

Modification 9 – Student Accommodation Development, Redfern

State Significant Development Modification Assessment Report (SSD-4949-Mod-9)

June 2026





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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1 Introduction

This report details the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (the Department's) assessment of a modification of the State significant development (SSD) application SSD-4949.

On 16 May 2012, Urbanest Pty Ltd was granted consent for the construction of a student accommodation development. Since the approval, The Trustee for Scape Australia (Cleveland) Trust has taken ownership of the site and is the Applicant for this modification application.

The Applicant seeks approval to replace the requirement for an on-site caretaker or member of staff to be on the premises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with an off-site centralised safety and incident response system.

1.1 Project location

The site is located at 157-163 Cleveland Street, Redfern, in the City of Sydney local government area. The site is shown in **Figure 1**.

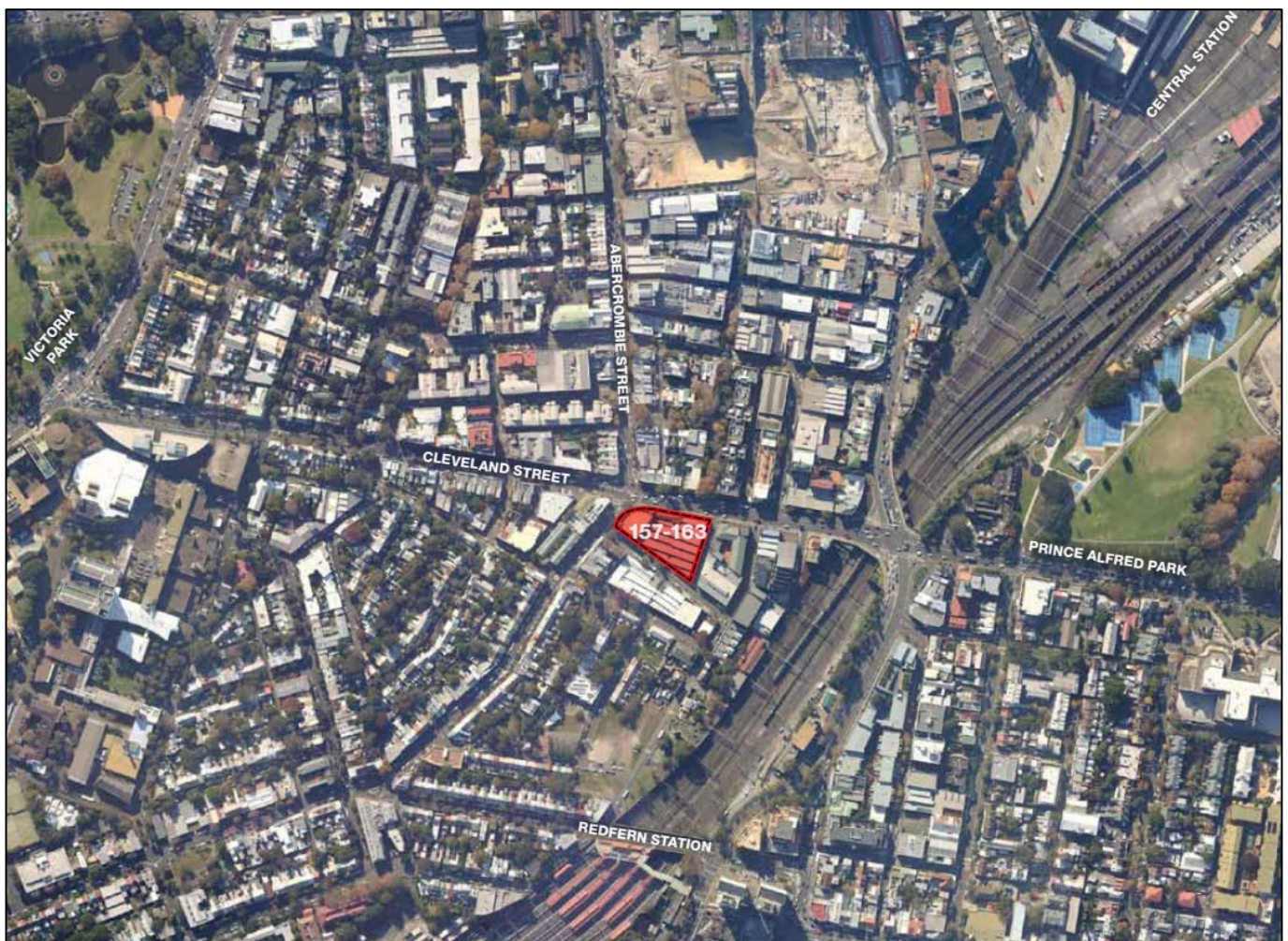


Figure 1 | Site Context (source: Applicant's EIS)

1.2 Approval history

On 16 May 2012, the Director General, as delegate of then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, granted development consent to the construction of a student accommodation development, including:

- construction of a part 2 / part 5 storey building and partial retention of existing facades to Cleveland and Hart Streets
- total GFA of 10,080m²
- 404 bedrooms with capacity for up to 461 students
- provision of communal facilities including reception/lobby, administration room, meeting room, internet/study area, TV/games room, laundry room and communal kitchen
- landscaped central courtyard
- site identification signs to Cleveland Street and Hudson Street.

The consent has been modified on 7 occasions (see **Table 1**).

Table 1 | Summary of modifications

Modification	Description	Decision-maker	Type	Date
MOD 1	Amend condition A4 to defer the requirement to pay Section 94F affordable housing contributions	Department	4.55(1A)	9 August 2012
MOD 2	Amend conditions D9 and E4 relating to Green Star ratings and hours of work; amendments to condition B3 relating to external signage, materials and finishes; a new condition A7 relating to signage	Department	4.55(1A)	19 October 2012
MOD 3	Amend condition D2(b) relating to Aboriginal and European archaeology and demolition and reinstatement of the Hart Street elevation	Department	4.55(1A)	31 January 2013
MOD 4	Reduce the number of student beds; modification to internal layouts; fenestration changes; increase in the size of awning	Department	4.55(1A)	14 August 2013

Modification	Description	Decision-maker	Type	Date
MOD 5	Amend condition E4 relating to Green Star rating	Department	4.55(1A)	30 September 2013
MOD 6	Modify condition A4 to delete the requirement for payment of affordable housing contributions	Planning Assessment Commission	4.55(1A)	20 June 2014
MOD 7	Withdrawn	n/a	n/a	10 April 2014
MOD 8	Modify condition D2 relating to Aboriginal and European archaeology to extend the timeframe to submit implementation plans; amendments to the awning structure	Department	4.55(1A)	21 July 2014

2 Proposed modification

Condition G4 of the consent requires an on-site caretaker or member of staff to be on the premises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week who must be contactable for emergencies 24 hours a day. The Applicant seeks to replace the requirement for an on-site caretaker or member of staff with an off-site centralised safety and incident response system.

A detailed description of the proposed modification and the Applicant's justification for the proposed amendments is provided in **Appendix A**.

3 Strategic context

3.1 Scope of modification and assessment pathway

Details of the legal pathway under which modification is sought and are provided in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 | Permissibility and assessment pathway

Consideration	Description
Scope of modification	The Department has reviewed the scope of the modification and considers that it can be characterised as a modification involving minimal environmental impact as: • no physical changes are proposed • is substantially the same development as originally approved • it will not involve any further disturbance outside of the already approved disturbance areas for the project. The Department is satisfied the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(1A) of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> (EP&A Act) and does not constitute a new development application. Accordingly, the Department considers that the application should be assessed and determined under section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act rather than requiring a new development application to be lodged.
Consent authority	The Minister of Planning and Public Spaces continues to be the consent authority under section 4.5(a) of the EP&A Act and has the capacity to modify the consent.
Decision-maker	Under the Minister's Instrument of Delegation dated 21 November 2025, the Team Leader, Key Sites and TOD Assessments, may determine the application as: • a reportable political donation or gift has not been disclosed • no submissions were received by way of objection • the submission received from the City of Sydney Council (Council) has been considered in the assessment of the modification application.

3.2 Mandatory matters for consideration

3.2.1 Matters of consideration required by the EP&A Act

In determining the modification, the consent authority must take into consideration such of the matters referred to in section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act as are of relevance to the development the subject of the modification application.

The consent authority must also take into consideration the reasons given by the consent authority for the grant of the consent that is sought to be modified. The Department's consideration of these matters is shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3 | Matters for consideration

Matter for consideration	Department's assessment
Environmental planning instruments, proposed instruments, development control plans & planning agreements	Appendix B – Statutory considerations
EP&A Regulation	Appendix B – Statutory considerations
Likely impacts	Section 5 – Assessment
Suitability of the site	Section 1 – Introduction and Section 5 – Assessment
Public submissions	Section 4 – Engagement and Section 5 – Assessment
Public interest	Section 4 – Engagement, Section 5 – Assessment and Section 6 – Evaluation

3.2.2 Objects of the EP&A Act

In determining whether to modify the consent, the consent authority should consider whether the modified project is consistent with the relevant objects of the EP&A Act (section 1.3) including the principles of ecologically sustainable development. Consideration of those factors is described in **Appendix B**.

The Department is satisfied that the development is consistent with the objectives of the EP&A Act and the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

4 Engagement

In accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, the Department made the modification application publicly available on the NSW Major Projects Planning Portal and referred it to Council for comment. Engagement with NSW Government agencies was not considered necessary.

Council provided comments in response to the proposed modification application.

5 Assessment

Condition G4 of the consent requires an on-site caretaker and/or member of Urbanest staff (now referred to as Scape) to be on the premises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week who must be contactable for emergencies 24 hours a day. The Applicant seeks to modify this condition to instead provide an off-site centralised safety and incident response system.

The Applicant advised that Scape utilises the 'ScapeSafe' safety and security framework which is a centralised and off-site safety and incident response system providing 24/7 oversight across all Scape properties in central Sydney. This model has been developed in response to student needs and safety concerns and has been implemented at other Scape properties.

The Applicant prepared an updated Management Plan which forms part of the modification application. The updated Management Plan sets out the ScapeSafe safety and security framework including the ScapeSafe Safety Control Centre which is a dedicated hub providing 24/7 remote CCTV monitoring of all Scape buildings enabling real-time surveillance and incident detection, and rapid emergency response coordination.

In addition, trained ScapeSafe security personnel regularly patrol within and around the building and the broader Redfern precinct throughout the night, providing a visible and proactive safety presence and enabling a swift, physical response to any emergency or incident. The ScapeSafe model therefore provides continuous 24/7 support and is consistent with the intent of Condition G4.

The Applicant states that removing the requirement for an on-site caretaker will ensure alignment with recent approvals granted for other Scape developments across Sydney, supporting a consistent and standardised approach to facility management across the Scape portfolio.

The Department notes that recent approvals for similar student accommodation developments do not require 24/7 on-site management.

Council requested further information on the management of the system to ensure the safety of occupants. In response, the Applicant provided clarification on the operation of the system. They advised that unlike a traditional on-site manager who is available on request, or who may otherwise be unavailable (whether asleep or attending to other matters), ScapeSafe operates as an active, always-on safety system immediately contactable 24/7. The model combines continuous CCTV monitoring, proactive roving patrols, and a dedicated response capability for alerts and incoming resident requests.

The Department has carefully considered the Applicant's reasoning and justification for the proposed modification and finds the proposed request to be acceptable, noting that:

- it is supported by an updated Management Plan and integration of the ScapeSafe safety and security framework to ensure its occupants are safe and supported at all times

- ScapeSafe security staff regularly patrol the building and surrounding area during the night to ensure the ongoing safety of occupants
- it allows for a consistent approach across all Scape developments, therefore allowing for a more efficient service
- no physical changes are proposed to the approved development and it would not result in any adverse environmental impacts.

Accordingly, the Department considers the proposed modification to be acceptable, subject to the recommended modified conditions.

6 Evaluation

The Department's assessment has considered the relevant matters and objects of the EP&A Act and concludes that the modification is acceptable as:

- the development, as proposed to be modified, would be substantially the same development as originally approved
- the development would continue to provide a high level of residential safety and amenity for occupants
- no physical changes are proposed to the approved development
- it would not result in any adverse environmental impacts.

Consequently, the Department considers the modification to be in the public interest and should be approved, subject to the recommended modified conditions of consent.

7 Recommendation

It is recommended that the **Team Leader, Key Sites and TOD Assessments**, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report
- **accepts and adopts** the findings and recommendations in this report as the reasons for making the decision to approve the modification
- **modifies the consent** for the student accommodation development (SSD-4949) at 157-163 Cleveland Street, Redfern, subject to the conditions in the attached instrument of modification
- **signs** the attached instrument of modification (**Appendix C**).

Recommended by:



Adam Flynn

Senior Planning Officer

Key Sites and TOD Assessments

8 Determination

The recommendation is **adopted** by:

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

Brent Devine

Team Leader

Key Sites and TOD Assessments

Appendices

Appendix A – List of referenced documents

The modification report and supporting information to this assessment report can be found on the Department's website as follows:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-9-amendments-condition-g4>

Appendix B – Statutory considerations

Objects of the EP&A Act

The Minister or delegate must consider the objects of the EP&A Act when making decisions under the Act. The Department is satisfied the proposed modification is consistent with the objects of the EP&A Act.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Regulation)

A consent authority may modify the consent if it is satisfied the proposed modification application meets the requirements of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act. An assessment of the proposed modification application against the requirements of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act is included in **Table 4** below.

Table 4 | Consideration of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act

Section 4.55(1A)	Assessment
1A(a) The proposed modification is of minimal environmental impact	The Department is satisfied that the proposed modification is of minimal environmental impact as: • no physical changes are proposed • it will not introduce any additional environmental impacts • it will not involve any further disturbance outside of the already approved disturbance areas for the project.
1A(b) The development to which the consent as modified relates is substantially the same development for which consent was originally granted and before that consent as originally granted was modified	The proposal seeks consent for changes that would not materially impact the nature of the overall development. The modification application is considered to result in development that is substantially the same development as that originally approved.

Section 4.55(1A)	Assessment
1A(c) The application has been notified in accordance with the regulations	The application is not required to be notified in accordance with the EP&A Regulation. The application was made publicly available on the Department's website.
1A(d) Any submission made concerning the proposed modification has been considered	The Department received advice from City of Sydney Council which has been considered in Section 4 of this report.
(3) Relevant matters in Section 4.15(1) of EP&A Act and reasons given by the consent authority for the grant of the consent that is sought to be modified	The relevant matters in Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act are considered at Table 5. The Department considers the project would not change the reasons for consent, including that the development remains permissible with consent and compatible with the relevant plans and policies, and that the impacts on the community and the environment can be appropriately managed.

Under section 4.55(3) of the EP&A Act, the consent authority must consider the matters referred to in section 4.15(1) of relevance to the development. **Table 5** identifies the matters for consideration under section 4.15 of the EP&A Act that apply to the proposed modification.

Table 5 | Consideration of the matters listed under Section 4.15 of the EP&A Act

Section 4.15 Matters for consideration	Department's assessment
(1)(a)(i) any environmental planning instrument	The modifications are consistent with the relevant Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs) as addressed in this report.
(1)(a)(ii) any proposed instrument	There are no relevant draft EPIs.
(1)(a)(iii) any development control plan	Under section 2.10 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021, development control plans do not apply to State significant development.
1(a)(iia) any planning agreement	Not applicable.
(1)(a)(iv) the regulations	The application satisfactorily meets the relevant requirements of the EP&A Regulation, including the procedures relating to application, the requirements for notification and application fees.

Section 4.15 Matters for consideration	Department's assessment
(b) the likely impacts of that development including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality	Section 5 of this report provides a detailed assessment of the impacts associated with the modified development. The modified development is not expected to result in unacceptable environmental impacts.
(c) the suitability of the site for the development	The site remains suitable for the development.
(d) any submissions	The Department has considered the advice received from the City of Sydney Council at Section 4 .
(e) the public interest	The Department considers the proposed modification to be in the public interest.

Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs)

To satisfy the requirements of section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act, this report includes references to the provisions of the EPIs that govern the carrying out of the project and have been taken into consideration in the Department's environmental assessment. The following EPIs are relevant to the application:

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022
- Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012

The Department undertook a comprehensive assessment of the application against the relevant EPIs in its original assessment. The Department has considered the above EPIs and is satisfied the modifications do not result in any inconsistency with these EPIs.

Appendix C – Recommended instrument of modification

The instrument of modification can be found on the Department's website at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/modification-9-amendments-condition-g4>