



The Hon. Robert Borsak, MLC  
Chair, Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021  
Parliament House,  
6 Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

27 January 2022

Dear Chair and members of the Select Committee,

**Clarification of evidence provided at the hearings of the Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021**

Thank you for the opportunity for Carsingha Investments Pty Ltd ('Carsingha') to appear and provide evidence before the Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021.

Due to the technical difficulties at the Select Committee hearing of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust Bill 2021 and the difficulties in hearing questions Carsingha wish to make clear statements made today.

**Carsingha has only held its lease over The Entertainment Quarter for just over 7 years**

Carsingha's lease over The Entertainment Quarter (EQ) commenced on 22 December 2014 and expires on 21 April 2036 with an option to renew for a further 10 years (ie potential remaining term of c.14 years + 10 years or a total of c.24 years remaining)

Carsingha's original and current intention is to revitalise EQ.

As such, it lodged its Unsolicited Proposal with the NSW Government in 2019. In early 2020, the NSW Government noted that Carsingha was uniquely positioned to deliver its proposal and agreed that the proposal in concept form was of "sufficient interest to warrant further development and progression to a more defined project" as part of Stage 2 of this process.

**It is important to understand the prior history and that there were two former EQ leaseholders who both struggled to make acceptable commercial returns as a function of current restrictions on the site. This is what facilitated the approach to Government about a USP.**

In 1998, the Royal Agricultural Society relocated to Homebush Bay and the Sydney Showground land and facilities were redeveloped as a working studio together with public entertainment, commercial and retail facilities.

In 1999, EQ and Fox Studios Back Lot opened, however, it was closed just three years later due to heavy commercial losses. Following this, EQ was then separated from Fox Studios and the ownership was transferred to News Corp's joint venture partner, Lend Lease Corporation.

After reporting a write-down on the project of more than \$145 million after tax in 2002, Lend Lease sold its interest in EQ to Colonial First State in 2004.



Similarly, Colonial First State was unable to make its anticipated returns and sold its remaining interest in the long term lease to Carsingha for \$80 million in December 2014.

### **Scale of proposed redevelopment**

Carsingha also wish to clarify that its revised emerging Vision (attached as **TAB A**) does not include any 20 story towers which was referenced by a number of witnesses today.

### **Long-term leases**

The NSW Government currently allows for long-term leases for up to 99 years on land which is considered State Significant, including The Rocks, Darling Harbour, Western Sydney Parklands and Sydney Olympic Park.

Each lease term is negotiated on a case-by-case basis on its merits. The amendments to the Bill place a cap of 50 years, which make it uneconomic for any substantial investment.

The current Masterplan's features and benefits are predicated upon a longer term lease. Reducing the term of the lease to 50 years maximum would have a significant adverse impact to the future amenities to be provided to the Community.

Industry standard returns would not be achievable within a 50-year lease for this site.

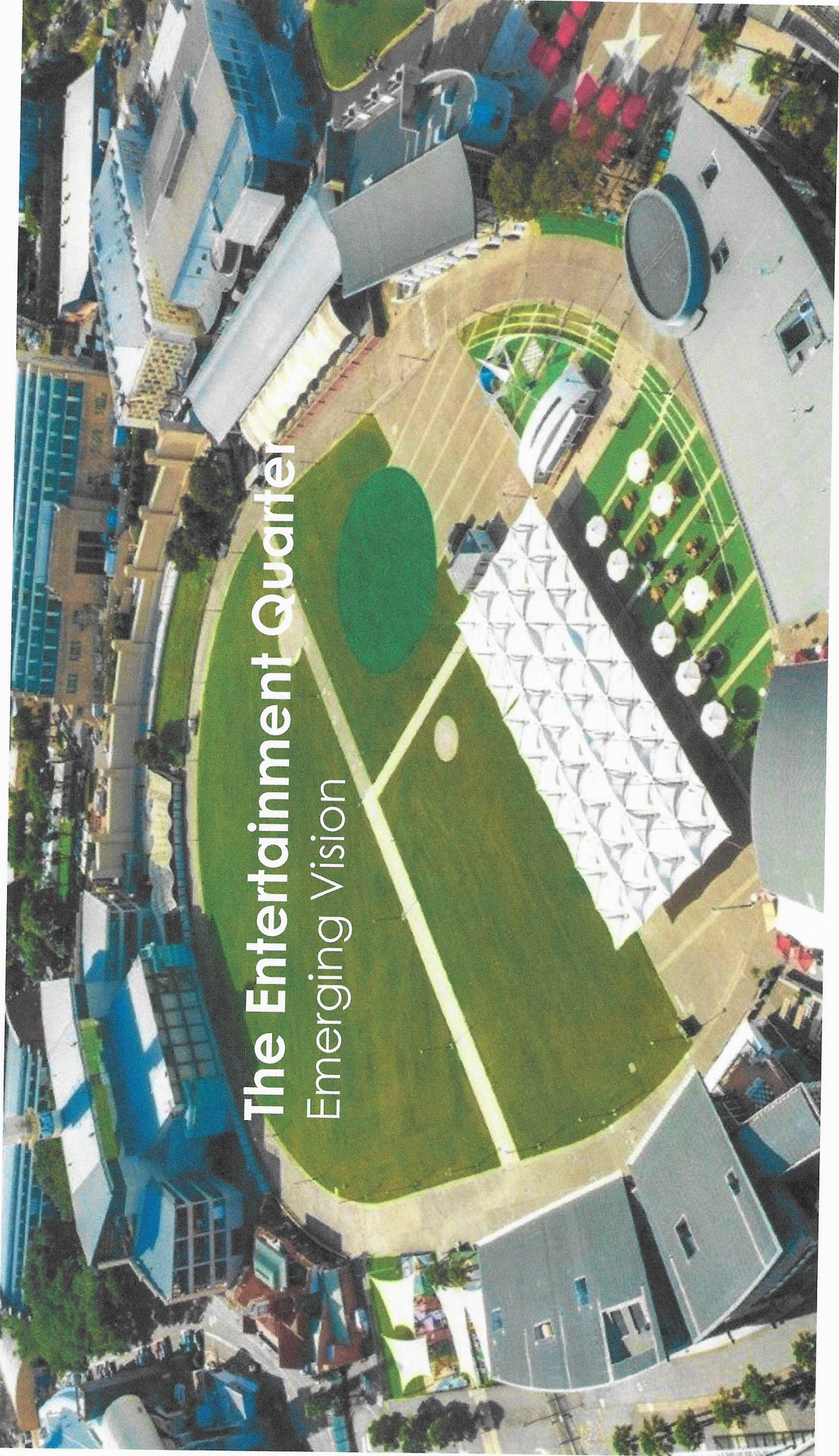
If you have any questions or would like to clarify anything, please do not hesitate to call Sam Romaniuk, co-CEO of The Entertainment Quarter

Yours sincerely,

**Max Moore-Wilton AC**

Chairman, The Entertainment Quarter

**TAB A: Emerging Vision for The Entertainment Quarter**



# The Entertainment Quarter

## Emerging Vision

# Purpose

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## Background

Carsingha Investments Pty Ltd ('Carsingha') holds a leasehold interest from the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust (the 'Trust') over the site known as The Entertainment Quarter ("EQ"). The lease expires on 21 April 2036 with an option to renew for a further 10 years (ie potential remaining term of c.15 years + 10 years)

The Moore Park precinct is the home of many world class facilities and organisations within the sporting, entertainment and broader creative industries, including the Sydney Cricket Ground, Hordern Pavilion, Fox Studios (Disney) and the Australian Film and Television School.

In 2019, Carsingha submitted an Unsolicited Proposal to Government, who agreed that the revitalisation of EQ into a world class integrated leisure, events, cultural, creative and entertainment precinct is of sufficient interest in concept form to warrant progression to Stage 2 of the Unsolicited Proposal process.

## Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to outline Carsingha's emerging Vision for EQ.

The emerging Vision has been developed in close consultation with the Community, neighbouring organisations, industry bodies and feedback from State and Local elected leaders.

Notwithstanding the long term aspiration for EQ, we expect that more detailed features will change over time as greater feedback is sought from the various stakeholders.

# EQ's historical link with public cultural and recreational activity has been lost

## EQ's history of community connection and public events

The area now known as Moore Park was originally part of Governor Macquarie's 'Second Sydney Common'. The area was quickly transformed through the creation of sports facilities, the Zoological Garden and the Sydney Showground (which today incorporates EQ and Fox Studios)

By the turn of the century, Moore Park was Sydney's most popular sporting and entertainment precinct

The Royal Agricultural Society used the Sydney Showground to host the largest annual drawcards to the Park, being the Royal Easter Show, which was held at the site for 116 years. RAS sought to encourage and promote the rural industry through competition, education and events, with competitive displays showcasing the best animals and rural produce.

Over time, the event grew and diversified, and featured more commercial and entertainment activities in addition to rural industries.

Throughout its history, the Sydney Showground at Moore Park has been an important public asset, with a focus on a diverse range of cultural and recreational activity.

## In recent times, successive leaseholders have failed to capitalise on the site's history, location and key attributes

In 1998, the RAS relocated to Homebush Bay and the Sydney Showground land and facilities were redeveloped as a working studio together with public entertainment, commercial and retail facilities.

In 1999, EQ and Fox Studios Back Lot opened, however, it was closed just three years later due to heavy commercial losses. Following this, EQ was then separated from Fox Studios and the ownership was transferred to News Corp's joint venture partner, Lend Lease Corporation.

EQ's land uses, activities and planning framework have restricted successive owners in the way the precinct has been positioned. As such, the local community has failed to embrace the retail and commercial offer.

## The site has suffered from difficult access, restricted range of uses and a lack of critical mass of people

The Moore Park precinct has long suffered from a fragmentation of individual land holdings, that has resulted in poor integration and connectivity between EQ and adjacent lessees and owners, including the Stadia precinct (SCG and SFS), Hordern Pavilion, Royal Hall of Industries, Fox Studios and the Equestrian Centre. Each space has, in effect, operated as its own independent 'walled precinct'.

In addition, the restrictive planning framework has restricted the activities at EQ to specific activities, being film, television and video industries. As wider economic activity and community expectations change over time, overly restrictive employment zones can limit employment opportunities and consumer choice.

Further, a restriction on employment uses has challenged the site to accommodate embed a critical mass of people within EQ to drive a sustainable daytime turnover of the retail precinct. This, in turn, has limited the diversity, quality and number of food and beverage operators necessary to draw custom from outside the precinct and sustain and financially viable night time destination

# **EQ serves an essential purpose for local communities, entertainment industries and tourists**

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## **Growth in population in the Eastern Harbour City will require further investment in social infrastructure in the Moore Park precinct**

By 2030, upwards of 60,000 additional people are estimated to reside around Moore Park, including the City of Sydney, Woollahra, Waverly and Randwick Council areas. This will place additional pressure on public spaces, access and pedestrian/cycling demands. Specifically for the Moore Park precinct, access to Moore Park will continue to be challenged. While most visitors arrive by car, the Light Rail will increase the number of people arriving by public transport.

Further, pedestrian and cycling will continue to be a growing mode of transport in need of infrastructure and access, particularly between the West of Anzac Parade and the connection to Centennial Park and the Eastern beaches.

This growth in population is also expected to place pressure on the availability of community sporting facilities. Although widely recognised as a providing physical and mental health benefits to the community, growth in community sports in Eastern Sydney is being inhibited by a deficient provision of new open space, new community and second tier facilities and a lack of inclusive amenities at existing venues.

## **Recent significant sporting and tourism investment underpins Moore Park precinct's expanded role in Sydney's future economic growth**

The Moore Park precinct, in the context of the Eastern Harbour City and Greater Sydney, is undergoing significant infrastructure and economic transformation. The precinct will play a key role in realising The Greater Sydney Commission's vision for the Eastern Harbour City as a 30 minute city, where jobs, services and quality public spaces are in easy reach of people's homes.

In addition, the Eastern Harbour City is well placed to provide much needed support to support wider Government economic initiatives, such as the 24 hour economy and COVID-19 recovery efforts.

In recent times, the NSW Government has invested significant funds to assist the Tourism and Major Events industries resident within the Moore Park precinct, namely the construction of the Sydney Football Stadium (c.\$830m) and the Light Rail (L2- Randwick line). Together, these investments attract marquee state, national and international sporting and entertainment events and drive growth in the visitor economy.

In addition, the NSW Government has also collaborated with the Sydney Swans and the Sydney Swifts to redevelop the Royal Hall of Industries into a world class training and administration building designed to house the Swan's men's and women's and Swifts programs, complete with a community hub.

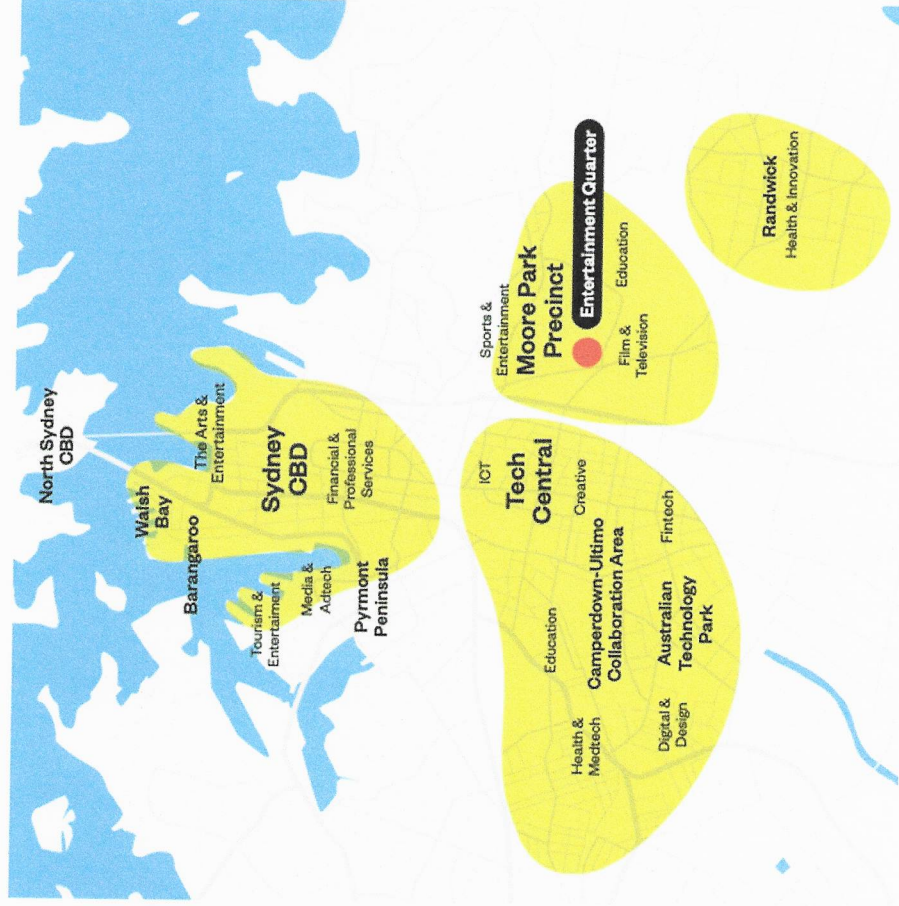
# EQ is ideally placed to enhance Sydney's global competitiveness

## The Moore Park precinct should complement existing and emerging precincts at the forefront of the State's economic growth aspirations

Greater Sydney's overall global competitiveness is reinforced by the diversified aggregation of a number of significant assets, including:

- Sydney CBD finance centre, anchored by the ASX, Australia's monetary and financial institutions
- Tech Central, an innovation and technology precinct at Sydney CBD;
- Health and Education precinct, anchored by the University of NSW, Sydney Children's Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick;
- Redfern to Everleigh precinct, anchored by the Australian Technology Park;
- University of Technology Sydney precinct, combining Sydney School of Entrepreneurship and the UTS campus;
- Walsh Bay precinct, including Sydney Dance Company and the Sydney Theatre Company

However, Greater Sydney is missing a critical element in Eastern Harbour City: a similar aggregation of the sports and creative industries, providing entrepreneurial and job opportunities which arise from a critical mass of cultural, tourist and entertainment facilities.



- **Moore Park Precinct**  
World-class sporting and entertainment
- **Entertainment Quarter**  
Sydney's premier entertainment and media district
- **Sydney CBD**  
Financial and professional services hub
- **Tech Central**  
Technology and creative innovation hub
- **North Sydney CBD**  
Agglomeration of advertising business
- **Pyrmont Peninsula**  
Agglomeration of media tourism and entertainment
- **Randwick**  
Health and Innovation Precinct
- **Walsh Bay**  
Cultural arts precinct
- **Camperdown-Ultimo Collaboration Area**  
Agglomeration of fintech, education, digital and design



Precincts



## A new Vision for EQ

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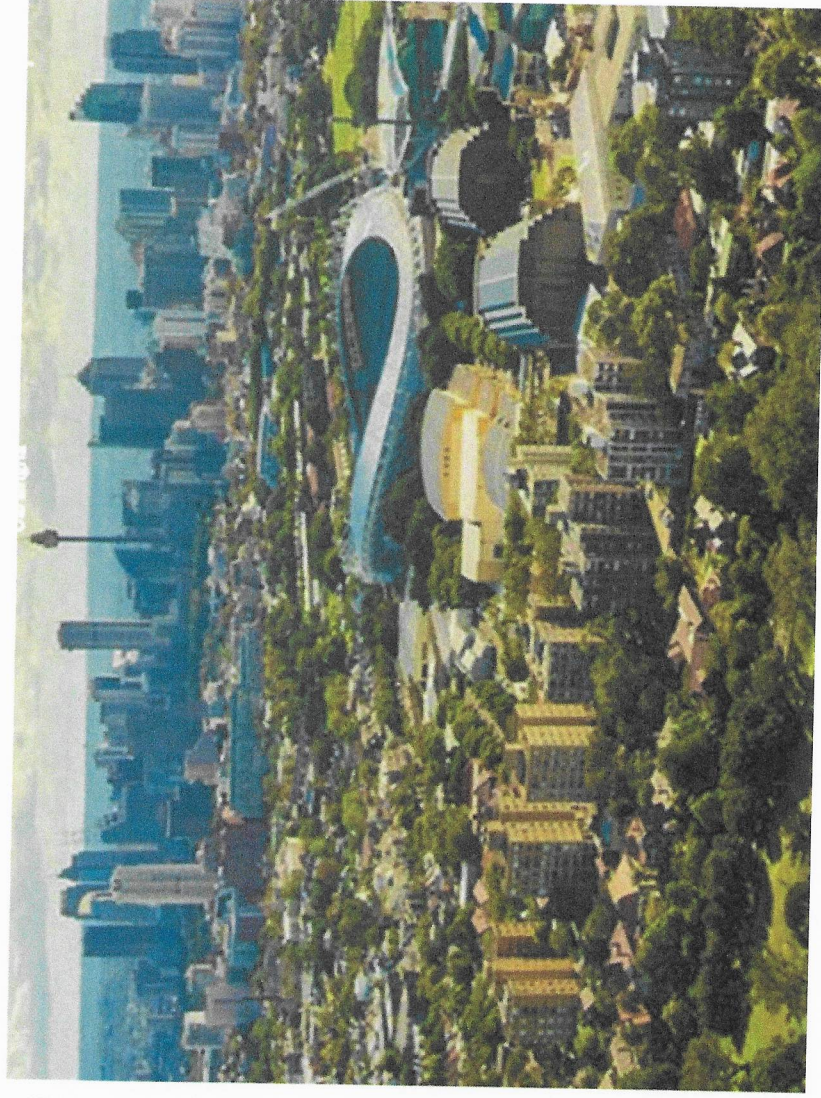
### **Sydney's premier entertainment and media district, within a world class sporting and entertainment precinct for Moore Park**

To fulfil its true potential, EQ requires a comprehensive reinvention to provide a precinct that can support and elevate Sydney's cultural and entertainment industries. These goals are paramount to Sydney's successful recovery from the COVID-19, growing its 24 hour and creative economies and supporting its social and economic future as a dynamic global city.

A revitalised EQ will play a vital role in enhancing Sydney's global attractiveness for investors, students, tourists and visitors, as well as Sydney's diverse communities of residents and workers.

Partnering with its adjacent world class facilities, venues and businesses, **our Vision for EQ is to become Sydney's premier entertainment and media district, within a world class sporting and entertainment precinct for Moore Park.** A significant investment will make a significant contribution to Sydney's competitiveness for visitors, major events and inward investment, and support its ongoing growth and development as a desirable international destination.

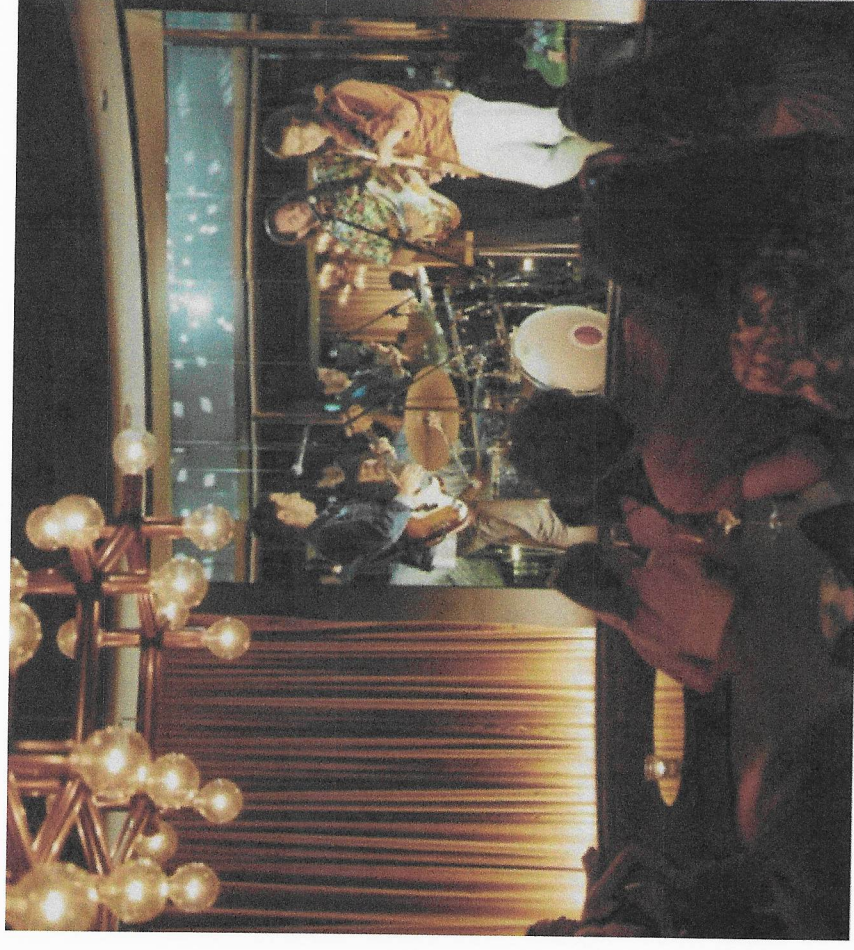
Ideally located within a strategic corridor of precincts connected by Sydney's Light Rail and within 3 kilometres of Sydney's Eastern CBD, major rail and Metro networks, this district is set to become a thriving live music and performance ecosystem and a growing Sydney's film, television and entertainment industry.



# \$2bn of investment will drive significant economic, social and environmental benefits

## Key features

- ▲ Create over **17,000 jobs**, generate over **\$3.3 billion economic benefits**, and contribute **c.\$800m to Gross State Product each year**;
- ▲ **Improved entries, public access pathways, laneways, cycle paths and transport links** between Moore Park, Centennial Park, the Sydney Cricket Ground and surrounds;
- ▲ More than **\$100 million invested in a 5 hectare network of parks**, tree-lined pathways and paths including an **additional 1 hectare of new parks**;
- ▲ **Create a vibrant Film, Television and Entertainment ecosystem**, including multiple education, production and post-production spaces as well as short term accommodation for on-site workers. Also, new office space for complementary sport, film and television industries will help grow the precinct's economic output.
- ▲ **New live performance and music district** featuring multiple small, intermediate and multipurpose live performance spaces, including a 5,000 capacity outdoor venue, rehearsal spaces, new comedy club, supper club and the possibility of a Lyric Theatre;
- ▲ **Significantly improved game day experience** for Sydneysiders and tourists, including additional parking, improved access to the Light Rail and Sydney Cricket Ground, a 4 star boutique hotel, pop-up events and quality casual food and beverage facilities ;
- ▲ **New world class community sport facilities and a revitalisation of the Show Ring**, for community clubs, a female pathway for AFL Women's training and competition, as well as dedicated Community spaces for health and wellbeing, indigenous, multicultural and school programs;
- ▲ **Curated hawker-style food markets** showcasing Sydney's multi-cultural culinary diversity across day and night, seven days a week, for on site workers, locals, tourists, music and sports visitors ; and
- ▲ **Transformative roof top urban farm** offering additional green space for the community including a productive working urban farm, multi-use event space and centre to run education programs on sustainability and urban agriculture.



# \$2bn of investment will drive significant economic, social and environmental benefits



## Amenities

- 1 Sydney Cricket Ground
- 2 Hordern Pavilion
- 3 Royal Hall of Industries
- 4 Byron Kennedy Hall: rehearsal space
- 5 New live performance space
- 6 New party and event space
- 7 New four-star hotel and short-term accommodation
- 8 Historic pub
- 9 New laneways and office space for entertainment/film & TV
- 10 New boulevard connecting cycle & light rail
- 11 Additional parking & rooftop urban farm
- 12 Hawker-style markets
- 13 Market square
- 14 New Showing fitness track
- 15 Market lawn
- 16 New restaurants
- 17 Refurbished Showring
- 18 Playground (younger children)
- 19 New park
- 20 Adventure playground (older children)
- 21 Cinemas
- 22 New 5000-seat venue & flexible stage
- 23 Upgraded heritage park
- 24 Digital education, film & TV space
- 25 New Student Accommodation (AFTRS)
- 26 Potential link between SCG & Entertainment Quarter
- 27 New Community Club House

**Existing features**



**New features**

## Industry and community partnerships are critical to precinct outcomes

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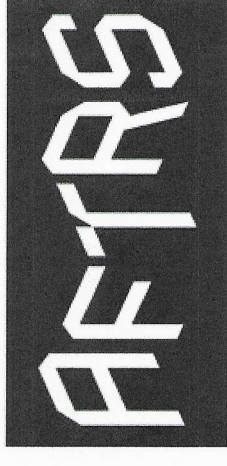
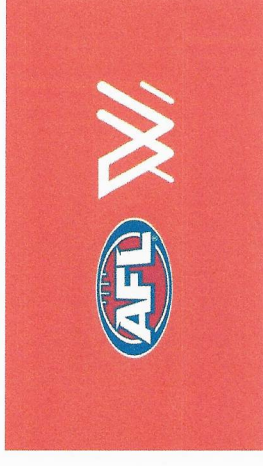
### Key industry and community partnerships are critical for EQ's revitalisation

Ensuring a revitalised EQ delivers on its expected social, economic and community benefits, will require a number of critical partners, including:

- **AFL NSW/ACT**, to community AFL training and competition, including schools, after-work co-ed social AFL 9s, female pathway training and up to 5 AFLW matches per season. In addition, a dedicated multi-purpose Community Clubroom and female change room facilities will also host community health and wellbeing programs, as well as youth leadership camps for Indigenous and Multicultural athletes, school holiday camps, gala days and a range of community activities;
- **Australian Film and Television School**, to provide up to 100 student accommodation spaces, new digital labs and joint industry/education spaces;
- **Fox Studios**, to provide short term accommodation for on-site workers; and
- Community health and wellbeing programs, through AFL's partnership with **Headspace**, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation

Critical industry and community partners will be formalised in the short term and will include:

- Pre-eminent 4 star Hotel operator, committed to immersive cultural experiences and health and wellbeing, for visitors and tourists;
- Leading event producers to draw world class musical and theatrical productions and live entertainment to the variety of live performance and music facilities; and
- Major sustainability organisations across a range of disciplines including urban farming and nature regeneration and protection, to operate the Rooftop Urban Farm.



# The Show Ring will become a industry leading active sports and events venue

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## Revitalisation of the Show Ring

A key component of the new Vision is to recapture the significance of the Show Ring and return it to its historic use as an active sports and events venue.

Refurbished as an industry-leading multi-purpose space, the Show Ring will host outdoor performances, such as live music events such as and Christmas Carols, as well as community AFL training and competition. This will host schools, community clubs, female pathway training and up to five AFLW matches per season.

In addition, the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings adjacent to the Show Ring will be the home of dedicated multi-purpose Community Clubroom and female change room facilities. In partnership with the AFL, this space will also host community health and wellbeing programs, as well as youth leadership camps for Indigenous and Multicultural athletes, school holiday camps, gala days and a range of community activities.

To enhance the experiences on the Show Ring and within the adjacent world class stadiums, hawker-style markets, a playground and flexible stage infrastructure will be installed.



# A revitalised EQ will complement the world class stadium and transport infrastructure to establish a significant Tourist destination

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## Significantly improved game-day experience for Sydneysiders and tourists

Ease of access, pop-up events and quality casual food and beverage facilities will provide people with more reasons to arrive early and stay longer. Specifically, the Vision will provide:

- Improved access and increased car parking capacity, enabling Moore Park East to return to passive green public space;
- Integrate the two Stadiums and EQ, with direct pedestrianised access to the Sydney Cricket Ground;
- Increase activation on game day, with pop-up events on the Show Ring and adjacent spaces;
- Create a new entrance to EQ that links directly with the Light Rail stop
- Hawker-style food markets, appropriate to cater for large volumes of visitors.

## A new 4 star boutique hotel located next to the world class stadiums will support tourism objectives by enhancing the visitor experience and encouraging the night time economy

Benchmark world class sporting and entertainment precincts, such as L.A. Live, successfully integrate multiple sport and entertainment venues and offer adjacent hotel facilities. For visitors, these facilities provide convenience to the events as well as the opportunity to enjoy bars, restaurants, cinemas and live performance options.

Premium and convenient accommodation will only add to the experience for visitors to sporting and major events at Moore Park and will more likely provide more reasons to travel, stay and return.



## Sydney's Film & Television industry will grow with more organisations and workers on site

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### Attracting related organisations servicing the Film & Television industries to EQ will increase Sydney's global competitiveness

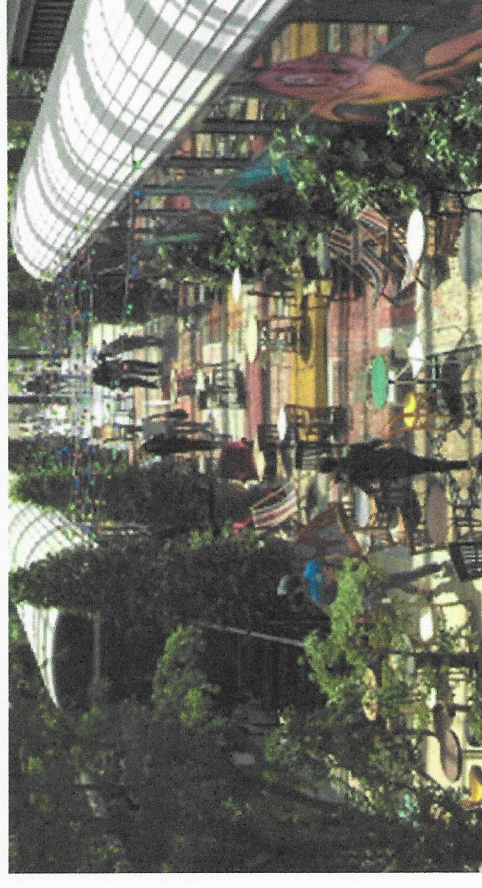
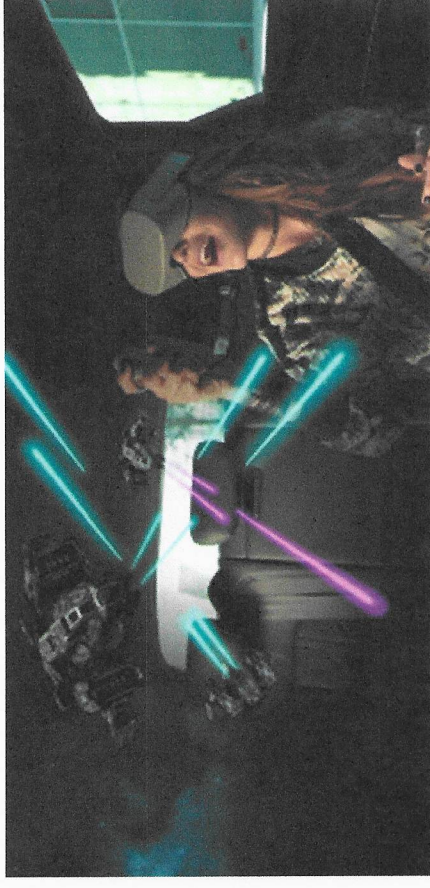
NSW competes globally to attract large-scale screen projects and is a world class destination for film and television. One way to increase inbound investment and employment is to facilitate the collaboration of additional multi-disciplinary related organisations on site. Fox Studios currently partners with many local, national and global organisations onsite and further opportunities exist to attract similar and related organisations to EQ.

Providing purpose-built offices and workplaces adjacent to Fox Studios and AFTRS will help increase the scale, productivity and collaboration of these important industries. A revitalised EQ will also offer these workers greater amenity and improved access to the surrounding heritage parklands.

### Short term accommodation for on-site workers and students will support the film and television industry

Today, EQ hosts upwards of 4,000 workers, students and teachers employed in film production, post-production and related services organisations, including Fox Studios, the largest integrated facility in the Southern Hemisphere and AFTRS, Australia's premier screen and broadcast school. A significant number of these workers and students require short term accommodation, and typically source temporary residences in neighbourhoods across Greater Sydney.

Supply of on-site flexible and convenient accommodation within a diverse entertainment district will allow these organisations to attract and retain these workers and students vital to the film and television ecosystem.



## **EQ will create Sydney's premier live performance district**

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### **Sydney lacks a critical mass of live music and cultural facilities**

Notwithstanding Sydney's \$1.5 billion output of music, performing and visual arts, its live music infrastructure is lacking. Sydney has a well documented deficit of smaller and intermediate live performance and outdoor venues.

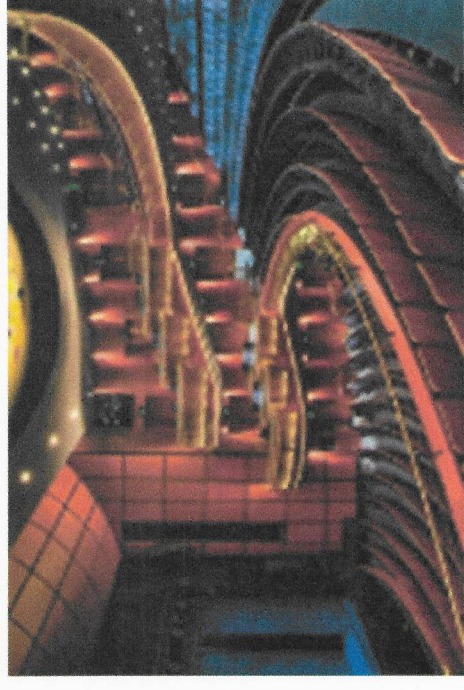
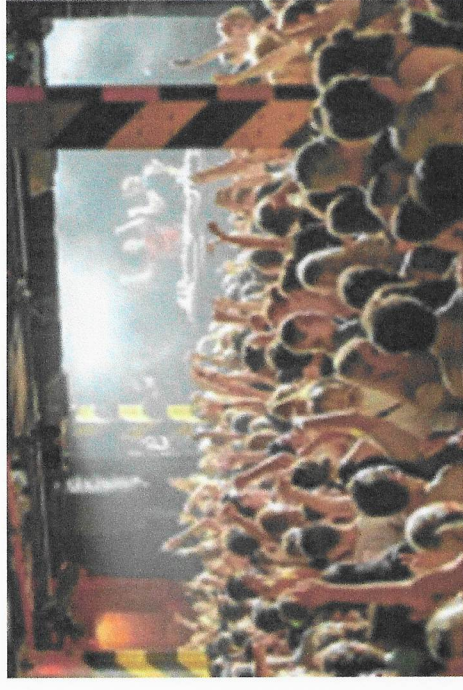
In addition, Sydney's existing theatre stock is at capacity and is severely limiting the ability of the city to attract major first-run international productions. Sydney's lack of diverse theatre infrastructure of varying capacities is driving away many major international productions to Melbourne, including *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *Come From Away* and *Moulin Rouge*.

### **Multiple indoor and outdoor venues of varying sizes will attract more Sydneysiders and tourists that will more likely stay for longer**

New purpose-built, custom designed spaces for a variety of performance types within a concentrated area will encourage audience casual discovery and seek to underpin audience growth for amateur as well as professional performances.

The combination of these performance venues, alongside the adjacent Hordern Pavilion, Fox Studios and AFTRS, will combine to create Sydney's premier live performance district.

These venues will benefit from EQ's existing substantial car park facilities and transport access. Further, a 4 star boutique hotel would encourage greater intra and interstate visitation.





# Improved access and sustainability outcomes are a critical to EQ's long term success

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## Improved public transport connections and additional parking for major events

Additional parking at EQ will be accommodated for people who wish to visit the Moore Park precinct for major events yet cannot use public transport for a variety of reasons.

This will allow for parking to be removed from green space on Moore Park East and not diminish the game day experience.

## Improved walking, cycling and public access within and connecting to EQ

New north-south and east-west connections will better link Moore Park with the Stadiums, as well as the inner east suburbs with the eastern beaches. Enhanced pedestrian and cycle paths with improved lighting, tree planting and signage will help encourage public access.

## New parks and usable green rooftops will enhance visitor experiences

Complementing the expansive heritage Centennial Park and Moore Park parklands, EQ will create c.1 hectare of new parks designed for passive as well as active use.

In addition, a productive working urban farm on EQ's carpark rooftop will provide multi-use event space and centre to run education programs on sustainability and urban agriculture



## A revitalised EQ is strongly supported by the local community, local businesses and local sporting clubs

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### Over 70% of locals and Greater Sydney residents support or strongly support a revitalised EQ

In September 2021, the local and broader Sydney Community have voiced strong support for enhancing the precinct to support a more vibrant and well-utilised place in Sydney's inner east, with some describing its renewal as an important opportunity not to be missed

Recent community research conducted in September 2021, emphasise that there is very strong support for the proposal

- **Over 70% of respondents** (70% locals; 71% from Greater Sydney) **expressed strong or very strong support, with only 5% opposed**
- **62% of respondents** (58% locals and 64% from Greater Sydney) **supported the hotel and employment space elements, with only 5% opposed**

### Recent constructive conversations with local business, community and sporting organisations about the new Vision have not raised any objections in principle.

These organisations include: Fox Studios, Australian Film, Television and Radio School, Screen Australia, Venues NSW, Tourism and Transport Forum, Business Sydney, AFL NSW/ACT, Sydney Swans and the Alliance of Moore Park Sports (AMPS)

