
01 Urban design context

The future of Darling Harbour

“This project will transform the western fringe of Sydney’s central business district and is the biggest and most exciting change to Darling Harbour in 25 years,” “Darling Harbour already attracts 25 million people a year and this development will create a more vibrant place on Sydney Harbour.”

Barry O’Farrell, NSW Premier
The Australian, December 11, 2012

In the coming years Darling Harbour will undergo dramatic transformation. This is primarily driven by the Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct (SICEEP) redevelopment which will see the reframing of the harbour with more significant waterside development.

Darling Harbour is in the midst of a serious makeover. It is an exciting time for this important part of our city as we reconsider its relevance for locals and visitors alike.

The SICEEP site will become a world class events precinct and is a key part of reinforcing Sydney’s status as a global city. The project provides the opportunity to revitalise a 20 hectare precinct that runs north-south from Haymarket through to Cockle Bay, and east-west from the CBD to Ultimo.

The SICEEP proposal will introduce a wide variety of built forms into Darling Harbour including tall, large floorplate buildings for the Convention and Exhibition Centres and tower forms of 35-40 storeys at the northern and southern ends of the SICEEP precinct for residential and hotel uses.

As stated by NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell, this new scale of development is part of the evolution of the western edge of the

CBD. Darling Harbour is becoming more an extension of the city rather than a place of specific use with limited attractions for local people. The city is expanding, absorbing Darling Harbour into the fabric of the CBD.

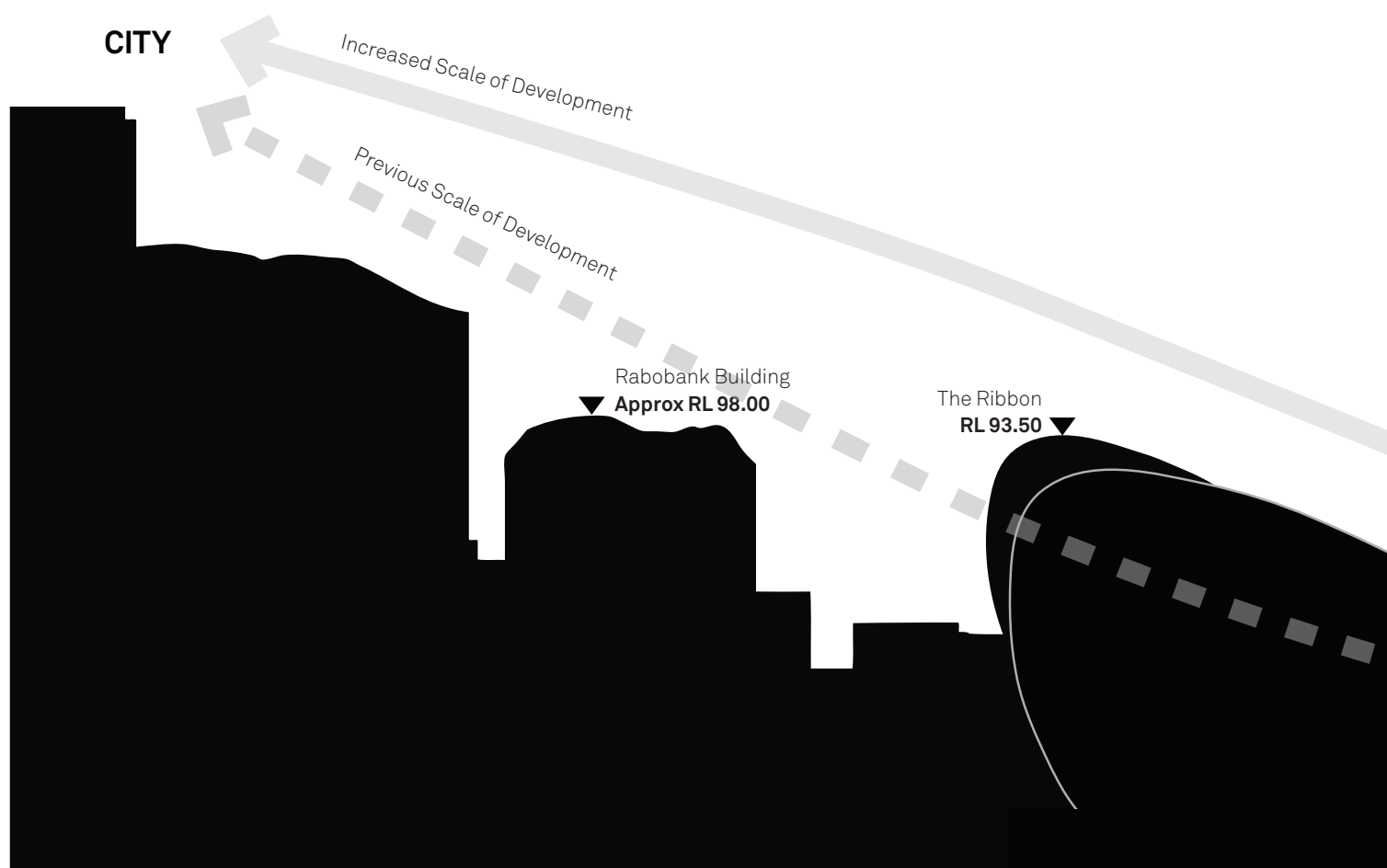
A number of residential towers are also being built in the Southern Quarter with heights of over RL 100.

One of the most beneficial changes to Darling Harbour has been the increased diversity of uses in the area, creating a more significant local community. The Ribbon will bring a high volume of workers to the area, further developing the diversity of activity in the area.

As principal designers of both The Ribbon and the preferred SICEEP redevelopment proposal, HASSELL are able to ensure seamless integration of pedestrian realm, built form and landscape design.

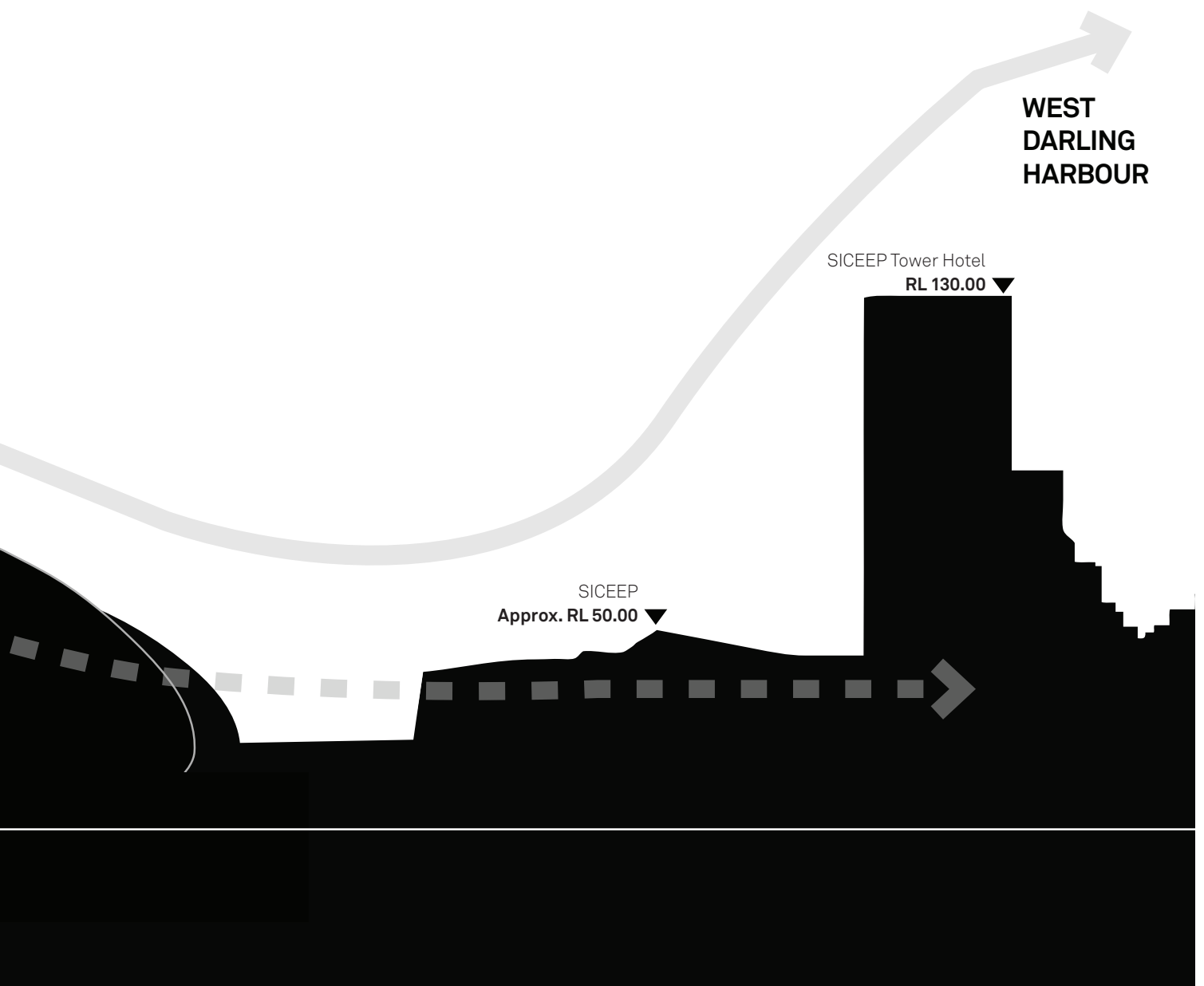
01 Urban design context

A new scale of
development



Proposed Darling Harbour skyline facing south.

“The Ribbon forms a link between West Darling Harbour and the CBD. The height and scale of the proposed building is in keeping with existing and proposed buildings in the immediate vicinity”.



01 Urban design context

A new scale of development

The Ribbon forms a link between West Darling Harbour and the CBD. The height and scale of the proposed building is in keeping with existing and proposed buildings in the immediate vicinity.

It is critical to consider The Ribbon within the context of existing, but also future development, set to dramatically transform the Sydney CBD and Darling Harbour. The building has been conceived on these terms; working with new scales of development which will define the future character of the area.

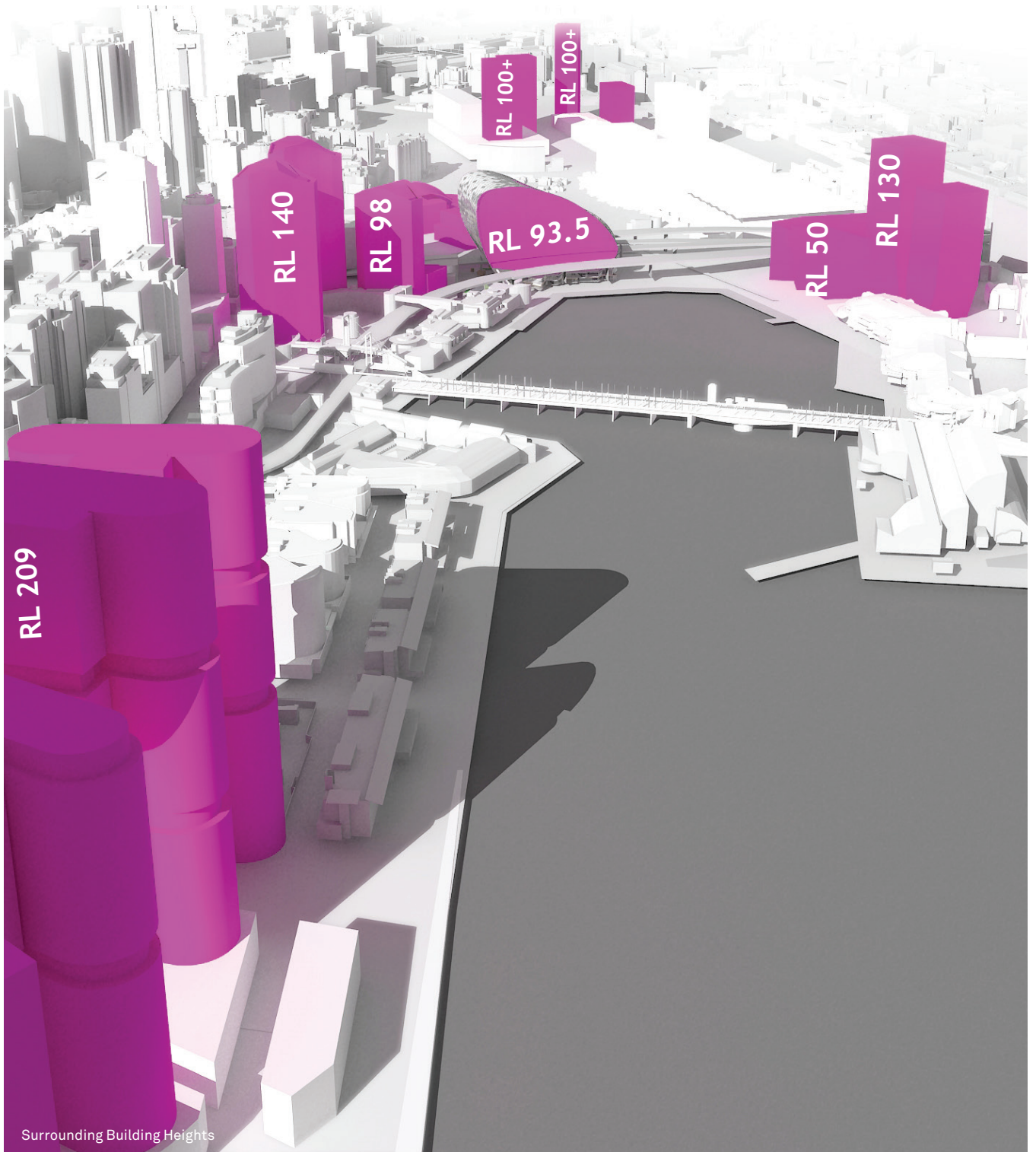
There are a number of significant towers in the vicinity which will have a strong spatial relationship with The Ribbon. The most important of these are the Darling Park Towers to the east and the proposed SICEEP Hotel Tower to the west.

The unique form of The Ribbon provides a sympathetic skyline, guided by a need to draw together the two sides of the harbour and create a more unified waterfront. At the same time The Ribbon footprint within the public domain narrows to strengthen the pedestrian links and sightlines.

The Ribbon has contextual fit as it is of an appropriate height and scale given various precedents in the area such as the Darling Park Towers.

The approval of buildings of significant height, including the residential towers to the South Quarter and the SICEEP hotel tower indicate further support for the skyline and scale of development to change in this precinct. Low rise development is being replaced with a mixture of updated, high quality buildings which reflect the growing density in this part of the city.

As the skyline drawing on the preceding page indicates, The Ribbon fits with the projected skyline of South Darling Harbour.



01 Urban design context

Extending Darling Quarter

Darling Quarter has become a distinct and extremely popular destination for locals and visitors. This innovative locale is now clearly defined and well known as a place of public gathering, recreation and commercial activity.

Darling Quarter is today a vibrant and popular public domain. The playground in particular is a raging success with people of all ages from all corners of the city and beyond. The area is crowded with families on weekends and provides a relaxed breakout space for workers during the week.

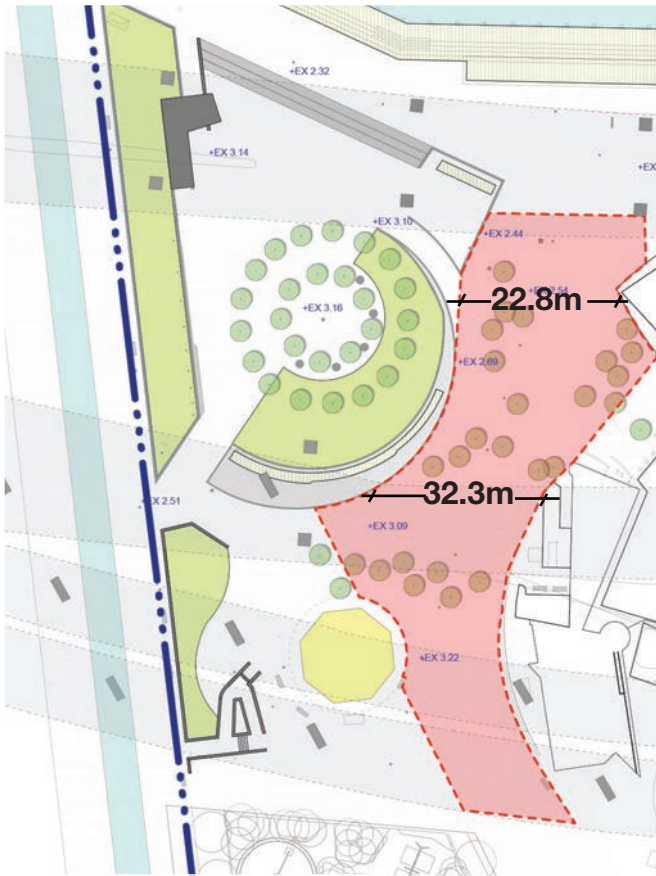
The success of Darling Quarter has transformed the harbourside precinct. Darling Quarter now stands out as a place adjacent to, but distinctly different from Cockle Bay. What was once a confusing extension of the Bay has broken away to become a highly successful piece of the City in its own right.

In our proposal Cockle Bay and Darling Quarter will be linked with stronger pedestrian level connections and sight lines by 'de-cluttering' the space. Achieved by increasing the clear public domain width through relocating the palms and carousel and extending the existing Darling Quarter playground Northward to occupy area under the elevated roads.

As development continues to densify and change the character of the whole foreshore area, The Ribbon will become part of the renewed character for both the Darling Harbour and Tumbalong entertainment precincts.

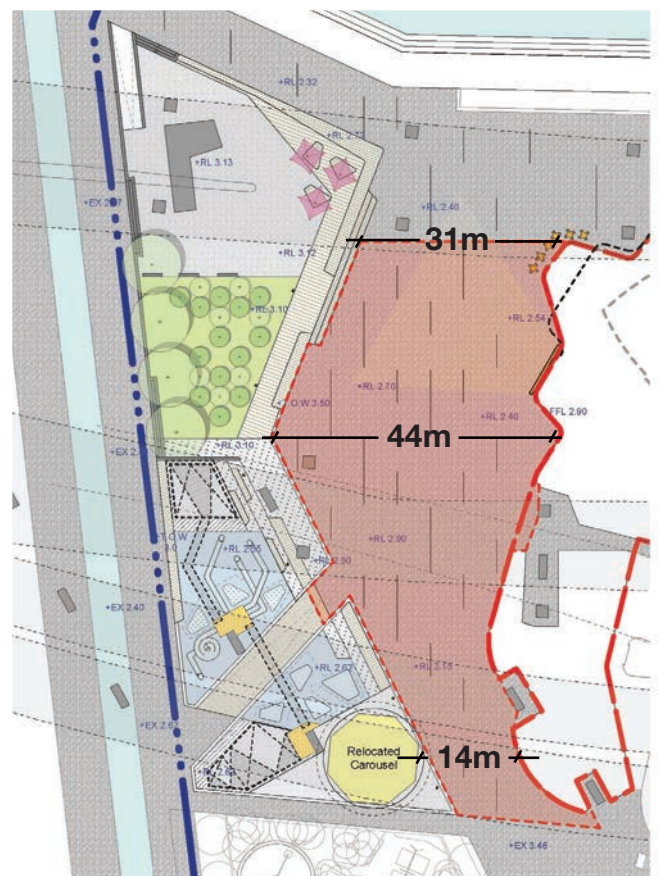
The newly established Darling Quarter
<http://www.aspect.net.au/wps/wcm/connect/web/w/news/news+darling+quarter+awarded>





Existing Public Domain
 Open Public Space

Approx 1900m²



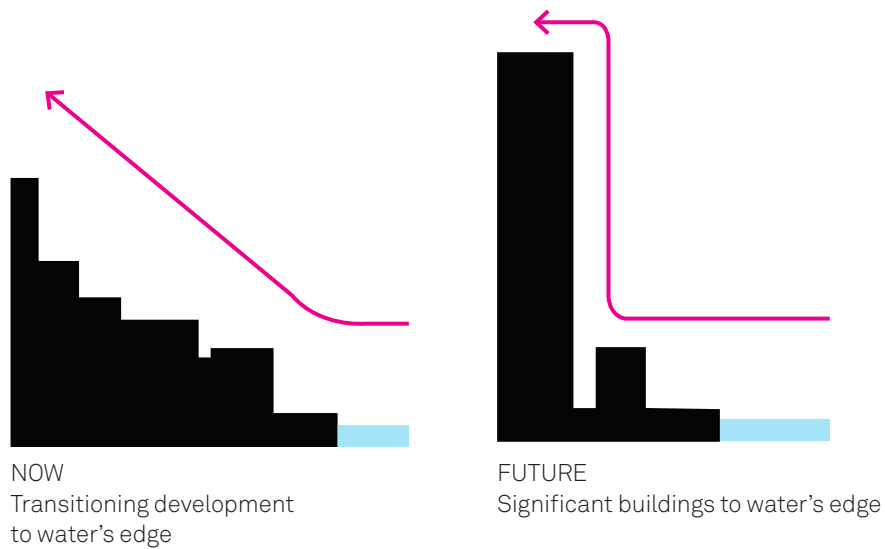
Proposed Public Domain
 Open Public Space

Approx 2430m²

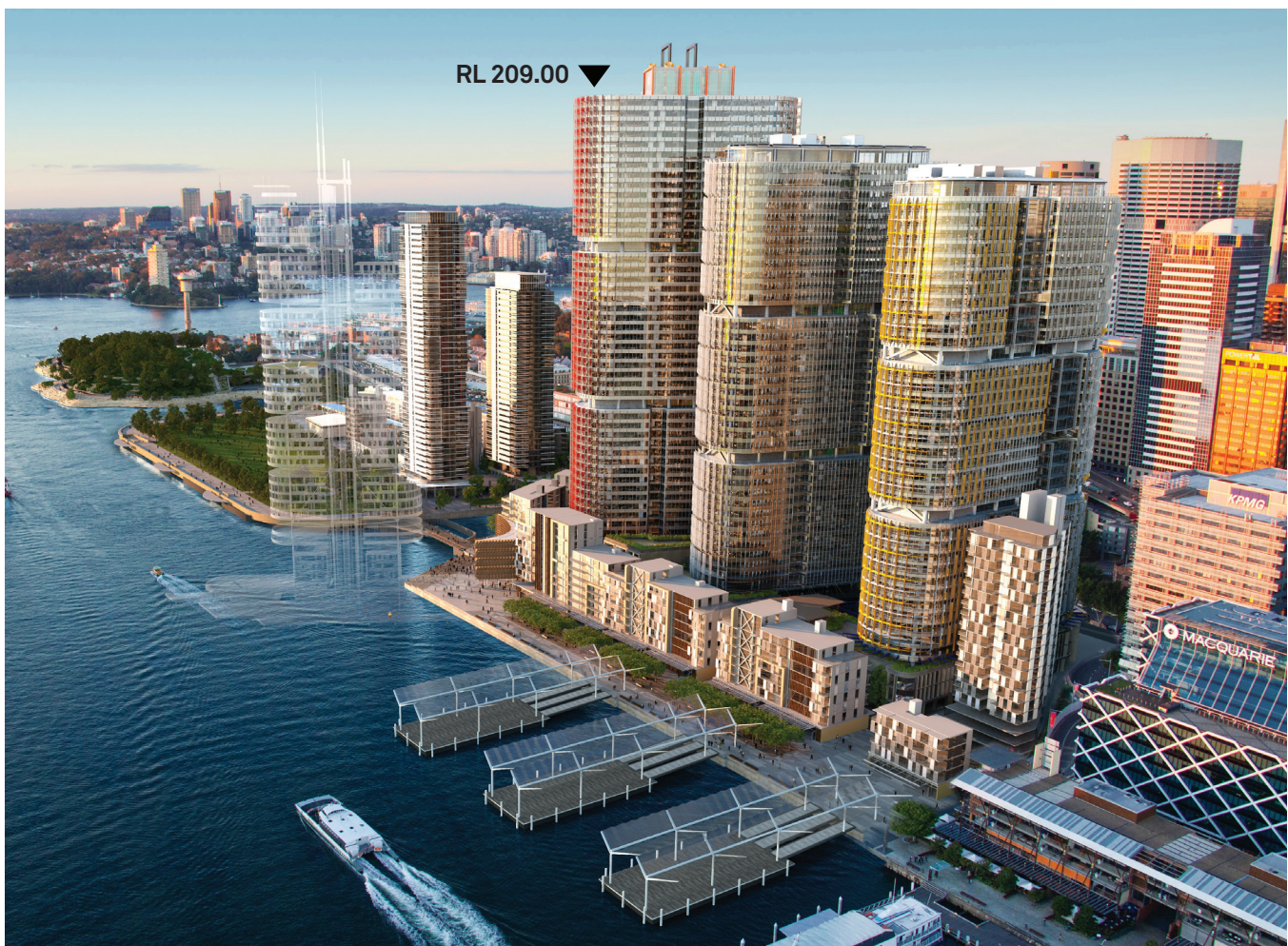


01 Urban design context

Evolution of the Darling Harbour edge



Barangaroo South Commercial Tower
Image courtesy of Lend Lease



01 Urban design context

Evolution of the Darling Harbour edge

New development at Barangaroo is dramatically transforming our harbour foreshore. The approved towers to the water's edge at Barangaroo South will stand some 200+ metres (approximately 50 storeys) above sea level.

Barangaroo is a precedent setting development, redefining the relationship between city and water in Darling Harbour through a dramatic change in scale directly at the harbour's edge.

The transition of building heights, tapering down to the water, is becoming a thing of the past. As the city expands this new high density edge condition will become more and more prevalent.

The verticality of the towers and their scale right on the water strengthens the edge and heightens the contrast between land and water.

Significant height at the water's edge also helps to frame the space of the water and in the case of Darling Harbour, with buildings on all sides, would transform the water space into more of a 'room'.

The Barangaroo development and SICEEP suggest a new direction for Darling Harbour where 'city scale' meets the harbour. The approved new building heights set a precedent for a new condition at the harbour edge, one where high density city scale buildings frame the harbour edges. We must be looking to existing, but also future developments, as we contribute to Darling Harbour's waterfront.

Barangaroo South Commercial Tower
Image courtesy of Lend Lease

