

GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT NEW SOUTH WALES

11 March, 2025

Alistair Smith
Director
Mecone
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CC:
Wil Robertson
Urban Design Specialist
Willoughby City Council
Wil.Robertson@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au

**PROJECT: 3-5 Help St, Chatswood
Mixed-Use Development - Infill Affordable Housing
(SSD- 76555711)**

RE: Request for Design Competition Exemption

Dear Alistair,

I am writing to you in response to your request for an exemption from the requirement to undertake a new competitive design process for the above development, pursuant to Clause 6.23(8)a of the Willoughby Local Environmental Plan (WLEP).

We note that a competitive design process has been previously undertaken in November 2022, and that the proponent has now sought to transition the EMBECE winning scheme to an SSDA under the In-fill Affordable Housing provisions of the Housing SEPP.

For the SSDA, we confirm that a Bridging Design Excellence Strategy (Strategy) has been developed in consultation with GANSW, DPHI and Willoughby City Council. This Strategy was endorsed by GANSW on 5 February 2025. As required by the Strategy, the original competition jury formed a Design Integrity Panel (DIP) to review the revised proposal prior to the lodgement of the SSDA. On 18 February 2025, the panel confirmed the proposal maintains the potential to exhibit design excellence in accordance with the WLEP.

In assessing this request, we have consulted with DPHI officers, and they have advised they are supportive of the exemption request.

On this basis, you are advised that a new competitive design process is not required for the development, subject to the following conditions:

- EMBECE and Common Grounds are maintained as lead design team throughout the development process, consistent with the requirements of the endorsed Strategy
- The DIP is established to satisfy the requirement of a design review panel in accordance with C6.23(8)b of the WLEP

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- The DIP is reconvened to review the development at the key stages outlined in the endorsed Strategy
- The consent authority takes into account the findings of the DIP in accordance with C6.23(8)c of the WLEP

It should be noted that the approval of this competition exemption and the findings of the panel does not fetter the discretion of the consent authority in the assessment of the SSDA for the subject site.

Should you have any further enquiries about this matter, please contact Guy Pinkerton - guy.pinkerton@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely,



Abbie Galvin LFRAIA
Government Architect
GANSW

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