

# Preliminary Public Art Plan for 4–6 Bligh Street, Sydney

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4–6 Bligh Street, Sydney

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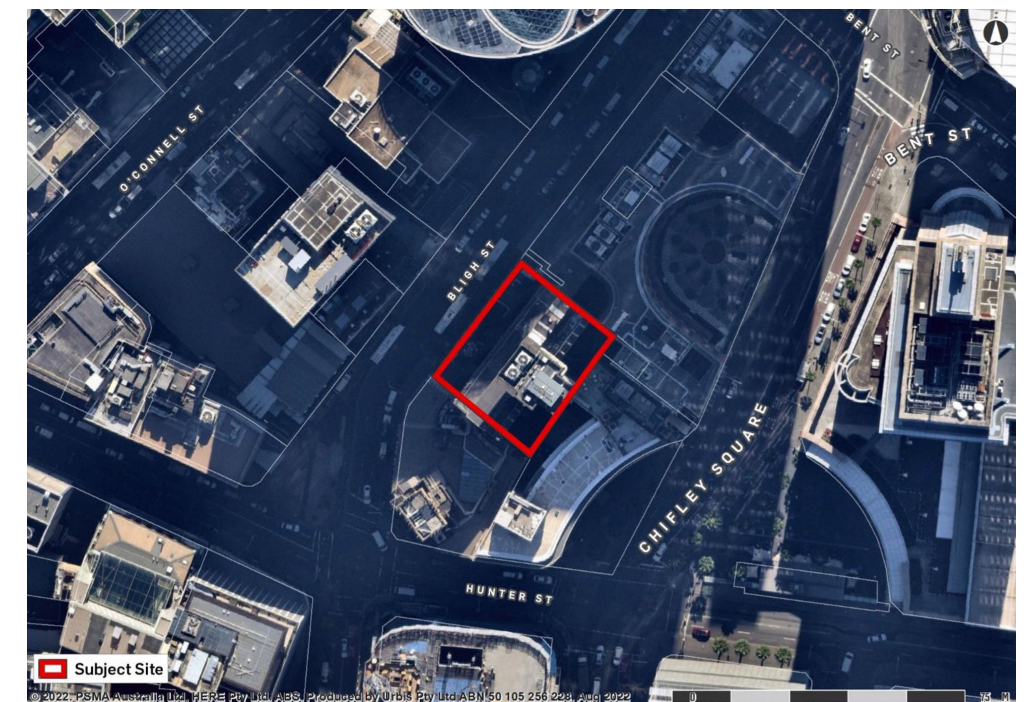
# 1

## Executive summary

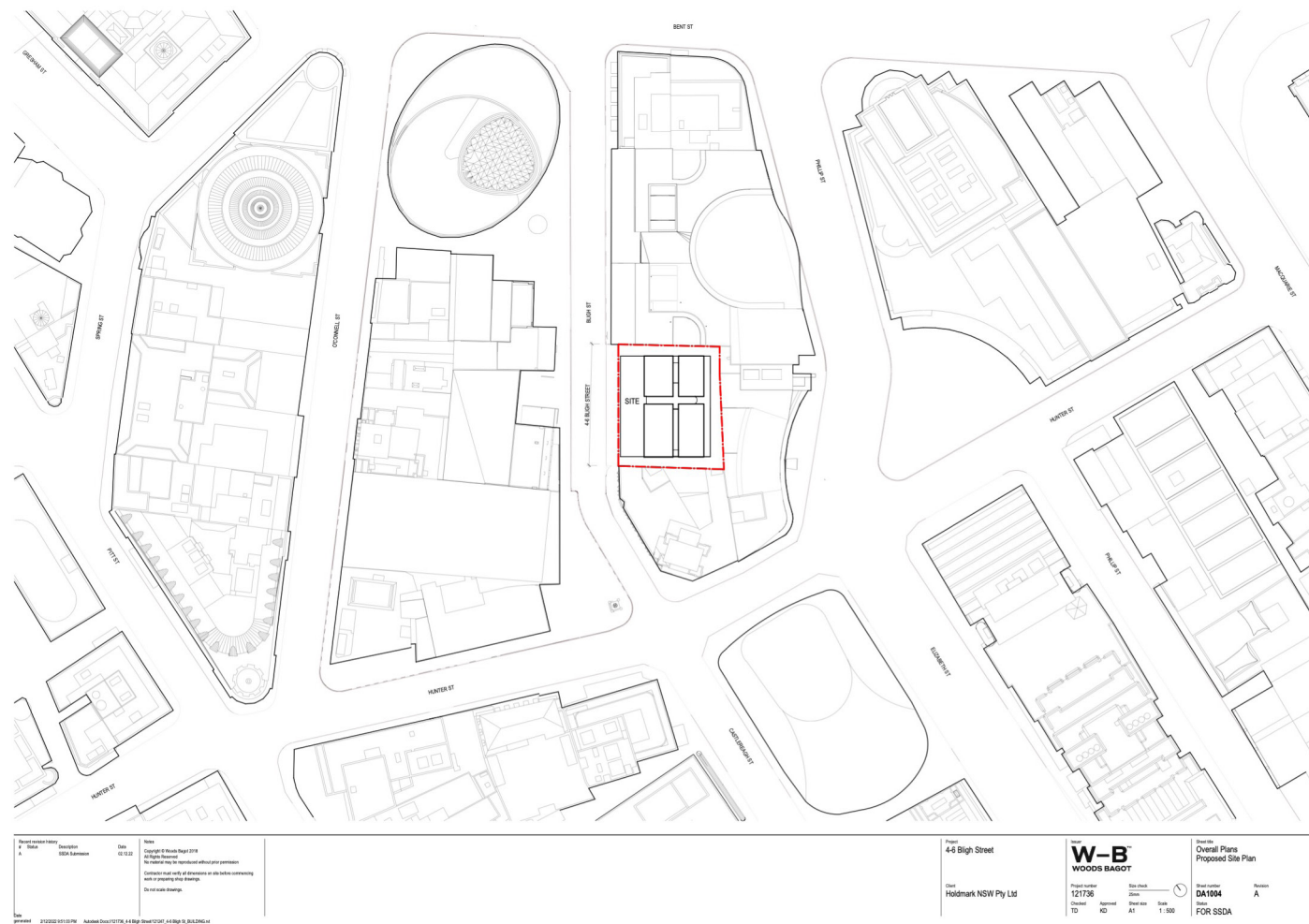
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This Revised Preliminary Public Art Plan has been prepared by Barbara Flynn for Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd to accompany a detailed State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the mixed-use redevelopment proposal at 4–6 Bligh Street, Sydney. It addresses the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the project site (SSD-48674209), which is legally described as Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 1244245. There are no mitigation measures required that pertain to public art.

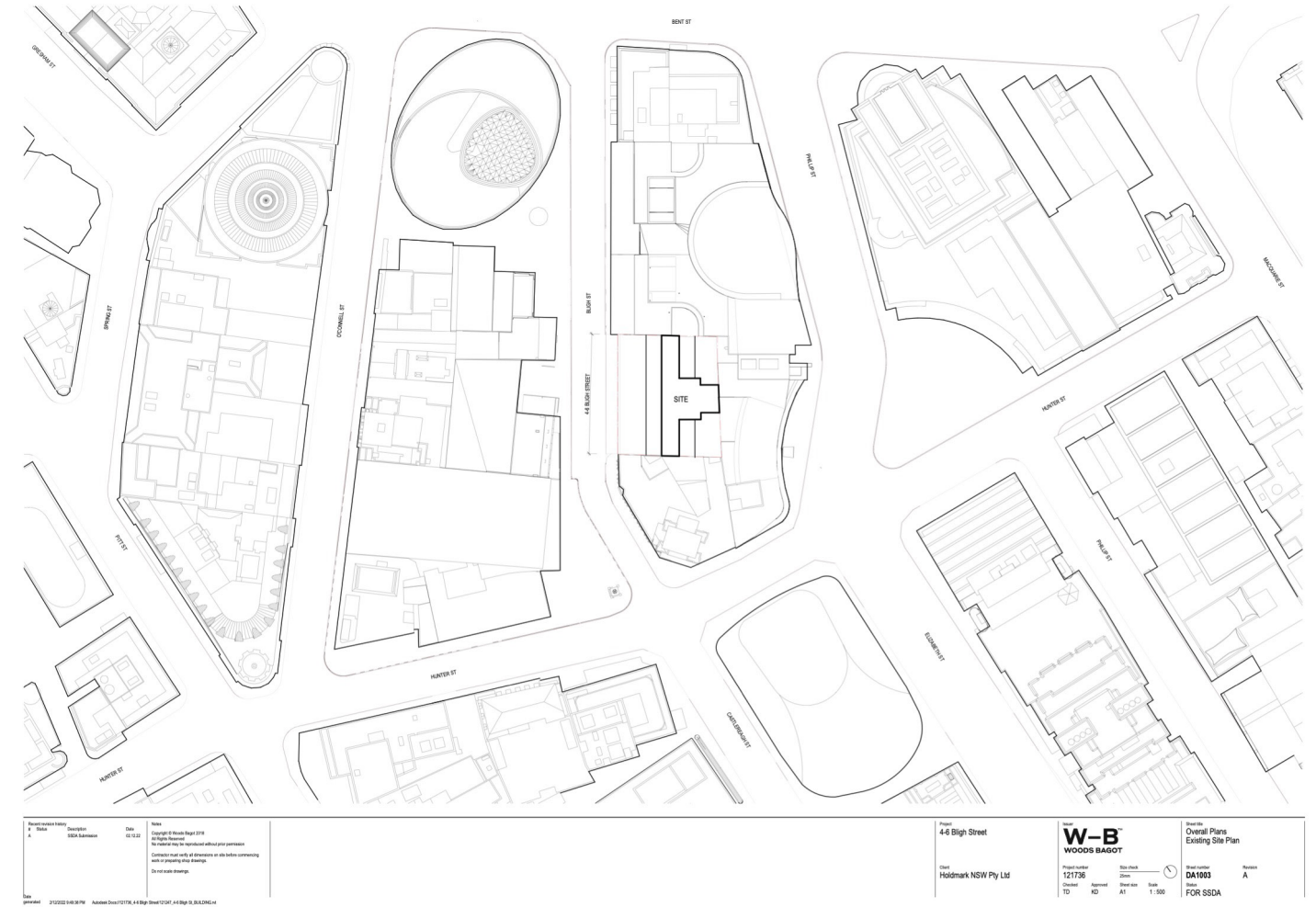
The project team pay respect to the Traditional Owners and Elders, past, present and future, of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation on whose Country – land, waters, air and sky – the 4–6 Bligh Street site is located. We acknowledge the Aboriginal people who have passed through and who continue to use and find meaning on the site today. We pay tribute to Aboriginal connection to material and creative practice on these lands for more than 60,000 years and celebrate the enduring presence and knowledge of Aboriginal people.



Site identification plan



*Proposed site plan*



Existing site plan



# 2

## Planning requirements, the site, analysis of the precinct and cumulative impacts

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### Planning requirements

The Council of the City of Sydney, as delegate for the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister), is the Consent Authority for the SSDA under an Instrument of Delegation issued by the Minister on 3 October 2019.<sup>1</sup>

The application seeks consent for the construction of a 59-storey mixed-use hotel and commercial development. The purpose of the project is to revitalise the site, and to deliver new commercial floor space and public-realm improvements consistent with the City’s vision to strengthen the role of Central Sydney as an international tourism and commercial destination.

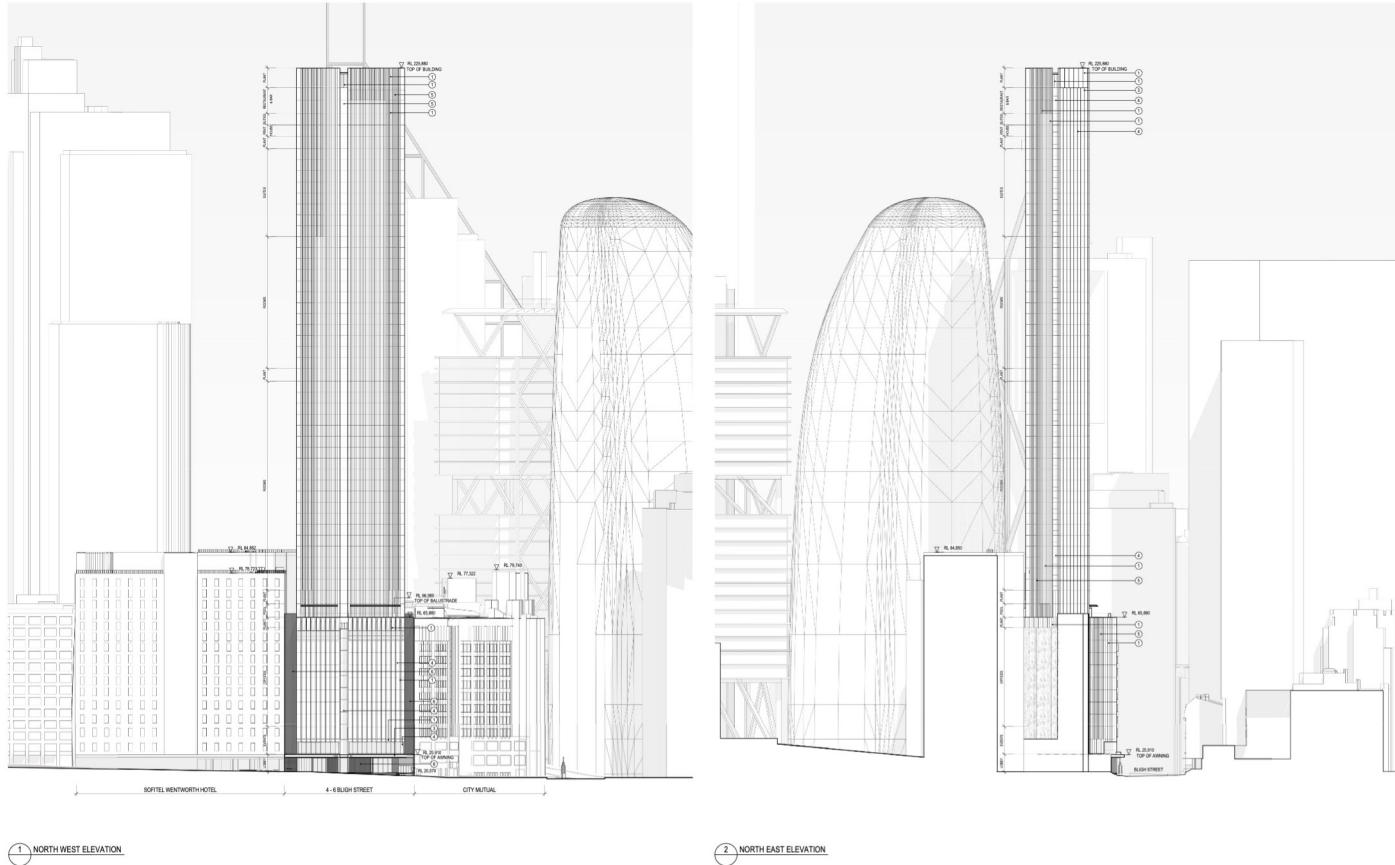
A separate development consent (D/2018/892) relating to early works for the proposed application was granted for the site on 31 January 2020. Consent was granted for the demolition of the existing site structures, excavation and shoring of the site for three basement levels (to a depth of RL9.38 metres) to accommodate the proposed mixed-use hotel and commercial development. This application does not seek consent for these components and instead seeks to rely upon and activate D/2018/892 for early works.

Development consent is sought for the following.

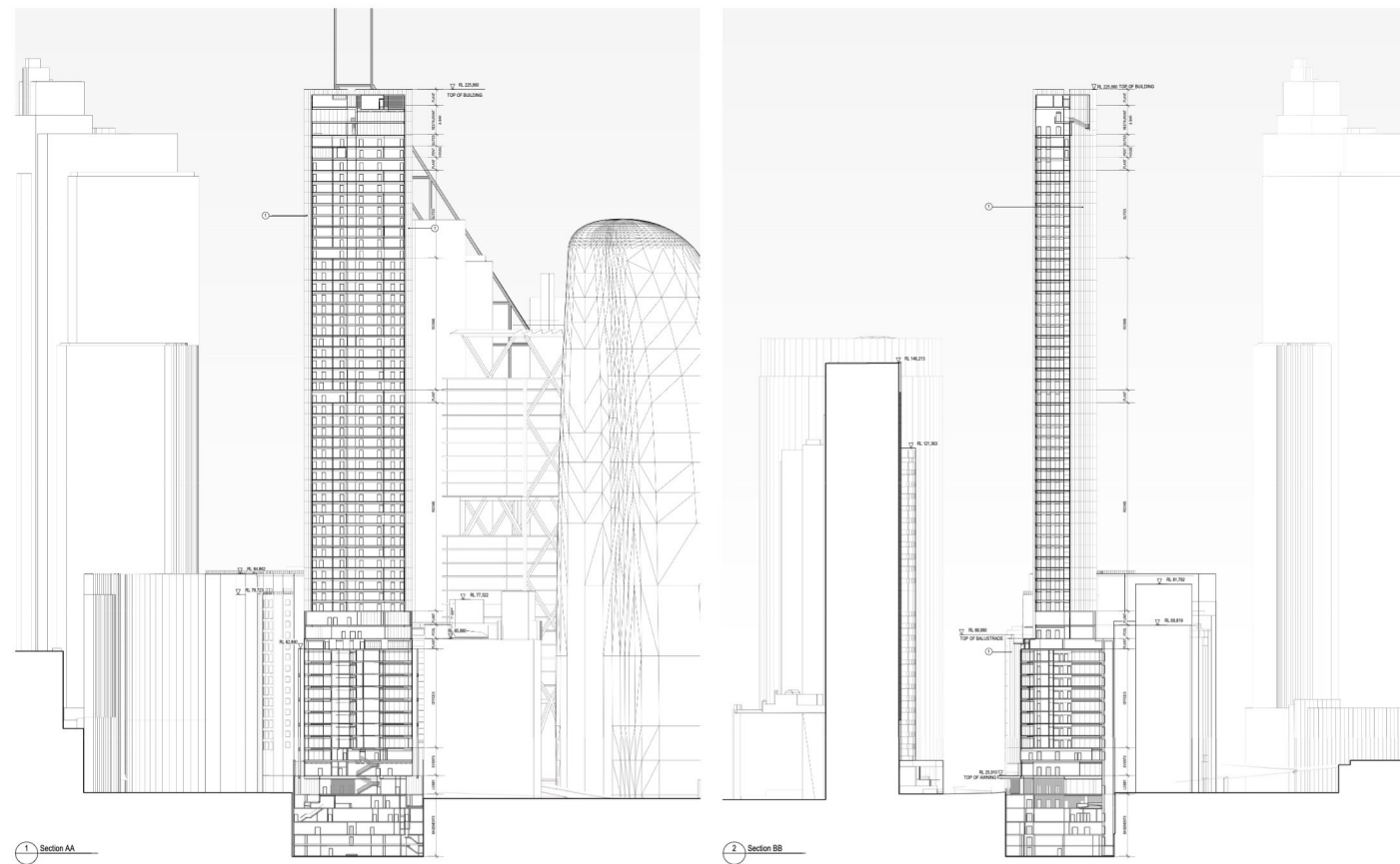
- Site establishment. This includes removal of three existing trees along the Bligh Street frontage, and de-commissioning and removal of an existing substation (s2041) on the site.
- Construction of a 59-storey hotel and commercial office tower. The tower will have a maximum building height of RL225.88 (205 metres) and a total gross floor area (GFA) provision of 26,796 square metres, and will include:
  - a 12-storey podium accommodating hotel concierge and arrival at ground level, conference facilities, eight levels of commercial floor space and co-working facilities, and hotel amenities including a pool and gymnasium at level 12
  - 42 tower levels of hotel facilities, including 417 hotel keys comprising standard rooms, suites and a penthouse
  - two tower levels accommodating restaurant, bar, back of house, and a landscaped terrace at level 57
  - plant, servicing and BMU at level 59 and rooftop.

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- Increase to the width of the existing Bligh Street vehicular crossover to 4.25 metres, and provision of an additional 4-metre vehicular crossover on Bligh Street to provide one-way access to the porte cochere and service bays on basement level 1.
- Landscaping and public domain improvements. These include:
  - replacement planting of three street trees in the Bligh Street frontage
  - construction of a landscape pergola structure on the vertical façade of the north-eastern and south-eastern podium elevations
  - awning and podium planters
  - provision of a feature tree at the level 57 terrace.
- Identification of two top-of-awning building-identification signage zones with a maximum dimension of 1200 by 300 millimetres. Consent for detailed signage installation will form part of a separate development application.
- Utilities and service provision.
- Installation of public art on the site, indicatively located at ground level.



North-east and north-west elevations



Sections

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## The site

The site for the purposes of this SSDA is a single allotment identified as 4–6 Bligh Street, Sydney, and known as Lot 1 in Deposited Plan 1244245. The site has an area of 1218 square metres, and is identified in the site identification plan above.

The site is relatively flat, with a slight slope ranging from 21 metres AHD in the north-western corner to 19.5 metres AHD in the south-western corner.

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.

The site is also located close to a number of stations sites of Sydney Metro City & Southwest (opening 2024) and Sydney Metro West (opening 2030). These include, to the immediate east, the Sydney Metro Hunter Street station (east site), which is located on the corner of Hunter Street and Bligh Street. (There is also a west site.) The Hunter Street station sites are part of the Sydney Metro West project. SEARs for the preparation of Concept SSDAs for the sites were issued in August 2022.

Approximately 150 metres to the south of the site is Sydney Metro Martin Place Station site, located on Hunter Street between Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street. The Martin Place Station site is currently under construction and forms part of the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project.



Render of aerial view





Render of city view

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The site is occupied by a vacant commercial office building, known as Bligh House, which has ground-floor retail and basement car parking. 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 set back from the street frontage. The building was designed by Peddle Thorp & Walker (PTW) and was constructed as part of the post-World War II development boom in the Sydney CBD. At a height of 73.15 metres, upon its completion Bligh House was the eighth-tallest skyscraper in Sydney.

The podium overhang along the footpath provides continuous pedestrian protection. Vehicle access to the site is off Bligh Street via a single 2.6-metre-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.

The site contains no vegetation; however, two existing street trees are located adjacent to the site boundary on Bligh Street.

Development consent for the demolition of the existing site structures, excavation and shoring of the site for three basement levels (to a depth of RL9.38m) was granted by City of Sydney on 31 January 2022 (D/2018/892).

### Analysis of the precinct

The architectural design will make a positive contribution to the streetscape and create an amenity of a high order. Art will work together with the architecture to achieve these objectives.

There are a number of heritage items in the immediate vicinity of the site that art might reference. These include the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth hotel (including interiors) at 2 Bligh Street and 61–101 Phillip Street; the former City Mutual Life Assurance Building (including interiors) at 10 Bligh Street; the former Qantas House (including interiors) at 68–96 Hunter Street; Chifley Square; Richard Johnson Square, including its monument and plinth at the southern end of Bligh Street; the former NSW Club building (including interiors) at 31 Bligh Street; and the former Manufacturers House (including interiors) at 12–14 O’Connell Street.

### Cumulative impacts

Taking the document ‘Cumulative Impact Assessment Guidelines for State Significant Projects’ (October 2022) as a guide, the art advisor and artists for the project understand that ‘State significant projects are subject to a comprehensive assessment with extensive community participation under the EP&A Act. This involves evaluating the merits of projects as a whole, having regard to the environmental, social and economic impacts of the project and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.’

They understand the need for and have experience with community consultation, and, as artists, are singularly aware of and actively involved with achieving sustainability and climate action goals.



# 3

## Singular intelligence of art and architecture

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This plan proposes an approach to implementing public art at 4–6 Bligh Street that is aligned with the client’s and architects’ objectives for the new tower building. Like the tower, art will make a singular impression and introduce order to an unruly collection of existing buildings in the vicinity.

Through the alliance of artists and architects, we see how intelligent art can work together with intelligent design to promise a new kind of moment in the central city, combining meaning and rigour with visual excitement and attractiveness. Artists of talent are the enablers who can pull off these feats by comprehending buildings from the start and expressing the most genuine intentions and aspirations of a design.

The artists proposed are Elisa Jane Carmichael, Megan Cope, Kyra Mancktelow and Judy Watson. Watson and Cope are mid-career artists of prodigious experience with public art. Combining them with the two younger-generation artists Carmichael and Mancktelow will set up collaborative relationships which will make for positive and very interesting results. As a group, the four bring integrity and a fresh outlook to projects and will realise art unlike anything people have seen before. Cope, Carmichael and Mancktelow are as yet not represented with artworks in the exterior public realm of Sydney. It will be exciting for this project to be the first to present their art in this context.

Who is this building for? As a hotel, it will function for interstate and international visitors as a range of things, from playground, hotspot and place-to-be, to a sanctuary and location for calm and wellness in the middle of a dynamic city. The tower will satisfy the appetite of Sydney residents for an elegant, high-style place to go, providing a bar and dining experience that is unforgettable – a timely update of Bemelmans or the American Bar in the grand New York and London hotels of old.



Judy Watson  
Photo: Jenni Carter



Megan Cope



Elisa Jane Carmichael in front of her work *Dabiyil wunjayi* (water today), 2020



Kyra Mancktelow  
Photo: Rhett Hammerton



People coming to the hotel will want to see what makes Sydney and Australia special. We don't travel and book into a very special hotel to see art and design that looks like home, or that reminds us of any other global city. We are curious to see what makes Sydney unique. To satisfy this desire on the part of visitors, art will be from here and architecture will make its own statement – one that is Sydney-responsive and original. Hotel guests will be provided with an insider's view of art and creative production here, which will be an experience like no other anywhere else in the world.

What the tower and the art are made of will be paramount. Whether this is the destination you have booked into, or the sumptuous façade and dazzling entry you are walking past, you will feel excited as art and architecture entice you to come inside or walk past again and again, on your own, or to show off Sydney's remarkable attractions to visitors and friends.

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## 4 Precedents and studies relevant to the objectives for public art

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The various public art guideline documents of the City of Sydney have informed this plan, as have several other historical and current reports, presentations and articles – such as the fine 2017 report of the City of Parramatta, *Culture and Our City*, and the presentations by artists, public art curators and academics at the Monash University public art symposium *Let's Go Outside: Making Art Public* (Melbourne, 30–31 August 2019).

Art will conform to the guidelines for public art and culture of the City of Sydney. The relevant City of Sydney documents are the *City of Sydney Public Art Policy* (January 2016), *City Art Public Art Strategy* (2011), and *Interim Guidelines for Public Art in Private Developments* (2006), which provide the framework for the acquisition and management of public art in the City of Sydney Local Government Area.<sup>2</sup>

The Interim Guidelines document states the purpose of the City's guidelines as:

- ensuring that high-quality public art is included in accessible public spaces in all large-scale developments
- assisting owners and developers in the commissioning, procurement and display of public art
- ensuring that works of public art are constructed and installed in accordance with Development Consent.

City of Sydney requires three public art plans to be drafted to accompany developments 'in urban renewal areas requiring a Master Plan or Stage 1 DA ... and all privately initiated multiple residential, commercial or industrial projects which include a significant amount of public (or publicly accessible) space or which have a construction value exceeding \$10 million'.<sup>3</sup>

The first required public art plan is this plan, the Preliminary Public Art Plan, which is normally submitted with the Stage 1 Design Application (DA). The requirements for the Preliminary Public Art Plan allow the nominated artists the scope to think freely and conceive of a work or works that will be not just suitable for the site but significant. Quoting from the City's guidelines documents, the plan

‘should identify public art opportunities, propose a methodology for the selection and commissioning of artists and provide an estimated budget and program for the inclusion of artists’.

The second plan required is the Detailed Public Art Plan, which secures Development Consent for a project. Third is the Final Public Art Report, which is submitted at the completion of the project and secures the Occupation Certificate.

Sydney is the leader in art-in-architecture projects worldwide due to the vision of the City of Sydney, which requires development companies to make a contribution to art and culture above a certain level of investment. There is a large volume of construction underway in the city that translates into just as many public artworks that need to be coordinated. The City and curators are aware that we don’t need art everywhere, and we don’t want the same themes repeated from artwork to artwork. Thus, curators and artists working in central Sydney today have an exciting array of existing artworks in architecture to respond to. The approach is to avoid duplicating what is already on hand and provide the opportunity to artists like Carmichael, Cope and Mancktelow who do not have permanent works on view in the central city, in this way further enriching the city’s collection of what is on offer.

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# 5

## Methodology for selecting and commissioning artists

### Methods that ensure success

When art, architecture and landscape architecture work together meaningfully with a consideration of Aboriginal history and culture, the collaboration can create a significant new building project.

The term ‘integrated’ is used a lot. When public art is fully integrated it looks as if it belongs there. It is the opposite of the public art we see that looks random and out of place, as if it has been dropped in somewhere without any thought for its environs or physical context, or for the values of the place it is in. One way to achieve art that looks ‘right’ is by starting the process of identifying and selecting artists as this project has, early enough to allow for integration to occur. All the design disciplines need to be carefully coordinated with public art from the earliest stages of the project.

Working closely with the artists, who have the final say, the team can identify a new bespoke fabricator for every project, finding the right maker to fit the vision. Every artist true to their vision will propose to work in a new and distinct way. Such individuality is critical to ensure the artworks created for the project will look like nothing else.

### Clear preference for commissioning Australian artists

The client and working team have decided on a direct commissioning method of engaging artists. Working with Australian artists was a clear preference of the client and the architects, in the context of a project that aspires to highlight the best of Australian art, design and architecture for the enjoyment of Sydneysiders, and national and international visitors.

### Achieving an equivalence of form and material

The architects are creating a tower that is a sculptural form. Their design documents cite precedent examples from the art of Constantin Brâncuși (Romania, 1876–1957) and Dame Barbara Hepworth (England, 1903–75). The

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art of Carmichael, Cope, Mancktelow and Watson might be more flexible and responsive to what is of concern and meaning to us today than the art of such practitioners, but what is interesting about the comparison is the updating of tradition that their art represents. A strict and calculated composition, something shared by Brâncuși and Hepworth, also underlies everything the four living artists do. Their works may be more ‘now’ and of today, but in their hands, the use of dyeing, organic detritus and newly developed techniques for working in metals and a large range of other materials is no less effective than the way the masters Brâncuși or Hepworth used bronze.

The dramatic patinated copper canopies of the Wentworth and fenestration detailing of 10 Bligh Street are employed at the base to link into the surroundings and continue the grand civic move. The copper of the tower is a malleable material with a beautiful tone, lustre and depth and will be sourced in Australia. The warmth of the material and the ability to respond to light echoes that of sandstone.

– Ian Lomas, Partner, Woods Bagot

As Lomas expresses it, the architects will employ a palette of sumptuous materials for use on the façade, at the ground plane and throughout the tower. Sydney sandstone and copper sourced in Australia will be used alongside patinated bronze, cast brass and ribbed bronze anodised aluminium. Artists as inventive as Carmichael, Cope, Mancktelow and Watson may develop new materials to address the façade, the underside of the canopies, the entry and the ground plane. Soon the team will be working to identify the appropriate local makers to work closely with the artists, translating their colour palettes to engage with the warmth and brightness of the sandstone and the lustre of the copper of the architects’ tower.

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*Render of Bligh Street façade*

# 6

## Public art opportunities

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### Locations for art

There are three preferred locations for art. These are: the 59-storey façade of the tower; the canopy, podiums and gardens of the design; and the ground-floor tower entry, which the architects describe as an ‘Australian tiled veranda, a place of welcome and engagement with the street’. The idea of the veranda suggests a place that will be often visited and comfortable to use.

### Blurring the lines

The artists will focus on the ground-floor locations with the idea of carrying the art into the foyer and up the façade to the underside of the canopy. Works of Cope’s and Watson’s show how vibrant and engaging this will look. Art will be accessible and visible to the public in keeping with the requirements of the City of Sydney.

The idea basic to the architects’ conception is to blur the lines between public and private and outdoors and indoors. This idea will be exciting to the four artists who are the perfect choice to affect that sort of expansive and immersive experience.

When they discuss the project, the architects are clear about their aim to reinstate what hotels used to be – living rooms for the city. The work of the four artists becomes the expression of the welcome the architects are seeking; their art is the way people will feel invited into the space. How will the four artists achieve this?

### The theatre of the hotel

The architects also talk about ‘the theatre of the hotel’. The four artists nominated create the kind of art that sparks discussion and is a must-see. One imagines how the experience of an all-engrossing, vibrantly patterned ground plane will continue onto the façade, with elements visible from afar to draw people to the tower. Art placed high up is inspiring; it acts as a beacon to attract people.

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# The artists

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The vision is to create a suite of works by four artists that will sit well together and provide a rich, interconnected experience for people. Flynn and three of the artists – Carmichael, Cope and Watson – have worked together in a similar process of cross-referencing in 2020–21 for the Cross River Rail project for Brisbane. In that project, the three artists demonstrated their talent for working on a monumental scale, conceiving magnificent works for VT shaft glazed walls that were several storeys in height.

Watson and Cope have delivered numerous singular works for the public realm that are permanent, durable and robust. Less experienced, Carmichael and Mancktelow are the creators of images of great power and relevance that edge ever closer to being realised on a public scale.

One of Australia's most respected artists, **Judy Watson** (Waanyi, b.1959, Mundubbera, Qld, lives and works in Brisbane) works from memory, sometimes drawing on archival documents and materials to reveal histories of First Nations Australians. The artist applies a refined eye to working on a site, creating visually engaging correspondences that look right. Few artists are consummate composers in space in the way Watson is. This ability is contagious and will inspire the other artists as the group works together to establish a dialogue.

Working with Watson it could be possible to continue the stories she has expressed in the other works she has delivered for the Sydney public domain, *Bara* in 2022 and *Ngarunga Nangama: Calm Water Dream* in 2016.

In a recent *New York Times* article, the artist talks about how, in her newest work *shadow bone*,

my hands are seen opening and closing against sunlight. I recorded the video of the sunlight dancing on the water at Warrane (Sydney Harbor) with my cellphone. The audio in the background of the video is the sound of the traffic on Sydney Harbour Bridge. You can also hear the noise from the water slapping against the rocks below the bridge. ...

I wanted to animate the action and inaction of blocking out distasteful events and unpalatable facts. This effect draws on what these tragedies mean in the context of the past, the present and the future. Black deaths in police custody are still occurring. Frontier wars were fought in Australia and need to be acknowledged. While it may be painful to recall, we have a shared history that must be recognized and remembered.<sup>4</sup>



**Judy Watson**  
*Bara*, 2022  
Installation view  
Photo: Brett Boardman



**Judy Watson**  
Artist's impression of commission for Tarpeian Precinct Lawn,  
Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, overlooking Dubbagullee/  
Bennelong Point  
Commissioned by City of Sydney for Eora Journey  
Curator: Hetti Perkins





**Judy Watson**  
*tow row*, 2016 (installation view)  
 Bronze  
 193 × 175 × 300cm (approx.)  
 Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane  
 Commissioned for the 10th anniversary of Queensland Art Gallery  
 Photo: Rosanna Ryan



**Judy Watson**  
*Ngarunga Nangama: Calm Water Dream*, 2016  
 CNC-carved sandstone wall  
 265m<sup>2</sup>  
 200 George Street, Sydney  
 Commissioned by Mirvac  
 Photo: Roger D'Souza/UAP



**Judy Watson**  
*Clouds and undercurrents*, 2020–21 (installation view)  
 Indigo, acrylic, natural pigments, embellishment on canvas, bunya leaves, nets, vinyl, sound  
 Exhibited *The National: New Australian Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 26 March – 5 September 2021  
 Supported by the Australia Council for the Arts and Atelier, Art Gallery of New South Wales  
 Photo: Felicity Jenkins/AGNSW



Staying close to cultural heritage by collecting materials on Country is a practice that connects artists Judy Watson and **Elisa Jane Carmichael** (Quandamooka, b. 1987, Brisbane, lives and works in Brisbane). Another connection they share is language, which has long featured in Watson's paintings on canvas and paper, with words woven into compositions of colour and line. Parallel to this, Elisa Jane and her mother Sonja Carmichael's four cyanotypes in the *Tarnanthi* exhibition (2020–21) featured text – words Carmichael cut out of paper and pinned to the cotton so they could develop alongside the natural materials. Words included mara mibul wunjayi, which means 'hands alive today' in the Moondjan dialect of Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island). The words budjong (mother), maran (aunty) and jadin (sister) were also included, with a respectful nod to the strong matrilineal ancestry of the Carmichael women.

The websites of Carmichael and Kyra Mancktelow, the younger-generation artists recommended, speak of climate concern. Images of ghost nets, seafood feasts, middens and 'flowing clear freshwater' figure in the art in cyanotype by Carmichael and her mother, and the blue colour of the ground is an echo of the rich colour of the Quandamooka sea.<sup>5</sup>

Other recent achievements of Carmichael's include the public art installation *Water is Life*, completed in 2020 at South Bank Parklands in Brisbane. The preoccupation with the preciousness of water they share has led to past collaborations between Watson and Carmichael – in 2016 on the work *tow row*, and more recently, on the public art commission *nerung ballun* (*Nerang River*), *freshwater*, *saltwater* for the new Home of the Arts Gallery (HOTA) on the Gold Coast. The central element of the HOTA installation is a concrete form representing the nerung ballun – the Nerang River – that Watson based on original mappings of the river sourced by Aboriginal photographer and anthropologist Michael Aird. The bronze basket and dilly bag components of the installation were originally made by Carmichael in collaboration with fellow Quandamooka artist Libby Harward at the 2017 South Stradbroke Indigenous Artist Camp (Cross Currents: From Island to Mainland) – a five-day placement for emerging and established local Indigenous artists to work alongside leading artists to create site-specific works. Watson was lead artist for the camp, proceeding generously as she always does, exercising a gravitational pull that draws younger artists to her to collaborate.

A clue as to how Carmichael might possibly work to inscribe art into the ground plane of 4–6 Bligh Street is provided by the forms in the cyanotype prints for *Tarnanthi 2020*. To make them, Elisa and her mother placed objects collected from the sea and the land – shucked shells, fallen leaves – on a textile surface and exposed it to UV light. In the final works, the layering of forms correlates to a profound metaphorical layering of meanings about the traditions of ancestral people and their ways of life.

Like Carmichael, Kyra Mancktelow (Quandamooka/Ngugi/Nunukal, b. 1997 in Logan, Qld, lives and works in Logan and Brisbane) was named a finalist in the emerging artist category of the 2021 Telstra NATSIAA, which she won. Mancktelow's winning entry *Moongalba II* evokes the uniforms worn by the children of the Myora mission on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) in the years 1892–96. These are rendered in monoprint and hanging three-dimensional recreations made of Tarlatan, a printmaking fabric used to remove colour from an etching plate.<sup>6</sup>



Sonja Carmichael and Elisa Jane Carmichael  
*Wagari djagun (carry country)*, 2020  
 Cyanotype on cotton  
 279 × 275cm  
 Exhibited *Tarnanthi 2020*, Art Gallery of South Australia,  
 Adelaide, 16 October 2020 – 31 January 2021  
 © Elisa and Sonja Carmichael/Onespace Gallery  
 Photo: Grant Hancock



Mancktelow studied painting and printmaking as a student in contemporary Australian Indigenous art at Queensland College of Art. Interviewed for a July 2021 article, she described how her focus shifted from painting to printmaking once she realised that ‘Mark-making [provided] the opportunity to portray concepts in ways painting can’t.’<sup>7</sup>

Line is wielded powerfully to tell a story in *Moongalba II* and other works by the artist in the medium of printmaking. She is an ideal candidate to create inscribed art for the ground plane of 4-6 Bligh Street.



**Kyra Mancktelow**  
*Moongalba II*, 2021  
 Unique monoprint on 350gsm Hahnemühle paper  
 120 x 80cm (each work)

Language is an important component of the art of **Megan Cope** (Quandamooka b. 1982, Brisbane, lives and works in Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and northern New South Wales). Illustrated here, one recent public art project – *After the Flood*, at James Cook University in Townsville – used old military maps of the Townsville coastline to explore sea-level rises that are predicted to occur over time from the effects of climate change. The work was made with the assistance of the James Cook University Indigenous Education and Research Centre. Place names in elegant script printed onto the canopy of the work locate it squarely in Townsville, lending it immediacy and urgency in relation to climate change concerns. *After the Flood* is a canopy work that helps us to imagine how Cope would address the entry canopy of 4–6 Bligh Street.

Language is also at the core of *Weelam Ngalut* (2018) for the Monash University Clayton Campus. As part of the process to create the work, Cope invited students of and visitors to Monash University to learn and speak languages of the Koori, Goori, Murri and Wik peoples of Australia’s east coast. The phrases incorporated in brass inset into the ground plane of the work were contributed by the students and others who got involved. They appear in language and English translation on Cope’s website.<sup>8</sup>

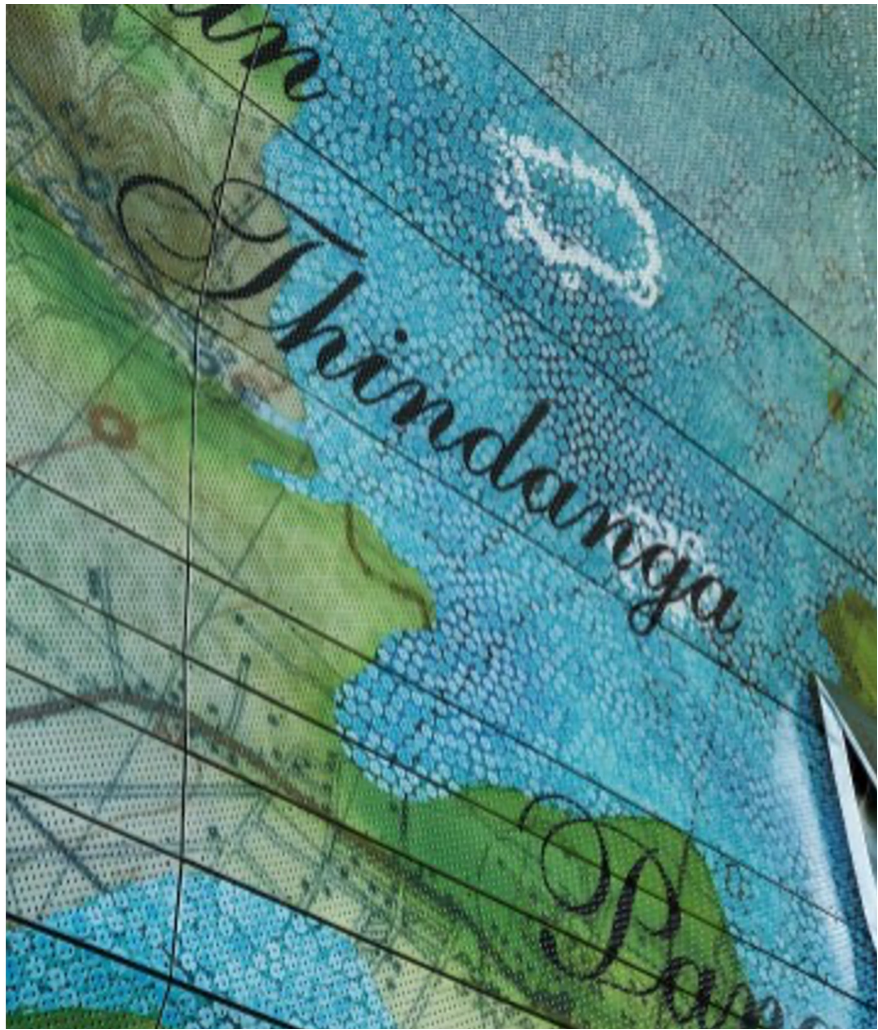
The title of the work *Weelam Ngalut* means ‘our place’ in the Woiwurrung language spoken by the people of the Kulin nation of the area of the Monash Clayton Campus. Sandra Delaney, a linguist who worked on the project, is a Noonuccal, Ngugi and Goenpul woman who, like Cope, is from the Quandamooka area of south-east Queensland. Sandra grew up speaking some words of Jandai, a dialect of the Jagera language, and has advocated passionately for revitalising language and making it part of everyday life. Cope’s way of quite naturally enfolded specialists like Delaney alongside ordinary community people is a skill that will enrich the 4–6 Bligh Street project.

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**Megan Cope**  
*After the Flood, 2020*  
 Central Plaza, James Cook University, Townsville  
 Commissioned by Cox Architecture and Woollam  
 Construction  
 Project curator: UAP Studio  
 Photo: Andrew Rankin



**Megan Cope**  
*After the Flood, 2020 (detail)*  
 Central Plaza, James Cook University,  
 Townsville  
 Commissioned by Cox Architecture and  
 Woollam Construction  
 Project curator: UAP Studio  
 Photo: Andrew Rankin



*Render of canopy*





**Megan Cope**  
*Weelam Ngalut (Our Place)*, 2019 (detail)  
Bronze, brass, concrete, tiles, gold leaf  
Monash Public Art Commission  
Commissioned by Monash University Museum  
of Art, Clayton Campus, Melbourne

# 8

## Budget

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Project budgets need to be realistic and fair, allowing artists to be paid on time for their efforts. A budget needs to be known before an artist can consider an opportunity and submit a detailed proposal for an artwork project.

A public art budget of A\$3,340,104 has been nominated by the client. The sum is more than sufficient to meet the requirements of the City of Sydney and to ensure a significant contribution to the city's existing array of public art.

# 9

## Indicative program

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The following table sets out the milestones of a public art project.

Initial stage	
Stage	Project milestones
Contracting of art advisor	Execute art advisor’s contract
Site analysis, curatorial research and artist identification	Advice of art advisor
Discussions of the possible artists matched to sites	Convene sessions of working team
Template artwork contract provided as starting point for contracting artists	
Public art budget confirmed	
Reporting to the relevant consent authority or authorities	

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Creation of artwork stage	
Stage	Project milestones
Finalising of artwork contracts	
Design development	
Commissioning of prototypes	Prototyping
Construction documentation	Reconfirm costings
Identifying possible fabricator(s)	
Tender	
Engagement of successful tenderers	
Preparing DA documentation	
Ongoing reporting to the relevant consent authority or authorities	

4

Fabrication and preparations for installation	
Stage	Project milestones
Fabrication	Fabricate artworks
Artwork lighting	Commissioning company undertakes artwork lighting and site preparation with input from the artists and art advisor
Preparations for transport	
Site preparation	

5

Final delivery and installation stage

Stage	Project milestones
Transport	Deliver and install artworks
Installation	
Maintenance manual	Complete maintenance manual by artists
Inspection and acceptance	Mandatory site visit by artists for final inspection and acceptance
Defects rectification	Rectify any defects by artists
Signage, promotional material, catalogue	Confirm and complete title, signage, writing about the artworks
Artwork photography	Photograph the artworks

6

Launch

Stage	Project milestones
Launch	Launch with art advisor and artists in attendance

# 10 Process

## Process of commissioning works of art

### Selection criteria

The success of a public art project is ensured by an artist who is capable of making art that is:

- excellent, innovative and original
- unique to Sydney
- exciting and relevant
- timeless in artistic content and durable (with a lifespan of 25 years).

### Direct commission of artists

Our preferred artists meet the criteria we have set. They are:

- based in Australia
- for three of the artists, creating their first works for the context of central Sydney
- capable of strong conceptual thinking and in command of a range of approaches that will ensure they will make art unique to this project
- comfortable with the architects’ design and approach
- capable of working collaboratively with the architects, the landscape architects, the art advisor and the larger project team
- for three of the artists, experienced working in the public realm; all four are able to meet the allocated budget and delivery program.

### Project delivery

The process of commissioning and delivering public art is dynamic. Flynn has developed the ability to foreshadow and plan for the possible eventualities and has documented them in the Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd template artwork contract. She has developed this document across several realised Sydney public art projects and is making it available to the client for use in the project.



Flynn redrafts the template artwork contract for each new instance. It sets out all stages of conceiving, designing, fabricating, installing and approving the artwork(s). Its scope is exhaustive and its clauses ensure protection of the artists' vision and art, and respect of their rights under Australian copyright law.

### Future ownership and care of the work of art

Commissioning and owning art brings with it obligations for care and maintenance that are reinforced by Australian moral rights law. It can reflect poorly on the commissioning company when artworks fall into disrepair.

As a guide, the Barbara Flynn Pty Ltd template artwork contract requires the production of a maintenance manual by the commissioned artist. Its clauses set out the obligations of ownership and the procedures to be followed in the event of a change in ownership.

### Engagement with the Government Architect NSW and the City of Sydney

City of Sydney, which is recognised for a depth of experience in delivering public art projects, will monitor the process of public art delivery throughout the stages of conception, fabrication, installation, and final acceptance and approval on site. The City of Sydney structure for monitoring the public art delivery process is its Public Art Advisory Panel (PAAP), instituted in 2007.

The client understands that the approval process is tied to a building's construction program. Design Approval (DA), Construction Certificate (CC) and Occupation Certificate (OC) can be withheld if the approval authority deems a commissioning company is not delivering on their obligation to make a positive contribution to the public domain.

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# 11 Conclusion

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Artists and architects will create a new benchmark for Australian art, architecture and design in the heart of the city. It will be an exceptional, welcoming and fascinating universe of sumptuous material, and lush pattern and colour, for Sydneysiders and international visitors alike to enjoy and make their own.

# Notes

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1	Some material in this section is drawn from the Architectural Design Competition Brief by Urbis, dated 2 November 2018.
2	The relevant policies are: <i>Public Art Policy</i> , City of Sydney, January 2016; <i>City Art Public Art Strategy</i> , City of Sydney, adopted 2011 (both accessible from the City of Sydney’s Public Art page <a href="http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/explore/arts-and-culture/public-art">www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/explore/arts-and-culture/public-art</a> ); and <i>Interim Guidelines for Public Art in Private Developments</i> , City of Sydney, September 2006 ( <a href="http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/development-guidelines-policies/interim-guidelines-public-art-private-developments">www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/development-guidelines-policies/interim-guidelines-public-art-private-developments</a> ).
3	City of Sydney, <i>Interim Guidelines</i> , p. 2.
4	Judy Watson, ‘Illuminating a forgotten history’, <i>New York Times</i> , 9 December 2022, <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/special-series/indigenous-australian-art-film.html">www.nytimes.com/2022/12/09/special-series/indigenous-australian-art-film.html</a> .
5	Jane Howard, ‘Something magical: Mother-daughter artist duo on reviving the lost art of weaving,’ <i>Guardian</i> , 19 October 2020, <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/oct/19/something-magical-mother-daughter-artist-duo-on-reviving-the-lost-art-of-weaving">www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/oct/19/something-magical-mother-daughter-artist-duo-on-reviving-the-lost-art-of-weaving</a> .
6	The 2021 iteration of the Telstra NATSIAA was the 38th in the series. The exhibition was on view at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, 7 August 2021 – 6 February 2022.
7	Quoted in ‘A distinct new voice from emerging artist’, <i>Our Logan</i> , vol. 95, July 2021, <a href="http://www.logan.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/3356/our-logan-magazine-volume-95-budget-edition-2021">www.logan.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/3356/our-logan-magazine-volume-95-budget-edition-2021</a> .
8	Megan Cope, ‘ <i>Weelam Ngulut (Our Place)</i> ’, 2018, <a href="http://www.megancope.com.au/public-art/weelam-ngalut-our-place">www.megancope.com.au/public-art/weelam-ngalut-our-place</a> .

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