

Rationale for a moratorium on the development of The Block, Redfern

- Proposal includes 99 year lease locking away Aboriginal access and sense of ownership for the foreseeable future contravening the very premise for which the grant for the land was given by the government. **This clause must be deleted.**
- Full Investigation required of the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) and its viability as a housing provider for which it has a 'checkered' and totally opaque past history. There is enormous suspicion and doubt in the Aboriginal community at large as to whether this organisation can or has ever provided housing for the Aboriginal community. It is not up to the task and does not have the confidence of anyone outside a small vested interest group.
Where has the previously available housing stock and resources been distributed?
Why wouldn't the AHC accept further government money (\$5M from Nigel Scullion, Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in 2016) to provide for an affordable housing development for the original Aboriginal families.

To be responsible for a proposed development of this size and scale, the AHC needs to be transparent, accountable and genuinely consultative and responsive to the Redfern Aboriginal community and it is not. The rest of the country and indeed, the world is watching how we manage this sensitive and important matter in the provision for and recognition of Australia's First Peoples.

- Genuine, wide, thoughtful community consultation has not occurred to get a good outcome for the community for this site. The process through Sydney City Council, then Scott Carver Architects 'managed' PR event has been surreptitious, secretive, and excluding. There is a decided 'smell' of exploitation and commercially driven intent around the deal that has been struck between the AHC and the chosen developers, Deicorp and Attira.
The Independent Planning Commission offered the first opportunity for members of the community to speak but there was little notification and notice to attend, the speakers were strictly managed and the time for submissions also restricted to one week with a second week graciously granted.

Aboriginal community members involved and/or historically residing on this land have indicated their aspirations for this land which are feasible, thoughtful and widely accepted.

They include facilities resembling:

A community healing/meeting centre so this site can continue to be a 'place' where anyone can come looking to connect with the Redfern Aboriginal community for which there is a long and significant record. Political leaders, celebrities, people from other countries and regional and remote Australia have come to know "The Block" as this place.

An affordable day care that is Aboriginal run and culturally safe for local Aboriginal families. With a %400 increase in removals of Aboriginal children since the national apology, Aboriginal families need appropriate support and recognition to keep their families intact. There is a dearth of this type of facility in this area.

- Affordable Aboriginal housing as a primary purpose of this site. To re house the families removed that were promised a return by the AHC better future housing if they left and for there to be a transparent widely consulted process to determine access for other Aboriginal families wanting to live on this site and in Redfern.
- A revamp for this development to be wholly for Aboriginal housing and community meeting/ service provision.

There are many other sites in this area that can be used for “much needed overseas student housing”.

This site should not be one of them. It has a much more important role, Historically and into the future.

This submission has not addressed the scandalous physical overdevelopment of the site including the sheer size and scale of the proposal as I believe it is a secondary issue and one better dealt with down the road once the above issues have been addressed.

As a former Paddington Greens Councillor, I comprehend the complexity of these issues including heritage and planning controls confronting the Independent planning panel and implore you to give utmost thought to the social impact the development of this site will have, both if it is done atrociously as is the current proposal and if was to be done well.

Sustainable development principles are inherent to Aboriginal custodianship and must also be a strong consideration for this development.

As a senior mental health clinician with significant knowledge about the impacts of colonialism, systemic racism and intergenerational trauma on the Australian Aboriginal community especially in Redfern, I urge you to consider the formidable psychological symbolism this piece of land holds within the whole Australian community and how it must be managed with respect, sensitivity, compassion and vision.

Susan Jarnason

