



**Australian
Institute of
Architects**

ABN 72 000 023 012
The Royal Australian Institute of Architects
trading as Australian Institute of Architects

Tusculum
3 Manning Street
Potts Point, NSW 2011

P: +61 2 9246 4055
nsw@architecture.com.au
Architecture.com.au

General Manager
North Sydney Council
PO Box 12
North Sydney NSW 2059

29 June 2020

To the General Manager

cc: enquiry@planningpanels.nsw.gov.au

**Re: Alterations and Additions to North Sydney Pool
PPSSNH-43 – North Sydney – DA347/2019
Request to Address the Panel**

On behalf of the Australian Institute of Architects, I am writing to object to the above mentioned application, and to request to Address the Panel at the Public Meeting on Wednesday 1 July 2020.

Further to my letter of 5 December 2019 (attached), I stand by all comments opposing the demolition of the current 25 metre pool building designed by Hassell Architects. I am also now aware the DA proposal is to demolish and rebuild the current 50 metre original pool back into its original position. The Institute is concerned this may impact the existing boundary walls of the original complex and compromise its heritage status by reducing and/or rebuilding it differently.



The red texture brick arcaded wall around the 50 metre pool on its east, south and west with its art deco decoration and the walls to the northern tower with the change rooms etc is an exceptional design for its period of 1936 when the complex was designed in the Inter-War Free Classical Style by the architects Rudder and Grout for North Sydney Council, the owners of the land. Following the completion and opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in March 1932, the areas set aside for workshops and fabrication of steelwork on the north-west side of the bridge were vacated by Dorman Long and the lands returned to government ownership, and were then subsequently bought by North Sydney Council.

The bricks are textured with horizontal lines, and several colours of bricks are used. The south and east boundary walls are formed from a series of stilted semi-circular arches, with the south wall being the main facade. The central pair of arches are taller, forming a rectangular pediment above with stucco moulded keystones formed as parrots. The flanking three arches on each side have keystones formed as scallop shells. Spandrels are also moulded with fish, plant and water motifs. Other arches are of brick without stucco decoration.

The decorated external walls are exceptional both when seen from the inside of the complex and from the outside, especially from the south, as seen all the time from the harbour especially when the ferries dock at Milsons Point/ Luna Park. They enhance the recreation aspects of the pool when the users relax behind this wall beside the 50 metre pool in the sun in summer, autumn and spring, and emphasise the health aspects of swimming and relaxation for the patrons, both young and old, enhancing the leisure aspects of the pools.

The complex is listed on North Sydney Council's LEP as Item 10537 gazetted on 2 August 2013. It is located between Luna Park, constructed in 1935, to its west, North Sydney Council LEP item 10536 and the northern pylons of the Sydney Harbour Bridge opened in 1932, NSW Heritage listed 00 (H00781) in 1999 and Australian Heritage listed (ID 105888) in 2007.

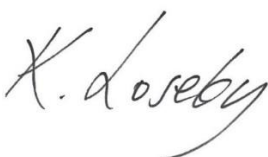
The Statement of Significance states that:

The North Sydney Olympic Pool is an outstanding example of a 1930s Olympic Pool, principally due to its architectural style and detailing, its integration with its magnificent harbourside setting, and the 1930s sophistication of its facilities. Historically significant as the venue for two Empire Games (1938 and 1958) and the setting for the establishment of 86 world records in swimming and diving events. Associated with adjacent Luna Park stylistically and functionally. Popular and significant recreational facility in the region, used by many from outside North Sydney

Neither the award winning building housing the 25 metre pool, nor the heritage red brick boundary wall should be demolished or compromised.

The Institute looks forward to continuing to work constructively with North Sydney Council on this important issue.

Yours faithfully



Kathlyn Loseby
President NSW Chapter
Australian Institute of Architects

General Manager
North Sydney Council
PO Box 12
North Sydney NSW 2059



'Tusculum'
3 Manning Street
Potts Point NSW 2011
T +612 9246 4055
nsw@architecture.com.au
architecture.com.au

Australian Institute of Architects

5 December 2019

To the General Manager

Submission re: DA 347/19 – North Sydney Olympic Pool

On behalf of the Australian Institute of Architects, we are writing to object to DA 347/19 on the grounds that the implicit demolition of the current 25 metre pool building:

- disregards its considerable architectural value
- eliminates any possibility for its future contribution to North Sydney's and Sydney's architectural heritage and
- disrespects the exemplary design competition process that led to its construction.

Additionally, we object on the grounds that Council has failed in its obligation to effectively consult under moral rights legislation, and we are very concerned by the lack of environmental responsibility demonstrated by a plan to demolish and redevelop so recent and meritorious an addition to the pool complex.

This building and its associated facilities was completed in 2000 and was the result of a design competition conducted by North Sydney Council and endorsed by the Australian Institute of Architects. Convened by Graham Jahn, the jury was chaired by Richard Johnson and the competition won an award for its exemplary process. The new pool complex also itself won an Architecture Award in the prestigious Australian Institute of Architects New South Wales Awards Program.

As such, the process and outcome of this undertaking to upgrade North Sydney Pool represent outstanding achievements from which Council and the public would be expected to enjoy significant benefit with considerable longevity, far beyond 20 years. It is therefore greatly concerning that, although not clearly spelt out in the DA, the proposal involves complete demolition of the current 25 metre pool building.

The DA documentation states that:

The structure of the existing 20-year old facilities is displaying evidence of corrosion and dilapidation and does not meet current regulatory and performance requirements for a modern aquatic facility. Similarly, the pod and main support facilities are dilapidated and near the end of their useful life without major renovations. They will be upgraded and adapted in the new facility. The existing indoor 25m pool will be retained in its current size with the addition of a new ramp and stairs as required by NCC to provide modern accessibility requirements. It will continue to cater for mixed pool use including Learn to Swim (LTS) classes. A new warm water pool complete with accessible and non-accessible warm water spas will be added within the new upper level Pool Hall. It will cater to mixed pool use including Aqua-robics and Learn to Swim as well as recreational wading and swimming.



Australian Institute of Architects

No evidence concerning the state of the existing structure or any non-compliances is provided however, and it is clear from the description and drawings that the additional facilities proposed are able to be added as a separate element without the need to demolish the whole of the building.

During the design stages of the proposed development and despite a formal request, there has been no consultation or engagement with HASSELL as architects for the 25 metre pool complex, nor with Ken Maher as design director. HASSELL's only contact with the Council has been through a briefing from the current architects just prior to the submission of the development application.

We consider Council has not given adequate recognition to the architectural merit of the 2000 addition and has not effectively carried out its responsibility to respect its value, nor its obligation to effectively consult under the moral rights legislation.

Further, the proposed redevelopment will see significant embodied energy wastage result from demolition as well as considerable additional environmental costs associated with building the new structure. This is misaligned both with Council's sustainability focus generally and with the objectives of the Green Council Projects implemented at North Sydney Pool to date specifically.

This award-winning building should not be demolished.

Sincerely

Kathlyn Loseby FRAIA
NSW Chapter President
Australian Institute of Architects

Cosignatories:

Helen Lochhead LFRAIA – National President, Australian Institute of Architects

Abbie Galvin FRAIA – Incoming Government Architect NSW

Angelo Candalepas LFRAIA – Director, Candalepas Associates

Paul Berkemeier LFRAIA – Principal, Paul Berkemeier Architect

Peter Mould LFRAIA

Ken Maher LFRAIA AO – HASSELL

Philip Thallis LFRAIA – Founding Principal, Hill Thalys Architecture + Urban Projects

Andrew Nimmo FRAIA – NSW Chapter Past President, Australian Institute of Architects

Tony Caro – Director, Tony Caro Architecture

Shaun Carter FRAIA – Principal, Carter Williamson Architects