

100 MOUNT STREET, NORTH SYDNEY

Prepared on behalf of  
**Laing O'Rourke**

**PUBLIC DOMAIN DESIGN REPORT**

Revision E for S75W Application  
11 August 2011

**OCULUS**

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to describe the public domain associated with the revised design of the proposed development of 100 Mount Street, North Sydney. In particular, it seeks to address Key Issue 5 - Public Domain of the Director General's requirements, including the following:

- Potential improvements to the existing public domain including local streets, footpaths and shared zones and identify any proposed road closures and re-alignments;
- Interface of proposed development and public domain (where applicable);
- Relationship to and impact upon existing public domain; and
- Provision of linkages with and between other public domain spaces including access rights, openness to sky, legibility and "safer by design" (CPTED) issues.

Other relevant issues identified in the Director General's requirements include Key Issue 2 which requires that the design of the 100 Mount Street development relate to the proposed design of the adjoining development at 88 Walker and 77-81 Berry Street in order to ensure a "high level of design quality and coordination to the outcomes to the public domain are achieved", and Key Issue 3 which requires the Environmental Assessment to demonstrate that the property to the west at 80-84 Mount Street can be integrated into the development in the future.

This report focuses on the key changes and benefits to the public domain from the revised architectural design of the building and its surroundings.

## 1.2 OVERVIEW

The 100 Mount Street development lies in the heart of North Sydney CBD, located between Walker Street and Miller Street, just to the north of the Pacific Highway and North Sydney Station. The site itself is bounded by Spring Street to the north, Mount Street to the south, Walker Street to the east, and an existing commercial building at 80-84 Mount St which fronts onto Denison Street to the west.

The streets and laneways surrounding the site form an important part of the local vehicular and pedestrian movement network. Walker Street is an important sub-arterial road which connects to the Pacific Highway to the south. Mount Street forms a major pedestrian link between Walker Street to the east and Miller Street / Pacific Highway to the west. In addition, pedestrians use Spring Street to move between Walker Street and Denison Street / the MLC Centre / Tower Square / Mount Street. Denison Street is used as a north-south link between Mount Street and Spring Street, and beyond to Berry Street. There are also a series of diagonal pedestrian movements which use these laneways and through-site links. The pedestrianised section of Mount Street between Denison Street and Miller Street / Pacific Highway forms an important public domain space within the North Sydney CBD.

Levels are a significant issue with a general change in level across the site from west to east and to a lesser extent from north to south. Thus Mount Street and Spring Street slope quite steeply west-east from Denison Street to Walker Street. Spring Street itself rises steeply from the intersection with Little Spring Street to Denison Street. There is currently a high point on Denison Street just north of the intersection with Spring Street.

The existing traffic use of the laneways surrounding the site has a strong impact upon the use and quality of the public domain by pedestrians. Currently these laneways are all one-way as follows: Spring Street east-west, Denison Street north-south and Mount Street west-east. There is an existing shared zone on Spring Street from the intersection with Little Spring Street which continues into the section of Denison Street that connects to Mount Street.

Mount Street has short-term car parking along both sides: 45 degree parking on the north side and parallel parking on the south. There is also motorcycle parking along the south side of Denison Street between Spring Street and Mount Street.

Mount Street forms an important east-west pedestrian link and is highly activated, especially at the beginning and end of working days and at lunchtime. Mount Street Plaza (the pedestrianised section) between Denison Street and Miller Street / Pacific Highway forms an important public domain space and is particularly well used at lunchtime by local workers. The laneways of Spring Street and Denison Street are currently fairly active during business hours, through the pedestrian movements outlined above, and vehicle movement, including on-street parking and loading/servicing. The existing Berry Square shopping centre provides some activation to Spring Street and the MLC Centre has some outdoor seating along the section of Denison Street between Spring Street and Mount Street. However, generally the activation of the existing laneways is characterised by through-movements and short-term use rather than longer stays, varied activity and extended use out of business hours.

Currently, Spring Street is dominated by traffic with a resultant poor quality public domain. Footpath widths are narrow in places and considerable lengths of street frontage on the south side are occupied by loading zones/docks. The adjacent buildings have a significant impact upon microclimate, with much of the public domain being shaded for most or all of the day and subject to wind tunnelling and down-draughts. Mount Street does receive morning and afternoon sun and has the most amenable microclimate of the streets and laneways surrounding the site.

Existing vegetation is predominantly limited to street trees. Mount Street has street tree planting of Plane Trees on both sides. There are large mature specimens on the north side, one near the corner with Denison Street (approx 25m high x 15m spread), and another near Walker Street (approx 25m high x 12m spread). Between these, the Plane trees are smaller, less mature and somewhat affected by being located between awnings and the road kerb. There are two existing mature Plane trees on Spring Street, one near the corner with Little Spring Street (approximately 20m high x 10m spread) and the other near the corner with Denison Street (approx 25m high x 15m spread), both of which contribute significantly to the amenity of the street. The raised planters on Spring Street near the corner with Denison Street also contain a number of other smaller trees and shrubs. There is also another semi-mature Plane tree located along the Walker Street frontage between Mount Street and Spring Street.

### 1.3 DESIGN APPROACH

The design of the public domain needs to work on a number of levels:

1. The public domain works associated with the development itself ie. the footpaths surrounding the site and within the site boundary from the building to the kerb line on Mount, Walker & Spring Streets;
2. The interface with the wider public domain of the local area, including Walker, Spring, Denison and Mount Streets as a whole ie. the broader public domain master plan; and
3. The linkages with and between other public domain spaces and the pedestrian network of North Sydney based upon the principles, approach and strategies contained in the North Sydney Centre Public Domain Strategy.

The public domain plan submitted as part of this planning submission shows the first level of public domain works ie. between the building line and the existing kerb line immediately adjacent to the site. However, it is recognised that it is necessary to consider the interface with the wider public domain as noted in the DG's requirements, and that there may be public domain works over and above this implemented at the discretion of Council and covered by a S94 contribution. For this reason, an indicative public domain master plan has also been included in this submission which illustrates the broader vision for the public domain surrounding the site including the interface and linkages with adjacent public domain spaces and the integration with the public domain associated with the adjoining development of 88 Walker and 77-81 Berry Street.

It is intended that the new/improved public domain associated with the development of 100 Mount Street will be well defined, integrated and accessible. It will comprise a variety of urban spaces both within the site boundary and the adjacent public domain footpaths. The public domain will provide ample opportunities for people to interact by creating spaces that reflect different uses, whether they are areas for outdoor seating associated with retail uses, gathering areas associated with the commercial lobby, transitional spaces or areas to simply sit and watch. The key public domain spaces and interfaces associated with the development are discussed in more detail below.

One of the most significant advantages of the revised architectural design of the building has been the positive impact on the ground plane and resultant benefits to the public domain. The raising up of the building on columns, relocation of the vehicle entry to the basement from Spring St to Walker St, having the servicing for the building on the west side against 80 Mount Street and the use of operable facade system at either end of the pedestrian through-site link has freed up much of the ground plane effectively as public space.

This has provided the opportunity for a considerably improved public domain outcome, including:

- Greater pedestrian permeability north-south through the site;
- Increased activation of the pedestrian through-site link by the Commercial lobby;
- The creation of a stepped public plaza with potential cafe, located just off the through-site link and Commercial lobby, overlooking the surrounding streets; and
- Activation of the corner of Mount & Walker Streets by a retail tenancy located under the plaza level.

## **1.4 MOUNT STREET**

Mount Street forms an important part of the public domain network within North Sydney being both a major east-west pedestrian link and at its western end (Mount Street Plaza) a key pedestrianised public space. As part of the development, it is intended to re-pave the footpath adjacent to the site in granite to Council's standard. This paving treatment will be extended throughout the entire ground plane including the pedestrian through-site link, plaza and lobby to provide a seamless integration of public and private space.

At-grade access will be provided to the commercial lobby and through-site link from the street to the maximum extent possible. Further east, where the existing slope of the street will not permit this, stairs will be used to deal with the change in level to provide the greatest possible pedestrian permeability with the street. West of the main entry, where street level is above that of the ground level lobby & plaza, the area in front of the stairs will grade up in order to provide access from the street for pedestrians coming from the west.

The best of the existing Plane trees on the north side near the corner with Walker Street will be retained. The other four existing Plane trees between these adjacent to the site are proposed to be removed as part of the development in order to provide construction access and replaced with five new trees of the same species in the footpath.

## **1.5 SPRING STREET**

The relocation of the basement car park entry to Walker Street, provides the opportunity for the eastern section of Spring Street to be enhanced as a pedestrian environment, with potential for the existing shared zone to be extended east to Walker Street and/or for footpath widening / carriageway narrowing. The western section of Spring Street, from the intersection with Little Spring St west, will be maintained as a shared zone with a raised carriageway defined by bollards and flush kerbs.

At-grade access will also be provided to the commercial lobby and through-site link from Spring Street. Further east, where the existing slope of the street will not permit this, stairs will be used to deal with the change in level to provide the greatest possible pedestrian permeability with the street.

Footpaths will be paved in granite in accordance with Council's standards, with shared zones paved in granite setts. Vehicle access to the existing car park entry, loading dock and substation of 80-84 Mount Street on the south side of the street will be maintained. A new street tree will be provided on the south side of Spring Street just before the intersection with Little Spring Street.

## **1.7 WALKER STREET**

The public domain frontage to the site on Walker Street will be treated as part of the overall street character of Walker Street. The setback of the building and retail tenancy with outdoor seating at ground level, along with the public plaza space and cafe above overlooking the street, will help to provide activation to this frontage. As noted above, the basement car park entry will now be located off Walker Street rather than Spring Street, providing direct access to the more major thoroughfare rather than being off a laneway.

The public footpath will be re-paved in granite in accordance with Council's standards. This is will be extended back to the building line within the property boundary for continuity. The one existing Plane tree in the footpath will be removed

## **1.8 PAVING**

The paving materials selected for the public domain, and their laying, will be in accordance with Council's standards. Currently, this is an Australian grey-green granite (Albany Green as supplied by Melocco Pty Ltd) with exfoliated finish. This is proposed to be laid in rectangular units in a stretcher bond pattern for footpaths and pedestrian areas, and in square setts for shared zones and vehicle crossovers/driveways. All paving materials and workmanship will comply with all the relevant standards issued by the Standards Association of Australia, the Building Code of Australia and Policy Documents where relevant.

The steps at the main entry to the commercial lobby off Mount Street and Spring Street will be paved in granite to match the adjacent paving. The stepped plaza space and associated ramps east of the through-site link will also be granite to help create a seamless interface between public and private space. Handrails, contrasting stair nosings and tactile ground surface indicators will be provided to all steps in accordance with Australian Standards.

## 1.9 TREES AND PLANTING

Street trees will be used to provide visual amenity, improved microclimate, and a foil and sense of scale to the adjacent buildings.

*Platanus orientalis* 'Digitata' or Oriental Plane (a deciduous exotic species) will continue to be used along Walker Street and Mount Street to permit solar access whilst providing seasonal colour, form and texture to the streets / spaces. The four existing Plane trees along the site frontage in Mount Street will be removed in order to allow for construction access, as will the one on Walker Street due to the relocated car park entry. These will be replaced by five new Plane trees along the site frontage on Mount Street. New street tree planting on Spring Street is not possible due to the limited footpath width, however, four new evergreen trees will be planted on the northern edge of the ramped plaza above street level. These will help to provide wind protection to the plaza space and amenity at both plaza and street level. Opportunities for mass planting will be limited, but where it is used it will provide colour and texture, whilst being robust and low maintenance.

## 1.10 FURNITURE

Proposed outdoor furniture will consist of a suite of elements that complement each other and have multiple of uses. By incorporating multi-purpose design elements for people with specific and varied needs, designed urban furnishings will bring style, practicality and increased functionality to everyday life. Seating elements will be designed to be accessible, varied in form to suit a range of user types from children to the elderly, and promote social interaction. Furniture elements will be robust and low maintenance, with timber used on seats for comfort combined with steel or concrete supports, and stainless or painted steel for more utilitarian furniture items such as handrails, bollards, bike racks and litter bins.

## 1.11 LIGHTING

Pedestrian lighting will be of sufficient levels to facilitate safe movement and meet the relevant standards. The lighting of the public streets will comply with the requirements of North Sydney Council, including compliance with the parameters shown in AS/NZS1158.1.1-1997.

Specialist feature lighting will be provided to light the external areas associated with the new building, incorporated into steps, walls, paving or other landscape elements. Feature lighting provides the opportunity to create various lighting effects that will provide experiences and accents as well storytelling and information dispersal.

## 1.12 PUBLIC ART

Public art forms an important constituent of the public domain and is a key strategy of the North Sydney Centre Public Domain Strategy. One of the principles which should underlie the design of public domain is that the residents and workers of North Sydney must have an active rather than a passive part to play in the use of public space and that any public art must be of relevance to them, their culture and daily lives.

Other principles which will provide the foundation for the development of a public art strategy for the development include the effective utilisation of commissioned works of art to:

- contribute towards the wider public realm of the North Sydney CBD and form multiple, rich itineraries in streets, along pedestrian paths and within key public spaces;
- encourage social interaction among residents and workers;
- create visual focal points or "icons" which function as visual destinations and identity points; and
- respond to past and contemporary social and cultural history of the North Sydney area, preserving and amplifying the identity of this part of the city.

Public art should be perceived to be part of the landscape or architecture rather than simply being placed objects. The opportunities for art fall into two broad categories: firstly, larger installation pieces located on or in the built form and secondly, more informal pieces integrated into the public domain.

## **1.16 POTENTIAL WIDER PUBLIC DOMAIN IMPROVEMENTS**

It is important that there is a future vision for the public domain surrounding the site based upon the principles, approach and strategies contained in the North Sydney Centre Public Domain Strategy. This will include how this links with other spaces and fits into the wider pedestrian network of North Sydney, as well as considering the adjacent development at 88 Walker and 77-81 Berry Street, and the potential future redevelopment of the property at 80-84 Mount Street. It is acknowledged that achieving such an extent of public domain improvements may involve Council in a staged approach over time.

The longer-term public domain strategy needs to work in conjunction with the traffic strategy for the local area in order to improve the quality of the public domain. The key potential moves in this regard include:

- to make the section of Mount Street between Denison Street and Walker Street a shared zone as a continuation of the existing shared zone in Denison Street;
- to replace the existing 45 degree parking on the north side of Mount Street with parallel parking and remove the existing parallel parking from the south side, thereby increasing footpath widths on both sides;
- to centre the carriageway of the section of Spring Street between Walker and Little Spring Streets between the buildings and reduce its width so that the footpath on the north side can be widened; and
- to retain the existing shared zones in the section of Spring Street between Little Spring and Denison Streets and in Denison Street between Spring and Mount Streets.

Another advantage of the revised design of the building and the relocation of the basement car park entry to Walker Street will be the reduced impact of the vehicular traffic associated with the development on the local traffic network of Spring/Little Spring/Denison/Mount Streets.

These potential changes to the current traffic planning have been driven by the desire to improve the quality of the public domain, particularly in Mount Street, by removing some of the on-street parking, widening the footpaths on both sides, and extending the existing shared zones in Spring Street and Denison Street into Mount Street. These shared zones would have flush kerbs and a higher quality paving treatment with the vehicle route defined by bollards. This will provide the opportunity to increase the public use, activation and amenity of the section of Mount Street between Denison and Walker Streets, and further enhance Mount Street as a key public domain space in North Sydney.

The south section of Denison Street receives some afternoon sun resulting in a more amenable microclimate than the other public domain footpaths surrounding the site. It is also less impacted upon by loading requirements than other sections of laneway and connects to the south to the existing pedestrian plaza and the possible future shared zone in Mount Street. It also has the potential to be activated by ground level retail on the east side should the property at 80-84 Mount Street be developed in the future, including possible outdoor seating associated with cafes or restaurants.

The potential future upgrade to Denison Street would also provide benefits to the existing retail on the ground level of the MLC Centre on the west side, hopefully providing the stimulus to upgrade the retail and its associated outdoor seating area. These potential public domain improvements may include re-paving, removal of some/all of the existing motorcycle parking, new street tree planting, and replacement of the existing planter/walls to the MLC Centre outdoor seating area with steps to promote greater activation and treat the space in a more unified way.

Spring Street west of Little Spring Street through into the southern section of Denison Street would likely remain as a shared zone to reinforce pedestrian use. There is the potential to extend the existing shared zone on Spring Street east all the way to Walker Street given that all the traffic generated by the development will access directly to/from Walker Street.

The potential public domain improvements to the section of Mount Street between Denison and Walker Streets would include replacing the existing angled on-street parking on the north side with parallel parking, removing the existing parallel parking on the south side, widening the footpaths on both sides, and making this section of street a shared zone. Whilst it is not possible to fully pedestrianise this section of Mount Street, and Mount Street Plaza further west would remain the primary public domain space, the creation of a shared zone and widening of the footpaths would have significant public domain benefits in terms of providing greater opportunities for activation and more intense / diverse use. It is proposed that the street, once made into a shared zone, would have a reduced carriageway width defined by bollards and flush kerbs, and would be paved in stone setts to emphasise pedestrian use and slow vehicle speeds.

There would also be the opportunity for further public domain improvements in the future to Mount Street Plaza to the west and Elizabeth Street Plaza to the south. This may include repaving in stone to match the paving used further east, additional tree planting, replacement street furniture and public art.

## 2.1 INDICATIVE MATERIALS SCHEDULE

Location	Element	Material	Finish
<b>PAVING</b>			
Walker/Mount/Spring Sts	footpath paving	granite unit paving	exfoliated
Spring Street	shared zone paving	granite sett paving	exfoliated
Pedestrian Plaza/Link	paving	granite unit paving	exfoliated
Walker/Mount Sts	road kerbs	insitu concrete	trowelled
Spring St (shared zone)	flush kerbs	granite	exfoliated
<b>STEPS &amp; WALLS</b>			
Generally	steps	granite	exfoliated
	tactile ground indicators	stainless steel	polished
	walls	insitu concrete	class 2 off-form
<b>FURNITURE</b>			
Generally	bench seats	hardwood timber	sawn, clear oil
		insitu concrete	class 2 off-form
	handrails	stainless steel	polished
	bollards	stainless steel	linished
	litter bins	stainless steel	linished
	bike racks	stainless steel	linished

## 2.2 INDICATIVE PLANT SCHEDULE

Location	Botanic Name	Common Name	Size at Planting	Mature Size
<b>TREES</b>				
Mount Street	Platanus orientalis 'Digitata'	Oriental Plane	400L, 4.5x2.0m	25x15m
Spring Street	Tristanopsis laurina 'Luscious'	Water Gum	200L; 2.5x1.0m	8x3m
Plaza (north side)	Magnolia grandiflora 'Exmouth'	Bull Bay Magnolia	200L, 3.0x1.5m	12x5m
<b>SHRUBS</b>				
Ground level	Buxus microphylla	Japanese Box	45L, 800x400mm	1.2x0.6m
	Cycas revoluta	Cycad	75L, 600x450mm	1.2x0.8m
	Phormium tenax 'Grey'	NZ Flax	45L, 800x400mm	1.2x0.8m
	Teucrium fruticans	Bush Germander	15L, 450x300mm	1.0x0.5m
	Westringia fruticosa 'Smokey'	Coast Rosemary	45L, 500x350mm	1.0x0.6m
<b>GROUND COVERS</b>				
Ground level	Arthropodium cirrhatum	Renga Renga Lily	1.5L, 300x200mm	0.5x0.3m
	Liriope 'Royal Purple'	Liriope cv.	1.5L, 250x200mm	0.3x0.3m
	Lomandra longifolia 'Tanika'	Lomandra Tanika	1.5L, 250x150mm	0.6x0.6m
	Trachelospermum jasminoides	Star Jasmine	1.5L, 200x300mm	0.4x0.5m

MLC building

77-81 berry street

rain garden

feature stone steps

timber deck

planters with seating elements

stone paving

existing trees retained

stone sett paving (shared zone)

outdoor seating area

flush kerb with bollards

stone paving

street trees

bench seating

on street parallel parking

existing tree retained

existing old GPO column

mount street plaza

73-79 mount street

86 walker street fire station hotel

100 mount street

80-84 mount street

denison street

83 mount street

93-103 mount street

elizabeth street plaza

mount street

88-92 walker street

spring street

through site connection

stone sett paving

tree planting at plaza level

glass awning over

vehicle cross over

stone paving

stone steps

signage plinth

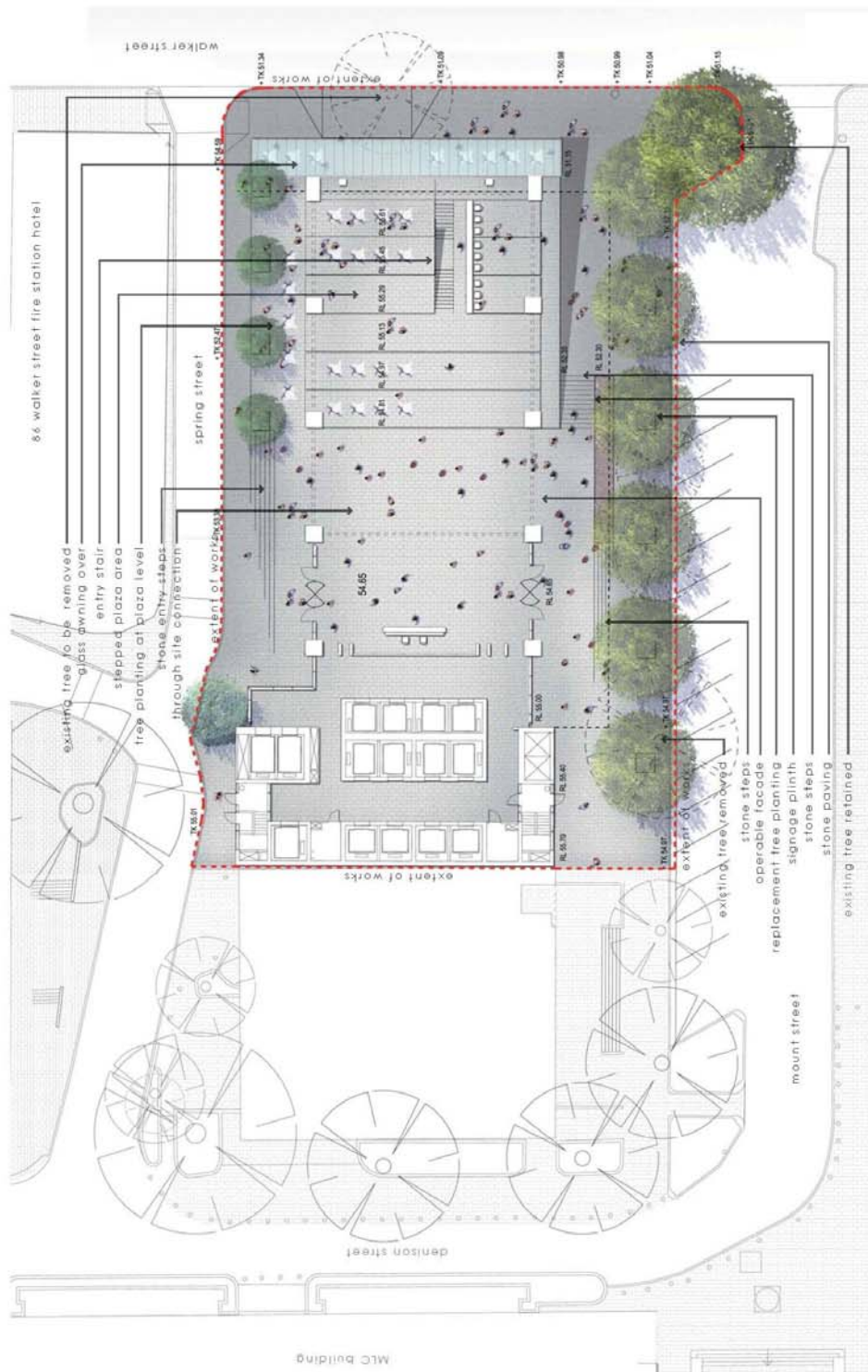
existing tree retained

replacement tree planting

stone sett paving (shared zone)

flush kerb with bollards

## Landscape Plan



LANDSCAPE PLAN  
1:150 @ A1



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: OCULUS

ARCHITECT: SOM + Architectus

CLIENT: Lang O'Rourke

PLOT: 100 MOUNT STREET  
NORTH SYDNEY

DATE: AUGUST 2011

## Public Domain Sections

