

The Cockle Bay Wharf Redevelopment Proposal

A Submission to the Department of Planning and Environment

We write to express our concerns over the proposed redevelopment of Cockle Bay Wharf. We have been citizens of Australia for more than 60 years and lived continuously at 50 Murray Street to the west of Cockle Bay for more than 20 years. We are retirees.

Our Concerns

1. We find difficulties in accepting the following: (a) the height of the proposed tower given its proximity to the northeast foreshores of Cockle Bay and to Pyrmont Bridge, (b) the height of the proposed podium that replaces the existing Cockle Bay Wharf dining and entertainment venues, and (c) to alteration of the walkaway at the foreshores by widening or by a westerly shift- either of these could only be done at the expense of the Bay's body of water.
2. Given that the proposed site is at the western edge of the Sydney CBD, the DA concept submission relates the proposed tower to the tall buildings throughout the Sydney CBD. However, the much more relevant neighbouring area to which the proposed tower should relate is Cockle Bay and its foreshores. And the proposed tower adversely impacts Cockle Bay.
3. As part of Darling Harbour, Cockle Bay is Australia's pre-eminent entertainment cultural and recreation precinct of international standing. Over the last two hundred years, land reclamations have rendered what was previously known as Long Cove into the much shorter and narrower bay that it is today. The much-reduced areas of land and water in Cockle Bay restrict the Bay's capacity to pursue its primary purpose.
4. Tall buildings already line the eastern foreshores of Darling Harbour, thereby altering the landscape and making the Harbour - and Cockle Bay in particular - looks conspicuously narrower. The two prominent examples are the three Barangaroo towers (168, 180 and 205 metres) and the two towers in Darling Park (each at 127 meters). The presence of low to medium height buildings in the eastern foreshores - many being sandwiched between the line of towers and the water edge - mitigate and buffer the appearance of the taller buildings. Even the 93-meter Four Point Tower is buffeted by a much lower row of extension on its west, while the low-lying aquarium and zoo complex at the water edge further adds to the visual acceptability of the Four Points vertical thrust.
5. The proposed a 235-meter tall tower at Cockle Bay Wharf protrudes way beyond the heights of the low to medium foreshores buffers. Even more so, it is 108 metres taller than the adjacent Tower One and Tower Two at Darling Park. When seen from the west of Cockle Bay, the proposed structure towers almost twice the height of the two existing towers at Darling Park. It also creates a new height record around the whole Cockle Bay foreshores.
6. We join the public's general expectations that no tall building should be created at Cockle Bay foreshores. Given the existing reality, any development at Cockle Bay eastern foreshores should not be taller than the existing low to medium-height buffers.
7. Pyrmont Bridge does not need a "gateway building" as referred to in the instant DA concept submission. A gateway tower will visually impact on the already narrow general **appearance** of the Bay and the length of Pyrmont Bridge. Just north of Pyrmont Bridge, the Maritime Museum wharves to the west and Sydney Aquarium and associated walkways in the east have already created a physical isthmus to the entrance Cockle Bay.

8. To the south of the Pyrmont Bridge, a tower in Cockle Bay Wharf and another proposed tall Mirvac tower on the western foreshore will visually create two monstrous-looking sentinel towers at the two ends of Pyrmont Bridge. The Bridge will now appear even shorter to the human eyes.
9. The incongruousness of this picture is rendered acutely conspicuous when viewed from any point at the southern shore of Cockle Bay. From here and looking north, we see a backdrop of the three yonder towering and wide buildings at Barangaroo, whereby the entrance to Darling Harbour is rendered visually narrow despite seen from a distance. The two sentinel towers bracing Pyrmont Bridge now make our Long Bay look like a narrow and short harbour. The largest of foreshores crowds are invariably positioned at the southern shores where the damaging visual perspective is most noticeable.
10. Cockle Bay waterway should not be further reduced by an expansion of the walkways in the foreshores or by any other man-made structure. There has been enough land reclamation over the last 200 years.

A Suggestion on Standard Heights

No doubt professionals in the field are better at establishing what is an acceptable height. As laymen, we would like to suggest an objective concept that relate to some east-west sloping lines connecting the edges of tall buildings and the Bay's eastern water edge.

The idea starts with a notional line connecting the western edge of the roof of Tower One at Darling Park and the water edge on the eastern foreshore of Cockle Bay; a little further south, a corresponding second line connects the western edge of the Third Tower roof and the water edge, and a third line between the edge of the new IMAX Ribbon roof and the water edge.

We propose a notional plane connects these three lines, and the plane is used as reference for limiting the heights of future developments on the Bay's eastern foreshore. This concept assists the preservation of the Bay's eastern landscape and facilitates Cockle Bay's future development as a tourism and entertainment precinct.

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