Public Exhibition - Planning Proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown - Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 and Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 Amendment

File No: X104453

Summary

The City of Sydney's Economic Development Strategy 2025-2035 identifies the Tech Central innovation district as representing Australia's deepest and broadest research and technology ecosystem. It is home to 3 world-leading universities and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA), industry innovation leaders including Atlassian and Canva, and has a high concentration of privately owned startup companies valued at more than US$1 billion ('unicorns') in Australia. The Tech Central West precinct, including the suburb of Camperdown, has more than half of the City of Sydney's higher education and research jobs. More than 100,000 students progress research and development across critical future industries including quantum, biotech, fintech, cyber security, artificial intelligence, health-sciences, deep tech and green tech.

A planning proposal, consistent with the City's Economic Development Strategy 2025-2035, has been prepared for 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, following a request by the proponent to amend the planning controls for the site. The site is directly north of the University of Sydney and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and close to the major educational, healthcare and research institutions of Tech Central West.

The planning proposal seeks to amend the building height and floor space controls to facilitate the development of a biomedical and life sciences research facility, with more than 34,000sqm of floor space for laboratories with ancillary offices, education space and retail. This would be housed within a built form with a maximum height of 80m. The planning controls would also be amended to facilitate an expansion of an adjoining serviced apartment building, with an additional 3 storeys and 1,250sqm of floor space.

A draft site-specific Development Control Plan has been prepared to support the planning proposal and provide guidance on built form, landscaping and sustainability, transport and servicing, design excellence and public art. The proponent has submitted a public benefit offer to enter into a planning agreement to deliver upgrades to surrounding streets and lanes, achieve sustainability targets above requirements and deliver in-kind public art on site.

This report recommends approval of the planning proposal for submission to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure seeking a Gateway Determination, followed by public exhibition and referral to government agencies for comment. After this consultation, the planning proposal and any issues raised in submissions will be reported back to Council and the Central Sydney Planning Committee.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

(A) Council approve Planning Proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report, to be submitted to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces with a request for Gateway Determination

(B) Council approve Planning Proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report, for public authority consultation and public exhibition in accordance with any conditions imposed under the Gateway Determination

(C) Council seek authority from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to exercise the delegation of all the functions under section 3.36 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to make the local environmental plan and to put into effect Planning Proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown

(D) Council approve the Draft Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, as shown at Attachment B to the subject report, for public authority consultation and public exhibition concurrent with the Planning Proposal

(E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make any variations to Planning Proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, to correct any drafting errors or to ensure consistency with the Gateway Determination

(F) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make any variations to Draft Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown, to correct any drafting errors or ensure it is consistent with the Planning Proposal following the Gateway Determination

(G) Council note the Chief Executive Officer will prepare a draft planning agreement in accordance with the letter of offer dated 9 October 2026 shown at Attachment C to the subject report, and the requirements of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, to be exhibited in accordance with the Act.

Attachments

Attachment A. Planning proposal - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown and Attachments

Attachment B. Draft Sydney development control plan 2012 - 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown

Attachment C. Public benefit offer letter dated 9 October 2026

Background

1. In March 2026, a request to prepare a planning proposal was lodged through the NSW Planning Portal on behalf of the landowners, the University of Sydney and Veriu Serviced Apartments, for 84-86 and 88-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown ('the site'). The site is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Land affected by this planning proposal

2. The multiple lots compromising the site have a total area of 5,361sqm and have frontages to Parramatta Road and Sparkes Street. Existing development on the site consists of 3 buildings:

   (a) 84-86 Parramatta Road, a 6-storey serviced apartment building trading as Veriu Camperdown with 28 apartments

   (b) 88-90 Parramatta Road, a 3-storey warehouse building constructed in 1927 which is currently vacant

   (c) 92-94 Parramatta Road, the University of Sydney Medical Foundation Building, a 3-7 storey research laboratory and office building, constructed in 1988-90 with approximately 11,800sqme of floor space

3. Further details of the site and existing planning controls can be found in sections 1 and 2 of the planning proposal, attached to this report at Attachment A. Photos of the site's Parramatta Road frontage and existing development are at Figures 2 and 3.

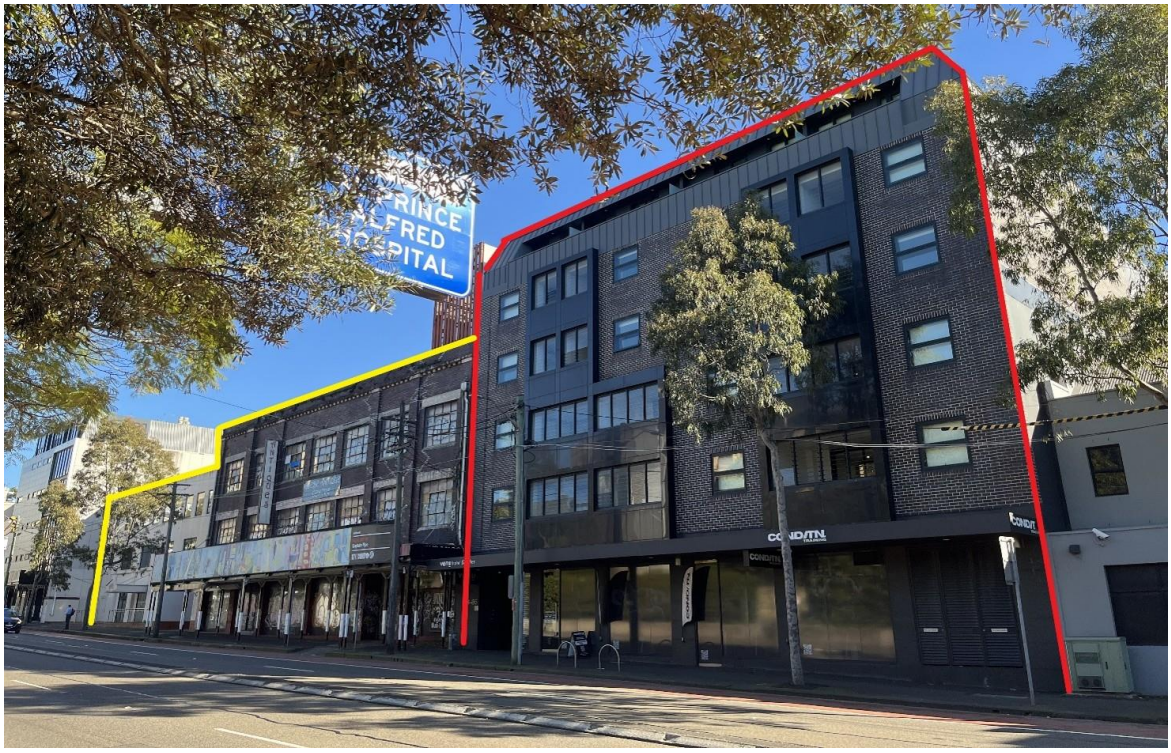


Figure 2. 84-86 Parramatta Road (outlined in red) and 88-94 Parramatta Road (outlined in yellow) looking north west

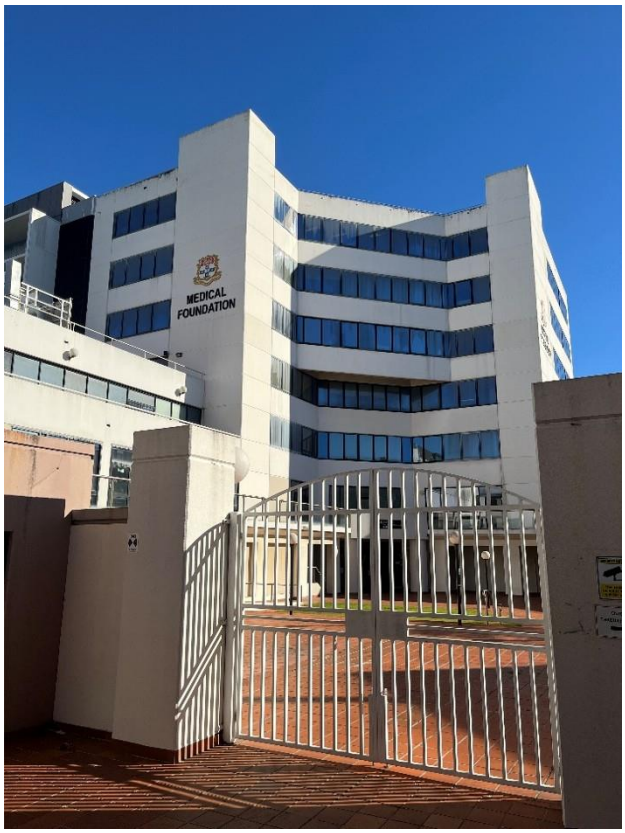


Figure 3. Medical Foundation building at 92-94 Parramatta Road with interior courtyard

The proponent has requested amendments to planning controls to enable redevelopment for life sciences research facility

4. The proponent requested a planning proposal to facilitate a redevelopment to achieve:

   (a) 34,000sqm of commercial floor space for a mixed-use biomedical and life sciences research facility with ancillary office, education space and retail. This would be located at 88-94 Parramatta Road and be consistent with the Tech Central Economic Development Strategy and City of Sydney Economic Development Strategy 2025-2035

   (b) an additional 1,250sqm of serviced apartment floor space to expand the current serviced apartment operation at 84-86 Parramatta Road

5. Illustrations of the reference design prepared by the proponent are shown at Figures 4 and 5.



Figure 4. Illustration of reference concept massing looking north east



Figure 5. Illustration of reference concept massing looking north west

6. An earlier version of the scheme was presented to the City's Design Advisory Panel on 13 February 2025. Advice received from the Panel emphasised the need to align with the objectives of the Apartment Design Guide with regard to sun access and encouraged retention of the existing warehouse building at 88-90 Parramatta Road. This advice was incorporated into the final scheme lodged in March 2026.

The City has prepared a planning proposal to increase the maximum building height and floor space ratio controls for the site

7. The planning proposal details the proposed amendments to the Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 (Sydney LEP 2012) by inserting new site-specific provisions to incentivise productive floor space. For 88-94 Parramatta Road, the provisions are to:

   (a) permit a maximum building height of 80m, an increase from the current control of 18m

   (b) increase the maximum floor space ratio control from 2.5:1 to 6.5:1 inclusive of design excellence

   (c) prevent development consent being granted unless the consent authority is satisfied the resulting building contains health or medical related high technology industry.

(d) prevent development consent being granted unless the consent authority is satisfied the resulting building would not be used for residential or serviced apartments.

8. For 84-86 Parramatta Road, the provisions are to:

(a) permit a maximum building height of 30m, an increase from the current control of 18m

(b) increase the maximum floor space ratio control from 2.5:1 to 4:1

(c) prevent development consent being granted unless the consent authority is satisfied the resulting building would be used for serviced apartments only.

9. Further explanations of the provisions can be found in section 4 of the planning proposal at Attachment A.

A site-specific Development Control Plan will ensure the development demonstrates a high-quality built form and protects the public domain

10. A draft site-specific Development Control Plan (draft DCP) is at Attachment B and provides further guidance for development facilitated by this planning proposal. The draft DCP provisions include:

(a) dimensions of a maximum building envelope as shown at Figures 9 and 10

(b) guidance for partial retention of the warehouse building at 88-90 Parramatta Road

(c) additional requirements regarding sustainability, landscaping, transport and servicing, and public art

(d) a design excellence strategy.

11. The draft DCP fulfills the role of a Stage 1 Concept Development Application and with the inclusion of the Design Excellence Strategy, enables the applicant to proceed to a design competition. However, Schedule 1, section 14 (1)(c) of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021 states that "development that has an estimated development cost of more than $30 million for health, medical or related research facilities" is declared State Significant Development. In these circumstances, the draft DCP will have no statutory weight but may still provide guidance for the future consent authority in its assessment of any future DA.

Key implications

Strategic alignment with Tech Central

12. The Tech Central precinct is the most significant innovation district in New South Wales. The precinct includes an existing technology and innovation community, a growing ecosystem of technology industries, all anchored by a network of premier research and education institutions, namely the University of Sydney (USyd), University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA). The Tech Central Economic Development Strategy, released by the NSW Government in 2025, provides the state's most recent strategic direction to grow the Tech Central economy, attract and foster leading talent, and create a vibrant and welcoming destination.

13. The City of Sydney's Economic Development Strategy, released in 2025, specifically identifies Tech Central West, centred on Camperdown and the major institutions of USyd and RPA, as a major location for education, innovation, creative-tech and technology. It contains the following visions with particular relevance for the planning proposal:

    (a) boost Sydney's innovation economy and connect it globally to attract and retain businesses, talent and investment

    (b) plan for economically competitive and resilient places, including development of quality workplaces supported by infrastructure

    (c) promote areas with strong sector specialisations and a clustering of complementary economic activities.

14. The planning proposal also aligns with City Plan 2036, the City's Local Strategic Planning Statement, with particular reference to the planning priority to develop innovative and diverse business clusters in the City Fringe.

15. The Camperdown area within Tech Central accommodates an established biotechnology precinct, supporting more than 60 science, technology and research institutions. These include the Charles Perkins Centre, Brain and Mind Centre, and ongoing investment into biochemistry and biomedical engineering facilities. The Sydney Biomedical Accelerator (SBA) is currently under construction and due for completion in 2028. Co-funded by the NSW Government and USyd, it will provide 36,000sqm of life sciences floor space, bringing together clinicians with researchers and industry to accelerate research into commercialisation.

16. This planning proposal will provide an additional 34,000sqm of biomedical and life sciences research floor space with supporting office, education and retail uses. It is responding to existing demand for laboratory space and providing ongoing collaboration opportunities with USyd, RPA and SBA. It will allow students and startups to migrate to the new development on Parramatta Road as they mature and seek private investment. This keeps more of the potential economic value of the research in the City of Sydney rather than seeking support interstate or overseas. The economic impact assessment, at Attachment A9, estimates the economic benefit of the development to result in an annual net increase of:

    (a) $440.9 million in output

(b) $215.1 million in contributions to GRP

(c) $110.5 million in incomes and salaries

(d) 1,225 ongoing full-time employees.

Site context

17. The subject site is located in an area undergoing substantial change with regard to building height and density. Figure 6 below illustrates some of the future developments proposed for USyd and RPA, including the Sydney Biomedical Accelerator (SBA).

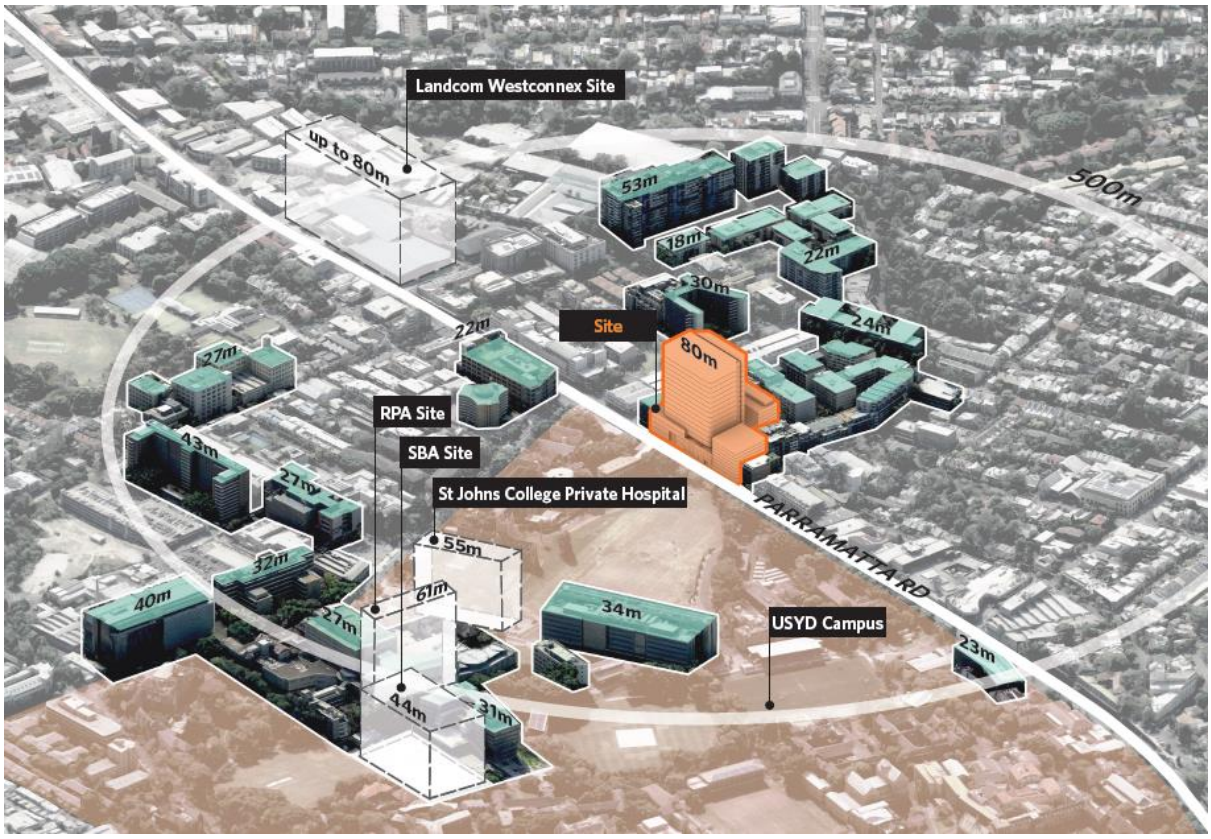


Figure 6. Parramatta Road context at time of lodgement

18. Figure 7 below illustrates some of the future residential development proposed for the area. The planning proposal site is coloured green. Sites coloured in red represent future residential development - either as part of the West Connex dive site with a maximum height of 80m or have had an Expression of Interest accepted by the Housing Delivery Authority for high-density residential between 12 and 22 storeys (approximately 40m to 70m).

19. The purple line represents areas within the Inner West Local Government Area incorporated into the State-led Rezoning for the Parramatta Road Corridor. The area in blue represents sites identified in the City of Sydney's Housing Discussion Paper as an opportunity for renewal. This idea received strong support from the community and the City will proceed with rezoning process in the near future. Therefore, the maximum height proposed for the subject site of 80m will be consistent with the area's future context.



Figure 7. Proposed high density residential along Parramatta Road (planning proposal site in green)

Built form

20. The proposed maximum height of 80m and maximum FSR of 6.5:1 for the life sciences development have been assessed by City staff. The FSR proposed is substantially lower than what could be achieved for a standard commercial office building of 80m. The lower FSR reflects the specific needs of laboratory spaces in the life sciences, including:

    (a) increased floor-to-floor heights of 4.5m to accommodate services and ventilation

    (b) increased plant size

    (c) the delivery of a floor plate to accommodate a typical research group structure with wet labs, dry labs, support labs, core facilities and storage.

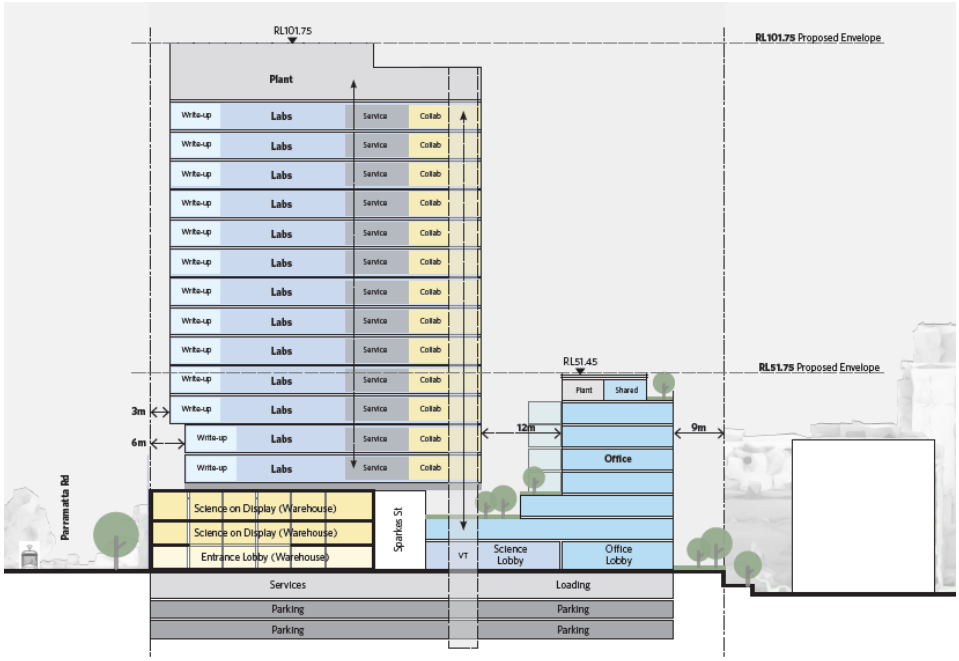


Figure 8. Reference scheme - vertical arrangement looking west

21. The draft DCP at Attachment B contains the dimensions of a maximum building envelope, which has been designed to protect sun access for neighbouring residential properties, provide for building separation and the installation of deep soil and landscaped areas, while delivering a floor plate to accommodate the needs of a life sciences facility.

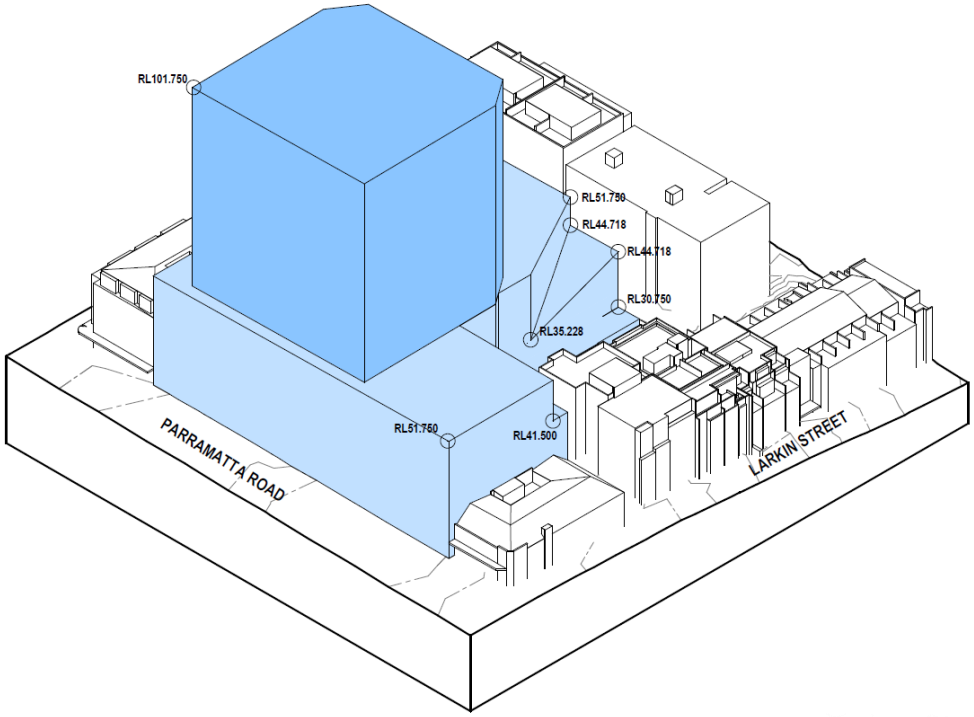


Figure 9. Maximum building envelope - axonometric south east view

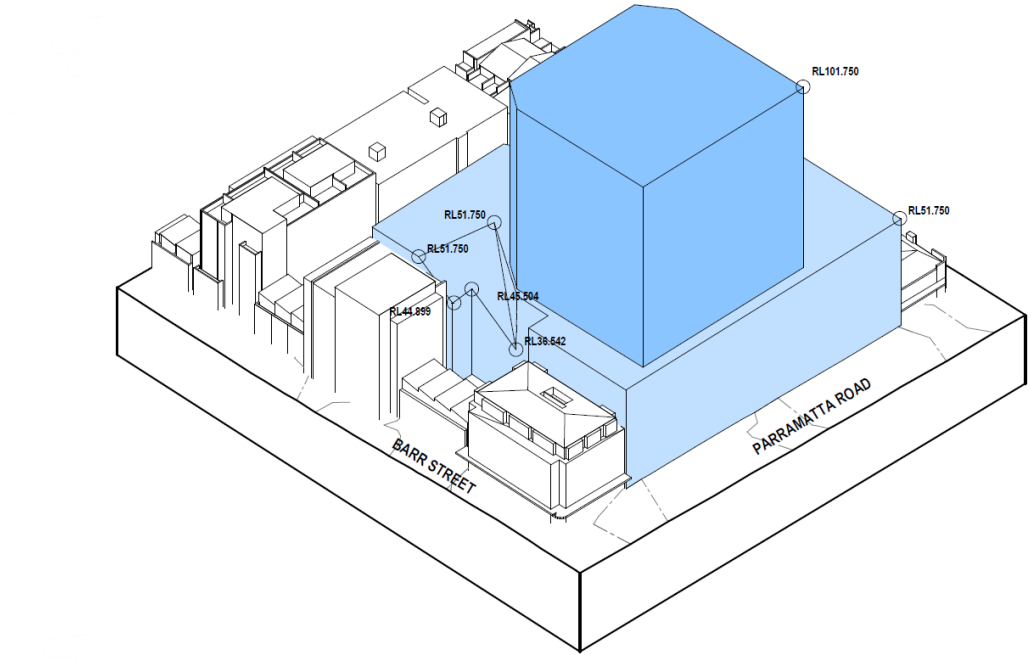


Figure 10. Maximum building envelope - axonometric south west view

Sun access

22. Positioning the tower along the southern boundary maximises building separation with surrounding residential properties and ensures alignment with the sun access objectives of the Apartment Design Guide (ADG). Figure 11 illustrates the properties assessed for sun access impact.

    (a) Some residential properties at 1 Missenden Road will lose some direct sun access between 9am and 10:30am but will still enjoy more than 2 hours throughout the day.

    (b) 32-38 Barr Street have living spaces and courtyards facing east which receive no direct sunlight at midwinter. This planning proposal will not affect their condition.

    (c) 96 Parramatta Road is not compliant with the ADG with regard to sun access, however there are 4 north-facing apartments which currently enjoy at least 2 hours of sun access at midwinter. The maximum building envelope illustrated at Figure 10 ensures these 4 apartments retain 2 hours of direct sun.

    (d) 19-21 and 23-25 Larkin Street are not affected by the proposal with regard to direct sun access at midwinter.

    (e) Non-residential properties on the southern side of Parramatta Road, including St Joseph's Catholic Church, parts of Sancta Sophia College and St John's Oval, will be affected by a loss of sun access. However, all these properties should receive in excess of 5 hours of direct sun at midwinter.

23. More information on sun access is available in section 5.3 of the planning proposal.

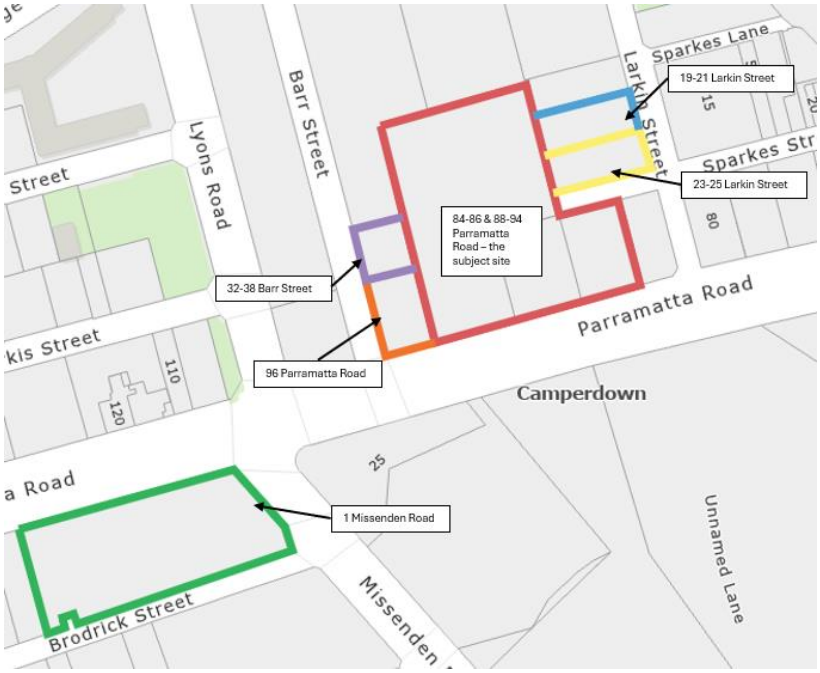


Figure 11. Neighbouring properties assessed for sun access

Visual impact

24. The proponent has undertaken a visual impact analysis which forms part of the Urban Design Report at Attachment A2. This analysis finds that no key view corridors are impacted as a result of the development. In particular, public views of the heritage-listed St John's College and St John's Oval are not affected. Views of the sky are maintained from nearby streets and parks.



Figure 12. View of Parramatta Road with maximum building envelope looking west



Figure 13. View of St John's College and Oval with maximum building envelope looking northwest

Wind

25. A quantitative wind effects report has been prepared, at Attachment A19, which is consistent with the requirements of Sydney DCP 2012. This analysis, based on wind tunnel testing of the building envelope as defined in the draft DCP at Attachment B, finds no exceedances of the Wind Safety Standard in any public place surrounding the site as a result of the development. The analysis also finds acceptable wind comfort conditions in the locations proposed for landscaping and deep soil along the northern and western boundaries of the site.

26. The analysis finds that 2 bus stops on Parramatta Road (one opposite the site on the southern side of Parramatta Road and another located approximately 65m to the east) see their mean wind speed exceed the Wind Comfort Standard for Standing, though remain within the Wind Comfort Standard for Walking. There is no exceedance of Wind Safety Standards, and opportunities remain for further refinement of the proposal to improve wind conditions through the design excellence process and subsequent lodgement of the DA.

Heritage

27. Part of the site is occupied by a 3-storey brick warehouse constructed in the Inter-War period (c. 1927) as a motor-car showroom and possibly a service station. The ground floor has been considerably altered, but the first and second floors retain some original timber flooring, columns, beams and joists.

28. Building on the applicant's intention to retain the historic warehouse and the advice received from the City's Design Advisory Panel, the draft DCP at Attachment B has an objective to “[maximise] opportunities to retain significant portions of the warehouse building at 88-90 Parramatta Road, including façade, columns, roof form and wooden floors, beams and trusses”. This objective is supported by additional guidance with regard to the legibility of the building from Parramatta Road, and the location of any additional structural supports, new building services and access points.

Transport and servicing

29. The Transport Impact Assessment at Attachment A7 concluded that the traffic generated by the proposal would be considered modest compared to existing and future background traffic in the network. The reference design proposes 185 parking spaces, which is below the maximum of 199 spaces allowable under Sydney LEP. The site will also be required to provide end of journey facilities in accordance with the minimum rates for office premises or business premises.

30. The reference design has shown 5 loading bays in the basement loading dock accessed from Sparkes Street: 1 x 9.8m bay suitable for a commercial waste vehicle; 2 x 8.8m medium goods vehicle (MGV); and 2 x 6m light goods vehicle (LGV). Any future detailed DA will need to be accompanied by a Delivery Servicing Plan in accordance with the requirements of Sydney DCP, once a final design for the loading dock has been completed. Swept path diagrams have been provided demonstrating that these vehicles can enter and exit the site via Sparkes and Larkin Streets. More information on transport and servicing issues is available in section 5.3 of the planning proposal.

Public benefit offer

31. The proponent has offered to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with Council to deliver public benefits as part of this planning proposal. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act) allows the proponent to enter into a VPA with Council. Voluntary Planning Agreements are voluntary and must be freely entered into by the public authority and a proponent. They are also publicly exhibited and held on a publicly accessible register.

32. The letter from the landowner at Attachment C to this report offers to provide upgrades to Sparkes Street and Larkin Street to improve the pedestrian environment, achieve a 5-star Green Star Buildings rating which is stronger than the current requirement for this land use, and an in-kind contribution to public art to be delivered on site. This offer will not offset any applicable infrastructure or affordable housing contributions required under Sydney LEP or the Act.

33. The VPA will be prepared and is intended to be publicly exhibited with the planning proposal.

Serviced apartments at 84-86 Parramatta Road

34. This planning proposal increases the maximum FSR for the serviced apartment building from 2.5:1 to 4:1, for the purposes of serviced apartments only. The reference design provided by the applicant shows a scheme where the existing structure is retained and 3 additional storeys are added. The proposed amendment to Sydney LEP does not require building retention, allowing for full redevelopment of the site in the future.

35. The proposed FSR of 4:1 is lower than the request made by the proponent of 4.5:1. Following assessment of the proposal by City staff, it was not considered possible for any future detailed DA to provide a design that would achieve the higher FSR while demonstrating compliance with ADG with regard to sun access.

36. The lower FSR has been tested to ensure that it can be accommodated with the maximum building height of 30m and the maximum building envelope as defined in the draft DCP. An increased setback to the northern boundary for the 3 additional storeys has been included to ensure sufficient building separation to 23-25 Larkin Street.

37. The Flood Risk Assessment at Attachment A11 assumes retention of the existing structure with no change to existing floor levels. It demonstrates that the site is above the 1% AEP level and all finished floor levels are above the flood planning levels required by section 3.7.1.2 of the Policy and Housekeeping Amendments to Sydney DCP.

38. The site is vulnerable in a PMF event however the assessment concludes that the flood risk to the residential lobby and lift shafts is estimated as a 0.05% AEP event, a level of risk that can be managed through an emergency risk management plan and shelter-in-place plan in alignment with relevant state and City policies.

39. More information on these issues can be found in section 5.3 of the planning proposal.

Strategic alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

40. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:

    (a) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - This proposal requires areas of deep soil and tree planting, contributing to the City's canopy targets. The development will also need to achieve a 5-star Green Star Buildings rating.

    (b) Direction 4 - Design excellence and sustainable development - The proposal is to achieve a high-quality urban outcome which responds to amenity and heritage. Any future development application will need to demonstrate design excellence following the completion of a successful design competition.

    (c) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - The proposal facilitates the delivery of more than 34,000 square metres of biomedical and life sciences research floor space with complementary commercial and education uses, in a location with an established cluster of education, innovation and technology activities surrounding USyd and RPA.

Risks

41. City staff have undertaken a thorough assessment of the planning proposal and found that it demonstrates strategic and site-specific merit in accordance with NSW Government guidelines. The planning proposal is consistent with City policies and strategies including City Plan 2036, Economic Development Strategy and Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision. Progressing the planning proposal is within the City's risk tolerance and appetite.

42. The planning proposal has demonstrated that development can be capable of complying with relevant environmental and planning laws, regulations and industry standards and is within the City's minimal appetite for non-compliance with environmental laws, regulations and industry standards.

43. Proceeding with the planning proposal will meet the City's minimal appetite for disruption to our regulatory functions as decisions will be within the timeframes set in Environmental Planning and Assessment (Statement of Expectations) Order 2026.

Relevant legislation

44. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

45. Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.

Critical dates / Time frames

46. Should Council and the Central Sydney Planning Committee endorse the attached planning proposal for public exhibition, it will be forwarded to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure in accordance with section 3.34 of the Act for Gateway Determination. The Gateway Determination will provide the required date for the completion of the Local Environmental Plan amendment. Following public exhibition, the outcomes will be reported back to Council and the Central Sydney Planning Committee.

Public consultation

47. The public exhibition process for this planning proposal will be determined by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. It is planned for the public exhibition of the planning proposal, draft Development Control Plan and draft VPA to run concurrently. The consultation will be in accordance with:

    (a) the Gateway Determination issued by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure under section 3.34 of the Act;

    (b) the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021;

    (c) the NSW Community Participation Plan; and

    (d) the City of Sydney's Community Engagement Strategy.

48. It is likely that the public exhibition period for the planning proposal would be a minimum of 28 days.

49. The planning proposal and draft Development Control Plan will be publicly exhibited on the City of Sydney website in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.

50. Following public consultation, the planning proposal and draft DCP will be reported back along with details on submissions received for consideration by Council and the Central Sydney Planning Committee.

GRAHAM JAHN AM

Chief Planner / Executive Director City Planning, Development and Transport

James Dirickx-Jones, Planner