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Introduction

“It will be great to see Barangaroo come to life and we are looking forward to progressing to the next stage of development so that we can extend a warm welcome to all Sydneysiders in the future. This site is a once in a generation opportunity to create something really special for Sydney”

Andrew Wilson Barangaroo South Managing Director Lendlease
1.1 Overview

PURPOSE

This document explains the principles, strategies and proposals for the design of the landscape and public realm that is included within this application. They have been prepared in conjunction with a specialist design team that includes Civil Engineers, Structural Engineers, Artists, Lighting and Signage Consultants. This report should be read in conjunction with the various other specialist consultant development application reports, and associated drawings, provided by the project design team as part of the application. All place names used in in this report are preliminary and subject to final approval.

BARANGAROO

Barangaroo, formerly known as East Darling Harbour, is a 22 ha site with a 1.4 km harbour foreshore frontage located on the north western edge of the Sydney CBD. The site is bound by the Sydney Harbour foreshore to the north and west, the historic precincts of Millers Point, The Rocks and Sydney Harbour Bridge to the east and the Darling Harbour/King Street Wharf precincts to the south.

An International design competition to identify a potential framework for the redevelopment of the entire Barangaroo site preceded a competitive process to select a preferred developer for the southern part of the site, Barangaroo South. Lendlease were successful in securing the development rights for the southern 7ha parcel of harbourfront land, and are now well advanced in the delivery of the first precinct on the site. Initial stages are commenced in 2015 and followed into 2016.

STAGE 1B

Design for the second stage of the project, described as “Stage 1B”, is advancing and includes the proposed residential buildings by Renzo Piano Building Workshop and the Crown Hotel Resort by Wilkinson Eyre Architects. Grant Associates has been appointed as the Landscape Architect for the public realm associated with Stage 1B.

Barangaroo has been divided into three distinct redevelopment areas (from north to south) - Barangaroo Reserve, Barangaroo Central and Barangaroo South. The Public Domain for Stage 1B is located in the Barangaroo South and is defined in the diagram overleaf. This includes the final stage of Barangaroo South as well as part of Central Barangaroo within the proposed Hickson Park.

Barangaroo South forms the urban quarter of the greater Barangaroo and when completed will cater for a daily population of over 24,000 people. The site will offer significant opportunities to engage with the harbour via an activated public realm which includes waterfront promenades, streets, lanes and a new cove. The final detailed resolution of the landscape and public realm design will be developed according to the principles contained in this report and will follow a design development stage to refine all of the important construction details and methodologies for the project.

EXISTING APPROVALS AND CONSTRUCTION

The construction of Barangaroo South Stage 1A is targeted for completion in 2017. Much of the public realm is however already complete. The Crown Hotel application has been approved and construction activity has commenced.

The DA applications for the proposed Residential Towers located at the edges of Hickson Park and have been lodged and publicly exhibited. These include a significant amount of public realm at the ground floor level that will be required to be integrated with this application. We have included these proposals in the drawings for this application so that they illustrate clear - and complete - proposals for the final public realm. The drawings for Stage 1B public realm clearly indicate the boundary line for the extent of work that is included within this application.

Some elements of the public realm constructed as part of Stage 1A will be required to be demolished, and in some instances re-used, in order to facilitate the design of the Stage 1B public realm. These important interfaces with the complete 1A public realm work are addressed in the report accompanying drawings.
STAGE 1B SITE AREA

- Development application boundary
- Barangaroo South 1B boundary
The landscape and public realm design for Stage 1B will respond to the many years of prior work on the overall Barangaroo Master Plan, the specific master plan proposals for Barangaroo South by Rogers Stirk Harbour Partnership and especially the important foundations for the design of the landscape and public realm that has already been established by PWP Landscape Architecture and Aspect/Oculus.

Barangaroo is intended to become the number one address in Sydney, if not Australia, due to the significance of the setting and the overall quality of the project including the recently completed Barangaroo Reserve and the buildings in Barangaroo South. It follows that the landscape and public realm for all of its parts must deliver and re-enforce this sense of pre-eminence whilst still offering an inclusive, attractive and welcoming environment for every citizen of Sydney, tourists, visitors and guests.

The completed parts of Stage 1A and the Barangaroo Reserve have established a number of benchmarks for quality, detail and character for the environment, the landscape and public realm. Stage 1B will adopt parts of these principles and details but will also include a number of key spaces that will become defining places in their own right and fundamental to the identity of Barangaroo. This suggests that the design for the Stage 1B public realm needs to offer something unique to the hierarchy and character of spaces that are already in place. These spaces will also engage with a number of major building developments that collectively offer the most important contemporary development project in Australia.

A key challenge for this part of the development will be to mediate between the various architectural projects, scales and styles to allow the landscape and public realm to become the unifying element.

1.2 Vision

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OVERALL CONCEPT AND APPROACH

From the outset we have been inspired by the opportunity with which this project presents. We understand that it will need live up to an internationally significant standard but it also has to deliver the perfect foil to the immediate historic neighbourhoods and the future looking Barangaroo South. It is a small but very significant part to the whole of the development of Barangaroo. At the same time, this public realm will incorporate much needed outdoor facilities that vary wildly in character and scale. They include dramatic, versatile event spaces at one level and at the other include intimate seating places within a new urban park. This report has been developed to convey all of the design challenges and opportunities that collectively have underpinned our thoughts so far. We have challenged ourselves to create a versatile collection of public spaces that will provide a key ingredient for the creation of a new part of the city that will exceed all of our aspirations.

In summary, the public domain must:

- Deliver a memorable, attractive and comfortable public realm;
- Integrate with existing and proposed spaces and development;
- Build on the transformational qualities of Barangaroo Reserve, Waterfront Promenade and Barangaroo South to provide a destination and iconic place of regional and international significance;
- Provide active and passive recreational and cultural opportunities for local residents, the local population and visitors;
- Provide opportunities for hosting public outdoor events, festivals and activities;
- Celebrate the character of Sydney’s waterfront destinations;
- Provide active street and park edges that promote a high level of public amenity; and
- Provide a safe and sustainable environment for residents and visitors to enjoy both day and night.

Our overall vision is to let the public domain of Barangaroo South Stage 1B to become a release in the cityscape. It becomes a breakout space where there is a feeling of expanse, flexibility and ease. That is not to say the designs will lack character. On the contrary, the proposal is to achieve a strong sense of place and neighbourhood through the sensitivity of detailed design and building on the transitional qualities between the intense high density development of Barangaroo South and the unique landscape of the Reserve.

We see this part of the development as a pivotal public hub that creates the missing connective tissue between the Waterfront, the Reserve, Barangaroo South, Observatory Hill, the Rocks and the CBD. At the same time this site will provide the various public facilities and opportunities missing from the immediate surroundings.

At the heart of this new public domain is a sequence of spaces, connections and attractions that navigate between diverse levels and development types to define the very identity of Barangaroo South. This identity takes advantage of a number of special qualities of the site and setting.
1.3 Environmental Character

MEETING THE WATER

This portion of the Harbour has long had a distinctive industrial character and a clearly defined edge where land meets water. Clearly this is quite different from other parts of the Harbour that offer expansive views of the Heads and steep vegetated cliffs. Here the relationship of water and land has a urban/developed character. Barangaroo Reserve has already established a significant shift to restore a natural character to this part of the Harbour through the contemporary mix of sandstone and native planting as the dominant elements that define the water’s edge and Nawi Cove. Further South, as the character to the precinct begins to take on a more urban character, Wulugul Walk redeline the character to the water’s edge through the provision of a continuous publicly accessible harbourside promenade. Wulugul Walk will be developed to include several new ways to offer visitors – and Sydneysiders alike - new opportunities to get closer to the water, even within the urban context.

BUSHLAND, SANDSTONE AND SEA

The Sydney Harbour landscape is defined by an eclectic mix of native bushland, sandstone and sea. The collective city is unified by the Harbour and is defined by moments and places where the city, sandstone and bushland meet the water. The bushland has a gnaely, weathered and strong character. Sometimes extending right to the waters’ edge, sometimes clinging to sandstone cliffs but always providing a rich myriad of textures: peeling banks, silvery greens, distinctive scents and contorted forms establishing that uniquely Australian composition and backdrop. At one level these moments can be intimate incidents in the sandstone shoreline, at local wharves, jetties, beaches and bays. At the other extreme they are international iconic built landmarks such as the Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Peter Walker and Partners design for Barangaroo Reserve offers a distinctive contemporary addition to these collections of city/sandstone/native bushland and sea moments. Barangaroo South needs to make its equivalent harbour edge mark at Watermans Cove.

One important question for our design work for the public realm design in Stage 1B has been: how does sandstone as a material appear throughout the sequence of spaces? It has a very minor role in the aggregate finishes of concrete in Stage 1A and, by contrast, a major role in the character and relationship to the water in Barangaroo Reserve. Archaeology reports of this area identify the beautiful sandstone walls associated with the old wharves. Can these be reused/reconstructed or re-interpreted in Stage 1B?

VIEWS TO THE HARBOUR

The most special quality of this site is the outlook across the harbour to the north west and west. At higher levels, views exist of the Harbour Bridge and features to the east but from ground level, the focus is the harbour itself. These views are typically dominated by green headlands and islands that lead the eye to distant horizons and expansive skies. The views are animated by varied activity on the water including the regular passing of ferries and watercraft in the foreground. These views capture the afternoon and evening patterns of the sun and include the dramatic sunsets across the west beyond Balmain. These views and borrowed landscape create an immediate sense of calm and a strong sense of place and this design proposal are entirely structured around taking advantage of these qualities.

ENDLESS SKY

An expansive endless sky is the perfect contrast to the drama of the water, bushland and the rapidly changing city scape. The sky, strangely seemingly bigger, taller and higher than many other cities, provides constant cover over vegetation, sandstone and city. It emerges in glimpses between tall buildings in the CBD and then stretches endlessly across the edges of the Harbour and beyond, adding a new dimension to scale and leaving long lasting impressions of expansive space and memorable feelings of blue. One dramatic characteristic of the exposure to the sky in the public realm of Stage 1B is the level of relief that a clear blue sky provides as you emerge from the shadow of the buildings and streets into Hickson Park and the Waterfront.

BORROWED LANDSCAPE

The character of views to and from the site is important. The topography and urban overlay of Sydney Harbour creates an extraordinarily rich diversity of views and character that ranges from raw natural coastlines through villages melded into the landscape to the bustling high density heart of Sydney rising as a distinctive skyline. From Barangaroo South the views across the harbour change in character from low rise urban backdrops to the south and west through to the tree and steeple profile of Balmain East and then to the more natural profiles of Goat Island, Balls Head Reserve, the Headland Park to the north west and north. The east is dominated by the tall buildings of the CBD growing out of sculpted sandstone cliffs. These backdrop views reflect the changing character within the Barangaroo Master Plan from high density city to the south through to the more natural environment created by the Barangaroo Reserve. Barangaroo South Stage 1B sits at a transitional space in this urban/green context and the Park has the potential to create a distinctive bridge between the intensity of high rise development and the calmer, lower rise qualities of Barangaroo Central. At the same time, the backdrop views of the harbour offer a unique borrowed landscape that must be used to maximum effect in views from within the project.

DISTINCTIVE GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The areas visual prospect is enhanced by the underlying sandstone outcrop that defines the colour, nature and topography of this part of Sydney. The former industrial developments along the waterfront carved back this original mass to create a level and functional quayside but the impression of the original hillside is still a powerful part of the feel and character of the site. The original profiles and forms of the geology can almost be drawn out as extensions of the carved cliffs along Hickson Road.

The Barangaroo Reserve reintroduces a similar dramatic topography to the north of the site and by contrast emphasises the importance of the large level open spaces created by Watermans Cove and Hickson Park.
VIEWS TO THE HARBOUR ACROSS AN ENDLESS SKY
Context
2.1 A Short History of Barangaroo

The Cultural Landscape

The Barangaroo site has an extraordinary human history through the accretions of wharves and jetties and infrastructure of trade and industry that colonised this shoreline from the 18thC through to the late 20thC. There is an opportunity, particularly in Hickson Park, where we can offer a place to reflect on this history. Preliminary research suggests the pattern of wharves that once stood on the site could be an interesting reference. The Park is also located in an interesting place in the historical evolution of the site. Neither true land nor open sea. A middle ground. Its wharves active along the edges but the warehouses calm with stored wool, flour, coal etc. A metaphor for the Park perhaps with reflective and calm interior and active edges?
HISTORICAL CONTEXT: COASTLINE EVOLUTION

- Francis Webb Sheild Plan of Sydney, 1844
- Trigonometrical Survey of Sydney, 1855-65
- City of Sydney, 1903
- Aerial Survey of the City of Sydney, 1949
- Aerial View, 2014
- Coastline evolution over time
2.2 City Context

Connecting routes to and from the City are varied and each has its own sequence of levels, experiences and qualities. Barangaroo South needs to complete these journeys and connections in a meaningful way that also reflects the individuality of each route and engages the City with its harbour.

Barangaroo South, particularly Hickson Park, will be a significant new addition to the framework of the public realm for the City. Its successful integration, permeability and connection to the existing network of spaces is essential.
CULTURAL RIBBON

The State Infrastructure Strategy proposes revitalising and expanding the State’s existing cluster of world-class cultural institutions and attractions through the development of an ‘Arts and cultural ribbon’ linking the cultural venues around Sydney Harbour and the CBD.

The Cultural Ribbon, the other major cultural proposal of Sustainable Sydney 2030, is a foreshore walk linking the City’s leading cultural institutions. The project aims to recognise the crucial role that arts plays in the City’s life and identity.

Along with the Eora Journey, the Cultural Ribbon will be a key cultural pathway on the City’s proposed Liveable Green Network. The Cultural Ribbon will link the Powerhouse Museum and Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour to future cultural venues at Barangaroo, to Circular Quay and the Opera House and on to the Art Gallery of NSW and the Australian Museum.

As with the Eora Journey, the Cultural Ribbon is a partnership project to promote the cultural life and experience of the City. Its inclusion in this strategy will enable it to be developed within the strategy’s broader approach to delivering public art. The development of the Liveable Green Network will provide opportunities for public art to be integrated into a city-wide way finding system which will reinforce pedestrian and cycling links across the city and south to Redfern, the Green Square Town Centre and the Alexandra Canal.

The cultural ribbon includes:

- Maritime Museum and Aquarium
- Theatres on Hickson Road
- Sydney Dance Company
- Sydney Theatre Company
- Bangarra Dance Theatre
- Sydney Observatory
- Angyle Square and the Angyle Cut
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Opera House
- Museum of Sydney
- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Mitchell Library
- Australian Museum
- Art Galley of New South Wales
- Sydney Conservatory of Music

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LOCAL PUBLIC SPACE

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2.3 The Barangaroo Precinct

REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Barangaroo has been divided into three distinct redevelopment areas (from north to south) – Barangaroo Reserve, Barangaroo Central and Barangaroo South.

Barangaroo South has been further divided into two sections. Barangaroo Stage 1A which is expected to be complete in early 2017 and Barangaroo South Stage 1B, the subject of this application.

The two completed areas of development are explained in further details over the following pages. They include the recently completed award winning Barangaroo Reserve.
Barangaroo Site Plan Option 01

1. Barangaroo South Stage 1B
2. Barangaroo South Stage 1A
3. Central Barangaroo Park
4. Barangaroo Reserve
5. Sydney Observatory
6. Crown Sydney
7. Nawi Cove
8. Sydney Steps
9. MOD 8 extension

Note: Barangaroo Central is indicative only, and subject to future planning approval.
BARANGAROO SOUTH STAGE 1A

Stage 1A has established a number of benchmarks for quality, detail and character of the Barangaroo South environment. The landscape and public realm has been detailed to a high level by Aspect | Oculus.

Stage 1B will adopt these principles and details but will also include a number of key spaces that will become defining places within Sydney and will be fundamental to the identity of Barangaroo. This suggests the designs for the Stage 1B landscape needs to offer something unique to the hierarchy and character of spaces already in place. These spaces will also engage with a number of major building developments that collectively offer the most important contemporary architectural and development project in Sydney. A key task of this project is to mediate between the various architectural projects, scales and styles and to allow the landscape and public realm to become the unifying element.
The creation of Barangaroo Reserve has been transformational for the city. It has restored a significant piece of natural Harbour bushland to the CBD in a scale that is unrivalled throughout the world. One that will be celebrated for generations.

The use and selection of the planting alone however is not the only reason for its success. The Reserve promotes an entirely welcoming and accessible character that in turn offers a range of views and experiences that draw on all of the qualities of this magnificent setting. One of its most significant attributes is the way in which the landform creates a distinctly different character. It defines a continuous meandering foreshore edge with dramatic distant views at the edges of the escarpment and sweeping views of the entire harbour at the top.