

ARCHITELLE

Architecture & Interiors

12 Denison Street, Hornsby NSW 2077
(02) 9477 3092
ms.architelle@gmail.com
ABN 44 173 768 426

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Muswellbrook Shire Council
PO Box 122
Muswellbrook
NSW 2333

Attention: Hamish McTaggart

RE: DA 2023/100, 37 OGILVIE STREET, DENMAN

Introduction

The following has been prepared in response to Council's Request for Additional Information Letter dated 07 November 2023, relating to proposed retail and motel development to 37 Ogilvie Street, Denman.

In response to the issues raised in the letter, the proposal has been modified. The scope of this letter is to assess the heritage impact of the modified scheme.

Authorship

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Margaret Skilbeck, Registered Architect NSW No 6144, heritage consultant listed with NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, and principal architect of Architelle, Architecture & Interiors.



Modified Proposal

Modifications to the previously submitted proposal that are relevant to this Heritage Impact Assessment include:

1. Delete the open walkway between the two shop buildings that front Ogilvie Street
2. Increase the open space to the west side of the shop buildings
3. Extend the verandah along Paxton Street footpath, in the form of a framed pergola
4. Provide articulation to the east (Paxton Street) facade of Unit 8 (previously Unit 1), including the addition of recessed windows and cantilevered window shades.

A comparison of the changes to principal views of the proposal from Ogilvie and Paxton Streets can be seen in the table below.

Streetscape images of previously submitted DA, compared to the current modified proposal.

View	Original Proposal	Modified Proposal
Ogilvie Street facade		

Ogilvie Street facade		
Ogilvie Street facade		
View from the corner of Ogilvie and Paxton Streets		
Paxton Street facade of Shop building with Unit 8 above.		

Heritage Significance

The heritage significance of the location has been identified as follows:

The commercial district of Denman is significant as it retains much of the physical character of a small town centre from the period before the first world wars. This character is dominated by small-scale, often detached, commercial and civic buildings and by modest interwar houses which are interspersed amongst commercial buildings. All the buildings are single storeyed and modest in bulk, other than the two hotels at the corner of Palace and Ogilvie Streets. Special features of the area are the painted and traditionally lettered signage and the unrolled iron skillion awnings supported by verandah posts which remain on some present and former commercial premises.

The stretch of Ogilvie Street between Palace and Paxton streets (the east end of the street) has the greatest integrity, presenting as a continuous strip of shopfronts book ended by the two storey hotel buildings to the east and the bank buildings on the corner of Paxton Street to the west. This east end

of Ogilvie Street is the principal retail strip within the town and makes a substantial contribution to the 1920's rural townscape character for which the Denman HCA is significant.

The west end of Ogilvie Street, between Paxton Street and the Railway, doesn't share the high degree of historic integrity or consistent streetscape character. It was developed later and has undergone significant change over time, including the construction of more contemporary buildings such as Denman Rural buildings, Merton Living homes, and the Denman medical facilities, all with varying forms, scale and setbacks from the street.

The subject property is located within the west end of Ogilvie Street.

Assessment of Heritage Impact

In Council's RFI letter it was acknowledged that:

Council Officers including Council's Heritage Officer do not have significant reservations with the overall external building design and appearance from a visual and heritage impact perspective, with the exception of bulk and location of proposed unit 1.

The modified proposal is generally consistent with the external building design of the previously submitted proposal, including in its siting, height, form, scale and materiality, so it continues to be acceptable from a visual and heritage impact perspective overall.

The design continues to be consistent with Council's Denman Style Guide, reflecting Denman's architecture and following the Guide's direction regarding key design features, including materials, awnings, roof form, frontage and simple decoration.

The main changes to the external form of the proposal, and its relationship to the streetscape, are limited to:

1. The Ogilvie Street shop fronts, and
2. The Paxton Street facade of Unit 8 (previously Unit 1)

The heritage impact of these changes is assessed below.

1. Ogilvie Street Shopfronts

Changes to the Ogilvie Street shop fronts have resulted from the resolution of planning issues raised in the RFI letter.

With the open walkway deleted from between the two shop buildings, the facade now presents as a double fronted shop facade, with a continuous verandah and parapet that reflects the double gable roof form behind. This form of shop front is characteristic in the traditional Ogilvie Street retail precinct, examples include Nos 13-15, 20, 21 and 29 Ogilvie Street.



Double fronted, double gable parapet shopfront at 13-15 Ogilvie Street



Double fronted, double gable parapet shopfront at 21 Ogilvie Street

Attaching the two shop buildings allows:

- a continuous parapet which assists to screen the first floor units behind more effectively.
- a simpler, less disrupted facade, with a narrower overall width and fewer verandah posts.
- a single, wider area of open landscaped space to be provided along the west side of the development. This open area is representative of the landscaped space previously provided

on the site (beside the existing dwelling) and is characteristic of the space provided between buildings along the main retail strip of Ogilvie Street.

The proposal will continue to replicate significant elements of the original Frantz Farmers Services corner shop building, including facade parapet details, window openings, trim profiles and verandahs, so the history of the site and its relationship to the heritage streetscape can continue to be interpreted.

The modifications to the Ogilvie Street shopfront facade are acceptable in terms of potential heritage impact, as the development will:

- continue to have a characteristic form and materiality that will make a positive contribution to the traditional townscape of Denman.
- continue to extend the traditional retail character of Ogilvie Street towards the west, beyond the Paxton Street corner.
- provide a characteristic balance between built form and space between buildings
- allow the single storey shopfront facade to dominate the presentation of the property to Ogilvie Street
- allow the original corner shop building to continue to be interpreted

2. Paxton Street Facade

Modifications to the Paxton Street facade have been undertaken in response to the following comment in Council's RFI letter:

It is the view of Council Assessing Officers that proposed unit 1 presents as a very square building element highly visible at both Palace and Ogilvie Street streetscapes. The strong blocky appearance of the unit is uncharacteristic of the conservation area. Council Officers are interested in whether a design solution could be explored to cut back the mass of the unit or its location to be shifted and whether shade devices such as eaves and cantilevered window shades could be added break up the first-floor bulk.

In order to reduce the visual impact of Unit 8 (previously Unit 1) on the Paxton Street facade, the following modifications to the facade have been incorporated:

- the verandah/awning has been extended along the footpath of Paxton Street to the end of the shop building, to assist to screen and break up the mass of the two storey facade. The verandah extension takes the form of an open pergola, that follows the line of the verandah, to be sympathetic with the retail street character, while allowing light into the windows beneath.
- the first floor windows are set within recessed panels, to provide articulation that reduces visual bulk. The recessed windows of Unit 8 are designed to reflect the character of the Old Bank Building on the opposite corner.
- cantilevered sun shades that have been added to Unit 8 windows provide additional articulation to the facade.

Although Council suggest that the *strong blocky appearance of the unit is uncharacteristic of the conservation area*, it has been designed in response to the parapeted buildings that are prevalent in Ogilvie Street, in order to have a sympathetic form and character. The development is generally unembellished to be visually recessive, while providing a stripped back version of characteristic development in the streetscape. Examples of contributory buildings referenced, that could be considered to have a similar 'strong, blocky' character include the Old Bank Building, Denman Memorial Hall, Denman Pharmacy (No 32) and the IGA Building (No 44).



Old Bank Building, to the NE corner of Ogilvie and Paxton Streets.



IGA Building, 44 Ogilvie Street



Denman Memorial Hall

The design of the Paxton Street facade, with the modifications proposed to reduce the visual impact of Unit 8, is therefore considered appropriate within the context.

Overhead Conductor Clearance

There are overhead powerlines along Ogilvie Street in front of the subject property. A Conductor Clearance Assessment Report has been prepared by Power Solutions, which has identified that there is insufficient clearance from the existing building to the overhead mains. The report concluded that changes to the structure or Ausgrid assets are required to comply with Ausgrid standards.

As the non-compliance is an existing condition, and the existing shop building makes a significant contribution to the streetscape character and history of Denman, dispensation is sought on heritage grounds to allow the existing building to be reconstructed in the new development.

Dispensation would not make the existing non-compliance any worse, but will allow the shop building to be reconstructed in its original form, in accordance with Muswellbrook Council's heritage advisor's determination.

Conclusion

The modified proposal is acceptable in terms of its potential impact on the identified heritage significance of the Denman Heritage Conservation Area.

The single storey retail premises will continue to make a substantial contribution to the integrity of the streetscape of Ogilvie Street and will allow the original corner shop building to be interpreted. The visitor accommodation to the rear is setback sufficiently from Ogilvie Street to ensure it will have no adverse effect on the scale and character of this principal streetscape of the HCA.

The new work has been designed with appropriate scale, form and character to be sympathetic to the conservation area and contributory buildings in the vicinity, so will have no detrimental impact on the identified heritage significance of the place.

The modified proposal is compatible with reasonable expectations of contemporary use of the property as a viable commercial development. Having regard to the above assessment, the heritage aspects of this application are worthy of approval.

Yours faithfully

MARGARET SKILBECK

B Arch (Hons) AIA

Registered Architect NSW No 6144

Heritage Consultant, NSW Heritage Council