

23 August 2023

Mr Steven Avery
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria
Department of Transport and Planning

Attention:



Re: Permit Application P35013 – Winfield Building, 487-495 Collins Street, Melbourne (H0040)
Permit Application P35014 – Rialto Building, 497-503 Collins Street, Melbourne (H0041)

This letter has been prepared in relation to the permit applications for the Rialto and Winfield Buildings. It responds to a letter from Heritage Victoria dated 29 June 2023 that requests additional information under s98 of the *Heritage Act 2017*, as follows:

- *Renders of the proposed development from the north side of Collins Street and from within the internal laneway, as outlined above.*
- *Information related to the extent of works undertaken to laneway to the west of Rialto Building in the 1980s and outline of the impacts of this work on the current fabric, layout and presentation of the western laneway.*
- *Drawings documenting the scope of conservation works prepared by a heritage consultant and addressing the matters raised above. Updated costings based on these drawings is also required.*
- *A copy of the 1980s paint investigation referenced in the Heritage Impact Statement.*
- *Information addressing reasonable and economic use pursuant to s101(2)(b) Heritage Act 2017 and in response to the comments made [in the RFI letter].*
- *Updated reasonable and economic use report (including any new version(s) provided in response to above) which reduces the extent of redaction for the purposes of advertising. More of the context of the discussion is considered necessary. It is accepted that financially sensitive information such as figures can be redacted.*

As requested, Cox Architecture have provided renders of the proposed development viewed from the north side of Collins Street and from within the internal laneway (also known as Winfield Square). The Collins Street renders indicate that the tower setbacks are more than sufficient to maintain the primacy of the heritage facades, and the tower envelope will not be pronounced or exaggerated in views from the street.

The Collins Street renders also serve to illustrate the point made in the heritage impact statements that the lower levels of the tower will form a visually neutral backdrop to the registered buildings, on account of the tower façade having been designed with subtle variations in colour and materiality.

The renders from within Winfield Square do not suggest any adverse impact on the character and amenity of the space resulting from the tower development. It is more the case that the views highlight the positive outcomes resulting from the decluttering of the existing atrium (by removal of stairs and revised pedestrian bridges), the increased sense of openness created by the new atriums on the east side of Winfield Square, and the breathing space that this provides to the galleried east elevation of the Rialto Building.

Additional to the renders, Cox Architecture have prepared revised architectural drawings showing a refinement of the pedestrian circulation route through Winfield Square. The refined scheme is consistent with the general intent of the proposal as lodged, but offers improvements in terms of minimising obstructions in Winfield Square and providing more open sightlines to the heritage facades by realignment of the stair and lowering of the office lobby.

In regards to the laneway to the west of the Rialto Building, architectural documentation from the 1980s development shows all of this area hatched with the annotation 'reinststate bluestone paving' (refer figure 1 below). This suggests that all bluestone paving in the laneway was intended to be taken-up and re-laid, but it is not certain if this work was actually carried out. It may be the case that only localised removal of bluestone occurred, such as for the installation of the grease trap near the southern end of the laneway.

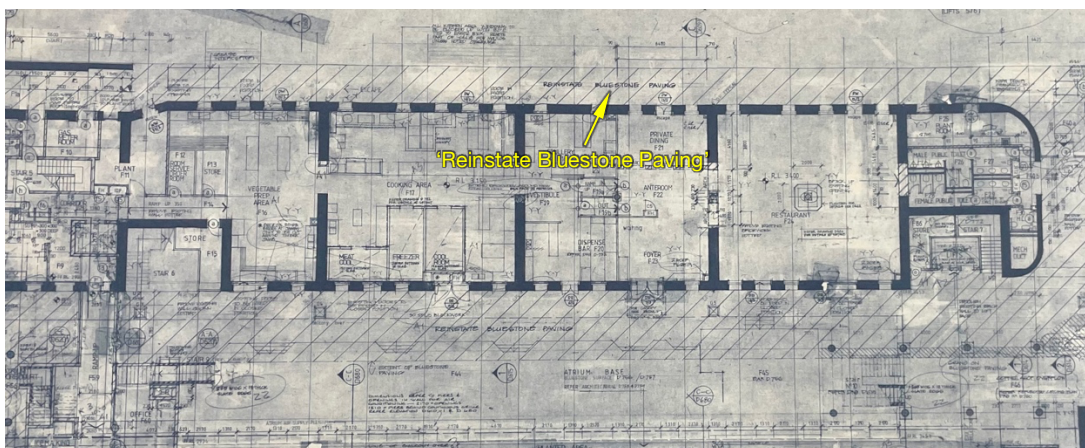


Figure 1 Extract from a 1982 floor plan of the Rialto Building showing the western laneway with the annotation 'reinststate bluestone paving'. Source: Public Record Office Victoria

A copy of the 1980s paint investigation is provided. I note that it was prepared by highly regarded heritage architect Richard Falkinger and provides a thorough analysis of historical painting regimes based on a microscopic examination of 50 samples. The probable original paint colour for external window/door joinery and metalwork (including gutters, downpipes, balustrading and the urinal cladding) was determined to be Indian red - ie the existing paint colour. Render was likely to have first been painted a cream colour – which is consistent with the existing render colour.

Our office has prepared drawings documenting the scope of conservation works with a greater level of detail than provided in the heritage impact statements. Costings for these works have been updated so that they are consistent with the drawings. The Ethos Urban reasonable or economic use report has also been updated to address issues raised in the RFI.

In conclusion, it is hoped that the additional material provided at this time, including this letter, the revised architectural documentation, conservation works drawings, and updated reasonable or economic report, has provided a sufficient response to the matters raised in the RFI.



Bryce Raworth