

MEDIA RELEASE

Ahead of the 2032 Olympics, Aria unveils Sanctuary, South Brisbane

As Brisbane prepares to host the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Aria Property Group, in conjunction with Richards + Spence and Bates Smart reveal an elaborate precinct consisting of five laneways, two restored heritage buildings and a public urban meadow.

The first tower, Sanctuary is crowned by Australia's first triple level rooftop club, a double level wellness club, and owner-occupied penthouse quality apartments featuring 2.9 metre high ceilings.

SOUTH BRISBANE, October 2026. As Brisbane prepares to welcome the world for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Aria Property Group has released the full design of Sanctuary, South Brisbane a new precinct on one of the last major undeveloped sites on Melbourne Street in the heart of the city's cultural district.

At street level, Richards + Spence has threaded five new laneways, two restored heritage buildings, twelve retail and dining tenancies and a new public park at 164 Melbourne Street. Above rises Sanctuary Residences, with architecture and interiors by Bates Smart and landscape design by Subtropic Design.

Aria spent eight years amalgamating the site across multiple titles, now holding 7,200m2.

Richards + Spence, the Brisbane architects behind The Calile Hotel and Aria's own Fish Lane Town Square wanted to create a precinct which lived up to its name. Instead of typical podium carparks and services, Aria created a step up off the hustle and bustle off the street, into an urban sanctuary.

"Sanctuary South Brisbane is a rare legacy project that, due to its scale, ambition and location, simply cannot be repeated," says Brent Liddell, Development Director of Aria Property Group.

Rather than a set of individual buildings, Sanctuary South Brisbane was planned as a single integrated precinct with the design intent concentrated at the ground. Pushing vehicular access and services to the rear of the site freed the entire street level for people, opening three active frontages with a connected web of five laneways and green courtyards.

"'Buildings worth keeping' is something we say a lot at Richards + Spence," says director Ingrid Richards. "The opportunity here was to mend the streetscape and build a cohesive precinct identity, held together at street level. We've kept to a limited palette, so the architecture feels like it has always been there, and lets the tenants and the landscape provide the colour."

The palette is brick and concrete, with roughly 240,000 red bricks in homage to the South Brisbane brickworks, whose iron-rich clay built the neighbourhood's early civic buildings and warehouses. Brick also holds up well in the subtropical humidity and weathers rather than needing to be reclad. Two heritage buildings are restored and folded back into the street. The 1951 Art Deco Bond's Sweet Factory becomes the precinct's flagship venue, a double-storey restaurant looking out over Melbourne Street and the laneways either side take the names Bond's Lane and Little Bond's Lane. On the corner, the former Malouf's fruit shop is reworked as an all-day dining venue opening onto Malouf Terrace.

Melbourne Lane runs the full width of the site as the precinct's spine, connecting restaurants, boutiques, the residential lobby and the park. Subtropic Design has planted the laneways densely with tree ferns, bird's nest ferns, native vines and understorey species drawn from South Brisbane's pre-European rainforest, so they feel shaded

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and enclosed. They open onto Sanctuary Park, an urban meadow of sweeping grasses, flowering natives and tiered seating, which is public space. In all there are 13,738 trees and plants across the precinct and a green plot ratio of approximately 76 per cent, unusually high for an inner-city site.

Bates Smart, designers of Aria's Rivière development, has worked with Brisbane's climate in Sanctuary Residences. Each apartment has a front door with a magnetic hold-open and a perforated security screen, so it can be left open to the naturally ventilated corridors and lobbies and let air move through the home all day. Balconies are deeply recessed for shade, glazing is operable and double-glazed and ceilings are 2.9 metres high, which Aria puts at 15% more volume than a conventional apartment. Lemon myrtle trees are planted on every second level of the tower.

"We wanted every journey through the residences to feel immersed in nature and unmistakably Brisbane," says Guy Lake, Director at Bates Smart. "The arrival sequence moves from landscaped forecourt to a hotel-inspired lobby via naturally ventilated corridors, so residents feel and touch air and greenery throughout."

The building is all-electric, with induction cooking, rooftop solar and a water-cooled chilled water system that Aria says reduces peak cooling energy by up to 30%. Every car space is EV-ready and residents share electric cars, e-scooters and a bike workshop. Bates Smart's interiors use warm natural materials, finely made joinery and softly sculpted forms, with V-ZUG and Sub-Zero appliances.

The residents' amenity is on a scale never seen in an Australian apartment building, closer in spirit to a private members' club and resort than to a conventional tower. It spans more than 4,600 square metres over seven levels, and brings what Aria calls the penthouse experience to every resident.

The Residents' Retreat at ground level has a lounge, courtyard garden and residents' art collection. Level 5 is Sanctuary Club, Aria's first private members club, which serves residents with a concierge, a longevity performance lab, treatment rooms, a work-from-home suite, a creative studio and a soundproofed music room. Levels 15 and 16 form a double-height Wellness Club and Bathhouse with Finnish and infrared saunas, hot and cold mineral plunges, a reformer pilates studio, golf simulator, games room, cinema and an indoor multi-sport court whose interactive floor reconfigures for different sports. On level 41 are three bookable guest suites, including Aria's first penthouse suite.

The tower is topped by a triple-height Rooftop Club, which Aria describes as Australia's first, following the double-height club it pioneered at Upper House, an earlier development. The centrepiece is a crescent-shaped lagoon pool with broad entry steps, surrounded by cabanas, mineral soaking baths, a private dining room, residents' wine cellar and a sunken lounge with fireplace. A Sky Bar and stargazing platform sit above on level 43.

Buyers have responded strongly. Aria has sold \$519 million worth of apartments exclusively to its database through September without a public launch, with three- and four-bedroom homes the strongest sellers appealing to owner occupiers and particularly downsizers. With limited options remaining, the final apartments will be released on 19 October.

Sanctuary Residences is due for completion in mid to late 2029, opening ahead of the Brisbane 2032 Games.

"Sanctuary has resonated strongly with discerning owner-occupiers and downsizers who won't compromise on quality and recognise exceptional value. By progressively securing the land over eight years and commencing construction 2.5 years ago, we're delivering a level of luxury, amenity and lifestyle that simply couldn't be replicated if the project started today. Surpassing \$500 million in sales before public launch demonstrates just how strongly buyers have recognised this opportunity," says Chris Houston, Head of Sales of Aria Property Group.

Sanctuary: at a glance

- A new precinct at 164–190 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane, developed by Aria Property Group
- Precinct public realm by Richards + Spence; Sanctuary Residences architecture and interiors by Bates Smart; landscape design by Subtropic Design
- Five new laneways, including Melbourne Lane, Bond's Lane and Little Bond's Lane, and approximately 3,000 square metres of public realm
- Two restored heritage buildings: the 1951 Art Deco Bond's Sweet Factory, to become a flagship restaurant, and the former Malouf's fruit shop, to become an all-day dining venue
- Approximately 240,000 red bricks, in homage to the South Brisbane brickworks
- Sanctuary Park, a public urban meadow; 13,738 trees and plants; green plot ratio of approximately 76 per cent
- Sanctuary Residences: 231 apartments over 43 levels, the first of three towers; 2.9 metre ceilings, naturally ventilated corridors and lobbies, all-electric
- Seven levels of residents' amenity over more than 4,600 square metres, including a triple-height Rooftop Club, Sky Bar, double-height Wellness Club and Bathhouse, and Sanctuary Club members club
- Twelve retail and dining tenancies
- Sanctuary Residences completion mid to late 2029; precinct opening in stages ahead of the Brisbane 2032 Games

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About Aria Property Group

Aria Property Group is a privately owned Brisbane developer established in 2003, known for design-led residential buildings and public spaces across South Brisbane, West End and Kangaroo Point. It has delivered 3,144 residences across 33 projects and manages 1,803 residential properties, four public realm precincts and 162 retail and commercial tenancies. Aria delivers in-house through Rivière Constructions alongside its design, development, sales and property management teams, and is the country's most awarded high-density developer, with 7x national and 13x Queensland honours from the Urban Development Institute of Australia.

About Richards + Spence

Richards + Spence was founded in Brisbane in 2008 by Ingrid Richards and Adrian Spence. Working largely in brick, concrete and stone, the practice has shaped a contemporary subtropical language for the city through projects including The Calile Hotel, the James Street precinct and Fish Lane Town Square, and its work is widely published internationally.

About Bates Smart

Bates Smart is one of Australia's oldest architecture practices, tracing its origins to 1853. A multidisciplinary studio of architecture, interior and urban design based in Melbourne and Sydney, its work spans landmark civic and cultural buildings, among them the State Library of Victoria, the Royal Exhibition Building and the Australian Embassy in Washington DC. In Brisbane it designed Rivière for Aria.

About Subtropic Design

Subtropic Design is a Brisbane landscape architecture studio led by award-winning landscape architect Vicki Barclay. With a focus on public realm, urban regeneration and high-density residential projects, the studio designs landscapes built around subtropical outdoor living and the neighbourhoods they serve.



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