



MIRVAC RECEIVES CONDITIONAL NOD FOR \$708-MILLION HARBOURSIDE REVITALISATION

25 June 2021

The Independent Planning Commission says conditions imposed on its approval of the proposed multimillion-dollar Harbourside Shopping Centre redevelopment at Sydney's Darling Harbour will mitigate key impacts and ensure design excellence.

Mirvac (the Applicant) sought concept approval for a \$708-million redevelopment which would see the existing 1980s-era shopping centre demolished and replaced with a new residential, retail, dining and entertainment precinct.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment finalised its whole-of-government assessment of the proposed redevelopment in March this year, concluding it was approvable subject to conditions; however, the Commission is the consent authority because the Department received an objection from the City of Sydney Council, as well as more than 50 'unique' public objections.

Commissioners Dianne Leeson (Panel Chair) and Wendy Lewin were appointed to determine the SSD application. They met with the Applicant, Department and Council and inspected the site and surrounding area.

The community had its say on the matter at an electronic public meeting and in written submissions to the Commission. Key issues raised in submissions centred around land use; the height and scale of the proposed tower and podium; visual impacts and view sharing; heritage impacts on Pymont Bridge and Woodward Fountain; and public access to and overshadowing of the Darling Harbour foreshore.

After carefully considering all the material and taking into account the community's views, the Commission has today (Friday 25 June 2021) determined to grant concept approval for redevelopment of the site, subject to conditions.

The concept approval clears the way for demolition of the existing Harbourside Shopping Centre and sets the parameters for the redevelopment of the site to support:

- a mixed use development comprising retail/commercial floorspace on the ground floor and podium levels with residential floorspace in the tower
- a maximum Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 87,000m²
- the provision of 45,000m² of the total GFA within the proposal as non-residential floorspace, with the balance of the GFA provided as residential floor space
- an additional limit on the volume of the podium and tower of a maximum of 80% of their respective envelopes, to support articulation of the built form within the envelope
- 3,500 m² of public open space above the northern podium, and
- design guidelines and a competitive design excellence strategy to guide future development applications and ensure 'world-class' design is delivered at the Site.

“The Commission accepts the project will have significant socio-economic benefits in terms of capital investment, job creation, a significant amount of new housing, and new and improved public spaces,” its Statement of Reasons for Decision reads.

“The Commission has, however, concluded that the bulk and scale of the podium (particularly at the northern end of the site) and the profile and positioning of the residential tower as proposed, would reduce solar access to the Darling Harbour foreshore and result in unacceptable overshadowing of the public promenade.

“The Commission also finds the bulk and scale of the northern podium risks diminishing the State significant heritage values of the Pyrmont Bridge,” it added.

The Commission also found that 3,500m² of public open space should be provided across a single level above the northern podium, not multiple levels as proposed, to ensure greater accessibility and public amenity.

“In response to concerns raised by Council and the community, the Commission has imposed a suite of empirical and performance-based conditions, ensuring that the outcome being sought is clear, and emphasising that detailed design solutions would be required as part of the Design Excellence Competition... [However] In some instances, the Commission found it was necessary to impose absolute limits in order to ensure an appropriate outcome is achieved.

“The Commission considers that the conditions of consent provide the Applicant enough scope to find design solutions to avoid, mitigate and minimise identified impacts without compromising the benefits of the Project,” it stated.

The final design of the redevelopment will require separate planning approval prior to any construction works being carried out.

The Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2021/04/harbourside-shopping-centre--darling-harbour

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