

INQUIRY INTO BARANGAROO SIGHT LINES

Organisation: Friends of Sydney Harbour (FOSH)

Date Received: 30 September 2022



NSW Legislative Council's Select Committee

Friends of Sydney Harbour (FOSH) is a not-for-profit community activist group that is a voice for the preservation and protection of Sydney Harbour for the enjoyment of everyone now and in the future.

FOSH welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on this significant development for Sydney. FOSH acknowledges the growth of Sydney is inevitable; however, Sydney Harbour is a unique asset, it is the centre piece of Australia's international city, the focal point for locals and tourists and must be preserved.

FOSH seeks that any proposed development on this site should preserve this living entity and the harbour, and its foreshores protected as it cannot be replaced.

FOSH considers that the Central Barangaroo site should reflect the protection of the natural form, heritage and access including iconic vistas to and from the harbour for *everyone*.

The Central Barangaroo area is etched in indigenous, colonial, and natural heritage as a meeting place from the land and the harbour, it is part of the working harbour dry docks etc. with Observatory Hill being the highest natural point of the harbour.

Central Barangaroo was once Sydney Harbour and is on reclaimed Crown Land. Therefore, FOSH demands that this public domain / open space not be alienated but retained, allowing access directly to Sydney Harbour foreshore and water. This view is supported by

FOSH supports the concept for Barangaroo that it is a Reserve Headland, not a development site with no civic space. Commercial, retail, residential was wholly focused on Barangaroo South and to the North. The plan for Central Barangaroo was and should be developed as public domain with direct access to the harbour foreshore mirroring the Botanical gardens and Domain headland to the east of the harbour bridge as identified in the original design and concept plan.

FOSH considers that the proposed Mod 9 application on exhibition is *not* in the public interest and is in total opposition to the principles of public domain in relation to:

Excessive bulk, mass form and scale of the commercial residential development

- Sight lines to the harbour and from the harbour to the headland are not preserved. The sight Line clause in the statement of commitment for Barangaroo South that the 270-degree panoramic views from Pymont and around to the harbour bridge for Crown and Lend Lease should be consistent for all of Barangaroo and imposed for Central Barangaroo as outlined in the concept plan “for future development within the Barangaroo site is to retain the views to Observatory Hill from (the harbour and) public spaces on opposite foreshores and to retain the panorama from Pymont Park around to the Harbour Bridge as seen from Observatory Hill Park” (2010).
- The development visually impacts on ALL the harbour west, southwest, and northwest of the harbour bridge.
- It does not reflect the natural topography of the land in line with the concept plan
- Reduction of inclusive public open space and equitable alienation to foreshore access rather than the concept of a transition space from the economic hub to a green and shaded harbour park, Sydney steps, harbour stage and cultural meeting precinct linking to the headland reserve.
- It impacts on observations taken by the Sydney Observatory
- The proposed ‘elite’ ‘high end’ commercial, retail, and residential development could occur in any site in the CBD. This open space, harbour vistas and public domain cannot.

Additionally, FOSH considers the Central Barangaroo Mod 9 application has the same detrimental impact as the planning precedent Commissioner Peter Walsh found in relation to Gladesville Marina development on 19th July 2022 in the Land in Environment Court. In that:

“The proposal prevents the aim of protecting the Sydney Harbour Foreshore as an outstanding natural and public asset for future generations.”

“That it would be a “visually intrusive, negative factor and incompatible with the existing character of the embankment”

“Would create visual impact problems for those using the foreshore”

“The development is not in the public interest”

FOSH considers that citizen democracy and due process should determine the outcome of this site and seeks consideration of the voices of all stakeholders, those on and near the site and people across the Sydney region who access and view it from land and water and the impact on tourism. Therefore, we believe that as a minimum the decision rests with the Independent Planning Commission and NOT one person the Planning Minister.

FOSH believes that we are all the custodians of the Harbour and its foreshores; it is our responsibility in a democracy to provide free and unfettered access to what is our future. For what is another example of short-term expedient elite development. By any measure this is not good planning. To deny citizens access to our Harbour is to deny access to our soul and who we are and will impact the future fabric of our society for what can easily be created in a much more appropriate environment. In Sydney Harbour’s future, do we want more open space like the Domain or high-rise buildings?

This development is a negative force in the future of Sydney.

Your sincerely,

John Molyneux

Chair

Friends of Sydney Harbour Inc.

David Pescud

Committee Member

Friends of Sydney Harbour Inc.

29th September 2022