

---

## SUMMARY OF CIS DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROCESS FOR THE FASS PROJECT

---

### CIS DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROCESS

1. The University of Sydney is committed to ensuring that design excellence outcomes are delivered on all infrastructure projects.
2. The University's Campus Infrastructure & Services (CIS) department is responsible for the Design Excellence Review Process with all project teams, and to support them in ensuring that the delivery of design excellence outcomes on all new and refurbishment projects on the campus is achieved.

### Design Excellence Criteria

3. The CIS project teams are responsible for ensuring that the Design Excellence Policy is adhered to and informs the architect selection, the design process, and the final design outcome.
4. Project teams are responsible for ensuring that the University's Design Excellence principles (aligned with those of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 – Clause 6.21*), take into account the campus context, and deliver the highest standard of architectural, urban and landscape design, and consideration of the following criteria:
  - (a) a high standard of architectural design, materials and detailing appropriate to the building type and location will be achieved,
  - (b) whether the form and external appearance of the proposed development will improve the quality and amenity of the public domain,
  - (c) whether the proposed development detrimentally impacts on view corridors,
  - (d) how the proposed development addresses the following matters:
    - the suitability of the land for development,
    - the existing and proposed uses and use mix,
    - any heritage issues and streetscape constraints,
    - the location of any tower proposed, having regard to the need to achieve an acceptable relationship with other towers (existing or proposed) on the same site or on neighbouring sites in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form,
  - (e) the bulk, massing and modulation of buildings,
  - (f) street frontage heights,
  - (g) environmental impacts, such as sustainable design, overshadowing and solar access, visual and acoustic privacy, noise, wind and reflectivity,
  - (h) the achievement of the principles of ecologically sustainable development,
  - (i) pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and service access and circulation requirements, including the permeability of any pedestrian network,
  - (j) the impact on, and any proposed improvements to, the public domain,
  - (k) the impact on any special character area,

- appropriate interfaces at ground level between the building and the public domain, and
- integration of landscape design.

## THE FASS DESIGN PROCESS

5. CIS applies competitive design processes for all major projects in ensuring that design excellence outcomes are achieved.
6. The following competitive design excellence and peer review processes were undertaken during the design process for the FASS development being a State Significant Development project;

**Stage 1:** A concept design competition was held to generate the initial concept reference design, resulting in a SEARs application to the Department of Planning & Environment (DPE);

**Stage 2:** A second stage design competition was held to challenge the Stage 1 concept reference design;

### Stage 1: Concept Reference Design:

7. The design competition process for FASS was in the form of an invited architectural design competition for the development of a concept reference scheme. The invitation was extended to four (4) architectural companies, all listed on the University's pre-qualified Architecture Panel for 'Buildings over \$10M'.

The rigorous pre-qualification process undertaken by CIS to establish the Consultancy Panels, included the requirement for the Architects to demonstrate and be evaluated on national and international *Design Excellence* on recent projects.

The selection of the particular architects from the panel was based on review of their recent relevant experience, in terms of innovation in teaching and learning pedagogy, agile workplace environments, heritage expertise, and a demonstrated design excellence in large complex buildings.

The architectural firms were as follows;

- Allen Jack + Cottier Architects,
- Bates Smart,
- Hassell,
- Noel Bell, Ridley Smith + Partners.

### Judging of Concept Design Competition:

8. A CIS evaluation Committee was established, chaired by independent architect **David Holm**. The full committee members were:

- David Holm                      Cox Richardson Architects, Director/ Architect/ Author/ Adjunct  
Professor FDAB University of Technology Sydney
- Michael Tawa                    University Professor at the Faculty of Architecture
- Duncan Ivison                  Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
- Alan Crowe                      CIS Design Manager, Architect
- Juliette Churchill               CIS, Campus Planning Manager
- Colm Harmon                  Head of School, School of Economics
- Simon Tormey                  Head of School, School of Social and Political Sciences
- Alf Del Pizzo                    Precinct 3 Manager

An independent probity officer was appointed to oversee the evaluation process, to ensure adherence with the criteria.

9. The Evaluation Committee held design reviews with all proponents during the concept design / competition process, and the Architects were required to submit a design report as part of the final submission.

The design submissions were reviewed against the design excellence criteria and the recommendation was for the selection of Bates Smart to develop their concept design further, and to test and refine the brief.

10. The Bates Smart concept design was further developed over an 18 month period, responding to the refinement and development of the brief, input from University Stakeholders and as a result of ongoing design reviews held the CIS design review panel, heritage architects and Design Manager.

11. Throughout this 18 month design development & review period, significant concerns across a range of issues were raised in regard to the Bates Smart concept design. These included but were not limited to:

- a. Issues and concerns over the structural resolution and negative impact of the atrium roof connection upon the heritage fabric of the RD Watt building, resulting in the removal of the roof and therefore the atrium.
- b. As a result of the removal of the atrium, and the redistribution of the informal ground floor space, the original design concept was significantly compromised.
- c. The redistribution of space also resulted in the building footprint extending beyond the maximum approved CIP envelope.
- d. The Proposed design response did not adequately architecturally address the significant and challenging Parramatta Road frontage;
- e. Delays in program and design progression as a result of Bates Smart failure to address and resolve these above issues.

12. In spite of numerous repeated attempts over this design development period, Bates Smart were unable to satisfactorily resolve concept design, and address the above issues, while meeting the Functional Brief and budgetary requirements.
13. By letter dated 16 June 2015, DPE confirmed that the project qualified as SSD and forwarded comments provided by other Government agencies regarding the formal documentation and preparation of the SSD application.

**Stage 2 – Secondary Design Competition:**

14. As a result of the issues noted above, the University elected to embark upon a secondary design competition in October 2015, responding to the change in the brief with the removal of the atrium, and to look at alternative panning and facade options.

Bates Smart (the original competition winners), and Architectus (selected from the University Pre qualified architectural panel), were invited to submit alternative design proposals.

15. The primary intent behind the Stage 2 – (secondary design competition) was to provide alternate concept designs to the Bates Smart proposal.
16. A design review panel was established made up of both CIS and Faculty Stakeholders (including members of the original evaluation committee), as follows:

- Barbara Caine            Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Colm Harmon            Head of School, School of Economics
- Simon Tormey            Head of School, School of Social and Political Sciences
- Gillian Luck            Director, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Greg Robinson,        Director, Campus Infrastructure and Services (CIS)
- Alan Crowe            CIS, Senior Architect
- Alf Del Pizzo            Precinct 3 Manager
- Scott Biggs            Project Director, FASS Development

17. On the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015, both designs were also presented to the Building and Estates Committee (BEC – a Senate sub-committee, members being subject matter experts in the field of development and construction). Both the Design review panel and the BEC unanimously agreed to proceed with the Architectus proposal, being a superior architectural design and demonstrated design excellence. The design proposal was adopted as the University preferred reference design scheme.

Evaluation commentary and the recommendation has been documented.

### **External Consultation process**

18. As a requirement under the SEARs, during the design development stage of the project, consultation was held with the City of Sydney where Architectus presented their developed scheme, presenting their design approach and response, and how they had achieved design excellence.

The design was received favourably by the City of Sydney, however some minor design comments were received, which were considered by the University and the architects, and were responded to and integrated into the final design proposal.

Over the past month our internal heritage consultant Ian Kelly has been in regular contact with the NSW Heritage Council seeking a date for the University to present the design. Unfortunately due to the current availability of their resources a date is yet to be determined. The University is committed to consulting with the Heritage Council and will meet with them at their earliest convenience to seek their feedback and integrate any comments into the final design.

### **Ongoing design review process**

19. CIS are committed to an ongoing design review process, to ensure design intent, quality, detailing and project delivery is consistent with the aspirations of Design Excellence.

### **Conclusion**

20. The University concludes that this design competition process and independent architecture and heritage peer review have resulted in final designs for both projects that acknowledge and satisfactorily resolve those design issues raised by the City of Sydney and the NSW Heritage Council.
21. The University believes the design excellence and design competition processes has achieved noteworthy and meritorious design outcomes for both buildings.
22. The proposals both responded positively to the advice provided by the Government agencies during SEAR and pre-SSD lodgement phases, and in meeting the design excellence criteria established by both the University and the *Sydney LEP 2012*.