

## Item 3.4

### Quay Quarter Lanes Precinct

File No: S051491

#### Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

Last year, I was pleased to participate in the opening of Quay Quarter Lanes Precinct, which is one of the most historic parts of Sydney, bound by Loftus, Bridge and Young Streets.

The precinct has been described as a “gift to the city” and won the Walter Burley Griffin Award for Urban Design at the Australian Institute of Architects’ National Architecture Awards. This impressive new precinct in the north of our city includes AMP’s Quay Quarter Tower. The tower was awarded World Building of the Year at the World Architecture Festival as well as the International High-Rise Award.

Long before European invasion, the site was a gathering place for the Gadigal people, as it was close to the harbour’s rich fishing grounds. Much later, it was the site of the gardens of the first Government House, where a key Aboriginal figure, Arabanoo, was held after being abducted. The redevelopment of the site includes a public artwork by Aboriginal artist, Jonathon Jones, that represents elements of Arabanoo’s life.

The site was also the arrival destination for post-war migrants and became the site of the earliest high-rise development in the 1960s.

The Quay Quarter development is made up of three parts; the completed low-rise development known as Quay Quarter Lanes, the award-winning Quay Quarter Tower at 50 Bridge Street, and the historic AMP Tower at 33 Alfred Street, which is currently under refurbishment.

Quay Quarter Tower is the world’s largest upcycled building, with 90 per cent of the 1976 building being retained. It is estimated that 7.3 million kilograms of embodied carbon has been saved in the upcycling of this building.

Architects BVN were involved in the master planning of the precinct and remained on the project along with architects 3XN who won the design competition for the tower. Today, Quay Quarter Tower achieves a 6-star Green Star and 5.5 Star NABERS energy ratings and is WELL Gold certified. BVN is currently undertaking a carbon neutral fit-out for one of the tower’s tenants, spanning three floors.

The urban design execution is stunning – a threaded public domain with diverse architecture housing fine grain businesses and apartments. The bespoke Design Excellence approach of selecting the landscape and architectural practices was a genuine partnership between the City and AMP following the international Stage 1 competition.

The City has been involved in the development and refurbishment from the beginning to ensure it benefitted our residents, workers and visitors. Loftus Lane has been transformed from a carpark entryway to a pedestrian lane with fine-grain retail and cafes. The air space above the lanes was captured as a public benefit so that it can’t be redeveloped in the future.

The City unlocked the potential of the sites by allowing the redistribution of floor space across two city blocks; unused floor space from the Young and Alfred Street block was transferred to the Young and Phillip Street block, so it could be used to enlarge and reuse the existing 50 Bridge Street tower. This transfer meant the Quay Quarter Lanes development remained low-rise, and incorporated the restoration of the two heritage buildings, Hinchcliff House and the Gallipoli Club.

The development is a collection of contextual buildings and is a good neighbour by not overshadowing Macquarie Place and maintaining views from surrounding buildings. It has been designed to accommodate the 24-hour city by ensuring residential units have acoustic glazing and operable windows, which also increases occupants' comfort and energy efficiency.

By breathing new life into this important and historic precinct, AMP Capital has created a legacy of rich social, cultural and economic value for the people of Sydney. The whole precinct brings together residential, retail and office space, with vibrant new night life and early morning retail to extend the City's life beyond the hours of nine to five.

As we work to bring people back into the city, it is more important than ever that we create places that are environmentally, visually and socially attractive – places that will sustain city life for decades to come. The innovative planning and sustainable upcycling in this project are great examples of that.

## **Recommendation**

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the opening of the Quay Quarter Lanes Precinct and the many public benefits this development will provide to our City including public art, design excellence, sustainability, heritage restoration and 24-hour economic activity;
- (B) congratulate the architects, designers, project managers, builders and investors involved in the award-winning Quay Quarter Lanes Precinct; and
- (C) commend the City's Planning staff under the leadership of Director Graham Jahn, who worked collaboratively and negotiated with the project team from the beginning to achieve the many public benefits for our city, as well as other areas such as the City's Design Advisory Panel, Public Art Advisory Panel and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel who contributed to this precinct.

## **COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE**

Lord Mayor