

**AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME-  
ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

## **Amendment C25 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme**

**Esplanade Hotel,**

**11-12 The Esplanade,**

**St Kilda**

### **URBAN DESIGN EVIDENCE**

**Prepared by**

**Robert McGauran**

B. Arch. (Hons. Melb), B.A. (Fine Arts Melb.), P.D.M. (Melb.), LFRAIA, Architect.

### **Contents**

# **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

## **1.0 My Qualifications and Experience**

## **2.0 Documents forming the basis of the report**

## **3.0 Findings**

### **1.0 My Qualifications and Experience**

1.1 My name is Robert Alan McGauran. I have been a director of McGauran Soon Pty Ltd Architects, Urban Planners and Interior Designers since 1985 and practice at 10-22 Manton Lane Melbourne. I have been asked by the City of Port Phillip to comment on the proposed C25 Amendment for the Esplanade Hotel and in particular the appropriateness of the urban design outcomes contemplated by the proposed amendment.

1.1 I have an Honours degree in Architecture from the University of Melbourne, a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Architectural History from the University of Melbourne and a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management from the University of Melbourne Business School. Within the Architectural Profession, I am past Chairman of the Architects Registration Board of Victoria, a former Vice-President of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, a past Chapter and National Councillor of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Convenor of the Residential Working Group for the RAlA, and was awarded a Life Fellowship to the RAlA in 1999 for contributions to the Profession. In 2001 I was awarded the RAlA Sisalation Scholarship to investigate Sustainable Australian Cities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Details of my companies' awards and my work in the local area are detailed in my attached CV.

1.2 My work in the area of Urban design includes, membership of the Standing Advisory Committee reviewing Local Variations to the Good Design Guide, (most recently reviewing density, carparking, visual bulk, overshadowing, and overlooking techniques) and the C11 Amendment for Urban Villages in the City of Glen Eira, and authorship of the new urban design framework for the Box Hill District Centre and City of Bendigo in conjunction with Arup. I am a former convenor of the Urban Design Group for VEPLA, author of the Site analysis and Design Response plans for the D.O.I. Practice notes and author of residential style notes for the City of Moonee Valley. I have also acted in the past 12 months in a range of consultant, development facilitation and design roles on urban design matters and major projects to groups including, Moreland City Council, City of Port Phillip, City of Whitehorse, Hobson's Bay City Council, City of Yarra and City of Moonee Valley. My awards in the urban design context and relevant experience are outlined in more detail in the attached Appendix no.1.

1.3 I have made a recent inspection of the site and environs and am familiar with the site as a result of my having been a resident of the municipality for over 19 years.

# **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

## **2 Documents forming the basis of the report**

In considering the urban design matters I have taken account the documents provided by the applicant these being: -

- St Kilda Foreshore Urban Design Framework, March 2002
- Amendment C25 – Port Phillip Planning Scheme for The Esplanade Hotel Site, March 2002
- Committee and Council Reports and Minutes relevant to Amendment C25 – Port Phillip Planning Scheme
  - Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes, 22 October 2001
  - Strategy and Policy Review Committee Minutes, 1 October 2001
  - Statutory Planning Committee Minutes, 9 July 2001
  - Port Phillip Planning Scheme, Incorporated Document, City of Port Phillip Heritage Policy Map, December 2000
  - Ordinary Council, Supplementary Report, 28 May 2001
  - Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes, 28 May 2001
  - Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes, 18 December 2000
  - Changes to Port Phillip Planning Scheme as per council resolution of 18/12/00
  - Statutory Planning Committee, 11 December 2000
  - Analysis of Overshadowing Measures in Relation to the Esplanade Hotel Site, St Kilda, prepared by Robert Foster Architect, December 2000
  - Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes, 27 November 2000
  - Statutory Planning Committee Minutes 13 November 2000
- Amendment C19 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, approved 9<sup>th</sup> December 1999
- City of Port Phillip, Amendment C36 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, Exhibition Documentation, March 2002
- Relevant Documents in Relation to Amendment C5 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme
- Review of Height and Development Controls in the City of Port Phillip, Background report, prepared by Hansen Partnership with Brearley Middleton
- HMAS Lonsdale Advisory Group Outcomes, considered on 28 April 1997
- Inner Melbourne Foreshore Urban Design Framework, prepared by the Urban Design Unit, Department of Infrastructure, February 1999
- The Espy Update, issued by Becton, May 2001
- Municipal Strategic Statement, December 2000-
- Municipal Strategic Statement, August 2001
- Municipal Strategic Statement, August 2001
- Esplanade Hotel Working Group, Final Report, prepared by John Lawson, August-October 2000
- Letters from local people and groups concerned regarding the C25 amendment
  - National Trust Victoria
  - Michael Cramphorn, property owner
  - Viviane and Daniel Rouqueirol, 1 Pollington Street, St Kilda
  - Winifred Stivens, 15 Victoria Street, St Kilda
  - Maila Stivens and Joel Kahn, 13 Victoria Street, St Kilda
  - Esplanade Alliance Inc, September 2001
  - Tim Blythe, urbis
  - Minter Ellison, lawyers, submission on behalf of Becton

# AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

## 3 Findings

My report seeks to deal with the following issues: -

- 3.1 A description of the significant attributes of the local context.
  - 3.2 A discussion of those aspects of relevance in connection with the proposed amendment.
  - 3.3 A discussion of the efficacy of the proposed amendment in establishing appropriate urban design objectives and methodologies within the revised planning policy framework and recommendations for change.
  - 3.4 A discussion of aspects of the submission made by Minter Ellison on behalf of the current owner so far as it relates to urban design issues.
- 3.1 A Description of the Significant Attributes of the Local Context.

The Esplanade Hotel sits on an island site bounded by The Upper Esplanade, Pollington Street, and Victoria Street on the St Kilda Foreshore. In the amendment it is described as follows: - *"The site is located on the eastern side of The Esplanade, is approximately 4,200 square metres in area, and is an island site with each boundary having a road frontage. The site is occupied by several buildings of identified heritage significance (including the Esplanade Hotel – also identified as a cultural icon, the former stables, and Baymor Flats) and a bottle shop building of no heritage value, with the remainder of the site being vacant land*

I concur with the description in the proposed C36 amendment that the St Kilda Foreshore is a special place. It has a particular history and role in the Capital City and in metropolitan Melbourne that is unique to anywhere else. Elsewhere it notes that, "up to 10,000 people now live within 10 minutes walking distance of the foreshore." Its' broader popularity as a key recreation and entertainment destination for greater Melbourne is evident to any visitor to the precinct on holiday, summer or weekend periods. The attached drawing (Figure 1) provides a brief overview of built form and attributes.

The precinct is underpinned by key heritage icons that have provided the cultural, streetscape and built-form glue for in excess of 60 years. The Building fabric critical to this anchoring of place and identity include The Espy, Marli Place, Luna Park, The Palais, Kirby's, and the St Kilda Pier and are located at key axial and anchoring points in the precinct. (Refer figure 1- Site Analysis). Many are buildings with a social, cultural and architectural significance beyond their immediate context and are amongst the most widely known images of Melbourne. The valued built forms are interspersed with a number of medium rise apartment buildings of the 70's of 10 storeys or more and the more recent Novotel, most with poor ground floor interrelationships with the street, small characterless lobby spaces, unsightly at-grade carparking or elevated podium bases poorly interconnected with the public realm. Remaining buildings on The Esplanade are generally well-mannered infill development of 3-4 storeys some of contributory heritage value under the heritage overlay.

The public spaces they abut are also significant places within greater Melbourne. Both the waterfront foreshore boardwalk and pier and the Esplanade, rival Southbank as the premier waterfront promenade in Melbourne, drawing thousands of visitors to the location each week. In addition they provide the open spaces in which residents gather and enjoy the access to sunlight, views, open space, soft landscapes, activity, interaction, promenading and recreational activity. Frequently both the Esplanade and Jacka Boulevard are densely occupied by pedestrians with the Esplanade the scene year long of the popular Sunday Craft Market.

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

The precinct is a place held in great affection by Melbournians, and is amongst the most recognisable images of the contemporary Australian City. Its continuing cultural relevance is evidenced by recent popular recordings and high rating television series featuring continual references to these built form icons and the underlying sub-culture of contemporary music and entertainment that they underpin. For over a century the precinct has been a seaside destination for the broader community and provided a continuous range of entertainment and recreation options ranging from, music, amusements, hospitality, roller-blading, cycling, swimming, ice-skating, theatre, fishing, and triathlons, to festivals, markets, dance, hospitality, comedy and leisure. In many cases the architectural expression, built form orientation and public space organisation reinforce the bayside context and continually reinforce the relationship between the public space and key buildings.

### **3.2 A Discussion of those aspects of relevance in connection with the proposed amendment.**

The proposed amendment seeks to provide a structure for decision making and design resolution that will ensure: -

- 3.2.1 That key attributes and roles of heritage, social and cultural value specific to the site are preserved
- 3.2.2 That significant views and recognisable outlines of the building are maintained.
- 3.2.3 That new built forms do not detrimentally impact on adjacent highly valued and utilised nearby parks and promenades.
- 3.2.4 That valued active interfaces with adjacent secondary streets to the north and south be maintained and enhanced and that they be introduced to the east.
- 3.2.5 That new built form abutting these secondary streets is appropriately modulated so as to preserve and enhance the finer subdivision rhythms, active interfaces and lower scale character of these secondary and primary street frontages
- 3.2.6 That built form is appropriately modulated so as not to unreasonably impact on the private open space and amenity of adjacent residential accommodation.
- 3.2.7 That innovation and design excellence that achieve in elements of the site a quality of design resolution that justifies elements of built form up to the absolute maximum height.

I am satisfied that these measures are generally consistent with these objectives but will discuss them in further detail later in the report including recommendations for change.

#### **1. Key attributes and roles of heritage, social and cultural value specific to the site**

That key attributes of heritage, social and cultural value specific to the site are preserved is in my view a necessary and important element of the amendment. Setting aside its pure heritage merits which are identified in the heritage overlay, the scale, detailing and obvious Victorian Scale and attributes of The Esplanade Hotel continue to fulfil an important contextual role. With the nearby Marli Place, and houses in Pollington Street, Victoria Street and Alfred Square, street network, public spaces and the pier & associated buildings continue to provide a legible memory of the Place as it appeared in the Victorian era.

Owing to its scale and prominence on the bluff and siting on the axis of the St. Kilda pier axis, it is my view that the Esplanade Hotel remains a critical element in this reading of place and its evolution. Its continued hospitality role and emerging entertainment role in the twentieth century

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

has distinguished it from other activities on the Upper Esplanade that have progressively been privatised and become dormitory in nature.

In contrast the Esplanade Hotel has remained a gathering point, for many a quasi focus of community, and has continued to underpin a creative culture of performance and music that remain highly valued.

In this context in addition to its physical role in ordering our reading of place, it fulfils an ongoing critical role in our cultural underpinning of the context as one that is active, vibrant, creative and accessible.

A fundamental change to its role may have the effect of significantly diminishing the perception of the Esplanade as a destination for activity by other than those who reside there.

In this physical and place management context the Esplanade's strategic role has I believe been appropriately recognised in the proposed C25 Planning Scheme Amendment.. Its individual and emblematic role as illustrative of underlying social, economic, cultural, street/building interface activity and built form objectives for the precinct and the broader municipality are consistent with a range of other policy and investment settings of the council.

These policy settings are the result of considerable ongoing investment in understanding the structure and values of the local community, the physical context and urban character, the determination of a hierarchy of values to built form and places, the identification of future housing needs and the allocation of budgets to implement strategies. For example, the continuing aspiration of the precinct to remain accessible to people on lower incomes, and the desire to maintain a continuity between the venue and live music and comedy performance is in recognition of their continuing contribution to the underlying gritty diverse edge quality ascribed to St Kilda. It is a policy supported through a range of programs including a social housing program and support services, festivals with a focus on performance, support for the local arts, and the need to recognise emerging pressures that threaten the viability of the need for supporting entertainment and socialising options.

In the world over, Cities continue to search globally for icons that will nurture and provide emblematic focuses for their communities that speak of local values and aspirations rather than overlay formulaic "Truman-show," mythologies. The Esplanade Hotel is for an entire sub-culture a symbol of community. It's value is not simply in how it looks but how it operates and the egalitarian access it provides to a broad community representation. In this context, I believe it is entirely consistent to incorporate amendments within the sections of the LPPF that address broader concerns, valued elements of the existing built, social and cultural fabric of the municipality and the future vision and objectives. Also consistent with this is the need for adequate site controls that ensure that development in and around valued elements of the city such as the Esplanade Hotel are not misunderstood, undervalued or lost.

### **2. That significant views and recognisable outlines of the building are maintained**

For the same reasons it is my view that the continued preservation of views that are important in the reading the valued elements of place are worthy of inclusion in the Planning Scheme Amendment. If not considered and explicitly ascribed as an objective, valued reading of place can be lost. Such a situation emerged in the development of the Melbourne City Square. Mansard roofs of the new upper level apartments obstruct the previous silhouette of the St Paul's spires. These

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

roofs confused a previously clear set of visual cues and outlines that provided a civic reading of the relationship between the Victorian institutions of the infrastructure (the Station, trams and trains), hospitality (Young and Jacksons), church and civic administration (the Town Hall) that underpinned Melbourne's early development. Many have written of the tragedy of this outcome. Better that we provide a set of controls that identify those elements of our reading of a place or building that are significant and put in place a set of controls that address those priorities.

I believe the view cone lines, the proposed limitations on heights and required modulation of form, required treatments of boundary conditions and setbacks of upper levels to allow the buildings outline to continue to be read, are undeniably important in the continued reading of place. As to the quantum of these scale and setback measures I will discuss those in the review on the proposed schedule.

### **3. That new built form on the site should not detrimentally impact on adjacent highly valued and utilised parks, streets and promenades.**

The density of population they service, the high quality of many of the spaces and places, and the continuing and expanding role of the foreshore and adjacent squares and gardens as a destination for tourism, leisure, recreation and entertainment is critical to the continued liveability, amenity, and prosperity of the broader municipality and the Esplanade Precinct in particular. A number of earlier decisions of panels have verified this methodological basis for future development controls in the foreshore context in particular in respect to height and off-site overshadowing impacts.

The continuing densifying of the City will only place further pressure on these public spaces to fulfil an ever-increasing range of roles to an increasingly large population. Hence it important in the context of Alfred Square, the Esplanade, Jacka Boulevard and foreshore that valued public spaces not be overshadowed further.

An appropriate set of measures within the planning scheme serves to articulate the continuing place management needs and constraints on development required to ensure the amenity and quality of a public realm is retained and progressively enhanced. As a principle in this context, I believe the development of any one building for whatever accommodation purpose should not come at a cost of diminished amenity for the many multiples more who utilise the abutting public realm. This is particularly so where this series of places has a broader Municipality and Statewide strategic importance.

The overshadowing analysis work undertaken by Robert Foster for council in this context identifies criteria for achieving a satisfactory outcome with the key public interfaces to the west, south west and south and it is appropriate that a new overlay be informed by such a rigorous analysis. Before addressing broader urban design objectives in relation to streetscape, amenity, scale and bulk, this analysis serves to provide an objective basis for measures required to prevent detrimental shadowing outcomes.

The proposed maximum height envelope and that proposed by Becton both demonstrate the constraints of reliance on broad envelope measures, without consideration for the site specific issues of context. Fosters' modelling on the other hand was undertaken consistent with the three relevant planning provisions and should in my view provide a benchmark measure in relation to these three policy settings. It demonstrates that compliance with the maximum building envelope will

## AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

not in itself achieve the objectives in respect to offsite impacts and indicates that modulation of the upper levels to lower and/or setback additional distances will be necessary. The work included a table concerning impacts on Alfred Square and demonstrated that simple compliance with an envelope will not achieve the desired protection of public space and emphasises the critical importance of additional decision guidelines if amenity in the Square is to be maintained. Clearly additional shadowing of over 12.5% at 3.00pm (table 2), is highly undesirable, and suggests a range of additional criteria targeting off-site impacts are essential in order to ensure that any future development does not result in unacceptably diminished amenity of the public realm.

- 4 & 5 That valued active interfaces with adjacent secondary streets to the north and south be maintained and enhanced and that they be introduced to the eastern street interface. And that new built form abutting these secondary streets is appropriately modulated so as to preserve and enhance the finer grain subdivision rhythms, active interfaces and lower scale character that characterise valued streetscapes within this context.**

The proposal seeks to recognise the need to manage not only the primary public realm of the Esplanade but also the finer grain abutting Streets of Victoria and Pollington. In this objective, the Amendment seeks to flag that as an island site, the resolution of new development needs to be considered three dimensionally.

It establishes the local contributory significance of the Baymor Flats and the western end of the northern interface of the site with Pollington Street as visual cues for future development. These elements are seen as being of an appropriate scale as an interface with the street and provide characteristic of rhythm, inclusion of entrances, regular fenestration, and articulation that respond to the local secondary street context.

It proposes a set of measures that are intended to enhance these valued characteristics of place. The aim appears to be to negate the likelihood of a repeat of some of the unsightly carpark podium outcomes that have been characteristic of some of the poorer local outcomes in Alfred Place, Rouse Street, and elsewhere in the municipality in the past few years and an interface of inappropriate scale. It is in my view appropriate that redevelopment be associated with the enhancement of the streetscape in these historic minor road networks. The proposed amendment identifies the potential to offer the prospect of greater height potential than the previous six-storey height limit setback from the streetscape realm. It recognises the impacts of modulated increased scale within the core area of the site through the offset of substantially enhanced interaction with the street and appropriate street activity, façade articulation, permeability, and quality of design that are intended to provide as their goals high quality street environments.

I believe that subject to the establishment of appropriately stringent modulation requirements, an acceptable balance can be achieved between increased intensity of development and enhanced streetscape activity and quality.

- 6 & 7 Form is appropriately modulated so as not to unreasonably impact on the private open space and amenity of adjacent residential accommodation, discourages extruded solutions and rewards innovation and design excellence that mediate perceptions of bulk, with the ability to achieve the absolute maximum heights in parts of the upper levels where the quality of the design resolution against objectives, justifies an increase up to a maximum height.**

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

The option of proposing absolute height constraints or the establishing of preferred heights for very competent outcomes with greater height rewards for exceptional levels of design resolution, is a vexed one. Whilst some decisions have favoured the former preferring to use overlays and measures to carve out of the defined maximum building envelope block an acceptable solution, in my view this methodology is best applied generally to infill development rather than on sites where buildings will be applied three-dimensionally. It is a methodology for example that has been applied in much of the central Melbourne retail core and in many of our European Cities where the perimeter block model and gridded street networks support such a set of controls. Whilst generally achieving an objective of consistency in height it is to my knowledge rarely successful as a tool in achieving sculptured form more often seen as an envelope to be filled. In this instance it is a measure that will in all likelihood result in a flat topped building that seeks to maximise the envelope to its full height resulting in a proportionally substantial bulk

In this instance the challenge is to develop an acceptable set of controls for an as yet to be presented building plan so as to ensure an acceptable three dimensional resolution is achieved that meets offsite amenity, heritage abutment and streetscape objectives. It is an outcome that provides an additional challenge to the accepted Absolute height model.

We know for example that consistent alignment of a new building with the southern or Victoria Street frontage minimum setbacks, will create unacceptably high levels of overshadowing to the adjacent Alfred Square Gardens and present an unacceptably high and visually bulky impact on the Victoria Street frontage. The same could be said in respect to streetscape impacts for a similar approach to the eastern interface. Hence sufficient words and measures need to be put around a maximum height and minimum setbacks framework to ensure that the applicant is able to understand the acceptable levels of interface without removing the opportunity to resolve the architectural solution with reasonable levels of flexibility in respect to expression, layout and accommodation type. This envelope by definition should in my view have as its objective the modulation and articulation of the building so as to ensure both its successful architectural resolution and that its interfaces with its heritage neighbours and the streetscape realm provide acceptably enhanced or equivalent standards of amenity depending on the context. In other words, its resolution should seek to achieve on the one hand a clear and coherent architectural language and interaction and expression of forms that incorporates depth, light and shade, and potential for an interesting and changing silhouette when seen from a range of different vantage points and on the other a series of interactive street interfaces, appropriately detailed, scaled and modulated interfaces with heritage form, existing streetscape scale and resulting minimal detrimental off-site impacts.

### **3.5 A discussion of the efficacy of the proposed amendment in establishing appropriate urban design objectives and methodologies within the revised planning policy framework and recommendations for change.**

The following discusses the proposed amendments of Minter Ellison to the application and where appropriate, recommendations for change to the proposed amendment..

A discussion of aspects of the submission made by Minter Ellison on behalf of the current owner so far as it relates to urban design issues.

#### **21.03-6 Additional St Kilda Neighbourhood Issues**

The need to preserve the social and cultural diversity of the neighbourhood by offering a

## AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

range of housing choices including low-income housing, and supporting (*recognise*) a range of cultural activities and associated venues which are widely accessible, especially for people on low incomes.

### Comment:

The clause identifies a continuing need to reinforce the desired continued demographic mix through the neighborhood through the retention of key attractors that service this demographic. The proposed wording by the applicant in my view is less strategic in its intent than that proposed and hence in my view would be less effective in achieving the desired result..

### Recommendation:

Am C25 policy in Clause 21.03-6, dot point 2 should be retained.

### 21.04-6 St Kilda

- That cultural icons, such as the Esplanade Hotel, are protected and supported as they make an important contribution to the vitality, character and identity of the area.
- Becton proposes to vary the clause as follows:-  
*That places having local cultural value be supported for the contribution they make to the vitality, character and identity of the area.*

### Comment:

The clause identifies the key role that cultural icons play in St Kilda's identity. The Esplanade Hotel has unarguably contributed to the vitality, character and identity of the area and through the Council's study of valued icons was identified as a key emblem important to many residents. The council has in their MSS identified the sub-culture of music, live performance, and affordable access to venues as a strategy underpinning the continued desired character of place. In this context it is appropriate in my view to flag key locations and venues where they are known and seen as critical to the implementation of the strategy. Hence, on both grounds it would seem prudent for a responsible authority to underpin a key strategic cultural anchor with appropriate reinforcing policy settings given the decreasing representation of live venues elsewhere in the nearby area. The removal of the reference to the Esplanade Hotel in Becton's submission states that the reference to specific properties in clause 21.04 *is inappropriate* and that *the hotel is not of such significance that it warrants such a specific reference.*

### Recommendation:

Am C25 policy in Clause 21.04-6, dot point 3 should be retained.

## 21.05 OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

### St Kilda Neighbourhood

- Support the Esplanade Hotel in its established role as an incubator of independent local music and comedy talent and as a venue accessible to a broad and diverse public
- Support the Esplanade Hotel as one of the key publicly accessible facilities in the St Kilda foreshore recreation and entertainment precinct

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

### **Comment:**

Dot points 1 & 2 make explicit the recognition that the presence of the Hotel and the entertainment activities therein within the foreshore residential context, is not only seen as appropriate but remains a key desired attribute of the precinct.

I am however not convinced that the proposed dot points 3 & 4 are necessary given that the explicit core strategic objectives for the site support its existing entertainment and hospitality role.

### **Recommendation:**

Am C25 policy in Clause 21.05-1, St Kilda Neighbourhood, dot points 1 & 2 should be retained and dot points 3 & 4 deleted.

## **21.05-2 FORESHORE**

### **Comment:**

As the applicant and authority are in agreement on the removal of Dot Point 12 no comment has been offered. Similar agreement is in place for Dot point 4 in section 21.05-06 Tourism-St Kilda Neighbourhood.

The retention of Dot Point 3 is consistent with the desired ongoing and historic role of the Esplanade Hotel as an important live music and entertainment venue and identifies the nexus with adjacent points of tourism that provide an immediate interface with potential customers.

### **Recommendation:**

Am C25 policy in Clause 21.05-6, Tourism -St Kilda Neighbourhood, dot points 1,2 & 3 should be retained and dot point 4 deleted.

## **SCHEDULE 12 TO THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY**

### **1.0 Design objectives**

#### **> Proposed amendment to Dot Point 1.**

### **Comment:**

The proposal by Becton to remove the references to The Esplanade Hotel's *central landmark value* and the need to *secure its pre-eminent place among landmark buildings of The Esplanade* is not supported. I believe the rich cultural and historic links of the hotel, combined with its prominent siting and strong visual links to other early foreshore buildings on the sandstone bluff discussed earlier in the report substantiate the retention of this dot point.

### **Recommendation:**

That the first dot point be retained unchanged

#### **> Proposed amendment Dot Point 2**

### **Comment**

The continued growth of the city and the key role of the St Kilda foreshore underpins the Tourism, open space and cultural strategies of the municipality. Urban Designers throughout the world are recognising the need to continue to improve the amenity of pedestrian environments and diminish the impact of cars on the experience of pedestrians

## AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

of those environments. In this context a design objective that has as a goal the need to *enhance* rather than simply *recognise* the pedestrian environment is seen as an important and necessary statement of purpose if the aim is to continue to enhance the quality of public spaces.

### Recommendation:

That the second dot point be retained unchanged

> *Proposed amendment Dot Point 3*

### Comment

Another key strategy being used by Urban Designers throughout the world to encourage increased pedestrian activity is the improvement of linkages within the street network. In this context a design objective that has as a goal the need to *enhance and strengthen* rather than simply *recognise* the need to enhance key linkages in the pedestrian environment is seen as an important and necessary statement of purpose if the aim is to continue to enhance these connections of public spaces is to be achieved.

### Recommendation:

That the third dot point be retained unchanged

> *Proposed amendment Dot Point 4*

### Comment

To maintain the existing character and amenity of the local residential character implies that the quality of the existing environment cannot be improved. The previously noted physical assessment of the precinct and the heritage statement for the Espy site identifies aspects of built form that make no positive contribution to the place. In this context incremental change that preserves valued attributes of the precinct should be an objective rather than simply maintaining the status quo. I am of the view that the word maintain should be deleted and replaced with *respond and enrich*. Such an amendment would contemplate both a analysis and informed response to the valued attributes of context and reinforce an objective of continuous incremental enhancement.. The proposed use of *recognise* suggested by Becton is passive and does not in my view constitute an objective.

### Recommendation:

That the fourth dot point be retained but amended to delete retain and insert respond and enrich.

> *Proposed amendment Dot Point 5*

### Comment

I am not sure that the reference to *multiplicity and diversity* provides any useful direction given that the integration of new and old proposed by other attributes of the controls will in any event by default achieve the objective. Hence the first part of the objective should in my view be deleted. The second part of the proposal is an expression of concern that is worthy of structuring as a measure.

### Recommendation:

That the fifth dot point be amended to read as follows:-

In my view it should be reworded to the following:

To ensure that any new development adjoining the existing hotel modulate and articulate its mass and form so as to not overwhelm adjacent places of valued heritage and cultural significance.

As there is agreement on the sixth dot point I offer no further proposed amendment.

> *The Proposed amendment Dot Point 7*

## AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

### Comment

The continued key role of the St Kilda foreshore underpins the tourism, recreation, open space and cultural strategies of the municipality. In this context a design objective that has as a goal the need to *ensure* new development does not overpower or dominate the foreshore is in my view both reasonable and consistent with a strategy that has identified the foreshore and environs as one of the municipalities principle assets. The proposal to delete the clause are not supported.

### Recommendation:

That the seventh dot point be retained unchanged.

#### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 8*

### Comment

The retention of key views is consistent with an objective aimed at retaining important visual cues that underpin our reading of the place. Hence the proposed amendments to wording are not supported. I believe the use of the word silhouette implies that the outline of the building can be read unobstructed against the sky. The proposed building envelopes are not consistent in all cases with this objective and compliance would in my view unreasonably diminish development if distant points of reference such as the St Kilda pier were adopted. Views from the site I do not consider to be at risk and hence the reference to views to these elements should be deleted

### Recommendation:

That the eighth dot point be amended to read as follows:-To protect and enhance key views including:-

- The legibility of the front façade and main section and of the Esplanade Hotel when seen from:

- St Kilda Pier and the foreshore area between the pier and The Esplanade.
- The Esplanade, including from the south-west corner of the Arrandale property, 8-10 The Esplanade and from the north-west corner of the Bayview property, 13 The Esplanade.

#### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 9*

Becton has proposed the wording of this clause be amended as follows:-  
To ensure site planning and design are demonstrative of St Kilda's diverse and layered history and the culture of the area.

### Comment:

I support these amendments as clarifications of the intent

### Recommendation:

That Becton's proposed change to the 9th objective be supported.

#### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 10*

### Comment:

The proposed deletion of the reference to the Baymor flats is not supported. The flats are noted as contributory and provide a valued set of interface characteristics and streetscape scale for remaining infill development that should be supported in the design objectives for the site and provide a benchmark scale for new development.

### Recommendation:

That the tenth dot point be amended to read as follows  
*To maintain or enhance the standards of streetscape imagery, form, and interface between the Site and Victoria Street established by the Baymor Flats.*

## AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 11*

I support the removal of this objective. If the conservation management plan for the site recognises the importance of the rear of the site and the need for the evolution of development to be legible then a design objective is not required. If it is not identified within heritage criteria, it is my view that it will unreasonably constrain development options and potentially diminish the potential for articulation of form visible from the perimeter of the site.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the eleventh dot point be deleted.

### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 12*

#### **Comment:**

The dot point seeks to recognise the need for a design solution tailored to the differing characteristics of the sites abutting secondary and primary street frontages. The former being characterised by smaller scale one and two storey dwellings and narrower subdivisions and the latter by more substantial dwellings and densities. In addition it seeks to reinforce the enrichment and site specific nature required of any redevelopment owing to the presence on-site of valued heritage buildings. A more appropriate wording of the objective may be appropriate.

#### **Recommendation:**

Alternative wording of the 12<sup>th</sup> objective is recommended as follows:

"To ensure new development responds to the varied narrow subdivisions, heightened diversity, interaction, intimate scale and ambience of residences abutting Pollington Street and Victoria Street and the higher density of the residential character of The Esplanade."

### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 13*

#### **Comment:**

The dot point seeks to recognise the essential requirement of any design resolution of the site to respond to important heritage buildings that are intended to remain. In this context the wording of the point appears unambiguous and Becton's proposed deletion is not supported.

#### **Recommendation:**

The 13<sup>th</sup> objective be retained

### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 14*

#### **Comment:**

In contrast I am not sure that the next dot point contributes any further clarity to the design objectives and in this context I support Becton's proposed omission.

#### **Recommendation:**

Delete the 14<sup>th</sup> objective

### > *Proposed amendment Dot Point 15*

#### **Comment:**

The proposed amendments put forward by Becton address the essential purpose of the clause that the continued viable servicing of the hotel be demonstrated in any redevelopment. The reference to cultural significance in my view is superfluous.

# AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

## Recommendation:

Alternative wording of the 15<sup>th</sup> objective suggested by Becton is recommended for acceptance. i.e. "To ensure that the reasonable access, operational and service needs of the Esplanade Hotel are appropriately addressed."

## > Proposed amendment Dot Point 16

### Comment:

The proposed objective has as its objective the protection of key public spaces from overshadowing. The proposed amendment put forward by Becton suggests that this requirement be relaxed to allow overshadowing of an as yet undefined magnitude. Given the strategic importance of the public realm in this context and the consistent objective that this series of streets and squares and promenades be enhanced, the preservation of the clause is in my view essential. The wording however could be made less ambiguous through the explicit description of intent. The work undertaken by Foster demonstrates that the imposition of this constraint does not preclude significant development potential of the site. In reference to Alfred Square and having regard to Fosters' analysis the retention of firm requirements will only require reasonable levels of modulation to achieve the objectives.

### Recommendation:

That the 16<sup>th</sup> dot point be varied as follows  
*To ensure that new development does not overshadow the foreshore, the market precinct of the Esplanade and Alfred Square in midwinter between the hours of :-*  
*Alfred Square 10am and 2.00pm est*  
*The Esplanade and foreshore 10.am and 4.00pm est*

## > Proposed amendment Dot Point 17 & 18

### Comment:

The proposed amendments put forward by Becton continue to address the essential purpose of the dot points in respect to continued reasonable standards of amenity for adjacent properties and the recognition that new development should aspire to the highest standards of design excellence and innovation. .

### Recommendation:

That Becton's proposed amendments to dot points 17 & 18 be accepted.

## Schedule 12 TO THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY

### 2.0 Building and Works

#### Height & Setbacks

The general principles relating to alternative approaches to height have been discussed in section 3.2.

#### Comment:

Becton has proposed that all of the references to preferred maximum heights be deleted together with the additional flexibility to construct a range of additional elements including balconies sun-shading elements in excess of this absolute maximum height.

The question arising is perhaps if such a model was to be introduced at what scale of development would it be acceptable, particularly as the provision of balconies and sun-shading elements as proposed would have the effect of conveying a potentially even greater envelope of potential development. The combination of a provision that allows the potential breach of the maximum height for ten percent of the envelope when combined with the suggested architectural, balcony, sun-shading elements objectives would in my view have significant implications for the perceived scale of development. The resultant envelope implications are not in my view consistent with the underlying Absolute

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

Maximum height criteria. It is my view that should the panel adopt a maximum height only model using the absolute maximum height criteria, then a number of measures would be necessary to achieve an acceptable outcome in terms of built form.

This is predicated on my assessment of -

- The work of Foster in respect to offsite impacts arising from shadows
- The impact of increased scale on the adjacent heritage elements
- The impact on adjacent streetscapes
- The impacts and perceived increases in heights arising from the proposed encroachment of sun-shading and ballustrading elements
- The diagrammatic representations attached in appendix 1 that investigate the relative outcomes of differing approaches using the preferred, absolute and Becton alternative envelopes and then examine the implications of addition of elements.

### **Recommendation:**

That the current amendment height be varied to refer only to the absolute maximum height criteria

That a continued reference be made to an amended table excluding reference to preferred maximum height and that the objectives outlined therein be given further clarity in respect to the need to explicitly identify the need for greater modulation and reduced envelopes at upper levels of any design proposal.

That the second dot point remain as the inclusion of many of the items noted by Becton would result potentially in the perception of increased bulk mass and height.

### **2.2 Overshadowing**

The issue of overshadowing has been discussed earlier in the report.

### **Recommendation:**

Am C25 overshadowing provisions in Clause 2.2 should be retained.

### **Building Design**

The objectives for new built form have been articulated through the document. This clause explicitly reinforces these objectives. Notably it confirms the intent of the preferred and maximum height that imply that the design be characterised by considerable differentiation of built form through the development in terms of both height and setback. Its deletion as proposed by Becton would diminish the likelihood that the intent of the clause is understood and in conjunction with the proposed maximum height proposition result in a framework more likely to result in a building with enlarged footprints to each level. This is not to say however that the form and clarity of the design objectives could not be enhanced.

It is my view that changes should clarify a number of key outcome intentions.

- The first is to dispel any presumption that the maximum envelope should be the starting point for a design response. Rather the approach should be to determine a future strategy that meets the proposed design objectives and other measures outlined in the amendment, then to test the proposal against the proposed absolute maximum height criteria.
- The second is clarify the reasonable goal not to have an extruded outcome that fills the building envelope provisions. Instead it is the intention of the proposed amendment to achieve a highly articulated and modulated outcome that is fully enclosed within the proposed height and setback controls, and appropriately modulated between the core and lower perimeter and where a small part may achieve the maximum height allowed if the design is resolved to the highest coherent design standards.
- The third is to ensure that the interfaces with the surrounding minor streets acknowledges and mediates the interfaces with the one and two storey scale that characterises the eastern half of the site's interfaces therewith and is of a scale and massing comparable with the height and width of the main wing of the Baymor Flats and the Esplanade Hotel. In addition that it ensures that reasonable solar access is provided to private open spaces of neighbouring dwellings

## **AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

- And finally the other goal in design terms should be to ensure that key views from the foreshore, pier and the Esplanade. In addition that the historic relationship of the Esplanade forecourt with the street is visually unimpeded and that profiles of valued heritage buildings on the site including that part of the south-east elevation of the Esplanade Hotel, characterised by expressed string courses and eaves brackets, that is visible to a person standing on the north-west corner of No. 13, is maintained and that new buildings abutting heritage forms are appropriately setback, modulated and scaled in a manner that compliments the adjacent heritage buildings..

### **Recommendation:**

Am C25 Building Design provisions in Clause 2.2 should be amended to address the four key outcome objectives of the amendment listed above either in table form or as a set of objectives.

### **Proposed additional decision guidelines**

It is my view that the Burra Charter and the CMP will direct pursuant to heritage overlays, necessary measures in the realisation of the new buildings where they abut existing form and hence additional discussion in this section is in my view unnecessary.

### **Recommendation:**

That proposed additional clauses put forward by Becton not be adopted

### **Mapping**

The principle of mapping maximum height and minimum setback controls is in my view a useful addition to the amendment and hence should in my view be supported.

I am not convinced that the proposed amended outline as suggested by Becton should be supported as it prescribes an outline that diminishes setbacks at interfaces with narrow road reserves relative to the Esplanade. The envelope criteria that exclude the proposed incursions into the setbacks of Victoria and Pollington as put forward by the City of Port Phillip are supportable but will require considerable modulation and articulation of built form if they are not to present a built form of a mass and scale that overwhelms adjacent heritage fabric. As I acknowledged earlier, the expanded envelope put forward by Becton has potentially minimal impacts in the lower level incursions. However the same could not be said for the upper levels where the result of similar applications is contrary to the streetscape objectives of the amendment and will result in potentially greater bulk, and off site impacts that are not able to be reconciled as can be seen on the

The mapping of the two proposals varies: Council has articulated these as follows:///Preliminary comparisons between Am C25 and Becton's plan are as follows:

- Becton's plan shows an increase of 8 % to 13.8 % in the area of the 10 storey building envelope (8 % excludes the whole of the Esplanade Hotel from the 10 storey envelope and 13.8 % excludes the leased area of the Esplanade Hotel from the 10 storey building envelope).
- Becton's plan is equivalent to a re-organisation of the current 6 storey building envelope applicable to the site; ie there is none or only a minor net gain in building envelope, although the reorganisation has other benefits (eg maximises views).
- In terms of draft overshadowing diagrams (for midwinter) provided by Becton, their building envelopes would not result in any overshadowing of the foreshore reserve, would result in some overshadowing of The Esplanade up until 11 am and would result in overshadowing of Alfred Square after about 3.30 pm.

# AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME- ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.

## Discussion of Diagrams in Appendix 1

These plans have been prepared using the Becton and Council absolute maximum height and minimum setback parameters as a basis for discussion. A floor-to-floor height of approximately 3m has been assumed for upper levels.

Figure 1 is a camera key plan which indicates the location of viewing points to examine the implications of the envelopes. Viewing heights adopted are at 1600mm above the surveyed pavement levels at each of the points. The locations adopted are:-

- On the opposite footpath alignment on the Sunday market side of the Esplanade at a midpoint of the historic hotel looking towards the hotel
- On the north-east footpath of the intersection of Pollington Street and the Esplanade looking towards the site
- On the north-east side The Pollington St east intersection looking towards the site
- On the south-east side of the Victoria St Esplanade looking towards the site
- On the south east intersection of Victoria St and The Esplanade looking towards the site

Figures 2 to 6, demonstrate the relative differences in scale when examining the exhibited preferred maximum height against the exhibited absolute maximum height scenario, using the Becton proposal as a basis for levels from a range of viewpoints. What is significant in this analysis is that the impact of form for even the enlarged envelope is relatively benign in the larger base and lower levels of the setback zone but is substantially more evident in the upper levels of the building envelope. If a building was to err towards maximum envelopes in its resolution then what is evident is that the built form outcome of the exhibited preferred maximum height outcome is demonstrably better than the both the Becton and Exhibited City of port Phillip absolute maximum equivalents.

Notably as follows:-

- The resultant maximum scale of the podium interface with Pollington St and on Victoria St.(Fig.4)
- The skyline views for figure A versus Figure B on Figure 5
- The silhouette outcome for the preferred height versus Becton's proposal in Figure 6

Hence to be supported the revised absolute maximum height envelope as an outcome, must result in a substantial component of its upper levels removed from the absolute envelopes in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution with abutting streets. Equally evident is that the Becton amendments if filled would have significant detrimental impacts at the upper levels though arguably not at lower levels through the diminished setbacks and subsequent wider frontages of envelopes.

Figure 7 seeks to illustrate an assessment of the potential impact of the application of the proposed clause allowing the application of balconies within the minimum setback zone versus an alternative measure that proposes the removal of form to create balconies. In each case again at the lower levels the impact is only marginally different whilst at the upper levels the increased envelope both enlarges the perceived built form and bulk and will undoubtedly result in additional off-site impacts in addition to the visual ones.

Again it is equally evident that the Becton amendments if filled would have significant detrimental impacts at the upper levels though arguably not at lower levels a situation that the provisions for projections of balconies canopies etc could only serve to emphasise further.

In respect to setbacks the proposed council dot points continue to reinforce the notion that the building is to be articulated in three dimensions rather than conceived in an extruded arrangement similar to some of its neighbours. The removal of references as proposed by Becton is in my view unhelpful.

The table with the exclusion of the column referring to preferred maximum heights provides a useful shorthand guide to designers of the linkages between interface, height and objectives and as a format is supported. Alternatively for consistency the table could be reinterpreted as a series of objectives though not in my view with any greater clarity.

**AMENDMENT C25 TO THE PORT PHILLIP PLANNING SCHEME-  
ESPLANADE HOTEL, 11-12 THE ESPLANADE, ST. KILDA.**

**Recommendation:**

**Recommendation:**

That the absolute maximum height envelope and minimum setbacks as proposed by Council in the amendment schedule and table should be used as the basis for the preparation of mapping for the site.