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Our Reference: 14455

Planning Considerations for the Full Restoration of the Old Municipal Council Chambers Building

The Christchurch District Plan (District Plan) identifies the Old Municipal Chambers Building (OMC) as a Group 1 'Highly Significant' heritage item – Heritage Item Number 415.

Under the new provisions of the District Plan “repairs” and “maintenance” works are permitted. However, “heritage upgrade work”, which includes structural seismic upgrades and reconstruction works, require resource consent as a controlled activity unless the works are undertaken in accordance with a certified heritage works plan. Alterations to a heritage item also require resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity.

It is considered that the Full Restoration Option would likely require resource consent due to some of the proposed works meeting the definition of “alteration”. However, owing to the nature of the proposed works, which will help ensure the repair, restoration and strengthening of a nationally significant heritage building, it is considered that the proposal will be actively achieving the relevant objectives of the Christchurch District Plan and the Regional Policy Statement.

In considering the policy framework for the District Plan, Objective 9.3.2.1.1 - *Historic heritage* and the associated Policy 9.3.2.2.3 – *Management of scheduled historic heritage* and Policy 9.3.2.2.5 - *Ongoing use of heritage items and heritage settings* all provide for the on-going use and adaptive re-use of heritage items and heritage settings. A Full Restoration option is considered to be consistent with this policy framework

Underlying Zone Provisions

The site is zoned Open Space – Avon River Precinct (Papa o Otakaro) in the District Plan. The zone aims to restore and enhance the established and important public open space of the Avon River Precinct/Papa o Otakaro as a:

- i. People, walking and cycle focused river edge;
- ii. Place providing leisure opportunities and enhancing the city’s distinctive identity while protecting the natural qualities and habitats of the river and its margins.

Notwithstanding possible impacts on heritage values, which may make the following activities unacceptable, in terms of possible future uses for the restored building, the following activities are permitted within the zone if they meet any relevant activity specific standard:

- Public amenities including visitor information centres;
- Ancillary office activity;
- Ancillary retail activity;
- Food and beverage outlets;

- conference and function facilities;
- guest accommodation;
- community activity;
- gymnasium;
- residential activity; and
- cultural facility.

It is also considered that if an alternative viable use could be found for OMC that required resource consent because of the underlying zoning provision but was sympathetic to the heritage fabric of the building that it would likely be granted resource consent.

Key Stakeholders in the consenting process

Christchurch City Council Heritage Team

Consultation with the Christchurch City Council's Heritage Team Leader, Brendan Smyth, has already commenced. The initial discussions have centred around the draft feasibility concept design options that are under development.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

In recognition of its historical significance, the building is registered by Heritage New Zealand as a Category I Historic Place.

Regular meetings are to be held with a representative from Heritage New Zealand.

Mahaanui Kurataiao Limited (MKT)

Owing to the proximity of the proposed works to the Avon River consultation will be undertaken in due course with Mahaanui Kurataiao Limited (MKT).

Other Matters - Archaeological Authority

The Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 makes it unlawful for any person to destroy, damage or modify the whole or any part of an archaeological site without the prior authority of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. This is the case regardless of whether the land on which the site is located is designated, or the activity is permitted under the District or Regional Plan or a resource or building consent has been granted.

A global authority will be required for works as the site is associated with pre-1900 human activity and hence has status as an archaeological site as defined in the Historic Places Act Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

Planning Conclusions

- The Full Restoration Option would likely require resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity;
- The Full Restoration Option would be actively achieving the relevant objectives of the Christchurch Regional Policy Statement and Christchurch Replacement District Plan;
- A resource consent would likely be processed on a non-notified basis;
- The underlying zone provisions provide for a range of permitted uses of the building;
- If an alternative viable use could be found for OMC that required resource consent because of

the underlying zoning provision but was sympathetic to the heritage fabric of the building that it would likely be granted resource consent;

- Ongoing consultation should be had with key stakeholders.

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