FLINDERS STREET STATION DESIGN COMPETITION

STATEMENT OF KEY OBJECTIVES

MAJOR PROJECTS VICTORIA
INTRODUCTION

First built in 1854, Flinders Street Station is a beloved and vital part of Melbourne. As Melbourne’s main railway station, Flinders Street is used by more than 150,000 passengers a day, while its iconic heritage buildings and features have become a part of the city’s collective consciousness.

As Melbourne and Victoria have grown, a number of new challenges have emerged for the station and its surrounding precinct: transport patronage is expected to double in the next decade and a new underground metro rail line is planned for central Melbourne; integration with surrounding precincts such as Federation Square and the south bank of the Yarra River is poor; large areas of the heritage listed Administration Building are in urgent need of restoration and have not been publicly accessible for decades; and the western end of the site is underutilised and offers potential for new buildings and spaces.

On 15 November 2011, Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu and Minister for Major Projects Denis Napthine announced an open design competition looking for the world’s best ideas to upgrade, restore and reinvigorate the Flinders Street Station precinct.

With entries opening in mid-2012, the Victorian Government has offered a prize pool of $1 million for the very best ideas from across the globe to fully explore the potential of this Melbourne landmark.

This statement of key objectives is the basis of a detailed design brief to be released as part of the competition documentation.
OVERVIEW

COMPETITION OBJECTIVES

The guiding objectives of the Flinders Street Station Design Competition are:

- to upgrade the station to its former glory—in the tradition of other great cities around the world—as a Victorian and international landmark and a centrepiece of the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD);
- to restore and protect the Administration Building and other heritage elements with adaptive reuse of areas of high public interest such as the ballroom, making them accessible to the public;
- to improve all aspects of the transport function of the station and adjacent transport modes and cater for significant growth in transport patronage;
- to better integrate the station with the surrounding precincts that have grown up around it and provide better linkages between the CBD and the Yarra River;
- to better utilise the land adjacent to rail and the air space above rail on the western portion of the site;
- to provide significant civic space, while allowing for a distinctive and memorable architectural outcome, with a mix of uses; and
- to provide a value-for-money solution capable of being (at least partially) self-funding.
TRANSPORT

1. CATER FOR FUTURE GROWTH
As Melbourne’s busiest train station, Flinders Street Station is the hub of the city’s metropolitan radial rail network. More than 150,000 patrons currently use the station on a typical weekday, and by 2021 the typical weekday patronage is forecast to more than double, to around 400,000. This growth will necessitate expanding the station’s capacity, which will include improving patron access to the station.

2. EXTEND PLATFORMS
Platforms currently cater for 6-car trains (platform length of 160 metres). Some platforms may need to be reconfigured and provision made to extend them to accommodate 9-car trains (platform length of 230 metres).

3. INTEGRATE WITH POTENTIAL MELBOURNE METRO
Under the proposed plans for the Melbourne Metro underground rail line, there is potential for a CBD South metro station near the intersection of Flinders and Swanston streets. Provision needs to be made to ensure that Flinders Street Station can be adequately integrated with this proposal.

4. CONTINUE TO OPERATE WITH MINIMAL IMPACT
The station needs to continue to operate during construction activities, with minimal impact on trains and patrons. Design proposals will need to consider construction adjacent to and over ‘live’ rail, limited opportunities for structural support, staging and construction methods.
HERITAGE

5. RESTORATION AND USE OF ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The station, and in particular the Administration Building, is a Victorian and international landmark which enjoys great public affection. The whole site is also listed on the Victorian Heritage Register. With these facts in mind, it is vital to retain the heritage facade and significant internal elements, integrate the building with new development, and restore the building to ensure all areas are used and valued. An objective for internal areas that have high public interest, such as the ballroom, is that they be accessible to the public.

6. INTEGRATED ADAPTIVE REUSE OF HERITAGE ELEMENTS

The historical and heritage significance of the site must be considered as a whole and include the integration and adaptive reuse of other heritage elements such as the Banana Alley Vaults and the Milk Dock.
**PRECINCT INTEGRATION**

7. **LIMIT OVERSHADOWING OF THE SOUTH BANK OF THE Yarra RIVER**

New building forms must not cast shadows onto the south bank of the Yarra River for any significant length of time.

8. **MAINTAIN IMPORTANT VIEW LINES**

New building forms must maintain important view lines of significant landmarks on the station land such as the main dome, the Elizabeth Street clock tower and the south elevation of the Administration Building when viewed from Southbank. They must also maintain important view lines of significant landmarks around the station, such as St Paul’s Cathedral.

9. **IMPROVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE CBD AND THE RIVER**

A better connection between the CBD and the Yarra River’s north bank is required. The station currently acts as a 560 metre barrier separating the CBD from the river, and only one highly congested pedestrian path through the station is provided by the Elizabeth Street underpass.

10. **PRINCES BRIDGE ENTRY TO THE CBD AND CONNECTION WITH FEDERATION SQUARE**

Princes Bridge on St Kilda Road, the premier river crossing and entry to Melbourne’s CBD, enjoys views of the open space and forms of Federation Square and St Paul’s Cathedral. The Swanston Street (east) elevation of the station and connection with Federation Square, however, needs improvement.

11. **QUEENS BRIDGE ENTRY TO THE CBD AND WESTERN END OF THE SITE**

The western end of the site is particularly constrained by the complex road and traffic conditions associated with the Queens Bridge and Flinders streets junction, and with:

- overhead rail track supports;
- offsetting traffic between Queens Bridge Street and William Street away from the no-through road of Market Street; and
- the heritage significance of the Banana Alley Vaults.

This part of the site is also likely to be required for maintenance, recovery and emergency vehicle access to rail infrastructure and is a potential vehicle access point for any new development. The objective is to improve the western end of the site.
TOURISM AND EVENTS

12. RESTORE AND PRESERVE A LANDMARK BUILDING

Flinders Street Station’s main entry at the corner of Flinders and Swanston streets is one of the quintessential images of Melbourne. This corner element and the 240 metre heritage facade along Flinders Street are intrinsic parts of Melbourne’s history and identity. The objective for these elements is that they be restored as close as possible to their original intent and for them to be preserved for the future.

13. ENHANCE THE STATION AS A POPULAR DESTINATION

Melbourne and Victoria compete with other Australian destinations to attract visitors, major events, conventions and other activities. The station precinct has the potential to play a greater role in tourism and events by providing new congregation spaces supported by the provision of food, beverages and entertainment and possibly hotel accommodation. A great design will also attract people.
14. BETTER UTILISATION OF SPACE
The space above and adjacent to the tracks needs to be used to provide greater benefit to the State. The total land area of the station site is 46,800 square metres, with the footprint of the Administration Building being 3,200 square metres, the eastern concourse 5,300 square metres and the platforms 11,200 square metres. Above and adjacent to the tracks, some 27,100 square metres, or about 60 per cent of the total land area, is underutilised.

15. IMPROVE USEFULNESS OF THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
To protect it into the future, the Administration Building must be made more useful and economically valuable. The building has five levels comprising basement, ground, first, second and third floors. The current usable space varies on each level, and while a significant portion is required for circulation within the building, it could provide in the order of 9,000 square metres of space for uses consistent with heritage requirements.
16. CONSIDER COMMERCIAL ELEMENTS

Consideration must be given to a commercial component for any redevelopment so that cost to the State is reduced. Accordingly, the State is prepared to consider commercial elements, particularly towards the western section of the site.

17. BALANCED OUTCOME FOR VICTORIANS

To improve the transport function and restore the station as a cultural heritage landmark, a significant public investment may be required. The State considers it important to find a balance between reducing the burden on public funding while maximising the benefits that are valued by the majority of Victorians.
18. DISTINCTIVE DESIGN OUTCOMES

The project seeks distinctive design outcomes that will add to the rich collection of memorable spaces and buildings of which Melbourne is justly proud. Flinders Street Station is a critically important landmark site on the edge of the city grid, on the edge of the river, and opposite two key civic and cultural sites—Federation Square and the Arts precinct. To make the most of this important site, the State is conducting a generously awarded international architectural competition to attract design propositions of excellence from the best in the world.
**INDICATIVE SCHEDULE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Site Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration Building</td>
<td>Restore &amp; Internal Refurb</td>
<td>3,200m²</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Concourse</td>
<td>Reconfigure &amp; Improve</td>
<td>5,300m²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Platforms</td>
<td>Restore &amp; Improve</td>
<td>11,200m²</td>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<td>Site 'A' (West Concourse)</td>
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<td>Site 'B' (Milk Dock)</td>
<td>New Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site 'C' (Banana Alley Vaults)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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