

Camden Residents' Action Group

Incorporated

Camden – Still a Country Town

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Camden Local Planning Panel

15 March 2022

DA 2020/741/2

19 Edward Street Camden

Demolition of existing structures and construction of a two-storey mixed use building containing five commercial tenancies, use of tenancy 2 as a café, at-grade car parking, landscaping, civil engineering works and associated site works

Almost exactly a year later, I speak again on behalf of Camden Residents' Action Group against this DA. We do acknowledge the changes to it. We note the removal of the raised walkway and third level rooftop garden that were grossly incompatible with the Heritage Conservation Area and disregarded the rights of other properties, especially their privacy.

We disagree with the assessment of this DA on a number of points. Given the time constraint we focus on interpretation of the HCA listing and the cherry picking of the Urban Design Framework. We submit that we know what we are talking about, having been closely involved over many years in providing input into Camden policy including the heritage listing of the Camden township. The Agenda Report does not seem to take account of the historical significance of the Macarthur town, that Camden Council has agreed in principle to investigating its state listing and that the latest Local Strategic Planning Statement strongly reiterates the strategy of conservation of the town's rural and heritage identity and its contribution to tourism.

In relation to the HCA listing, the Agenda Report describes the site as containing a post war era cottage that is set amongst a group of similar post war cottages¹. The town's heritage listing refers to important intact building stock to the mid-20th Century and the need to respect the significant qualities of the development of the town's original grid pattern.

¹ The Site and Surrounding Context: pp 12-13

Edward Street, which is part of the 1836 grid, with its streetscape of mid-century cottages is by definition significant in the history of the town. The cottage on the site, built between 1945 and 1955, is by definition contributory².

It is not within the province of anyone to simply assume that a cottage within a conservation area does not contribute. According to the 6 questions of the Planning Principle of the Land and Environment Court, demolition of 19 Edward St is not permitted. The argument that because cottages in the street are not individually heritage listed, that any of them can be demolished is illogical and obviates the purpose of the listing of the conservation area. As is common, the cottage should be adaptively reused as expected by adoption of the Burra Charter into Camden's DCP.

In relation to the Urban Design Framework, we take exception to the cherry picking of some statements and ignoring of most of it. The DCP states that development within the B4 zone must be consistent with the Framework³. This development is not consistent with its spirit of conservation or its building principle of protection and enhancement of the unique character of Camden's heritage and its identity as a rural town.

Architecturally the proposed building is an extravagance of colours, textures, lines and shapes. To many eyes these are not in harmony. Certainly, the design bears little if any relationship to the original building stock referred to in the HCA listing. Also, the Agenda Report provides no evidence for its statement that shale gray cladding, timber boarded concrete cladding and brown flat face brick is reflective of the fabric and character of the conservation area. As a Group that is very familiar with the town, we state categorically that these are not sympathetic design features and are clearly not traditional in the building stock up to the mid-20th Century including the streetscape of Edward St.

The community is cynical and is a wake up to this common developer strategy with its end game of gaining approval for what is better but remains non-compliant with legislation and policy.

The piecemeal approach to demolition of the fabric of the HCA and replacement with generic modern constructions will result in its unconscionable loss. This is not Camden Council policy as written and as understood by the community.

We sincerely request that this DA be again refused.

679 words

² NSW Heritage *Camden Town Centre Heritage Conservation Area* Available at <https://apps.environment.nsw.gov.au/dpcheritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=1280090>

Land and Environment Court *Planning Principles: Helou v Strathfield Municipal Council* [2006] NSWLEC 66. Paras. 43-46 Available at <https://www.caselaw.nsw.gov.au/decision/549f84273004262463abec2e>

³ DCP 5.3.3 <https://dcp.camden.nsw.gov.au/centres-development/camden-b2-local-centre/camden-b4-mixed-use/>