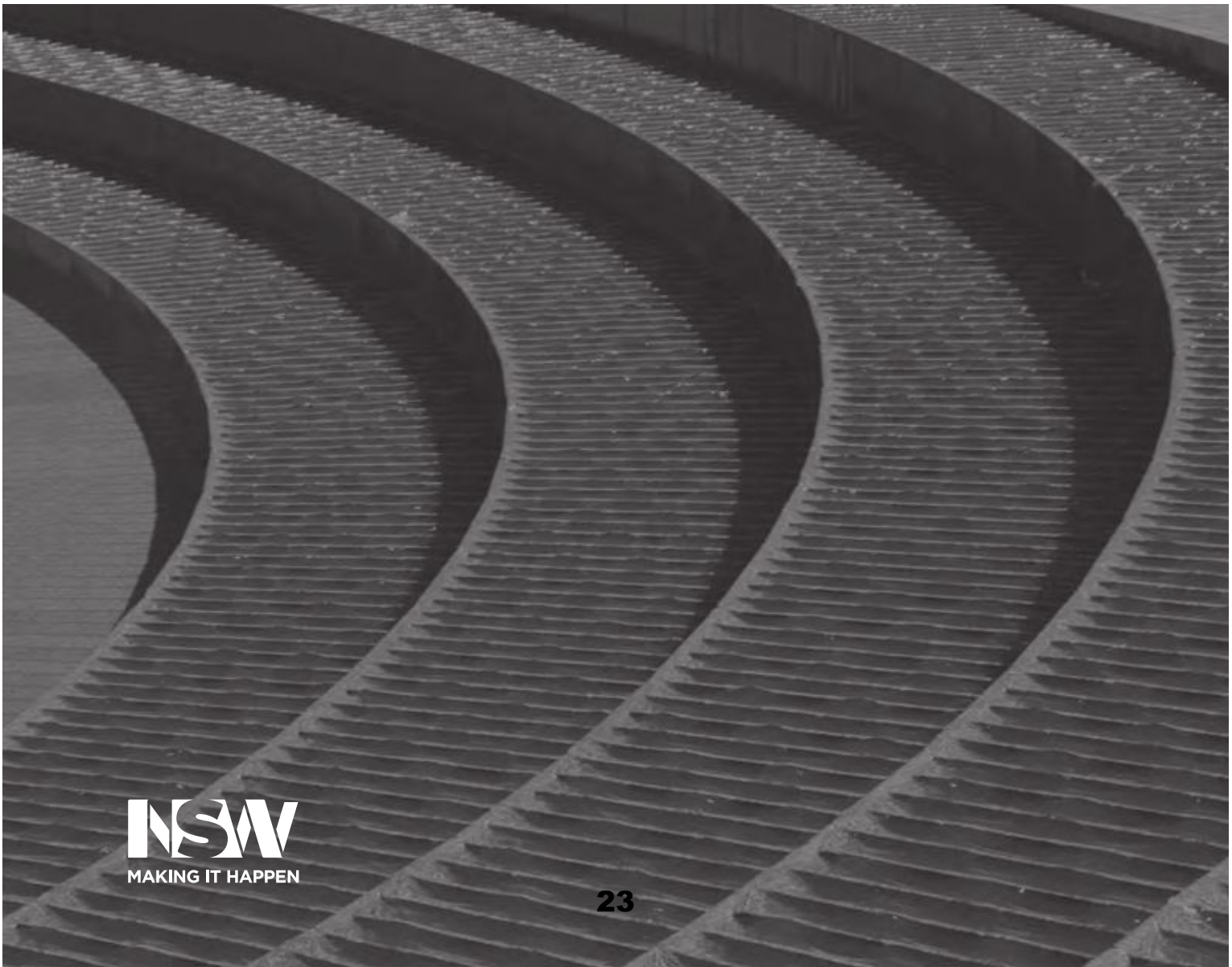




## DRAFT DARLING HARBOUR URBAN FORM STRATEGY



Darling Harbour Urban Form Strategy  
April 2016  
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Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority  
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DRAFT DARLING HARBOUR URBAN FORM STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION .....5

1.1 About Darling Harbour’s urban form..... 6

1.2 Strategic Directions ..... 6

1.3 Existing plans and guidelines ..... 7

1.4 Government’s landowner role ..... 10

1.5 Darling Harbour Urban Form Objectives..... 10

2. URBAN FORM PRINCIPLES ..... 13

2.1 Urban structure ..... 14

2.2 Urban grain ..... 15

2.3 Density and mix..... 16

2.4 Height and massing ..... 17

2.5 Sustainability ..... 19

2.6 Facades and materials ..... 20

3. GUIDELINES FOR PROPONENTS ..... 23

3.1 Guidelines for potential redevelopment sites..... 24

3.2 Guidelines for obtaining landowner’s consent..... 30





“The built environment is a powerful communicator. It speaks of and reflects our culture, community values, aspirations and achievements. It reflects us. It tells a story. How and what it expresses will largely determine the meaning of a place to us and its level of ‘memorability’ and meaning.”

*Placefocus, 2011, [Urban Design and Placemaking](#)*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

*The Darling Harbour Urban Form Strategy* aims to provide early guidance and clear principles about the physical shape and character of the built environment as Darling Harbour continues to evolve. It is a good practice guide for future building renewal by the private sector which will ensure that the precinct remains Australia's favourite place for people to visit. It contains:

- ▮ precinct-wide objectives
- ▮ strategic directions
- ▮ urban form principles
- ▮ guidelines for:
  - specific potential redevelopment sites
  - obtaining landowner's consent

The *Urban Form Strategy* draws from a number of recent studies and guidelines as well as consultation with key public and private sector stakeholders. It is consistent with the *SICEEP Urban Design and Public Realm Guidelines* prepared by Infrastructure NSW in 2012 to guide the development of ICC Sydney. Draft guidelines and consultation undertaken by Woods Bagot on behalf of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority during 2014 have been instrumental in developing the strategy.

Six urban design principles underpin *The Urban Form Strategy* and aim to create an exciting, connected, active and vibrant precinct that brings delight to visitors and Sydney-siders alike:

**Place making** – integrate and activate the buildings and public domain to create the perfectly functioning whole and a unique destination

**Permeability** – make it easy and inviting for tourists, business visitors and locals to explore everything that the precinct has to offer

**Identity** – provide a distinct personality of international appeal which is contemporary and welcoming

**Flexibility** – deliver public spaces that can effectively change from day-to-night, from week-to-week and from year-to-year

**Variety** – provide for a range of activities and experiences that provide something for everyone and attract repeat visits

**Connectivity** – deliver seamless linkages to surrounding precincts and engage with neighbours to improve connections.

## 1.1 About Darling Harbour's urban form

The urban form of Darling Harbour takes its cue from its natural valley landform and harbourside setting nestled between the CBD peninsular and the Pyrmont peninsular. It is also influenced by its primary purpose as a place for people to come together for leisure, play and celebration in spaces which enjoy generous access to sunlight and shelter from inclement winds.

The original 1980's design guidelines for redevelopment of the precinct sought to keep buildings to the edge, maintain the central valley floor for pedestrians, provide grade separated pedestrian access to the precinct, develop a continuous public waterfront promenade and create a focal green park with strong north-south connections. These guidelines remain relevant today.

Key elements of Darling Harbour's urban form today are:

### Open valley floor

The valley floor, generally determined by the historical shoreline of 1836, is the core urban open space dedicated to people on foot.

### Stepped building form

Buildings are concentrated around the edges of the precinct and scaled back from the waterfront and valley floor.

### Inward facing buildings

Building facades address and activate the central public spaces including the waterfront of Cockle Bay and Tumbalong Park.

### Mixed uses

Uses complement the public purpose of the precinct and encourage a wide variety of people to visit the precinct primarily for leisure and entertainment.

### Elevated traffic infrastructure

Elevated arterial roads dissect the precinct into three distinct sections which each have their own form and character.

### Segregated movement systems

Main roads run around the periphery of the precinct and parking is kept to the edge. Pedestrians have grade separated access to the precinct and priority in its public spaces.

## 1.2 Strategic Directions

Darling Harbour is nearing its 30th anniversary of its 1980's renewal as the entertainment and leisure precinct. Many of the buildings constructed at the time are at or near the end of their economic life. Renewal of older buildings in Darling Harbour can enhance the precinct and create an even better place for business and visitors. Greater certainty is required so that proponents can make investment decisions with confidence and the public benefit from the change.

The four strategic directions set out the focus of Government actions over the next five years:

### New planning controls

A priority is to review, consolidate and update 30 years of planning controls to align with current state-wide standards and to provide greater clarity about uses and design including the bulk and scale of new development.

### Urban form principles

Urban form principles in this strategy will guide renewal proposals in the interim.

### Renewal that enhances Cockle Bay

The built form around Cockle Bay should retain a sense of openness to the Bay, enhance pedestrian access and the experience of visitors using the public promenade and waterway.

### Improved pre-application processes

Collaboration with the NSW Government landowner is essential to a successful outcome and requires a clear pre-DA and lease negotiation process for proponents.

**“The arrangement, form and appearance of buildings in Darling Harbour provide clear cues to mark this as a special place. The unusual circular and stepped forms of buildings as well as material selection mark the buildings of Darling Harbour as different from one another and from the wider city.”**

*(City Plan Urban Design and Tony Caro Architecture for the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, 2006, [Darling Harbour Building Height Study](#))*



### 1.3 Existing plans and guidelines

Darling Harbour is a place of state significance and unique in its function and diversity. It is subject to the *Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Act 1998* and land use and development is controlled through a dedicated state planning instrument.

A number of other plans and guidelines also apply. This strategy does not take the place of these plans and guidelines. Instead it aims to supplement them with particular regard to matters of importance to the landowner.

#### The Darling Harbour Plan

The *Darling Harbour Development Plan No 1* is the primary land use plan applying to Darling Harbour.

It was gazetted in 1985 to facilitate the rapid delivery of the precinct redevelopment in time for the 1988 Australian Bicentenary. It is a deemed State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) which contains broad objectives and allows a wide range of uses.

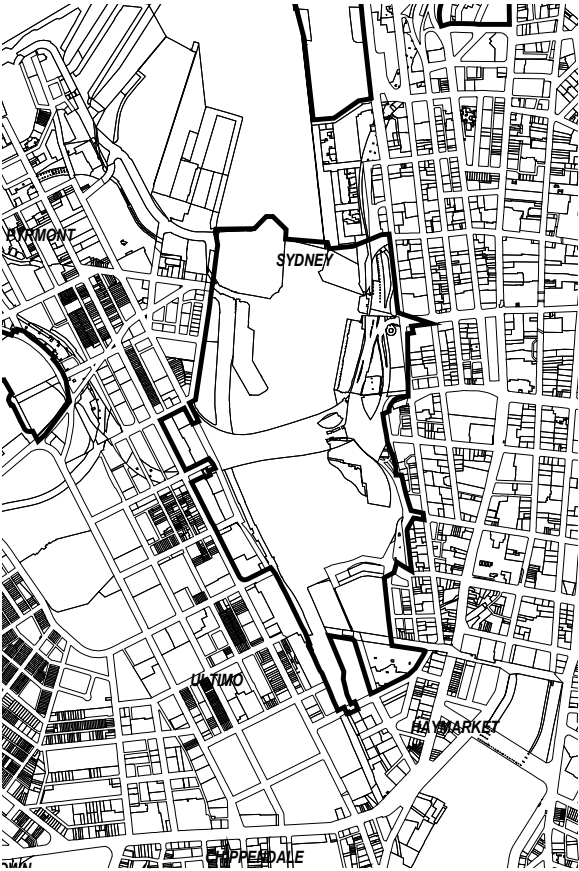
The Darling Harbour Plan is due for a comprehensive review to more clearly define expectations from redevelopment while ensuring it remains a place that current and future generations can enjoy. For example, the existing plan does not specify building heights or floor space ratios.

#### Other plans and guidelines

Darling Harbour is within the foreshores and waterways area of the Sydney Harbour deemed State Environmental Planning Policy (2005) which is accompanied by a development control plan containing advice on mitigating environment and scenic impacts.

The Department of Planning and Environment, and the City of Sydney Council have a number of other plans and policies which may also apply in relation to various development matters such as small-scale (exempt and complying) development and outdoor advertising.

Boundary of the Darling Harbour Development Plan No 1



## A NEW PLAN FOR DARLING HARBOUR

The following has been prepared as a starting point for preparation of a new Darling Harbour plan.

### Aims

A new Darling Harbour plan will have clear and strong aims to ensure the bicentenary gift continues to be a unique leisure and entertainment precinct for the people. It will seek to

- support the global city reputation of Sydney and economic prosperity of NSW
- enable a range of uses, services and infrastructure that meets the needs of visitors
- enhance the amenity of Darling Harbour through high quality urban form and design excellence
- conserve environmental heritage, enhance Darling Harbour’s foreshore setting and protect the significant public open space.

### Zones

The new plan should introduce zones to the precinct for the first time taking into account existing uses and the zoning of adjoining land. The CBD to the east of Darling Harbour is mainly zoned B8 Metropolitan Centre and land in Pyrmont to the west of Darling Harbour is mainly zoned B4 Mixed Use. Any proposed zones for Darling Harbour should continue to provide for a diversity of uses, with a focus on leisure and entertainment and protection of public spaces.

All existing public spaces including the waters of Cockle Bay and surrounding promenade should be zoned primarily for open space and public recreation purposes. Appropriate zones are RE1 Public Recreation and W3 Recreational Waterways.

The commercial, entertainment, conference and tourist facilities of Darling Harbour should be zoned to ensure these uses endure and contribute to the precinct’s international reputation. It is important to avoid residential redevelopment within these areas. Appropriate zones for consideration are the B8 Metropolitan Core zone or the SP3 Tourist zone.

The new Darling Square residential and creative quarter in the southern part of Darling Harbour might be zoned B4 Mixed Use. This is a zone which seeks to integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations.

### Key provisions

The new plan should include controls addressing relevant matters to consider in the design and assessment of new development including:

- ▮ Temporary use of land
- ▮ Height bulk and scale of buildings
- ▮ Overshadowing of public spaces
- ▮ Design excellence
- ▮ Foreshore scenic protection.

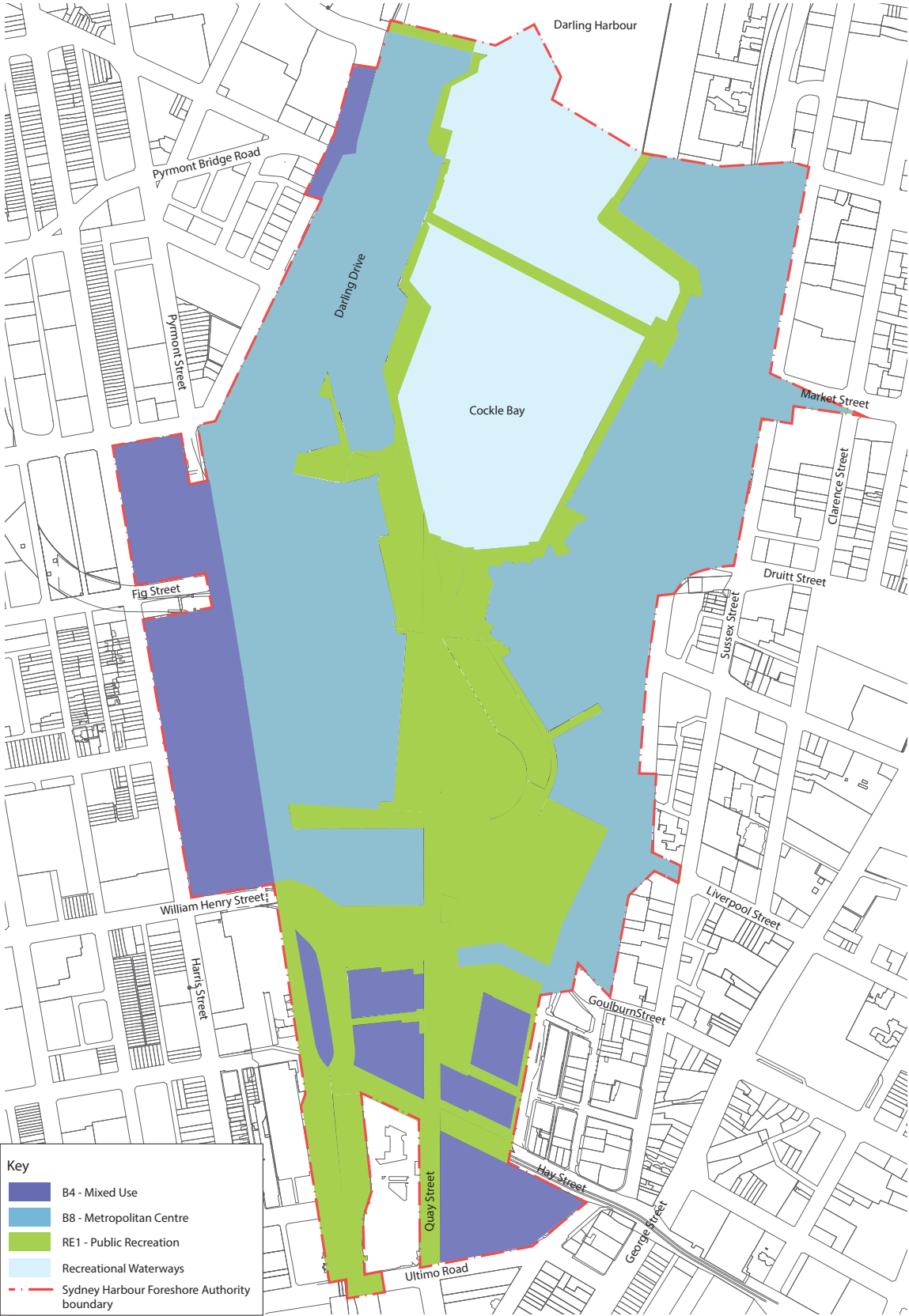
### Heritage items

A number of items of state heritage significance should be recognised and protected through the new plan including:

- ▮ Pyrmont Bridge
- ▮ Woodward Fountain
- ▮ The Carousel
- ▮ Chinese Garden of Friendship
- ▮ Paddy’s market facades
- ▮ Archaeological remains of former maritime and industrial past.



Zones under a new plan for Darling Harbour would seek to protect the central open spaces and Cockle Bay for public recreation



## 1.4 Government's landowner role

The NSW Government owns Darling Harbour and makes decisions taking a whole-of-precinct perspective, with functions under the *Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority Act 1998* to

- a) protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the foreshore area,
- b) promote, co-ordinate, manage, undertake and secure the orderly and economic development and use of the foreshore area, including the provision of infrastructure,
- c) promote, co-ordinate, organise, manage, undertake, secure, provide and conduct cultural, educational, commercial, tourist, recreational, entertainment and transport activities and facilities.

Government land ownership of Darling Harbour is a powerful tool. Developers must obtain landowner's consent to lodge a Development Application. This provides the opportunity to negotiate improvements to private sector proposals in relation to matters which impact public amenity such as the proposed use, height and setback of buildings. It allows the Government, on behalf of the people of NSW, to actively pursue and advocate for enhanced urban form outcomes which contribute to the precinct as a whole.

## 1.5 Darling Harbour Urban Form Objectives

To deliver the best possible urban form outcome for Darling Harbour, the following objectives have been established to guide the design of major building renewal projects. They recognise that Darling Harbour is a special place with an international reputation which belongs to the people of NSW.

### **Deliver outstanding quality building design**

- Adopt best practice approaches to design which ensure new buildings are recognised internationally for design excellence.
- Ensure new buildings meet the highest standard for sustainable performance of design and operation.

### **Complement the precinct**

- Provide a variety of people-focused uses including tourist, educational, recreational, entertainment, cultural and commercial facilities.
- Ensure the size, bulk and scale of buildings are appropriate to their context and respect the pre-eminence of the central civic spaces.

### **Return public benefits**

- Improve the public domain by negotiating a fair contribution from private sector redevelopment of public land.
- Enrich the visitor experience by ensuring building design contributes to an attractive, connected and vibrant precinct.

*The Darling Quarter children's playground was one of the public benefits to arise from redevelopment of Sega World*









“The element that unifies the quite disparate buildings is their relationship to the open space whether it be park or harbour. The important parts of the development are the public areas of the park and the harbour with its promenade and each building recognises that relationship by scaling back the building form from the pedestrian areas, by locating the most intensive public activities adjacent to the open space and by maximising the amount of glass and openness at the pedestrian interface between building and open space.”

*(Barry Young, 'Darling Harbour: A New City Precinct' in G Peter Webber (ed), 1988, The Design of Sydney: Three Decades of Change in the City, Sydney)*





## 2. URBAN FORM PRINCIPLES

**Urban form principles have been developed to ensure a consistent approach across the precinct and to realise the urban form objectives.**

The principles provide examples of how the urban form objectives to deliver outstanding quality building design which complements the precinct and returns public benefits. This can be realised through the design and arrangement of physical elements in the precinct including major building renewals.

The principles relate to:

- ▮ Urban structure
- ▮ Urban grain
- ▮ Density and mix
- ▮ Height and massing
- ▮ Sustainability
- ▮ Facades and materials.

These principles should be considered in all major new development or upgrade proposals within the precinct.

## 2.1 Urban structure

Strategically located adjacent to Sydney's CBD on the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and possessing a rich maritime and industrial past, Darling Harbour has a strong urban and historic context which has influenced its structure. It is an important part of the city's open space network, is home to a number of attractions in the cultural ribbon and an integral part of the CBD foreshore walk. Darling Harbour is also an identifiable and unified precinct, which is unique in the priority it gives to people on foot and relies on strong connections to surrounding transport networks. The movement system within the precinct lays the foundation for a safe and inclusive environment that supports a high level of pedestrian activity.

### PRINCIPLES:

- Harbour influence** – recognise and retain the harbour's physical and visual influence on the character of Darling Harbour and the role it plays in the unique and dynamic open space network for the city; minimise any further encroachment over the water and ensure that any land/water based structures provide for enhanced public access and enjoyment of the waterfront.
- Historic connections** – acknowledge the traditional landowner's industrial past and in the continuing evolution of Darling Harbour.
- Cultural importance** – continue to recognise Darling Harbour as a gift to the people for tourist, educational, recreational, entertainment, cultural and commercial purposes.
- Pedestrian valley floor** – respect and maintain the original concept of the valley floor as a pedestrian zone and ensure that footpaths and public spaces provide appropriate capacity, safety and amenity to support and encourage walking.
- Pedestrian connections** – retain and enhance existing grade separated entry points to the precinct and improve pedestrian access to and from surrounding streets and walking routes wherever possible.
- Cycling environment** – foster safe east-west crossings of the precinct for cyclists and shared management with pedestrians, with strong links to the broader city cycle network.
- Public transport** – improve water-based transport and provide clear and convenient pedestrian routes to nearby bus, train and light rail transport.



*Darling harbour is a green and blue oasis between the CBD and Pyrmont peninsula*



## 2.2 Urban grain

Urban grain refers to the street pattern, the size of blocks and building footprints and describes the interrelationship between these elements. A fine urban grain is highly desirable to create a precinct which is inviting, permeable and easy to navigate for visitors on foot. Landmarks, vistas and focal points within and beyond the precinct provide important cues for the urban grain. A fine grain can create new meeting points, a better sense of arrival and a vibrant waterfront that enhances the social and economic fabric of Sydney, and strengthens the role of Darling Harbour as a leisure and entertainment precinct.

### PRINCIPLES:

- **Alignment** – align developments with adjacent places outside the precinct to enhance connectivity and permeability.
- **Views and vistas** - protect and enhance key public views into the precinct and from the public domain to the harbour waters.
- **Streets and traffic** – ensure buildings provide a sense of address and activation to peripheral streets and roadways.
- **Utility infrastructure** – place services underground and avoid service boxes and plant facilities in front-of-house areas where possible or integrate these into the design of public spaces.
- **Parking** – keep parking to the edge of the precinct and out of view of pedestrian thoroughfares and open spaces.

NSW Sydney Harbour  
Foreshore Authority WOODS  
BAGOT



Landmark and key views into the Darling Harbour Precinct (map to be updated)

## 2.3 Density and mix

Darling Harbour was gifted to the people on Australia’s bicentenary for entertainment, cultural, educational and recreation purposes. Further residential development is generally inconsistent with its civic and commercial focus. The density of development and mix of uses is driven by the need to make all people feel Darling Harbour belongs to them and meets their changing leisure needs and expectations. In particular, the central open spaces must not be overwhelmed by surrounding development and ground level uses must address and activate the adjoining public spaces. A rich choice of facilities and services which are open into the evening are also essential.

A distinguishing feature of Darling Harbour is its lower density than the CBD as a result of generally lower building heights and broader open spaces. This is a major factor contributing to the perception of Darling Harbour as a place of respite from the hustle and bustle of the city.

### PRINCIPLES:

- Compatible uses** – focus on tourist, educational, recreational, entertainment, cultural and commercial facilities which encourage a wide range of people with different interests to enjoy the precinct.
- Open space** – preserve the valley floor open space and provide new open spaces and recreational opportunities in line with growth in the precinct.
- Ground level uses** – favour uses which have active frontages to encourage people to linger in the precinct and interact with the outdoors including retail, food and beverage uses.
- Lifestyle offers** – offer local residents and office workers greater choice to purchase convenience items and healthy foods so they stay in Darling Harbour for many of their daily and lifestyle needs.
- Foreshore attractions** – continue tourist attractions of broad appeal at the northern gateway to Cockle Bay: the Australian National Maritime Museum and Merlin Entertainment.
- Density** – distinguish Darling Harbour from the CBD by ensuring that the higher density redevelopments and taller buildings are restricted to the edge and southern part of the precinct.



Ground level uses at Darling Quarter are inviting and help activate the precinct



## 2.4 Height and massing

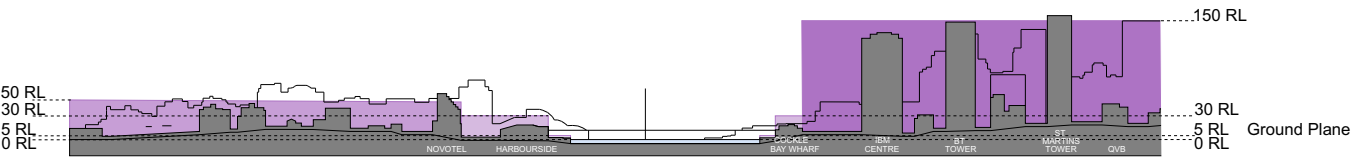
The valley floor of Darling Harbour is a pivotal datum that relates to the sea level of Cockle Bay. Building height and massing has a direct relationship with the topography of the precinct and seeks to accentuate the valley form while maximising the sense of openness and sunlight access to the central open spaces on the valley floor. This approach protects the amenity of Cockle Bay, the foreshore promenades and many gathering places for the public and allows for optimal view and sunlight sharing.

Building height and massing also needs to be considered in the context of neighbouring buildings and the scale of adjoining precincts. The configuration of buildings can improve the transition between these including physical and visual connections to the waterfront.

### PRINCIPLES:

- Building height** – retain lower scale buildings around the edge of the valley floor and progressively increase the height of buildings on the slopes and precinct edge to optimise openness and view sharing.

- Building bulk** – limit the degree to which buildings extend above their surrounds and design to break-up large expanses of blank walls through articulation, fenestration, detailing and materials.
- Amenity of public spaces** – avoid buildings which overwhelm adjoining spaces and ensure no loss of sunlight to the public spaces and waterfront of Darling Harbour.
- ICC Sydney** – respect the pivotal importance of the ICC buildings to the precinct by ensuring new development within its visual catchment is generally subordinate in scale and form.
- New towers** – consider slim tower forms, scaling down from the CBD built form and ICC Sydney hotel, with lower level podiums that address the pedestrian scale.
- Waterfront building setback** – setback buildings including any associated outdoor eating areas at least 20 metres from the water’s edge, where possible, to provide suitable promenade width.
- Waterfront building height** – maintain low rise buildings to the waterfront to provide an important human scale to the public promenade.



The building height of Darling Harbour accentuates the valley topography while remaining more moderate than the CBD.

## RECOMMENDED BUILDING HEIGHTS

The following building heights were recommended in a previous analysis of precinct heights. Proposals should address these recommendations for certain existing buildings.

Where new development proposals include higher buildings, a detailed analysis and view impact analysis must be undertaken.

### Western side of Darling Harbour

- Australian National Maritime Museum (Eastern half) 18m
- Australian National Maritime Museum (Western half) 24m
- Harbourside Shopping Centre 18m
- Novotel (south) 29m

### Eastern side of Darling Harbour

- Merlin Entertainment Complex (Aquarium) 24m
- Corn Exchange infill (north) 76m
- Corn Exchange infill (south) 10m
- Cockle Bay Wharf 18m
- Darling Park (Central) 132m
- Darling Park (Western) 22m

Source: City Plan Urban Design and Tony Caro Architecture for the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, 2006, *Darling Harbour Building Height Study*

Note: The promenade and valley floor are at an RL of approximately 2m.



The aim is to keep foreshore buildings at a human scale, about 16m in height above the promenade

## 2.5 Sustainability

The buildings in Darling Quarter were the first in Australia to receive the highest sustainability rating for offices (a 6 Star Green Star Office As Built v3 rating) and Darling Harbour Live is set to continue the tradition of sustainable firsts. The Darling Harbour Live consortium is seeking an international Green Star Communities rating for the entire 20 hectare site and the US Green Building Council's LEED Gold rating for the ICC Sydney facilities.

Energy and resources use efficiency is critical and design must demonstrate international best practise. The principle of long life, loose fit and low energy should drive all aspects of design. Equally important is social responsibility towards the public domain and precinct as a whole to ensure Darling Harbour remains an appealing and inclusive place for all people.

### PRINCIPLES:

- Sustainability ratings** - adopt best practice sustainability measures to maintain the track record of excellence in environmental and social sustainability established for the precinct.
- Solar orientation** – orient buildings to facilitate passive solar design and reduce the need for artificial lighting and heating.
- Resource consumption** – design buildings to minimise use of non-renewable energy and to facilitate reuse and recycling of water and waste.
- Culture, heritage and identity** – incorporate and celebrate the heritage, culture and historical context of Darling Harbour, in innovative ways that contribute to its sense of place and identity.
- Equity of access** – achieve equity of access to all building with dignified routes for people with disabilities.
- Safety and security** – design to include passive surveillance and to prevent crime 24 hours a day following recognised best practice guidelines.
- Public domain** – ensure private redevelopment returns benefits to the people of NSW, as the ultimate owners of Darling Harbour, by contributing to the betterment of the precinct including the public domain.

## ICC SYDNEY - KEY SUSTAINABILITY FACTS

- Over 15% reduction in annual greenhouse gas emissions to 2012 NCC minimum requirements
- Target 14% reduction in potable water use (reference to Australian Standard AS/NZ:500.1.2003 100% mains water)
- Solar hot water servicing the commercial kitchens
- Improved east west pedestrian connections between Darling Harbour and neighbouring precincts of Chinatown, Town Hall, Central, Ultimo and Pyrmont
- New 680m long 20m wide Boulevard connecting Darling Harbour to Quay Street
- Encourage cycling with designated bike track and end of trip facilities
- 3000sqm more public space at Tumbalong Park
- 90% construction waste recycling target
- 75% operational waste recycling target.

Source: Darling Harbour Live, 2015, Media Release: Australian first in sustainability at ICC

## 2.6 Facades and materials





Facades and materials contribute to human comfort, safety and enjoyment of the public and private realm. The attractiveness and quality of buildings are influenced by the selection of materials in terms of detail, craftsmanship, texture, colour, durability, sustainability and treatment. The design of building facades is especially important to enhance visitor access and engagement with adjacent open spaces and surrounding areas.

Best practice design ensures minimal maintenance, durability, longevity of materials and finishes and a quality appearance which enhances the visitor experience. It also creates an active ground level environment and interface which invites people in from and welcomes people out into the public spaces.

### PRINCIPLES:

- Building address** - ensure facades and ground level portions of buildings face the central open spaces and include retail, community or civic uses which activate the precinct and adjoining public areas.

- Visual interest** – provide diversity in the elevations through articulation of walls and using smaller elements to break up facades.
- Shade and shelter** – use colonnades or awnings along building frontages to provide weather protection without encroaching onto main thoroughfares.
- Interface with surrounding areas** – improve back-of-house arrangements and ground level design of buildings facing surrounding areas so that they have human scale, are inviting and safe and provide an improved address to streets.
- Materials** – take inspiration from Sydney as a harbourside city in selecting natural and contemporary materials.
- Colour** – use colour to add vibrancy and distinctiveness. Colour may be added through coloured light, retail signage, coloured glass or glazed brick as well as coloured fabric awnings and parasols.

MATERIALS INSPIRATION		
Reference sky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use materials that elevate built form into the sky</li> <li>Provide generous feeling of light and air throughout the buildings</li> </ul>	
Reference canopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use materials that distinguish the roofline and any elevated decks</li> </ul>	
Reference water city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use materials that reinforce Sydney as a harbour city</li> <li>Refer to water courses / estuaries / rivers for inspiration</li> </ul>	
Reference base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use materials that connect the building to the ground</li> <li>Refer to the weathered landscape for inspiration</li> </ul>	



*The materials of the ICC Sydney Exhibition Halls take inspiration from Sydney as a harbourside city*







“The Government is encouraging the best ideas and solutions from the private sector and a greater level of private sector investment and participation in projects, with rigorous planning and costing to deliver the highest standards of public value – and confidence to investors and the community.”

*(NSW Premier February 2014, Unsolicited Proposals Guide for Submissions and Assessment )*



### 3. GUIDELINES FOR PROPONENTS

**The new developments emerging in the precinct, including Darling Quarter (2011) and the ICC Sydney are setting a high standard in the quality of building design and new Australian benchmarks in environmental sustainability. They also display social responsibility towards the precinct by providing significant public legacies such as the Darling Harbour children's playground and renewed Tumbalong Park. This standard of excellence is expected in all future building renewal projects.**

The renewal of existing buildings is expected to continue and can contribute to the on-going success of the precinct. The Government as landowner has a major role to ensure outcomes benefit the precinct and has therefore prepared:

- ▮ guidelines for certain potential redevelopment sites
- ▮ guidelines for obtaining landowner's consent

A collaborative approach between the public and private sector to change in the precinct can produce outstanding results as is demonstrated by Darling Quarter.



## DARLING QUARTER

Darling Quarter is an example of built form excellence delivered through a collaborative public and private partnership approach. It has won five International and over 39 Australian Industry Awards.

The \$500M mixed use precinct opened in 2011 and includes national headquarters for the Commonwealth Bank, housed in a 6 Green Star building, retail and dining options and a world-class 4000 square metre children’s playground that has delivered an interactive work and play area for the local community, city workers and tourists.

The Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority established a renewal vision for the site and sought expressions of interest from Australia’s leading design and development firms to deliver the vision. In partnership with Lend Lease, Darling Quarter has greatly improved public activation by bringing together commercial, retail and leisure all within the one area.

Darling Quarter reconnects the south end of Darling Harbour to the city. A new pedestrian link, referred to as the Civic Connector, creates a gateway to Darling Harbour that connects to Town Hall Station, Chinatown and the Darling Harbour waterfront.



## 3.1 Guidelines for potential redevelopment sites

Darling Quarter and ICC Sydney are examples of recent major redevelopment projects within Darling Harbour. Redevelopment of the Four Seasons Hotel is currently underway and a number of other redevelopments are in the pipeline.

Landowner guidelines have been prepared for three other potential redevelopment sites within Darling Harbour:

- The Australian National Maritime Museum
- Harbourside Shopping Centre
- Cockle Bay Wharf



### Australian National Maritime Museum

The Australian National Maritime Museum leased site includes the buildings, public domain and waters at the northwest corner of Darling Harbour. It is in a highly visible location adjacent to the Pyrmont Bridge and the Harbour entrance to Darling Harbour and ICC Sydney. Designed by Phillip Cox “it is reminiscent of tall masts and billowing sails” (Mark Aarons, 2009, *A Place for People: The transformation of Sydney’s Darling Harbour*).

The Museum is preparing plans to guide redevelopment of their facilities for the next 25 years.

Landowner guidelines:

- Widen the foreshore public promenade and extend its opening hours to 24 hours a day to enhance the city foreshore walk from Woolloomooloo to the Anzac Bridge.

- Improve views to and from public domain areas including the water, promenade and Pyrmont Bridge.
- Enhance the integration of land and water activities.
- De-clutter public spaces including the water and retain lines of sight and movement.
- Set back development from and respect the heritage significance of the Pyrmont Bridge.
- Preserve views down Murray Street to Pyrmont Bay.
- Retain the existing foreshore building height (18m) and any western extension to 24 metres in height.



Future renewal should aim to de-clutter the waterway in proximity to the historic Pyrmont Bridge

### Harbourside Shopping Centre

The Harbourside Shopping Centre opened in 1988 and sits beside the new ICC Sydney Conference Centre and ICC Sydney hotel. The original basic design principles for this building remain relevant today:

“Three levels of visible activity were seen as important in creating the sense of bustle and festivity, people promenading on the lowest level, people dining on the shaded terrace and overlooking the promenaders, and on the upper deck were restaurants overlooking the over lookers and all focusing on the water of the harbour.” (Barry Young, ‘Darling Harbour: A New City Precinct’ in G Peter Webber (ed), 1988, *The Design of Sydney: Three Decades of Change in the City, Sydney*)

Landowner guidelines:

- Maintain a balance between built form of foreshore buildings on the eastern and western side of Cockle Bay.
- Design buildings which are restrained and unpretentious and subordinate to the landmark ICC Sydney buildings on the south western side of Cockle Bay.

- Any upgrade or redevelopment should address a preferred 18 metre foreshore building height; any additional height should be setback and designed to read as a separate element.
- Ensure no net reduction in the amount of sunlight access to the public promenade.
- Set back buildings and outdoor eating areas at least 20 metres from Cockle Bay to provide adequate public access and gathering opportunities.
- Present an attractive and active frontage to the public foreshore promenade to enhance the visitor experience.
- Enhance pedestrian access and views from Dunn Street to the waterfront.
- Improve the interface with the approaches to the Pyrmont Bridge, and respect its heritage significance including its visual setting.
- Improve back-of-house arrangements and the appearance of the Darling Drive frontage; consider active building interface with the street.
- Address view sharing for neighbouring residential buildings.



Sunlight access to the promenade must not be reduced



### Cockle Bay Wharf

The Cockle Bay Wharf is a food, beverage and entertainment complex on the eastern side of Cockle Bay.

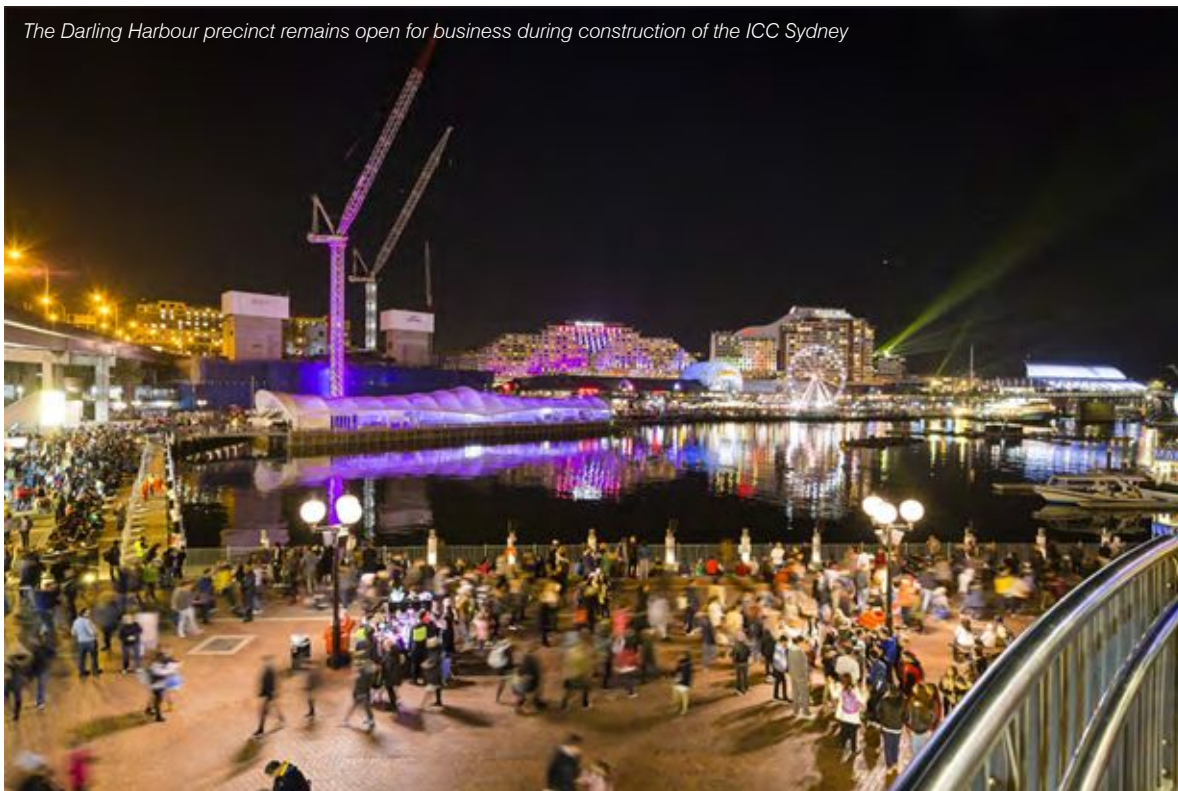
Landowner guidelines:

- Maintain a balance between built form of foreshore buildings on the eastern and western side of Cockle Bay.
- Design buildings which are restrained and unpretentious and subordinate to the landmark ICC Sydney buildings on the south western side of the Bay.
- Any upgrade or redevelopment should address a preferred 18 metre foreshore building height; any additional height should be setback and designed to read as a separate element.
- Allow shared views to the water with neighbouring properties.
- Ensure no net reduction in the amount of sunlight to the public promenade and waters of Cockle Bay.
- Set back buildings and outdoor eating areas at least 20 metres from Cockle Bay to provide adequate public access and gathering opportunities.
- Present an attractive and active frontage to the public foreshore promenade to enhance the visitor experience.
- Respect the heritage significance of the Pyrmont Bridge, including its visual setting and approaches.
- Improve back-of-house arrangements and appearance; consider a more active building interface with the street achieved by consolidating service access.



*An attractive and active interface at all levels with the promenade is essential*

The Darling Harbour precinct remains open for business during construction of the ICC Sydney



### 3.2 Guidelines for obtaining landowner's consent

Guidelines for obtaining landowner's consent to lodge a development application for proposed redevelopment of leasehold properties have been prepared to assist private sector proponents and provide clarity to the community.

The landowner's consent process for major building renewal projects involves five steps and is designed to protect the public interest and minimise risk associated with negotiations on buildings which have long term leases in place.

#### 1. Initial meeting

At the earliest stage, the proponent should meet with SHFA's executive to discuss their redevelopment ideas. This meeting will provide preliminary and without-prejudice feedback on the general suitability of the proposal for the precinct and matters to be addressed. The landowner, has both the right and a public obligation to seek improvements to proposals which will result in a better outcome for the precinct and an appropriate return for use of public land.

#### 2. Initial Submission under a Deed of Understanding

To more formally consider any proposal, the proponent is required to enter into a *Deed of Understanding* that sets out the basis and framework for submission of an initial proposal and its preliminary assessment by the landowner. The preliminary assessment is undertaken in accordance with the landowners adopted protocol for consideration of proposals and conduct of negotiations.

Each party pays their own costs at this stage. If the proposal proceeds further, the proponent is required to pay their own costs and landowner's costs for work to complete any redevelopment negotiations and lease documentation.

#### 3. Detailed Proposal under a Deed of Direct Negotiation

Subject to the landowner's and the proponent's decision to proceed, the initial submission will be referred to the Department of Premier and Cabinet in accordance with requirements for unsolicited proposals. If the Government supports direct negotiation with an existing tenant, the proponent will be required to enter into a *Deed for Direct Negotiations*.

The *Deed for Direct Negotiations* sets out the basis and framework for the negotiation of a number of key items including the Heads of Agreement, Agreement for Lease, design development, financial proposal and landowner's consent.



**4. Heads of Agreement and Agreement for Lease**

As part of direct negotiations, a Heads of Agreement will be developed followed by an Agreement for Lease. The preparation of the Agreement for Lease is informed by supporting information including financial modelling, design, proposed use and public domain contributions to the precinct. Key elements to be agreed in the Agreement for Lease include the lease term, rent, scope of agreed works, public domain contributions and development program.

Negotiations and supporting information are treated as confidential. To promote integrity and fairness in the negotiation process, meetings during direct negotiations will be conducted in the presence of a Probity Advisor.

**DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY PANEL**

At any time during the five step process for obtaining landowner's consent, the landowner may seek the advice of the Design and Development Advisory Panel on redevelopment proposals. The panel, comprising independent design experts, will provide comments and may suggest improvements to the proposal which will assist in obtaining landowner's consent.

**5. Landowner's Consent for the Development Application**

The proponent must submit all documentation which forms part of the Development Application plus financial modelling to obtain landowner's consent.

The granting of landowner's consent to lodge a Development Application does not imply that development consent will be granted. The landowner reserves the right to make submissions to the relevant planning authority supporting or opposing the Development Application.

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

Development at Darling Harbour that has a capital investment value of more than \$10 million is state significant development and the Minister for Planning is the relevant consent authority. Other development requires the consent of the City of Sydney Council.

It is the responsibility of the proponent to liaise with the relevant planning authority about requirements for lodging a Development Application.

For state significant development it is recommended that the proponent request the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) from the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) after the conclusion of step 3 of the landowner process. This will assist in aligning landowner and proponent expectations, opportunities and constraints. As part of the planning process DPE routinely requests state agency input to the SEARs.

Lodgement of the DA should not occur until landowner's consent has been obtained.

