site will be managed.

2 The Former Water Street Army Depot

2.1 BACKGROUND HISTORY

The former Water Street Army Depot, at 342 Water Street, Fortitude Valley, contains some surviving elements of a former military training depot which was established on this site in the 1920s. The depot developed and expanded from that time and into the post war period and closed in the 1980s.

A range of military related buildings were constructed on this site to comprise the depot from the 1920s to the 1950s.

The focal building at the site was the drill hall, a large hall or shed constructed of timber where military training (or drill) was conducted for volunteers. This drill hall was initially constructed in 1884 on a different site, in Boundary Street, Fortitude Valley. The drill hall was relocated to this site in the mid-1920s, together with a caretaker's cottage and orderly room (also constructed in the 1880s at the original Boundary Street site), to form the nucleus of the relocated Army Depot at Water Street.

The Water Street site remained in use as a military training depot with associated military uses until the 1980s, when the site was sold by the Commonwealth. The site, together with the adjacent Jackson's Furniture site, was then developed as the Endeavour College of Natural Health. The college has since closed and the site is being redeveloped for residential purposes as the Central Village development.

In 2011 when the site was entered in the Queensland Heritage Register nine buildings from this previous military use were extant at the site, including the former drill hall, caretaker's cottage and orderly room. Most buildings had been adapted for educational use and other purposes in relation to the use of the site as an educational facility.

There have been a number of development approvals issued by the EDQ over the former Water Street Army Depot since this heritage listing. These approvals have allowed the demolition of the later military buildings at the site but required the retention and adaptive reuse of the three listed buildings – the former drill hall, the former orderly room and the former caretaker's cottage.

The drill hall is being adapted for use as a recreational and communal facility for the future residents of the Central Village development, and the general public.

2.2 CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Cultural significance is the term used to embrace the range of qualities that make some places especially important to the community, over and above their basic utilitarian function. These places are usually those that help understand the past, enrich the present, and that will be of value to future generations.

The *Burra Charter* defines cultural significance as *aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present, and future generations*.¹

There are a range of heritage criteria that are used by different authorities which explain and expand on the above areas of cultural significance in the *Burra Charter*, which are broadly consistent with one another.

The *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* defines cultural heritage significance of a place or feature of a place as:

...its aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, or other significance, to the present generation or past or future generations.

¹ 'The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of places of cultural significance (the Burra Charter)', reprinted in Peter Marquis-Kyle and Meredith Walker, *The illustrated Burra Charter: good practice for heritage places* (Sydney: Australia ICOMOS, 2004) p. 102-110.

Part 4 of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* covers the registration of places in the Queensland Heritage Register. Section 35 of the Act states that a place may be entered in the register as a State heritage place if it satisfies one or more of the following eight criteria of cultural heritage significance:

- (a) *The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history;*
- (b) *The place demonstrates rare, uncommon, or endangered aspects of Queensland's cultural heritage;*
- (c) *The place has the potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Queensland's history;*
- (d) *The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places;*
- (e) *The place is important because of its aesthetic significance;*
- (f) *The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;*
- (g) *The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- (h) *The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.*

A place can be entered in the Queensland Heritage Register if it satisfies one or more of the above heritage criteria.

2.2.1 SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following statement of cultural significance is taken from the register entry for the former Water Street Army Depot which was prepared by the DEHP in support of its entry in the Queensland Heritage Register.

The register entry finds that the former Water Street Army Depot site is culturally significant, satisfying criteria (a), (b), (d), and (h) of section 35 (1) of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, as demonstrated by the following statement of cultural significance:

The drill shed, caretaker's cottage and orderly room (former) are part of Queensland's response to perceived external threats in the 1870s and 1880s, and are important in demonstrating the resulting military training and support infrastructure constructed during the pre-Federation period in Queensland.

Constructed in 1884-1885 at Boundary Street, Fortitude Valley, and moved to Water Street, Fortitude Valley in 1925, the three colonial-era buildings served a number of Brisbane-based units of the Queensland Defence Force (QDF), and later the Australian Military Forces, the 2nd Australian Imperial Force, the Citizen Military Forces and the Army Reserve.

The QDF and its drill sheds and parade grounds, taken over by the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, facilitated the development of Queensland's military units which later went on to serve in World Wars I and II.

The 1884 drill shed at Water Street is the oldest known surviving drill shed in Queensland, built prior to the formation of the QDF in February 1885.

Of the seven known surviving pre-Federation Queensland drill sheds, it is the only one with a gable-roofed design, and it is also the last remaining pre-Federation drill shed in Brisbane.

Along with its accompanying caretaker's cottage and the former 1885 orderly room of the Moreton Mounted Infantry, both also moved from Boundary Street to Water Street in 1925, the drill shed is

part of an uncommon group of colonial era defence buildings. As a pair, the drill shed and the cottage may be a unique surviving example in Queensland.

The drill shed is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a pre-Federation Queensland drill shed, retaining its large hall area with office and armoury rooms arranged along one side. The hall and the rear rooms of the drill shed continue to illustrate how the building functioned, with spaces for drilling, weapons storage and administration.

The three buildings have a special association with the QDF, an organisation regarded as the first line of defence for colonial Queensland and whose units became part of the Commonwealth forces of Australia after Federation. The drill shed, cottage and orderly room served as military training, accommodation and administration facilities for over 100 years, from 1885 to 1988.

In particular, the buildings have an important association with the 1st Queenslanders (Moreton) Regiment and the Moreton Mounted Infantry, two important QDF militia units, and their post-Federation incarnations, the 9th Australian Infantry Regiment and the 13th Australian Light Horse Regiment.

2.3 VIEWS

The above statement of cultural significance prepared by DEHP does not ascribe cultural significance to the former Water Street Army Depot site under criterion (e) of section 35 (1) of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, for aesthetic significance.

The buildings are modest structures at best and do not demonstrate importance or cultural significance for their architectural design, building materials, overall expression, or visual qualities.

As views to and from a site or building are normally considered under aesthetic significance, it would appear that the DEHP register entry does not consider any views to and from the buildings and the site as part of its cultural heritage significance.

Further, the Water Street site is a large one and the three listed buildings, the former drill hall, caretaker's cottage and orderly room are located well within the site. The buildings are away from the street frontage and away any potential view sheds or corridors from public areas. The approved developments at this site will result in new residential towers located between the Water Street frontage and the heritage buildings, further obscuring these buildings from view and a wider appreciation in the public consciousness.

In any event the proposed redevelopment of the subject site of 527 Gregory Terrace allows an opportunity for the drill hall, cottage and orderly room to become more visible and prominent in the urban environment of this part of Fortitude Valley.

Images of the drill hall, the other buildings and the wider site are illustrated on the following page. These photographs are from a few years ago and show the drill hall and other buildings prior to the redevelopment of this site. The site is currently undergoing development as the Central Village development and cannot be accessed easily.

FIGURE 1 – THE WATER STREET ARMY DEPOT – IMAGES AND VIEWS



PICTURE 1 – THE FORMER DRILL HALL – SOUTHERN ELEVATION



PICTURE 2 – THE FORMER CARETAKERS COTTAGE



PICTURE 3 – THE WIDER VIEW OF THE FORMER ARMY DEPOT SITE, WITH THE BUILDINGS ON THE SUBJECT SITE IN THE BACKGROUND



PICTURE 4 – THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE DRILL HALL AND THE INTERFACE WITH THE SUBJECT SITE



PICTURE 5 – THE MINIMAL SETBACK OF THE CURRENT BUILDINGS ON THE SUBJECT SITE TO THE WIDER ARMY DEPOT SITE



PICTURE 6 – THE DRILL HALL, AND THE TENNIS COURT ON THE SUBJECT SITE

3 The Proposal

The proposal comprises a mixed use development comprising two building towers set above three storey podiums and four levels of basement carparking.

3.1 QUANTUM OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal encompasses a total of 45,811m² of Gross Floor Area of development. The proposal contains a diverse mix of apartment types and uses.

The Stage 1 tower building is a 30 storey built form which is RL 117.5m AHD in height. This tower comprises a total of 361m² of commercial/retail floor space on the ground floor, with the balance of the building comprising 311 residential apartments which includes a mix of 160 one bedroom apartments and 151 two bedroom apartments.

The Stage 2 tower building is a 25 storey built form which is RL 102.5m AHD to the plant level. This tower comprises 2,882m² of commercial/retail floor space located on basement level 1 (given the topography of the site which falls to the south), ground and podium levels. Above the podium level area are 210 residential apartments, comprising 88 one bedroom apartments and 122 two bedroom apartments.

3.2 SETBACKS AND INTERFACE

The interface of the proposal with the adjoining former Water Street Army Depot site is explained in the following text. Some comparisons with the built form and current conditions on the subject site are also made.

The boundary between the two sites is currently demarcated by a fairly crude chain wire fence with barbed wire at the top in places. There is a fairly significant level difference as well between the sites, with the subject site elevated above the former Army Depot site, with concrete retaining walls throughout.

The buildings currently on the subject site are located quite close to the boundary of the former Water Street Army Depot (less than a 5 metre setback).

At the former Water Street Army Depot site, the drill hall itself is located quite close to the northern boundary, with the skillion roofed section of offices along the northern elevation of the building facing this boundary. Again the setback of the drill hall to this boundary is very tight (less than 5 metres). The former caretaker's cottage is adjacent to the drill hall to the east – the front of the cottage faces the south while the rear of the house facing the subject site.

The third heritage building – the former orderly room – is further to the south and well within the site. The subject development has little bearing or impact on views to this building.

The Bowen Hills PDA Development Scheme prescribes a rear setback of only 6 metres for development on the subject site. Therefore, a 6 metre setback for new buildings on the subject site would comply with the PDA Development Scheme provisions.

Given the cultural significance of the drill hall and its proposed adaptation and reuse as part of the Central Village development, the proposed scheme for the subject site provides a much greater setback to this rear boundary, to open up this part of the site to the adjacent site and the former drill hall. The footprint of the new development on the site locates these new buildings some 20-25 metres away from the site boundary with the drill hall, rather than the 6 metre compliant setback.

Further, the new development on the subject site does not present a rear elevation to the drill hall (as does the current building), but actively engages with the drill hall and responds directly to it. This engagement has been achieved by carefully sculpting the landscaping at the rear of the site to provide an urban green within the site, located between the Stage 1 tower and the drill hall and overlooking the drill hall. The landscaping provides a transition from the level of Gregory Terrace through to the level of the drill hall below.

Importantly the boundary between the subject site and the adjoining site will not be defined by a fence or some other barrier. The two sites will 'flow' into one another. The drill hall will be equally as visible to the residents of the new development on the subject site as those in the Central Village development. The drill hall is 'brought' into the subject site in a visual sense as a result of the location of the new development proposed, the lack of a dividing fence between the sites, and the new pedestrian pathway through the site to link with the public realm initiatives of the Central Village development.

A major pedestrian pathway is proposed through the Central Village site from Brunswick Street, past the drill hall and then through to Diggles Close. Another pedestrian pathway or shared zone runs to Water Street. To further improve pedestrian connections within the wider precinct a north-south pedestrian pathway is proposed through the subject site between the two towers as part of the proposed development. This pathway will be open to the public and will continue through to the drill hall on the Central Village site. The drill hall will be linked to Gregory Terrace via this pathway, and also Gregory Terrace will be linked through to Water Street. The pedestrian will be able to stand at the corner of Gregory Terrace and Brunswick Street, and look through the subject site between the two towers and view the roof of the drill hall.

This view to the drill hall is not currently available and in this regard the proposal will improve the current conditions of the drill hall and views to the building.

The drill hall is proposed for reuse as part of the Central Village development by Metro Properties as a recreational facility, providing meeting rooms and general communal space. It will be open to residents of the Central Village development, and the general public. The residents of the subject development will be able to use the facilities of the drill hall as members of the public.

The setting of the drill hall will be greatly enhanced by the proposal on the subject site. Open space around the drill hall to all sides will allow the building to be seen "in the round". Currently the northern elevation of the skillion roofed offices is largely obscured and not well appreciated given the proximity of the site boundary and the location of buildings on the subject site. These circumstances will be greatly improved by the proposed scheme.

The combined effects of the approved development of the Central Village site, and the proposed development of the subject site, will be to open up views to the drill hall from both Water Street and importantly Brunswick Street and Gregory Terrace. The drill hall will become the focal point of both developments, centrally located within the wider site and accessed easily from both developments.

It is emphasised that the clever design and the precise placement of new buildings on the subject site, with the increased setbacks from that required in the Bowen Hills PDA Development Scheme and a smaller footprint for the towers, is largely responsible for these improvements in views to the heritage building, the enhanced access through the site leading the pedestrian to the drill hall building, and the improved public realm outcomes that will result.

A standard compliant scheme that proposed a large building on the subject site with a standard 6 metres setback to this rear boundary, with a rear elevation to the building, would not provide for views to the drill hall, would not provide a pedestrian path to the drill hall through the site, and would not allow the proposed development to respond positively to the drill hall as an important heritage feature of the adjacent listed site.

3.3 THE FORMER MUSEUM BUILDING

The former Museum Building is located opposite the subject site across Gregory Terrace.

The former Queensland Museum is also a place of cultural heritage significance. The site is permanently entered in the Queensland Heritage Register and is subject to the Heritage Overlay provisions of the City Plan.

The former Queensland Museum is one of Queensland's most well-known heritage buildings. Constructed in the early 1890s as an Exhibition Building for the RNA, the Romanesque design and intricate face brickwork and detailing of the building make it one of Brisbane's most distinctive buildings.

The proposed development is not assessable in terms of heritage impacts with respect to the former Museum building. In any event the scheme has considered the proximity of the subject site to the former Museum building, and responds to this proximity in a positive sense in the proposed landscaping treatments and details of the development.

An open plaza is proposed at the intersection of Gregory Terrace and Brunswick Street at the corner of this site, matching the open area at the corner of the former Museum site opposite.

A series of low brick walls are proposed to the site boundaries to Gregory Terrace, Brunswick Street and within the site generally to reference the facebrick aesthetic of the former Museum building.

A series of arches are proposed within the site to mark the pedestrian pathway. These arches reference the architectural details of the former Museum Building and the strong elements and features of the Romanesque design.

4 Assessment of Impact

4.1 THE BOWEN HILLS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Bowen Hills Development Scheme contains the following provisions concerning cultural heritage places in the PDA.

Heritage, character and culture

The removal or demolition of any building or structure forming part of a heritage place as identified on Map 4, will be considered only in those circumstances where the retention of the building or structure would prejudice the delivery of the identified precinct outcome.

In those circumstances where approval is given to remove or demolish an identified heritage building or structure, the heritage building or structure, its context and its heritage significance is to be appropriately documented prior to its removal or demolition and submitted to the ULDA.

Development on, or adjoining, a heritage place as identified on Map 4 must respect the heritage values of the site by sensitively managing the interface between development opportunities and the heritage place.

To help create place identity and a distinctive character for the UDA, development should seek to protect, incorporate, re-use or re-interpret the heritage, character, cultural features and history of the UDA and surrounding area.

4.2 DISCUSSION

Most development assessment provisions relating to heritage buildings regulate development of the specific heritage place itself – what changes are proposed to heritage fabric, how adaptive reuse of the place is managed, how the new building work proposed (if any) to the site of the heritage place relates to the heritage place itself.

Development assessment provisions for sites adjacent to heritage places are concerned with scale of development, how new buildings and existing heritage buildings relate to each other in an urban design sense, and the impact on views.

Generally, new development on sites adjacent to heritage places including landscape and building elements should not impair significant views of the heritage place.

The above considerations have informed the provisions of the Bowen Hills PDA Development Scheme concerning development of sites adjacent to heritage places.

4.3 IMPACTS ON CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

At the outset it is noted that the proposed development involves no changes to the fabric of the heritage buildings at the former Water Street Army Depot site.

The main issue with respect to the current application and assessments of heritage impacts is the improvements in the relationship between the subject site and the adjacent army depot site, the proximity of new development on the subject site to this boundary, and the opportunities that will be realised with respect to cultural heritage with the new development.

The proposed development takes into consideration the proximity of the drill hall to the subject site and pulls the new buildings well away from the northern elevation of the drill hall, to open up this elevation to be viewed and appreciated. It is difficult to easily view and appreciate this elevation currently given the site boundaries and the location of buildings on the subject site.

The precise placement and footprint of the proposed development of the site will allow for new view opportunities to the drill hall from both Gregory Terrace and Brunswick Street, views that are either not possible now or are fragmented and diluted.

The proposal has been conceived and designed in such a manner that acknowledges the adjacent heritage place and the drill hall building itself. The heritage building will in many ways become a part of the new development site as a result of the conscious decision to increase setbacks to the rear boundary, allow new buildings to address the drill hall rather than face away, create new pedestrian pathways through to the drill hall site, and propose landscaping treatments and a major green space between the Stage 1 tower and the drill hall itself. The lack of a dividing fence between the two sites is another element in support of the proposal for heritage considerations.

Overall the proposal represents a positive outcome for the cultural significance of the former Water Street Army Depot and the drill hall itself. Views to the drill hall building will be improved from current conditions, access to the drill hall will be vastly improved from current conditions, and an improved appreciation of the drill hall by the general public should be realised.

It is clear that the interface between the development proposed at this site and the adjacent heritage place has been sensitively managed.

4.4 SUPERIOR DESIGN OUTCOMES

The proposed development of the subject site demonstrates a superior design solution in respect of cultural heritage considerations due to the significant 'breathing room' provided to the heritage buildings adjacent to the subject site.

These greatly increased setbacks to the drill hall have been consciously conceived to enhance the setting of this significant heritage building as the 'centrepiece' of the Water Street Precinct.

The proposal also acknowledges the presence of the former Museum Building on the site opposite across Gregory Terrace. While there is no statutory requirement to do so, the proposed scheme introduces a number of design elements in the landscaping and treatments of the ground plane that reference the former Museum Building, its building materials and design features.

In terms of cultural heritage considerations, the proposal is commended for its consideration and due respect of the adjacent heritage site and is recommended for approval.

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