

27 April 2020

RE: Amended Concept Proposal – Harbourside Shopping Centre Redevelopment (SSD-7874)

***PRIMARY OBJECTION IS THE HUGE BULK AND EXCESSIVE HEIGHT OF THE “PODIUM”, PARTICULARLY AT IT’S NORTHERN SECTION.***

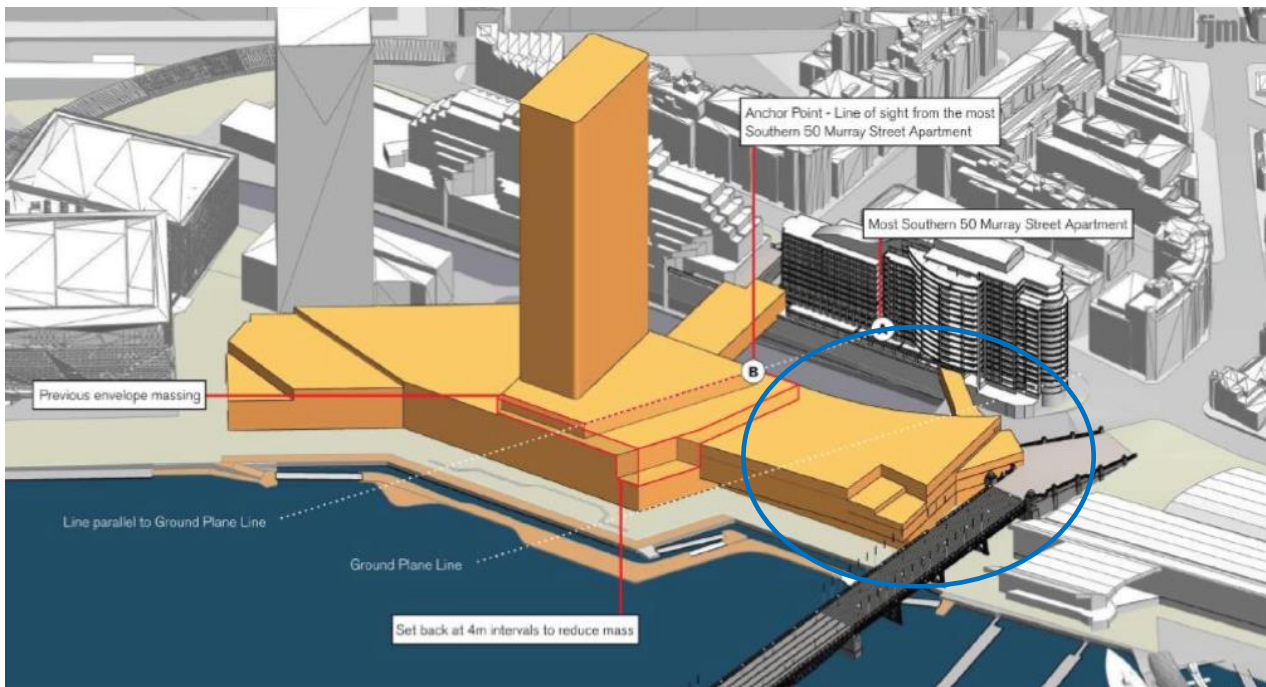
We are concerned that the proposed expansion of the Harbourside Plaza is far too excessive. The images (artist’s impressions) we have seen indicate an unnecessary expansion of HUGE BULK.

The amended proposal SSD-7874 does feature a smaller footprint and better location of the main Residential/Commercial Tower, HOWEVER the PODIUM is **excessively bulky** and extends far too close to the Pyrmont Bridge, resulting in its massive height and bulk destroying the Darling Harbour Precinct.

**1. Overshadowing Darling Harbour:**

NB. This does not just mean loss of sunlight (a), it also means the overshadowing dominance that the proposed PODIUM will have over the whole Harbour (b).

- a. Sunlight: The amended design proposal does nothing to improve sunlight along the main Western Promenade of Darling Harbour that the development purports to support. The entire West Promenade will be without sunlight from 2pm onwards.  
Why? The PODIUM is too tall. The proposal represents an extreme overdevelopment, seeking to change an existing two storey structure into a **five** storey structure, PLUS Bulking it up enormously (refer to **Figure 1**).
- b. Dominance: The PODIUM will dominate our Historic Pyrmont Bridge and the whole West side of Darling Harbour. Bridges, by nature, are usually higher than adjacent structures.



*Figure 1: Highlights excessively large and bulky Podium*

I note that the cleverly written justifications and figures focus on the heights of the tallest buildings around the precinct. The underlying promise of Council to Sydney has been to keep the foreshores of Darling Harbour low rise. This allows the Harbour the “breathe” and not be hemmed in (boxed in) by massive structures right on the promenade. PLEASE let’s keep the space open to light and not box it in with a few (too many) retail shops.

Additionally, the proposal seeks historical lenience by using a 1906 photo showing a building on the South-West approach to the Pyrmont Bridge as a justification to have buildings closely adjacent to the Bridge. The building is obviously only two storey and the Bridge turret features do stand taller and proud of the adjacent building! (which will not be the case based on the new podium height)

## **2. Diminishing Sydney’s History and Heritage**

- Pyrmont Bridge is one of the most outstanding examples of Heritage Bridges in NSW (see **Figure 2**).
- This Spectacular Structure deserves to be observed and appreciated.

- Many mistakes were made when the monorail was constructed around Sydney - somehow a sign of the times then... Thankfully it has been removed.



*Figure 2: Heritage of Pyrmont Bridge*

One of those mistakes is the derelict station still existing adjacent to the Pyrmont Bridge West approach (see **Figure 3/4**). This must be removed and NOT replaced with anything adjacent to the Historic bridge. The old station is tall and impinges of the Pyrmont Bridge due to its height and proximity.

*Furthermore, this derelict station should not be used as a benchmark to justify heights for new structures!*

This ridiculous structure must be removed, and nothing built in its place, then all will be able to enjoy the Pyrmont Bridge approach in their magnificent scale and beauty from every angle. By nature, bridges should be taller than their immediate surroundings, not overshadowed at close proximity.



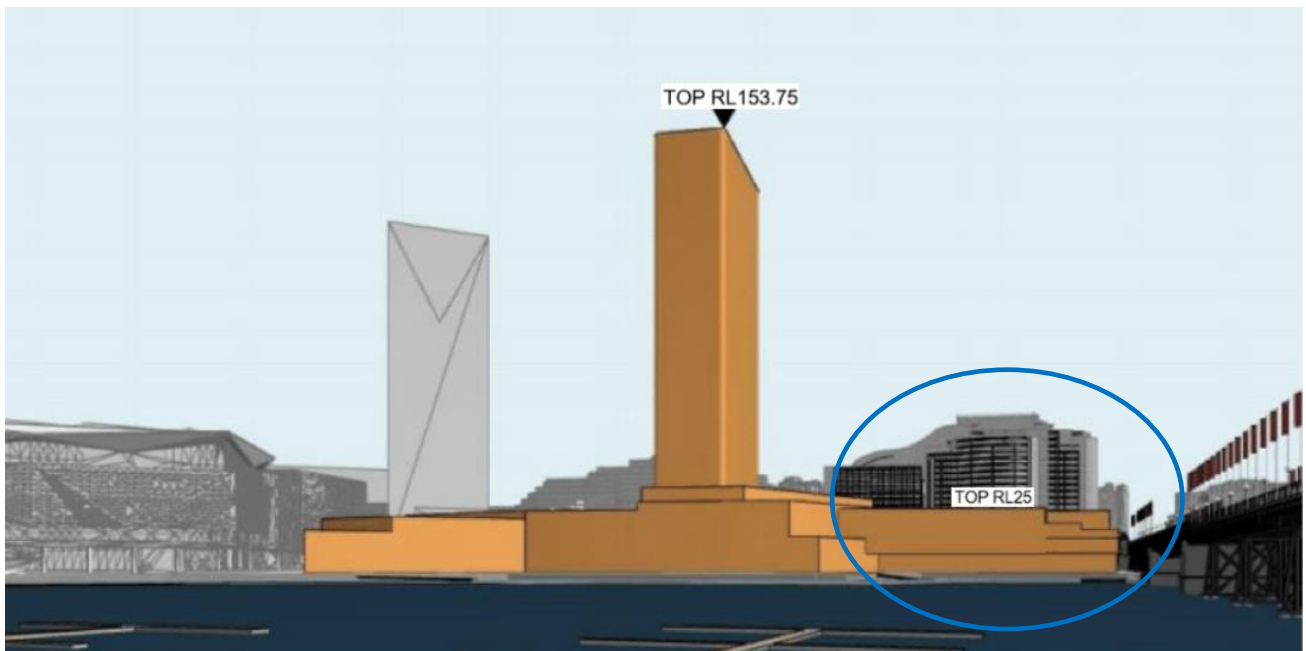
*Figure 3/4: Derelict station demonstrates impact of any structures too close to historic bridge*

*Why is it that we seem intent on dwarfing the magnificent Heritage Bridge and building higher and higher in Sydney? Why not be more grounded and appreciate the low-rise magnificence which allows our eyes to see further and observe the existing features that are the pleasure of our Darling Harbour?*

The Sydney City has recently created the new and magnificent ICC. The proposed PODIUM design will crowd and diminish the visual impact of this magnificent addition to the Darling Harbour Precinct. Why let that happen? Should we build more massive structures adjacent to the Opera house or the Sydney harbour Bridge?

### **3. Economic ramifications**

- Retail Shop space demand is on the decline.
- Commercial office buildings already overcrowd the city and there are plenty of vacancies.
- Devaluation of residential property on Murray Street is inevitable due to loss of views (refer to **Figure 5**).
- The present Harbourside Plaza Eateries are not reaching capacity.
- There is the potential of creating a ghost complex...



*Figure 5: Devaluation of Murray Street property due to obstruction of views*

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The Northern end of the PODIUM should be not more than two storeys high and be slightly lower than the Bridge while also being set a good distance away from the Bridge. The entire PODIUM must be kept to a maximum of three storeys to allow sufficient sunlight to enter the Harbour and the Promenade from the North-West beyond 2pm and into the late afternoon.