

## **Speech to the Independent Planning Commission re Pemulway Project - 15 November 2018**

My name is Mark Hanna. I've owned a terrace in the Block for 13 years and lived more than two decades in the area and speak for many of the owners and residents there.

I am also a lawyer and familiar with how one can twist facts and words to suit one's purpose. The *Pemulway Assessment Report* does just that. It conveniently distorts facts, and ignores others, to support a project that is clearly anathema to the residents of the area - as evidenced by the fact that 94% of the submissions to the Department opposed the project in its current form.<sup>1</sup>

In these short minutes let me raise just a few issues:

### **1.<sup>2</sup> Shadowing**

At page 5 of the report *"The Department concludes the increase in height ...from 8 to 24 storeys ... would **not have an adverse impact on amenity in terms of overshadowing, overlooking...**"*

To support this *curious* conclusion, the report publishes **Figures 18 and 19** to illustrate the effects of shadowing on Lawson Street and the surrounding area.

Figures 18 and 19 simply whitewash the effect of shadowing on Caroline, Hugo, Louis and Eveleigh Streets. There is one small diagram showing a large shadow at 9am over the entire area, while the report, without proper substantiation, claims that there will still be 6 hours of daily sun for this area in winter.

Any fool can predict that for most of the mornings, especially in winter, most of the Block's residences will be cast under a dark pall by the 24 floor skyscraper dwarfing the 100 year old terraces.

### **2. Pedestrian, traffic and parking issues**

The report states *"The proposal would not result in adverse traffic or car parking impacts."*

and

*"The proposal would not generate additional pedestrian footpath movements that would exceed footpath capacity surrounding the site."*<sup>3</sup>

One can only conclude that the author of this report has never visited the Block or, with no disrespect to the visually impaired, is blind.

As it is now, not only Lawson Street but Caroline Street, cannot deal with pedestrian traffic in the mornings or evenings. Pedestrians and residents on Caroline Street are already forced to walk on the road - the footpaths are either blocked or too narrow being less than half a meter in part. And the report admits there is no proposal to do anything about the paths nor the roads.

Table 18 of the report states that the pedestrian traffic will increase in Caroline Street for example by a factor of 1000% (10x). Mysteriously it claims this "will not cause an exceedance in comfort levels for pedestrian routes..."<sup>4</sup> How does one accommodate the juxtaposition of these two contradictory facts?

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<sup>1</sup> As shown by the fact that 171 of the 183 submissions opposed the project in its current form.

<sup>2</sup> Page 5

<sup>3</sup> Page 5

<sup>4</sup> Page 70

Car and truck traffic in the Block are already so heavy and dangerous that a number of submissions have been made to the council to block off one end or the other. Some residents have been so concerned that they have attempted to take matters into their own hands to decrease the danger.

Yet with 600 students added to the small area as well as other Pemulway residents, there will undoubtedly be a large rise in cars. Even if only one in ten owned or used a car that is another 60 cars added to the area with no supporting car spaces or infrastructure whatsoever!

As part of the “solution” to this conundrum, the Department has curiously recommended that “future residents not be eligible for on-street parking”!<sup>5</sup> This is either an attempt to legislate segregation and a two-tiered form of residence in one area or one that I submit the Department knows would be legally unenforceable.

The notion that parking will not be an issue because the 600 students and various other residents will all be pedestrians or ride bicycles is simply laughable.

### **Social and cultural Impacts**

To state that “the proposal would not have an adverse social or cultural impact” is equally ludicrous.

Firstly, it fails in its basic premise to house the Aboriginals that were once housed on the Block and consider it their home. Other speakers have spoken far more lucidly on this and it is unnecessary for say more.

Secondly, it treats the current residents of the Block with utter disdain. It imposes a modern, arguably gaudy, out of character, giant skyscraper that would be *22 floors higher* than the beautiful 100 year old terraces that surround it. The visual impact is self-evident.

It imposes car and foot traffic that are unsustainable without in any way improving the roads or footpaths that carry that traffic.

It is impossible to get Council approval for even a north facing solar power panel on terraces in the Block because such panels are considered unsympathetic to the heritage. How then could this domineering skyscraper be even remotely considered neutral, let alone sympathetic, to the characteristics of the area?

### **Conclusion**

My fellow neighbours and I decry the destruction to our neighbourhood this project currently represents. No-one would place this tower in the centre of Centennial Park or Paddington. Similarly, it does not belong in the Block.

Pemulway was a warrior who resisted the destructive effects of colonisation. The residents of the Block, in the same tradition, resist this imposition on our culture and our heritage.

If I know anything about history, I am confident Pemulway would also strongly oppose this project.

**Mark Hanna**

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<sup>5</sup> P68