



THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY Inc.
For Community and Heritage
Est 1964

The General Manager
Woollahra Municipal Council
PO Box 61,
Double Bay NSW 1360

Attention: **Mr George Fotis** Planning and Development Division

16 March 2025

Dear Mr Fotis

6-22 Young Street, Paddington - DA 42/2025
Remedial works to the upper section (12 metres) of the former RHW chimney.

On behalf of the Paddington Society, we note the following re the above DA, acknowledging the urgency for the Paddington Green Strata Committee of commencing remedial action to prevent structural failure of the chimney after storm damage and the lighting strike of 1 December 2024.

The urgency is exacerbated by concerns for safety of human life and property and the fact that residents of 4 dwellings have had to vacate their properties and be re-accommodated elsewhere.

Noting the recommendations of Structural reports and other lodged documents, and in the interests of public and property safety, we cannot, and therefore do not object to the essence of the proposal for the urgent remedial works proposed. These include demolition of 12 metres of the top section of the chimney, down to and including the vertical section with the white glazed brick R H W lettering.

Methodology statement in the Cost Estimate report document (pp 7& 8)

- Subject to Council's assessment and conditions, we assume that Option 2 requiring a crane and 75m mobile Boom lift, accessed from Young Street, with a netted elevated work platform (EWP) for material removal, is likely to be more favoured than Option 1, which requires scaffolding, back-propping of two basement slabs and barrow material hoist removal via Flinton Street.
- Timing estimate for Option 2 is also considerably shorter than for Option 1 (5 versus 11 weeks)
- However, we do have strong reservations and concerns about the proposed disposal of "Debris ... via a tipper truck and sent to a waste recycling yard" (p8)
- No mention is made of assessing the condition of the removed brickwork, or retaining any undamaged sections or undamaged rows of bricks if discovered intact during the process. It is unclear and presumably will remain so until the removal process has commenced.
- The "Debris" description should not apply to *all* removed brickwork, noting that the proposal does include retaining all the white glazed lettering bricks. It is possible that those surrounding the white bricks, or other portions in the 12 metres might be undamaged and could be re-used?
- We had been advised that the original engineering recommendation had been to remove some 8 to 12 metres of the top section, but Council required a precise dimension for lodging this DA, therefore noting the larger of the two dimensions in this DA became a necessity.
- It is possible that not all removed bricks will be "debris" and we trust that during the removal process they will be inspected, with re-usable brick sections documented and carefully stored.

SEE & HIS - February 2025 by Paul Davies Pty Ltd

The report notes that "... this DA does not seek to do any more than is necessary to carry out the urgent remedial works that have been set out." (p4) and subsequently that (p5):

- Internal inspection is not possible due to severe limits on access.
- Many bricks have suffered from damage, are cracked, have had corners and sections blown off and are not capable of re-use.
- The inner face of the chimney is not face-brick and from earlier photos has extensive mortar applied as a rough finish over the roughly laid brickwork. Its condition has not been capable of assessment due to access restrictions.

The Summary (p22) affirms that "... there is a very clear understanding that there are heritage impacts arising from an approval" and:

- "We also note that on completion of the remedial works that a future heritage assessment will be prepared, taking into account the status of the chimney at that time, that will be provided to Council to assist any considerations related to future works."

Conclusion:

As outlined in our brief Late Correspondence to the full Council meeting of 24 February 2025, in response to Councillor Robertson's QWN Item 15.2.

- The applicant should show how heritage will be protected - can the chimney be re-instated?
- We trust that the DA can be conditioned to salvage and record all intact bricks and sections of bricks, even if this necessitates a slower process than is presently estimated, to determine:
- Whether any removed bricks and/or rows of bricks can be re-used (not just white glazed bricks).
- Alternatively, whether any deteriorated removed bricks can be replaced with like-for-like, with the aim of eventually reinstating the chimney to its former height and tapered appearance.
- The applicant should also demonstrate how ongoing structural stability and lightning protection can be carried out with minimum change to heritage fabric - ideally the DA should be conditioned to note that this must be demonstrated - after completion of emergency remedial works.
- A previous 2023 Heritage assessment noted that it would too costly to rebuild & is not required, since the chimney "only has local significance" but we disagreed then and now, believing that consent conditions should stipulate that the Strata Committee has a duty of care for this contributory item - rated 'significant' in the Conservation Management Plan and LEP 2014 as part of the Royal Hospital for Women group of heritage items (item 1244)
- The chimney is a significant feature on the site and is a key landmark within Paddington and far beyond. It is a prominent landmark from Darlinghurst, Potts Point and Edgecliff - dominating all views along the ridge.

If the chimney is to retain its meaning and heritage value, as it should, reinstatement to full height after completion of these remedial works will be a very significant consideration.

Yours sincerely



Esther Hayter President, The Paddington Society