



10 July 2015

Hon John Day MLA
Minister for Planning; Culture and the Arts
11th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Minister

GUILDFORD HOTEL REDEVELOPMENT

The Australian Institute of Architects advocates on behalf of the architecture profession and the community to enhance the quality and amenity of our built environment. We take this opportunity to comment on the City of Swan's recent decision to reject a scheme amendment for the Guildford Hotel that would have seen a 25 metre building height limit at the rear of the site.

It is the Institute's view at the outset that there be some flexibility around height limits to allow for merit based decision making, however we also take guidance from the Heritage Council of Western Australia which itself provided input during the scheme amendment comment period.

To put our position in some context it is important to understand the heritage value of the hotel, the existing built form in Guildford and how this supports your Government's desire for higher density.

The devastating fire at the Guildford Hotel in September 2008 caused the loss of much of the original fabric of the building, including a substantial section of the roof and first floor. There was also considerable damage to the ground floor and total loss of the belvedere. The latter was a landmark feature in the town.

Guildford is a special place, as recognised by the National Trust, and in time, may well find its way onto the State Register. In the past two decades the area has become more and more popular, not only as a place to live, but as a destination, with the standard of shops, antique outlets and cafes improving. The town is also centred on the Guildford Train Station, something that enables sites like the Guildford Hotel to be more responsive with development.

It is essential that the hotel is conserved and supported by some additional development, providing that it is compatible with the significance of the building and its place in the town. In its role as the State's authority on heritage, the Heritage Council resolved to support a development that might be as high as 11 metres, the approximate height of the existing parapet wall, with a maximum height being that of the belvedere.

The Council's decision to support only two storeys is disappointing and misses an opportunity to obtain a good heritage outcome while at the same time increasing density near a train station. The Institute favours the Heritage Council's position, but is also open to a less rigid regime that might attract the sort of high quality designs which would otherwise be deemed unacceptable.

We are happy to further discuss our views on this matter to emphasise the benefits of good conservation, adaptation and increased site utility. It may in fact be appropriate to seek the advice of the Government Architect on how to achieve the best results, but in any case, the Institute is keen to play a role.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Griffiths', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PHILIP GRIFFITHS FRAIA RIBA M.ICOMOS
STATE PRESIDENT WESTERN AUSTRALIA