

Committee for North Sydney

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The Hon. Don Harwin MP
Special Minister of State and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Sent to Hon Minister's website

Dear Minister

The MLC Building: Important in the future of the North Sydney city centre

The Committee for North Sydney* welcomes the heritage assessment of the MLC Building, since this landmark Australian building – of high aesthetic, technical and representative significance – has been a civilised presence in the city centre for over sixty years.

We urge you to include the MLC Building on the State Heritage Register.

It does have a future. In this regard, the Heritage Council made four significant findings.

- It is the 'iconic Miller Street wing' that has the greater significance.
- A major upgrade/refurbishment would not compromise its heritage significance.
- A reasonable or economic use of the building is possible based on economic analysis.
- Undue financial hardship to the beneficial owners has not been demonstrated.

There is an added reason for accepting the Heritage Council's recommendation: the alternative, as proposed in North Sydney DA 147/20, inflicts serious damage on this core area of the city since strict rules (about shading) mandate a built form that offends all urban design precepts.

We were advised, in early briefings by Investa, that the new owners were fully aware, before purchasing the building, that their two options were either refurbishment or demolition, and that they considered the building a good long-term investment in either case.

It is clear from the Heritage Council's assessment that there is a third option: an imaginative and expert realisation of the site's increased development potential while (i) retaining and recovering the essential elements of the building's cultural significance and (ii) incorporating civic spaces and functions that would enhance the city centre at its very heart.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Dawkins'.

Jeremy Dawkins
Convenor
Committee for North Sydney

* The members of the Committee for North Sydney are eminent practitioners in planning, architecture, urban design and related fields and respected members of the North Sydney community. Their primary purpose is to involve the community in planning for the evolution of North Sydney from merely a CBD to an appealing *city centre* – a place for people.