

## Case Study

# Melbourne Connect

Melbourne Connect (MC) is a purpose-built innovation precinct built to connect world-class researchers, industry leaders, high-degree students, and artists.

This project was delivered under challenging conditions due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.



## Project Objectives

As Independent Certifier (IC), North's objective was to monitor compliance with the Project Documents, assess progress in terms of time, cost, and scope, and oversee commissioning activities, ultimately enabling the Certification of Practical Completion.

North's IC service offered an impartial, trusted assessment and certification. After identifying non-compliances associated with the programme, several remedial steps were performed by IC and the project team.

## Project Challenges

The Pandemic introduced additional complexities to conducting onsite inspections and assessing COVID-19 ramp-up costs, along with ongoing construction works. Apart from standard quality control methods for inspection, the team developed a paperless methodology for the entire inspection process.

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This enabled site progress tracking in real-time. Assessment of site progress was rooted in drawing reviews, and all steps were completed through MS OneNote from a mobile device in place of paper documents.

## Project Solution

North tackled programme issues by adopting best practice standards for programme review, while removing underlying cost uncertainties by breaking down the aggregate cost into its associated separable proportions for the Commercial Precinct and Student Accommodation Building separately. These measures created transparency and accountability throughout peak construction activities and facilitated increased efficiency and effectiveness for rapid claim assessment, better – and quicker – decision-making, and the prevention of any potential contractual risks that may have arisen.

## Key Features

North developed an interactive Power BI Dashboard for large-projects that drive project teams' insights and facilitate evidence-based decision making.

As IC, North protects all parties' rights for project variations, building defects, disputes & programme delays. Drawing from business intelligence tools to harness the power of project data and provide current and strategic advice, North's IC team improved project outcomes for all key stakeholders and end users.

## Results

Utilising expertise in area and numerical analysis, North developed a cost benchmarking system to efficiently and accurately calculate the monthly payment certification amount. This enabled the assessment against the works completed to date and forecasted the monthly claim and progress to foresee and prevent cost overruns and project delays.

The precinct houses three separate buildings with different functions and uses to cater to the unique tenants and stakeholders. It was essential that the total project cost be broken down into a high level of granularity for transparency and to ensure cost-effectiveness across all buildings. North assisted and enabled Lendlease Building to drill down on the costs of main works and variations and soft costs, which eliminated uncertainties and prevented possible disputes. North's experienced IC expert and Contract experts supported the project with extensive knowledge in EOT assessment – and general commercial nous – to ensure all project parties commercial interests were protected in line with the iron triangle principles of time, cost and scope.