

**ANGEL PLACE  
LEVEL 8, 123 PITT STREET  
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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ABN 50 105 256 228

16 September 2022

Annika Hather  
Planning Officer – Key Sites Assessment  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Via – NSW Major Projects Portal

Dear Annika,

## **4-6 BLIGH STREET, SYDNEY | REQUEST FOR INDUSTRY SPECIFIC SEARS**

This letter has been prepared on behalf of Holdmark to provide a detailed description of the proposed mixed-use hotel and commercial development at 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney (the site). It has been prepared to accompany a request to the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) in issuing industry-specific Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements ('SEARs').

SEARs were previously issued on 03 September 2018 for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) relating the redevelopment of the site for a mixed-use hotel and commercial development (SSD 9527). As a SSDA and Environmental Impact Statement was not submitted within two years of the SEARs being issued, these SEARs have now expired.

The new landowner, Holdmark Property, are looking to submit a new SSDA to redevelop the site in accordance with the existing planning controls and the previous Architectural Design Competition winning scheme for the new development by Woods Bagot.

It is noted that within the course of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement for SSD 9527, an Instrument of Delegation of the consent authority function for the application was issued by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (Minister for Planning) on 24 October 2019 and by the Secretary of the Department on 22 October 2019.

These instruments of delegation remain relevant for any development of a class described in clause 13 of Schedule 1 of the former *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* on Lot 1 DP 1244245. As such, this request for SEARs for a future SSDA is lodged to the Department noting that the future SSDA will be assessed and determination by the City of Sydney and Central Sydney Planning Committee respectively.

The following sections identify the applicant for the project and describe the site and proposed development.

## 1. APPLICANT DETAILS

The applicant details for the proposed development are listed in the following table.

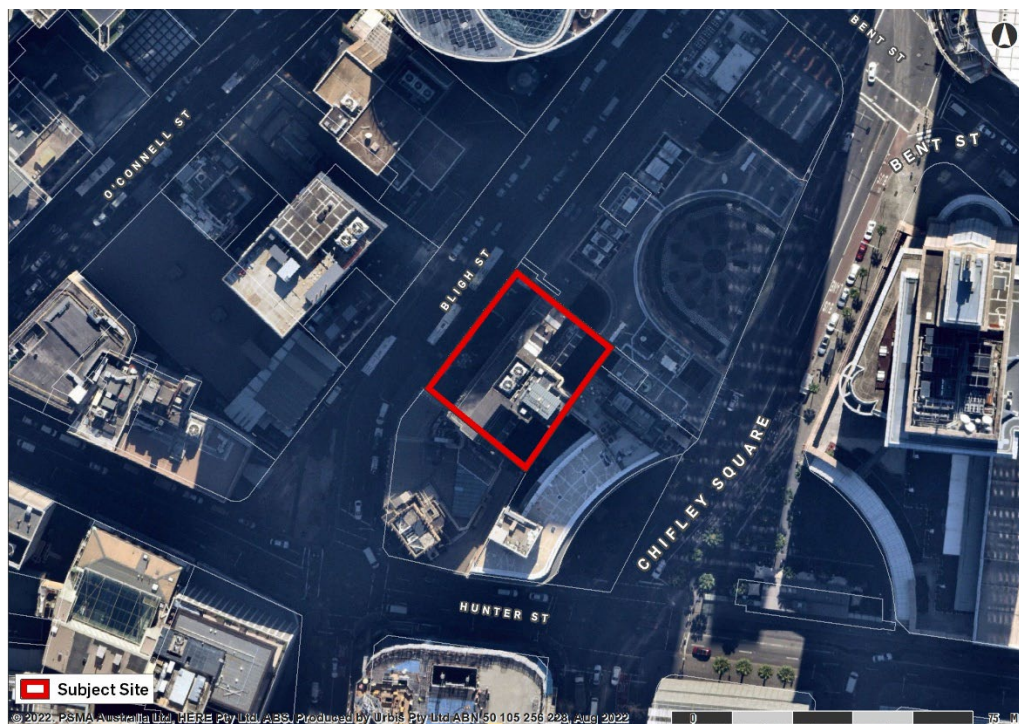
Table 1 Applicant Details

Descriptor	Proponent Details
Full Name(s)	Holdmark NSW Pty Ltd
Postal Address	Suite 2/2-4 Giffnock Avenue, Macquarie Park NSW 2113
ABN	98 152 957 867
Nominated Contact	Kevin Nassif
Contact Details	0414 667 784

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located at 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney within the City of Sydney local government area (LGA). The site is legally described as Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 1244245. The location of the site is illustrated in **Map 1**.

Map 1 Local Context



The key features of the site which have the potential to impact or be impacted by the proposed development are summarised in the table below.

Table 2 Key Features of Site and Locality

Descriptor	Site Details
Land Configuration	<p>The site is a single allotment identified as 4-6 Bligh Street, Sydney. The site has a single street frontage of 38m to Bligh Street and a depth of 32m, with a total area of 1,218sqm.</p> <p>The site is relatively flat, with a slight slope ranging from 21m AHD in the north-western corner to 19.5m AHD in the south-western corner. Surface water currently runs offsite and discharges into the Council stormwater drainage system.</p>
Land Ownership	The site is owned by “4 to 6” Bligh Street Tst Co Pty Ltd (658787912).
Existing Development	<p>The site is occupied by a commercial office building with ground floor retail and basement car parking known as “Bligh House”. Completed in 1964, Bligh House is a 17-storey tower inclusive of a three-storey podium with the podium levels built to the Bligh Street alignment and the tower setback from the street frontage.</p> <p>Development consent was granted on 31 January 2020 (D/2018/892) for demolition of the existing building, excavation and shoring of the site to accommodate a future mixed-use development with three levels of basement. The development application was classified as Integrated Development under the Water Management Act 2000.</p>
Local Context	<p>The site is located within the north-eastern part of Central Sydney in a block bound by Bligh Street to the west, Hunter Street to the south, Chifley Square/Phillip Street to the east, and Bent Street to the north. The surrounding buildings are generally characterised by a mix of commercial office and hotel uses with ground level retail, restaurant and café uses and are of varying heights, ages and styles, including a number of State and local listed heritage buildings.</p> <p>The surrounding locality is described below:</p> <p><b>North:</b> Adjoining the site to the north at 61-101 Phillip Street is the Sofitel Wentworth Sydney, a 19-storey hotel built in 1966. The hotel consists of 436 hotel rooms and 46 suites on levels 3 to 19, and the Wentworth Connection retail arcade with three levels of bars, shops, restaurants, function rooms, eight meeting rooms and hotel reception. The building is a</p>

Descriptor	Site Details
	<p>local heritage listed item (I1674) under the <i>Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> (SLEP 2012).</p> <p><b>East:</b> To the immediate south-east of the site is Chifley Square, a large semi-circular space bisected by Phillip Street. The public space is a local heritage listed item (I1708) under the SLEP 2012, recognised for its historical and aesthetic significance. ‘Qantas House’ at No. 1 Chifley Square is a 12-level office building including three levels of retail. The building is a State-heritage listed item (I1811) under the SLEP 2012. Chifley Tower is located at No. 2 Chifley Square. The building was constructed between 1989 and 1992 and consists of a curved glass façade on the eastern side of the building, and a mix of sandstone, marble and steel elements on the remaining facades.</p> <p><b>South:</b> To the immediate south of the site at 66 Hunter Street, is the ‘City Mutual Building’, a 12-storey office block, completed in 1936 with basement level parking for 21 cars and sub-basement storage space. The building is a local heritage listed item (I1675) under the SLEP 2012.</p> <p><b>West:</b> The western side of Bligh Street is dominated by commercial office towers ranging in height from 29 to 31 storeys, and the four-storey “NSW Club” building at 31 Bligh Street. The NSW Club building is a State heritage listed item (I1676) under the SLEP 2012. A Sydney Metro tunnelling support site is located at 33 Bligh Street to support the new metro station at Martin Place.</p> <p>Photographs of the surrounding land uses are provided as <b>Figure 1</b>.</p>
Regional Context	<p>The site is located within the Central Sydney precinct, within the City of Sydney LGA. The precinct is characterised by a layered development history progressing through the twentieth century, as represented by a mix of commercial developments in a variety of architectural types and scales. The area is characterised by large-scale high-rise tower buildings interspersed with lower scale development.</p> <p>The built form of the surrounding context generally follows the street alignment at lower levels, with the curved alignment of Chifley Square to the north creating a unique urban landscape within Central Sydney. This range of built form and architectural styles provide a visual relief and break in the intensely built-up area of the financial centre located to the east and south of the site.</p>

Descriptor	Site Details
	To the east of the site is a significant public open space corridor extending from Hyde Park through to The Domain and Royal Botanic Gardens, and to the north of the site is Sydney Harbour. This proximity provides amenity opportunities for the site and iconic views.
Infrastructure	The site is approximately 200 metres walking distance to Martin Place Train Station and future Martin Place Metro Station, approximately 450 metres walking distance to Wynyard transport interchange, and approximately 500 metres to Circular Quay transport interchange. Bus stops are located along Pitt, Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets, providing access to Sydney's eastern, northern, western and inner suburbs. Pedestrian and cycleway networks are also located within the immediate locality providing connections to Circular Quay, the Rocks, Sydney Town Hall, and surrounding transport hubs.
Site Access	Pedestrian and vehicle access to the site is off Bligh Street. Vehicular access to the site is via a single 2.6m wide driveway that is restricted by a security gate under one-lane, two-way access arrangements. The driveway provides access to the basement car park, containing 21 car parking spaces.
Easements and Covenants	The site does not contain any significant easements or covenants restricting future development on the site.
Services	The site is currently connected to all necessary services including water, gas, electricity and communications.
Acid Sulfate Soils	The site and locality is identified to contain Class 5 Acid Sulphate Soil and is not within close proximity to other Classes of Acid Sulphate Soils. Further, the Sydney Harbour 1:25,000 Acid Sulphate Soils Risk Map indicates that there is no known occurrence of Acid Sulphate Soils in the locality.
Contamination	Given the historical use of the site, it is not expected that there will be any contamination present on the site. Further contamination of the site has been addressed in D/2018/892 which granted approval for demolition of the existing building, excavation and shoring of the site.
Geotechnical	The site is underlain by fill comprising sandy gravel, with some rubble and fragment. Rock generally occurs at shallow depths across the site, typically within four metres of the surface.

Descriptor	Site Details
	Sydney Metro tunnels and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) land extends in a north-westerly to south-easterly direction to the immediate eastern corner of the site at depths between RL5.6 and RL-16.05.
Stormwater and Flooding	The site is not affected by the 100-year average recurrence interval (ARI) flooding event nor the probable maximum flood (PMF) flooding event.
Bushfire Prone Land	Given the site location within Central Sydney, the site is not identified as being affected by bushfire prone land.
Flora and Fauna	The site contains no vegetation; however, two existing street trees are located adjacent to the site boundary on Bligh Street.
Aboriginal Heritage	An analysis of the Archaeological Heritage and Information Management System (AHIMS) database conducted on 2 April 2019 identified a total of 15 Aboriginal sites located within 1km of the subject site. The high level of disturbance across the site demonstrates any potential for subsurface archaeological deposits has been eliminated and as such it is considered that there is no Aboriginal archaeological potential within the site.
European Heritage	The site is not a listed heritage item, nor is it located within a listed heritage conservation area. However, the site is surrounded by individual heritage items of local and State significance.



Figure 1 Site and Locality Photographs



Picture 1 Photograph of the site (Bligh House)



Picture 2 Sofitel Wentworth Hotel



Picture 3 Former 'Qantas House' (1 Chifley Square)



Picture 4 Former NSW Club Building (31 Bligh Street)

### 3. DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The key components of the proposed development are listed in the following table. A copy of the architectural concept drawings is submitted with the request for SEARs.

Table 3 Project Details

Descriptor	Project Details
Project Area	The site has a total area of 1,218m <sup>2</sup> . The full extent of the site is expected to be physically disturbed by the project
Project Description	<p>The project comprises the demolition of the existing building, remediation of the site and construction of a mixed-use hotel and commercial development including the following key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum building height of RL 225.88 metres (or 59 storeys).</li> <li>Total GFA of 26,796m<sup>2</sup>, broken down as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial: 6,166m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>Hotel: 20,630m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>Vehicle access will be provided via Bligh Street.</li> <li>On-site vehicular and bicycle parking (final quantum to be determined and clarified in the EIS).</li> <li>Amenities including pool, spa, gymnasium, function and pre-function space, restaurant, and bars.</li> </ul>
Expected Capital Investment Value (CIV)	Expected CIV is approximately \$270,000,000 (excl. GST) (final quantum to be determined and clarified in the EIS).
Staging/Phasing	<p>The project is proposed to be delivered in one stage. Construction of the project will be carried out within approximately three stages of works, which will be the subject of separate construction certificates. The indicative staging of works is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage 1 – Structural works;</li> <li>Stage 2 – Internal fit out; and</li> <li>Stage 3 – Hotel preparations.</li> </ul> <p>The indicative operational details of the project are as follows:</p>



Descriptor	Project Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The operational hours for the project are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 24 hour, seven days per week trading operations including hotel reception check-in desk, concierge, pool and gym facilities, and lobby lounge areas;</li> <li>– All day dining restaurant 6:00am till midnight, seven days per week;</li> <li>– Lounge lobby bar 7:00am till 1:00am, seven days per week; and</li> <li>– Rooftop bar 7:00am till 2:00am, seven days per week.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The maximum capacity for visitors and guests on the site at any one time is 1680, including a ballroom patronage of 312 patrons and 800 hotel guests. This assumes no duplication of guests staying within the hotel using its facilities, which is the more common and expected scenario.</li> <li>▪ A maximum of 200 staff are proposed at any one time on site.</li> </ul>

## 4. STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT CLASSIFICATION

Pursuant to Schedule 1, Clause 13 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*, development for tourist related development (but not including any commercial premises whether separate or ancillary to the tourist related component) that has a capital investment value of more than \$100 million is assessed as SSD.

The proposed development is classified as an SSD application given the proposed development incorporates a hotel component that will exceed a capital investment value of more than \$100 million.

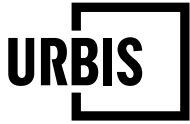
As such, the proposed development is in accordance with the definition and criteria established under the Planning Systems SEPP and can be assessed as an SSDA.

## 5. BDAR WAIVER REQUEST

In 2019 the Department reviewed an application to waive the requirement for a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) to be submitted with SSD 9527 relating to the site.

The Department reviewed the test of significance under section 7.3 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, that was prepared by Eco Logical Australia dated 24 July 2019, and additional information received 30 August 2019, and agreed that there is no need for the SSDA to submit a BDAR as part of the application.

A BDAR Waiver was previously granted for development on the site on 04 September 2019. The request for a BDAR Waiver and the BDAR waiver issued by the Department on 04 September 2019 are attached to this request for SEARs.



As the proposed request for SEARs relates to the same site as SSD 9527, and for principally the same proposed development as outlined in SSD 9527, it is requested the Department consider this request and re-issue a new BDAR waiver to support this SSDA.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

I trust the information provided with this letter provides sufficient details to provide the Department with a comprehensive understanding of the proposed development to facilitate the issue of industry-specific SEARs.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 8233 9990 or at [aryan@urbis.com.au](mailto:aryan@urbis.com.au) to discuss.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Ryan".

Ashleigh Ryan  
Director  
+61 2 8233 9990  
[aryan@urbis.com.au](mailto:aryan@urbis.com.au)

Attachment A – Indicative Architectural Plans (Woods Bagot)

Attachment B – BDAR Waiver Request (Eco Logical Australia)

Attachment C – Former BDAR Waiver (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment)