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18<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Minister of Planning

NSW Department of Planning

NSW Government

Dear Minister,

**RE : Telopea Precinct, Proposed Changes to the Parramatta Local Environment Plan for Telopea and the Stage 1 Masterplan prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment in consultation with NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) and the Parramatta City Council.**

This is a submission to the proposed changes to the height, zoning and FSR controls for Telopea Precinct in relation to its impact on the heritage house 'Redstone' in 34 Adderton Road, Telopea, which is listed both on the Parramatta LEP 2011 as a local heritage item and on the NSW Heritage Register, SHR No 01795.

'Redstone' is of significant heritage value, being the only intact and largely unaltered residence designed by Walter Burley Griffin in Western Sydney. It is Griffin's last completed house in Australia and the United States still owned by the family who commissioned it. The proposed changes to the Parramatta LEP controls for Telopea in the vicinity of 'Redstone' if implemented will impact very negatively on its heritage value

'Redstone', also known as The Winter House, was designed and built for Mr Edward and Mrs Greta Winter (my grandparents) by Mr Walter Burley Griffin, internationally acclaimed town planner and architect. Burley Griffin is best known for his winning design for Canberra, Australia's capital in 1911. His output in Australia include the celebrated Newman College in Melbourne and a number of domestic dwellings in Victoria and NSW. He was credited with contributing to the development of The Prairie School of Architecture with element of **low profile houses relating to open settings and the landscape.**

The house was designed in 1935 for then a rural orcharding setting. Its heritage, cultural and historical value is inherent in its intrinsic architectural aesthetic character, its place in Modernist Architecture, its intactness as the only Griffin designed house in the world that has not had any substantial alterations; its value is that it is the only Griffin building in Western Sydney and its link to Western Sydney's past in the farming and orcharding era.

The Talopea area lies on the broad, open undulating Cumberland Plain in Sydney's West.

'Redstone' is sited on a gentle rise within the Parramatta Valley on what was an orchard, with views toward the Parramatta River and vistas eastward to the city of Sydney. The house is well set back on its original block, retaining Griffin's intended setting and layout and reflecting the importance he attached to harmonising the built environment with the landscape.

When in 2009 the house was listed on the State Heritage Register for its aesthetic qualities as a fine work of architecture and an outstandingly intact example of Walter Burley Griffin's small-scale domestic design, the then Minister of Planning Kristina Keneally noted *'The survival of 'Redstone' is a credit to three generations of Winter family to have the house listed and to maintain so well the original design of the house and the garden'*.

The house is one of the most significant twentieth-century houses in western Sydney, and the house and its context require particular respect and careful planning provisions for the surrounding area to ensure the protection of its heritage values for future generations.

The current Parramatta City Council LEP 2011 zones this property and four surrounding lots as "R2 Low Density Residential", creating a minimal and inadequate buffer. Beyond this, the 'R4 High Density Residential' Zone will visually dominate the low-set single storey Redstone.

The currently proposed changes to the LEP planning controls for the Talopea precinct if approved will irreversibly destroy the heritage value of 'Redstone' and impact very negatively on the visual character and its context.

I strongly disagree with the statements in the 2017 Talopea Master Plan Heritage and Archaeology Report by URBIS, in the 'Built Heritage' Chapter, supporting proposed height controls for the surrounding area of 'Redstone' as maintaining existing form and scale of development in the vicinity of the house.

The Masterplan allocates only two blocks (36 Adderton Rd and 2 Winter St) as a buffer to the north of Redstone and one block to the east (3 Manson St), where the height controls will be limited to 9m or 2 storeys. The immediate site to the north of the Parramatta LEP heritage curtilage area for the house is proposed to be 15m or 5 storeys and the single block to the east (No 5 Manson St) of the heritage curtilage area and the laneway is also shown as 15m high. I strongly disagree with the URBIS's report statement, that the proposed dramatic scale change of the surrounding development areas as respecting the scale and form of 'Redstone' and site, in an appropriate manner.

This significant heritage site requires more buffer from the proposed high-rise development and appropriate transition of height from 9m to 15m, 22m and 28m on the surrounding blocks.

I request the Minister to amend the proposed planning controls for the immediate surrounding sites of 'Redstone', as follows:

- To protect and conserve its heritage value, due consideration should be given to Redstone's visual setting. The surrounding and nearby buildings should not overwhelm an essential element of its heritage value, its open setting as originally conceived by Griffin. The **adjacent buildings should have minimal height impact on 'Redstone'; 9 metres high buildings only should be permitted on 36 Adderton Rd and 2 Winter St to the north of Redstone and on 1, 3 and 5 Manson St to the east of 'Redstone'. Further back from Redstone beyond the areas mentioned, maximum heights of buildings can be progressively increased to maximum of 11 metres along Winter St and Manson St.**
- The area to the north east of 'Redstone' – Polding Precinct, the 28m height area proposed for west of Sturt St should be reduced. There should be an appropriate transition in building

heights with gradual gradation from 22m (7 storey buildings), 15m (5 storey buildings), 11m (3 storey buildings) to the lowest height of 9m on the heritage site. Please see the enclosed map of proposed changes to the height controls.

- The Zoning and FSR changes should reflect the adjusted height controls.
- Heights of buildings proposed in Polding and Wade Precincts should consider over shadowing as well as impacts on visual amenities and privacy of surrounding properties.
- Shunting vehicle traffic from Marshall through relocated Wade St to Manson St poses safety issues. The narrow, winding nature of Manson is not ideal for heavy traffic load. Telopea Public School borders on Manson St – this would be used by primary school children.

Redstone's importance is recognised with its listing on the NSW State Heritage Register in January 2009, adding to listings on the Register of National Estate and National Trust of Australia; it is on the Register of Twentieth Century Buildings of Significance of The Royal Australian Institute of Architects; its heritage significance is also recognised by the Parramatta Council, being on the Parramatta City Council Local Environmental Plan, listing No 010, gazetted 21<sup>st</sup> February 1997 (Gazette No 20, P873).

I submit that in order to protect and conserve Redstone's heritage value, due consideration should be given to 'Redstone's' visual setting. The surrounding buildings must not overwhelm an essential element of its heritage value, its landscape setting. It is a rare and intact 20<sup>th</sup> century building of historical, architectural and cultural significance, designed by an internationally renowned architect and town planner. The surrounding development must respect this value and needs to be well modulated and sympathetic to a very important 20<sup>th</sup> Century State Heritage Item in Telopea.

Yours Sincerely,

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