

## **Proposed modification to the Pemulwuy Concept Plan (MP 06\_0101 MOD 2)**

1. As part of the silent majority, I was not going to make a submission but, given the excitement and misplaced emotion from various interest groups, I feel that I should.

### **Background**

2. [**hype**] Despite the rhetoric, Aborigines do not enjoy a close or special connection with Redfern. The connection with Redfern began in the 1972 when the Whitlam government granted money to the Aboriginal Housing Co Limited (AHC) to purchase properties, in response to a freedom ride organised by 30 white Sydney University students. The AHC is a private company.
3. [**Pemulwuy**] There is an unfortunate recent trend to try to re-invent history and make people into more than they really were. Ned Kelly was simply a thief and a murderer. Pemulwuy was involved in revenge killing - sometimes against unarmed people. His feats do not raise him into a hero.
4. [**noise**] Aboriginal people make up a very vocal 2.8% of the Australian population.<sup>1</sup> It is disappointing that other cultures and groups are not given the same coverage.
5. [**misuse of taxpayer dollars**] The AHC's gross mismanagement of the Redfern properties is both notorious and astounding. In 2018, it appears that this gross mismanagement is too easily forgotten. Few people saw "The Block" prior to the 2004 riots and the demolition of the slums, as this was a strict "no go" area even for police. I have. The very existence of The Block is embarrassing and should not be celebrated. The cost to society of The Block extended well beyond the initial grant and includes the cost of crime, policing and the social and health issues, and embarrassingly enough even the demolition costs.
6. [**no experience, no expertise**] The AHC has been proposing redeveloping this area for at least 35 years. Previous proposed developments have failed to get off the ground largely due to the AHC's lack of experience and expertise, and unrealistic

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<sup>1</sup> 2016 Census

proposals. These proposals inevitably always require further government funding. There has been no upskilling and it is unclear why there is expected to be a different result.

7. [**show me the money**] This development is well beyond the experience and expertise of the AHC and it has never attempted anything on this scale. A prudent company would start small and gain experience before embarking on such a massive undertaking. It is therefore unclear who is driving the proposed development, why there needs to be a 24-storey 522-bed student accommodation and who is going to pick up the bill if the development fails.
8. [**more student accommodation**] There is already significant student accommodation in the Darlington and Chippendale areas with new student accommodation under construction on Abercrombie Street, Darlington Road, Central Park and in the Chippendale area which are closely connected to UTS, Notre Dame and Sydney Universities, and are not collocated with affordable housing. Query whether this business model is sustainable and what is the proposed development going to look like in 10 years?
9. [**3, 6, ..., 24!**] The scale of the proposed amendment is massive and out of proportion to Eveleigh, Caroline, Lawson and Vine Streets area. It will create significant overshadowing of the local area, particularly Caroline, Eveleigh and Lawson Streets, and also the day care centre proposed by the AHC. From an external observer, the fact that a proposal has increased fourfold from 6 to 24 floors has got this far raises serious questions about the transparency and credibility of the planning process.
10. [**run Forest run!**] The proposed builder was not selected through a competitive tender process and has a dubious safety record.<sup>2</sup>
11. [**the definition of insanity**] The proposed development contemplates 62 affordable houses. Whilst this is not the subject of the amendment, it is surprising that approval has been given to collocate a large group of vulnerable group. These people would be better served integrating them into society where intergenerational unemployment,

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<sup>2</sup> *SafeWork NSW v Deicorp Pty Ltd* [2018] NSWDC – Deicorp pleaded guilty and fined \$75,000 for failing to comply with its health and safety obligations. In August 2014, 10 storeys of scaffolding collapsed on Gibbons Street, Redfern trapping people. This was only a 5 minute search.

drug use and child abuse will not become the norm. There is significant research that affordable housing should be spread through society and amongst other families going to work and going about their daily lives.