



View from Harbourside raised walkway; Harbourside to the left; Novotel to the right. Source - Hassell



View from Light Rail stop to the Convention Centre; Raised walkway connection to the right. Source - Hassell



View towards Harbourside Shopping Centre and ring road; Darling Drive and Light Rail corridor to the right. Source - Hassell

### 3.3 Site opportunities

The hotel site location and nature of the surrounding built form presents a unique opportunity from both an urban planning and architectural point of view. The ICC Hotel is identified as an “Anchor Building” within the SICEEP Precinct Plan.

The hotel will offer a contemporary and innovative architecture, vertically elegant and accentuated, setting the proposed hotel built form in subtle dialogue with the new ICC. The form and architecture proposed will express the massing and articulation of the hotel as a series of rectilinear tectonic elements. These elements are composed to represent their overall individual forms, to both articulate the podium and reinforce the vertical expression of the tower.

#### Public Realm Opportunities

As noted in the previous section of this report, the pedestrian network and quality of ground plane activation in the vicinity of the ICC Hotel is key to delivering “Harbourside Place” and “The Waterfront”. These are two of the main public spaces within the SICEEP Precinct.

The ICC Hotel will reinforce and make a significant contribution to the urban quality and expression of these spaces. The detail massing and materiality of the podium levels of the ICC Hotel will reinforce the public nature of these spaces. The internal planning of the hotel has been undertaken with consideration of these important spaces such that maximum articulation is possible along key edges.

Connections from the ICC Hotel to the SICEEP Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment facilities have been made simple and straight forward. The proximity to the ICC has thus been considered of paramount importance in developing the architectural design.

#### Landmark Opportunities

The existing western skyline is mainly dominated by quite massive but not tall buildings: the Novotel, the Ibis, the Oaks Goldsbrough apartment building and the Harbourside Shopping Centre on the waterfront.

The ICC Hotel proposal inevitably separates itself from the predominantly horizontal buildings that form the existing skyline. The verticality of the built form of the ICC Hotel will create diversity in the skyline thus creating an important landmark for the wider SICEEP precinct.

The ICC Hotel has been considered within the context of the changing skyline to the west of the city, including Jackson’s Landing and Frasers Broadway which bring height to the western side of the Darling Harbour valley.

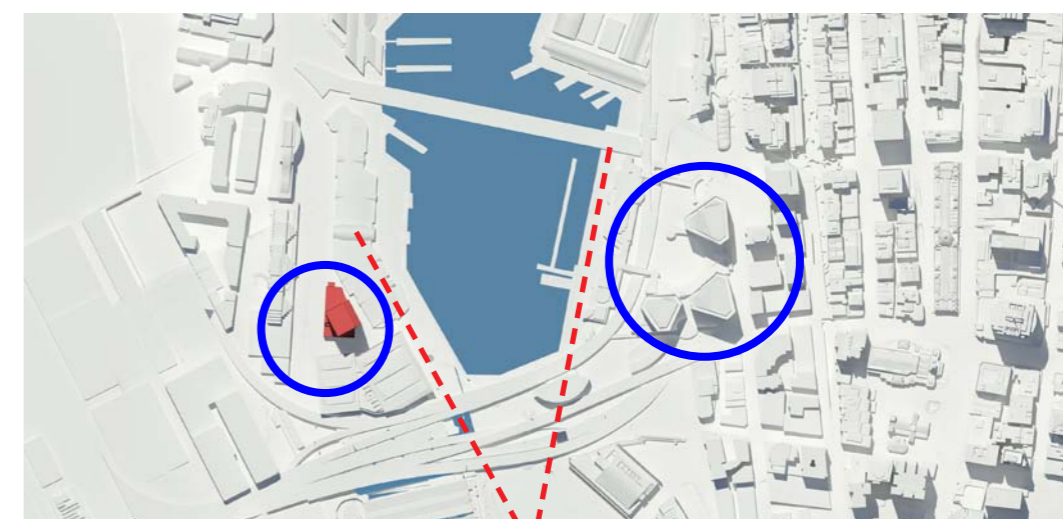
The ICC Hotel will be visible from key urban spaces within the SICEEP Precinct, Ultimo, Pyrmont, Cockle Bay Wharf, Barangaroo and the CBD. The massing and materiality of the tower component of the hotel is intended to express an identifiable orientation within the skyline such that it will have differing formal relationships to the key urban spaces.



Site opportunities - Views sectors



Site opportunities - Public Realm opportunities



Landmark opportunities: Gateway to wider SICEEP precinct

## Urban Design

### 4.1 Design Vision

The Built Form and Public Realm Report for SSDA 1, SICEEP identified the following five key design elements as generators of the Overall Precinct Strategy:

1. The Boulevard
2. Three Public Spaces
3. East-West Connections & New Entrances
4. The Anchor Buildings
5. The Terraced Landscape

The ICC Hotel has a key role in the achievement of four of these SICEEP design elements.

#### 1. The Boulevard

The Boulevard provides a strong north / south pedestrian connection through the SICEEP precinct linking the hotel, the ICC and the Waterfront in the north to Tumbalong Park and the Haymarket in the south.

#### 2. Three Public Spaces

The urban form of the SICEEP proposal is structured around three main public spaces, each with its own distinct character and directly linked by the Boulevard. The Waterfront, on the edge of Cockle Bay offers a gathering place and forecourt to the ICC and the adjacent hotel. Through placement of the porte-cochere, the ICC Hotel engages and contributes to the vitality of the Waterfront.

#### 3. East-West Connections & New Entrances

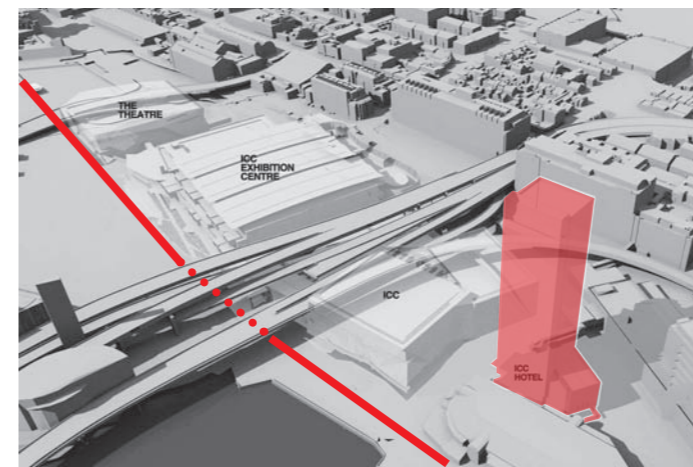
A fine-grained network of east-west connections integrates the precinct with the immediately surrounding areas. The northern most connection is Harbourside Place. The hotel's arrival, the porte-cochere and lobby are designed and located in consideration of this relationship. The porte-cochere and hotel's orientation provides a strong visual connection to "The Waterfront" upon arrival and entry to the hotel.

#### 4. The Anchor Buildings

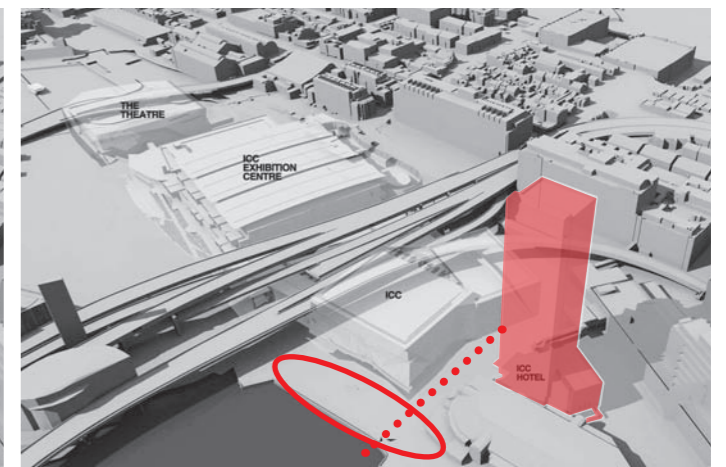
The ICC, the ICC Hotel and The Theatre are emphasised as three anchor buildings within the precinct.

While the tower component of the hotel will read as a distinctive landmark it must also read as an identifiable piece of the wider SICEEP built form and architectural expression.

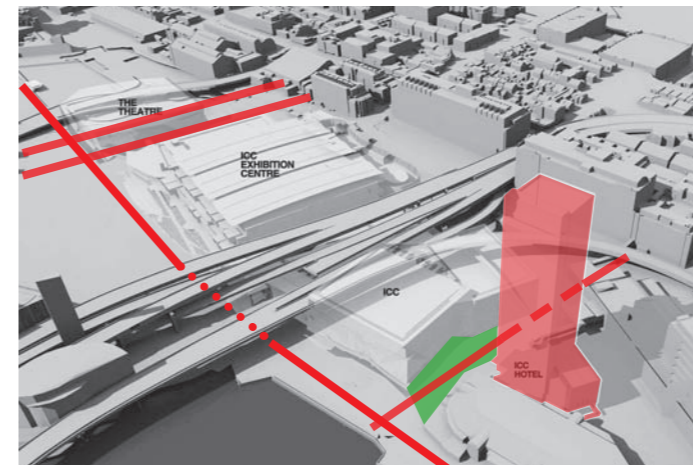
An architecturally distinctive element on the Harbour, the ICC represents the international positioning of the precinct, while the ICC Hotel locates the precinct on the city skyline in a unique Sydney Harbour setting. The architectural expression of the ICC Hotel seeks to respond to this requirement by providing a distinctive yet elegantly refined vertical expression.



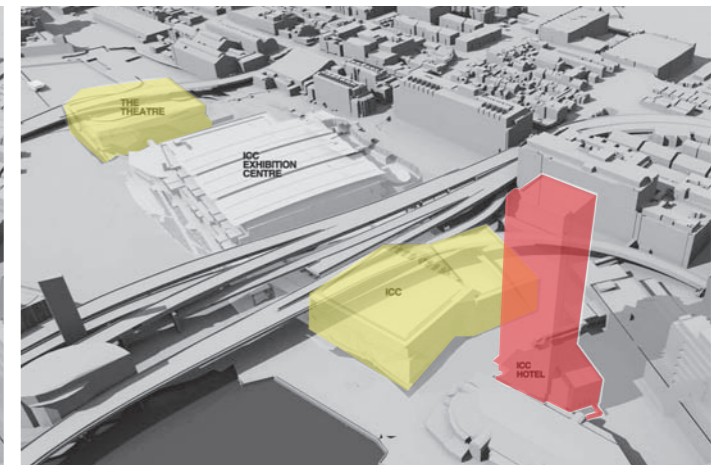
Relationship to The Boulevard



Relationship to The Waterfront public space



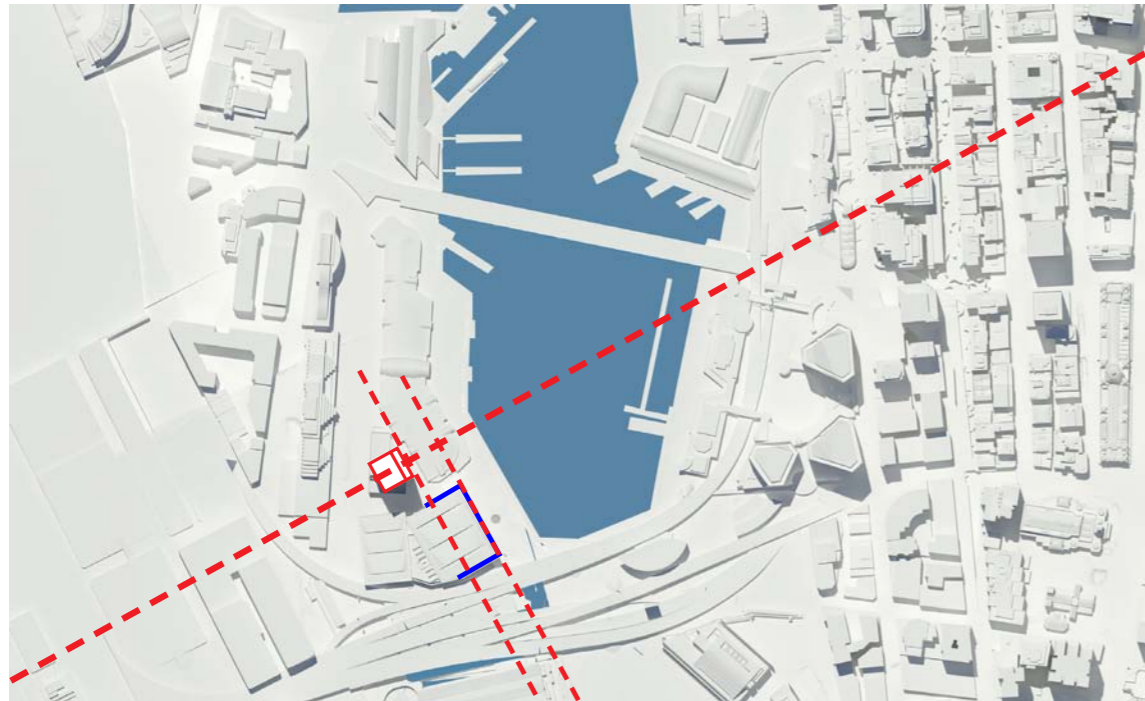
East West connections and relationship to Harbourside Place



Anchor buildings



Design inspiration reference images



Tower orientation:  
The tower is oriented to the north east such that it has a strong relationship to the CBD. The orientation also responds to the International Convention Centre (ICC).



Approach view from north via Darling Drive



View of hotel from south east

View of hotel from the east of Pyrmont Bridge

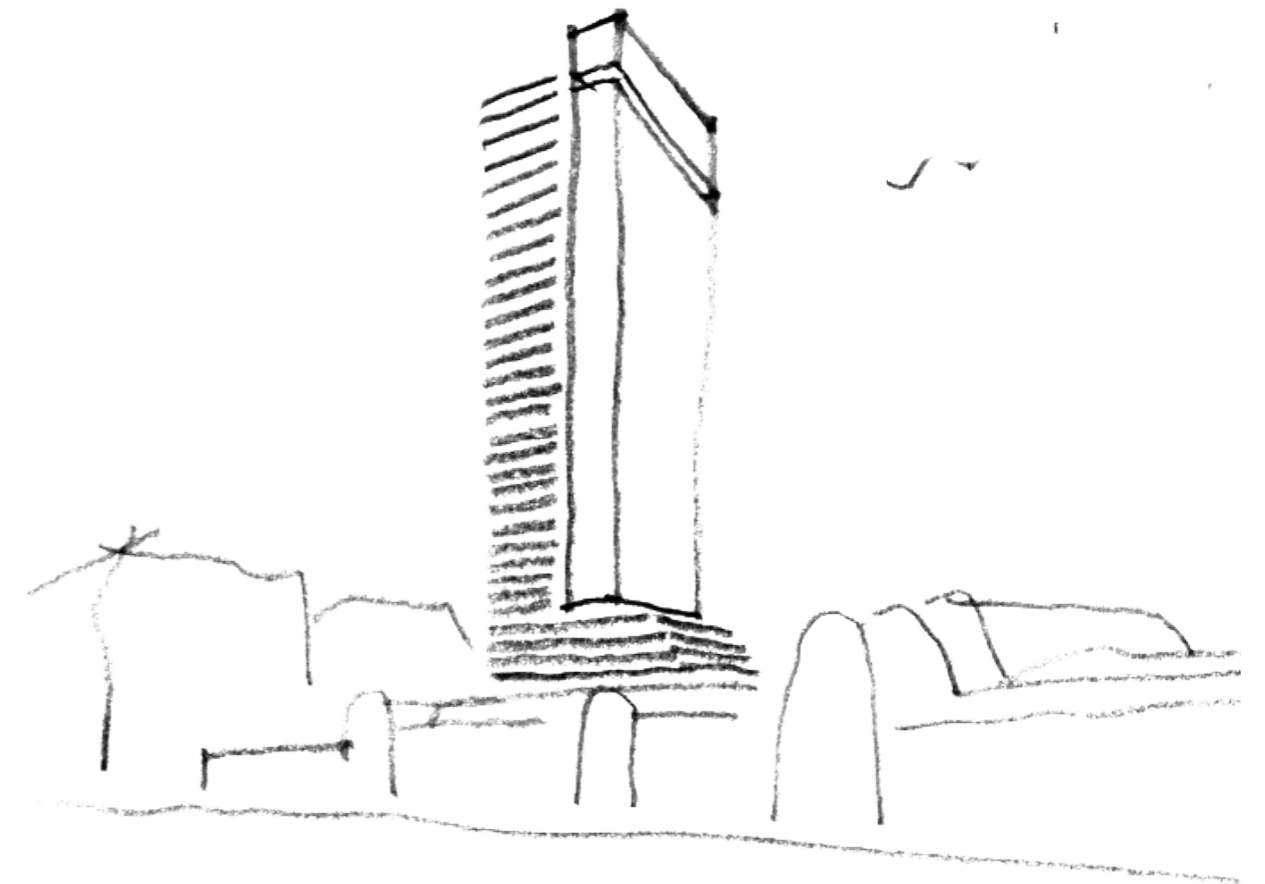
## 4.2 Design Process / Evolution

Darling Harbour Live's master plan (at the time of being announced as Preferred Proponent in December 2012) made reference to a two tower hotel scheme of up to 900 keys. Darling Harbour Live's master plan also included public realm areas specifically related to the establishment of a new ICC arrival area, Harbourside Place, which forms a civic arrival space between the new hotel and ICC while also connecting Darling Drive to the Cockle Bay waterfront.

An extended two-staged community consultation program was conducted to seek feedback about the proposed hotel and inform the design development.

Following announcement of Preferred Proponent, the Darling Harbour Live consortium commenced community consultation in relation to the preferred masterplan. An extended two stage consultation process followed, to facilitate feedback from stakeholders, precinct players, the local community and residents, about the proposed hotel and inform the design for this SSDA 6 application.

This section of the report tracks the development of ICC Hotel scheme from the original two tower proposal to the single tower proposal which forms the subject of this application. The proposal for a single tower has been developed with detail consideration of site opportunities and constraints, urban requirements and brief requirements.



Initial concept sketch for a single tower form



Initial two tower proposal



Initial two tower proposal in context



Early single tower proposal



Adopted hotel as viewed from Pymont Bridge

### December 2012

Darling Harbour Live's preferred master plan included a two tower scheme at the time of being announced as the Preferred Proponent for the redevelopment of SICEEP.

The taller of the two hotels was conceived as the tallest building within the preferred master plan. The key driver for the massing was the desire to differentiate the hotels from the surrounding built forms and to create an iconic marker to the northern gateway of Darling Harbour.

The cactus shaped towers of the ICC Hotels sought to establish a strong relationship with the adjacent ICC at the lower height, and loosen themselves vertically from the horizontally oriented buildings that surround.

The massing included a base that integrated with its surroundings, with slender tower forms that became part of the skyline. The use of the available site area was optimised by creating a building mass joined at the base with towers that branch and cantilever out above.



Preliminary proposal for two tower scheme



Preliminary proposal for two tower scheme



Preliminary proposal for two tower scheme in context.

**February 2013**

In January and February of 2013, the Darling Harbour Live project team held a series of public forums for the local community and hosted a model of the project in different locations in Darling Harbour. These face-to-face events were a chance for the team to hear directly from local residents about their views on the project. More than 200 people attended the forum sessions and model display, and many others registered their views using the Darling Harbour Live information phone line, email and online forum. Questions related to the scale, the ground plane, the connectivity between the neighbouring buildings and the harbour, the treatment of the façade as well as the operational management of the proposed hotel.

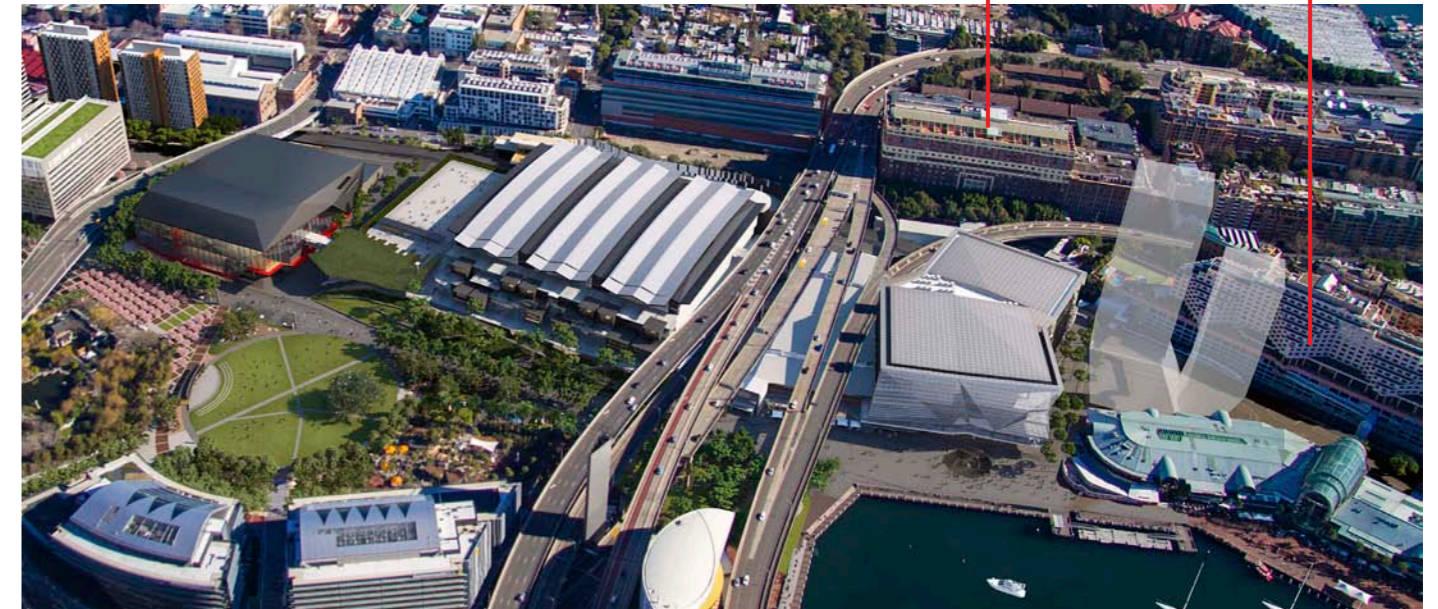
A key issue raised in these forums was view loss from the surrounding buildings resulting from the proposed two hotel scheme.

The diagrams on this page illustrate the two tower scheme and potential view impacts from a number of adjacent buildings.

In response to this feedback, the Darling Harbour Live project team decided to reconsider the possibilities for the hotel's form. The following pages describe this process and design evolution informing the proposal included in this application.

Oaks Goldsbrough

Novotel Sydney Darling Harbour



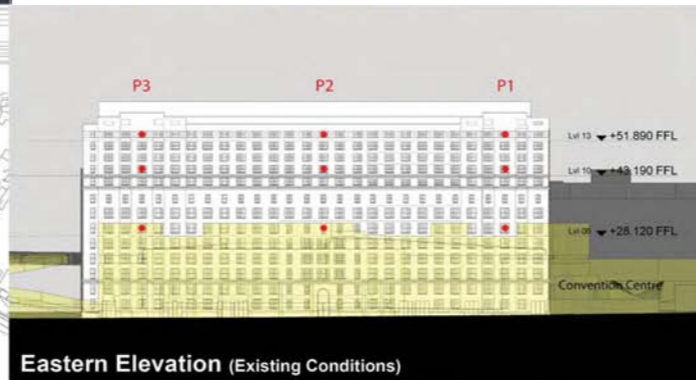
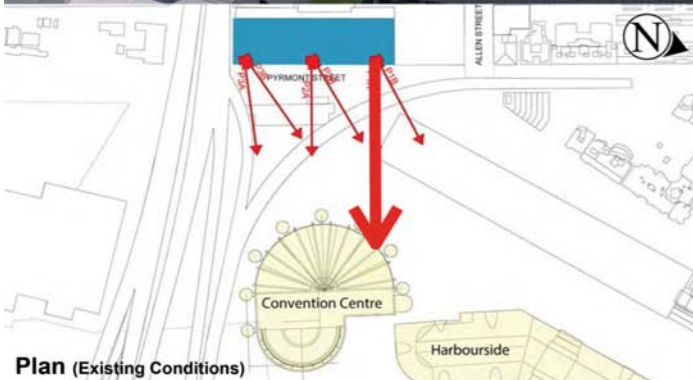
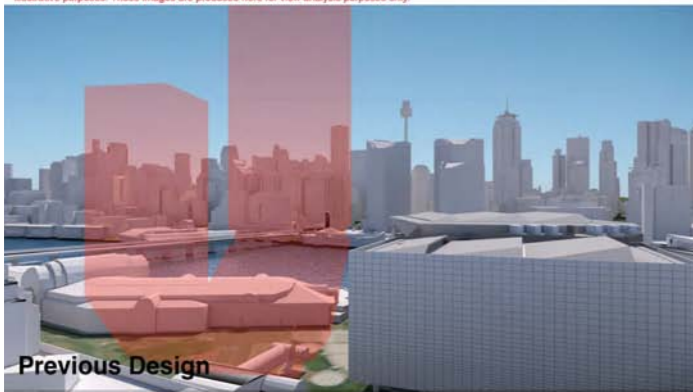
**Oaks Goldsbrough Apartments**

Position: P1A  
Level: 13  
RL: 53.49 (Camera Height)

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**LEGEND:** 27

- Key Building
- Neighbouring Buildings
- View Direction (50mm Camera)
- Camera Position
- Hotel (subject of a future separate DA.)



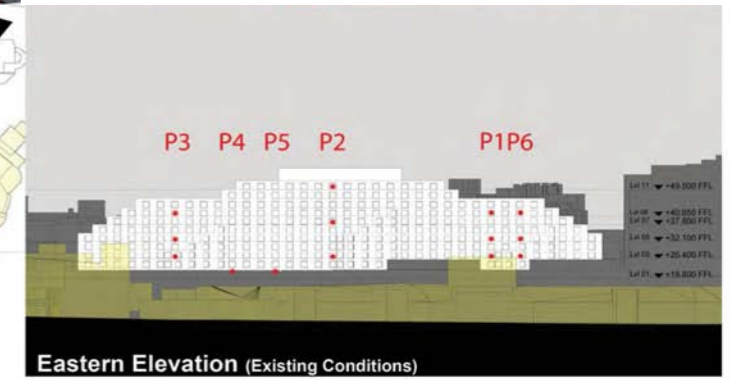
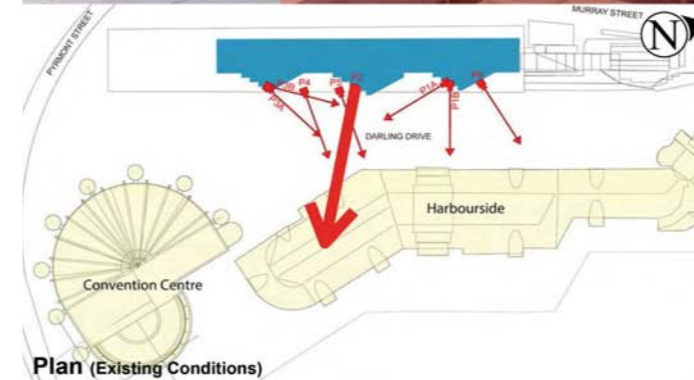
**Novotel Sydney Darling Harbour**

Position: P2  
Level: 11  
RL: 51.10 (Camera Height)

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**LEGEND:** 7

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**April 2013**

The initial proposals for a single tower ICC Hotel proposal sought to provide a simple and elegant, finely proportioned tower. The integration of the tower and the podium was seen of being of high importance. The initial proposals sought to address the following key design principles:

- Improved View Sharing
- Overall Mass
- Form and Proportions
- Facade and Fenestration
- Expression of the top of the tower
- Podium integration

**Improved View Sharing**

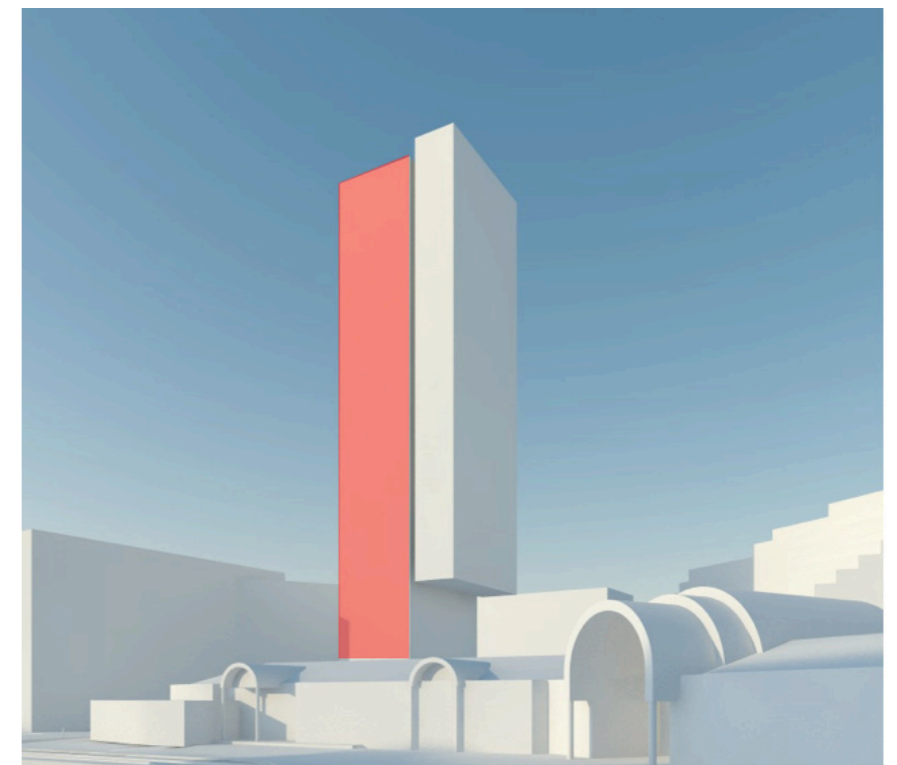
As illustrated on the previous pages of this report a single tower delivers significant improvements in view sharing relative to a two tower scheme. The plans for a single tower were developed to ensure maximum planning efficiency, thus providing for a slim tower form. This slim tower form helps create an elegant architectural expression while further improving view sharing.

**Overall Mass**

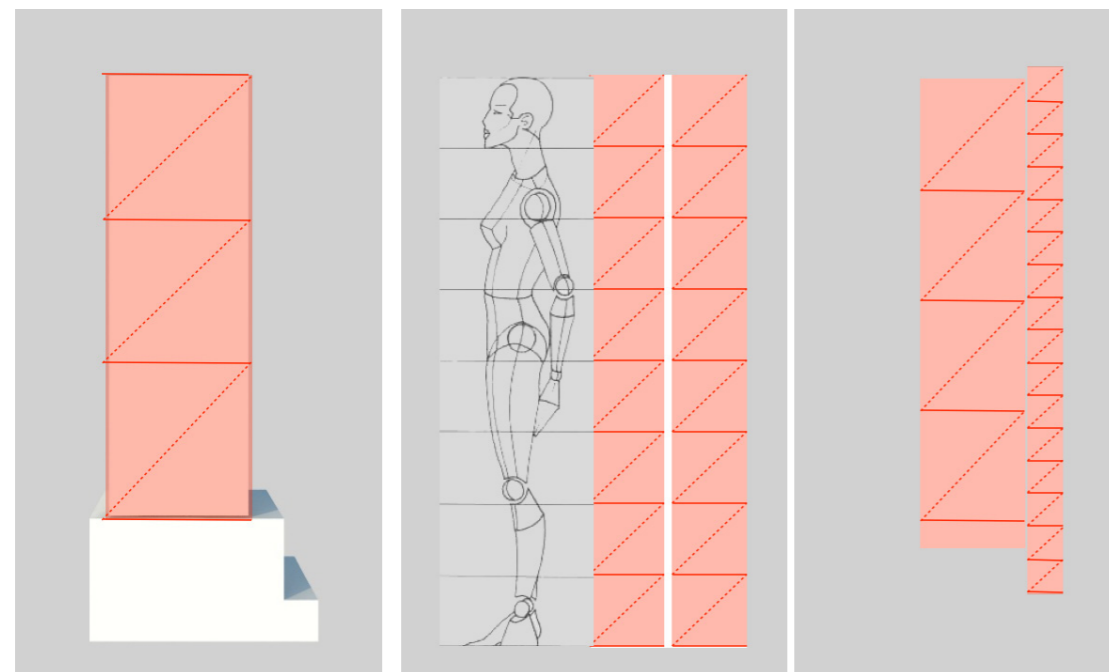
Initial proposals sought to create a unified mass and expression which would create a strong identifiable form for the hotel whilst linking the podium and tower elements of the building. A single formal and architectural expression was proposed to ensure that the ICC Hotel has an strong identifiable and linked expression when viewed within the city skyline and at the local pedestrian level.

**Form and Proportions**

The preferred floorplate size combined with the brief requirements for room numbers determined a tower element with a base proportion of 1:3. The initial proposals sought to create a more slender vertically orientated tower by separating the tower volume into two masses. This formal strategy also allows for the tower to be given a clean and strong orientation within the skyline thus enabling the achievement of a landmark opportunity as identified earlier in this report, ie, that the tower has a different character when viewed from different surrounding spaces.



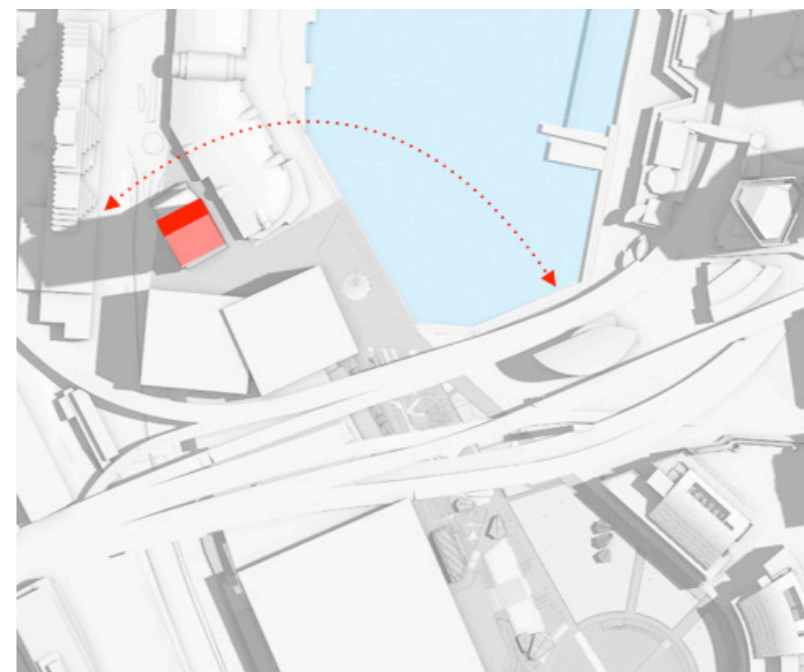
Preliminary proposal for two tower volumes



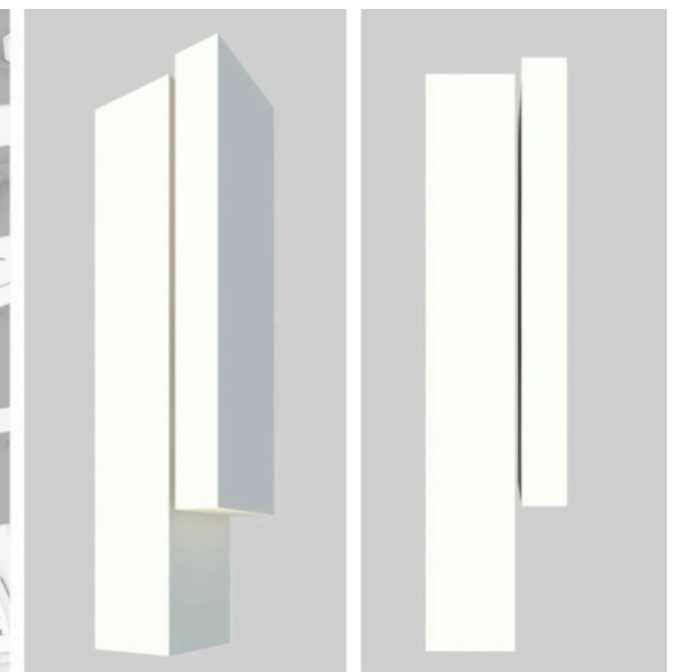
1:3 Base Option

1:8 An ideal figure at 8 heads tall

1:4 and 1:16 proposed



Initial proposals for tower orientation



**Facade and Fenestration**

The initial proposal for a single tower investigated a glazed curtain wall facade for the full extent of the tower. The two masses within the tower were to be treated with different formal and material treatments.

The main volume of the tower was provided with a horizontally banded treatment of alternating bands of vision glazing and metal spandrel. This facade treatment draws from the Helmholtz illusion which determines that a rectangle of vertical stripes needs to be extended by 7.1% vertically to match the height of a square of horizontal stripes and that a rectangle of horizontal stripes must be made 4.5% wider than a square of vertical stripes to match its perceived width.

The smaller, more slender form was proposed as a simple, elegant white volume which extended above the main roofline.

**Expression of the Top of the Tower**

A key element of the initial proposal for a single tower was that the slender volume of the tower extends above the main body of the tower to form an identifiable 'lantern' element in the skyline. The proposed 'lantern' element was identified as an opportunity to ensure the tower positively contributed to the city's skyline with particular consideration of night time.

**Podium Integration**

Given the spatial requirements within the brief for the podium levels of the tower, it was considered that a traditional podium / tower massing relationship was not appropriate, ie: the volume of the podium is significant relative to the overall volume of the hotel.

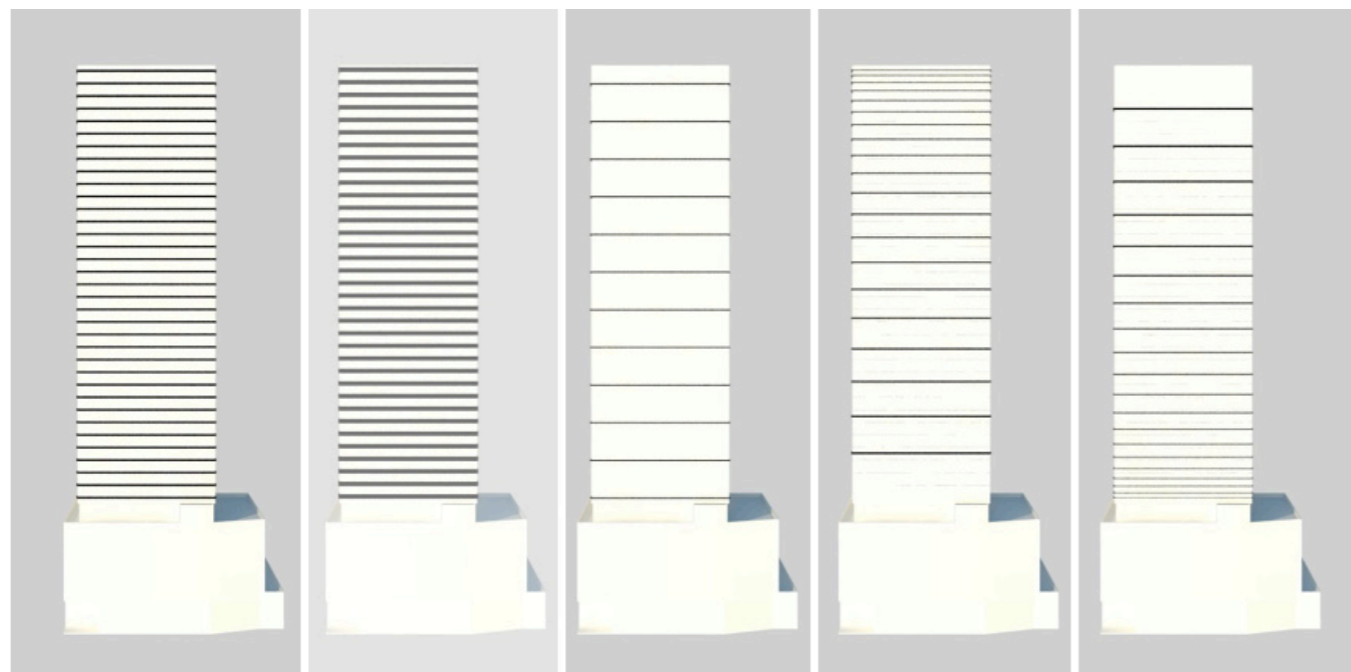
It was identified that an integrated tower and podium would allow for the most elegant proportioning of the building. A stepped podium was initially considered such that the mass of the tower could transition into the larger podium level of the proposal.



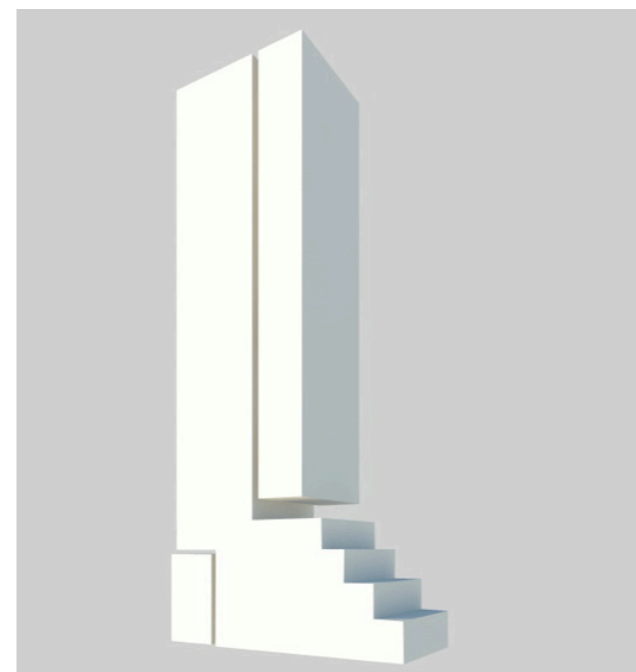
**Helmholtz illusion**

Helmholtz (1867) reported that a square composed of horizontal lines appears taller and narrower than an identical square made up of vertical lines. A rectangle of vertical stripes needs to be extended by 7.1% vertically to match the perceived height of a square of horizontal stripes.

Helmholtz illusion diagram and explanation



Preliminary analysis of horizontal facade treatments



Preliminary proposal for stepped podium



Preliminary proposals for a roof lantern element

**INSW Design Review Panel - June 2013**

The proposal developed for the June 2013 INSW Design Review Panel was based on a symmetrical planning arrangement with the tower oriented to the north. The tower sat on a developed stepped podium with the northern end of the podium incorporating opportunities for terraces. This arrangement sought to blend the tower into the podium as identified in the initial concept studies. The east and west sides of the podium provided for smaller steps while the southern end of the podium was characterised by a glazed volume which sat out over the porte-cochere.

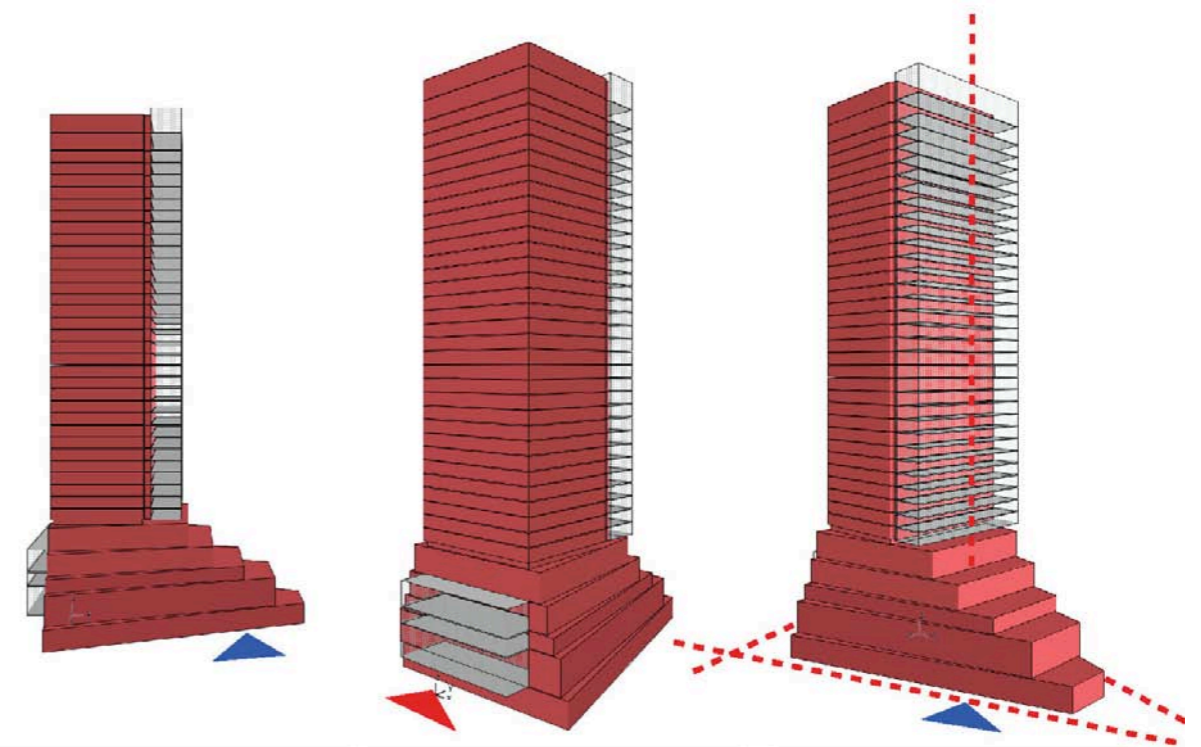
This glazed podium element would later develop into the southern podium volume of the adopted scheme.

This proposal had the tower oriented on a central axis relative to the podium levels with the white volume of the tower facing north.

This planning arrangement was subsequently set aside in favour of a tower aligned with the local urban grid which had a stronger formal relationship with the city and better deals with local site constraints.



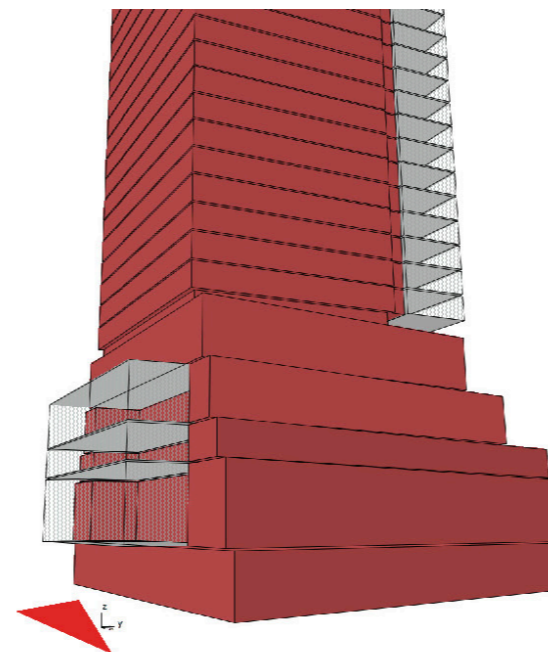
Preliminary proposal for a symmetrical podium / tower relationship



Preliminary proposal for a stepped podium



Preliminary proposal for a symmetrical tower / podium relationship



Preliminary proposal for a stepped podium



Preliminary proposal with white tower volume oriented to the north

**July 2013**

Following further design consideration and feedback, the hotel design evolved such that the orientation of the tower was towards the Cockle Bay and the city beyond. This orientation gives the hotel a strong relationship to the local Pyrmont grid.

The tower is rotated such that it aligns with the key water facing facades of the ICC. This additionally allows the tower to have an increased relationship to the city and the eastern edge of Darling Harbour.

Orientating the tower in this direction allows the tower to relate to the wider urban context while the podium volumes remain orientated to the local urban grid and proposed public spaces.

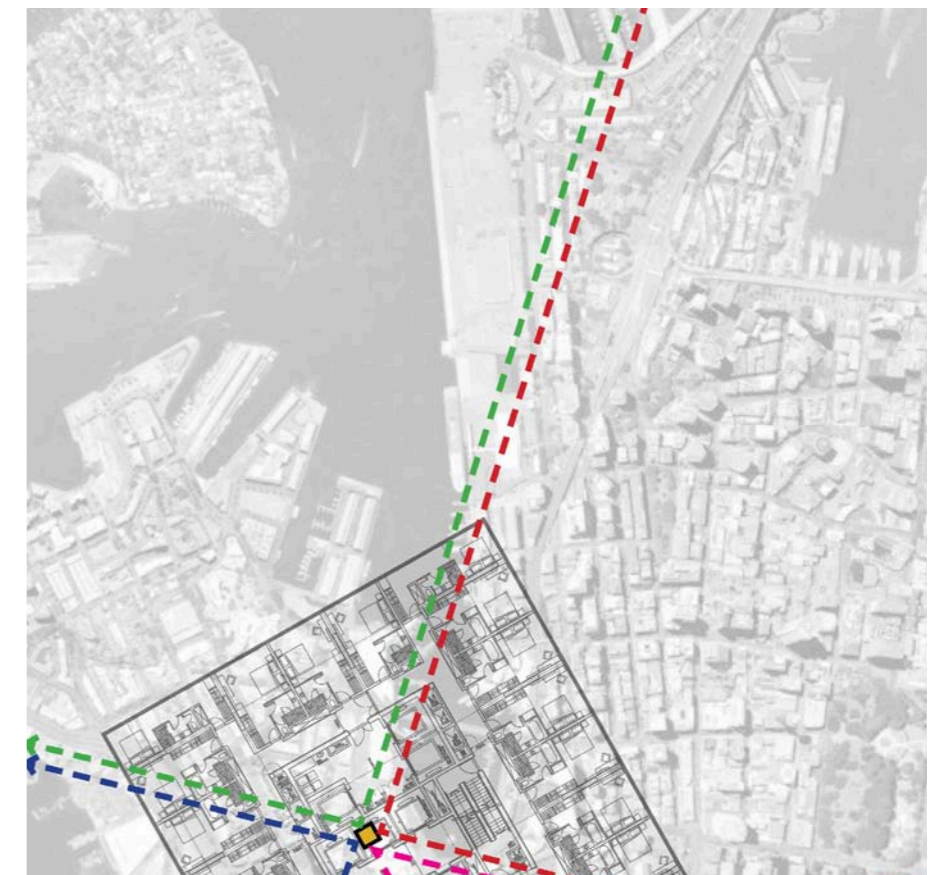
The towers relationship to the podium is no longer axial but rather both tower and podium are expressed as a series of interlocking volumes with overlapping geometries.

The north eastern slender volume of the tower is extended into the podium levels and provides a strong presence within Harbourside Place. The facade treatment of the north east tower volume has a strong relationship to the southern podium volume which fronts Harbourside Place.

The orientation of the tower is such that it creates a narrow shadow at key times, eg 3.00pm on 21 June as illustrated to the right.



Tower orientation minimises width of shadow at key times



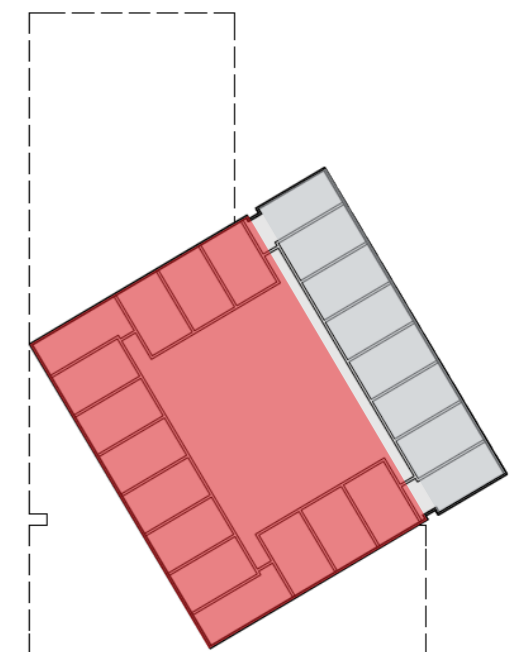
Study of tower orientation and views



Massing model hotel from Pyrmont Bridge



Massing model - view across Darling Harbour



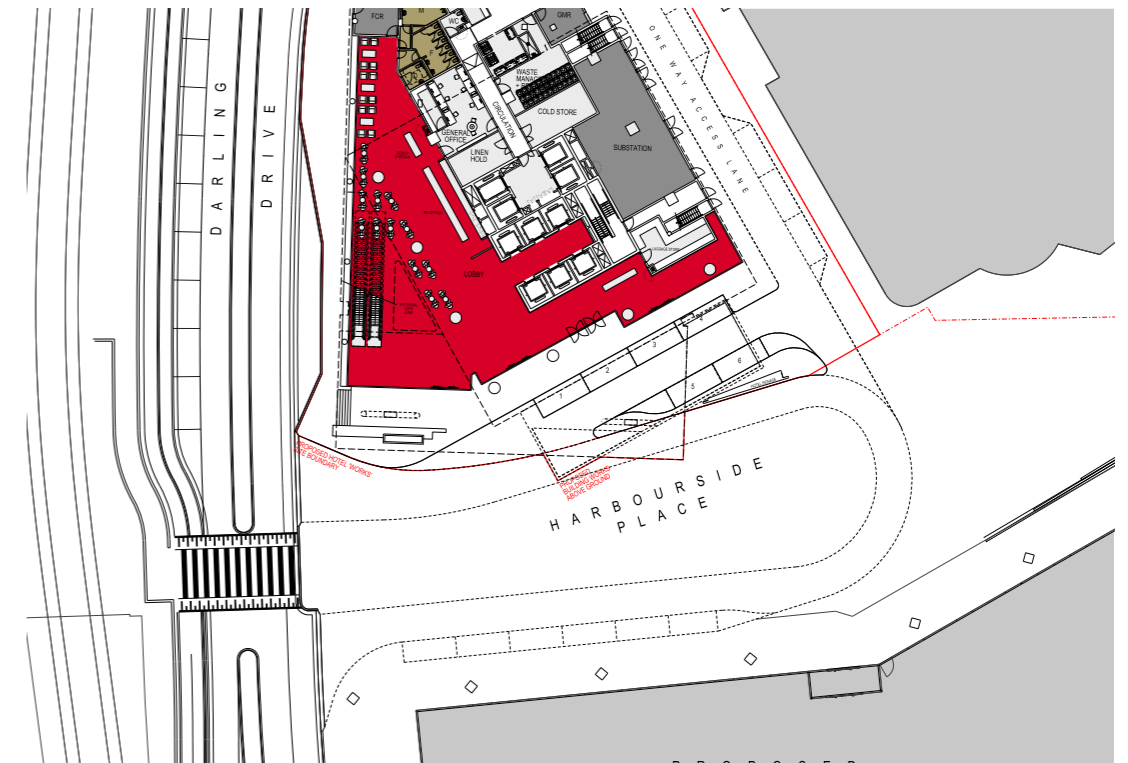
Sketch Plan showing revised tower orientation

**INSW Design Review Panel - August 2013**

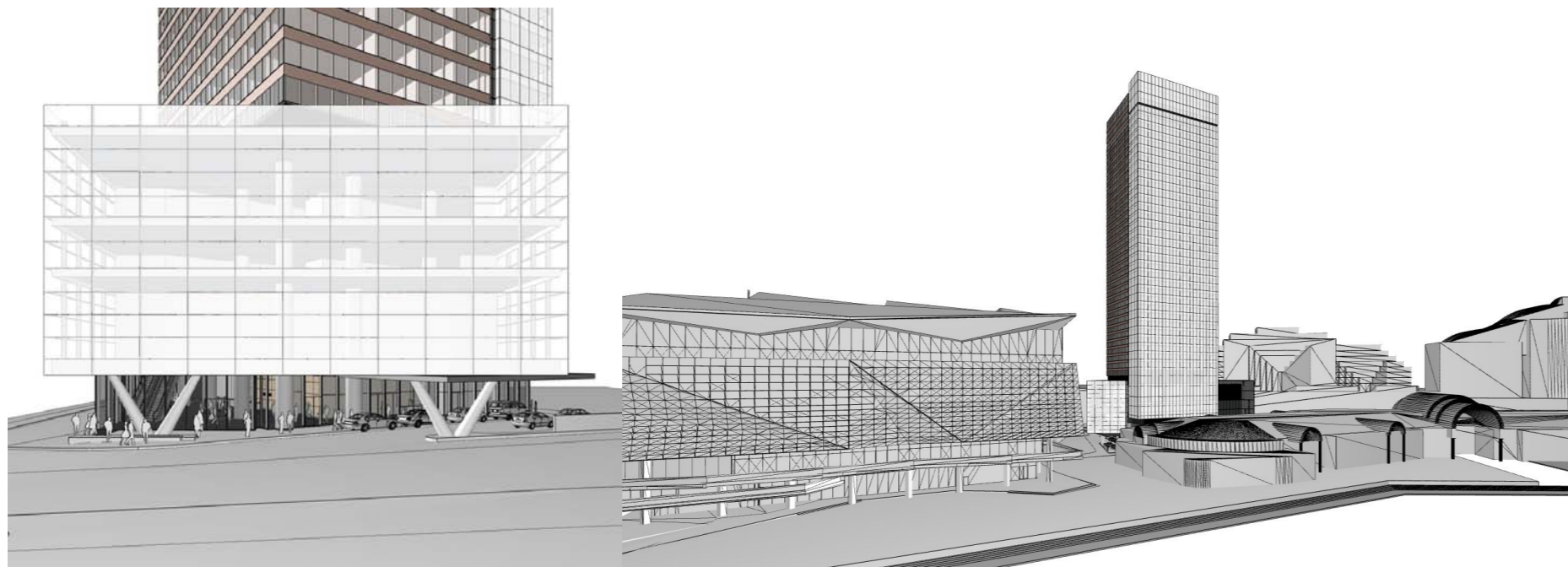
The current design intent is to generate a contemporary and innovative architecture, vertically elegant and accentuated, setting the proposed ICC Hotel built form in subtle dialogue with the new ICC located immediately south of the site. The planning and architecture as developed seeks to express the massing and articulation of the hotel as a series of rectilinear tectonic elements. These are composed to represent their individual forms which both articulate the podium and reinforce the vertical expression of the tower.

Key principles of the current scheme are:

- Improved view sharing from existing buildings to the west of the site compared to the original two tower scheme.
- Orientation towards the city with strong formal relationship to the ICC.
- Orientation of the tower relates to the local Pyrmont grid.
- Strong arrival address which reinforces the hotel's relationship to the ICC at the ground plane.
- Integrated public realm with strong relationship to Harbourside Place and the Waterfront.
- High level of ground level activation along Darling Drive and Harbourside Place provided via glazed walls to the lobby beyond.
- Orientation sensitive to existing underground water culvert.
- The ICC Hotel locates the SICEEP precinct on the city skyline in a unique Sydney Harbour setting.
- Lantern element at roof level creates a strong visual landmark for the wider SICEEP precinct and beyond.

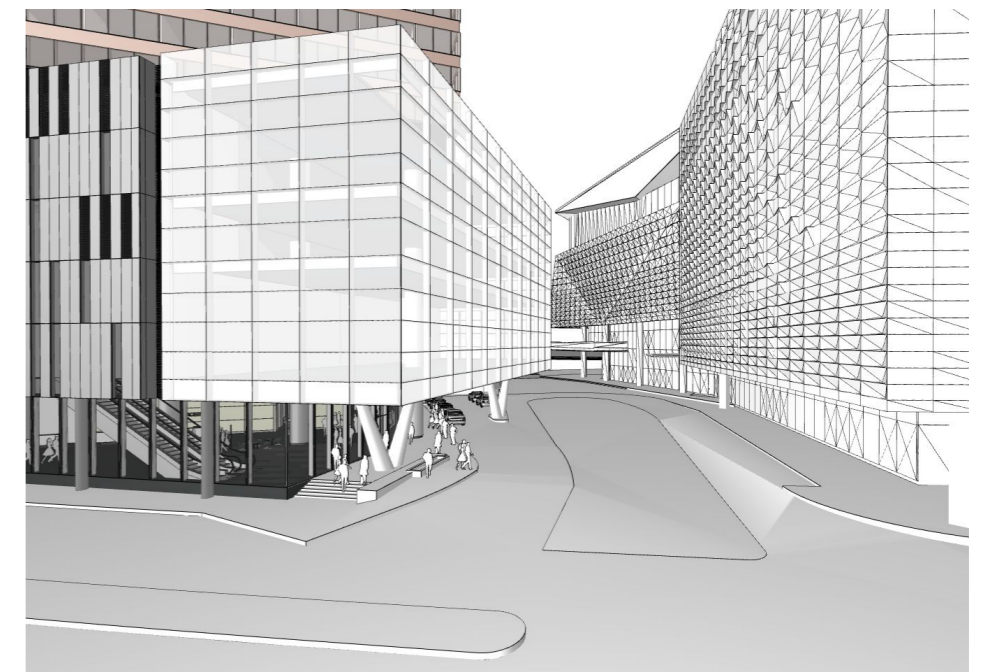


Site Plan showing relationship to Harbourside Place



Concept Massing Diagram - Interlocking volumes

Concept Massing Diagram - View from east



Concept Massing Diagram - Relationship to ICC

**August 2013**

The diagrams on this page show the single tower scheme in white overlaid on the original two tower scheme in red. These diagrams illustrate that a single tower form results in significantly improved view sharing outcome for adjacent buildings such as Goldsbrough Apartments and Novotel Sydney, Darling Harbour.

The final design response has taken into consideration matters raised during consultation. A more elegant and slimmer hotel design has been created which improves view sharing with surrounding buildings and provides more public space and flexibility at the ground level. Enhancements have also been made to the podium levels of the hotel which now have a strong relationship with Harbourside Place (and the arrival for the International Convention Centre), Darling Drive, and the adjacency with Harbourside Shopping Centre.



Location image

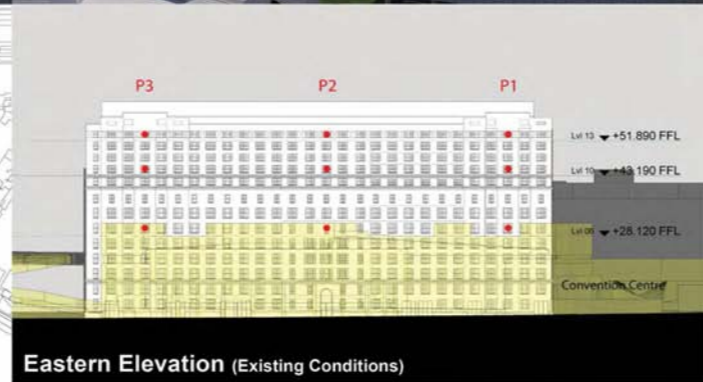
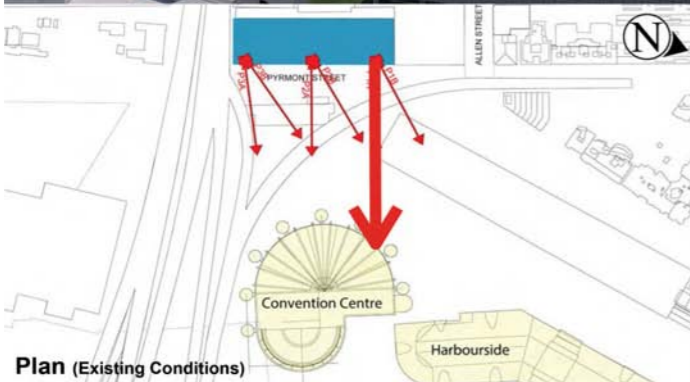
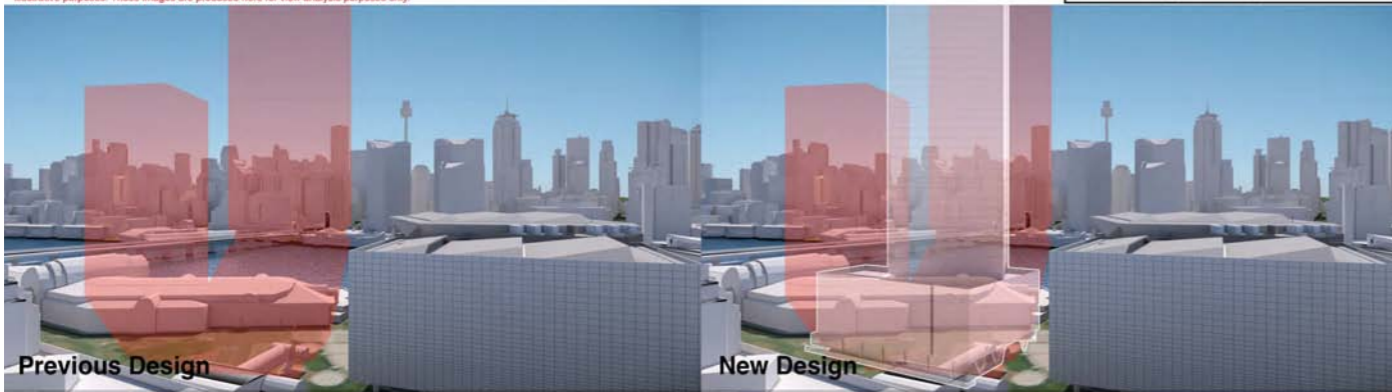
**Oaks Goldsbrough Apartments**

Position: P1A  
Level: 13  
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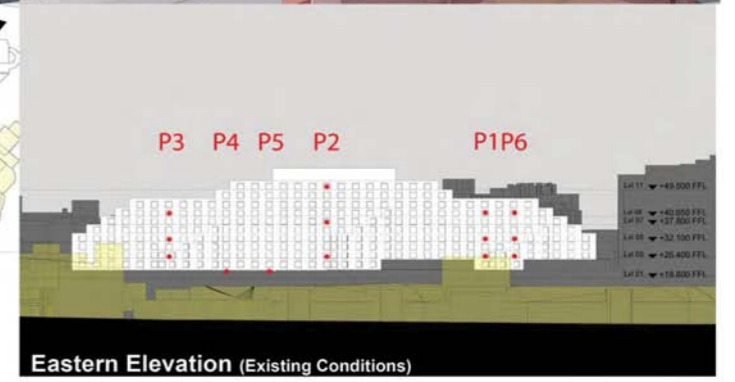
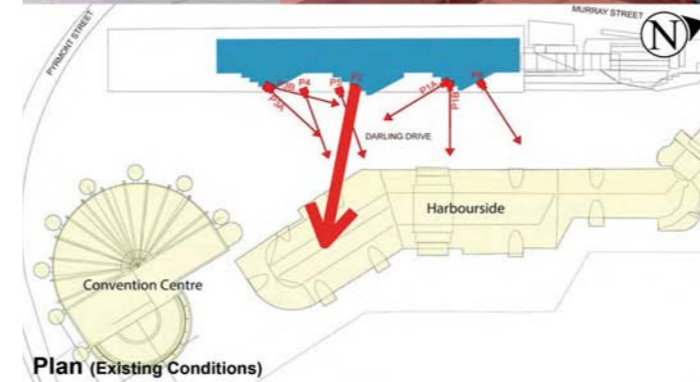
**Novotel Sydney Darling Harbour**

Position: P2  
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- Hotel (subject of a future separate DA.)





Proposed view from east

## Built Form

### 5.1 Design Principles

The proposed development will be defined by a single tower built form consisting of 31 hotel accommodation floors, with a top level sky lounge and 5 levels of podium including ground floor. Planning has been coordinated with input from hotel operators and represents a robust hotel planning solution.

The hotel site location, set within a relatively low rise to medium rise contextual built form environment, presents a unique opportunity from both an urban and architectural point of view. Considered an “Anchor building” within the SICEEP Precinct Plan, the significant vertical nature of the proposed hotel tower will “visually pronounce” when viewed from the east side of Darling Harbour and the apron of the CBD.

Together with the buildings of Darling Park across Cockle Bay, the hotel tower forms an urban gateway to Darling Harbour.

Its position adjacent to the Western Distributor also serves as an iconic marker on one of the primary routes into the city from the west.

The footprint of the tower has been minimised from two towers in order to:

- create a slender, elegant silhouette;
- reduce the width of overshadowing on its surroundings;
- promote view sharing with surrounding buildings; and
- create an efficient floor layout responding to hotel operational requirements.

The design intent is to generate a contemporary and innovative architecture, vertically elegant and accentuated, setting the proposed hotel built form in subtle dialogue with the new ICC located immediately south of the site. The planning and architecture proposed seeks to express the massing and articulation of the hotel as a series of rectilinear tectonic elements which are composed to represent their overall individual forms which both articulate the podium and reinforce the vertical expression of the tower.

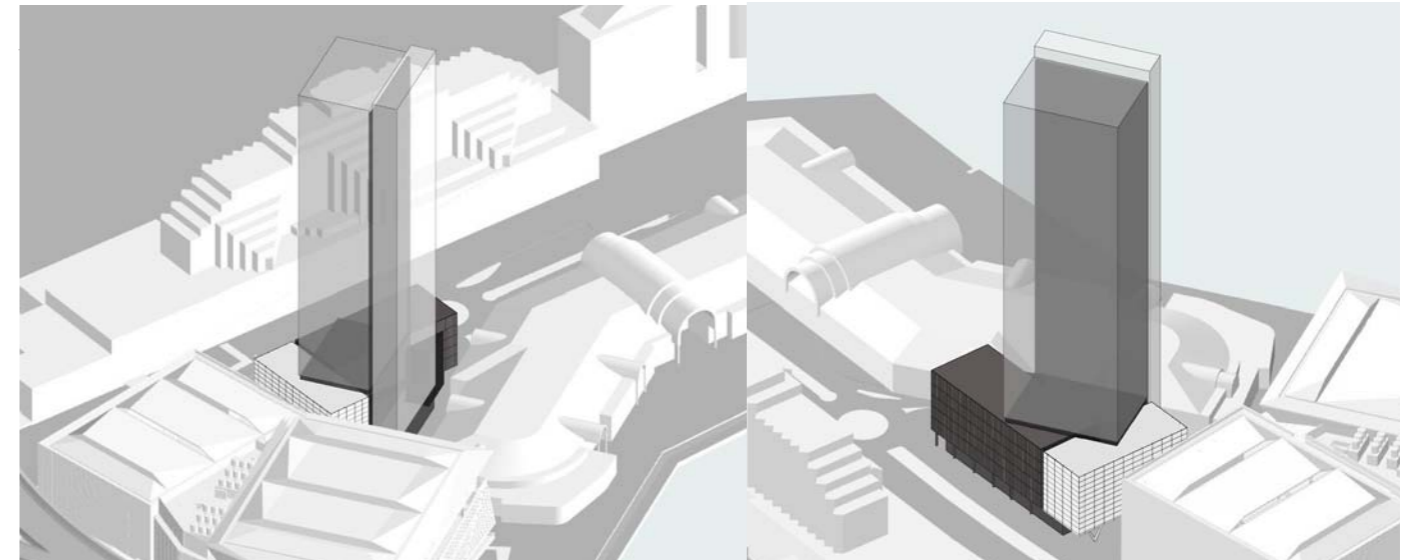
The tower component of the proposal is conceived as two vertical volumes, with a slender volume orientated to the city. This slender volume is expressed as a ‘white’ glazed element forming an elegant yet strong element in the skyline and is capped with an expressed ‘lantern’ element which provides an integrated yet dramatic top to the tower.

The underlying design principles of the hotel are consistent with the wider precinct proposals so that it forms a coherent part of the city’s fabric.

The design will offer improved connectivity and permeability through site, linking Darling Drive to the harbour via improved pedestrian, public transport and vehicular links.

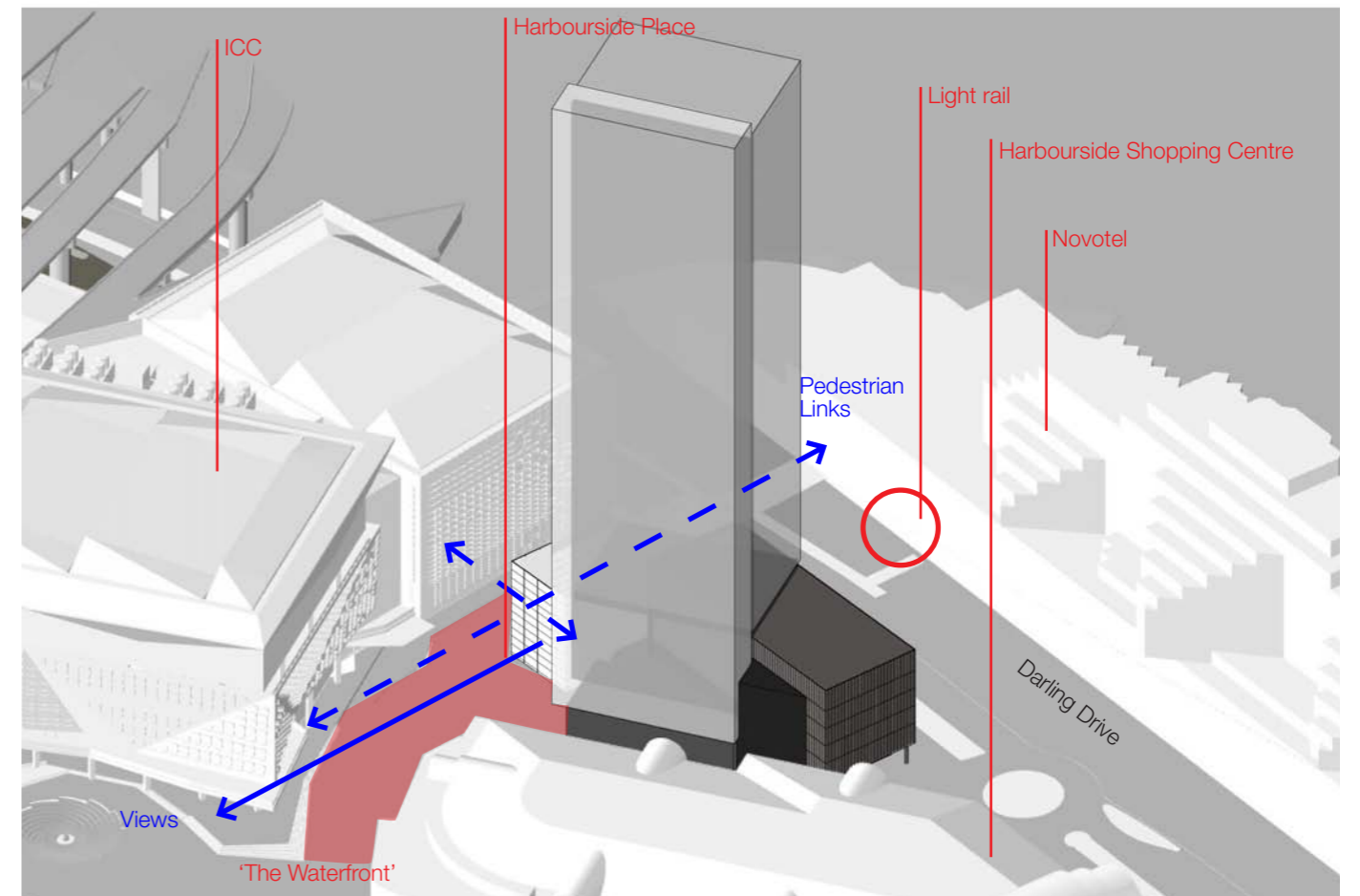
In particular, pedestrian routes are enhanced to create safe, enjoyable and active paths. These paths are connected to the wider precinct and surrounding areas with vistas to urban focal points opened up to assist with way finding.

This positioning of the hotel seeks to create a sense of arrival as delegates, visitors and locals approach the precinct.



Overall form and context - viewed from south east

Overall form and context - viewed from south west



Overall form and context - viewed from north east