



New South Wales Government
Independent Planning Commission

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

RE: GLEBE ISLAND SILOS - PART 4 SIGNAGE DA PROJECT
(DA-21/13182)

DEPARTMENT MEETING

COMMISSION PANEL: PROF. RICHARD MACKAY AM (Chair)
 DR PETER WILLIAMS

OFFICE OF THE IPC: CASEY JOSHUA
 JANE ANDERSON

CITY OF SYDNEY ANDREW REES
COUNCIL: REINAH URQUEZA

LOCATION: VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

DATE: 11.00AM, WEDNESDAY, 10 AUGUST 2022

TRANSCRIBED AND RECORDED BY APT TRANSCRIPTIONS

PROF. MACKAY: Good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that I am speaking to you from Gadigal land and I acknowledge the traditional owners of all of the Country from which we virtually meet today and I pay my respects to Elders past and present. Welcome to this meeting today to discuss the Glebe Island Silos - Part 4 Signage DA Project, DA21/13182, which is currently before the Independent Planning Commission for determination. The applicant, Eye Drive Sydney Pty Limited, is seeking approval for the ongoing use of two existing advertising signs on the Glebe Island Silos.

10 My name is Professor Richard Mackay. I am the Chair of this Commission Panel and I'm joined by my fellow Commissioner, Dr Peter Williams. We are also joined by Casey Joshua and Jane Anderson from the Office of the Independent Planning Commission. In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure the full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website. The meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of this matter and will form one of the sources of information upon which the Commission will base its determination.

20 It's important for the Commissioners to ask questions of attendees and to clarify issues whenever it is considered appropriate. If you're asked a question and are not in a position to answer, please feel free to take the question on notice and to provide any additional information in writing which we will then put up on the Commission's website. I request that all members here today introduce themselves before speaking for the first time and for all members to ensure that they do not speak over the top of each other to ensure accuracy of the transcript. And could I perhaps invite the Council representatives to introduce themselves and then we'll get underway with the items on the pre-circulated agenda please.

30 MR REES: Reinah, you can introduce yourself first.

MS URQUEZA: Yep. Good morning, my name's Reinah Urqueza, I'm a Senior Planner at the City of Sydney Council.

MR REES: And my name is Andrew Rees. I'm the Area Planning Manager, currently in the Major Projects Team which reviews state-significant development including this application.

40 PROF. MACKAY: Well, thank you, Reinah, thank you, Andrew, and welcome. The Commission has been through the documents, the Application, the submissions, the responses to submissions and, of course, the Department's assessment report. I think it would be perhaps appropriate if we just provided an opportunity to the Council

representatives to introduce a summary of the grounds for Council's objection to the Application and perhaps any update of Council's current position please.

MS URQUEZA: Thank you. I'll speak to that and thank you for the opportunity to enable City of Sydney Council to address the Commission this morning. The City has long expressed opposition for the erection and ongoing display of the advertising signage on the Glebe Island Silos. The city maintains objection to the subject application for the continued use of the silos to display advertising signage for a further 10 years. The Minister for Planning granted development consent on the 21st of May, 1992 to install the 2000 Olympic Games mural and sponsor advertising and lighting on the Glebe Island Silos and the consent was limited to a 10-year period. And now, thirty years since the granting of the time-limited consent, and moreover 22 years since the 2000 Olympics, the temporary intent and purpose to which signage was approved, which was for the exceptional circumstance to assist the state government in achieving a successful outcome in Sydney's bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games, has its basis completely eroded.

The rolling consents to extend the signage display and now with the subject application for a 10-year extension has, and continues to, perpetuate a permanent blight on the Sydney skyline for third-party advertising 22 years following from the 2000 Olympics. The proposal sets a negative precedent for temporary arrangements and undermines the relevant time-limited consents as a reliable mechanism to compliant impacts for the short term. Additionally, the rolling consents have subverted the impacts and heritage significance of the Glebe Island Silos, which is listed as a heritage item under SEPP Precinct Eastern Harbour City 2021.

The short-term impacts of the signage to the heritage item by virtue of conditions for a time-limited consent in the original approval has been distorted by previous approvals to extend the display of advertising signage. The signage is unsightly and visually unappealing and overwhelms the heritage significance of the silos. The subject application for a further 10 years will only continue to erode the heritage value of the site, which over time has been diminished. There are no other advertising structures of this scale in Sydney. Permitting the extension to display third-party advertising on the Glebe Island Silos continues to undermine the relevance of time-limited consents and skews the heritage value of the Glebe Island Silos. For these reasons, the city objects to the proposal. The City considers it's not in the public interest and the advertising signage displayed must finally come to an end.

PROF. MACKAY: Reinah, thank you. I think I've just got one perhaps question arising that's not otherwise covered on our agenda today. You specifically mentioned heritage impacts as one of the Council concerns. The Commission is conscious that

the silos themselves are an item of local heritage significance and that on either side they are flanked by two state-significant items, the Glebe Island Bridge and the White Bay Power Station. Would Council like to expand a little on what it regards as the inappropriate element of the heritage impact of the proposal please.

MR REES: Yeah, I think I can. If I can just share a screen, I think I might just show something, just an image of it. If I can share this one. So if you can see this is an example of silo art which has become very popular in rural context but you can clearly see there's artwork here and the original form and structure of the silos are retained
10 and you can clearly see the horizontal, you know, structure at the top there is clearly visible, has no signage. Another example here where there is no signage, you can clearly see the horizontal conveyor room. Another example.

So there's plenty of examples of great murals on side walls of silos but they've all retained their – they're really identifiable as silos but then you move to the subject site and this structure has this sign, as Reinah has said, is completely out of scale with any other signage that we've had to deal with. The flattening off of the top obscures the horizontal conveyor room so you cannot clearly distinguish its form and it does have a comical resemblance now to a bulk carrier perhaps dry docked on top of faux Doric or
20 Grecian column monument to what the Olympics once had. So it is rather, has distorted the visual appearance of the silos. This is the view that's gained from all the City of Sydney residents. So from both Pyrmont – this photo was taken at the Glebe foreshore where it's only about 400 metres away. So the structure doesn't look anything like silos anymore and it stands well above the horizon and is clearly visible for all to see.

PROF. MACKAY: Andrew, thank you. So if I may just clarify – and that's very helpful and informative for the Commission. The heritage impact is seen as an impact on the significance of the silos themselves and the ability to understand them because
30 of the obstruction of the overhead conveyor?

MR REES: That's correct, yeah.

PROF. MACKAY: And, look, could I ask you please to send this document to the Commission officers and we'll need to post it on our website in conjunction, perhaps at the end of the transcript, so that anyone who wants to access the record of this meeting sees the material.

MR REES: Those images.
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PROF. MACKAY: Yes. Thank you for that.

MR REES: Not a problem, Commissioner.

PROF. MACKAY: Look, thank you. Peter, can I just check whether you've got any questions arising from Reinah's opening remarks and the summary of the grounds of the objection please?

10 DR WILLIAMS: Yes. Thank you, Richard. Sorry, Reinah, just two interrelated questions. You mentioned that the Application or the ongoing extensions of approval for this development has undermined time-limited consents and I just wanted to – if you can explain what you meant by time-limited consents. Are you saying that it should be of a shorter time limit generally or the fact that these time-limited consents are continually being rolled over? And also related to that, you talked about, you spoke about Council's opposition to a 10-year extension. What consideration or what might Council's view be to an extension that might be of a much shorter duration, say three years, for example?

20 MS URQUEZA: Yep. So the comment or the objection in relation to the undermining time-limited consents really talks to, I guess, the latter that you discussed about it setting a negative precedent for confining any sort of long-term impacts to a short-term time-limited consent and the fact that these consents to display advertising signage have been ongoing for the past 22 years following from the Olympics just continues to undermine any future application for a time-limited consent. And, I guess, that's the concern that we've got at the moment with this is, you know, it was approved for 10 years and 30 years since that approval it's just been ongoing and will continue to perpetuate this and its impacts essentially eroded because it's been ongoing for all this time. Was there anything else, Andrew?

30 MR REES: Yeah. I think the – it's about certainty. There's certainly a lot more certainty now as to the future context of this area. There's the, you know, the state-significant infrastructure application and the over-station development work for the rezoning for the Bays precinct, the Bays Station is now really coming to light. There's also the redevelopment of the Sydney Fish Markets, the former site there and the adjoining land. So there is greater certainty as to the changing context of this area and we just think that the rolling consents that have just continued on and on with every – I mean, we could be back here in three years' time with the same arguments. We just need certainty that this is the last period that it's being granted, if it is to be three to 10 years, preferably three. So, yes, I think that's the main point that we want to get across.

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PROF. MACKAY: Thank you, Andrew. And just on that last point for the purposes of us being clear about Council's position, I mean, it's very clear Council objects to 10-year consent. Through the course of the exhibition, submissions, response to submissions and the Department's assessment report there's now the suggestion that a three-year consent might be more appropriate, particularly given the short-term planning land use context, the Bays Precinct and the like. Does Council – well, if it is a three-year consent does that allay Council's concerns or does Council still press its objection to a three-year consent?

- 10 MR REES: I, our preference is to, yeah, that it be terminated now but I think three years is – if that is what the Department are recommending we wouldn't object to that. That would align with the, you know, the future growth of the immediate context. So, yes, so I think that's what – but I think the wording, I mean, it kind of, the condition, I think it's A5, yeah, the wording could be tighter to say that this is the last consent. I'd probably leave that to you as the determining authority to come up with wording but it really needs to be stronger, otherwise it's just inviting another application come the three years.

- 20 PROF. MACKAY: Okay. Thank you. That's very clear. I guess while we're in this area, I presume Council's had the opportunity to consider the Department's assessment report. Is there anything further that Council would like to put before the Commission arising from the consideration of that report?

- MR REES: I think, well, I think the lighting impact is probably the other important aspect. I think there is a recommendation to cut it from 1.00am to 11.00pm. I mean, that is welcome but I think to really appreciate the impact of that lighting – I think there's 49 downlights – you really need to go out there yourself and have a look at it at night-time. There is no other structure that sits well above the horizon, maybe about five or six degrees above the horizon. All the other lighting below is nowhere near the intensity of what this signage is. I know that there is an Australian Standard which
30 they are complying to but when you put that many lights above the horizon you cannot see the night sky at all and it really does, it is a real blight and residents that live down there have probably had to endure this for 30 years. So I think we refute the claims that the lighting impacts are acceptable as well.

PROF. MACKAY: Sorry, just to clarify. I presume you're predominantly speaking about residents from Glebe Point that are orthogonally opposite?

- MR REES: That's correct.
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PROF. MACKAY: Yeah. The Commission has inspected the precinct obviously and we've also had the benefit of being able to read every submission through a GIS that – so we're able to sort of understand exactly from where each individual submission has been made which has been very helpful but I acknowledge and take on board the comment that having a look at night time would also be informative, so thank you for that suggestion.

MR REES: Yes.

- 10 PROF. MACKAY: And then I'm again reading between the lines but Council clearly considers the 11.00pm curfew limit preferable to the 1.00am. There are some submissions that seek 10.00pm. I guess to use the Dorothy Dixier question, what would Council's view be on that?

MR REES: 10.00 would be welcome, yes. That would, I mean we'd consider anything past 10 o'clock in our late-night trading DCP as a late-night trading premises. So I think that sort of aligns with our kind of planning controls. So 10.00pm would be definitely more welcome.

- 20 PROF. MACKAY: Okay. Anything else in response to Council's – sorry – in response to the Department's assessment report?

- MR REES: The other concern that, I guess, that we perhaps didn't put in writing is, I guess, this use of a voluntary planning agreement. I think, you know, voluntary planning agreements are viewed from the public with great suspicion and I don't think this is really adding to the confidence in the public as to the use of this mechanism. Ideally voluntary planning agreements need to be works in kind that have a direct nexus to the development, not some kind of obscure cash, annual cash contribution which really compromises the objective assessment of the Inner West Council's ability
30 to make comment on this application. So I think that is a bit of a concern as well.

PROF. MACKAY: And what would Council's view be? I mean, the Commission is very careful and we're yet to turn our mind to whether or not to grant consent and we've got a public meeting scheduled for next week but if the Commission did have a mind to grant consent it would be open to us, for example, to put in a condition on that voluntary planning agreement to say install some interpretative signage that related to the silos in the context of the surrounding pedestrian precinct such as it is. Would Council have a view about that?

- 40 MR REES: Well, our preference, I think, is that, you know, voluntary planning agreements are really not appropriate in this instance but if that is something that you

need to rely upon then that would perhaps go some way towards, I guess, ameliorating the adverse impacts of this sign.

PROF. MACKAY: Thank you. Now, Peter, I've asked a few questions. Peter, can I just check with you if there's anything you would like to raise in response to Council's comments and representations?

10 DR WILLIAMS: Reinah and Andrew, are there any other concerns about the signage itself? I mean, we can't control content but any other controls that would be appropriate to try and ameliorate the impact of the signage in terms of its visual impact, whether it's illuminated at night or not, during the daytime?

MR REES: I think the lighting impacts, Dr Williams, is significant so if there wasn't to be any illumination that would be welcome. I note that there are conditions about it not being a rolling or digital advertising so we'd like to be sure that that remains a static sign. I think that would assist in its impact. There are, I guess, other signs that do have a community content, a community message, perhaps that might be something that could be considered but, look, ultimately our preference is that this sign be completely removed, ideally within three years.

20 DR WILLIAMS: Thanks, Andrew.

PROF. MACKAY: Okay.

MR WILLIAMS: Thanks, Richard. Thank you.

30 PROF. MACKAY: Thank you. Then is there anything else that either Council representative would like to put before the Commission in this meeting? I think we've been through the documents, Council's position is eloquently and clearly stated as reiterated in this meeting. Is there anything else that you'd like to comment on please?

MR REES: No, that will suffice for me. Thank you.

PROF. MACKAY: Thank you.

MS URQUEZA: Agree with that.

40 PROF. MACKAY: Thank you, Reinah. And any last question or comment from you, Peter?

DR WILLIAMS: No, thank you, Richard. Nothing else, thank you.

PROF. MACKAY: And the two officers from the Independent Planning Commission Secretariat?

MS JOSHUA: No, thanks, Richard.

MS ANDERSON: No, thank you, Richard.

10 PROF. MACKAY: Well, I think we're all done. A very efficient, very clear meeting. So thank you very much Reinah and Andrew. Thank you for Council's input to the process. As I mentioned, we have a public meeting next week. I thank you for the suggestion that we also take the opportunity to inspect at night-time and if you wouldn't mind sharing the illustrations from the document that you screen-shared that would be appreciated but it remains just for me to thank everyone who's participated in this meeting and to declare the meeting closed. Thank you.

MR REES: Thank you, Commissioner.

20 MS URQUEZA: Thank you.

DR WILLIAMS: Thanks for your time, Reinah, Andrew. Thanks very much.

MS URQUEZA: Thank you very much.

MEETING CONCLUDED

[11.26am]