



**39-65**  
**OLD**  
**CASTLEREAGH**  
**ROAD**

# DESIGN EXCELLENCE STRATEGY

TO FULFILL PENRITH LAKES DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN -  
STAGE 1 REQUIREMENTS - UPDATED DECEMBER 13 2024



# INTRODUCTION

**Audax Urban** has been engaged by Clearrock Investments Pty Ltd & Jacob4765 Investments Pty Ltd (Proponent) to prepare a Design Excellence Strategy (henceforth, the DES) for the site located at 39-65 (Lots 12, 14 and 16) Old Castlereagh Rd, Castlereagh. The DES has been prepared in response to the requirements of the NSW Government Penrith Lakes Development Control Plan – Stage 1 (henceforth, Penrith Lakes DCP).

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Design Excellence Strategy applicable to the site is Governed by the Penrith Lakes DCP 2021 – Stage 1.

Section 2.5 Design excellence strategy, requires “all precinct master plans to include an approved design excellence strategy, that will, among other aims, “ensure development is well integrated into and complements” the surrounding context.

The focus of the PLDCP is to promote “best practice in design” as an integral part of the action plan “for the preparation of the master plan”.

According to the Penrith Lakes DCP, a design excellence strategy is “an action plan for how the master plan will be prepared” and according to the Controls under section 2.5 Design excellence strategy, it needs to (1) “be submitted to and (3) approved by the Minister for Planning and Homes as the relevant planning authority” prior to the preparation of a masterplan.”

**Figure 02**  
Subject Site (outlined in red)  
Courtesy of the Morson Group



**A design excellence strategy is “an action plan for how the master plan will be prepared” PLDCP 2021 – Stage 1**

The Design Excellence Strategy, (2) “will require”:

- procurement of suitably qualified and experienced urban, architectural and landscape design professionals to lead the process; and ensure the design quality of the master plan; and
- design review program including frequency of design review coordinated with key hold points in the master plan design process.

In response to the procurement of “suitably qualified and experienced urban, architectural and landscape design professionals, as well as being “informed by an understanding of Country, in accordance with traditional owners and knowledge holders”, the Applicant has engaged:



**The Morson Group** – a team of skilled Architects and Project Managers specialising in design and coordination of services for projects in the built environment. The Morson Group will be responsible for the Project Design Leadership and Architecture in collaboration with other key disciplines, including:



**Distinctive** – a leading Landscape Design practice, specialising in the “design of well-thought-out, liveable spaces and living environments” allowing for a relationship between the created space with “the surrounding environment, its cultural and historical identity and its future response to climate change.” Distinctive will be responsible for the creation of a responsive landscape strategy for the masterplan. One that is informed by the process of Indigenous Engagement and the opportunities and constraints of the site.



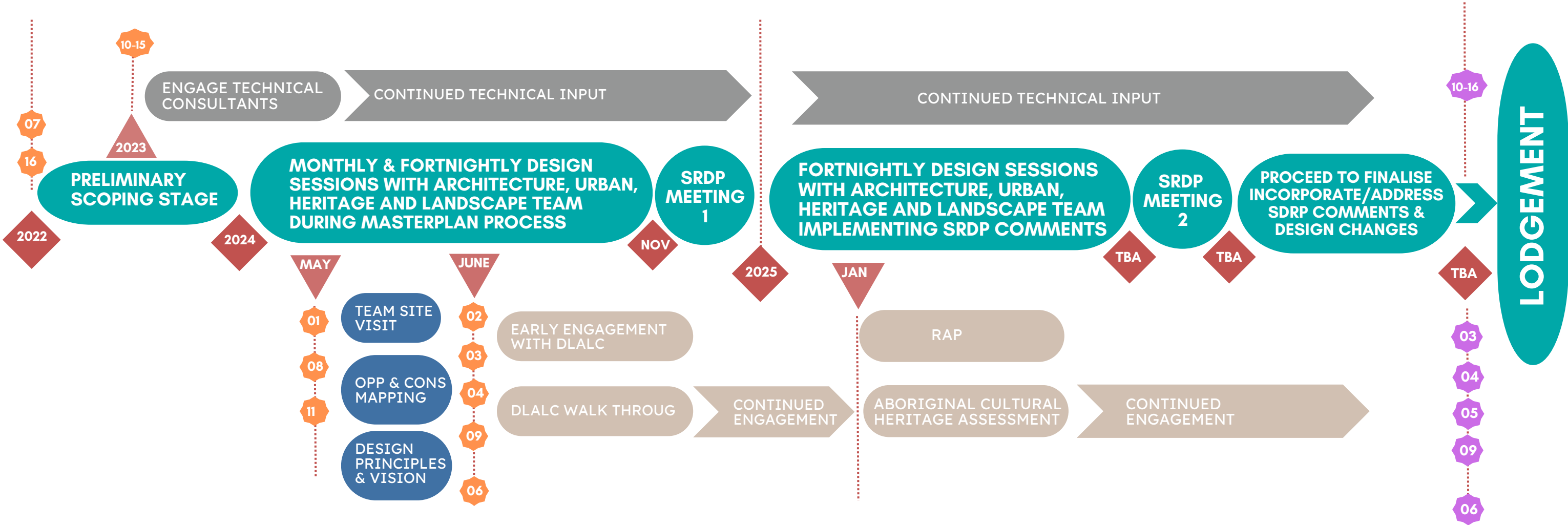
**Virtus Heritage** – a leading Anthropologist and Heritage Consultant, which will assist the project team in organising Due Diligence and Connecting with Country Site Visit/ Walk on Country and liaising with the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council (DLALC). This has informed the design principles to inform the proposal’s understanding of Country.



**Audax Urban** – an Urban Design and Design Excellence consultancy engaged to peer review the Project Architect – Morson Group’s proposal from the concept scheme and provide ongoing urban design input in the formulation of a built form response for the site with the aim of arriving at an integrated and high quality master plan informed by Connecting with Country, Landscape and Urban Design principles.

# DESIGN PROGRAM

In response to the need to adhere to a “design review program including frequency of design review coordinated with key hold points in the master plan design process”, the proponent is committed to following a rigorous design process as depicted in the following flow chart.



| Item | Task                                                                                          | Consultancy                                     |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Design Excellence Strategy (Submitted for assessment prior to preparation of the masterplan). | Audax Urban – Urban Design                      |
| 2    | Connecting with Country Strategy                                                              | Virtus Heritage - Anthropologist                |
| 3    | Aboriginal Archaeologist Due Diligence                                                        | Virtus Heritage - Archaeology                   |
| 4    | Landscape Design Strategy                                                                     | Distinctive Living Design - Landscape Architect |
| 5    | Landscape Architectural Design                                                                | Distinctive Living Design - Landscape Architect |
| 6    | Urban Design Strategy                                                                         | Audax Urban – Urban Design                      |
| 7    | Surrounding Context Analysis                                                                  | Morson Group - Architects                       |
| 8    | Site Analysis – Constraints & Opportunities                                                   | Morson Group - Architects                       |
| 9    | Architectural Drawings                                                                        | Morson Group - Architects                       |

| Item | Task                                                  | Consultancy              |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 10   | Site Drainage & Stormwater Design                     | Stormwater Engineer      |
| 11   | Flood Engineering advice (excluding flood evacuation) | Flood Engineer           |
| 12   | Traffic Report                                        | Traffic Engineer         |
| 13   | Preliminary Site Investigation                        | Hydrologist              |
| 14   | Sewer and Water Services Design                       | Sydney Water Coordinator |
| 15   | HV Power Services                                     | Level 3 ASP Designer     |
| 16   | Town Planning Input                                   | Tomasy Planning          |

Table 01 List of Design Tasks & Consultancies



## Masterplanning Process

The project team appreciates the scale and complexity of the project, and the importance of achieving a good contextual fit with the broader site context" in the design of precincts and individual buildings" to achieve 'best practice design'" (PLDCP and SEPP-PWPC (2021).

This will be achieved by a series of internal processes including design workshops and on-going team coordination of design and technical consultants. This is further addressed on page 4 in Best Practice Design.

In addition to a landscape and Country led design strategy, the project team will also be guided by a comprehensive opportunities & constraints analysis and awareness of emerging development in the vicinity of the site.

The above will maximise opportunities for coordination and to adequately inform the response to the site.

The project team has already undergone a thorough analysis of the context, a mapping of the opportunities and constraints as well as the preparation of design principles and a vision for the site ahead of the preparation of the masterplan. The Project Team will demonstrate this process as part of the first SDRP meeting.

The project team will also "ensure new development is well integrated into and complements this context" by undertaking a comprehensive analysis and "site planning" to gain an understanding of the key local and regional opportunities and constraints that should influence the overall master plan response for the site. This includes having an understanding of the precinct's Olympic history, to protect and celebrate the area's "Olympic Legacies".

## Desired Future Character

The PLDCP under 5.2 Tourism South Precinct, requires development applications "to demonstrate consistency with the desired character objectives". The proposal will aim to and be consistent with:

- a) *low-scale development fronting the Regatta Lake that responds to its landscape and preserves existing trees where possible;*
- b) *a generous landscaped buffer along Old Castlereagh Road that provides a sense of arrival, functions as a Gateway to Penrith Lakes and preserves existing trees or plants advanced replacement trees capable of reaching a substantial height and canopy;*
- c) *preserve north-south views from Old Castlereagh Road to the Regatta Lake through sufficient separation between buildings; and-*
- d) *improved permeability and pedestrian access to primary roads, nature trails, the Regatta Lake, and current and future recreational features of Penrith Lakes.*

The project team is aware of the desired character stated in the DCP and is confident that it will be able to demonstrate consistency with these objectives as part of the masterplan process.

The early formulation of design principles, guiding the masterplan "based on the analysis of the site and its context" will set out the conceptual basis for:

- The urban design and landscape strategy
- how "the road network and potential access points will work";
- The potential "location of communal open space, its function and landscaping";
- the integration of "urban design and landscape strategy";

- The "identification of potential gateway sites and corridors";
- The formulation of "pedestrian, vehicular and cycle road access and circulation networks and facilities";
- the desire to be contextual and responsive to as individual lots "to the other lots in the ... precinct";
- compatibility with masterplanning of other lots in the Tourism South precinct;

## EARLY ENGAGEMENT WITH DLALC

The Project Team, facilitated by Virtus Heritage has commenced a rigorous process of engagement with the DLALC to "ensure development is informed by an understanding of Country, in accordance with traditional owners and knowledge holders".

Refer to the table below for a chronology of consultation carried out to date with the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC):

| 2024 Dates | Interaction                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 25    | Walk on Country carried out In Person with a DLALC representative and the project team.                                                                         |
| July 18    | Virtus Heritage provided the DRAFT Connecting with Country (CwC) Report for DLALC's review and comment.                                                         |
| Aug 27     | Virtus Heritage submitted the DRAFT 'Aboriginal archaeological due diligence assessment' for DLALC's review and comment.                                        |
| Sept 18    | Virtus Heritage issue final CwC report to project team. Although numerous attempts were made to follow up and seek feedback, LALC did not provide any comments. |

**Table 02** List of early Interactions with DLALC - Source Virtus Heritage

In addition to the interactions listed in **Table 02**, an Archaeological Due Diligence report has been completed by Virtus Heritage. One of its findings is that an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) committee is required, and this work will commence in September, 2024.

The process of carrying out the ACHA will involve consultation with at least 29 aboriginal parties as part of the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP). At the time of the writing of this DES, 16 parties have successfully consulted with Virtus Heritage.

The Project Team welcomes the synergies and creativity that may emerge during consultation with the traditional owners that may inform the design process. As per PLDCP (Part 4.4(a)), the landscape strategy will be informed by an understanding of designing with Country

Furthermore, the Design Team will follow the Connecting with Country Guidelines, which require a number of Procedural and Practical Actions as well as key objectives, including a Country-Centered Approach which will guide,

- *The design of buildings and landscapes that fit into the natural systems and are respectful of cultural narratives tied to the land.*

Following the Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion guidelines, the Project Team will follow a design process that is

- "collaborative, respecting Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property" incorporating "Aboriginal placenames and the integration of Aboriginal storeys and art".

The Connecting with Country (CWC) report will outline some of these strategies.

With the early formulation of the Urban Design Principles, the team is already on its way to creating a competent and technically sound master plan, which requires the interrogation and understanding of more technical requirements such as:

- the open space and drainage networks and any basins or water quality treatment measures;
- the existing physical and environmental features of the site;
- the general indication of the phasing of development;
- the proposed site layout, including an indicative road layout;
- remediation of any site contamination; and
- any other infrastructure, such as transmission lines, trunk sewage, recycled water or water supply lines or infrastructure.

The project team understands that an adequate response to the technical challenges of the site is key to achieving and delivering a high-quality design. For this, qualified consultants in the areas of contamination, geotech, flooding and water management have already completed preliminary studies and reports to help gain a better understanding of the site at the inception stages of the masterplan. The knowledge and understanding gained through these preliminary studies will be carried through the next stages of the masterplan design.

The master planning process of 27, 330 m<sup>2</sup> site to realise the vision of a vibrant recreational and tourism accommodation facility requires speciality knowledge, expertise and coordination.

Recognising these challenges, the project team will pay special attention and seek specialist technical input and advice on the following key components:

- Flooding and access
- Ground level interface, circulation and servicing
- Parking and vehicle circulation
- Sewage and water supply infrastructure

The project team understands the importance of considering the movement of flood waters during the development of the masterplan to ensure proposed site layouts will not result in impacts to the existing and future environment.

A qualified flood engineer has been engaged and the project team will address flooding in the Master Plan submission and flood evacuation in the DA submission.

As part of the master planning process, 'Site Planning' has a vital role as expressly required by Section 4.1 of the Penrith Lakes DCP. It states the need for development to address b) "the key site planning principles, urban design and design excellence by":

- responding to the natural topography and landform of the site;
- protecting areas of scenic or visual importance in the Penrith Lakes;
- adopting a height, massing and scale that accords with the analysis of the site and minimises visual impact;
- incorporating safety and security measures within site design;
- providing for active living and connectivity through the provision of healthy, walkable, green built environments, including quality public open space, community facilities and walkable streets;

- *using, where possible, sustainable materials that minimise impacts on the environment, maintenance and waste; and*
- *incorporating the principles of universal design to maximise accessibility for all people.*

*In achieving the above objectives, the project team will conduct a detailed site analysis as part of the master planning process. However, a view impact analysis will not be required as the master plan and future development will not impact any of the view corridors identified in Section 2.3 of the PLDCP.*

### Significant and Key Views

The development will be a vibrant and exciting place that unites world-class sporting facilities in the precinct with innovative indoor recreational sporting facilities and hospitality accommodation within the setting of high-quality publicly accessible spaces to serve the local community. It will connect visitors and the local community, visually link to the natural assets in the site's immediate surroundings, and celebrate the heritage and Olympic sporting legacy of the area.

None of the views illustrated in Fig 1 apply directly to the site, however the project team will explore ways to preserve views of escarpment where possible and from Old Castlereagh Road to the open recreational land immediately to the north of the site including Regatta Lake.

The project team will explore ways to visually link the site and Old Castlereagh Road to the open recreational land immediately to the north of the site.

### Best Practice Design

The achievement of 'best practice' in design within a unique setting such as that of the subject site requires leadership where the response to Country and the landscape response should be key considerations and lead the design strategy for the entire site. As a minimum, other considerations will include:

- biodiversity, health and restoration of ecological communities,
- access and movement,
- opportunities to connect with waterways,
- solar access,
- canopy, deep soil, and
- the landscape setting of the built form.

The Landscape Architecture response has already commenced investigations and a rigorous consultation process that will continue to inform all disciplines across all relevant considerations. The aim is to collectively engage with the narratives both intimately and broadly, in and around the subject site with regards to the built form's landscape setting.

### Landscape Architecture Response

The master plan already seeks and will continue to employ best practice design processes. The project Landscape Architects champion Designing with Country within their field of enterprise.

From the outset, the project team collectively and in particular, Distinctive have engaged with Virtus Heritage to facilitate the On Country Process. This in turn, has and will continue to inform all of the landscape design decisions.

The landscape documentation that will be provided, as the wider masterplan is developed will articulate the integrated nature of the design rationale and the design strategy outcomes.

## Sustainability

The project team and Distinctive propose the following strategy with regard to landscaping sustainability:

- Broadly, the concept is to deliver a green frontage and enable the landscape to intertwine with the built form, publicly accessible areas and to connect with the surroundings and sense of place through the landscape.
- Extensive deep soil planted areas to support large scale canopy trees.
- Extensive landscaped podium areas, able to also support small and medium scaled trees, shrubs and groundcovers.
- Permeable paving and recyclable landscape materials, with locally sourced hardscaped materials.
- Low voltage landscape lighting, ideally powered by on site PVC.
- Natural airflow drawn through the landscaping into the built form.
- Connections into the surrounding local cycleway and walkways that encourage walkability and bicycle use.

## Built Form Sustainability

The project team will ensure the development achieves a high level of sustainability and environmental performance. They will achieve the following:

- Integration of passive cooling and heating design techniques when climatic conditions permit.
- Adoption of façade materiality which achieves a high level of environmental performance.

- Provision of robust and low maintenance materials to minimise and avoid ongoing maintenance such as re-painting or replacement of materials. Where possible provide locally sourced materials.
- Avoidance of basement carparking reduces damage to the landscape and maintains contour lines. Proposed parking is to be above ground.

Through out the master plan process, the project team will:

- Ensure development is informed by: *"an understanding of Country; ... and "well integrated into and complements this context; promote best practice in the design of precincts and individual buildings; protects Olympic legacies; and significant views"* (Part 2.5 Design Excellence Strategy PDCP).
- Prepare a detailed site analysis which, in part, has already been commenced by the Morson Group in collaboration with the project team in satisfaction of control 4.1(1).
- Maintain and uphold the strategic intent for the Tourism South Precinct as a tourism and recreation hub.
- Consistently have First Nation's involvement and interaction throughout the masterplaning process.
- Deliver building design and landscape outcomes as an expression of Connecting with Country, and ensure Connecting with Country informs the masterplan process.
- Ensure all buildings should be designed to a high architectural standard and has already engaged a suitably qualified design expert and consultant team.
- Seek to meet the objectives of improvement of social , economic and environmental sustainability through best practice design.
- Address item '3.1 Flood Planning' as part of the Master Plan submission in the form of setting floor levels and considering pre and post flood behaviours.
- Prepare a landscape strategy as part of the masterplan, which intended design strategy outcomes are a reflection of the design rationale formulated in consultation with Country.
- Recognise the inherent responsibility of creating a Tourism and Recreational precinct adjacent to an active world class sporting facility and the resulting need for a consistent level of coordination between project stages, various disciplines and technical consultants.

## Assessment Pathway

The project's Capital Investment Value (CIV) has not yet been confirmed at the time of the writing of this DES. However, the project team understands that the SDRP process will remain the same whether the project is a DA or SSD.

Based on the above, the project architect, Morson Group and and project team aim to proceed with the concept design to arrive to the most resolved scheme and will make 2 x review submissions to the SDRP. The 2x review meetings applies to "private projects on private land". The Castlereagh Tourism Project is private and the land at 39-65 Old Castlereagh Road is private land.

The project team is confident that the following deliverables will be met for each of the two proposed meetings:

**SDRP 1 (First meeting)** - Project team will present: Site and context analysis, conceptual approach including approach to indigenous culture and heritage that will be used in the formulation of the masterplan for the site. Diagrammatic information will be presented in sketch form and the discussion will also include, in general, the analysis of opportunities and constraints i.e. flooding, context that led to the design principles and vision for the site.

**SRDP 1 (Second Meeting)** - The project team will present an update to the conceptual response of the masterplan, indigenous culture and heritage. More developed plans, site sections and the landscape plan will be presented at this session. This presentation will contain a response to any issues raised as part of the previous advice received.

In formulating this DES, the project team has had regard to all relevant recommendations and controls in the PLDCP. We respectfully request that this DES be endorsed and approved by the DPHI, the consent authority.



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## Quality Control

**Final Draft:** Issued 12 July 2024 - Written by KC. Checked by the Morson Group.

**Final A:** Issued 18 July 2024 - Written by KC. Checked by the Morson Group.

**Final B:** Issued 21 August 2024 - Written by KC

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**Final V3:** Issued 11 Nov 2024 - Written by KC. Checked by the Morson Group.

**V4:** Issued 06 December 2024 - Written by KC. Checked by the Morson Group + GANSW.

**V5:** Issued 13 December 2024 - Written by KC. Checked by the Morson Group + GANSW.

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