

**INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION**

**STAR CASINO REDEVELOPMENT MOD 13**

**27 August 2019**

**Chair of IPC Panel: Dianne Leeson**

**IPC Panel Members: Stephen OConnor, Adrian Pilton**

**Statement:**

**Katherine O'Regan,**

**Executive Director, Sydney Business Chamber**

Thank you, Chair and Commission Members, for the opportunity to discuss an integral issue to the people and businesses of Sydney - the construction of a world class hotel and residential tower complex in the Western Harbour precinct.

As you may know, Sydney Business Chamber is a leading advocate for Sydney as a competitive and global city.

A division of NSW Business Chamber, Sydney Business Chamber together with our counterpart in Western Sydney, represent over 145 leading corporations. We identify, develop and promote public policy issues that drive the economic growth and sustainability of our great City.

Our members are multinationals, 'iconic' brands, and government agencies representing a broad cross-section of the Sydney economy. From retail, infrastructure, property, aviation, and education to tourism, banking, sport, and the arts.

Our members are based within the CBD and the Greater Sydney Basin, they are often the first to understand and feel the impacts of local changes.

Our submission highlights the need – **for an integrated and modern approach to planning so that our city can provide the jobs and amenities it deserves.**

The building guidelines for Pyrmont have been in place since the mid 1990s.

Over the past two decades our city has evolved into the nation's number one global gateway. Pyrmont too has seen rapid change in this period, transforming from a semi-industrial inner-city suburb nestled on a working harbor to the next door neighbour of the city's most visited local and international tourism and entertainment precincts - stretching from Barangaroo to the Fish Market.

Pyrmont has become a part of the city's exciting new super precinct and it's planning needs to suitably reflect and complement its role as an integral part of the Western Harbour gateway.

Last year Darling Harbour attracted some two and half million international visitors and in its first year of operation, the new International Convention Centre has delivered \$900 million in economic benefit to New South Wales. This resulting from more than 1.77 million overnight stays and the creation of 5,790 full time equivalent jobs for the local economy.

It is critical to recognise that the positive impact of Sydney's ICC does not stop at the Precinct border. Through their supply chain and a focus on the quality and diversity of the food and wine available, some \$12.2 million produce was sourced from regional NSW.

All this, only a picturesque 10-minute walk from the proposed new development we are addressing here today.

In fact, Darling Harbour has demonstrated a capacity and capability to bring together 4,200 local residents, 2,500 office workers and some eighty businesses and restaurants. Along with students and hotel visitors, there's something the size of a thriving small town's population there for part of every day.

The Sydney Business Chamber supports the application by The Star for the new Ritz Carlton tower complex and sees this new development as an opportunity to support the continued growth of the emerging Western Harbour Precinct.

The Star is already a major economic hub, employing 5,000 staff and welcoming more than 14 million guests to our city each year. In 2018, The Star's input to the State's revenue exceeded \$290 million.

The proposed Ritz Carlton hotel and residential complex will add to this delivering over 1,000 construction jobs over the next three years and on completion, provide some 754 permanent fulltime positions.

Commissioners - we are all conscious of potential economic headwinds, we are all conscious of the impacts of any worsening in the unemployment rate.

This makes the opportunity to continue to create real and sustainable jobs critical to the livelihood and wellbeing of the people and families of Sydney.

Economic headwinds can also impact investment attraction and to date we have seen successful private sector investment in rejuvenating Darling Harbour as a key business and tourism destination. Again, here we have The Star and the Ritz Carlton bringing \$400 million of private sector investment to benefit our city.

As well as the economic outcomes, I would also like to address the equally important issue of local community benefits.

Integral to the quality and character of the design is the dedicated visitor spaces specifically for local residents. In essence, we not only have the opportunity for a prestigious six-star hotel but also a premium quality Neighborhood Centre.

Accessible to everyone, the Centre provides five levels of mixed-use community space, for the local neighborhood – a total of around 1,690 square metres.

Initial consultation has indicated that the Pymont community is in need of a new playground, recreation halls, meeting rooms, drop in and study spaces. True to the commitment to connecting and being local, the final usage of the Neighborhood Centre will actually be determined by the community.

It is worth noting that there are no other such size multi-purpose integrated community hub available to the people of Pymont.

Commissioners - as you are aware it has been recognised that the current planning instruments are in need of review.

They need to be updated to reflect how best we bring together key elements of the Western Harbour precinct, enabling Sydney-siders and tourists alike to experience all of what this precinct has to offer.

The planning instruments need to recognise that our city has changed, that the attraction and flow of people is across precincts – that we are a city of opportunity.

In summary, this proposal has been well-designed and thought out with suitable deference to local residents' concerns along with generous beneficial elements built in and secured for a minimum three decades.

This proposal presents the next step into the exciting future of the expanding Western Harbour super-precinct, with a clear and exciting vision of a new era for the Pyrmont foreshore.

With the economic and employment outcomes clearly on offer, this proposal is a great opportunity to put into practice the Premier's recent assertion that 'Pyrmont is open for business' part of the new and expanding Darling Harbour redevelopment in our city of opportunity.

I thank you all for your time and welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further with the Commissioners.