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Planning Services – NSW Planning and Environment
Level 29, 320 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Attention: Tim Green, Planning Officer
tim.green@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Tim,

Barangaroo South Stage 1B Public Domain Works – SSD 7944 MOD 1

Thank you for your correspondence, dated 19 June 2019 inviting the City of Sydney to respond to the proposed modification of SSD 7944 relating to the public domain works at Barangaroo South.

It is understood the proposed modifications includes the raising of the approved ground level of Hickson Park by a maximum of 400mm, design refinement to the public pier within Watermans Quay and various design and aesthetic changes across the public domain in relation to materiality, access arrangements, street furniture and vegetation.

The Section 4.55 report by Ethos Urban claims that the proposed modification does not alter the overall vision, aspirations and design principles for the public domain as approved. The landscape plans, however, reflect reduced quality of materials, increased soil depth in the park yet below standard soil depths for trees in the public domain and waterfront. It is disappointing that the public domain design does not appear meet compliance with relevant standards.

The modification raises the following issues which are not supported:

Park design modifications

Hostile vehicle attack barriers

- On Barangaroo Avenue and Watermans Quay entries, the design of barriers against hostile vehicle attacks presented in April 2018 were a “sculptural sandstone seating element and vehicle deterrent” using local sandstone. The design was to act as seating, public art and be a playful edge to the public Hickson Park.

Like the barriers on Hickson Road, the proposed low concrete blocks have little design finesse. Further, there is no justification for the reduction in quality of materials and design. The substitution is not supported.

Raising approved ground level up to 400mm

- Raising the park behind a wall has reduced public permeability across the site between Hickson Road and Barangaroo Avenue and is suboptimal. Access has been limited to plaza entrances near the residential buildings.
- Previous design iterations identified the need to protect against hostile vehicle attacks and introduced barriers. These have morphed into a continuous wall instead, which blocks off access for many users and creates the impression the park is private space for use by residents.
- The access points will create high areas of pedestrian traffic and increased friction between park users.
- No real details are given about footway treatments and changes along Hickson Road other than hinting at materials, this aspect of the proposal remains undeveloped from previous designs.
- Behind the temporary wall to Hickson Road is the main area proposed to distribute a 400mm deep topsoil, which increases soil depths above the recommended maximum 1500mm depth for deep soil.
- According to the Hickson Park Sections, in areas the soil depth will be over 3000mm deep which will result in aerobic soil and is not good practice.
- The wall facing Barangaroo Avenue is up to 700mm higher than the adjacent public domain. The potential impact on required view corridors from Hickson Road to Darling Harbour if standing on Hickson Road (until 2023 when Hickson Road levels will be completed has not been tested and is unclear).

Material changes throughout the park and streets

The quality of materials should meet or exceed expectations rather than be standard lower quality. Adequate justification of the replacement of sandstone and timber features has not been provided and the proposed design is lacking in adequate public comfort levels.

Timber seating to feature tree planters

- The modification deletes the timber seating and does not provide an alternative design with comfort in mind, the proposal is simply a concrete planter edge. No details of the planter have been provided.
- The deletion of timber seating and backrests to the signature feature Fig tree planters is not supported. These feature trees are located in Waterman Cove, Barangaroo Avenue, Spirit of Tasmania Loading Dock and Watermans Quay.
- Elsewhere the signature fig trees are in raised sandstone planters and the City of Sydney timber benches are proposed in the streets.

Stairs

- The substitution of sandstone stairs with concrete, along Watermans Quay and Wulugul Walk and Boardwalk Park is a poor outcome for a high profile public space that will facilitate events and large public use year round.

Available and soil volume

- The submitted plan sets out all new tree planting in the public domain in streets and waterfront quay. Only **4 out of 25 tree trenches** proposed achieve the minimum 1000mm depth required for trees on slab. Many trenches are only 750mm deep and some as little as 500mm.

The following recommendations are made:

- Alternate methods of ensuring protection for park users while retaining permeability are encouraged to be explored.
- The applicant is to produce a public domain plan in consultation with Council's Public Domain Unit that focuses on footways and the interface with adjacent roads, particularly the final treatment for Hickson Road
- The applicant is to consult with Council's Public Domain unit to prepare suitable stormwaters overland flow path calculations and design, drainage systems, on-site detention measures and stormwater quality assessments. The stormwater quality design/report for the proposed development shall comply with Council's MUSIC Link model. The certificate/report from the MUSIC Link model and the electronic copy of MUSIC Model shall be submitted to Council for review and approval.

Should you wish to speak with a Council officer about the above, please contact Marie Burge, Planner, on 9265 9333 or at mburge@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Jahn AM
Director
 City Planning, Development & Transport