

Town of East Fremantle Adopts Development Controls for Royal George Hotel Site

The Royal George Hotel was purchased by Saracen Properties in June 2017 after it was transferred to the State Government from the National Trust. It is understood that a Heritage Agreement between the Heritage Council of WA and the owner formed part of the contract of sale to ensure the restoration of the building.

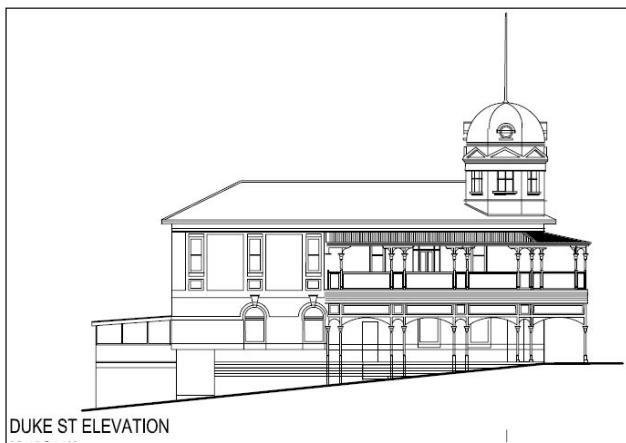
Following discussions by the Town with the owner and the Heritage Council of WA it became clear that the Conservation Management Strategy (developed in conjunction with the Heritage Agreement) would not address issues of development controls (as was intended by the current Planning Scheme) but solely focussed on the restoration of the Hotel.



As such the Town initiated Amendment 15 (June 2017) to protect the heritage value of the whole site and the surrounding character and amenity of the area. Amendment 15 limited building height to seven (7) storeys, but made provision that a decision-maker could vary all development standards.

Amendment 15 was advertised for public comment from July to September 2017 and a total of 15 submissions were received; all in support of seven (7) or less storeys or equivalent building height to the Hotel.

The property owner's planning consultants also made a submission proposing nine (9) storeys, with a provision for increased height if performance criteria were met. The community submissions included a 115 signature petition objecting to seven (7) storeys (requesting maximum five (5) storeys) and the associated traffic and parking impacts.



Nearly all submissions commented on the significant traffic and parking issues being experienced in the precinct.

Council, at a Special Meeting held on 6 June 2018, resolved to support Amendment 15 with modifications. The modifications will introduce a maximum building height of six (6) storeys (including basement or semi basement parking), building setbacks from Duke Street and the Hotel, no plot ratio controls and no parking concessions. Also, a provision which would not allow a decision-maker to vary the height and setback provisions has been included.

Mayor Jim O'Neill stated *"It is Council's view that these controls are fair and reasonable given the location and significance of the site, and will still enable the Royal George Hotel to be developed on a larger scale than the current Planning Scheme provisions would permit, whilst protecting the established character of the Town"*.

The Amendment has now been forwarded to the Western Australian Planning Commission who will provide a recommendation to the Minister for Planning, Lands and Heritage. The Minister then has the power to approve, refuse or modify the proposed Scheme Amendment.

Mayor O'Neill said that *"the Town initiated Amendment 15 in June 2017 and over the last year has undertaken public consultation, sought feedback, and liaised with the owner, including the owner presenting on several occasions to Council. This all being done to allow careful consideration by Council of the matter before finalising the proposed development controls in Amendment 15."*

