

# Bridging Design Excellence Strategy

Mixed use development with in-fill  
affordable housing

3-5 Help Street, Chatswood

Prepared for  
Lofrex Chatswood Pty Ltd

March 2025



Mecone acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on where this project is undertaken and across the Mecone offices that this report is prepared, paying respect to the Elders past and present. We recognise the ongoing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to land, waters, and culture.




## Project Director

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Revision	Revision date	Status	Authorised: Name & Signature
V1	03/09/2024	Draft	Kirsty Vogel 
V2	23/01/2025	Final - GANSW/Council Comments	Kirsty Vogel 
V3	19/02/2025	DIP Addendum Draft	Alistair Smith 

\* This document is for discussion purposes only unless signed and dated by the persons identified. This document has been reviewed by the Project Director.

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# 1 Introduction

This Bridging Design Excellence Strategy (the **Strategy**) has been prepared by Mecone Group Pty Limited on behalf of Loftex Chatswood Pty Ltd to support a State Significant Development Application (**SSDA**) to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (**DPHI**), pursuant to *Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 (Housing SEPP)* at 3-5 Help Street, Chatswood (the **site**).

This Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the *Design Competition Guidelines* published by Government Architect NSW (**GANSW**) (2023). It develops the Design Excellence Strategy dated 23 August 2022 which was endorsed by Willoughby Council (**Council**) as part of a Local Design Excellence Competition for the site which concluded in November 2022. This strategy provides bridging documentation between Council-led Design Excellence Processes and State-led Design Excellence processes and has been developed in consultation with GANSW, DPHI and Council.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Bridging Design Excellence Strategy

The purpose of this Strategy is to establish the process that transitions a recently completed Local Design Competition to a revised scheme which seeks to pursue in-fill affordable housing (IAH) as part of an SSDA. By providing a bridging design excellence strategy, there is no requirement to run a new Design Competition for the site - a separate design competition exemption will be required to be granted by GANSW.

Specifically, this Strategy confirms the following:

- The outcomes of the original design competition
- The engagement of the competition-winning design team through to completion of the project
- The planning framework and any relevant outcomes of early scoping meetings with DPHI.
- How the revised proposal seeks to maintain the design intent and design quality of the competition winning scheme.
- Provision of a high-level comparison of the proposed development against the competition winning scheme at key stages.
- Details of how design integrity will be maintained throughout the SSDA process including processes for reconvening the original competition jury as the 'Design Integrity Panel' (DIP) to review and comment on the revised proposal.
- Requirement to obtain DIP confirmation the SSD proposal has maintained the potential to exhibit 'design excellence' in accordance with Clause 6.23 of the *Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012 (WLEP 2012)*

**Note – Nothing in this Strategy endorses a departure from the relevant planning controls, including any relevant State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and WLEP 2012. Where there is any inconsistency between this Strategy and the relevant planning controls, the relevant planning controls prevail. Endorsement of this Strategy does not fetter the consent authority in the assessment of any future development application for the subject site.**



## 1.2 The Site

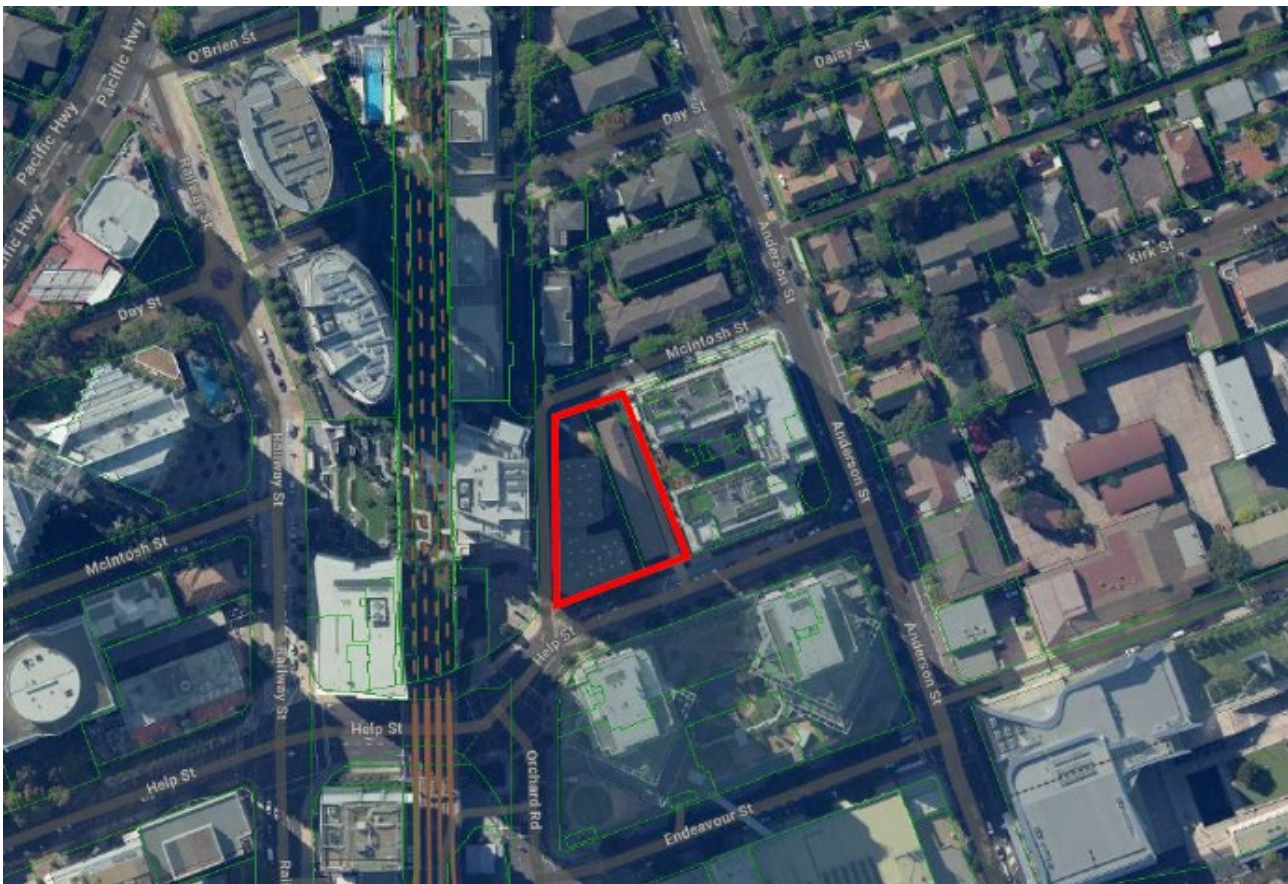
### 1.2.1 Site overview

The site is identified as 3-5 Help Street, Chatswood within the Willoughby Local Government Area (LGA) and has a site area of 2,290m<sup>2</sup>. The site comprises two lots as follows:

- 3 Help Street – SP 134
- 5 Help Street – SP 52320

The site is bounded by Cambridge Lane to the west, Help Street to the south, and McIntosh Street to the north. To the east, the site shares a common boundary with an 8-storey shop-top housing development, which occupies the remainder of the street block up to Anderson Street (see **Figure 1** below).

The existing improvements on the site consist of two mid-rise residential flat buildings.



**Figure 1: Site Location**

Source: Mecone

### 1.2.2 Local context

The site is located in the northern portion of Chatswood CBD, approximately 250m north of Chatswood Transport Interchange, and benefits from immediate access into the core of the Chatswood CBD via a walkway and cycleway.



To the north are medium to low density residential developments with maximum heights ranging from 8m to 12m. Development applications have been lodged for larger future developments at 44-52 Anderson Street and 54-56 Anderson Street.

To the east beyond Anderson Street are medium density residential dwellings with heights ranging from 12m to 14m. Mixed-use developments are within the immediate vicinity with building heights of 172m (RL).

To the south of the site is the Chatswood CBD commercial core and Transport Interchange.

To the west of the site are high density residential and commercial core towers with maximum heights ranging from 90m to 172m (RL). Further west, the Pacific Highway separates the commercial core and low to medium density residential dwellings.



## 2 Planning Background

### 2.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

The in-fill affordable housing provisions in Chapter 2 Part 2 Division 1 of the Housing SEPP aims to facilitate the delivery of new in-fill affordable housing to meet the needs of very-low, low and moderate-income households.

Clause 15C of the Housing SEPP stipulates that Chapter 2 Part 2 Division 1 applies to development that includes residential development if the development is permitted with consent, the affordable housing component is at least 10% of the total gross floor area, and the development is carried out in an accessible area.

The proposal satisfies above criteria for the following reasons:

- The proposal involves shop top housing which is a type of residential development as defined as section 15B.
- The proposal will provide a State affordable housing component of 14%
- The proposal is located in an accessible area (within 800m of a railway station) as defined in Schedule 10 of the Housing SEPP.

### 2.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021

The proposed development is classified as SSD pursuant to Schedule 1, Clause 26A of the Planning Systems SEPP which provides that development for the purpose of in-fill affordable housing (partly or fully) with an estimated development cost of more than \$75 million is SSD. In this regard:

- The proposal relates to development to which Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1 of the Housing SEPP applies;
- The proposal comprises residential development and has an ESD of more than \$75 million; and
- The development does not involve a type of land use that is prohibited under an environmental planning instrument applying to the site.

### 2.3 Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy 2036

The Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy 2036 guides future private and public development as the Chatswood CBD grows over the next 20 years. It aims to provide capacity for future growth and employment, achieve exceptional design and a distinctive, resilient and vibrant CBD.

The Strategy informed changes to the Willoughby LEP (Amendment No. 34) and Willoughby Development Control Plan that directly affect the subject site.

### 2.4 Willoughby LEP 2012 Amendment No 34

On 30 June 2023, changes to Willoughby LEP 2012 (Amendment No 34) were gazetted. This amendment altered a number of planning controls and other provisions across the Chatswood CBD, giving effect to the recommendations of the Chatswood CBD strategy. The site was subject to these changes, resulting



in significant uplift of planning controls. A summary of the applicable LEP development standards is provided in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1 – WLEP 2012**

Clause	Assessment
<b>2.1 Land Use Table</b>  MU1 Mixed Use	The proposed shop top housing and infill affordable housing land uses are permissible with consent in the MU1 Mixed Use zone.
<b>4.3 Height of Buildings</b>  90m	The proposed development will have a height of 115.2m, which is 28% of additional height above the standard specified under Clause 4.3.
<b>4.4 Floor Space Ratio</b>  6:1	The proposed development will have an FSR of 7.68:1, which is 28% additional FSR beyond that specified in Clause 4.4.
<b>4.6 Exceptions to development standards</b>	Clause 6.25 of the LEP requires that shop top housing developments in the MU1 zone must comprise a minimum of 17% non-residential floor space. In this regard, the proposed design will provide approximately 2,345m <sup>2</sup> of non-residential GFA, which is equivalent to 13.3% of the total proposed GFA. This non-compliance will be detailed and justified in a Clause 4.6 variation request.
<b>6.7 Active Street Frontages</b> .... (3) <i>Development consent must not be granted to the erection of a building, or a change of use of a building, unless the consent authority is satisfied that the building will have an active street frontage,</i> (4) <i>Despite subclause (3), an active street frontage is not required for part of a building that is used for the following –</i> (a) <i>entrances and lobbies, including as part of mixed use development,</i> (b) <i>access for fire services,</i> (c) <i>vehicular access.</i>	The proposed development will provide active frontages at the ground plane through a podium containing retail and other non-residential land uses.
<b>6.8 Affordable housing</b>  4% of the gross floor area of the residential component of the development must comprise affordable dwellings.	The required affordable housing under the LEP is intended to be satisfied via dedication of dwellings to Council.
<b>6.15 Sun Access</b> (1) <i>Development consent must not be granted to development on land in Zone E2 Commercial Centre or Zone MU1 Mixed Use that results in additional overshadowing on land identified as “Area 1” on the Sun Access Protection Map at mid-winter between 12pm and 2pm.</i> (2) <i>Development consent must not be granted to development that results in additional overshadowing on land identified</i>	A detailed shadow analysis will be prepared to confirm dwellings in Area 3 maintain at least 3 hours of direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm at mid-winter.



<p>as “Area 2” on the Sun Access Protection Map at mid-winter between 11am and 2pm.</p> <p>(3) Development consent must not be granted to development that results in a dwelling on land identified as “Area 3” on the Sun Access Protection Map receiving less than 3 hours of direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm at mid-winter.</p> <p>(4) Development consent must not be granted to development that results in additional overshadowing on the tree canopy of the Angophora costata tree identified as Schedule 5, Part 1, item I237 at mid-winter between 12pm and 2pm.</p>	
<p><b>6.25 Shop top housing in Zone MU1</b></p> <p><i>Development consent for the purposes of shop top housing on land in Zone MU1 Mixed Use must not be granted unless the consent authority is satisfied at least 17% of the gross floor area of the building will be used for non-residential purposes.</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will provide approximately 2,345m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential GFA, equivalent to 13.3% of the total GFA proposed.</p>

## 2.5 Early Scoping Meeting

An early scoping meeting was held with DPHI and GANSW on 30 August 2024 to seek preliminary feedback on the proposal.

Written feedback following this meeting was provided on 5 September 2024, detailing the following comments:

*Based on the information provided, the Department considers the proposal is likely to be classified as a State significant development (SSD). Therefore, you may proceed with requesting SEARs for the abovementioned proposal through the Major Projects portal.*

*Please refer to the following documents relevant to the SSD pathway, when preparing the SEARs documents as well as going forward:*

- *State Significant Development Guidelines*
  - *Appendix A to the state significant development guidelines – This provides guidance on the expected scoping report structure and appendix. Please follow this structure, where possible. In addition, please ensure compliance tables, broadly outlining the compliance of the proposal with the relevant LEP, Housing SEPP and Apartment Design Guide (ADG) provisions, are provided.*
- *In-fill affordable housing*
  - *Scoping Meeting Requirements – for Applicants – The required documents/plans discussed in this document should be added in the Scoping package, as relevant.*
  - *Planning Circular PS 23-003: In-fill affordable housing under State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021*
  - *In-fill affordable housing Practice Note December 2023*

*In addition, I would like to remind you of the following:*

- *BDAR waiver requests can be provided as part of the SEARs request package.*



- *The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) process should start as soon as possible.*
- *In the scoping report, please state if the proposal includes any of the following:*
  - *Any VPAs*
  - *Any concurrent draft PPs/LEP amendments that may relate to the application*
  - *Extent of any clause 4.6 requests.*

*In addition to the above, please note the following when lodging the SEARs request through the portal:*

- *create an applicant's account and the planning consultant's account*
- *lodge the request under the applicant's name, rather than the planning consultant*
- *the planning consultant can be added to the applicant's account as a "Company", if the consultant lodges the SEARs request*
- *ensure that the applicant name includes a company name with the correct ABN, to ensure smooth processing of fees etc in the later stages.*

*I am happy to review your draft scoping report package before you submit a PDA request on the Major Projects portal.*

### **Bridging Design Excellence Process**

*Please contact Guy Pinkerton via email at [guy.pinkerton@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:guy.pinkerton@dpie.nsw.gov.au) if you have any further questions regarding this process.*

### **Other Matters**

- *Please review the proposed affordable housing gross floor area and Housing SEPP bonuses and ensure that any proposed GFA/height bonuses do not exceed the maximum permitted under the Housing SEPP. Please be mindful of rounding numbers up, as this results in non-compliance.*
- *Please ensure that you provide a letter from a Quantity Surveyor confirming that the residential component of the development exceeds \$75 million in accordance with the Planning Systems SEPP with any request for SEARs.*
- *Please ensure that any references to SEPP65 are updated to reflect current legislation.*
- *Can you please forward the early scoping meeting presentation to us for record keeping purposes?*

## **3 Design Competition Summary**

A Design Competition was undertaken for the site between August – November 2022 in accordance with Clause 6.23(6)(b) of the LEP.

A Design Excellence Strategy (**Appendix 3**) and an Architectural Design Competition Brief (**Appendix 2**) were prepared in consultation with Council and in accordance with the *Guidelines for Design Excellence Review and Competitions (2019)*. The Competition Brief was subsequently endorsed by Council.



## 3.1 Participating Design Teams

The Design Competition was undertaken as an invited process where the proponent sought three design teams to respond to a Competitive Process. The three selected design teams were:

- EMBECE (winning scheme, see **Figure 3**)
- Kann Finch
- Nettletontribe



**Figure 2: Competition Winning Scheme**

*Source: EMBECE*



## 3.2 Competition Jury

The Competition Jury (the Jury) incorporated one (1) representative nominated by the Government Architect NSW (GANSW), two (2) representatives nominated by Council, and two (2) representatives nominated by the Proponent.

The Jury comprised the following members:

- **Matthew Bennett** (GANSW nominated Chair)
- **Digby Hall** (Council nominated)
- **Emili Fox** (Council nominated)
- **Chris Johnson** (Proponent nominated)
- **Peter Poulet** (Proponent nominated)

## 3.3 Key Dates

The key dates and processes were:

- Commencement date: 23 August 2022
- Final presentation date: 25 October 2022
- Jury Endorsement of Competition Report: 17 November 2022

## 3.4 Feedback on Winning Scheme

**Appendix 1** provides the Architectural Design Competition Report which was prepared at the conclusion of the competition. The report outlines the Design Competition process, architectural submissions, and the competition jury's deliberations, decision, and recommendations. The Jury unanimously considered that the EMBECE scheme provided the best response to the Design Competition Brief and concluded it was capable of achieving design excellence. The following feedback was provided by the Jury on the EMBECE scheme:

### Architectural Strategy

- The formal proposition is a clear, intuitive and sophisticated response to a constrained site and challenging context that is commended. The following elements should be retained:
  - the proposal for a singular form, including the tower extending to the corner of Help St and Cambridge Walk, to create a strong and legible urban marker for this precinct,
  - the careful and sensitive modulation of the building envelope to maximise northern light into neighbouring buildings, the proposed apartments, and the communal and public open space, and
  - the folding of podium wall heights to align with the neighbouring buildings to integrate the proposal with the surrounding context in a nuanced manner.

### Urban Strategy

- The public domain proposal is very well considered and is a major strength of the proposal.



- The establishment of Cambridge Walk as a sun-filled public space to support the viability and vibrancy of the future retail spaces and lobbies is essential to the concept and should be retained including:
  - the additional 4.5m setback to Cambridge Lane to increase the width of the public domain,
  - the extent of retail activation illustrated in the proposal including the provision of retail and lobby spaces that are contiguous with the levels of the public domain along Help St, Cambridge Lane and McIntosh St,
  - the extent, quality, amenity and character of the proposed public domain landscape,
  - the change in the facade materiality of the lower levels to address the public realm in lieu of a tower and podium form,
  - the double height volumes proposed for the retail and lobby spaces and the character and high level of amenity and they will provide, and
  - the interface between the building and public domain including awnings to mitigate potential wind impacts.
- The alignment of the podium along Help Street creates a more generous urban intersection with Cambridge Lane, opens views between Help St and the existing urban plaza, and seeks to consolidate urban form by aligning with the wall of 28 Anderson Street.
- The allocation of deep soil along Cambridge Walk and Help St is strongly supported. The Jury encourages the proponent and Council to collaborate in shaping the high quality urban streetscape with extensive tree canopy and landscaping to supports urban cooling, stormwater management, the mitigation of flood risk, and increases to urban biodiversity.

## Planning Envelope Alignment

- From a design perspective, the Jury supports the scheme as presented with no podium form to Cambridge Lane, and a minor breach in the setback to Help St, and notes that in our opinion, the proposal results in better architectural, urban and landscape outcomes for this site compared to the podium and setback controls required by the DCP, and an acceptable alternative solution within the overall planning envelope.

## Connecting with Country

- The strategy for Connecting with Country should continue to be developed to inform and enrich the architectural and landscape design strategies and qualities including the integration of public art and naming opportunities.

## Facades, Materiality, and Structure

- The simplicity, sophistication and layering of the proposed facades is integral to the concept and expression of the building and should be retained including:
  - the proposed restrained materiality palette including the coloured concrete,
  - the strong gridded structural forms of the elevations,
  - the combination of solid and layered screening elements to mitigate heat load and overlooking, while still retaining access to views, sunlight and daylight, and
  - the crisp and elegant detailing illustrated in the presentation materials.
- The Jury notes that the configuration of the facade including the proportion of solid to glass may evolve with detailed thermal analysis, but the proposed system provides a good basis to respond to consultant inputs without undermining the original proposal.



- To support cross ventilation and natural ventilation, the design team should consider how prevailing nor-easterly summer breezes might be harnessed through facade design and operability.
- The design team is encouraged to consider how these facade treatments can have a greater impact on the internal design and character of the apartments and the interface between the interior and exterior.

## Cantilevered Form

- The scheme was presented with a cantilever to the north to maximise the extent of landscaped communal open space. An alternative scheme was also presented that did not rely on a cantilever that may offer cost benefits. The Jury notes that both schemes are capable of achieving design excellence, subject to communal open space provision calculations, and that further alternative schemes could be explored that utilise a stepped building form supported by columns to achieve similar communal space outcomes.

## Residential Considerations

- The Jury supports the quality of the proposed apartment planning, the apartment mix, and the focus on amenity in the design process.
- The provision of separate living spaces in the 4 bedroom apartments is a good point of market difference and should be retained.
- The detailed design should consider how apartments can enjoy natural ventilation at night with bedroom doors closed.
- The landscape qualities and amenity of the communal open space, and the location of the common rooms in relation to these spaces is an important strength of the proposal and should be retained.

## Non-Residential Considerations

- The Jury commends the provision and location of the non-residential core and notes that it permits the subdivision of the floorplate into smaller tenancies, while still providing natural light and ventilation to the lobby space with views to landscaped spaces east and west.
- The proponent is encouraged to consider the inclusion of a high quality stair access between the ground floor and level 1 to encourage stair use over lift access for non-residential tenants.

## Loading, Basement, and Servicing

- The end-of-trip bicycle store for non-residential tenants requires further resolution of access and amenity. The scheme as presented was not clear on the journey experience for building users and this should be considered in further detail during design development.
- Waste management space allowance should be developed to support future residents in avoiding waste to landfill. This might include allocation of space for the re-use or exchange of loose furniture, organic waste composting and re-use for landscape, and general recyclables management.
- The location of the substation within the building envelope provides a good urban outcome and consideration should be given to the capacity and space required to provide EV charging to each parking space.



## ESD Considerations

- The proposed Green Star pathway, whilst including a range of strongly supportable initiatives, requires detailed development aligned with the design. In particular, the pathway includes reliance on 100% renewable energy use in the building (which is strongly supported by the Jury) which requires a clear commitment to 100% electrification. It should also be noted that the proposed pathway and resultant compliance with Green Star requires a number of operator initiatives and the design team is encouraged to maximise the number of initiatives that are embedded into the design itself.
- Building services require detailed resolution in order to support a fully electric scheme. In particular, the location of building services for heating and hot water should be resolved as a priority given the potential for plant room demands.
- It was noted that the proposal included buildings services design guidance that relies upon industry standard climate settings. The proponent is strongly encouraged to design to anticipated and predictable increases in climate conditions - particularly heat and rainfall intensity - as a result of climate change. Such climate risks are not reflected in industry standard design criteria and instead must be drawn from recent climate modelling and risk analysis relevant to the specific site.
- In developing building services, ensure that sufficient rainwater storage is provisioned to support landscape irrigation.
- The scheme includes 3 x shared EV charging spaces, which meets the brief, but in practice such solutions will become problematic for the residential community. Shared EV spaces require a high level of governance in order to avoid clashes between residents wishing to charge vehicles, the spaces can be used for parking by non-EV users, and unless sophisticated and costly payment systems are included, the electricity will be paid for by strata. The proponent is strongly encouraged to consider including simple GPO points in every car space, metered to the owner's energy usage, allowing any type of EV to be charged overnight using their own equipment. The slower draw on overnight electricity is also generally an easier load to manage. The proponent should assume that all residents cars will eventually be electric.

The Design Competition Brief (**Appendix 2**) guided design teams to fully comply with LEP and DCP controls. However, it did not contemplate bonus floorspace or height that may be awarded to shop-top housing under the provisions of Chapter 2 Part 2 Division 1 of the Housing SEPP, as these provisions came into effect for the site on 30 June 2024.



# 4 The Proposed Development

The proposal relates to a shop top housing development which seeks 28% GFA and Height bonuses in addition to the LEP controls for the site. It will provide 14% state affordable housing under the Housing SEPP in the form of a mixed-use shop-top housing development comprising the following key components:

- A basement car park comprising five levels of residential parking and one level of commercial parking;
- A ground plane podium with commercial premises and residential lobby access;
- A residential tower with a residential communal level and 31 levels of residential apartments above, including an affordable housing component; and
- Associated landscaping and public domain works.

The affordable housing component required under the Housing SEPP is proposed to be provided in the lower levels of the development with a total GFA of approximately 2,462m<sup>2</sup>, equivalent to 14% of the residential GFA of the development. Under Chapter 2, Part 2, Division 1, section 16 of the Housing SEPP, this allows a bonus FSR and building height of 28% beyond that specified in Clauses 4.3 and 4.4 of the LEP.

The proposed development is eligible for the SSSDA pathway as:

- It is for the provision of infill affordable housing (minimum 10%);
- The location is within the Eastern Harbour City and has a capital investment value of more than \$75 million;
- It does not involve development prohibited under an applicable EPI;
- It is not subject to State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021, Chapter 3, Part 4;
- Whilst a development application has been made before the commencement of the applicable section in the Planning Systems SEPP, a new and separate SSSDA would be lodged.

**Table 2– Proposed Development**

Parameter	Winning Scheme	Indicative SSSDA Scheme
Site	2,290m <sup>2</sup>	2,290m <sup>2</sup>
Land use	Shop top housing	Shop top housing
Gross Floor Area	Gross floor area (GFA) comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial: 2,286m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Residential: 11,444m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Total GFA: 13,730m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	The envisaged GFA comprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial: 2,345m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Residential: 15,238m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Total GFA: 17,584m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	6:1	7.68:1
Building Height	90m 28 storeys	115.2m 35 storeys
Setbacks	Northern Setback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3m (podium)</li> <li>• 7.5m (tower)</li> </ul> Southern Setback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3m (podium)</li> <li>• 7.5m (tower)</li> </ul> Eastern Setback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nil (podium)</li> <li>• 4.5m (tower)</li> </ul> Western Setback:	No change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3m (podium)</li> <li>• 7.5m (tower)</li> </ul>	
Dwelling number	109 dwellings (0 Affordable)	160 dwellings (32 Affordable)
Affordable housing	LEP affordable: 4% of residential GFA	LEP affordable: to be provided as a monetary contribution  Housing SEPP affordable: 2,470m <sup>2</sup> (14% of total GFA)
Communal open space	433 m <sup>2</sup> (18.9% of site area)	617 m <sup>2</sup> (27% of site area)
Deep soil area	153m <sup>2</sup> = 6.7%	174m <sup>2</sup> = 7.5%
Car Parking	166 car parking spaces (including 47 adaptable spaces)  7 motorcycle spaces	133 parking spaces (including 36 adaptable spaces)  9 motorcycle spaces

*Note: The above table does not represent an endorsement of any controls which do not comply with the WLEP 2012 and WDCP 2023.*

The figures below provide an indicative comparison between the competition winning scheme and the proposed SSDA scheme.



**Figure 3: CGI of Competition Winning Scheme**

Source: EMBECE



**Figure 4: CGI of Proposed SSDA Scheme**

Source: EMBECE



## 5 Design Integrity Process

The Design Integrity Process is to be undertaken in accordance with Part 3.5 of the GANSW Design Competition Guidelines 2023. In the event of any inconsistency, the Design Competition Guidelines prevail.

### 5.1 Retention of the winning design team

This Strategy confirms that as the winning design team of the competition held in 2022, EMBECE and Common Grounds will be appointed as the Lead Design Team as selected by the Jury. Common Grounds has been appointed by the Applicant as the landscape architect and forms part of the design team. The scope of design services provided by the lead designer should include:

- preparation of drawings for a development application
- preparation of drawings for a construction certificate
- preparation of drawings/material for contract documentation
- continuity of design leadership through construction to occupation certificate.
- Provide any documentation required by the Consent Authority verifying the design intent has been achieved at completion; and
- Attend all meetings that pertain to design issues with the community, authorities and other stakeholders, as required.

The SSDA shall maintain the design intent and design quality of the Jury selected Design Competition scheme and maintain the potential to exhibit 'design excellence' in accordance with Clause 6.23 of the Willoughby LEP.

### 5.2 Design Integrity Panel

In accordance with the Design Competition Guidelines, a quorum of the original competition jury will be appointed as the Design Integrity Panel (**DIP**) to review the proposed design and advise on the delivery of design excellence.

The original jury members comprised:

- **Matthew Bennett** (GANSW nominated Chair)
- **Digby Hall** (Council nominated)
- **Emili Fox** (Council nominated)
- **Chris Johnson AO** (Proponent nominated)
- **Peter Poulet** (Proponent nominated)

To improve the efficiency of the design integrity process, the DIP will comprise:

- Matthew Bennett as the GANSW nominated Chair;
- 1 x Council-nominated juror; and
- 1 x Proponent-nominated juror.



The DIP is to review the revised proposal against the merits and elements identified for refinement in the Design Competition Report and as identified in **Section 3.4** of this Strategy. Where the DIP is satisfied that the scheme maintains the potential to achieve design excellence, the DIP will confirm in writing no later than 7 days after a DIP review.

Where a scheme requires further design development to deliver Design Excellence, the DIP may require more than one review and shall make recommendation on a process to ensure that Design Excellence may be achieved.

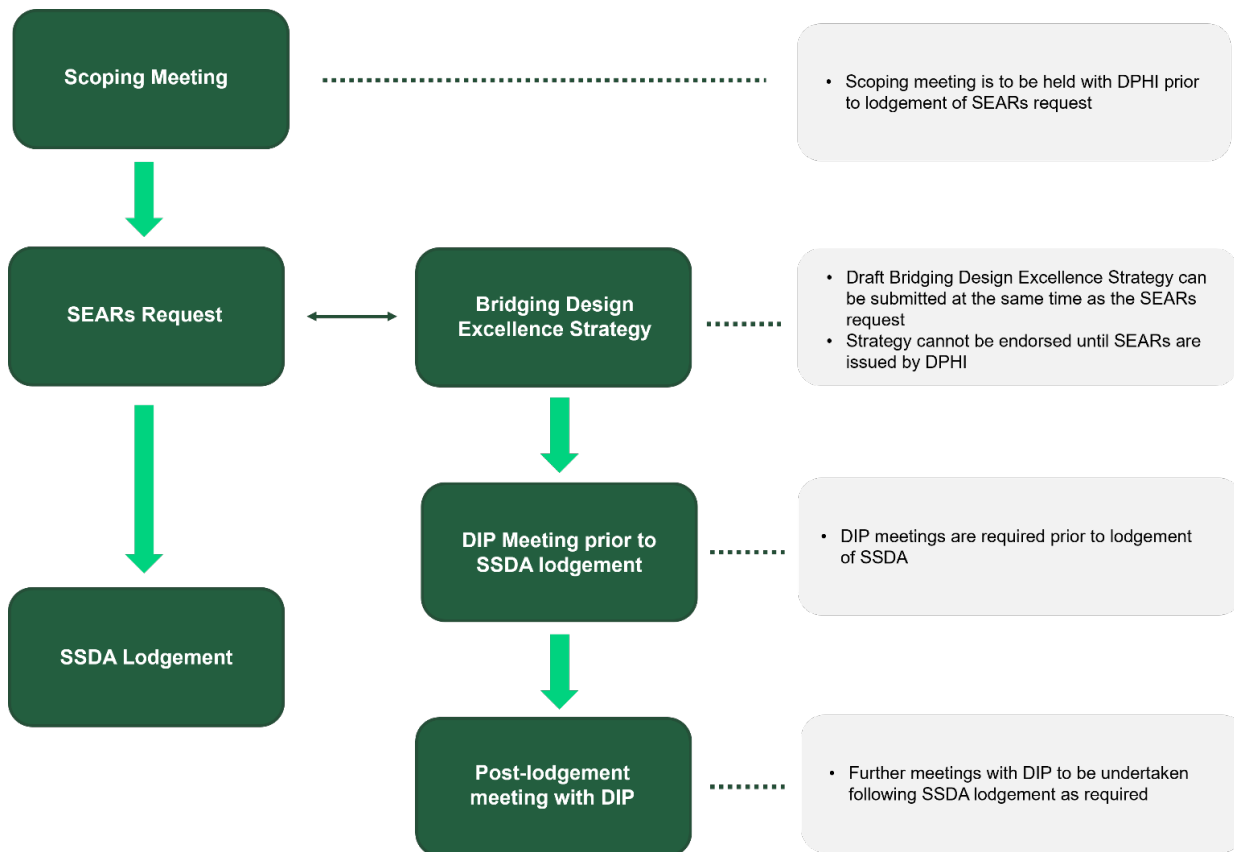
The following operational parameters will apply to the proposed Design Integrity Process:

- The DIP is reconvened by the Applicant with assistance from the competition manager.
- Invited observers to DIP meetings must be: DPHI (Assessments Staff), Council and GANSW.
- Prior to the first meeting, the DIP is to review and sign a 'terms of reference'.
- All presentation material will be provided to DIP 5 working days prior to any meeting, and should provide a clear 'compare and contrast' between the competition scheme and the SSSA scheme. Any additional height or floorspace should be clearly annotated on all drawings.
- Each meeting of the DIP will be documented in a design integrity report. The report will include a statement confirming that the design retains or improves upon the design excellence qualities exhibited in the competition winning submission and retains the potential to achieve design excellence.
- The DIP report will:
  - make specific reference to advice and recommendations from the competition report and earlier DIP sessions.
  - specify if further DIP sessions are recommended.
  - be prepared by the competition manager and reviewed and endorsed by the DIP.
  - be submitted to the consent authority as part of the SSSA.



## 5.3 Design Integrity Pathway

The Design Integrity Process is summarised below:



**Figure 5: Design Integrity Pathway**

Source: Mecone

## 5.4 SSDA lodgement and Competitive Design Process Exemption Request

Following DIP advice, certifying (in writing) that the proposal maintains the potential to achieve 'design excellence', the applicant may submit a formal exemption request to GANSW clearly explaining the relevant circumstances of the request.

Following internal review and consultation with the Willoughby City Council, GANSW will advise the applicant in writing whether a new competitive design process is not required, and if not, how the design review panel will be conducted. GANSW will respond to the request in a timely and efficient manner. The exemption request is to be made in accordance with Clause 6.23(8) of the LEP, which states:

*(8) Subclause (6)(b) does not apply if—*

- (a) the consent authority certifies in writing that a competitive design process is not required, and*
- (b) a design review panel reviews the development, and*
- (c) the consent authority takes into account the advice of the design review panel.*



# ADDENDUM – Design Integrity Report



# 1 Design Integrity Panel Meetings

This section describes the review sessions held with the DIP, the issues raised during the sessions, and how the proposal has addressed those issues.

## 1.1 Introduction

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the DIP includes a quorum of the original competition jury, including the Chair. Three jury members from the original competition jury were appointed as the DIP, including:

Panel member	Role/Position
Matthew Bennett (Chair)	Director – Bennett and Trimble
Emili Fox	Principal – Architectus
Chris Johnson AO	-

One review session was held with the DIP on 18 February 2025. The session was attended by key members of EMBECE (the design team), Loftex (the Proponent) and Mecone (DIP Manager). Key stakeholders were also invited to attend the DIP sessions, including representatives from the DPHI, GANSW and Willoughby City Council), however they were not in attendance.

A copy of the DIP review feedback provided after the session is at **Appendix 5**.

## 1.2 Fundamental elements of design excellence

As outlined in **Section 3**, EMBECE were selected as the winning scheme to progress to the detailed Development Application. A series of matters were identified by the competition jury for retention and refinement in the Design Competition Report, which are required to be addressed as part of the design integrity process.

Since the design competition, the winning scheme has been further developed to seek to utilise the 30% FSR and building height uplifts under the Housing SEPP, while maintaining the design intent and design quality of the winning competition scheme.

As stated in the DIP review feedback, the focus of the DIP review sessions was to review design, and amenity impacts and merits of the 28% uplift proposal. The advice provided by the DIP does not fetter the discretion of the consent authority in assessing impacts including, but not confined to, wind, overshadowing to public domain, shadow impacts on surrounding development, traffic, car parking, waste strategy, and utility capacity.



## 1.3 DIP Review Session

The DIP review session was held in-person on 18 February 2025 and written DIP feedback was subsequently received on that same day. The DIP supported the amendments to the scheme as they were consistent with the quality and strategies of the Design Excellence Competition proposal.

In particular, the Panel noted their support for the:

- Increased height resulting in a slender tower form
- Sculpting of the upper tower levels to reduce overshadowing impacts on the public domain
- Provision of affordable housing with a shared ground floor lobby and access to communal open space facilities.
- Revised apartment mix while retaining high levels of natural cross ventilation and solar access
- Increased Communal Open Space provision including internal areas located on the podium rooftop.

### **Conclusion**

The Panel broadly supports the amended scheme presented by EMBECE as it is consistent with the design and quality of the Design Excellence Competition proposal.

The Panel have identified no items requiring further consideration for the scheme to achieve design excellence. No further reviews are required by the Design Integrity Panel prior to submission of the proposal for assessment.




## 1.4 DIP endorsement

The DIP Chair confirms that this Addendum is an accurate record of the DIP feedback and that the DIP endorses the observations and clarifications by consensus.

The DIP endorses the progression of the proposal to lodgement, for the reasons outlined in this Addendum.

### Design Integrity Panel (DIP) Endorsement

Name	Signature	Date
Matthew Bennett (Chair) Director – Bennett and Trimble		25 February 2025



# Appendix 1

# Design Competition Report

# Parade Consulting

PLANNING  
URBAN FUTURES

## Design Competition Report

Design Excellence  
Competition  
3-5 Help Street  
Chatswood

14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Submitted to: Jury Panel Members  
and Council for final Endorsement



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Project Name: DEC 3-5 Help Street Chatswood

File Reference: 3-5 Help Street Design Competition Report 20221114

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**Cover page:** montage image of Design Competition submissions – NettletonTribe on the left, Kann Finch bottom right, and EmBeCe top right.

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Revision	Date	Details	Name	Signoff
01	7/11/2022	First Draft	Matt Hurst	
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03				
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Design Excellence Competition report documents the evaluation of the design submissions prepared as part of the Design Excellence Competition for the site known as 3-5 Help Street Chatswood. Prior to the evaluation by the Jury panel each of the submissions were subject to a planning review on the basis of the environmental, urban design, and social provisions of the relevant planning controls. The Planning review was undertaken to assist the Jury with the selection of the most optimal built form for the site within the constraints of those land use, height, density, and urban design parameters.

The Design Competition report has been prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act), Willoughby City Council's LEP, DCP, Design Excellence Competition Guidelines and Policy, the approved DEC Strategy and the Associated competition Brief.

Three designs were submitted for review by the three competition participants, Kann Finch, EmBeCe, and NettletonTribe.

**There were no red non-compliances in the planning compliance review**, and all three designs have offered acceptable solutions to their partial non-compliances in their design statements.

**The Design by EmBeCe was unanimously selected as the winner of the competition by the Jury Panel.**

## 1 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

This Design Excellence Competition has been undertaken as part of the Planning and Development Process for the site known as 3-5 Help Street Chatswood. The Competition has been managed by Parade Consulting on behalf of the site owners. The key objectives of the Competition are to achieve both Design Excellence and Planning Compliance for the proposed design that will be taken forwards to form a Development Application before Council, in accordance with the Willoughby LEP 2012 (as amended) and with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

This report documents the conclusion of the Design Excellence Competition, including the Jury's determination of the design submissions, and their recommendations. The Competition invited three architecture firms to provide competition submissions, those firm are **Kann Finch**, **NettletonTribe**, and **EmBeCe**.

### 1.2 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this Design Competition Report is firstly to summarise the finding of the Jury Members and secondly to inform Council and the project proponent of the results of the Competition including any recommendations from the Jury panel with regards further enhancements for the selected scheme.

### 1.3 The Planning Review Process

The Planning compliance review of the submitted draft competition designs was undertaken two weeks prior to the final submissions of the competition designs. The work was undertaken by the nominated planning consultant for the Design Excellence Competition - Parade Consulting. The review was undertaken in a similar fashion to a DA stage Planning Compliance assessment. All relevant controls from both the LEP and the DCP, as well as the relevant SEPPs, were considered as part of this review. The LEP and DCP for the subject site were both updated in March 2022.

The Competition Participants had an opportunity to rectify any Planning non-compliances or document how/why their designs represented an acceptable solution and was more likely to achieve design excellence than compliance. This work by the participants was undertaken prior to making their final submission for the Jury's assessment and determination.

## 2 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The Design Excellence Competition is seeking to achieve design excellence through the assessment of three independent competitively generated designs. Only compliant (or agreed acceptable) designs may be selected for the successful outcome of the Design Excellence Competition.

### 2.1 Current Zoning

The current zoning is B4 mixed use. The following table summarises the current zoning controls:

**Table 1 - Existing Planning Controls**

<b>Control</b>	<b>Existing</b>
Zone	B4 Mixed Use
Building Height	90m
Floor Space Ratio	6:1

### 2.2 Height

The current maximum “height of buildings” development standard is 90 metres. This is in line with the CBD Strategy. The indicative height of likely development concepts is about 30 storeys.

### 2.3 FSR

The current maximum “floor space ratio” development standard is 6:1. This is divided between commercial and residential and requires a minimum 1:1 FSR for commercial floor space for any development on site.

The indicative built form delivered by a FSR of 6:1 (including min 1:1 commercial floor space) is the focus of the development concepts submitted to the Design Competition.

## 3 DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

### 3.1 Objectives and Intended Outcomes

The objective of this Design Excellence Competition is to facilitate the redevelopment of land at 3-5 Help Street, Chatswood in a manner generally consistent with the provisions of the CBD Strategy, the LEP, and the DCP (which designate the site for mixed-uses), and the relevant SEPPs.

The proposed designs being assessed in the competition are intended to achieve an ‘unlocking’ of the site, and enable a viable and ecologically responsive tall slender building to be realised. The outcomes of this Design Excellence Competition will ensure that the final form of development on the site is more appropriately tailored to the site’s characteristics and opportunities, whilst not negatively impacting on the amenity of the surrounding public spaces and historic residential areas.

In response to the strategic site qualities and opportunities, the ultimate objective of the Design Excellence Competition is to facilitate the future development of a high quality, metropolitan scale, mixed-use development that is iconic within this precinct of the Chatswood CBD location. A favourable outcome would enable the direct achievement of a range of both regional and local strategic planning objectives including job and housing growth in a highly accessible and connected location, with a stronger night-time economy and urban renewal of the last under-developed parcels within this precinct of Chatswood CBD.

### 3.2 Explanation of Current Provisions

The Design Excellence Competition incorporates several recent amendments to the WLEP 2012 as it relates to the site. These resultant and current controls are summarised in **Table 2**.

**Table 2 – Existing Planning Controls**

<b>Control</b>	<b>Existing</b>
Zone	B4 Mixed Use
Building Height	90m
Floor Space Ratio	6:1

### 3.3 Land-use Zoning

**The zoning of 3-5 Help Street Chatswood is B4 Mixed Use.**

The Zoning Map is as follows:

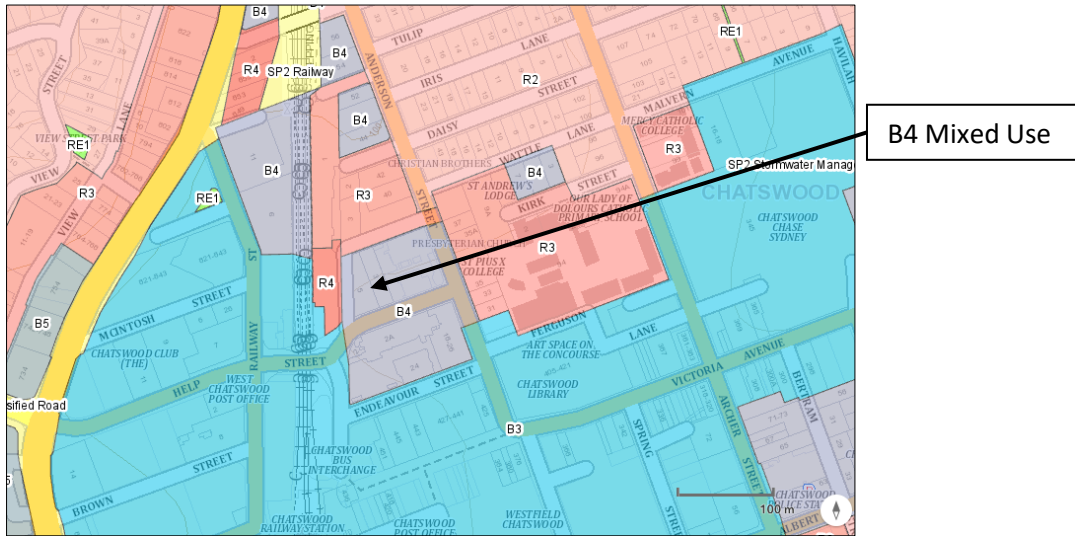


Figure 1 – Amended WLEP 2012 Zone Map Base Source: Willoughby LEP 2012 maps, legislation.nsw.gov.au

### 3.4 Height of Buildings

The maximum building height of 90m across the entire site is shown on the Height of Buildings Map.

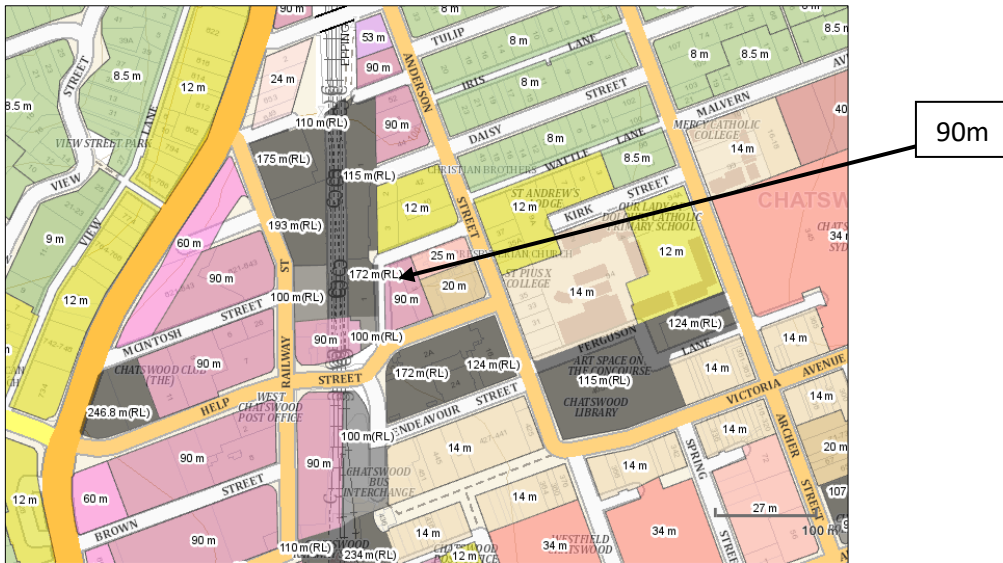
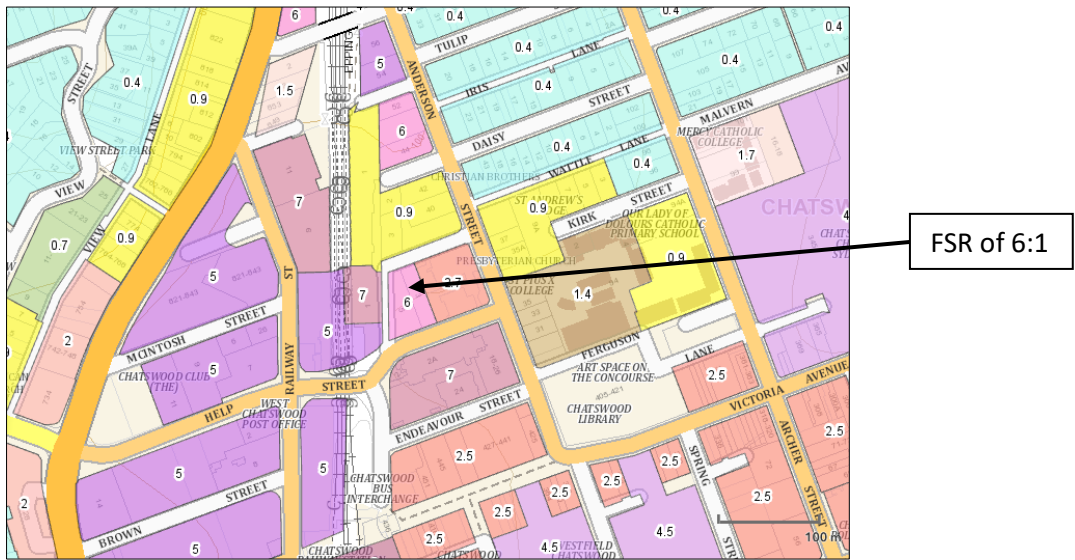


Figure 2 – Amended Maximum Building Height Base Source: Willoughby LEP 2012 maps Sheet HOB\_003, legislation.nsw.gov.au

### 3.5 Floor Space Ratio

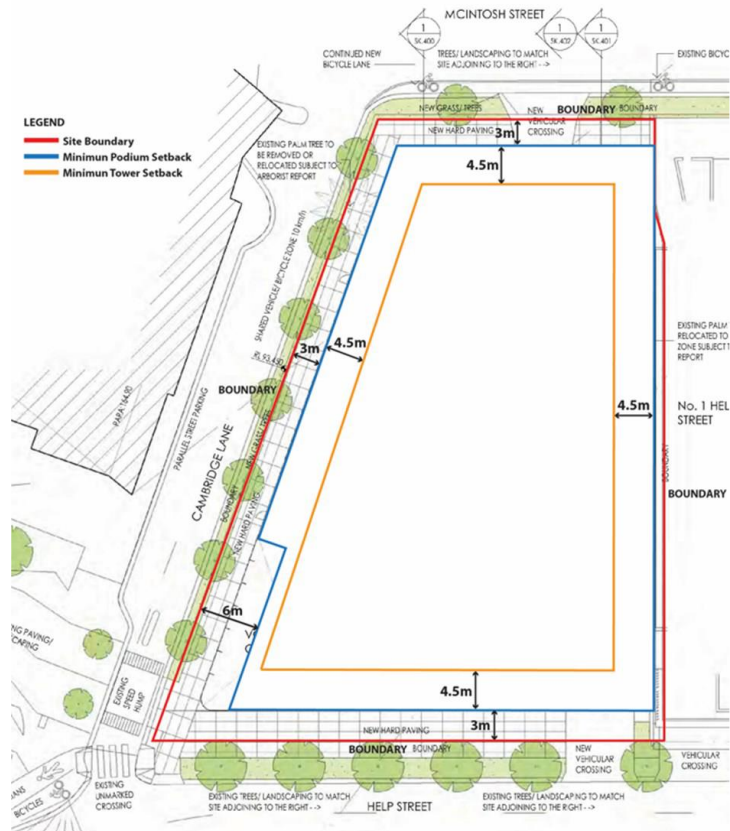
The maximum floor space ratio (FSR) is 6:1 shown on the Floor Space Ratio Map below.



**Figure 3 – Amended Maximum Floor Space Ratio**  
 Base Source: Willoughby LEP 2012 maps Sheet FSR\_003-, legislation.nsw.gov.au

### 3.6 DCP Controls

Council’s CBD Strategy envisaged a new CBD DCP, which has been developed by Council. A specific DCP has also been developed for the site. Many of the issues covered by this site specific DCP resulting from the list of concerns raised by Council during the Planning Proposal development stage. The DCP is available on Council’s Website if required. The Site Layout and Setback Controls from the DCP are shown on the following Map:



**Figure 4 – Site Layout and Setback Controls**

### 3.7 Planning Matters raised by Willoughby Council Planners

This section is a summary of the responses prepared by our team of consultants' in response to the queries raised by Council as relates to the previous Concept Design developed to support the Planning Proposal and now supporting the Design Excellence Competition. Each query has been addressed independently, and has been summarised here.

#### 3.7.1 Podium Height of between 6 to 14m

The podium height of the designs are to be between 6m and 14m above the ground floor level fronting the Help Street Footpath.

#### 3.7.2 1:1 FSR for Commercial component

The FSR for the commercial component is to be no less than 1 to 1.

#### 3.7.3 Two lifts minimum servicing the residential required

Two secure lifts are required at a minimum to service the residential component of the building. The commercial levels are serviced by secure lifts with dedicated key access. Access to all levels other than return to the lobby is via swipe key card only, or by being buzzed in by a resident/commercial tenant whereby the lift will proceed only to the level of the authorising occupant.

#### 3.7.4 Services risers/cores should be shown on the designs

Services and riser cores are to be screened if located in an alcove area located behind the lift shafts, access is from the intermediate landings of the fire stairs.

#### 3.7.5 Green roof at podium level

The Top of the Podium level is to be a landscaped area.

#### 3.7.6 Garbage requirements of the development

Access to the Garbage Bin collection dock is via a door in the lobby through into the services lobby. Commercial garbage cleaning contractors will have access to this services lobby from the commercial floors via the lift which also opens into this same lobby.

#### 3.7.7 Fire services facilities on the ground floor

A fire Control Room with external ground floor access is to be included in the design. The size of the fire control room is to meet the required standard.

#### 3.7.8 Specify the substation requirements and location

The specifications for the substation requirements involve a street level sub-station Kiosk and an associated Main Switch Board.

#### 3.7.9 Two fire stairs are likely to be required

Two Fire stairs will need to be incorporated into the design and run vertically throughout the above ground levels of the building. Additional staircases may also be required to serve the basement levels.

#### 3.7.10 Streetscape activation

Activated retail space will need to be incorporated into the design of the building and beside the main entrance. This space should also be accessed from additional folding glass doors on the front façade of the building.

#### 3.7.11 Two-way access to the site needs to be achieved for residents/commercial parking

Car Parking access will require separate entry and departure driveways, or a double width driveway, with queuing for at least one (preferably two) arriving cars inside the property boundary whilst one car departs.

#### 3.7.12 Storage of up to two vehicles arriving whilst one departs

Please refer to the previous point above.

**3.7.13 No vehicles to be waiting on Help Street.**

The designs should allow for up to 2 vehicles to queue inside the property boundary on arrival, and depending on the length of the vehicles, potentially a third also - overlapping the footpath and parking lane – but well clear of passing traffic.

**3.7.14 The separation of garbage and couriers/deliveries**

This will need to be managed through a time allocated roster system to be implemented by the building manager. It is proposed that a Condition of Consent be included with DA submission that the Building Manager for the site must administer an agreed roster for access to the loading dock to ensure its availability is clear for garbage collection within a specified time window. This allocated roster for use of the dock will need to be confirmed with Council garbage services prior to implementation.

**3.7.15 Provide clarification of the designation separation of ground floor/basement users**

Access to the lobby will be direct from the Car Park, and further, to the commercial levels via secure access from the lifts.

**3.7.16 Preference for LVR rather than MVR length vehicles in the bay**

Due to the small area for ground floor facilities inside of the permissible building footprint, the site can only comfortably accommodate MVR length vehicles. For more details, please refer to the Traffic Assessment Report.

**3.7.17 Provide comments on disabled parking**

Any space in the carpark should be able to be utilised by wheelchair accessible vehicles. Loading and unloading of wheelchairs should be facilitated in the car park. Level access to the building is to be via the lobby and through to the lifts also.

**3.7.18 Undertake turning path analysis for both access and egress points**

Turning path analysis will need to be undertaken for the new driveway egress and egress, and for the loading/garbage dock.

**3.7.19 Vehicular access should be left-in and left-out**

Left in/left out entry and exit for the car park should be achieved with the approved design.

**3.7.20 All car parking designs must satisfy Australian Standards**

All Car parking designs must be designed in accordance with the required relevant Australian Standards.

**3.7.21 Bicycle parking designs must satisfy Australian Standards**

The design of the Bike Parking must comply with the relevant Australian Standards.

**3.7.22 Bike rider showers and lockers to be adjacent to bicycle racks/storage**

The Bike parking area is to have an associated change room, lockers, and shower immediately adjacent to the lockable bike park area. Access to the Bike parking for residents, commercial tenants and cleaning staff is to be by security pass only.

**3.7.23 Provide comments on noise**

Please refer to the previous Noise Report. A More Detailed Noise Report will be required at DA stage.

**3.7.24 Provide comments on wind**

Please refer to the previous Wind Report. A More Detailed Wind Report will be required at DA stage.

### 3.7.25 Provide comments on 5-star GBCA rating attainment

The architects who participate in the Design Excellence Competition are required to attain an ESD report that relates to their submission design. The attainment of 5-star GBCA rating can only be achieved upon completion of a level of analysis and design development associated with the DA phase.

### 3.7.26 Provide comments on on-site landscaping including podium

On site Landscaping will be provided in both the deep soil areas (located in the 3-meter setbacks located at the front of the building), and also on the podium level.

### 3.7.27 Provide comments on plantings, planters, and green wall sections

Plantings will be determined based on potential height, location, and appropriateness of species on a location-by-location basis. Planters will be located along the property boundary separating the area that could be designated for café seating from the adjacent footpath. Planters will be located a minimum of 1 meter back from the edge of the balustrade on the podium level to ensure there is no climb-over risk, or be over 1.5m high. The final design of landscaping will be developed during the DA phase with further consultation from Council.

## 4 COMPETITION SUBMISSIONS

### 4.1 Overview of submissions

All three competition participants submitted high quality designs. All were determined to acceptably meet the Planning requirements of the site (specifically the zoning, height, FSR and Setback requirements).

Each of the designs differed significantly in their Architectural response to the brief both in terms of design theme and structural form.

### 4.2 NettletonTribe Submission

The NettletonTribe design was a very creative design with a strong emphasis on the of liveability in the unit layouts, with an emphasis on both natural light and ventilation. There was a strong focus on the public realm on the corner of Help Street and Cambridge Lane, however this space was likely to be perpetually shady in winter. Overall, it seemed to be a solid interpretation of the requirements of the brief, notwithstanding the visual bulk of the two long façades facing east and west.

### 4.3 Kann Finch Submission

The Kann Finch submission might be described as a contemporary response to the opportunities presented by the site with similar themes to their previous adjacent work at 28 Anderson/1 Help Street. With an environmentally inspired design theme that consists of a green and grey alternating panelled façade form and strong horizontal floorplate elements spanning the height of the eastern façade. Whilst also an excellent response to the brief the resulting building forms do not appear to achieve the “Slender Tower” design objectives when viewed side on.

### 4.4 EMBECE Submission

The EmBeCe Design was a unique response to the brief, with a core theme focused on achieving a slender tower form. This was achieved by making the singular structure appear to be three or more separate towers. This was further emphasised through the use different top and bottom starting and finishing heights for the “visually distinguishable” sections of the tower with the use of cantilevered sections. A public space focus along Cambridge Lane and at the Corner of McIntosh Street creates sunny pockets at different times of the day. The design appears to represent an excellent response to the constraints of the site within its local context and is also an excellent response to the brief.

## 5 PLANNING COMPLIANCE REVIEW OUTCOMES

The Planning Compliance Review has been prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979* (EP&A Act), and Willoughby City Council’s Design Excellence Competition Guidelines and Policy and the associated Strategy (V05) and Brief(V05).

The following table summarises the Planning Compliance review. A Traffic Light colour coding has been adopted for clarity as follows:

- Green is fully compliant,
- Red is non-compliant (with no likely Acceptable Solution)
- Orange is non-compliant (but with a solution which the participant argues represents a better design excellence outcome than a fully compliant solution)
- Yellow is partial non-compliant (with a documented acceptable solution offered)

The table presents the results for the Draft EmBeCe, NettletonTribe, and Kann Finch competition submission designs:

Design Compliance Checklist			Participants'		
Control Element		Requirement	Compliance		
			EmBeCe	Kann Finch	NettletonTribe
<b>LEP</b>					
<b>Zoning</b>	Mixed Use	Com/retail and Res	yes	yes	yes
<b>FSR</b>	Res	5:1	yes	yes	yes
	Com	1:1	yes	yes	yes
<b>Height</b>		90m	yes	yes	yes
<b>Activated Street Front</b>					
	Help St		yes	yes	yes
	Cambridge Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes
	McIntosh Street		Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>DCP</b>					
Slender tower form			yes	Yes	yes
Height includes all elements			yes	yes	yes
Flat roofs incorporate usable outdoor rec space			yes	yes	yes
<b>Building exterior</b>					
Articulated façades			yes	Yes	yes
No extensive blank walls at ground/street level			Yes	yes	yes
<b>Setbacks</b>					
	Podium				
	Help St	3m	Not entirely	Yes	Effectively (Vertical Fins)
	Street wall height	6-14m	yes	Yes	Yes
	Cambridge Lane	3m (+3m section)	yes	Yes	Effectively (Vertical Fins)
	Street wall height	6-14m	yes	Yes	Yes
	McIntosh St	3m	yes	Yes	Effectively (Vertical Fins)
	Street wall height	6-14m	yes	Yes	yes
	Adjoining Boundary	0m	yes	Yes	yes
	Tower				
	Help St	7.5m	yes	Yes	yes
	Cambridge Lane	7.5m	yes	Yes	yes
	McIntosh St	7.5m	yes	Yes	yes
	Adjoining Boundary	4.5m	yes	Yes	yes

<b>Amenity</b>					
These DCP controls are generally achievable on this site and will be assessed at DA stage with specific reports					
<b>Open space and Landscaping</b>			<b>EmBeCe</b>	<b>Kann Finch</b>	<b>NettletonTribe</b>
Roofs up to 30m in height have landscaping			yes	yes	yes
Roofs up to 30m in height have usable Recreation space			yes	yes	yes
2hrs of direct solar access for publicly accessible space			mostly	mostly	mostly
Communal Open Space for residents complies			yes	yes	yes
20% of site is soft landscaping			yes	yes	yes
Deep soil in the Cambridge Lane Setback provided			yes	yes	yes
Through Site Links - Technically not required for this site as not on the DCP map			N/A	N/A	yes
<b>Active Street frontages</b>					
Does the frontage have a non-residential frontage					
	Help Street		yes	yes	Yes
	Cambridge Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes
	McIntosh Street		yes	Yes	Yes
Does the frontage provide an element of visual interest					
	Help Street		yes	Yes	Yes
	Cambridge Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes
	McIntosh Street		yes	Yes	yes
<b>Traffic and Transport</b>					
All vehicles enter and exit in a forward direction			yes	yes	yes
Vehicle access provides safety and avoids conflicts			yes	yes	yes
Left in/left out only to/from Help Street and/or McIntosh Street			yes	yes	yes
Cycle access along Cambridge Lane, McIntosh and Help Streets retained			yes	yes	yes
Secure Bike parking incorporated on site			yes	yes	yes
End of trip facilities for cyclists included			yes	yes	yes
Car parking is to be located underground			yes	yes	yes
<b>Waste, loading and services</b>					
All loading docks and deliveries located in basement or at rear of Ground floor			yes	Mostly yes	yes
All com and waste access to be via Help Street			yes	yes	yes
All Residential access and exit to be via Help Street and or McIntosh Street			yes	yes	yes
Substations to be inside buildings			yes	No	yes
Substations are not to be in setbacks			yes	No	yes
Substations not to be in the 20% open space allowance			yes	yes	yes
Substations are not to face key activated street frontages			yes	yes	yes
Design Excellence					
This competition is compliant with Council's Policies			yes	yes	yes
<b>Public Art</b>					
The design incorporates Public Art or has an allowance to facilitate it			yes	yes	yes
<b>Building Sustainability</b>					
Refer to the separate ESD report. DA stage finalisation.			ESD report	ESD report	ESD report

There are no red non-compliances in the review and all three designs have offered acceptable solutions to their partial non-compliances in their design statement.

## 6 PROJECT BUILD COST ASSESSMENT

Each of the submissions were reviewed for cost compliance by the Proponent’s selected Quantity Surveyor - Owen Power, at Hutchisons Builders. The Target build costs was \$77Mil.

After an initial review of each design scheme minor amendments were made by some competition participants to reduce certain cost elements in their designs (the full cost review reports are attached to this report in the appendices).

The final designs were subject to a final cost assessment and the results of that are presented in the table below:

Comp. Participant	<b>EmBeCe</b>	<b>Kann Finch</b>	<b>NettletonTribe</b>
Build Cost estimate	\$85,548,395	\$74,268,192	\$78,490,697

## 7 JURY ASSESSMENT

### 7.1 Assessment methodology

Competition submissions were required to be submitted to the Competition Convenor by 2:00pm on Monday the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2022. The competition participants were invited to present their designs to the complete Jury Panel on the Morning of Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Each presentation was allowed up to 40 minutes to present, followed by up to 20 minutes of question time from the Jury members. Each of the Jury Panel members were provided with access to the designs at least seven days prior to the presentations.

The Jury Panel were each provided with the Competition Strategy and Brief documents that contained the objectives and goals of the design competition; these are also listed below. Prior to the presentations, the Jury were also provided with the Planning Compliance report for their consideration.

The urban design principles that underpin this Design Excellence Competition are as follows:

- Building designs that are fully compliant with the planning scheme, the DCP, and other relevant planning legislation
- Building designs which demonstrate the ability to be fully compliant with all the required building codes and environmental sustainability requirements
- Building designs that respond appropriately and imaginatively to the opportunities and constraints of the site and its surroundings
- Building designs that are inspired and represent an appropriate response to the site being located at the northern gateway to the Chatswood CBD.
- Building designs that display consideration of the adjacent heritage precinct and other characteristics of the surrounding built form
- Building designs that will result in high amenity for the occupants and users of the building
- Building designs that represent value for money, both in consideration of the construction cost and ongoing maintenance, relative to the high quality of the design outcome
- Building designs that articulate a strong design idea that comply with the brief.
- Buildings that overall, are determined by the Jury - to represent design excellence.
- Building designs that facilitate a mixed-use tower that responds to the location of the site and the neighbouring properties;
- Building designs that minimise overshadowing of adjoining buildings;
- Building designs that allow design excellence to be further explored in the detailed DA stage.

Each of the design submissions had to comply with satisfying the following design requirements:

- Resolved site and location plan.
- Contextual site study and view analysis.
- Conceptual analysis of the proposal and design rationale.
- Typical plans, elevations and sections including the ground plane.

- Relevant plans, elevations and sections demonstrating compliance with the site-specific planning proposal and development control plan, SEPP 65 and ADG, LEP and generic DCP controls.
- 3D massing modulation study to demonstrate relationship to adjoining buildings, and articulation of proposed building.
- Proposed external finishes and materials.
- Three co-ordinated perspectives of proposed development from the locations specified.
- Ground plane and public domain area in the context of the site.

The Assessment was made against the objectives in the brief articulating:

- An innovative design that responds to the opportunities of the site.
- A design that provides a high level of residential amenity and achieves the targets for ecologically sustainable development.
- Compliance with site specific LEP, DCP, built form, and commercial requirements of the brief.
- Feasible construction methodology and QS confirmation that scheme is inline with the project budget.

## 7.2 Jury Panel Members

The Jury Panel was made up of some of the most experienced and well renowned Architects in New South Wales:

- The Jury Chair was nominated to be **Matthew Bennett**.
- Council's nominated Jury members were **Digby Hall** and **Emili Fox**
- The Site proponents nominated Jury members were **Chris Johnson** and **Peter Poulet**.

## 7.3 Assessment Summaries

### DESIGN EXCELLENCE JURY COMMENTS

The Jury commends the work presented by the three competitors, in particular noting the high degree of compliance of each scheme with the site specific DCP and other relevant controls, as well as achieving the allowable maximum development floorspace. It is noted that development cost estimates provided by each competitor were somewhat divergent, whilst just remaining in the acceptable range for variance from the target scope. Notwithstanding the cost variations, the Jury focused on the key design quality areas of: urban design, residential amenity, and the architectural design proposition of each submission.

### 7.3.1 Competitor 1 Nettleton Tribe

The Jury complimented the coherence and resolution of Nettleton Tribe's scheme with a proposal for a new civic space that created an interesting relationship between the podium and tower. In particular the Jury commended:

- the intention to establish a new urban open space in relationship to the existing open space to the west of the site,
- the extent of street activation to Help St, Cambridge Lane and McIntosh St,
- the extent of the deep soil zone along Cambridge Lane to support urban tree canopy coverage,
- the flexibility and amenity of the commercial spaces on levels 1 and 2,

- the size and quality of the north-facing communal open space on Level 3,
- the modulation of the tower form to capture north-eastern sunlight,
- the stepped interface between the tower, the podium and the ground plane to create open landscaped spaces,
- the proposal for full electrification with sufficient allowance in the substation location to allow for potential growth in electricity demand, and
- the potential for the facades to manage heat load.

Despite the scheme's strengths, the Jury raised a number of concerns including:

- the amenity of the proposed urban open space including its size, southwest orientation, relationship to the overhead tower in regards to wind, its reliance on a new crossing to establish a link to the existing open space, and its perceived character as an entrance forecourt,
- the lack of a strong architectural concept or detailed considerations of materiality,
- the configuration and size of the commercial and residential lobby spaces,
- the location of the commercial lifts and the challenges this would create in subdividing these floors,
- the tightness of the apartment planning, the orientation of some living spaces, and the proportional relationship between a number of living spaces and balconies,
- the appearance of the eastern balconies as clipped-on elements rather than integrated with the overall massing proposal,
- the solar amenity of the south-west corner apartments, and
- the lack of clarity about building costs to achieve Net Zero.

### 7.3.2 Competitor 2 Kann Finch

The Jury was impressed with the architect's detailed knowledge of the site and context, including the level changes across the site. In particular the Jury commended:

- the strategy to widen Cambridge Lane and the intention to keep existing significant trees to enhance the public domain around the site,
- the clear relationship between the podium and the tower
- the structural simplicity, constructability and efficiency of the scheme,
- the use of historical precedents to inform the proposal,
- the rationality of the apartment planning, and
- the quality and clarity of the fly-through animation.

In general, the Jury was concerned about the strength of the architectural concept, the resolution of the proposal, and the significant amount of work that would be required for the scheme to achieve design excellence. The Jury raised a number of concerns including:

- the lack of activation to the surroundings streets, and in particular Cambridge Lane, as a result of separate loading and car parking entries,
- the difference in levels between the retail space and the public domain on McIntosh St,
- the location of the substation within the public domain of Cambridge Lane,

- the architectural qualities of the residential and commercial lobbies,
- the complexity in subdividing the commercial floor plates given the location of the cores,
- the size, orientation, configuration and amenity of the communal open space on level 3,
- the use of coloured horizontal bands that compete with the vertical articulation of the tower forms,
- the high proportion of glazing and lack of sun shading (particularly in the eastern facade) and the impact this would have on heat loads, privacy and overlooking, and
- the extent to which sustainable initiatives were integrated into the architectural proposal, materiality and detailing.

### 7.3.3 Competitor 3 EmBeCe

The Jury unanimously agreed that EmBeCe’s scheme was an excellent proposal that is capable of achieving design excellence. The Jury praised the team’s high level of urban and architectural ambition, the resolution of the scheme, and the exceptionally clear graphic and verbal presentation of the proposal.

The Jury has identified a series of strengths of the proposal that should be retained in order for the scheme to achieve design excellence, as well as a number of elements for further consideration and refinement prior to the submission of the Development Application.

#### **Architectural Strategy**

- The formal proposition is a clear, intuitive and sophisticated response to a constrained site and challenging context that is commended. The following elements should be retained:
  - the proposal for a singular form, including the tower extending to the corner of Help St and Cambridge Walk, to create a strong and legible urban marker for this precinct,
  - the careful and sensitive modulation of the building envelope to maximise northern light into neighbouring buildings, the proposed apartments, and the communal and public open space, and
  - the folding of podium wall heights to align with the neighbouring buildings to integrate the proposal with the surrounding context in a nuanced manner.

#### **Urban Strategy**

- The public domain proposal is very well considered and is a major strength of the proposal.
- The establishment of Cambridge Walk as a sun-filled public space to support the viability and vibrancy of the future retail spaces and lobbies is essential to the concept and should be retained including:
  - the additional 4.5m setback to Cambridge Lane to increase the width of the public domain,
  - the extent of retail activation illustrated in the proposal including the provision of retail and lobby spaces that are contiguous with the levels of the public domain along Help St, Cambridge Lane and McIntosh St,

- the extent, quality, amenity and character of the proposed public domain landscape,
  - the change in the facade materiality of the lower levels to address the public realm in lieu of a tower and podium form,
  - the double height volumes proposed for the retail and lobby spaces and the character and high level of amenity and they will provide, and
  - the interface between the building and public domain including awnings to mitigate potential wind impacts.
- The alignment of the podium along Help Street creates a more generous urban intersection with Cambridge Lane, opens views between Help St and the existing urban plaza, and seeks to consolidate urban form by aligning with the wall of 28 Anderson Street.
  - The allocation of deep soil along Cambridge Walk and Help St is strongly supported. The Jury encourages the proponent and Council to collaborate in shaping the high quality urban streetscape with extensive tree canopy and landscaping to supports urban cooling, stormwater management, the mitigation of flood risk, and increases to urban biodiversity.

### **Planning Envelope Alignment**

- From a design perspective, the Jury supports the scheme as presented with no podium form to Cambridge Lane, and a minor breach in the setback to Help St, and notes that in our opinion, the proposal results in better architectural, urban and landscape outcomes for this site compared to the podium and setback controls required by the DCP, and an acceptable alternative solution within the overall planning envelope.

### **Connecting with Country**

- The strategy for Connecting with Country should continue to be developed to inform and enrich the architectural and landscape design strategies and qualities including the integration of public art and naming opportunities.

### **Facades, Materiality and Structure**

- The simplicity, sophistication and layering of the proposed facades is integral to the concept and expression of the building and should be retained including:
  - the proposed restrained materiality palette including the coloured concrete,
  - the strong gridded structural forms of the elevations,
  - the combination of solid and layered screening elements to mitigate heat load and overlooking, while still retaining access to views, sunlight and daylight, and
  - the crisp and elegant detailing illustrated in the presentation materials.
- The Jury notes that the configuration of the facade including the proportion of solid to glass may evolve with detailed thermal analysis, but the proposed system provides a good basis to respond to consultant inputs without undermining the original proposal.
- To support cross ventilation and natural ventilation, the design team should consider how prevailing nor-easterly summer breezes might be harnessed through facade design and operability.
- The design team is encouraged to consider how these facade treatments can have a greater impact on the internal design and character of the apartments and the interface between the interior and exterior.

### **Cantilevered Form**

- The scheme was presented with a cantilever to the north to maximise the extent of landscaped communal open space. An alternative scheme was also presented that did not rely on a cantilever that may offer cost benefits. The Jury notes that both schemes are capable of achieving design excellence, subject to communal open space provision calculations, and that further alternative schemes could be explored that utilise a stepped building form supported by columns to achieve similar communal space outcomes.

### **Residential Considerations**

- The Jury supports the quality of the proposed apartment planning, the apartment mix, and the focus on amenity in the design process.
- The provision of separate living spaces in the 4 bedroom apartments is a good point of market difference and should be retained.
- The detailed design should consider how apartments can enjoy natural ventilation at night with bedroom doors closed.
- The landscape qualities and amenity of the communal open space, and the location of the common rooms in relation to these spaces is an important strength of the proposal and should be retained.

### **Non-residential Considerations**

- The Jury commends the provision and location of the non-residential core and notes that it permits the subdivision of the floorplate into smaller tenancies, while still providing natural light and ventilation to the lobby space with views to landscaped spaces east and west.
- The proponent is encouraged to consider the inclusion of a high quality stair access between the ground floor and level 1 to encourage stair use over lift access for non-residential tenants.

### **Loading, Basement and Servicing**

- The end-of-trip bicycle store for non-residential tenants requires further resolution of access and amenity. The scheme as presented was not clear on the journey experience for building users and this should be considered in further detail during design development.
- Waste management space allowance should be developed to support future residents in avoiding waste to landfill. This might include allocation of space for the re-use or exchange of loose furniture, organic waste composting and re-use for landscape, and general recyclables management.
- The location of the substation within the building envelope provides a good urban outcome and consideration should be given to the capacity and space required to provide EV charging to each parking space.

### **ESD Considerations**

- The proposed Green Star pathway, whilst including a range of strongly supportable initiatives, requires detailed development aligned with the design. In particular, the pathway includes reliance on 100% renewable energy use in the building (which is

strongly supported by the Jury) which requires a clear commitment to 100% electrification. It should also be noted that the proposed pathway and resultant compliance with Green Star requires a number of operator initiatives and the design team is encouraged to maximise the number of initiatives that are embedded into the design itself.

- Building services require detailed resolution in order to support a fully electric scheme. In particular, the location of building services for heating and hot water should be resolved as a priority given the potential for plant room demands.
- It was noted that the proposal included buildings services design guidance that relies upon industry standard climate settings. The proponent is strongly encouraged to design to anticipated and predictable increases in climate conditions - particularly heat and rainfall intensity - as a result of climate change. Such climate risks are not reflected in industry standard design criteria and instead must be drawn from recent climate modelling and risk analysis relevant to the specific site.
- In developing building services, ensure that sufficient rainwater storage is provisioned to support landscape irrigation.
- The scheme includes 3 x shared EV charging spaces, which meets the brief, but in practice such solutions will become problematic for the residential community. Shared EV spaces require a high level of governance in order to avoid clashes between residents wishing to charge vehicles, the spaces can be used for parking by non-EV users, and unless sophisticated and costly payment systems are included, the electricity will be paid for by strata. The proponent is strongly encouraged to consider including simple GPO points in every car space, metered to the owner's energy usage, allowing any type of EV to be charged overnight using their own equipment. The slower draw on overnight electricity is also generally an easier load to manage. The proponent should assume that all residents cars will eventually be electric.

## 8 JURY DETERMINATION

After due consideration of the brief, submitted documents, and presentations from the competitors, the Jury formed a unanimous view that the scheme submitted by **EmBeCe** best responds to the various requirements of the competition brief, and is most likely to achieve design excellence with further design development.

## 9 CONCLUSION

The Design Competition report has been prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the EP&A Act), Willoughby City Council's LEP, DCP, Design Excellence Competition Guidelines and Policy, the approved DEC Strategy and the Associated competition Brief.

This Design Excellence Competition report has documented the review of the environmental, urban design, and social provisions of the relevant planning controls, to assist with the selection of the most optimal built form for the site within the constraints of those land use, height, density, and urban design parameters.

There are no red non-compliances in the compliance review, and all three designs have offered acceptable solutions to their partial non-compliances in their design statements (or its compliance addendum where required).

**The design by EmBeCe was unanimously selected as the winner of the competition by the Jury Panel.**

This Design Excellence Competition Report will now be submitted to Willoughby City Council. This report provides a comprehensive justification that the Jury Panel selected design by EMBECE is most able to achieve Design Excellence, and should proceed forwards through the planning process towards Development Application assessment and approval.

## 10 REFERENCES

Kann Finch

*Draft Design Excellence Competition Submission– 3-5 Help Street Chatswood*  
October 2022

EmBeCe

*Draft Design Excellence Competition Submission– 3-5 Help Street Chatswood*  
October 2022

NettletonTribe

*Draft Design Excellence Competition Submission– 3-5 Help Street Chatswood*  
October 2022

The 3-5 Help Street Chatswood - Design Excellence Competition - Jury Panel's Assessment Report,  
8<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

Willoughby City Council

*Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012 as amended*

Willoughby City Council

*Willoughby Development Control Plan amended 2022*

*Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act)*



# Appendix 2

# DIP Review Feedback

## **3-5 Help Street Chatswood NSW**

### **Design Integrity Panel**

**Matthew Bennett (Chair), Emili Fox, Chris Johnson**

18<sup>th</sup> February 2025

#### **Foreword**

The focus of this commentary will be on design and amenity impacts and merits of the 30% uplift proposal. The advice provided below does not fetter the discretion of the assessment authority in assessing impacts including but not confined to wind, overshadowing to public domain, shadow impacts on surrounding development, building separation, traffic, waste strategy, and the capacity of utilities.

#### **1. Amendments Supported by the Panel**

The Panel broadly supports the amended scheme by EMBECE as it is consistent with the design and quality of the Design Excellence Competition proposal and the approved Development Application. In particular the Panel supports the:

- Increased height resulting in a slender tower form
- Sculpting of the upper tower levels to reduce overshadowing impacts on the public domain
- Provision of affordable housing with a shared ground floor lobby and access to communal open space facilities
- Revised apartment mix while retaining high levels of natural cross ventilation and solar access
- Increased Communal Open Space provision including internal areas located on the podium rooftop.

#### **Conclusion**

- The Panel have identified no items requiring further consideration for the scheme to achieve design excellence.

- No further reviews are required by the Design Integrity Panel prior to submission of the proposal for assessment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Bennett'.

Matthew Bennett (Chair)

