

# Design Excellence Strategy

Pitt & Bridge, Sydney

Submitted to the City of Sydney  
on behalf of Dexus CPA Pty Ltd

# Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Objectives of the Design Excellence Strategy.....	4
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Design Excellence Strategy.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	The Location and Extent of the Competitive Design Process.....	5
2.2	The Type of Competitive Design Process to be Undertaken .....	6
2.3	Selection of Competitors.....	6
2.4	Establishment of Competition Jury.....	6
2.5	Indigenous / Connecting with Country Committee .....	6
2.6	Competition Brief.....	7
2.7	Options for distributing Floor Space within the Building Envelope .....	7
2.8	Sustainable Design Targets.....	7
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Design Integrity.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## Figures

Figure 1	Site Location and Extent of Competitive Design Process.....	5
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## Tables

Table 1	Property Title Description.....	5
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# 1.0 Overview

This Design Excellence Strategy is submitted to the City of Sydney ('the City' or 'Council') on behalf of Dexus CPA Pty Ltd ('Dexus' or 'the Applicant') to establish a framework for the competitive design process in relation to the Pitt & Bridge Planning Proposal located on land at 56 Pitt Street, 58 Pitt Street, 3 Spring Street and 60 Pitt Street, Sydney (the site).

The Pitt & Bridge project will be an anchor to the green economy and represents a proposal for a green and global premium grade office tower, constituting a vertical exchange of finance, knowledge sharing, innovation, education, sustainability and wellness. Dexus's vision for Pitt & Bridge is to provide office accommodation to attract and facilitate the green finance sector, providing the infrastructure to attract green businesses and talent which are aligned with global sentiment around addressing climate change and resilience and which can engage with the emerging global green economy. It will lead the way in meeting world-class sustainability objectives and contribute to Sydney's role as a future leader in the global green economy.

This Design Excellence Strategy supports a Planning Proposal that seeks to amend the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012* (Sydney LEP 2012) and *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012* (Sydney DCP) to enable new maximum height of building (HOB) and floor space ratio (FSR) controls for the site. The proposed planning envelope reaches a maximum height of RL 310 (305m above ground) and includes a gross floor area of 90,000m<sup>2</sup> (27.4:1) consistent with the outcomes envisaged in the *Central Sydney Planning Strategy* (CSPS). The Planning Proposal and Design Excellence Strategy relate to land at 56 Pitt Street, 58 Pitt Street, 3 Spring Street and 60 Pitt Street, Sydney (commonly known as Pitt and Bridge) (the site).

As part of Dexus's commitment to connecting with Country through First Nations collaboration, an Indigenous design strategy will be prepared for the project. This strategy will involve collaboration during the competitive design process with traditional custodians of the land, and includes additional commitments as set out in this Design Excellence Strategy. The intent is to ensure the winning design draws upon and celebrates the culture and history of the Gadi people and greater Eora Nation, enriching the cultural fabric and experience of the city.

This Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the City's *Guideline for Site Specific Planning Proposals in Central Sydney*. In accordance with clause 1.2 of the *City of Sydney Competitive Design Policy* (the Policy) and clause 3.3.2 of the Sydney DCP this Strategy defines:

- The location and extent of the competitive design process;
- The type of competitive design process to be undertaken;
  - An architectural design competition, open or invited; or
  - The preparation of design alternatives on a competitive basis.
- The number of designers involved in the process;
- Whether the competitive design process is pursuing additional height or floor space;
- Options for distributing any additional floor space ratio or height which may be granted by the consent authority for demonstrating design excellence through a competitive design process; and
- Target benchmarks for ecologically sustainable development.

The Applicant has elected to carry out an Invited Architectural Design Competition as the competitive design process associated with the development, with a minimum of five (5) invited Competitors.

It is envisaged that the competitive design process will begin as soon as practical after the public exhibition of the Planning Proposal and the endorsement of the Competition Brief by Council.

**Note:** Nothing in this Design Excellence Strategy represents an approval from the consent authority for a departure from the relevant SEPPs, Sydney LEP 2012 or Sydney DCP controls (as amended by the Planning Proposal for Pitt and Bridge). Where there is any inconsistency between this Strategy and the relevant SEPPs, LEP or DCP (as amended by the Pitt and Bridge Planning Proposal), the relevant SEPPs, LEP or DCP (as amended) prevail.

## 1.1 Objectives of the Design Excellence Strategy

The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Establish a methodology for the Applicant to implement a competitive design process for the redevelopment of the subject site, in accordance with the Policy;
- Ensure the established project vision is translated into the building design through the competitive design process;
- Ensure the proposal supports a 'designing with Country' approach that seeks to engage, collaborate with and benefit First Nations people, incorporating Indigenous narratives, artwork and design, and provides spaces for First Nations people to practice culture, and provide community benefit;
- Ensure that the competitive design process works within the framework of this approved Design Excellence Strategy;
- Confirm the number of architectural practices to participate in the competitive design process and how these will be selected;
- Establish the process for the selection of a Competition Jury;
- Set out the approach for establishing a competition brief that ensures:
  - The Consent Authority's design excellence requirements are balanced with the Applicant's objectives.
  - The achievement of design and architectural diversity.
  - Procedural fairness for Competitors.
- Ensure the project vision is imbedded in the competitive design process;
- Ensure the ecologically sustainable development targets established as part of the proposed Public Benefit Offer (and future executed Voluntary Planning Agreement) are addressed as part of the competitive design process to enable the future achievement of these targets; and
- Ensure that design excellence integrity is continued in the subsequent detailed development proposal through construction phase to completion of the project.

# 2.0 Design Excellence Strategy

## 2.1 The Location and Extent of the Competitive Design Process

The site is located at 56 Pitt Street, 58 Pitt Street, 3 Spring Street and 60 Pitt Street, Sydney. The competitive design process applies to the entirety of the site which has an area of 3,288m<sup>2</sup> and comprises six (6) lots as described in **Table 1** and illustrated in **Figure 1**.

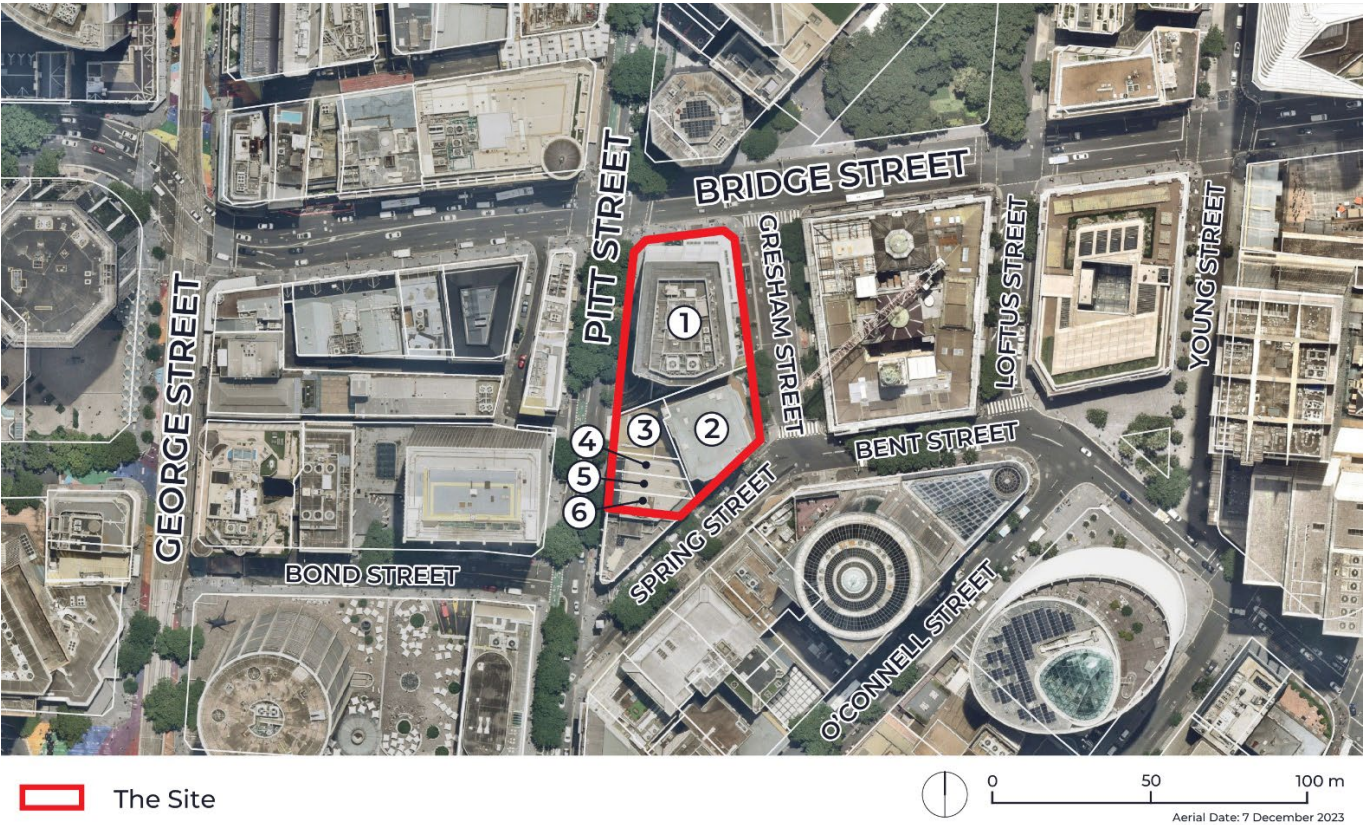
The site is irregular in shape and has a 35m along Bridge Street, 65m along Gresham Street, 35m along Spring Street and 81m along Pitt Street.

The site is unencumbered by any significant environmental and planning constraints. It does not contain a heritage item of national, state or local significance and is located within a tower cluster area under the CSPS (intended to support additional employment floor space capacity) which is unaffected by sun access and public protection view planes.

The Competition is intended to apply to the whole of the site as shown in **Figure 1** below.

**Table 1** Property Title Description

Ref No.	Lot and DP	Address
1	Lot 1 in DP 222751	56 Pitt Street, Sydney
2	Lot 1 in DP 558106	3 Spring Street, Sydney
3	Lot 1 to 33 in SP 57509	58 Pitt Street, Sydney
4	Lot 5 in DP 192236	60 Pitt Street, Sydney
5	Lot 4 in DP 192236	
6	Lot 3 in DP 192236	



**Figure 1** Site Location and Extent of Competitive Design Process

Source: Nearmap, edits by Ethos Urban

## 2.2 The Type of Competitive Design Process to be Undertaken

The Applicant has elected to conduct a single **Invited Architectural Design Competition** for the project. The process is to be undertaken prior to the lodgement of a detailed Development Application (DA) for the redevelopment of the site as planned in the site-specific Planning Proposal.

The Invited Architectural Design Competition will be conducted primarily in accordance with the City's Competitive Design Policy and Model Competitive Design Process Brief. Endorsement of the Competition Brief is required by the City prior to commencement of the Design Competition. The Design Competition will also follow additional Designing with Country requirements to be set by the Indigenous Design Committee (as discussed in **Section 2.5**).

## 2.3 Selection of Competitors

The Applicant will undertake an Invited Architectural Design Competition with a **minimum of five (5) invited Competitors**. The selection of the invited Competitors will be determined by the Applicant, undertaken in consultation with the City, as follows:

- A Competitor may be a single person or firm, or a number of firms working in partnership, constituted of a principal/lead architect supported by an executive architect(s).
- Design teams are to include Indigenous consultants.
- A Competitor will either be a person, corporation or firm registered as an architect in accordance with the NSW Architects Act 2003, or, in the case of interstate or overseas Competitors, eligible for registration with their equivalent association.
- Competitors must demonstrate capabilities in design excellence by being the recipient of an Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) commendation or award in the past 5 years, or equivalent overseas professional association.
- Competitors with demonstrated experience on projects that have either received an environmental sustainability award or achieved high Green Star Buildings v1 or NABERS Energy/Water ratings (or international equivalent) will be preferred.
- Competitors must demonstrate they meet a gender representation ratio of 40% male: 40% female: 20% any gender in their design team and leadership.

## 2.4 Establishment of Competition Jury

The Competition Jury will comprise six (6) Jury members. The Jury will be appointed by the Applicant and is comprised of:

- Half the members nominated by the consent authority, who have no pecuniary interests in the development proposal or involvement in approval processes;
- Half the members nominated by the Applicant; and
- One member of the Jury must be a demonstratable expert in the field of ESD.

Jury members are to:

- Represent the public interest;
- Be appropriately experienced with commercial towers of significant scale (ie >300m in height);
- Include only persons who have expertise and experience in the design and construction professions and related industries; and
- Include a majority of registered architects with urban design expertise.

## 2.5 Indigenous / Connecting with Country Committee

As part of its commitment to connecting with Country, Dexus will work with the City to establish an Indigenous Design Committee, who will build upon and agree on additional protocols and commitments for the Competition. The committee will nominate these additional protocols and commitments by building upon the requirements within the design competition brief and criteria. The committee will also provide advice on the 'Connecting with Country' approach of each competition entry.



The Committee will work with the City to provide advice and conditions on Connecting with Country to the winning design team in developing the winning design, and will review and provide advice both prior to and following lodgement of the DA.

The Committee will also have a design integrity role post approval:

- As part of design development through to issue of the Construction Certificate, with the committee ensuring the integrity of Indigenous principles through the design are protected; and
- Through construction to occupation. The design team and cultural collaborators will provide advice and information to building contractors as needed and both will ensure the integrity of Indigenous design components are realised prior to issue of the Occupation Certificate.

## 2.6 Competition Brief

The Competition Brief (the Brief) will be prepared by the Applicant who will liaise with the City for endorsement prior to commencement of the competitive design process, as per clause 2.3 of the Policy. The Indigenous Design Committee will also have involvement in the preparation of the Competition Brief, ensuring additional 'Designing with Country' criteria are set for the Competition.

The Competition Brief will be limited to approximately 30 pages (excluding competition procedures) with compliance schedules and appendices reduced where possible. In establishing the brief, the Applicant will ensure that:

- All details regarding the conduct of the competitive design process are contained within the brief;
- The brief and appended documents are reviewed and endorsed in writing by the City prior to its distribution to Competitors, Competition Jury and Technical Advisors; and
- The brief is to be generally in accordance with the Competitive Design Model Brief and the City's Competitive Design Policy.

The Competition Brief will ensure that the consent authority's design excellence requirements are balanced with the Applicant's objectives, that the process will promote design excellence and architectural diversity, and that procedural fairness for Competitors is achieved.

## 2.7 Proposed Allocation of up to 10% additional Floor Space

The Competition will be pursuing up to 10% additional floor space under the site-specific clause resulting from the Planning Proposal and the Policy.

The Planning Proposal to amend the Sydney LEP 2012 and Sydney DCP supports a tower envelope that can accommodate a site specific permissible height of 305 metres (RL 310) and FSR of up to 27.4:1 (inclusive of the 10% additional floor space).

## 2.8 Options for distributing Floor Space within the Building Envelope

The proposed Site-Specific DCP establishes a maximum building envelope for the competitive design process and the future built form on the site. The detailed proposal must be contained within this envelope which allows for approximately 10% articulation volume. The detailed proposal is not anticipated to completely fill the building envelope volume. The proposal consists of 90,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space, including office premises and retail premises floor space. The distribution of floor space within the envelope is to be considered by the Competitors in the competitive design process and must be consistent with provisions contained in the Planning Proposal (including Draft DCP Amendments) for the site.

## 2.9 Sustainable Design Targets

The competitive design process is to seek to achieve the following ecologically sustainable development (ESD) targets established as part of the proposed Public Benefit Offer (future Voluntary Planning Agreement):

- 5.5 star NABERS Energy Base Building Rating (Commitment Agreement);
- 6-star NABERS Base Building Energy Base Building (Target);
- 4.5-star NABERS Whole Building Water Rating (Target);
- 4-star NABERS Waste (Target);
- 6-star Green Star Buildings v1 certified rating;

- WELL Core Premium (Target);
- 100% renewable energy in operation;
- 100% electric; and
- 100% carbon neutral in operation.

The competitive design process will implement, the sustainable design strategies identified in the Sustainability Report prepared by Stantec (dated 1 May 2024).

ESD targets and sustainability initiatives will be carried through the competition phase, design development, construction, and through to completion of the project to deliver an exemplar of environmentally sustainable development.

## 3.0 Design Integrity

The architectural firm(s) of the winning scheme (as chosen via the 'Architectural Design Competition Process'), is to be appointed as the Lead Design Architect for the project and will perform this role until the completion of the project.

The role of the Lead Design Architect will include at a minimum the following:

- Prepare a Development Application for the preferred design;
- Prepare the design drawings for a construction certificate for the preferred design;
- Prepare the design drawings for the contract documentation; and
- Maintain continuity during the construction phases through to the completion of the project.

The Lead Design Architect may work in association with other architectural practices but is to retain a leadership role over design decisions.

In accordance with the Connecting with Country strategy, the Lead Design Architect will be required to engage with the Indigenous Design Committee, and other First Nations collaborators in developing the winning design. The design team and cultural collaborators are to:

- Hold at least one (1) site meeting and two (2) follow up meetings.
- Work together with respect to:
  - Narrative development;
  - Program and spatial advice;
  - Material and planting selection;
  - Art curation/strategy development;
  - Language names development in partnership with TO's; and
  - Acknowledgement of Country – placemaking and wayfinding strategy – tie in with heritage strategy.
- Have involvement in the design integrity phases of the development.

Following lodgement of the detailed DA, the design team will be required to continue to work with the collaborators, including meeting as necessary to further develop the design in response to feedback. Following DA approval, the design team and collaborators will be required to meet on at least three (3) occasions, to discuss:

- Detailed design advice;
- Material and planting selection;
- Art curation;
- Language implementation; and
- Wayfinding and acknowledgement implementation.

Following issue of the construction certificate, the design team and cultural collaborators are to provide advice and information to building contractors as needed, and the design team and committee are to ensure integrity of Indigenous design components are realised prior to occupation.