

WATERLOO METRO QUARTER OVER STATION DEVELOPMENT

Environmental Impact Statement Appendix B – Updated Design Excellence Strategy

**SSD-79307765 Second Amending Concept
SSD-79307758 Northern Precinct
SSD-79307746 Central Precinct**

Detailed State Significant Development
Development Application

Prepared for **WL Developer Pty Ltd**

October 2025

Ryan Thomas
WL Developer Pty Ltd
Level 28, 200 George Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

07 October 2025

Subject: Waterloo Metro Quarter Over Station Development - Condition A15 Design Excellence Strategy (SSD-9393-PA-4)

Dear Mr. Thomas,

I refer to your submission dated 29 September 2025, requesting approval for the updated Design Excellence Strategy under Condition A15 of the consent for Waterloo Metro Quarter Over Station Development (SSD-9393).

Accordingly, as nominee of the Planning Secretary, I approve the updated Design Excellence Strategy (Waterloo Metro Quarter Over Station Development-Central Precinct & Northern Precinct), prepared by Urbis and dated 2 September 2025.

The Department also note the letter endorsing the updated strategy by Ashe Earl-Peacock, Director Planning Approvals of Sydney Metro dated 22 September 2025.

Please note that these form part of the approved development. Any amendments or substitutions would require further approval under Condition A15.

If you wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Abigail Bautista on 9274 6525 or via email at abigail.bautista@dpie.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Annie Leung
Team Leader, Key Sites Assessments
As nominee of the Planning Secretary

The logo for URBIS, featuring the word "URBIS" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is contained within a white square frame that is partially open on the right side. A white L-shaped line extends from the top and right sides of the frame across the top of the page.

URBIS

UPDATED DESIGN EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

WATERLOO METRO QUARTER OVER STATION DEVELOPMENT -
CENTRAL PRECINCT & NORTHERN PRECINCT

Prepared for
WATERLOO DEVELOPER PTY LTD
2 September 2025

URBIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS REPORT WERE:

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Project Code Final
Report Number P0056227



Acknowledgement of Country

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We recognise that First Nations sovereignty was never ceded and respect First Nations peoples continuing connection to these lands, waterways and ecosystems for over 60,000 years.

We pay our respects to First Nations Elders, past and present.

The river is the symbol of the Dreaming and the journey of life. The circles and lines represent people meeting and connections across time and space. When we are working in different places, we can still be connected and work towards the same goal.

Title: Sacred River Dreaming
Artist Hayley Pigram
Darug Nation
Sydney, NSW

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. ABOUT THIS DESIGN EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

This updated Design Excellence Strategy (the **Strategy**) establishes the framework to deliver design excellence for the Waterloo Metro Quarter (**WMQ**) Integrated Station Development (**ISD**). Specifically, this Strategy applies to the Over Station Development (**OSD**) of the Central and Northern Precincts, which are located within the overall WMQ site. The Strategy outlines the process to ensure that the statutory design excellence requirements for the WMQ Concept Significant Development Application are met.

This Strategy draws from the NSW Government Architect’s Better Placed and aligns with the underlying principles of the NSW Government Architect’s Design Excellence Competition Guidelines. It has also been informed by the City of Sydney’s design excellence provisions and Competitive Design Policy including the requirements of the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012.

The approval conditions for the WMQ Concept Plan (SSD-9393) require the final version of this updated Design Excellence Strategy to be endorsed by the Planning Secretary, and specify that the Strategy applies only to the Waterloo Metro Quarter and not to any other sites. This Strategy is based upon the Sydney Metro City and South West Design Excellence Strategy (November 2018) for consistency and continuity purposes and has been updated specifically for the WMQ Central and Northern Precincts. This updated Strategy applies only to OSD applications within the WMQ Central and Northern Precincts. The Sydney Metro City and South West Design Excellence Strategy (November 2018) remains applicable to the balance of the WMQ site.

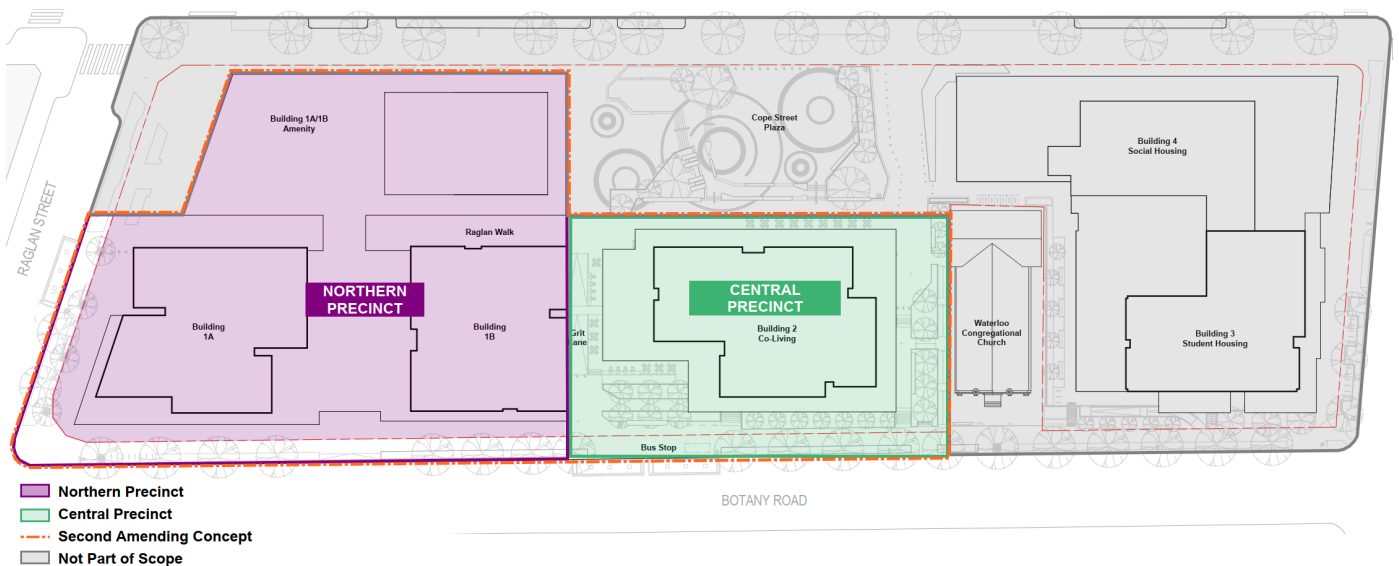
In addition, the Waterloo Concept Plan approval conditions require that the Waterloo Metro Quarter Design Excellence Strategy include a design integrity process to operate throughout the design development and is to be administered by either the State Design Review Panel (**SDRP**) or an alternative Design Review Panel endorsed by the Government Architect NSW. This updated Design Excellence Strategy requires the design integrity process to be administered by the State Design Review Panel.

The SDRP will be chaired by the NSW Government Architect (**GANSW**) or their representative. The panel membership will include an independent local council nominee and a Sydney Metro DRP member, as endorsed by the NSW Government Architect. The SDRP meetings will be chaired by Abbie Galvin or her nominee and the GANSW Design Advisor will support the operation of the SDRP process.

1.2. THE SITE

This Strategy relates to Waterloo Metro Quarter (**WMQ**) located at 150 Cope Street, Waterloo (the **site**). Specially, this updated Strategy relates to the Northern and Central Precincts of the overall WMQ site. The figure below indicates the land to which this Strategy applies.

Figure 1 Land to which this updated Design Excellence Strategy applies (outlined in dashed)



1.3. HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

The WMQ project has had an extensive planning history as detailed in Table 1. This includes a Concept State Significant Development Application (SSD-9393), which has been amended once (SSD-10441) and modified four times; and four detailed SSDAs, two of which have been modified:

Table 1 Project history

Relevant Matter	Date
The Sydney Metro City & Southwest - Chatswood to Sydenham project was approved by the Minister for Planning as a Critical State Significant Infrastructure project (reference SSI 15_7400) (CSSI Approval). The terms of the CSSI Approval includes all works required to construct the Sydney Metro Waterloo Station, including the demolition of existing buildings and structures.	2017
Concept Development Application (SSD 9393) approved for three residential towers and four mid-rise commercial towers above a three-to-four storey podium as the WMQ over station development (OSD).	December 2019
Amended Concept Development Application (SSD 10441) approved for an amended building envelope and use at the Northern Precinct to enable the development of a commercial building on the site and amended the podium level of the Central Precinct building envelope.	June 2021
Detailed SSDAs approved for residential, commercial and student housing buildings in the Central, Northern and Southern Precincts in accordance with the Concept Approval (as amended).	July-November 2021
Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for a Second Amending Concept Development Application (SSD-79307765) for the WMQ OSD and new detailed SSD applications for the Central and Northern precincts.	February 2025
Subject to the approval of the new detailed SSD applications for the Central and Northern precincts, the previous approved (2021) detailed SSD applications for the Central and Northern precincts will be surrendered.	

This updated Design Excellence Strategy is endorsed by Concept Plan Development Application (SSD 9393) and will apply to the new detailed SSD applications for the Central and Northern precincts.

1.4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

This Strategy addresses the following Conditions of Approval for the Waterloo Metro Quarter (SSD-9393) as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Compliance with Conditions of Approval

Condition	Compliance with Condition
A14. Prior to the lodgement of the first development application, the Applicant shall revise the Waterloo Metro Quarter Design and Amenity Guidelines (dated 20 November 2019), to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary, as set out in Attachment A.	An updated Design and Amenity Guidelines will be submitted to DPHI for endorsement as part of the Second Amending Concept Development Application.
A15. Prior to the lodgement of future development applications, the Applicant shall submit an updated Design Excellence Strategy to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary addressing the following:	Prior to the lodgement of new future detailed development applications for Central and Northern Precincts, the Applicant will submit

<p>(a) Independent design review process through use of the State Design Review Panel (SDRP) or an alternative endorsed by GANSW. The SDRP or alternative DRP is to be augmented by including a member of the Sydney Metro DRP to ensure consistency and continuity in design advice and expertise in integrated station developments.</p>	<p>this updated Design Excellence Strategy to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary. This updated Design Excellence Strategy adopts the State Design Review Panel (SDRP) process, which will include a member of the Sydney Metro DRP to ensure consistency and continuity in design advice and expertise in integrated station developments.</p>
<p>(b) Include a Design Integrity process description, prepared in consultation with GANSW, for the design development and construction documentation phases. Refer to Condition B7 in this regard.</p>	<p>The updated Design Integrity process is provided in Section 2.2.</p>
<p>(c) Deletion of the following Disclaimer of Page 4: Disclaimer: The processes described in this document are indicative only and are based on a generic tendering process. Aspect of the process described may change.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>A16. The endorsed Design Excellence Strategy in accordance with the above condition is applicable only to the Waterloo Metro Quarter and is not endorsed under this consent as a Strategy which applies to other sites.</p>	<p>This updated Strategy applies to the Waterloo Metro Quarter, and specifically to the Central and Northern Precincts only.</p>
<p>B5. The detailed development applications shall address compliance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Design Guidelines as endorsed by the Planning Secretary pursuant to Condition A14 (b) the Design Excellence Strategy as endorsed by the Planning Secretary pursuant to condition A15 (c) the conditions of this consent. 	<p>The Proponent will demonstrate compliance with this condition as part of the detailed development application.</p>
<p>B7. Future development applications shall address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Botany Road setback of 6.5m is to be extended to the north as identified in the Response to Submissions (Figure 10, Page 139). The extended setback is to be incorporated into revised Building Envelope Plans to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary prior to the lodgement of any future development application. 	<p>The Proponent will assess compliance with this condition as part of the detailed development application.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Submission of a Design Integrity Report to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary that demonstrates how design excellence and design integrity will be achieved in accordance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The design objectives of the Concept Development Application 	<p>The Proponent will demonstrate compliance with this condition as part of the detailed development application.</p>

-
- ii. Consistency with the approved Design Guidelines as amended by Condition A14
 - iii. The DEEP's Design Excellence Report
 - iv. The advice of the SDRP (or approved alternative under Condition A15)
 - v. The conditions of this consent
-

(c) The Design Integrity Report (DIR) as required by Condition B7(b) must include a summary of feedback provided by the SDRP (or alternative approved in accordance with Condition A15) and responses by the Applicant to this advice. The DIR shall also include how the process will be implemented through to the completion of the approved development.

The Proponent will demonstrate compliance with this condition as part of the detailed development application.

(d) Detailed design of the building(s) within the Northern Precinct must include an internal void or voids to break up building floorplate bulk and massing and provide occupant daylight amenity.

The Proponent will assess compliance with this condition as part of the detailed development application.

2. THE DESIGN EXCELLENCE PROCESSES

2.1. BENCHMARKS

Sydney Metro has worked with the GANSW and the City of Sydney Council to determine the appropriate benchmark projects. This involved selecting high quality examples that demonstrate particular aspirations of the site including:

- Integrated station and tower design outcomes
- Tower / skyline responses
- Response to place
- Public domain
- Materials and finishes

These Benchmarks remain applicable for the Central and Northern Precincts and will be used to ensure that designs meet minimum performance requirements of comparable quality. The Waterloo Metro Quarter benchmarks are included in Appendix B.

2.2. DESIGN INTEGRITY

Following contract award, an independent design review process will be undertaken through the use of the State Design Review Panel (**SDRP**). The SDRP is to be augmented by including a member of the Sydney Metro DRP (Tony Caro) to ensure consistency and continuity in design advice and expertise in integrated station developments.

Prior to the approval of the detailed SSDAs for the Northern and Central precincts, the SDRP will continue (when required) to provide advice regarding any significant design changes that may occur in response to public exhibition or to DPHI's assessment of the applications which would affect the design excellence outcome of the proposal.

Following approval of the detailed SSDA for the Northern and Central OSDs the Planning Secretary or Consent Authority may also refer modification applications to the SDRP for advice, but only if the changes are significant design modifications that may affect the design excellence outcomes.

The GANSW Design Advisor will support the SDRP and record the meeting outcomes to ensure the design excellence requirements are met throughout the process.

A strong design integrity regime is essential to ensure that the positive aspects of design, which underpin the attainment of design excellence are not compromised post contract award (including during development of the detailed SSDA) and into construction.

The proponent will prepare a Design Integrity Report for submission with the detailed SSD Applications for the Central and Northern Precincts. The Design Integrity Report will demonstrate how design excellence standards have been achieved and how they will be implemented through to completion of the development.

2.2.1. Overview of the Design Integrity Process

The State Design Review Panel will review and provide advice on the Second Amending Concept Plan relation to the Northern and Central OSDs on the following:

- The Proponent will present the scheme up to four times to the State Design Review Panel before the lodgement of the detailed SSD Applications, including assessment against endorsed site specific principles, benchmarks, design guidelines and this updated Design Excellence Report.

Any further review is only required if changes are proposed to the scheme which would affect the design excellence outcome of the proposal.

The GANSW Design Advisor will record the Design Review Panel advice and recommendations, which will be distributed to the proponent after meetings.

The proponent will prepare a design integrity report (together with the design integrity register) for submission to DPHI with the detailed SSD Applications for Northern and Central Precincts, providing evidence that the design excellence standards are met.

APPENDIX A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Concept State Significant Development Application means the Stage 1 concept development application for the over station development.

Consent authority means the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and is responsible for assessing State Significant Development Application.

Council means the City of Sydney Council.

CSSI approval means the development consent for the metro station and associated rail infrastructure (Critical State Significant Infrastructure CSSI 7400).

Design excellence is a term used to describe the outcome of high quality architectural, urban and landscape design as well as a structured process to support high quality design. Design excellence in the context of statutory development approval processes in NSW often involves a competitive stage where an independent jury assesses a design based on an agreed set of design related criteria.

Design Review Panel is a panel comprising a diverse group of people with expertise in design and the built environment. The panel offers independent, impartial advice on the design to achieve the best built outcome for stakeholders.

Detailed State Significant Development Application means the Stage 2 detailed development application for the over station development.

DPHI means the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

GANSW means the Government Architect NSW or their representative. GANSW is responsible for endorsing the Design Review Panel. GANSW is the chair of the Design Review Process.

Independent local council nominee is an independent expert nominated by the local council who participates as a member of the Design Review Panel.

Integrated Station Development (ISD) means the metro station, associated rail infrastructure and the over station development.

Over Station Development (OSD) includes all non-station related development that may occupy land or airspace above the station or within the immediate vicinity of the CSSI approval (but excluding space and interface works that may be constructed as part of the CSSI approval to make provision for future development).

Proponent means the applicant for any development applications.

Planning Secretary means the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

State Design Review Panel (SDRP) means the NSW State Design Review Panel administered by GANSW.

Sydney Metro is the government agency responsible for procuring the integrated station development. Sydney Metro is a separate entity within Transport for NSW and is the land owner and proponent for the CSSI approval.

APPENDIX B WATERLOO METRO QUARTER BENCHMARKS

Principle	Elements							Performance Indicators
	Metro Station	Podium	Towers	Plaza Building	Retail and services	Public domain	Public art	
Integrated	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active transport hub with seamless interchange Pedestrian priority and accessibility Complimentary station and over station interface High performing and activation ready functionality
Inclusive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible amenity, services and open space Shared democratic spaces recognizing both commuter and community Places for social interaction and activities for all
Connected	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legible, safe and walkable day and night Acts as a gateway and community marker Place stitches into surrounding context Social connectedness and shared spaces
Diverse		✓	✓		✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix and layering of uses and employment with extended hours Fine grain and active street edges Adaptable mix of dwelling types and living choices Architectural distinctiveness and variances
Local	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect the proud community character and diversity Response to place and context Foster local retail, business and services Embed the arts and local culture
Liveable		✓				✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micro-neighbourhoods and vertical villages Public affordances and community facilities Access to food sources and everyday needs Contextual, resilient, and green infrastructure, materials and finishes.
Case Study Benchmarks								
	Crossrail Place, UK	Woodwards, Vancouver	Central Park, Sydney	Folkestone Quarterhouse, UK	Chophouse Row, Seattle	Monash University Northern Plaza	Centre Hospitalier, Montreal	
	Norreport Station, Copenhagen	Nightingale 1, Melbourne	Upper House Carlton, Melbourne	Community Centre Maj, Czech Rep	Nakameguro Station, Tokyo	Afghan Bazaar Cultural Precinct, Melbourne	Landlines, Brisbane and Jonathon Jones	

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