

HIGHGATE

Highgate Owners Corporation Strata Plan 49822 ABN 66 342 557 275

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23rd March 2023

NSW Department of Planning & Environment
www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects

Application No SSD-47498458 - The Cutaway Cultural Facility, Barangaroo

The Cutaway Cultural Facility Barangaroo



Bark nawi on Sydney Harbour. City of Paramatta, 2021. Source: Natural History Museum (London)

Highgate is a strata residential apartment building consisting of 204 apartments and one commercial lot in Millers Point (<https://highgate.com.au/>). Highgate is privileged to be located at a focal point overlooking Australia's most iconic and unique heritage areas: the Rocks, Millers Point, the Observatory and Observatory Hill, and Central Barangaroo. The Highgate Strata Committee, on behalf of its residents, is actively involved in ensuring that the integrity, preservation, showcasing, and value of our heritage areas is retained and enhanced for the benefit of all Australians.

'Heritage is all the things that make up Australia's identity - **our spirit** and ingenuity, our historic buildings, **and our unique, living landscapes** [emphasis added]. Our heritage is a legacy from our past, a living, integral part of life today, and the stories and places we pass on to future generations' (NSW Government, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, 2021).

Aboriginal culture is the foundation of Barangaroo's identity, and heritage. In Sydney it is inextricably connected to the water. From pre-European settlement, Aboriginal people of the Cadigal territory fished and navigated the harbour in bark nawi, collected seashells and hunted along the shores of Barangaroo. Barangaroo itself is named after a Cammeraygai woman who was a powerful figure in Aboriginal culture and community at the time of colonial settlement. Barangaroo married Bennelong, namesake of Bennelong Point, the location of the Sydney Opera House.

The Cutaway was originally envisioned as the state's first dedicated national Indigenous facility, known as Buruk, in recognition of the importance and value of Aboriginal history to Barangaroo and Sydney Harbour. An all-Indigenous taskforce was formed to develop plans for inside the Cutaway, but these plans were abandoned in May 2021. Now Aboriginal culture is being excluded from this quintessential Aboriginal space at Barangaroo.

Instead, the "Cutaway cultural facility" is proposed to host the arts and culture of white Australia, providing a venue for performing and visual arts, exhibitions, and events. It has been proposed to offer an Indigenous cultural centre at the Museum of Sydney, site of Australia's first Government House. This is far removed from the lifeblood of Sydney's Aboriginal heritage, the waters of Sydney Harbour, and the site is strongly connected to colonial history.

The Cutaway itself is a disastrous, cold, cavernous, unsuccessful space that can only be improved. However, the proposed usage is a completely unacceptable compromise to Australia's heritage. It undermines our links to the unique history of our land and supplants Aboriginal value for Western entertainment; Aboriginal culture, for white culture. We object to the proposed purpose of the Cutaway.

Yours sincerely



Harold Kerr
Highgate Chairman

* on behalf of Owners Corporation Strata Plan 49822