



Preliminary Environmental Assessment

Mixed-Use Retail/Commercial/
Community/Entertainment/
Residential Complex

157 Redfern Street
REDFERN

Prepared for:

DeiCorp Pty Limited

Shop 5, 140-152 New Canterbury Road
PETERSHAM NSW 2049

Prepared by:

Ludvik & Associates Pty Ltd

Consultant Town Planners

Suite 103, Level 1, 10-12 Clarke Street
CROWS NEST NSW 2065

ACN 070 751 683
ABN 95 070 751 683

Tel: (02) 9906 3566

Fax: (02) 9906 3592

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1.0 Introduction

A development application is to be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning under the terms of Section 75E of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)* and *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005, (Major Projects SEPP)* for the construction of an eighteen (18) storey mixed-use building on land currently occupied by the Redfern RSL Club on 157 Redfern Street, Redfern.

The proposed building is to contain:

- active street frontages with shops at the ground floor level fronting both Redfern and Gibbons Streets;
- new club premises for Redfern RSL at the 1st floor level;
- commercial office space at the 2nd and 3rd floor levels; and
- apartments at the upper floor levels of the building.

The proposal will involve significant improvements to the public domain in terms of enhancing pedestrian linkages along Redfern Street between the Redfern Railway Station and the Redfern Town Centre on the eastern side of Regent Street by:

- eliminating vehicular access and vehicle/pedestrian conflict in Redfern Street; and
- establishing;
 - an attractive, vibrant and active street frontage;
 - shade and shelter for people using the link; and
 - casual surveillance of the public domain over extended hours by virtue of the use and operation of the proposed shops, offices, club and apartments.

The land is located within the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Sites, identified as a *State Significant Site* in Part 5 of Schedule 3 of the *Major Projects SEPP*.

The purpose of this assessment is:

- to seek confirmation under the terms of Clause 6(1) of *Major Projects SEPP* that the Minister for Planning is of the opinion that the proposed development is a major project to which Part 3A of the *Act* applies; and
- to obtain the requirements of the Department's Director-General, under the terms of Section 75F of the *Act*, for the issues to be addressed in the development application and the accompanying Environmental Assessment.

This report:

- provides details of the site and its setting;
- provides details of the development concept plans for the project;
- summarises the environmental planning legislation applying to the land and the project; and
- identifies the key issues associated with the proposed development.

2.0 Site Details

2.1 The Site

The land known as 157 Redfern Street, Redfern, is situated on the south-eastern corner of Redfern and Gibbons Streets.

A locality plan is contained in **Figure 1**.

The land comprises all of the land contained in Lot A, DP 354297 and Lots 1 and 2, Section D, DP 7328.

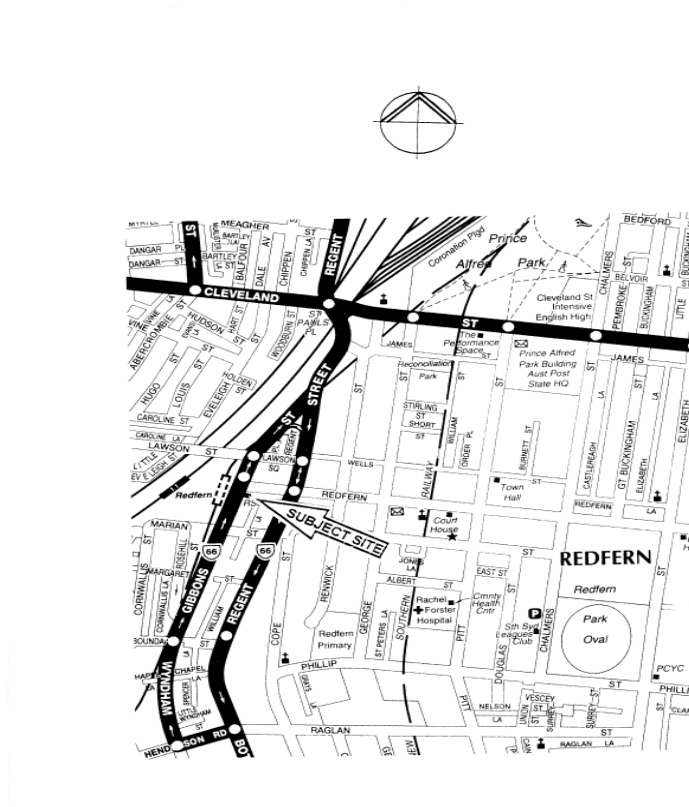


Figure 1 - Locality Plan

The site is irregular in shape and has:

- a frontage of some 39.3m to Redfern Street and 37.3m to Gibbons Street;
- a depth of some 38m relative to its Redfern Street frontage; and
- an area of 1,647.1m².

A site plan is contained in **Figure 2**.

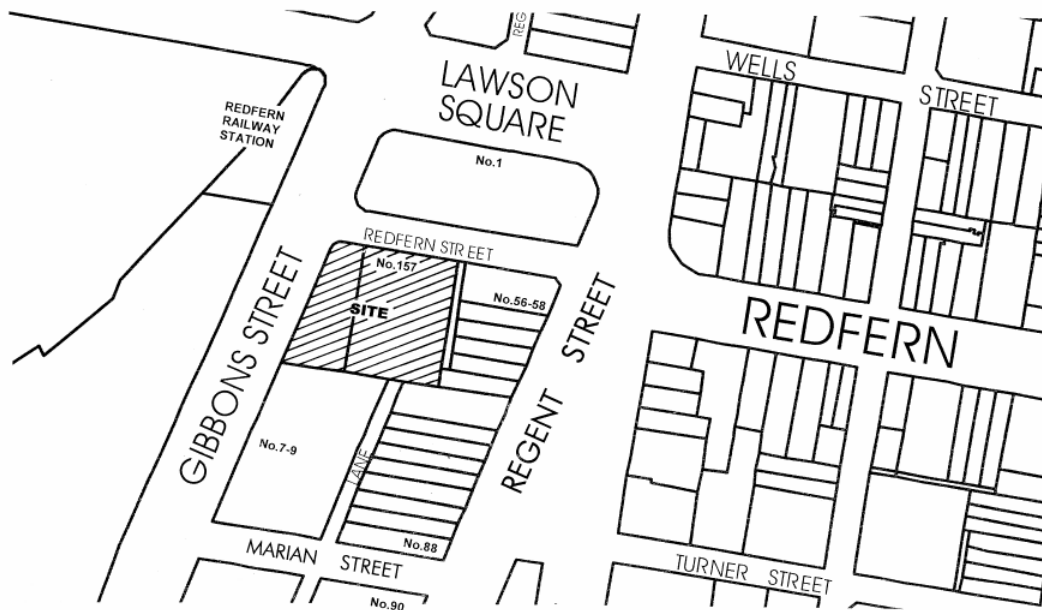


Figure 2 - Site Plan

The land contains a single storey brick club building occupied by the Redfern RSL Club, with limited car parking being provided under the building in its northern and western elevations.

The existing building is not an attractive element in the streetscapes in either Redfern Street or Gibbons Street, lacking any fenestration.

Vehicular access to the car parking facilities is obtained via a footpath crossing in Gibbons Street and multiple crossings in Redfern Street.

Vehicular access is available to a loading area in the southern rear elevation of the Club's building via William Lane.

The land experiences a significant fall of between 2.5m and 3.3m from its Redfern Street boundary to its southern rear boundary.

This represents an average grade of some 1 in 13, or 7.6%.

There is no vegetation on the land.

The land is not affected by any easements or rights of way.

The land is largely isolated from surrounding properties by:

- a 2.44m wide pathway to the east; and
- the car park associated with the GCA Towers on 7-9 Gibbons Street and William Lane to the south.

2.2 Site Context

The land is located in an area that exhibits a significant degree of diversity in terms of the use, nature and scale of buildings.

The land immediately to the east of the site comprises a 2.44m wide pathway accommodating access to the rear of 56-66 Regent Street and 68 Regent Street.

The properties at 56-68 Regent Street contain two (2) storey brick retail/commercial buildings occupied by:

- the Railz on Regent Hotel on 56-58 Regent Street;
- coffee shops on 60 and 62 Regent Street;
- a restaurant on 64 Regent Street;
- a business operating as Second to None on 66 Regent Street; and
- a take away food shop on 68 Regent Street.

Some of these properties contain dwellings at their first floor level.

The land immediately to the south of the site comprises the properties known as 7-9 Gibbons Street, 70 Regent Street and William Lane.

The property at 7-9 Gibbons Street extends to Marian Street and contains a four (4) level car park associated with the commercial office buildings known as the GCA Towers located at 1 Lawson Square.

There is a proposal to construct a fourteen (14) storey mixed-use retail/commercial/residential development on top of the existing car park.

The Director-General issued the requirements to be addressed in that proposal on 7 August 2008.

The property at 70 Regent Street contains a two (2) storey brick retail/commercial building occupied by the Medium Rare Gallery.

The land to the north, on the opposite side of Redfern Street, comprises the property known as 1 Lawson Square.

This property contains two (2) x twelve (12) storey commercial office buildings known as the GCA Towers occupied as the Redfern Police Station, the Universal International Colleges, GKN Aerospace and the Redfern-Waterloo Authority.

Four (4) levels of the complex are currently vacant and available for lease.

The land to the west, on the opposite side of Gibbons Street, accommodates the Redfern Railway Station and car parking and landscaping on an area known as 'Marian Road' Park.

The main section of the Redfern Town Centre is focused around Redfern Street, east of Regent Street.

Gibbons and Regent Streets represent major elements of the arterial road network in this locality.

Traffic in Gibbons Street is limited to one-way in a northerly direction, while Regent Street is primarily limited to one-way in a southerly direction.

Redfern Street is some 7 m wide between Regent and Gibbons Street and traffic is limited to a one-way easterly direction, with a left-turn only being permitted at its intersection with Regent Street.

This section of Redfern Street is primarily used to provide:

- vehicular access to car parking facilities associated with the Redfern RSL Club;
- pedestrian and loading access to the rear of the properties at 56-68 Regent Street;
- service access to the rear of the GCA Towers; and
- pedestrian access between the Redfern Railway Station and the Town Centre.

The setback of the existing RSL Club building from Redfern Street increases the perceived width of the street in front of the Club.

The area is conveniently located to public transport services with:

- Redfern Railway Station within 50m of the site; and
- major bus routes using Gibbons and Regent Streets to connect the area to the Sydney CBD.

The site is ideally located for a higher density mixed-use development in terms of its integration with surrounding transport services.

3.0 The Project

The project involves the demolition of the existing Redfern RSL Club building on the land and the construction of an eighteen (18) storey mixed-use building containing:

- shops at the ground floor level fronting both Redfern and Gibbons Streets;
- new premises for Redfern RSL Club at the 1st floor level;
- commercial office space at the 2nd and 3rd floor levels; and
- apartments at the upper floor levels of the building.

The building is to have a gross floor area of some 11,526m² and is to provide:

- 657m² of retail space;
- 1,403m² of space for the Club;
- 1,744m² of commercial office space;
- 7,722m² of residential spaces, expected to accommodate eighty-four (84) apartments comprising:
 - fourteen (14) x 1-bedroom apartments;
 - sixty-three (63) x 2-bedroom apartments; and
 - seven (7) x 3-bedroom apartments; and
- parking for one hundred and sixty (160) cars and loading facilities in basement levels under the building.

The ground floor level of the building is to be setback some 3.6m from Redfern Street, while the 1st Floor club premises are to extend to the boundary to provide a built-edge definition to the street.

The setback of the ground floor level is designed to improve the public domain in Redfern Street by creating a colonnade which will:

- increase the perceived width of Redfern Street; and
- provide shade and shelter for pedestrians using Redfern Street as a link between the Redfern Railway Station, Regent Street and the Town Centre.

The upper floor levels of the building are to be setback from Redfern Street and Gibbons Streets in the manner indicated on the development concept plans contained in **Appendix 1**.

The retail spaces fronting Gibbons Street are to step down to respect the site's topography while providing a continuous grade for pedestrians using the colonnade.

Pedestrian access to the RSL Club and commercial offices is to be separated from the access to the apartments, with:

- the Club and offices being accessed via a lobby from the corner of Redfern and Gibbons Streets by way of a lift and/or an escalator; and
- the apartments being accessed from a separate entry lobby off Gibbons Street adjacent to the southern boundary of the site by way of three (3) lifts.

The residential entry is to be fenced with security fencing along the Gibbons Street boundary and its forecourt area is to be landscaped to provide an interesting and attractive entry to this section of the building.

All of the levels within the building are to be designed to be accessible by people with a disability.

Vehicular access to the car parking and loading facilities is to be obtained via William Lane, while vehicles are to leave the site via a driveway connecting to Gibbons Street located adjacent to the site's southern rear boundary at a point adjacent to the existing footpath crossing in Gibbons Street.

These access arrangements are facilitated by the land's topography.

The project is to have an estimated cost of \$28 million.

Market research has indicated limited demand for large scale commercial office development in this area, confirmed by the difficulties associated with the leasing of commercial office space in the GCA Towers at 1 Lawson Place.

Urban design elements of the project include:

- the establishment of continuous colonnades and active street frontages along both Redfern and Gibbons Streets; and
- a built form which will provide a built-edge definition podium to both Redfern and Gibbons Street for the lower two (2) floor levels and tapering commercial office and residential building floor plates at the upper levels of the building.

The project is to be designed:

- to enhance the quality and amenity of the public domain, particularly in Redfern Street with the proposed colonnade significantly improving the major pedestrian link between the Redfern Railway Station, Regent Street and the Town Centre;
- to provide economic and social benefits to the local community; and
- to act as a catalyst and stimulus for further renewal and revitalisation of the Redfern-Waterloo area in the vicinity of the Redfern Railway Station.

4.0 Environmental Planning Framework

4.1 Major Projects SEPP

The prevailing environmental planning instrument controlling development on this land is the *Major Projects SEPP*, which was made on 25 May 2005.

The site is within the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Sites identified on Map 3 of the Schedule referred to in Part 5 in Schedule 3 - State Significant Sites of the *Policy*.

The land is zoned Business - Commercial Core under the *Policy*.

The project represents development for the purposes of “shops”, “commercial premises”, a “club” and a “residential flat building” under the definitions contained in the *Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006* adopted by Clause 2(1) of Part 5 of the *Policy*.

Development for these purposes is permissible, with the Minister’s consent, within the Business - Commercial Core zone under the terms of Clauses 9(2) and (3) of Part 5.

The proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives of the zone contained in Clause 9(1) of Part 5, in that:

- it will facilitate the development of a town centre;
- it will establish employment generating activities by providing retail, office and community/entertainment facilities;
- it will establish residential development that is compatible with non-residential development on the land and in the immediate locality;
- it will maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling;
- it will add to the vitality and safety of the community and public domain;
- it will be designed to achieve design excellence; and
- it will significantly enhance the amenity of the area.

The proposed building is to be designed to comply with the development standards contained in Clauses 21(1) and (2) of Part 5 of the *Major Projects SEPP*, which provide:

- a building height standard, which ranges from two (2) to eighteen (18) storeys; and
- a floor space ratio standard of 7:1.

The building on the land has not been identified as a “heritage item” on the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Sites: Heritage Map which accompanies the *Major Projects SEPP* and the only “heritage item” identified in the vicinity of the site is the Redfern Station Booking Office.

The proposed development would not have any discernible effect on the heritage significance of the Booking Station.

The development is to be designed to achieve the outcome of design excellence, as contemplated by Clause 22(1) of Part 5 by:

- creating a high standard architecture, in terms of the building's form and detailing;
- using a range of materials and colours to create an interesting and attractive element in the townscape and streetscapes in this area; and
- incorporating best-practice ecologically sustainable design features.

As a result, the building will significantly improve the amenity of this area as viewed from the public domain and provide a catalyst and stimulus for the ongoing renewal and revitalisation of this area in the manner contemplated by the *Major Projects SEPP*.

Accordingly, a design competition of the nature contemplated by Clause 22(3) would be unwarranted, particularly when consideration is given to:

- the relative small size of the site in the context of other sites within the Redfern-Waterloo area;
- the limited range of design options;
- the project's conformity with the height and floor space ratio standards contained in the *Policy*; and
- a competition not having been required for proposed redevelopment of adjoining and nearby properties.

In summary, the development concept plans are to comply and be consistent with the provisions contained in the *Major Projects SEPP*.

4.2 Other State Environmental Planning Policies

The following relevant State environmental planning policies are to apply to the proposed development of the land.

Policy	Comments
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 - 21/12/2007</i></p>	<p>The development is to comply with the provisions of this <i>Policy</i>.</p> <p>Preliminary discussions have been held with the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW concerning issues relating to vehicular access to the site from the surrounding road network</p>
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 - 25/6/2004</i></p>	<p>The development is to comply with the provisions of this <i>Policy</i>.</p> <p>A BASIX certificate would accompany any development application that is submitted</p>
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy No.55 - Remediation of Land - 28/8/1998</i></p>	<p>The development is to comply with the provisions of this <i>Policy</i>.</p> <p>There is no evidence of any soil contaminating activities having been undertaken on the site or on surrounding properties.</p> <p>A Phase 1 environmental assessment could accompany any development application that is submitted, should this be considered necessary</p>
<p><i>State Environmental Planning Policy No.65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development - 26/7/2002</i></p>	<p>The development is to comply with the provisions of this <i>Policy</i>.</p> <p>The residential element of the development is to be designed to be consistent with the <i>Residential Flat Design Code</i> which provides guidelines on the implementation of this <i>Policy</i></p>
<p><i>Draft State Environmental Planning Policy No.66 - Integration of Land Use and Transport - August 2001</i></p>	<p>The development is to comply with the provisions of this draft <i>Policy</i>.</p> <p>Development of the nature proposed is strongly consistent with the draft <i>Policy</i> in that it provides a critical mass and appropriate mix of retail, commercial, community/entertainment and residential development which will be transit-oriented and encourage the use of public transport services operating in the immediate vicinity of the land.</p> <p>The Department's Planning Circular PS 08-013, issued on 13 November 2008, indicates that draft environmental planning instruments that were exhibited prior to 1 March 2006 and which have not been gazetted should not be considered in relation to development applications in terms of Section 79C(a)(ii) of the <i>EP&A Act</i>.</p> <p>This direction is effective from 1 March 2009</p>
<p><i>Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006</i></p>	<p>The relevant provisions and terms contained in the <i>Standard Instrument</i> are to be used in finalising the design of the project</p>

4.3 Design Guidelines

The following relevant planning guidelines are to apply to the proposed development of the land.

Policy	Comments
<i>Redfern-Waterloo Built Environment Plan (Stage 1), August 2006 - Redfern-Waterloo Authority</i>	The development is to be consistent with the <i>Built Environment Plan</i> and will achieve the economic, social and environmental outcomes fostered and promoted by it
<i>Residential Flat Design Code 2002 - Department of Planning</i>	The residential element of the development is to be designed to be consistent with the <i>Residential Flat Design Code</i>
<i>Crime Prevention and Assessment of Development Applications 2001- Safer by Design Principles - Department of Planning</i>	The development is to be designed to be consistent with the principles of <i>Safer by Design</i> . The development would significantly improve safety and security in this locality as a result of the establishment of active street frontages and the casual surveillance over public domain areas offered by the range and nature of uses that are proposed within the building
<i>Guide to Traffic Generating Developments, 1993 - Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW</i>	The <i>Guide</i> is to be used to inform the access, traffic and parking study that would accompany any development application that is submitted
<i>South Sydney City Council's Development Control Plan No.11 - Transport Guidelines for Development 1996</i>	The <i>Guidelines</i> are to be used to inform the access, traffic and parking study that would accompany any development application that is submitted
<i>Redfern-Waterloo Authority Contribution Plan 2006</i>	Any required contribution is to be paid
<i>Redfern-Waterloo Authority Affordable Housing Contributions Plan 2006</i>	Any required contribution is to be paid

5.0 Preliminary Consultations

Preliminary consultations concerning the development concept plans have been held with:

- the Department of Planning on 18 November 2008;
- the Redfern-Waterloo Authority on 26 November 2008;
- the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW on 8 December 2008 regarding vehicular access arrangements to Gibbons Street and William Lane; and
- Rail Corporation NSW on 14 November 2008 regarding the impact of site works on existing and proposed railway infrastructure, including the Redfern Station Upgrade project.

The development concept plans have been prepared to reflect the matters that have been raised during these discussions.

6.0 Key Environmental Issues

The key environmental issues that have been identified and would need to be resolved as part of the development design process are as follows:

- built form and urban design issues which will need to be resolved within the opportunities and constraints offered by the site and its setting to achieve design excellence;
- geotechnical issues relating to the effect of development on the railway infrastructure associated with:
 - the Illawarra Line, which is within the 25m zone of influence of any development; and
 - the proposed Redfern-Green Square Line, which proposes a tunnel some 50m below ground level under the north-eastern corner of the site;
- issues relating to appropriate and satisfactory vehicular access to development from the surrounding road network, in accordance with the requirements of the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW;
- the provision of adequate and satisfactory car parking taking into consideration the Road & Traffic Authority of NSW's *Guide to Traffic Generating Developments, 1993* and *South Sydney City Council Development Control Plan No.11 - Transport Guidelines for Development, 1996*;
- public domain/urban design issues relating to Redfern and Gibbons Streets in terms of:
 - pedestrianisation of Redfern Street to accommodate a link between Redfern Railway Station, Regent Street and the Redfern Town Centre;
 - creating a comfortable and appropriate wind environment in public domain areas surrounding the land; and
 - optimising safety and security in the public domain by building design features;
- the adoption of ecologically sustainable development principles in the design of the building in terms of energy efficient and water conserving design; and
- any effect that development may have on the amenity of any residential elements of the mixed-use retail/commercial development to the east fronting Regent Street.

7.0 Conclusion

The project, as proposed, is clearly a major project to which Part 3A of the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979* applies in terms of:

- Clause 7(1) and the land's designation as a State Significant Site on Map 3 of Schedule 3 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005*; and
- the project's:
 - scale;
 - location;
 - inherent economic, social and environmental benefits; and
 - effect as a catalyst and stimulus for further renewal and revitalisation of the Redfern-Waterloo area in the vicinity of the Redfern Railway Station.

As such, the Minister for Planning can reasonably and properly be of the opinion, in accordance with Clause 6(1) of the *Major Projects SEPP*, that the proposed development is a major development to which Part 3A of the *EP&A Act* applies.

This preliminary environmental assessment provides an appropriate basis for the Director-General to issue requirements, under the terms of Section 75F of the *Act*, specifying the matters to be addressed in any development application that is submitted and the Environmental Assessment accompanying it.

APPENDIX 1

Development Concept Plans