



Cockle Bay Park Development

Architectural Design Report & Drawings

Response to Submissions

Darling Park Trust and Darling Park Property Trust

fjmt studio architecture interiors urban landscape

4th of July 2018 – Rev F

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sydney Level 5, 70 King Street, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia **t** +61 2 9251 7077
melbourne Level 2, 56 Hardware Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia **t** +61 3 9604 2500
oxford Belsyre Court, 57 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HJ United Kingdom **t** +44 1865 29 2042
london 42–43 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1H 5PW United Kingdom **t** +44 2037 52 6762

w fjmtstudio.com

Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp Pty Ltd ABN 28 101 197 219
Nominated architect Richard Francis-Jones ARBNSW 5301
Registered architect Richard Francis-Jones
Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp Ltd Company no 7384142 ARB 078103G

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A. Public Domain Solar Access

B. Envelope Drawings

Please note that all plans, diagrams images and graphics within this report and the supporting documentation (excluding the amended Concept Proposal Envelope Plans for approval prepared by Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp Pty Ltd) are indicative only and have been included to communicate the intent of the amended Concept Proposal, including representative building shapes, forms, locations, layouts and relationships. It is proposed that these representations, together with acceptance of the building envelopes and massing and associated design principles, will then be used to inform the Design Excellence process to follow the Stage 1 SSD Determination.



Artist impression by Doug & Wolf (Indicative render - subject to design competition)

1.0 Executive Summary

The Cockle Bay Park project is a unique opportunity to repair the damage to the city fabric created by the construction of the elevated Western Distributor motorway and reconnect the city to the harbour at a key strategic location through the creation of a significant new Public Space. This will reinvigorate the waterfront, reconnect Pyrmont Bridge and create a new contemporary workplace for Sydney's growing demands and the emerging western CBD.

Details of the proposed development have been progressively refined through consultation, public exhibition and responses. This revised proposal represents a balance of outcomes which deliver the benefits of the project vision whilst responding to matters raised in submissions. Key changes from the submission exhibited in late 2017 include:

- Further reduction in height
- Relocation of the tower envelope further south, and subsequent potential enlargement of public open space to the north
- Increased tower setback from the waterfront
- Reduction of overshadowing to public spaces
- Adjustments to the southern podium to improve amenity of the public space
- Additional Design Criteria to inform the design excellence process.

The revised proposal now includes an envelope and controls that have been rigorously tested to deliver a world class urban domain asset which will provide significant public benefit and mitigate environmental impacts. In particular, the maximum height has been reduced as far as possible whilst maintaining the ability to deliver of a slender and elegant tower, and the envelope has been developed to maintain flexibility for imaginative design excellence outcomes.

Design Vision

The design vision is described through a series of key initiatives as listed below. These have been consistent since the original Cockle Bay Park Stage 1 SSDA submitted in 2016, remaining as follows:

- Reconnecting the city to the Harbour
- Providing a new public park experience
- Restoring the Pyrmont Bridge connection to Market Street
- Reinvigorating the waterfront
- Providing a piece of architecture with an enduring international image
- Developing a new contemporary workplace for the emerging city, and
- Providing a platform for cultural programs

2.0 Introduction

Cockle Bay is located on the Darling Harbour foreshore where Market Street and Druitt Street lead to the harbour. Currently the connections from these city streets to the foreshore are severely compromised by the road network and the counter intuitive pedestrian routes surrounding them.

The Cockle Bay Park project is a unique opportunity to repair the damage to the city fabric created by the construction of the elevated Western Distributor motorway and reconnect the city to the harbour at a key strategic location.

A renewed and well connected Cockle Bay will integrate the city with Darling Harbour in a way that has been lacking since the original conception of Darling Harbour as an urban playground. The urban design vision is to connect the day to day activities of workers, residents and visitors in a new harbourside location with a combination of significant new public space, an enhanced foreshore and retail environment, a world class commercial building and an enlivened experience through cultural activities, public art and public space curation.

This report supports the Response to Submission prepared by Ethos Urban dated 22/6/18 and describes the amended Concept Envelope proposed for the Cockle Bay Park project following the feedback received on the revised Stage 1 - State Significant Development Application (SSD 7684) placed on exhibition at the end of 2017.

Key Initiatives

The key initiatives of the project have been consistent since the original Cockle Bay Park Stage 1 SSDA submitted in 2016, remaining as follows:

- Reconnecting the city to the Harbour
- Providing a new public park experience
- Restoring the Pyrmont Bridge connection to Market Street
- Reinvigorating the waterfront
- Providing a piece of architecture with an enduring international image
- Developing a new contemporary workplace for the emerging city, and
- Providing a platform for cultural programs

Improvements and Amendments to the Proposal

Following an analysis of key issues raised in submissions and extensive engagement with the Department of Planning and Environment through a series of design workshops, a number of changes and improvements have been made to the proposal. These changes respond to the key issues raised whilst preserving the Key Initiatives, benefits and vision for the project.

The changes are summarised as follows

- Further reduction of building height
- Relocation of the tower envelope further toward the south, and subsequent potential enlargement of public open space to the north
- Increased setback of the tower from the waterfront
- Further reduction in the potential overshadowing of the proposed future Town Hall Square
- No additional tower overshadowing of the Cockle Bay east promenade zone from at the critical period 11:00am to 2pm mid winter
- Incorporation of overshadowing control to Sydney Square
- Improved amenity of the southern podium public space, given it's proximity the Western Distributor Motorway
- Definition of Key Design Criteria to be used in concert with the proposed envelope in the design excellence process.

Report Structure

The report is structured into five main sections:

3.0 Urban Design Commentary:

This section highlights the broader city and urban design context of the site and how this proposal sits within it.

4.0 Design Evolution:

This section outlines the design history of the proposed concept, illustrating the extensive design review that has informed the concept and envelope as now proposed.

5.0 Key Issues:

This section identifies the key design issues raised in submissions, and summarises the workshop process undertaken with the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) in 2018.

6.0 Design Improvements:

This section provides the design responses to the issues raised, and the constraints defining these responses.

7.0 Envelope & Key Design Criteria:

This section sets out the revised envelope for which approval is sought. Associated design criteria are set out which are intended to inform the design excellence process.

Relationship to previous documentation

This report is designed to be read in conjunction with the Cockle Bay Stage 1 DA Architectural Design Report & Drawings dated 1st of November, 2017 – Architectural Design Report & Drawings, Response to Submissions – Rev H as previously submitted and describes the revised concept and the changes from the original proposal in response to submissions received.

3.0 Urban Design Commentary

City Typologies

The idea of a town emerged from the need for a place of transaction. Not much has changed, for the commercial imperative still lies at the beating heart of the contemporary city. The need to trade draws people to work, live and hopefully play, as society continues its migration from the dispersed agrarian paradigm of pre-industrial times to today's hyper-concentrated global hubs of political, cultural and economic power.

This seems axiomatic, but the driving foundations of city making are often neglected in the pursuit of how the modern metropolis looks, rather than the reasons why it continues to exist.

The morphology of cities comprises two primary archetypes. The traditional pre-industrial city is a low and dense matrix dotted with singular religious and secular monuments. Its form is constrained by the weight and beauty of its past, its public domain a suite of legible spaces coherently shaped by its architecture.

The modern, populist idea of a city is unencumbered by such shackles, its image a soaringly dense, visually dramatic symbol of unbridled commercial aspiration and corporate power. Buildings are designed as competing objects in the round, open space is amorphous in its typology, shape and program.

Between these paradigms sits the contemporary, real city of today, typically a hybrid form navigating a pathway somewhere between Olmsted's city beautiful and Carol Willis' form follows finance.



Fig. 1. Example City Typologies - Traditional (Rome), Hybrid (London), Future (Hong Kong)

Form of the City

Sydney is such a place. Its bones are pragmatic and essentially Victorian, with sporadic city visions by urban thinkers such as John Sulman, Denis Winston and George Clark reflective of the prevailing planning dogma of their particular times. The seminal 1971 Sydney Strategic Plan prepared under the direction of Clark proposed an accentuated urban form derived from the topographic profile of the city's peninsular ridges and flanking inlets, "to improve the appearance of the city from afar and from within, in harmony with the city's unique topography and character". This idea has curiously endured, a scenographic conceit more in tune with Camillo Sitte's C19th ideas that has nevertheless continued to influence development of central Sydney's highly constrained real estate.

Whilst the form of modern cities shifts more or less between these paradigms, the need for a coherent, safe public domain is universally agreed. The quality of the spaces between buildings is fundamental to the orderly function and pleasurable inhabitation of cities.

City Council's draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy 2016 traverses all of these considerations, offering a complex 3D model to guide the control of built form. The model is driven by the dual priorities of creating opportunity for essential employment growth and protection of public view corridors, sunlight and air into its important streets, parks and squares.

The subject Cockle Bay proposal has been prepared precisely with these over-arching objectives being entirely consistent with the schemes conceptual and commercial genesis.

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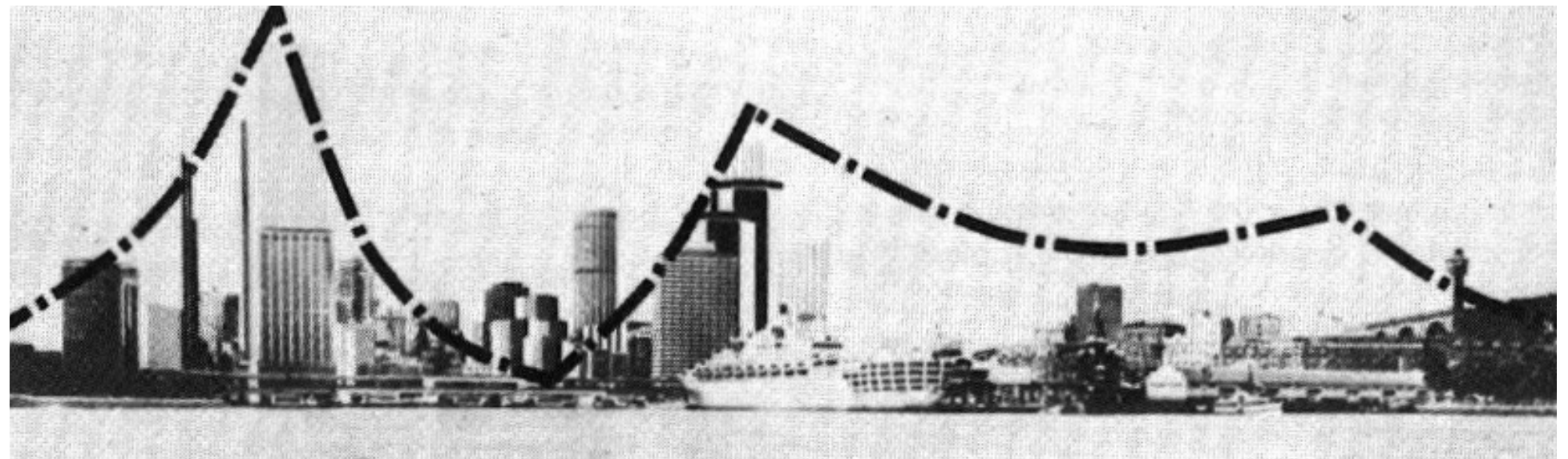
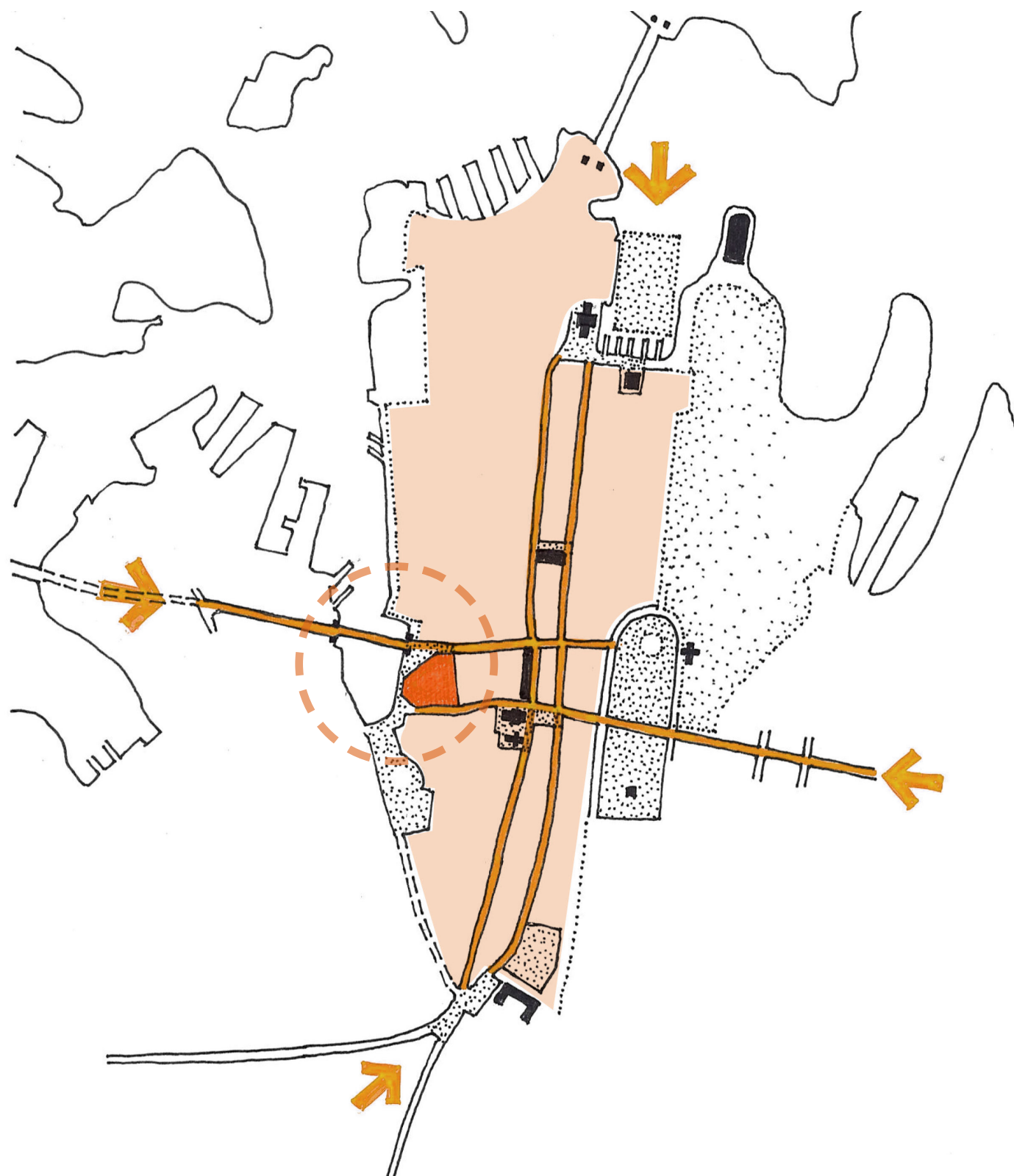


Fig. 2. Form of the City - 1880 View to Town Hall from Pyrmont Bridge, and Diagram from the City of Sydney Strategic Plan 1971



Sydney's constrained central business district and restricted access creates real challenges for a growing global city. The Cockle Bay precinct straddles the traditional western threshold to the city centre, although this has been eroded since the introduction of the elevated Western Distributor. This project offers an unparalleled opportunity to redress this major shortcoming in Central Sydney's accessibility and way-finding, and to create new workplaces and amenity for business, workers and the public.

Fig. 3. Urban concept sketch - Tony Caro Architecture

Development Context

The broad scale context of the site is the Darling Harbour foreshore forming Central Sydney's western edge. Until the late 1980's this edge and the head of Cockle Bay had served as Sydney's real working harbour, historically dedicated to port, rail and road goods transport. Along the eastern cote lies the CBD's western corridor, a remnant of Sydney's Victorian built heritage and a distinctive quarter of the city. This is a homogeneous, well-scaled precinct of traditional street-edge masonry architecture.

The slice of land between Sussex Street and Darling Harbour is a different story: the maritime docks and architecture of the working port have largely disappeared, replaced by a long public foreshore promenade edged by the tall, high-density towers of Barangaroo South, and the low-scale mixed-use buildings along King St Wharf, Aquarium and Cockle Bay. Future development of this edge offers significant potential for future workplace environments of a scale and density that will be commensurate with central Sydney's ambition for continued employment growth and global status.

The Cockle Bay redevelopment proposal engages with both the precinct and these broader issues of future city form, context and growth. It necessarily locates a tall building close to the eastern edge of Cockle Bay and adds a fourth element to the existing Darling Park tower cluster. The proposed height and mass of this building is commercially calibrated to the extensive new public domain contribution.

The potential positive impacts of an office building in this location are a key issue, and the broader economic vision for Sydney must be considered together with the visual and environmental assessment.

Collectively the additional commercial space and extensive public open space meet key demand and amenity objectives for the city and the proposals.

Conclusion

In considering the suitability of higher density and taller buildings along the city's western edge into the future, a key objective is ensuring central Sydney's ongoing capacity to secure its global aspirations.

Protection and enhancement of a high quality public domain is an essential consideration in determining the form of city buildings.

The historic shaping of central Sydney's skyline as a reflection of its topography has and may continue to constrain its economic development, presenting real challenges for a city footprint hemmed in by water and parkland if not boldly revisited.

A further consideration is the precaution that arises from perceived risk associated with major change: a tower close to the harbour edge is certainly a challenge to the de facto planning principles for central Sydney. The author of the independent review himself noted in "The Design of Sydney: Three Decades of Change in the City Centre" (1988) that during the 1960's "the first tall buildings in the city did not win universal applause...the most prominent being the AMP building on the Quay front designed by PTW architects...being a somewhat ungainly intrusion into the low skyline of the surrounding streets." Yet this building has over time become one of Sydney's most admired, a bellwether of change arising from the imperatives of a growing city that has ultimately been absorbed and integrated into its very fabric.

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