

Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Barangaroo South – Crown Sydney Hotel Resort (SSD 6957)

The Urban Taskforce has reviewed the application and associated documentation for the Barangaroo South - Crown Sydney Hotel Resort (SSD 6957), currently on public exhibition by the Department of Planning & Environment. The Urban Taskforce strongly supports the proposal. The development provides an excellent balance between the built form of the hotel and the natural environment of the new headland park, Barangaroo Reserve. This is particularly demonstrated by the recent opening of the reserve to the public which is a huge positive contribution to the Sydney community.

It is important that the application for the Crown Resort Hotel is considered in the context of two key issues. The first is the evolution of the initial Concept Plan Approval from a hotel in the harbour to one on the land. The second is the role of the hotel as an 'iconic world-class building on Sydney Harbour that would become a destination for international tourists'¹. The building has always been intended to be a sculptural landmark with the city as a back drop. The assessment of the application must give consideration to these two important issues and not simply treat the project as a standard building on a standard site. The proposed Concept Plan (Modification 8) is based around these two issues.

The Urban Taskforce provides the following comments.

1. The Crown Resort hotel is a relocation of a previously approved hotel in the harbour

The previous Concept Plan approval was based around the hotel being a 'marker' for the project located in the harbour. In August 2011, the NSW Government requested the applicant, Lend Lease, consider relocating the hotel from its approved position on a harbour pier, back onto land. The original location in the waters of the harbour provided an iconic and unique setting for the hotel.

In order to offset the loss of this special location, it is appropriate that the maximum building height is extended to RL 275, in order to retain the buildings iconic status and symbol as a 'marker'. The additional height also ensures that the loss of public domain that could have occurred as a result of the relocation of the hotel back onto the land is minimised. The new proposal still retains a close relationship with the harbour and remains a focal point for the western edge of the city.

2. The hotel must continue the approved role as a sculptural marker for the Barangaroo site

¹ Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (2008) Barangaroo ChSydney Australia – Call for Expressions of Interest

The previous Concept Plan approval issued for the site was for an iconic building that would serve as a landmark for the site and present as a glass 'sculpture' when viewed from all sides. It is important that this criteria is retained in this application.

The buildings at Barangaroo South are an example of a developing twenty-first century architectural aesthetic that relates to the waterfront site. The Urban Taskforce believes that this is leading to a 'Sydney style' of architecture where buildings have a more organic, sculptural form that relates to the flowing forms of Sydney Harbour. We have attached a copy of our recent publication, *Urban Ideas* that explains this approach in more detail with a particular focus upon the Barangaroo precinct.

As the hotel continues the role of the 'marker' of the site it must be the most sculptural of all the buildings and this is exactly what the proposed design is. The Urban Taskforce believes the design of the Crown Resort Hotel will become an international image that represents the spirit of Sydney. The architects, Wilkinson Eyre, are of an international standing with many awards of their buildings. They have sculptured a remarkable building for for this important site in Sydney.

3. Height, architecture, podium and relationship to the water

The height of the hotel (RL 275) is clearly very significant and will be one of the tallest buildings in Sydney. We believe that the height is appropriate as the building needs to stand out from the nearby towers as an iconic building and a landmark.

The building is the tallest building within the Barangaroo site, as stipulated in Part 4 of the *Draft Barangaroo South Design Guidelines*. The height gives the building a very elegant appearance which would be diminished if the size were to be reduced. As outlined in Point 1, the additional height also compensates for moving the hotel back onshore from the initial Concept Plan approval for a hotel in water of the harbour and allows the applicant to allocate space to the public domain which would otherwise be lost.

The architecture of the hotel is exceptional as a sculptural form clad in glass and masonry with different appearances from different sides. While the form has the balance and proportions of a sculpture it is also a reflection of the uses inside the building. Significant consideration has been invested in effectively articulating and emphasising the buildings geometry and sculptural curved form. The design will complement other Sydney icons such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House and in doing so will help Sydney achieve its tourism goals.

The podium contains uses that require more area than the tower but the form has been integrated into the overall building. The height of the podium at five storeys (40 metres) continues the podium approach on the other Barangaroo buildings. While the podium for the hotel is higher than the other buildings, the height is still compatible with the desired built form, as we believe this is appropriate for the taller tower to retain similar proportions across the site.

The relationship to the water is important to ensure that the public domain has a comfortable feeling and scale. The setback of 17 metres (southern edge) and 25 metres (western edge) is consistent with other parts of the site. The building side of the public domain will be activated with cafes and restaurants and this will give a bustling

urban character not dissimilar to South Bank in Melbourne where another Crown Resort Hotel connects with the public domain. In both instances the public relates to the scale of the podium rather than the taller buildings above.

In summary the Urban Taskforce is very supportive of the development application proposed for the Crown Resort Hotel at Barangaroo. We believe it will act as an attractor for global tourism and that it will be an excellent 'marker' to the overall composition for Barangaroo. Please feel free to contact me on telephone number 9238 3927 to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Urban Taskforce Australia



Chris Johnson AM
Chief Executive Officer