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URBIS

DESIGN EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

Large Erecting Shop

Prepared for
MIRVAC
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CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	1
1.1.	Background	1
1.2.	Site Description	2
1.3.	The Proposal	3
2.	Requirement for Design Excellence	4
2.1.	Legislative Framework	6
2.2.	State-Led Rezoning Study Requirements	6
3.	Design Excellence Approach	7
3.1.	Overview	7
3.2.	Design Objectives	7
3.3.	Connecting with Country	8
3.4.	Heritage Conservation and Interpretation	8
3.5.	Design Team	9
	FJMT	9
	Curio Projects Pty Ltd	9
	FCAD	9
3.6.	Design Review	9
3.7.	Design Integrity	10
4.	Conclusion	11
	Disclaimer	12

FIGURES

Figure 1	Site Location	2
Figure 2	Reference Scheme	3

1. INTRODUCTION

This Design Excellence Strategy has been prepared by Urbis on behalf of Mirvac and it accompanies a State-led Rezoning Application submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) to support the adaptive reuse and conservation of the Large Erecting Shop (LES) at South Eveleigh.

This Design Excellence Strategy outlines the principles and procedures that will be followed during the detailed design of the development, prior to the lodgement of a future State Significant Development Application (SSDA) with DPE. This will ensure that the architectural and urban design of future development stages achieves design excellence and positively contributes to the broader South Eveleigh Precinct and City of Sydney Local Government Area (LGA).

The Strategy more specifically articulates the proposed design excellence process and demonstrates how design excellence will be achieved during this stage of the development. The Strategy is based on the following six principles:

- Establishment of design objectives to guide the future development on the site.
- Incorporation of Connecting with Country requirements (as recommended by FCAD), including ongoing engagement with appropriate Aboriginal stakeholders throughout the project.
- Prioritise heritage conservation and interpretation through the development of the site, including celebrating the site's diverse history.
- Establishment of a robust process to select the Design Team for the site, ensuring appropriate experience in designing and delivering design excellence, and encouraging design diversity and visual interest across the precinct.
- Undertake a process of Design Review with the NSW Government Architect, City of Sydney and other relevant stakeholders during the preparation of detailed development applications.
- Ensure Design Integrity is maintained throughout the design process.

1.1. BACKGROUND

The LES is a large industrial building with a footprint of approximately 6,000sqm located at the north west of the South Eveleigh Precinct. The LES ceased formal operation in approximately 1988 and has been largely unoccupied since approximately 2017.

The NSW Government is committed to working with the local community to develop the biggest innovation district of its kind in Australia, being Tech Central. The South Eveleigh Precinct is a key neighbourhood within Tech Central, delivering workplaces and collaboration spaces that support the vision for a new tech and innovation ecosystem. The inclusion of the LES within the broader South Eveleigh Precinct has the potential to support further innovation, collaboration and jobs for the future.

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) is therefore seeking to adaptively use the LES for a mix of uses, including commercial office and retail premises. Such land uses are currently not permitted within the planning controls that apply to the LES building, which still reflect its former infrastructure function. As such, a State-led rezoning application is being proposed to the DPE to amend the planning controls that currently apply to the site under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts – Eastern Harbour City) 2021 (Precincts SEPP)*.

While external works are required, the proposal does not seek to significantly alter the existing building footprint of the LES. Further it is proposed that the general form of the existing building and key architectural features of the existing building are retained in any future reuse of the building for commercial purposes, noting that the LES is part of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops complex included on the State Heritage Register.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 (Planning Systems SEPP) identifies various types of development and particular sites upon which certain development is defined as State Significant Development (SSD). Schedule 2 of the Planning Systems SEPP lists specific sites that where development has a capital investment value of more than \$10 million; works on those sites are state significant. Clause 2 of Schedule 2 'Redfern-Waterloo Sites' as a specific site. As the proposed adaptive reuse and conservation of the LES will have a capital investment value greater than \$10 million, the future development application to seek approval for the proposed development will be classified as SSD and will be submitted to the DPE for assessment.

1.2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The LES is an isolated building at the north west of the South Eveleigh Precinct as identified at **Figure 1**. The South Eveleigh Precinct is located approximately 200m to the south west of Redfern Train Station and approximately 200m to the west of the future Sydney Metro Waterloo Metro Station. The South Eveleigh Precinct includes an overall area of approximately 13.2 hectares.

The LES site is currently legally described as being part of Lot 5, in Deposited Plan 1175706. This allotment also includes the North Eveleigh Precinct, the rail lines separating the North and South Eveleigh Precincts, and Redfern Railway Station. It is proposed that the LES building will be subdivided from this overall allotment as part of the future development application.

The LES is owned by Transport Asset Holding Entity NSW (**TAHE**) and managed by Transport Heritage NSW. It is currently being used as a maintenance facility for heritage locomotives but it requires significant capital investment to bring it up to the required standards for continued use and avoid further deterioration.

Figure 1 Site Location



Source: Mirvac

The LES is a rectangular building consisting of two main bays with twin gable roofs running the length of the workshop. Internally, the workshops are articulated with regular cast-iron columns supporting both roof and overhead cranes. Main elevations are regularly articulated with twin semi-circular arched windows with smaller arched windows above.

1.3. THE PROPOSAL

The proposed adaptive use of the LES to accommodate technology jobs is consistent with various Government policies to increase jobs and employment and strengthen NSW position and global recognition in the innovation and technology sector. The objective is to integrate LES into the broader South Eveleigh Precinct with the upgrade of the LES being the final building in the precinct to be adaptively reused to support the vision for a new tech ecosystem.

The proposed amendments to the Precincts SEPP involve the inclusion of the LES site within the 'Business Zone—Business Park' zone, which applies to the majority of the South Eveleigh Precinct and notably is the existing zoning for the adjacent Locomotive Sheds. One of the zone objectives of the 'Business Zone – Business Park' is to ensure buildings achieve design excellence.

The State-led rezoning application also proposes new development standards including a maximum gross floor area (GFA) control on the LES site of up to 15,000sqm. Further, the proposed new planning controls are intended to facilitate the following:

- Alterations within the existing LES to convert the ground level into commercial office and retail premises,
- Creation of two new 'internal' storeys within the existing LES building envelope for use as commercial office premises,
- External upgrade and conservation work to the existing LES building to ensure it is fit for purpose and environmentally sustainable, including the construction of a new roof and an external loading dock and building services structure,
- Heritage interpretation and conservation work generally throughout the LES site,
- Services augmentation, and
- Publicly accessible space upgrades.

A reference scheme has been prepared and submitted with the rezoning application to demonstrate the possible use of the LES building for commercial premises. This reference scheme is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2 Reference Scheme



Picture 1 – View of the proposed adaptive reuse of the LES building, view towards the north west

Source: *fjmt studio*

1.4. STATE-LED REZONING STUDY REQUIREMENTS

A request was made to DPE in February 2022 to request the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces undertake a State-led rezoning to enable the adaptive reuse of the LES site. Specifically, a letter was sent to formally request that DPE prepare Study Requirements to inform a future State Significant Precinct (SSP) Study for the LES site.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Study Requirements addressed by this report and where the relevant requirement is addressed.

Table 1 Study Requirements

Study Requirements	Reference
1. Public Domain, Place and Urban Design	
1.5 Prepare a Design Excellence Strategy for the site which:	This report meets the requirements of Section 1.5 of the Study Requirements.
a) outlines the strategy for how design excellence can be achieved in the planning and design stages; and	Refer to Section 2 (Page 5) of this Report
b) includes a strategy for a design integrity and governance process through delivery and operation stages.	Refer to Section 3 (Page 9) of this Report
1.6 Design Review Panel Engage with GANSW, as to whether a Design Review Panel is required to inform the new planning controls, or at later DA stages. Prepare a response in relation to the Draft Connecting with Country framework, in consultation with the GANSW to embed an understanding of Country into the proposal.	Refer to Section 3 (Page 6) of this Report. The proponent met with the office of the GANSW on 20 May 2022, and subsequently sent a draft copy of the Design Excellence Strategy for their comment. GANSW confirmed on 28 June 2022 that the strategy is a robust document, clearly outlining the key commitments. As outlined in Section 3.6 of this report (page 9) the Design Review Panel will be consulted during the preparation of the SSDA.

Study Requirements	Reference
	<p>While this report does not include the Draft Connecting with Country Framework (which is provided with the Urban Design Report) we note that this report embeds an understanding of Country into future stages of the development.</p>

2. REQUIREMENT FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

2.1. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Design excellence provisions are contained within the Precincts SEPP. These existing provisions require a consent authority when determining a development application to consider whether the proposed development exhibits design excellence.

Specifically, in considering whether proposed development exhibits design excellence, the consent authority must have regard to the following matters:

- (a) whether a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved,*
- (b) whether the form and external appearance of the building will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,*
- (c) whether the building meets sustainable design principles in terms of sunlight, natural ventilation, wind, reflectivity, visual and acoustic privacy, safety and security and resource, energy and water efficiency,*
- (d) if a competition is held as referred to in subsection (3) in relation to the development, the results of the competition.*

It is noted that the consent authority may require a competitive design process for any development over 12 storeys, consistent with guidelines issued by the Redfern-Waterloo Authority and approved by the Minister. Given the proposal will consist of a maximum of 3 'internal' storeys within the existing LES building, a competitive design process is not required to support the proposed development.

2.2. STATE-LED REZONING STUDY REQUIREMENTS

The Study Requirements relevant to the project issued by DPE in April 2022 require the preparation of a Design Excellence Strategy (this report) for the site which:

- a) outlines the strategy for how design excellence can be achieved in the planning and design stages; and*
- b) includes a strategy for a design integrity and governance process through delivery and operation stages.*

Further, the Study Requirements relevant to the project require the proponent to engage with GANSW, as to whether a Design Review Panel is required to inform the new planning controls, or at later development application stage(s).

3. DESIGN EXCELLENCE APPROACH

3.1. OVERVIEW

This Design Excellence Strategy has been developed in consultation with GANSW, including having regard to the seven objectives for good design of the built environment identified in Better Placed (GANSW):

1. Better fit: contextual, local and of its place;
2. Better performance: sustainable, adaptable and durable;
3. Better for community: inclusive, connected and diverse;
4. Better for people: safe, comfortable and liveable;
5. Better working: functional, efficient and fit for purpose;
6. Better value: creating and adding value; and
7. Better look and feel: engaging, inviting and attractive.

The Strategy to deliver design excellence for the project is based on the following six principles and as detailed further below.

- Establishment of design objectives to guide the future development on the site.
- Incorporation of Connecting with Country requirements (as recommended by FCAD), including ongoing engagement with appropriate Aboriginal stakeholders throughout the project.
- Prioritise heritage conservation and interpretation through the development of the site, including celebrating the site's diverse Indigenous, pre-colonisation, and post colonisation history.
- Establishment of a robust process to select the Design Team for the site, ensuring appropriate experience in designing and delivering design excellence, and encouraging design diversity and visual, material and spatial interest across the precinct.
- Undertake a process of Design Review with the NSW Government Architect, and other relevant stakeholders during the preparation and assessment of detailed development application(s).
- Ensure Design Integrity is maintained throughout the design process.

3.2. DESIGN OBJECTIVES

A series of design objectives have guided the preparation of the reference scheme for the proposal and are intended to be maintained through the design development of the project.

These objectives seek to ensure that any future design proposal suitably responds to its immediate and broader urban context whilst also providing a high-quality workplace building. These design objectives include:

- **Integration and completion of South Eveleigh precinct:** Transform a currently isolated site by encouraging the adaptive reuse of the building to complete precinct revitalization.
- **Activation of Locomotive Street:** Showcase the impressive heritage features of the building façade, adding new building entrances to Locomotive Street, and increase the quality and quantity of public domain, landscaping, and public seating along the street.
- **Minimal interference and alterations to existing heritage fabric:** Preserve as much of the original LES building fabric as possible, while restoring and bringing new life to the building. Any contemporary additions, such as new building entries, loading and waste management areas, services, and commercial mezzanine floor levels, are to avoid physical connection to original heritage fabric where possible.
- **Preservation and display of heritage gantry cranes and railway pits:** Structures that were at the heart of the building's former operations are to be preserved and restored in key locations.
- **Demonstrate achievement of the project sustainability targets:** Implement the following sustainability measures during operation of the LES proposal:

- Carbon neutral in operation
- NABERS 5.5 Star Energy
- NABERS 4.5 Star Water (~30% less than a typical office building)
- 5 Star Green Star Buildings (New tool released by GBCA in 2021)

Future detailed designs for the redevelopment of the building must demonstrate how the above objectives are met to achieve design excellence.

3.3. CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY

The site is located within the traditional lands of the Gadigal clan. There are around 30 Aboriginal clans within the Sydney Metropolitan area which are collectively known as the Eora Nation. The name 'Eora' was given to the coastal dwelling Aboriginal peoples within Sydney. Eora means 'here' or 'from this place' or 'people'.

The territory of the Gadigal stretched from South Head, through to Sydney Cove, Cockle Bay and Darling Harbour to Blackwattle Creek, taking in the suburbs known today as Redfern, Erskineville, Surry Hills and Paddington, down to the Alexandra Canal and Cook's River.

The dispossession of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands, together with introduced diseases and settler violence, took its toll on the Gadigal and significantly reduced their population. The development of the Eveleigh Railway workshops in the 1880s had a significant impact on both the Eveleigh and Redfern areas - providing a focus for Aboriginal people seeking employment, access to affordable housing and proximity to nearby train stations. Industrial activity in the early 1900s was one of the factors that influenced Aboriginal peoples' growing participation in political movements and their call for recognition.

FCAD has contributed to the Public Art Strategy for the LES State-led rezoning application. This Strategy, in addition to the Urban Design Report prepared by fjmt responds to GANSW's Connecting with Country Draft Framework 2020 and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study prepared by Curio Projects (2022).

The Strategy includes an Opportunity Plan that identifies areas of the project that would benefit from immediate and long-term opportunities for Connecting with Country, as well as key design considerations and recommendations.

The recommendations of the Strategy will be responded to in each of the future development phases for the LES project alongside ongoing engagement with appropriate Aboriginal stakeholders throughout the project.

3.4. HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

Further development and careful consideration through the detailed design phase is required in order to reduce or avoid impact to heritage fabric, and interpretation of the heritage significance of the LES building and site. As such, future development on the site must demonstrate consistency with the following heritage recommendations in achieving design excellence:

- Adaptive reuse of the LES building should be undertaken in a sympathetic, reversible, and sensitive manner that ensures the original use of the building continues to be understood and communicated to audiences through retention of as much of a building's original fabric and internal layout as possible, supported by complementary heritage interpretation initiatives where appropriate.
- Where modern additions must be incorporated into the LES building footprint, the design of these elements should adhere to the Burra charter principles of 'as much as necessary, as little as possible', and should complement the original structure and form while also using contrasting but sympathetic materials to ensure that modern additions can be readily distinguished from the original form and fabric.
- New additional volume to the southern facade should consider the visual connectivity between the LES and Locomotive Workshop, as well as the significant view lines of the LES along Locomotive Street and when approaching the building from the South East Village Square, to ensure that the key physical and visual attributes of the heritage items are respected, prominent, and not obstructed.
- New elements should adopt appropriate materiality and colour palettes commensurate with the surrounding heritage fabric and context of the South Eveleigh Precinct.

- Investigate opportunities for reuse and recycling of materials and fabric and fabric of little significance (e.g., rolling stock parts, memorabilia, etc.).
- Avoid over-landscaping, especially along the southern and eastern facades, as it would risk a reduction of the legibility of the significant fabric of the LES.
- Any proposed car parking areas should not overtake the public domain area along Locomotive Street or interrupt the pedestrian route towards the LES building or any interpretive/public art element.

3.5. DESIGN TEAM

The proposal is being being developed as an integrated, holistic, and collaborative process between the proponent, FJMT Studio, Curio Projects and FCAD to ensure that Indigenous design principles and art responses, and heritage conservation and interpretation form an integral part of the design solution from the inception of the project.

FJMT

fjmtstudio (**fjmt**) has been commissioned by the Proponent to provide architectural advice for the project. fjmt is a multi-disciplinary design studio committed to design excellence, innovation and the enhancement of the public domain. fjmt has won numerous international and national architecture competitions and design awards including the industry's highest awards for architecture including the AIA Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Outstanding Public Architecture, the Lloyd Rees Award for excellence in Urban Design, the AIA Emil Sodersten Award for Interior Architecture and the World Architecture Festival, World Building of the Year, being the only Australian practice to have received this international acclaim.

fjmt has a wealth of experience in heritage, cultural, public realm and workplace projects. fjmt's approach to interventions and additions to heritage buildings is to ensure that contemporary architectural forms are carefully designed to form direct and clear relationships with the existing buildings in terms of scale, proportion and materiality while being uncompromisingly contemporary. fjmt are at the forefront of commercial office building design having been awarded some of the highest design awards both in Australia and overseas, including the Harry Seidler Award for Commercial Architecture, the City of Sydney Lord Mayors Prize, and the Sir Arthur G Stephenson Award for Commercial Architecture.

Curio Projects Pty Ltd

Curio Projects has been commissioned by the Proponent to provide heritage advice for the project. Curio Projects have reviewed extensive background material to identify risks and opportunities related to new interventions into the LES building, and constraints and opportunities related to interpretation on the site. Curio will continue to refine opportunities for interpretive products as part of the detailed design phase of the project, while seeking to mitigate adverse impacts to the heritage significance of the site.

Detailed design should be developed in close consultation with an appropriately experienced and qualified heritage consultant to provide heritage advice and input throughout the detailed design process, especially with respect to the key additions, changes, and modifications proposed to elements that have potential to have an adverse physical and/or visual impact to heritage items and significance, that will require minimisation and mitigation through careful, sensitive, and sympathetic design solutions.

FCAD

FCAD has been commissioned by the Proponent to provide Indigenous consultancy and Co-design advice for the project. FCAD is an Aboriginal-Led Consultancy who work on engaging projects requiring Indigenous consultancy and facilitation services, where we provide advice to architects, designers, and infrastructure consortiums on translating Connection to Country into design and social outcomes for Aboriginal people.

FCAD work on all scale projects where we have created contemporary Indigenous art pieces that share cultural stories and the history of Indigenous Australia, and our team is passionate about powering the Indigenous economy.

3.6. DESIGN REVIEW

During the preparation of detailed development application(s) for future phases of the project a process of Design Review will be undertaken with the NSW Government Architect / State Design Review Panel (**SDRP**) and other relevant stakeholders. The Design Review process forms a key component of the overall Design Excellence Strategy to ensure design excellence is achieved.

The purpose of the Design Review process is:

- To provide independent, high-level, design advice for the delivery of the adaptive reuse of the LES.
- To advise on the implementation of project specific design objectives (See Section 3.2).
- To help ensure design excellence is achieved in accordance with the Precincts SEPP framework.

The Proponent is committed to meaningful engagement with the NSW Government Architect / SDRP for this significant project and endeavours to meet with these groups during the preparation and assessment of detailed development application(s) in accordance with this Design Excellence Strategy and the project Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (**SEARs**) to be issued for the SSDA.

Feedback provided by the NSW Government Architect / SDRP and other relevant stakeholders will be considered by the design team and applied to the project where practicable.

3.7. DESIGN INTEGRITY

To ensure that Design Integrity is maintained throughout the design and delivery process, the nominated Design Team will be retained throughout the design process for each respective stage. In addition to preparing the relevant SSDA documentation, the nominated Design Team will be expected to:

- Retain lead roles over the relevant design decisions in the preparation of the design drawings for a construction certificate for the preferred design.
- Retain lead roles over design decisions in the preparation of the design drawings for the contract documentation.
- Maintain continuity during the construction phases to the completion of the project.

4. CONCLUSION

This Design Excellence Strategy uses established methods to ensure design excellence is achieved for the delivery of the LES project. It ensures the community and consent authority can have confidence in the proponent and design team achieving a superior design outcome.

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