

SSD 7047

Response to Submissions and Amended Proposal

Interactive Display System - SICEEP



Sept 2016 ■ 15048

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Harry Quartermain

14/09/2016

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Alexis Cella

14/09/2016

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1.0 Introduction

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the Sydney International Convention Exhibition, and Entertainment Precinct (SICEEP) Interactive Display System (IDS) was publically exhibited for a period of 33 days between the 26 May 2016 and 27 June 2016 (SSD 15_7047).

This report, prepared by JBA on behalf of Darling Harbour Live (DHL), sets out the responses to the issues raised in accordance with Clause 85A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (EP&A Reg), and details the final project design for which approval is now sought. The final project design includes amendments made by DHL pursuant to Clause 55 of the EP&A Reg, including changes to address matters raised in the submissions.

This report also responds to the comments and feedback provided by the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department), more specifically correspondence dated:

- on 5 July 2016;
- on 28 July 2016;
- on 11 August 2016; and
- on 7 September 2016.

1.1 Public Exhibition

The public exhibition of the EIS and Development Application concluded on 27 June 2016 and a total of seven (7) submissions were received. The Department's correspondence set out items which required a response and further information necessary for the assessment of the application.

A detailed response to each of the submissions and to each of the separate pieces of correspondence received from the Department is provided as **Appendix B**, with additional explanation and justification requested by the Department provided within this report.

2.0 Key Changes Proposed

Physical and Operational changes to the proposed development are included within this submission. These are outlined below.

2.1 Physical Changes

The display area of T-17 is proposed to be reduced in size from 85m² to 40m². Following this reduction in size this element of the proposed development is no longer affected by Clause 19 of SEPP 64 and as such can be approved without a site specific DCP being in place. Amended plans reflecting the reduced T-17 sign is provided at **Appendix C**.

2.2 Operational Changes

Changes to the maximum luminance and dwell time of the proposed development have been incorporated into the Digital Content Management Plan (DCMP) and respond to concerns raised by City of Sydney Council and the Department of Planning. These changes are encapsulated within the updated DCMP provided at **Appendix D**.

3.0 Explanation and Justification

Additional explanation and justification has been requested in relation to a number of aspects of the proposed development. This additional information is outlined.

3.1 Additional Photomontages

Additional Photomontages were requested by the Department. These have been prepared by Virtual Ideas and are provided as **Appendix E**.

3.2 Road Safety

The Department requested that a cumulative road safety assessment to be conducted for Sign T17 noting that an electronic advertisement has also been approved facing Pier Street for the North West plot. This additional report was prepared by ARRB and is provided as **Appendix F**.

3.3 Public Domain Impacts

The Department requested further details and justification for the 10m radius for audibility of the proposed blade signs and requested plans showing radius of audibility of signs at 2.5m, 5m and 10m.

In response it is noted that the proposed blade signs will include the capability to project directional sound up to 10m in front of the unit. As the speakers associated with each blade sign are directional, the acoustic impact of each Blade sign will not be significant when perceived from the side or rear of any one sign.

Due to the scale and height of the proposed signs, the optimal viewing distance for each screen is between 5m and 15m away. An acoustic range of 10m is therefore considered to be appropriate to allow for an overlap of the optimal viewing area and the audible area of any one sign. This overlap is illustrated in **Appendix G**. Also shown in **Appendix G** is the likely cumulative audibility zone, when the impact of each one of the IDS elements is considered.

An Additional statement has been provided by Acoustic Logic in relation to the acoustic impact of the proposed development on the public domain. This is provided as **Appendix H**.

3.4 Public Benefit

The Department has noted that an appropriate and detailed public benefit is required to justify the proposed third party advertising. The response provided should address the City of Sydney's comments in relation to increasing the dwell time for wayfinding to a minimum of 50%, and clearly address why this is or is not appropriate.

A letter has been provided by Infrastructure NSW on behalf on the NSW State Government (refer to **Appendix I**), which outlines the public benefit that will be derived from the proposed development. In addition to the monetary value to be generated for the NSW State Government by the precinct partner content, there will be significant public benefits delivered through:

- The display of public information, such as way finding information, public transportation information, health and safety information and public interest messages.

- The display of entertainment material, such as 'live' sites that will display world events such as the Olympics and World Cup Football and World Cup Rugby

In relation to the City's comment regarding wayfinding signage, it is noted that the intent of the proposed public domain Blade Signs is to augment and improve on static wayfinding signage separately provided within the Darling Harbour Precinct, as provided for under the development consent for SSD 5752. Indicative plans for the pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding signage that will be located within the precinct was included within Appendix B of the EIS.

A requirement to allocate a minimum of 50% of the dwell time to wayfinding would therefore be unnecessary and inappropriate.

3.5 Design Review Process

The Department has requested additional information in relation to the Design Review Panel (DRP) that was appointed to oversee the design of the proposed development and specifically to note how the design of the development has been amended to respond to the DRP comments.

The proposed IDS has gone through a number of design iterations and evolution since project inception, as outlined below.

3.5.1 Original Design (2013)

The scheme as it was originally designed included:

- three LED signs on the ICC Convention Centre;
- four LED signs on the ICC Exhibition Centre;
- seven LED signs on the ICC Theatre; and
- five signs within the public domain (Boulevard), each 20m tall with signage on four sides.

Each sign location within the public domain had 'skytracker' lights on the top as shown in **Figure 1**.

A decision was made early on by DHL that given the need to carefully review, develop and integrate signage and naming/branding, that it would not form part of the PPP Core Facilities SSDA (5752-2012), but would follow as a subsequent future application.

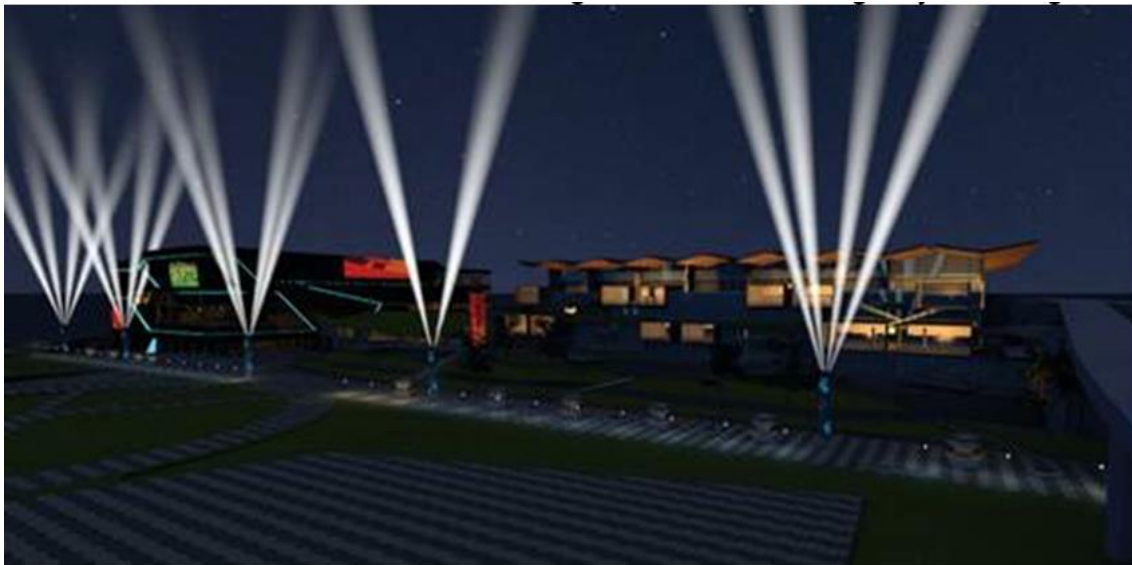


Figure 1 – Public Realm Signs included in the Project Deed of November 2013 and discussed at the August 2014 DRP

3.5.2 August 2014 DRP Meeting

Following detailed design development with Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Infrastructure NSW, and the Hassell design team the scheme was presented to the DRP. The major developments in this package from the original scheme are noted below:

- removal of two LED signs from the ICC Convention Centre
- removal of one sign on the ICC Exhibition Centre;
- reduction in size by 50% of two other signs on the ICC Exhibition Centre;
- expansion of the LED installation at the entrance of the ICC Theatre (i.e. T-01);
- removal of three signs from the ICC Theatre;
- expansion of one sign on the ICC Theatre;
- one large sign on the ICC Theatre was split into three separate signs; and
- the proposed public domain signs were combined with precinct markers.

The scheme, incorporating the above changes, was presented to the DRP within the presentation provided as **Appendix J1**.

Comments relevant to the design of the scheme provided by the DRP at the August 2014 meeting are provided as **Appendix J2** and include:

- *The DRP questioned the potential for conflict of signage within Tumbalong Place with artwork proposal. Further investigation required.*
- *DHL noted further work was being undertaken on wayfinding within the public realm and this will influence signage proposal within the public realm.*

3.5.3 April 2015 DRP Meeting

Following the August 2014 DRP meeting the design team spent time developing the design with the Hassell Studio design team, the DHL consortium, SHFA and INSW. **Appendix J3** illustrates the updated scheme, which was presented to the DRP at the April 2015 DRP Meeting. This meeting was held after the SEARS request for SSD 7047 was lodged and included the following major design alterations:

- Refinement of the location of the signs on the ICC Convention Centre (known as C-08);
- Refinement and relocation of two signs on the ICC Exhibition Centre, including the relocation of E-02 to reduce potential for impacts from this sign on neighbouring residents;
- Refinement of location of all signs on the ICC Theatre; and
- Following feedback from the DRP, Ken Maher and Angus Bruce, the previously envisaged five public domain signs were split up into discrete individual “blades”. The skytracker lights previously envisaged on the top of these structures were also removed. The proposed public domain signage now included:
 - Fourteen 6m tall individual blades; and
 - Three four-sided screens, mounted on the Western Distributor Columns

Comments relevant to the design of the scheme provided by the DRP at the April 2015 meeting are provided as **Appendix J4** and include:

- *The Public Realm Pier Signage wraps that are current in other parts of the Darling Harbour precinct look awful. The Blade signs are preferable.*
- *All signs need to be looked at in respect to their visibility with the proposed tree layout and their relation to seats and other signs and objects*
- *THE DRP recommends that all signage (digital/wayfinding/branding) needs to be coordinated. All signs need to be considered in their context – can they be seen from the Boulevard; through trees and do they compete with other pieces of infrastructure.*

3.5.4 SSDA Lodgement

In response to the DRP comments in April 2015, the following changes were made to the scheme prior to the lodgement of the application:

- The digital sign on the ICC Convention Centre (C-08) was removed;
- One digital LED sign (E-01) was removed from the ICC Exhibition Centre;
- The LED signs proposed to wrap around the Western Distributor Pylons were replaced with blade signs; and
- The number of blade signs was reduced from 14 blades and 12 pylon wrap screens (total of 26) to 19 blades in 7 locations in the Public Domain

As noted in the design report that accompanies the exhibited EIS the public realm blade signs have been designed to be visible from key entry points to the precinct so that they can assist with wayfinding and site orientation. They have been designed so that they do not compete with trees or other pieces of infrastructure. The content of the IDS will be controlled in a coordinated manner as per the provisions of the Digital Content Management Plan.

3.5.5 SSDA Response to Submissions

Whilst not in direct response to comments raised by the DRP, further design changes have been made by DHL in responding to comments made during the public exhibition of the SSDA. These changes as noted earlier include:

- Reduction in the size of T-17 (Theatre, from 85sqm to 45sqm); and
- Amendments to operational aspects of signs (dealing with luminance and dwell times).

3.5.6 Summary

Over a period of more than 3 years, DHL with its partners INSW have worked together under the design direction of Ken Maher and the Hassell Studio Team to develop a wayfinding, signage and branding approach that befits Darling Harbour as Australia's premier tourist and entertainment precinct. During this period there has been close engagement with INSW's Design Review Panel (DRP) – who was specially formed to provide expert advice and feedback on initial concepts and design development documentation for the SICEEP Project.

It is evident through the iterative design process and evolution of the IDS that the recommendations and feedback over the duration of the design phase provided by the DRP has been positively incorporated and reflected within the proposed SSDA (as amended).

3.6 Third Party Advertising

The department has requested clarity on the extent to which the proposed development will be used for Third Party Advertising, including an unambiguous definition of a Major Event and a justification for the proposed proportion of each content type within the IDS.

3.6.1 Definition of a Major Event

Within the updated Digital Content Management Plan (DCMP) (provided as **Appendix D**), the definition of a Major Event has been updated as follows:

***Major Events** are events held within the Darling Harbour Live Precinct authorised by the NSW Government. These events can be held either within or outside the ICC Venues and will attract a large number of participants (greater than 5,000 for duration of event) or be of state/national significance (event receiving direct Government support, e.g. G20, APEC etc). Major events can occur on any day of the week and be accessible to the public (e.g. Sydney International Boat Show) or be invitation only events (e.g. SIBOS event). There will be no more than 25 Major Events held each year.*

3.6.2 Content Management

As described in the updated DCMP it is intended to manage the content of the IDS so that messaging can be best targeted at the most appropriate audience. The DCMP allocates five different operating modes, these being:

- Day Time (7am – 4pm);
- Early Evening (4pm – 7pm);
- Late Evening (7pm – 12am);
- Night (12am – 7am); and
- Major Event.

The DCMP also divides the content of the IDS into five categories, these being:

- Precinct Partner Messaging;
- Naming Rights;
- Live Site;
- Precinct Information; and

■ Orientation and Wayfinding.

The types of messaging contained within each category are outlined within the DCMP.

By providing a different weighting to each content category within each operating mode, the DCMP is able to direct the most appropriate content to a specific audience. In this manner certain content, such as Precinct Partner Messages (from which the NSW Government is able to draw a revenue stream), is able to be focussed at times such as the Night and during a Major Event during which the footfall (and therefore the audience for the messaging) is likely to be greatest. During other operating modes the DCMP focuses the IDS on other types of content, such as Precinct Information or Orientation and Wayfinding.

Whilst noting the permissibility rationale put forward within the EIS, from a first principles perspective, third party advertising has been a constant feature and element at Darling Harbour since its redevelopment for the Bicentennial. The proposed IDS represents a modern reincarnation and adaption of the past. Even more recently approvals within SICEEP (Darling Square – North-West Plot) have been granted for signage providing provision for third party advertising.



Figure 2 – Historical third party signs at Darling Harbour



Figure 3 – Approved North-West Plot Building and its Digital Sign

Very different however to past approaches and approved signs, there is no intention to have a sign include third party content for 100% of its display time and/or area. The DCMP limits maximum third party advertising (Precinct Partners) exposure to between 25% and 75% (depending on the sign and operating mode).

The desired future character of the ICC precinct is that of a major tourist and entertainment destination. A digital presence, including digital third party advertising, forms a core part of every comparable precinct both internationally and within Australia. Therefore, were it not for the presence of the ICC buildings within SICEEP there would be no requirement for a third party advertising component within this application.

Further, from a purely scale and size perspective, the IDS (including the display of Precinct Partner information) is without question an insignificant and ancillary element of the core facilities and public domain. This said, it is an expected element that contributes to the overall character and vibrancy of this premier tourist and entertainment destination.

It is noted that the Darling Harbour Development Plan No 1 is over 30 years old and clearly did not contemplate the modern application of technology in the manner proposed by this application. Notwithstanding, this principal planning instrument applying to the land has stood the test of time due to its flexible approach to controlling development and enabling renewal that responds to the times. In this regard, reinvented, modern and fit for purpose convention, exhibition and entertainment facilities have been able to be delivered at Darling Harbour and with them digital signs and content (including third party advertising) that is able to heighten the overall tourist and entertainment character/appeal.

Darling Harbour is a special place within Sydney, where a visitor entering the precinct knows they are within a place that is completely different on a number of fronts from any other place in Sydney or Australia for that matter. Signage, branding, wayfinding etc have all in the past contributed to this uniqueness and will again through the IDS provide an important overlay to the precinct that again will let people visiting know they have arrived at a world class and Australia's premier tourist and entertainment precinct.

Overall and having regard to the relationship and context of the proposal with the core facilities and public domain, having regard to historical approvals granted for

third party advertising (under the same planning instrument that applies today), the proportion of third party advertising proposed under the IDS is not considered to be a limiting factor to favourably considering and assessing the proposal.

4.0 Conclusion

The proponent and project team have considered all submissions made in relation to the public exhibition of the proposal and further comments/feedback provided by the Department. A considered and detailed response to all submissions has been provided within this report and the accompanying documentation.

In responding to and addressing the range of matters raised, the proposal has been refined in response to the key matters raised.

The IDS responds to the vision and character set by the NSW State Government for the new Darling Harbour.

The success of the precinct on the world stage is intrinsically linked to the experience, vibrancy, and messaging that the IDS will deliver.

Given the significant planning merits of the proposal and that there will not be any adverse environmental, social or economic impacts; it is requested that the application be approved.