

RELEVANT INFORMATION FOR COUNCIL

FILE: D/2016/98 **DATE:** 27 June 2016
TO: Lord Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Graham Jahn, Director City Planning, Development and Transport
SUBJECT: Information Relevant To Item 9.10 - D/2016/98 – Development
Application: 126 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo - At Council 27 June
2016

That the Lord Mayor and Councillors note the information contained in this memo.

Background

At the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee (the Committee) on 21 June 2016, the retention and/or interpretation of the existing mural with the words 'Hi, Welcome to Woolloomooloo' (sic) was raised.

There are remnants of three murals on the site. These are identified in the figures below as "A", "B", and "C".

The particular mural in question, marked as "C" in Figure 1 below, is painted on a remnant brick wall, located approximately half way along the Reid Avenue site boundary. The wall is at a 90 degree angle to Reid Avenue and therefore does not face the Reid Avenue street frontage, but faces into the subject site. It is also approximately 12 metres from the Dowling Street frontage. The mural has three panels, with the middle panel including the text and a handprint. The two flanking panels appear to be graffiti, one making a drug reference.



Figure 1: Aerial image of the site highlighting the location of the existing murals, 'C' is the mural in question



Figure 2: Site viewed from the intersection of Dowling Street and Reid Avenue illustrating the location of the existing murals



Figure 3: Image of Mural “C” – ‘Hi, Welcome to Woolloomooloo’ (sic)

Paragraphs 75 to 79 and figures 19 to 21 in the planning report to the Committee on 21 June refers to the murals, including their relationship to the former Community Garden which was informally established on the site between 2004 and 2009. As viewed in Figures 4 and 5 below, which are dated from approximately 2009, mural “C” does not exist in these photos and can therefore not be more than approximately 7 years old.



Figure 4: Image of Wall in approximately 2009



Figure 5: Image of Wall in approximately 2009

Since the Committee meeting, further discussions have been held with the applicant, Land and Housing Corporation (Crown) and, due to the location of the wall at right angles to the street, and the required remediation and site works necessary to make the site suitable for development, the existing wall and mural cannot be retained in situ. The mural wall is not located at the boundary housing as was thought at the Committee meeting. It is perpendicular to the Reid Avenue frontage (see Figure 1). It is also noted that, given that it retains a step in the site, and the visibly poor structural condition of the wall, and significant structural cracking from the top of the wall to the bottom, options to relocate the brickwork are also not considered viable.

The significance, retention and/or interpretation of the mural was discussed with the City's Public Art Program Manager and Heritage Specialist. It is considered that the murals are not long standing features in the area, nor are they as significant as other murals associated with Woolloomooloo.

Advice has also been sought from other relevant community staff. They have advised that they are not aware of any complaints from the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community in Woolloomooloo on this issue. It is also their opinion that there are no colours or symbols (apart from a sketchy handprint) that resembles Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander art, and that the aspirations of the local community are unlikely to subscribe to the drug reference.

Therefore, in this instance, the removal of the mural is acceptable. Suitable conditions have been recommended in the planning report to the Committee on 21 June 2016 that require a photographic archival record of all of the murals and an interpretation of the murals as part of the provision of public art on site. The conditions relating to this are referenced below.

(23) PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTATION (MINOR WORKS)

Prior to any works commencing, an archival photographic recording of the art murals on the terraced landscape wall and the southern elevation of the existing building immediately located to the north of Lot 601 is to be prepared.

One copy of the record is to be submitted to Council to be lodged with Council's Archives.

For buildings or structures with heritage significance, the archival documentation, and the number of images required will be determined by the significance and quality of the building(s) or structure(s).

The recording is to include documentation of the site and its context, and the exteriors and interiors of the existing building(s), using a camera/lens capable of 'perspective correction'. Particular attention must be paid to fabric, elements, features, spaces and details that will be affected, modified or demolished.

The photographic recording is to be in digital form, prepared in accordance with the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage guidelines titled 'Photographic Recording of Heritage Items using Film or Digital Capture' <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/heritagebranch/heritage/infophotographicrecording2006.pdf>.

- (a) The Development Application number and the Condition of Consent number must be noted.
- (b) Include a summary report detailing the project description, date and authorship of the photographic record, method of documentation and limitations of the photographic record.
- (c) The digital images are to be taken with a minimum 8 megapixel camera, saved as JPEG, TIFF or PDF files with a file size of approximately 4-6MB each. Choose only images that are necessary to document the process, and avoid duplicate images. Each image is to be cross-referenced to location plans where each image was taken, and cross-referenced to an index table (catalogue sheet). Each image is to be appropriately named (with up to 20 characters) for ease of identification e.g. 01_Ext_WestElev, 15_Int_Bed1_Fireplce.
- (d) Include written confirmation, issued with the authority of both the applicant and the photographer that the City of Sydney is granted a perpetual non-exclusive licence to make use of the copyright in all images supplied, including the right to make copies available to third parties as though they were Council images. The signatures of both the applicant and the photographer must be included.
- (e) The report is to be submitted on a USB flash drive, CD or DVD, in PDF/A format (created directly from the digital original), with the digital catalogue of images containing the following data for each: DOS title, image subject/description and date photograph taken.

(24) PUBLIC ART

Final details of the proposed public art work on the Dowling Street ground floor elevation, including an interpretation of the local community significance of the site, murals and/or the remnants of its former uses, is to be submitted to and approved by Council's Area Planning Manager, provided that Council shall not unreasonably withhold such approval, prior to any building work commencing on site. The public artwork must be in accordance with the *Sydney DCP 2012* and the *Public Art Policy*. Installation of the art work must be completed to Council's satisfaction within 3 months following occupation of the development.

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TRIM Document Number: 2016/334888

Approved



**Graham Jahn, Director City Planning,
Development and Transport**