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THE GLEBE SOCIETY INC.

PO BOX 100, GLEBE NSW 2037 AUSTRALIA

Conserving our heritage ... Encouraging a sense of community ... Working for Glebe's future

Mr Ivan Pasalich
Planning and Assessment Manager
Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
PO Box N408
Grosvenor Place
NSW 1220

18TH October, 2006.

Dear Mr Pasalich

**Re: Application Number MPO6_0210
Dry Boat Storage and Marine Facility, Rozelle Bay
Part Lots 2, 3, & 4 DP873379 James Craig Road, Rozelle Bay**

The Glebe Society Incorporated has formally existed for nearly forty years and has maintained throughout that time a continuous involvement not only in Glebe but also in the activities on and around Rozelle Bay. The Society has in place policies pertinent to all its activities and interests, not least of which is its long-standing *Bays and Foreshores Policy* which has been made available to all relevant politicians, departments and authorities through all its revisions. We make this point to establish that we will not bind our response to the specifics of the proposed development in relation to the confines of The Master Plan but will look also at what is appropriate for Rozelle Bay and will examine the effect of this proposed development on the quality of the bay and the established activities on the bay.

We will not dwell on the quality of the Master Plan here, as the feelings of the local community and bay users were made clear during its evolution, save to say this site is just one of the sites on Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays where the bulk and height allowed on the land are totally out of scale with the size and nature of the bays. And this doesn't raise the absolutely inappropriate nature of the intended use of this particular proposal.

The next matter we must raise is the total inadequacy of the public consultation process for this proposed development – so inadequate that The Glebe Society Incorporated has had to fund and publicise a public meeting so that the community could be reasonably informed. Surely the fact that the developer managed to have about fifteen people to each of his two consultative meetings is a strong indication that he didn't consult when The Glebe Society could initiate a meeting which drew over 200 people. It is clear that the developer failed to inform well-established groups in Annandale and Glebe of its meetings; letterboxed only one block

Glebe is a human-scale, coherent and largely complete 19thC townscape which is listed on the Register of the National Estate and Classified as an Urban Conservation Area by the National Trust.

from the water; and made no attempt to inform legitimate “stakeholders” such as park users, canoeists, kayakers or even some of the organised water using groups.

Even SHFA neglected to inform widely amongst the interested parties in Glebe and on Rozelle Bay that the DA had been submitted to the assessors and that the *Environmental Assessment* was on display at four sites for one month. We must point out here that this period coincided with a standard NSW holiday period during which many interested parties would be away. Citing our own group as an example, absent for the whole or at least a part of the exhibition period were: our President, our Planning Convenor; the Assistant Planning Convenor; our Traffic Convenor; and our Bays and Foreshores Convenor. Further, the need to study four substantial folders at an outside location warranted more than one month, given that the interested parties must study the folders in their spare time and when their spare time happens to coincide with the business hours of the advertised locations.

Despite all efforts to approach the *Environmental Assessments* in an objective way, it is difficult to do so when the proposed development is such an abomination - so totally out of scale with the past and established uses of the bay, and with the scale of the past and present buildings adjacent to the site. The proposed building will create a walled-effect along the northern shore of the bay and dominate all its surroundings.

The building and its uses give no recognition to the heritage of the area. Whereas maritime industries in the area have been, and are, small-scale and genuine “working harbour” and haven’t and don’t interfere with passive uses of the bay, the proposed development is large-scale; is not “working harbour”; and will drive the traditional users of the bay away from this part of the harbour. No recognition is given to the 120 year-old rowing course – indeed the bland and erroneous statement “...few rowing training areas offer this clear straight width.” (Appendix H 3.6.6. – P28) indicates a total misunderstanding of the traditional uses of the bay which goes far beyond just training for rowers, but has played a large role in the teaching/learning of the sport.

There would appear to be conflict between Departments/Authorities over appropriate uses of Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays. Those Departments/Authorities which provided funds for and/or sanctioned the building of the dragon boat launching ramp (rejecting the alternative powerboat ramp), the canoe/kayak launching ramp at the end of Rozelle Bay, and the sundry canoe/kayak launching areas around the Bicentennial Park and walkway surely envisaged passive use of the bays as the appropriate use. Yet this proposal is the antithesis of passive use.

It is difficult too, as locals with great affection for the area, to suffer supposedly objective reports that find the problems, but turn the problem into a positive for the development rather than create a method of retrieval. We’ll raise just two areas to explain these concerns:

Firstly, we’ll look at noise – the high ambient noise in Glebe was explained away by the noise emanating from The Anzac Bridge. It was pointed out that as the Cross-city Tunnel gets into its stride, use of the bridge and thus noise will increase. A slight increase in noise above this level by inference doesn’t matter – “Glebe is noisy; a little more won’t hurt”. There was no attempt to explain why the Anzac Bridge is so noisy and why Glebe is forced to suffer its noise. The answer would have been very easy to find had they consulted the RTA or had looked at the evolution of the design of the Anzac Bridge and noticed the difference between the present structure and the last of the design detail that has never been erected. Our point is, just because Glebe is noisy because of the Anzac Bridge, that is not a good reason for making it noisier, particularly as had the bridge been completed to final design, Glebe’s noise would be considerably lower.

Secondly, we’ll look at the ecology of the bays – again the study reveals that by any measure the maritime plant and animal life of the bay are in a parlous state, but again the inference is to be drawn, that the situation is so bad, anything here would not be a problem. Objectively, the situation is very bad, but the appropriate

inference to be drawn is “...let’s clean the bay up”. The assessment makes some mention of the wetlands created in Johnson’s Creek and White’s Creek, but fails to mention the massive enterprise involved in the attempt to re-create the mangroves in three sections of the bays. It then fails to acknowledge all of these as an initial step towards improving the ecology of the bays.

The Glebe Society Incorporated’s *Bays and Foreshore Policy* rejects, and has always rejected, developments of this magnitude in the bays and ones which provide for similar uses of the bays. Our reasons for doing so are soundly based. This development (as was the case with some other developments proposed over the last three decades) impacts negatively on local residents, traditional users of the bay, and the newly enhanced foreshore park and walkway. The proposed development is inappropriate for this bay which is small, unflushed, land-locked, contaminated and suffering from the loss of its natural marine animal and plant life. In addition, this is a self-confessed noisy development which has residents and park users within 100 metres of the activities created by the proposed development.

Lest our motives be misunderstood, The Glebe Society Incorporated supports and has always supported genuine waterfront industry (*Bays and Foreshores Policy 2.2.3*) and will continue to do so. We believe that following the appropriate decontamination of the bay and the restoration of the original ecological communities of the bay, the site should then be considered for an activity which:

- is genuinely “working harbour”;
- is small scale;
- is non-polluting;
- maximises the views to and from the water;
- does not alienate the traditional users of the bay;
- does not detract from the present enjoyment of the bay and the foreshore park and walk way;
- recognises the cultural, *and* historical heritage and value of the rowing course;
- recognises that the rowing/paddling of craft has clear priority over other activities in the bay;
- does not create traffic congestion; and,
- provides unhindered, continuous pedestrian access to the waterfront.

The Glebe Society Incorporated acknowledges that, according to the Assessment, a need exists for this sort of facility. While other more appropriate sites have been suggested to the Society, we feel it is not our place to report them. However, it is clear to us and to anybody who genuinely thinks objectively about it, there could be few worse sites than this one for this project in the entire City of Sydney. Rozelle Bay is the most land-locked bay in Sydney Harbour!

Our considered response to the DA and Environmental Assessment is attached.

Yours faithfully,

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Bob Armstrong
President

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Tony Larkum
Bays and Foreshores Convenor