
From: Barbara MacGregor [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 20 May 2021 12:38 PM
To: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Subject: Mirvac Harbourside Proposal

I strongly object to Mirvac's current proposal on the following grounds:

1. Serious loss of view from my apartment - 204/50 Murray St Pyrmont.
2. The diminution of public amenity in terms of loss of sunlight on the public space, the reduction of that space and the continued emphasis on private residences and offices as against promoting the area as an entertainment and tourist destination.

Mirvac has apparently added a goal of "view sharing". They mention fractional improvement for some flats, but none for mine which is the most adversely affected of all. I would lose the view of Pyrmont Bridge, the eastern side of Cockle Bay, the marina, the promenade, and all the liveliness of movement from the boats, the pedestrians, pennants waving, birds flying. By night I would lose the sight of the Ferris wheel's revolving lights, the colourful neon signs and the windows lit up in city buildings. In exchange I would see only the backside of a shopping centre/office block. In addition my treasured garden would lose some sunlight, already in short supply.

No doubt I paid an extra price for my small unit because of its views. Now I would suffer a serious loss in the value of this, my only asset, with no compensation at all.

The losses to the public from Mirvac's proposal are great indeed and this marginal revision does little to address them. A major defect has been the loss of sunlight from the waterfront promenade. Mirvac's attempts to repair this defect by removing just one floor from the height of the podium is a clearly inadequate response. Mirvac seem aware of this themselves as they refer no fewer than four times to the stingy amount of additional sunlight this reduction achieves. Think how much sunlight they could achieve by reducing the height to RL 11.8 as suggested by the IPC.

The amount of sun on this public space is important, it adds animation and beauty, attracting promenaders and visitors. The government promotes Darling Harbour as the playground of Sydney and Cockle Bay is a vital part of this. Its western shore should remain people-friendly, inviting, offering fun in outdoor spaces bathed in sunshine, not a walk overshadowed by a tower and a shopping centre/office block.

In its current amendment Mirvac have not resolved the intrusion into publicly owned space. At one point it intrudes by as much as 9 metres and reduces the width of the promenade so seriously that the retention of the current Ferris wheel is threatened. In fact the amended proposal didn't include it at all. This wheel is a successful tourist attraction particularly for children and is certainly prized more by the public than any additional office space. Its loss again detracts from the holiday atmosphere, the touristy atmosphere that the government is keen to promote. There is nothing to be gained for the public by turning this waterside area into a residential/office precinct. There are of course huge gains to be made for the developer.

It is hard to believe that Mirvac is serious in their response to the IPC's suggested reduction of the height of the podium to RL 11.8; they protest it is "removing the ability of the project to fund and deliver a significant public benefit as envisaged". What the public benefit is in making a shopping centre into private residences and offices is never explained. They complain about "the whole project becoming unviable", well hooray! They say they have spent years working on this; so? They even fall back on jobs, jobs, jobs claiming at various times that the "removal of 16,435 sqm of commercial space would result in 1600 office staff removed", elsewhere a loss of "more than 1700 jobs", and finally a "loss of 2500 jobs". These figures are clearly plucked out of the air and are derisible. More seriously I ask, does Sydney need more office space when there is already debate about the future of empty offices in the CBD and when surveys show some workers and companies plan to continue with work from home? If their answer to that is 'yes', then where does that leave their public benefit argument?

Mirvac told us at the zoom meeting that "at the end of the day, we have a podium that we have really tried to, you know, massage".

It is clear that the current proposal is simply a hopeful gambit in a continuing contest and I strongly urge the Commission to find in our favour.

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