

INQUIRY INTO BARANGAROO SIGHT LINES

Name: Clover Moore

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THE LORD MAYOR OF SYDNEY
CLOVER MOORE

23 SEP 2022

The Hon. Mark Latham, MLC
Chair, Select Committee on Barangaroo Sight Lines

Dear Chair

Submission to the Select Committee on Barangaroo Sight Lines

I write to raise my longstanding concerns about the planning and delivery of development on public land at Barangaroo that I know continues to alarm the community.

It is well publicised that the negotiations between the NSW Government, the Barangaroo Delivery Authority, Lendlease and Crown have been shrouded in secrecy and backroom discussions. A lack of transparency around the deals has created probity and integrity issues and led to the vested interests of a few triumphing over the public good.

In 2005, Council gave in-principle support to the planning principles developed for the site – known then as East Darling Harbour. The principles included public transport accessibility, sustainability in design and public domain, consideration of maritime activities, an integrated and high-quality public domain and heritage conservation.

An urban design competition was launched and won by a team comprising Hill Thalix Architecture + Urban Projects, Paul Berkemeier Architects and Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture. The winning scheme sensibly interpreted and connected the city with the harbour and prioritised public elements such as streets, parks and heritage. The scheme located higher buildings in the south and lower buildings in the north, the entire foreshore was to be public land, including green open space and harbour pools and view sharing was intrinsically considered.

The development of Barangaroo should have been done in full public view and considered the public's best interest. Instead, since 2005, 11 modified development applications have significantly altered the form and scale of Barangaroo by adding more than 100,000sqm of floor space to the concept plan, and eroding sight lines across the site, particularly from Millers Point and Observatory Hill.

Central Barangaroo

We must question the integrity of the Barangaroo redevelopment project. The community now has another modified application (Modification 9) thrust upon them for Central Barangaroo – an application that was made under the now-repealed Part 3A of the

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. Modification 9 is a significant departure from the 2007 concept plan originally approved for Central Barangaroo.

The developer for Central Barangaroo recently announced at a community meeting that harbour views have already been obscured by previous modifications. It is unacceptable that previous poor decisions and approvals that have eroded sight lines are now being used to justify the proposed heights, bulk and scale, and view impacts at Central Barangaroo.

Modification 9 even seeks to overturn requirements set by the Independent Planning Commission's approval of the previous Modification 8, particularly in relation to the size of Block 5 and 7, Hickson Park, and the foreshore promenade. It should also be referred to the Independent Planning Commission for consideration, which is in the Minister's remit to do and as Ministers before him have done.

The City made two submissions to the revised concept plan (Modification 9). Ultimately, we completely object to the increase scale and height of the proposal.

I enclose a copy of the City's two submissions and ask the committee to consider them as part of the inquiry. I note that the Heritage Council of NSW and Millers Point Community Resident Action Group also lodged their strong objection to the plan.

The City's submissions raise significant concerns based on our expert staff review and community feedback, including:

- Unacceptable view impacts to and from Millers Point and Observatory Hill heritage sites
- Increased height, scale and residential floor space
- The reduction and overshadowing of Hickson Park
- Conservation of Hickson Road wall and steps
- The quality, location and amenity of the proposed public open spaces
- The proposed affordable housing initiative.
- Increased off-street parking spaces.

I am particularly concerned that the concept plan for Central Barangaroo will erode sight lines and important views between:

- Observatory Hill Park and Sydney Harbour
- The heritage Millers Point Conservation Area and Sydney Harbour
- Darling Harbour and Observatory Hill
- Darling Harbour and the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Pyrmont and Observatory Hill
- Pyrmont and the Sydney Harbour Bridge
- Observatory Hill and the sky
- The Stargazer Lawn and the sky
- Wulgul Walk and the city skyline.

Governments are temporary custodians. Effective governments should be making decisions that benefit the public now, and into the future.

I call on the committee to also consider Modification 9 in its inquiry to ensure the poor decisions of the past are not repeated at Central Barangaroo.

If the Select Committee would like to discuss this submission, please contact Maria O'Donnell, Policy Manager in the Office of the Lord Mayor, on _____ or at _____@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Clover Moore
Lord Mayor of **Sydney**