

7 February 2025

**Our Ref:** H-24034

**Claire Ryan**  
Northern Beaches Council  
1 Belgrave Street  
MANLY NSW 2095

Dear Claire,

**RE: RESPONSE FOR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - HERITAGE MATTERS  
DA2024/1375 FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO MANLY WHARF  
AND MANLY WHARF HOTEL AT MANLY WHARF RETAIL EAST ESPLANADE MANLY**

This letter has been prepared in response to the Request for Further Information (RFI) issued by Northern Beaches Council on 15 January 2025 regarding the Development Application (DA) DA2024/1375 relating to internal and external alterations and additions to Manly Wharf and Manly Wharf Hotel at Manly Wharf Retail, East Esplanade Manly. This letter specifically addresses the 'Heritage NSW Referral Comments' raised in the above noted RFI letter.

The 'Heritage NSW Referral Comments' included in the subject RFI are quoted below to assist in easy referencing and correlation with the response for each heritage concern accordingly.

**1. Heritage NSW Referral Comments**

*Heritage NSW has requested the following additional information:*

- 1. Horizontal railings are typical of Sydney wharf and ferry infrastructure in terms of level of safety and aesthetic character and without substantial justification it is unlikely the removal of the existing balustrades to the east and west boardwalks described in the SHR 01434 listing as metal 'ship' railing, and replacement with the proposed glass balustrade will be supported. Further details outlining the heritage significance of the existing metal railings to the outer edge of the boardwalks as well as defining dining areas is to be provided.*
- 2. Further details outlining the public amenity provided by the existing concrete amphitheatre seating that integrates the built form of the eastern Promenade with the beach and thereby the loss of amenity and visual impact if it is to be infilled. A photomontage of the proposed treatment of the eastern promenade as viewed looking towards the heritage item from the esplanade and the beach is to be provided.*
- 3. Further details including size, materiality and finishes are to be provided for the revised 'awning arrangement' to outdoor areas of the Manly Wharf Hotel.*
- 4. Further details of the excavation for the proposed boat installation as part of the extension to the Manly Hotel Wharf Bar Deck. If excavation is proposed, an archaeological assessment is required.*

*5. Further details on size, materiality and finishes are required to better understand the visual impact of the new repurposed boat playground equipment.*

## RESPONSE

### RFI #1

The existing metal balustrade along the eastern and western boundary of Manly Wharf are not considered to be significant heritage fabric. The existing 2016 Conservation Management Plan (CMP) by Architectural Projects does not identify the balustrade as significant in the Schedule of Significant Fabric, rather it provides a general assessment of the eastern and western sides of the wharf as having Low significance.

The statement of significance and physical description of the Manly Wharf heritage item (LEP (I145)) does not indicate that the promenade balustrade along the wharf as significant.

As per the LEP listing (I145).<sup>1</sup>

#### **Statement of Significance**

*Manly wharf is a dominant feature of Manly Cove, viewed from the harbour approaches, from the harbour beach and from the main cross streets of Manly which conjoin at the terminus. Its form is sympathetic to its position, the curved entrance reflecting the arc of the beach and its stylistic idiom having strong maritime connotations - ship shape and ship-like. It is an excellent example of mid-forties stylisation and the preoccupation with geometric forms while it also retains original shopfitting elements and signs.*

#### **Physical Description**

*A broad wharf supported on timber piers and with a concrete platform. The superstructure is constructed of steel and timber. The facade and side walls form an important architectural design, similar to the Circular Quay ferry terminals. Additions to the wharf include the hydrofoil pontoon (c.1968) and the more recent elevated platforms for new ferries.*

The statements of significance for both the SHR listing #01434 and the Section 170 listing also do not indicate the balustrade as significant. Only the physical description includes a mention of the balustrade. As per the SHR listing (#01434).<sup>2</sup>

(Mention of the balustrade in the physical description boldened for emphasis)

#### **Statement of Significance**

*Of environmental significance as a visually prominent man-made feature. Of historical significance for its associations with the maritime activities at Manly as a tourist destination and suburb of Sydney, dependent on the ferry link to the CBD. (Anglin 1990:2033)*

*Together with Circular Quay, the wharf is the only substantial older style ferry wharf surviving in Port Jackson: association with Manly's history as a recreational centre. (Blackmore, Ashton, Higginbotham, Rich, Burton, Maitland, Pike 1985)*

<sup>1</sup> NSW State Heritage inventory (SHI), 'Manly Wharf', Item ID 2020092, available via: <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=2020092>.

<sup>2</sup> NSW SHI, 'Manly Wharf', Item ID 5051365, available via: <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5051365>.

### Physical Description

*A broad wharf supported on timber piers and with a concrete platform. The superstructure is constructed of steel and timber. The facade and side walls form an important architectural design, similar to the Circular Quay ferry terminals. (Blackmore, Ashton, Higginbotham, Rich, Burton, Maitland, Pike, 1985).*

*The original part of the wharf was built in a modernistic transport idiom, with typical stylistic features of era including play of circular and rectangular geometric terms, bayed facade to the water (marine connotations), wide arc plan at entrance, clock tower with "fins", flat roofing marked by wide fascia board. The current entrance was originally designed as a tram terminus and turning area. Timber clad framed structure opening and large internal spaces, **concrete deck to west enclosed by "ship" railing**. Some original shop fittings, signage etc. Subjected to major alterations to the wharf wings involving a T-shaped clerestorey (Stapleton, 1981).*

As per the NSW Transport and Maritime Section 170 Heritage Conservation Register listing:<sup>3</sup>

### Statement of Significance

*Manly Wharf has played a key role in the development of Manly and the northern beaches as the major transport access to the area from the 1850s until the early twentieth century. It is unique in Sydney Harbour as a day-excursion destination wharf with special facilities and features appropriate to that role. It is the only surviving wharf building in Sydney retaining its mid-twentieth century architectural stylisation in recognisable form and it is the last of the ferry wharves on the North Shore of Sydney that maintains a key commuter transport-interchange role since the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The building is a notable work by a notable Australian architect, a local landmark and it is closely associated with the iconic 'Manly Ferries'.*

### Physical Description

*A broad wharf supported on timber piers and with a concrete platform. The superstructure is constructed of steel and timber. The original part of the wharf was built in a modernistic transport idiom, with typical stylistic features of era including play of circular and rectangular geometric terms, bayed facade to the water (marine connotations), wide arc plan at entrance, clock tower with "fins", flat roofing marked by wide fascia board. The current entrance was originally designed as a tram terminus and turning area. Timber clad framed structure opening and large internal spaces, **concrete deck to west enclosed by "ship" railing**. Some original shop fittings, signage etc. Subjected to major alterations to the wharf wings involving a T-shaped clerestorey. (Source: SHR Listing)*

This mention of the "ship railing" does not specifically indicate that this is significant, just that this was how the wharf was physically described at the time of the SHR listing and the Section 170 Register listing was updated.

Likewise, a comparison of historical photography indicates that the existing metal wharf balustrade is not original fabric. Photographs of the wharf from 1951 (Figure 1), the 1970s (Figure 2) and 1980s (Figure 3) shows the western balustrade to be a timber balustrade. This balustrade was replaced with the retail addition works to the wharf in 1990, as evidenced in the photograph dated 1 December 1990 (Figure 4), which shows the metal balustrade to be the same as that which is currently on site (Figure 5).

<sup>3</sup> NSW SHI, 'Manly Wharf', Item ID 4920067, available via: <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=4920067>.

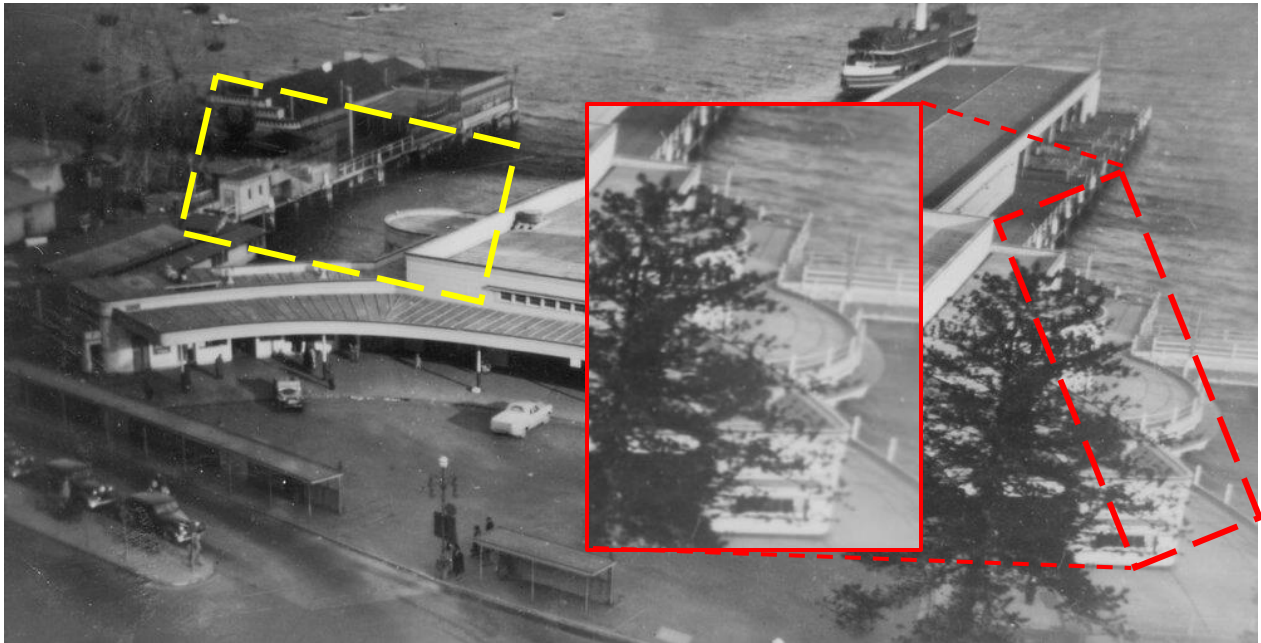


Figure 1: Manly Wharf as captured in 1951. The approximate area where the retail wing was constructed is indicated in yellow. The western promenade of the wharf shows a different balustrade to that existing and proposed to be replaced. Source: Northern Beaches Library, Record No. LH000589, accessed 18 April 2024 via <https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/51656>.



Figure 2: Photograph of Manly Wharf from the 1970s. Visible in the centre is the wharf balustrade, which is different to the existing. Source: Northern Beaches Library, Record No. MML/2322, accessed 3 February 2024 via <https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/43504>.





Figure 3: Photograph of the wharf in the 1980s (prior to retail addition to wharf), showing different timber balustrade. Source: Northern Beaches Library, Record No. MML/4732, accessed 3 February 2024 via <https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/44402>.



Figure 4: 1990 photograph at the opening of the Manly Wharf following the construction of the retail addition. Visible is the metal balustrade which currently exists on site. Source: Northern Beaches Library, Record No. LH010393, accessed 3 February 2024 via <https://northernbeaches.recollect.net.au/nodes/view/50110>.



*Figure 5: Current view of western balustrade, which is different to that visible in 1951, 1970s and 1980s photographs.*

The replacement of the non-original balustrade with a steel-framed glazed balustrade will be of similar to that existing along the Hugos Manly (Figure 6), which appears as being three horizontal railing with glass inserts rather than just a frameless glass balustrade. As seen from the clientele perspective of Hugos Manly, the retractable steel-framed glass balustrade will provide benefit to the community while also establishing a uniform appearance across both sides of the wharf. This existing Hugos Manly tenancy on the western deck of the wharf were recently approved by both Northern Beaches Council and Heritage NSW via DA2020/602 to alter the existing metal balustrade to a retractable glazed balustrade. This balustrade compliments the form and scale of the original wharf as it is transparent and maintains views to and from the wharf while providing protection from wind and similar 'ship' railing appearance to the existing (see drawing sheet DA.105 - rev 5).

Similar glazed balustrades are also incorporated within the Manly Wharf ferry terminal itself (Figure 7), which is an area of 'Medium' significance as identified in the 2016 CMP. While the framing of these balustrades is different to those approved for Hugo's Manly and those proposed in this package, they illustrate sympathetic incorporation of a glazed balustrade within an area of the wharf which retains heritage significance.

By introducing a steel-framed glazed balustrade across both the eastern and western flanks/decks of the wharf, a uniform and consistent appearance will be established. This will also ultimately improve patron and public safety when accessing the wharf (as detailed in Architectus' Response to Request for Information).





*Figure 6: Photo of Hugos Manly showing steel framed balustrade with glazed inserts. This retains the "ship-like" railing when viewed from a distance.*



Figure 7: Views of glazed balustrade within the Manly Wharf ferry terminal (an area of 'Medium' heritage significance as identified in the 2016 CMP).

## RFI#2

The alterations to the amphitheatre have been modified in response to the RFI to retain part of the concrete seating while also providing a safe space for the community. These alterations include the partial infill of the top 2 tiers of the seating, with the lower 2 tiers retained to keep the amphitheatre function. A concrete stair has also been removed and replaced with a new concrete staircase that includes a metal balustrade to match the existing. Further details of the proposed alterations to the existing concrete amphitheatre have been provided in the updated drawings (see for example DA.105 (rev 5)). See Figure 8 for a render for the proposed alteration to the amphitheatre. These alterations will retain the amphitheatre function at the wharf while providing a safer space to the community.





*Figure 8: Render showing the proposed alterations to the amphitheatre.*

This amphitheatre is not an original or significant element within the 'Manly Wharf' heritage item (item I145 and SHR# 01434) as it is a contemporary addition that came alongside the alterations to the wharf in 1990 to establish the eastern retail wing. This is confirmed in the comparison of historical aerial imagery of the site from 1986 and 1991 (Figure 9 and Figure 10). As such, the proposed partial infill will have no physical or visual impact on the heritage item. Likewise, the removal of the existing security fencing that exists around this amphitheatre (which is different to the ship like metal balustrade of the wharf) and replacement with the proposed operable glazed balustrade will further establish a consistent and uniform visual appearance around the wharf to match that currently existing at Hugo's Manly (approved under DA2020/602).



Figure 9: Aerial image of Manly Wharf from 1986, showing no amphitheatre prior to the 1990 addition of the retail wing (indicated in red, with yellow dash used as point of reference). Source: NSW Government Historical Aerial Imagery, 1986.



Figure 10: Aerial image from 1991 showing the location of the amphitheatre (indicated in red, with yellow dash used as point of reference). Source: NSW Government Historical Aerial Imagery, 1991.

### **RFI#3**

Further details of the proposed awning to Manly Wharf Hotel have been provided - refer to 'Awning Details' (Drawing No. DA.207 (rev 1) and DA.208 (rev 1)). This shows the operable PVC awnings at Manly Wharf Bar Deck that can be repositioned where appropriate to provide environmental protection to diners and staff. The awnings have powdercoated metal rafters and powdercoated metal fascia beams that are not visually dominant or overwhelming features. The fixed powdercoated metal awning at the south-eastern corner of the Manly Wharf Hotel deck is also a neutral addition to the façade of the retail wing.

The location of the Manly Wharf Bar deck away from the significant spaces and areas of the Manly Wharf heritage item (I145 and SHR #01434) means that these awnings will not visually impact the significance of the site. These awnings are consistent with those recently installed over the southern deck, which was approved by the Council and Heritage NSW under DA2022/0403.

### **RFI#4**

Further details of the proposed boat installation have been provided in the drawings - refer to 'Boat Playground Details' (Drawing No. DA.206 (rev 1)). No archaeological excavation is proposed for this installation as it is to be installed at deck level.

### **RFI#5**

As above, further details of the proposed boat installation are provided at Drawing No. DA.206. As identified in the accompanying Statement of Heritage Impact, the Shangri-La boat has historical significance as a surviving vessel that was used during WWII. The boat was constructed in 1938 in Sydney Harbour, and thus the return of the boat to the Harbour is a positive outcome.

As per the drawings, the proposed boat features colourful, abstract and kid-friendly artworks painted over the timber boat lining, with the natural texture of the timber remaining visible. Though the boat is long, it is not at a scale that overwhelms or dominates the wharf, nor does it obstruct any significant views from East Esplanade to the ocean or views from the promenade to the mature trees that line East Esplanade. The elements of the boat including the roof and hull will also be removed to lower the overall height and lessen any visual impacts. The proposal ultimately integrates a moveable heritage element to the site in a sympathetic manner that does not visually or physically impact the significance of the Manly Wharf (I145 and SHR #01434).

### **RFI#6**

Further details on the mechanical exhaust have been provided in the drawings, with these indicated in DA.103C (Rev 5), DA.104 (Rev 5) and DA.105 (Rev 5), as well as the submitted mechanical documentation. These are setback from the parapet so as to not be a visually intrusive element within the wharf. Its installation on the non-significant eastern retail wing means that it will not have any physical or visual impacts to significant heritage fabric of the wharf (item I145 and SHR #01434).



## CONCLUSION

I trust the above additional design refinements and response in relation to the remaining outstanding heritage matters will satisfy the requirements of Northern Beaches Council and will assist in finalisation of the assessment of the proposed development at Manly Wharf Retail, East Esplanade Manly under the DA2024/1375 that is currently before the Council.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss the matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 8270 3500 / 0414 421 035 or at [kerimed@cityplan.com.au](mailto:kerimed@cityplan.com.au).

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerime Danis".

**Kerime Danis**

Director - Heritage