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**PROPOSED HO1107 CITYWIDE (FORMER MELBOURNE CITY  
COUNCIL) DEPOT OFFICE AND WORKSHOP BUILDING AND  
HO1095 MATURE PEPPER TREE ROW**

**Both Described as Part 208-292 Arden Street (the building is actually on the south  
east corner of Langford and Green Streets, evidently 8-18 Langford Street)**

**MELBOURNE PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C207**

**PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY SCHEDULE LISTING**

**EXPERT EVIDENCE OF DAVID BICK**

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN AND CONSERVATION ARCHITECT**

**NOTE THAT ONLY THE PAPER COPIES OF THIS EVIDENCE CONTAIN  
PHOTOGRAPHS, PROFESSIONAL FILM HAVING BEEN USED TO PROVIDE  
THE BEST ILLUSTRATIONS FOR THE PANEL**

13 November 2013



**Other Contributors to this Report :**

David Bick undertook all of the work in preparing this Expert Evidence

**Instructions that Define the Scope of the Report :**

Citywide Service Solutions Pty. Ltd. initially approached David Bick earlier in 2013 and sought advice about the recommendations of the Arden Macauley Heritage Review and the proposed Heritage Overlay controls. After being informed by Planning Panels Victoria that a Panel Hearing was being established (the Responsible Authority, the City of Melbourne, had not informed Citywide Service Solutions Pty. Ltd. of its decision to send this Amendment to a Panel Hearing), Citywide requested David Bick to prepare Expert Evidence for the Panel Hearing in early October, 2013.

**Identity of the Person who Carried Out Any Tests or Experiments Upon Which the Expert Has Relied On**

No such tests or experiments have been relied on.

**Facts, Matters and All Assumptions Upon Which the Report Proceeds :**

This report was prepared based on the Exhibited material, the Arden Macauley Heritage Review, the Arden Macauley Structure Plan 2012, site inspections of the subject site, and a survey of the Arden Macauley Heritage Review study area and adjacent areas.

**Documents and Other Material the Expert has been Instructed to Consider or Take Into Account and the Literature and Other Material Used in Making the Report :**

These are the Exhibited material, the Arden Macauley Heritage Review, the Arden Macauley Structure Plan 2012, and old aerial photographs of the subject site from Land Victoria. The results of a search for old building plans of the site from the City of Melbourne's Archives were not available when this Evidence had to be prepared due to the short notice of the Panel Hearing, but will be provided to the Panel Hearing if it becomes available<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This search as requested from the City of Melbourne in October, but the City of Melbourne's Archives were not able to respond until 11/11/2013, and their response needs to be investigated.

**Statement Identifying Any Provisional Opinions that are Not Fully Researched for any Reason**

It is up to the Responsible Authority to research the history of the identified places recommended for Heritage Overlay Schedule listings (through its heritage study), but as that has not been done, David Bick has undertaken some historical research. However the short period of time made available by Panels Victoria to prepare this Expert Evidence (approximately three to four weeks) meant that not all of the intended work could be undertaken.

If any other additional relevant information becomes available, it will be made available to the Panel at the Hearing.

**Questions that Fall Outside the Expert's Expertise and Whether the Report is Incomplete or Inaccurate in Any Respect**

David Bick is not aware of any questions that fall outside his expertise in regard to the building, or of any incomplete or inaccurate aspects of this report, apart from as stated above. David Bick does not have horticultural expertise, but does have sufficient expertise to provide the Evidence given in regard to the trees. David Bick does not have expertise in Town Planning, but the aspects of this Evidence that refer to the proposed Structure Plan relate to the inherent conflict between the proposed Heritage Overlay controls and the broader Structure Plan in regard to the Citywide Service Solutions Pty. Ltd.'s site.

**Declaration**

I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate, as qualified above, and no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

David Bick  
13 November 2013.

**PANEL'S DIRECTION THAT SUBMITTERS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO BY NUMBER, NOT NAME**

Citywide Service Solutions Pty. Ltd., the owner of the subject Citywide depot, which attended the Directions Hearing, was unable to provide any guidance as to what the Panel was intending with that Direction. Given that Citywide's name is listed on the list of Submitters and is essentially the name of the property and the owner, no point could be seen in excluding their name from this Evidence, particularly as they commissioned it.

## **SUMMARY OF OPINIONS OF THE EXPERT**

My Expert Opinion in summary is that Heritage Overlay Planning controls being proposed for the workshop building and trees are not soundly based due to the following -

### **1) JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ARDEN MACAULAY HERITAGE REVIEW 2012**

Undertaking a heritage study or review as part of preparing a Structure Plan, if an applicable one is not available, is clearly justified.

However the Arden Macaulay Heritage Review appears to have limited its examination and analysis to just the Arden Macaulay study area (which may well have been what it was asked to do).

The Melbourne Planning Scheme's Heritage Overlay Schedule encompasses the entire Municipality and includes a very large number of buildings, individually listed and in areas, and thus any heritage study needs to have regard to the broader context of the Municipality, to assess and identify Heritage Overlay places in the broader context rather than just the very localised area. I am not saying that the assessment needs to be Municipality-wide, but in my opinion some regard has to be had to the broader context, particularly when there are so many directly comparable buildings within and in the immediate vicinity of the Arden Macaulay study area.

### **2) ARDEN MACAULAY HERITAGE REVIEW HAS NOT SATISFACTORILY JUSTIFIED THE PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY SCHEDULE LISTING FOR CITYWIDE'S DEPOT BUILDING**

The Arden Macaulay Heritage Review has not undertaken a -

#### **➤ COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS of the comparable buildings in the Arden Macaulay study area and beyond to demonstrate that it justifies Heritage Overlay controls.**

This is particularly important as both the Arden Macaulay study area and the abutting parts of West and North Melbourne contain a very large number of factory and other industrial and warehouse buildings that are directly comparable to the Citywide depot building (previously a City of Melbourne depot (motor vehicle workshop?) building).

These parts of the City of Melbourne, with their proximity to the railway lines and docks, and in the case of the Citywide site flood-prone land<sup>2</sup>, have traditionally attracted industrial (factories) and similar commercial buildings (warehouses and so on).

There are a very large number of such buildings that were constructed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, up until around the 1960s.

Citywide's depot building is the same as a typical factory building constructed during the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, and photographs of a number of directly comparable examples are included in this Evidence. Its interior contains virtually nothing that demonstrates its probable original function, apart from having a small office area on the street corner and a large open area behind, just like any factory constructed during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (there are a couple of vehicle inspection pits in the concrete floor, but it is not known if they are original or a later change).

➤ **The ARDEN MACAULAY HERITAGE REVIEW has NOT ESTABLISHED the -**

- ❖ **Date of construction** of this building
- ❖ **Original owner** (it has not been established that this building was built for the City of Melbourne)
- ❖ **Original function** of the building - presumably the building was built for the City of Melbourne, but was it an equipment store, motor vehicle workshop?. The Heritage Review refers to the office part having been the Council Depot offices, but the office area in this building is quite small.

The 1931, 1942, 1951 and 1960 aerial photographs show a number of other buildings on this site in the 1930s and 1940s, prior to the construction of this building (with the large open building behind) sometime between 1951 and 1960). Most or all of the early structures appear to have been demolished since. The asphalt plant evidently dates from recent times.

- ❖ **Date of the apparent small first floor addition** (the location of the windows and the join in the brickwork at parapet level in the southern part of the two storey section seem to indicate that the first floor was enlarged later).

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<sup>2</sup> The subject building and others in this location have substantially built-up ground floor levels, something like a metre higher than the ground level, and the entire Citywide site is included in LS101 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay in the Melbourne Planning Scheme (see map 4LSIO).

- ❖ **Relationship to the remainder of the City Council depot**, assuming that this building was originally built as part of the Council depot

The above information is really essential to justify an individual Heritage Overlay listing.

➤ **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE does NOT JUSTIFY the PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY CONTROLS**

The Statement of Significance does not justify the proposed Heritage Overlay controls. The Statement of Significance is the following -

*“Melbourne City Council Depot office and workshop building is significant*

*Aesthetically, as a well-preserved Modernist style, highly representative and prominent part of a large municipal depot complex, designed in the same Modernist manner which aligns with other distinctive City Architect designs in the locality (Criterion E).”*

In regard to the above Statement of Significance, the following considerations are relevant -

- ❖ The subject building is actually a rather behind-the-times design for the 1950s, repeating 1930s design. The Laurens Street electricity substation and the nearby factory at 35 Barrett Street are better examples of the same basic design idiom - see the photographs on the following pages. Some nearby examples of more modern 1950s and 1960s buildings are shown in the later section containing photographs of comparable buildings.
- ❖ The relationship to the Municipal depot has not been established (beyond that there was a Council depot in this location prior to the construction of this building.
- ❖ The Laurens Street substation is better example.
- ❖ The significance of supposedly being a work of the City Architect, if it was, has not been established.

3) **ARDEN MACAULAY HERITAGE REVIEW HAS NOT SATISFACTORILY JUSTIFIED THE PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY SCHEDULE LISTING FOR CITYWIDE'S 4 PEPPER TREES**

The Arden Macaulay Heritage Review has -

- ❖ **Apparently identified the 4 Pepper trees** as essentially a **representative planting** of exotic trees, **rather than** one that is **unusual or rare**.
- ❖ **Not undertaken a Comparative Analysis of Pepper trees** in the study area.
- ❖ There are a number of other examples in this part of the study area, such as -
  - ❖ Edging the front garden of the nearby North Melbourne Recreation Centre
  - ❖ (swimming pool) (apparently shown in the old aerial photographs in this Evidence);
  - ❖ Opposite side of Macaulay Road from the Recreation Centre - 1 large example and 1 younger tree (seedling/sucker?);
  - ❖ In Langford Street;
  - ❖ Along the Moonee Ponds Creek
  - ❖ Several apparently larger specimens in the front garden of the factory at 34-36 Stubbs Street.

➤ **The ARDEN MACAULAY HERITAGE REVIEW has NOT ESTABLISHED the -**

- ❖ **Likely Time of Planting** of the **4 Trees**.
- ❖ **Original Nature** of this **Planting** - the old aerial photographs seem to indicate a short line of trees/shrubs on either side of a now demolished building.
- ❖ **Three** of the **Trunks** are in **Close Proximity** to each other, which suggests that one or more are old suckers or seedlings rather than all trees originally planted as part of a line trees.
- ❖ The Citywide depot site is very low-lying and flood-prone, so the ground would always have had a relatively high moisture content, and that would presumably have promoted tree growth - thus these 4 trees may not be as old as they have been assumed to be.
- ❖ **Original owner** (it has not been established that these trees were planted for the City of Melbourne).



➤ **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE does NOT JUSTIFY the  
PROPOSED HERITAGE OVERLAY CONTROLS**

The Statement of Significance does not justify the proposed Heritage Overlay controls. The Statement of Significance is the following -

*“This mature pepper tree row at 208-290 Arden Street is significant.*

*Historically, as indicative of a once common perimeter planting regime specifically for dusty areas such as stable yards which were more common in this area than others in the Melbourne district also as street trees within the Melbourne area; and*

*Part of a group of similar and significant plantings across the Kensington and North Melbourne areas (Criterion A).”*

In regard to the above Statement of Significance, the following considerations are relevant -

- ❖ It has not been established when and why these 4 trees were planted - see above comments.
- ❖ There are a number of other plantings of this species of tree in the vicinity and in the Arden Macaulay area - see the examples on the next pages`.

4) **HERITAGE GRADINGS PROPOSED OVERSTATE THE CLAIMED HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The proposed C grading for the Peppercorn trees and the circa 1950s factory type building both overstate the heritage value that is being claimed - at best a D or E grading would be a more accurate definition of the perceived heritage value of both - this will be discussed at the Panel Hearing.

5) **PROPOSED USE OF A LEVEL 3 GRADING**

In regard to the proposed level 3 streetscape gradings (in front of the subject trees and building on their side of the street only), while the past practice of applying a level 3 grading to all streets not graded 1 or 2 has been followed in the City's heritage evaluations (though obviously the level 3 grading meaning all of the other streets that are not level 1 or 2 does not mean much at all), is pointless in a case such as this where the rest of the street in this location does not merit any heritage streetscape grading at all. There is no point in grading short lengths of street level 3 on one side of the street in front of something (or the rest of the street) when there is in reality no streetscape of any real heritage value in the remainder of the street (and no other graded sites).

6) **PHOTOGRAPHS OF COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES AND OLD AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUBJECT SITE ARE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES**

## **WHAT DO THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES IN THIS PART OF THE CITY OF MELBOURNE SHOW**

Those photographs show the following -

- There are a large number of (former) industrial, warehouse and other commercial buildings constructed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including in around the 1950s, in the Arden Macaulay area and in the abutting parts of the City of Melbourne - their sizable number, location and design all reflect the particular qualities of this location that resulted in them being constructed there (nearby railway and docks, proximity to central Melbourne, relationship to the remainder of Melbourne (large numbers of factory buildings were constructed in the inner suburbs of Melbourne during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), in some instances low-lying and flood-prone land that was not desired for residential or other use, and so on).
- There are a sizable number of industrial and other buildings that are directly comparable with the subject building, including some in the Arden Macaulay study area.
- In contrast to the subject, basically isolated site, there are basically precincts of comparable factory buildings in this part the City of Melbourne, beside the railway lines, south and north of Dynon Road, and west of the Moonee Ponds Creek and north of Arden Street - they all contain important industrial buildings from various eras in the context of the City.

## **WHAT DO THE OLD AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS SHOW**

Those photographs show the following -

- The City depot site, if that is what it was then, was very different in the 1930s and most if not all of the structures that existed then were either demolished around the 1950s, when the subject building appears to have been built, or subsequently.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH**

As the Heritage Review has not been able to find the necessary information, I have undertaken some investigation during the short time period available - if further information becomes available, I will make it available at the Panel Hearing.

**HERITAGE OVERLAY SIGNIFICANCE BEING CLAIMED FOR  
THE PROPOSED HO1107 FORMER MELBOURNE CITY  
COUNCIL DEPOT OFFICE AND WORKSHOP BUILDING, AND  
THE HO1095 MATURE PEPPER TREE ROW**

**PROPOSED HO1107 FORMER MELBOURNE CITY COUNCIL  
DEPOT OFFICE AND WORKSHOP BUILDING<sup>1</sup>**

The Arden Macauley Heritage Review's assessment of this building includes the following -

**Recommended Grading** C 3<sup>2</sup>

**Statement of Significance**

*"Why is it significant?"*

*Melbourne City Council Depot office and workshop building is significant*

*Aesthetically, as a well-preserved Modernist style, highly representative and prominent part of a large municipal depot complex, designed in the same Modernist manner which aligns with other distinctive City Architect designs in the locality (Criterion E).*

**Associated historical and other material in the Heritage Review -**

*"Resembling the earlier electricity substation, designed by city Architect Eric Beilby, and erected on the former City Pound Site in Laurens Street (1938) this two-storey three colour brick Modernist building was erected as office accommodation at the Melbourne City Council Depot in the 1950s.*

*Melbourne City road making had always been located around the North Melbourne area with a stone crushing plant and depot being south of them North Melbourne baths site in the Victoria-era and an asphalt plant on the Haymarket site in Elizabeth Street in the 1920s. The depot near the baths was moved in 1937 as part of the baths redevelopment.*

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<sup>1</sup> Graeme Butler and Associates, Arden Macaulay Heritage Review, 2012, pp. 364-365 and 355-358 (pages miss-numbered).

<sup>2</sup> The 2008 Heritage Places Inventory Incorporated into Clause 81 lists 210 Arden Street as a C graded building in a level 3 streetscape.

*The plant at the centre of the Council asphalt works was erected in 1957, on the 3 acre Arden Street reserve, costing &92,000 and based on a North American model. At that time the City maintained some 1382 acres of road surface and within a few years the new plant had made a marked difference to annual paving rates, allowing a speedier removal of the red gum blocks that had paved parts of the City roads.*

*This office and workshop building is a highly representative and prominent part of a large complex, designed in the same Modernistic manner in a parapeted form (sic) with two colour brickwork, distributed both sides of Green Street, with frontages to Arden<sup>3</sup> (sic) and Langford Street. Windows are steel framed with multi-pane glazing and set in cream brick streamlines or banding encircling the two building levels. Dark glazed manganese bricks trim the window and cream banding. Beyond the parapet is a distinctive hipped sawtooth roofline over the workshop areas. Other buildings further east on the north side of Green Street are similar in design but typically one storey."*

### **Recommendations section**

- ❖ *"...the place and associated land as mapped at 8-18 Langford Street (also known as 208-292 Arden Street), North Melbourne...."*
- ❖ *Paint colour control only should apply in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay, Clause 43.01 ..."*

### **"Further Work**

- ❖ *Continue to search Melbourne City Council Architect files for this building and reassess as required."*

### **Section setting out the sources used by the Heritage Review for its assessment**

- ❖ *Despite a large number of sources being listed, none of them gives any specific information about this building, not even a date of construction.*

### **Relevant thematic history theme represented section**

BUILDING A COMMERCIAL CITY:5.5 Building a manufacturing industry.

:6.6 Streetmaking, drainage and river works.

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<sup>3</sup> This building does not front Arden Street, but Langford and Green Streets, on the opposite side of the Depot site from Arden Street.

## **PROPOSED HO1095 MATURE PEPPER TREE ROW AT PART 208-292 ARDEN STREET<sup>4</sup>**

The Arden Macauley Heritage Review's assessment of these trees includes the following -

**Recommended Grading** C 3<sup>5</sup>

### **Statement of Significance**

*"Why is it significant?"*

*This mature pepper tree row at 208-290 Arden Street is significant.*

*Historically, as indicative of a once common perimeter planting regime specifically for dusty areas such as stable yards which were more common in this area than others in the Melbourne district also as street trees within the Melbourne area; and*

*Part of a group of similar and significant plantings across the Kensington and North Melbourne areas (Criterion A).*

### ***Contributory elements***

*The contributory elements within this property include, but are not restricted to canopy, trunk, limbs and root ball of identified trees."*

### **Associated historical and other material in the Heritage Review -**

- ❖ *"...mature pepper trees planted across North Melbourne and Kensington localities are indicative of a street and specimen tree planting program undertaken by the Melbourne City Council in the Victorian and Edwardian-era, with major plantings surviving at the former Newmarket stock sale yards. Pepper trees were seen across the Australian colonies to be hardy and drought resistant trees, as well as being evergreen and thus shade trees giving with a fine leaf canopy that allowed for dust screening. This latter aspect meant they were also planted along industrial, stable or stock yard perimeter plus school and public land boundaries to alleviate dust in what was then a relatively dusty environment. This type of site was common in North Melbourne, Flemington and Kensington."*

<sup>4</sup> Graeme Butler and Associates, Arden Macauley Heritage Review, 2012, pp. 202-213.

<sup>5</sup> The 2008 Heritage Places Inventory Incorporated into Clause 81 lists 210 Arden Street as a C graded building in a level 3 streetscape.

- ❖ *“These specimens (4) are mature with typical wide spreading canopies and located on the boundary of what was the Melbourne City Council stables and, over a longer period, by J Sullivan & Sons Pty. Ltd., carriers and horse dealers, presumably to inhibit dust as was common practice.”*
- ❖ *“The four remaining trees vary in trunk size and canopy but appear to have once been part of a row of trees.”*

### **Recommendations section**

- ❖ *“...the place and associated land within 5m of the drip line of the identified trees or the Tree protection Zone nominated in Australian Standard As (sic) 4970, whichever is the greater...should be added to the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay cited in Clause 43.01....”*

### **Section setting out the sources used by the Heritage Review for its assessment**

- ❖ *“ 1931 (aerial views) indistinct with line drawn over the boundary but shows two tree groups.”*
- ❖ *“Figure 49 Aerial view 1942 shows two mature tree groups”.*
- ❖ *Figure 50 c1955 aerial view showing mature trees (State Library of Victoria).”*

### **Relevant thematic history theme represented section**

APPRECIATING AND ADAPTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:7.2  
Cultivating the ‘Garden City’ aesthetic

### **Comparative examples section**

- ❖ *“...but observation of the project study area, plus parts of North Melbourne and large parts of Kensington, show that pepper trees are signature plantings across these localities either as substantial existing trees, tree rows along boundaries or new plantings evidently to perpetuate this character...”.*

- ❖ *“Pepper trees were identified along the railway Market (sic), and Moonee Ponds Creek reserves in Bellaire Street, Kensington in varying maturity...but are more importantly symbolic of a common usage by industry and government bodies for boundary planting in the Victorian-era and Edwardian-eras (sic) to achieve dust control as one key objective.”*
  
- ❖ *“The Arden Street examples, rather than being in competition with the other examples, provide a cumulative contribution that bolsters the once greater presence of pepper trees in North Melbourne.”*