

## SSD 6010 – One Residential Building (Student Accommodation) within Darling Drive Plot

Submission by:

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I object to the proposed development on the following grounds:

- that the need for student accommodation on such an inappropriate and noisy site should be unnecessary with additional student accommodation being proposed in the Central Park development – the old Carlton Brewery site
- that the height and bulk of the proposed building is not in keeping with its surrounds and will totally block the heritage listed Powerhouse Museum

## **1. Need for building on this site?**

The student accommodation is proposed for a narrow strip of public land between Darling Drive and the Powerhouse Museum. Immediately behind it is the light rail track which squeals around a bend in close proximity to the site and in front of it is Darling Drive itself.

Allen Jack + Cottier in their Design Report p12 maintain that traffic noise from Pier St will not be a problem but makes no mention of the proximity of any noise from Darling Drive, which is the major access road in the area and passes directly in front of the student building.

The architects acknowledge on the same page that squeals from the light rail will be a problem at lower levels only. The squeal from the light rail as it rounds the same bend can clearly be heard as far away as the high levels of The Peak Apartments, so it is hard to believe only the lower levels will be affected. The architects propose that this unpleasant and distracting noise will be alleviated by thicker glass windows, acoustic seals and alternative mechanical ventilation. Why should this extra expense be necessary? And how does alternative mechanical ventilation fit with the City of Sydney Green Apartment Initiative?

It is understood that since the developers of Central Park have failed to attract lead tenants to its proposed commercial buildings, they are intending to build additional student accommodation on the Central Park site. This makes good sense. Central Park is located within a short distance of both UTS Broadway and University of Sydney and within easy walking distance to UTS Haymarket campuses and TAFE. It would be a far better proposition than the dubious site proposed as part of the Darling Harbour development.

## **2. Height and bulk of the proposed buildings**

The two student accommodation towers will block the whole eastern façade of the Powerhouse Museum. Most of the western façade has already been obliterated by a new addition to the building. Only a small proportion of the façade will remain visible. What is the purpose of a heritage listed building if views of it are to be obscured by new, functional bulky buildings?

Allan Jack + Cottier in their Design Report P9 and the proponent in its response to the City of Sydney submission on the concept proposal for the Darling Harbour Redevelopment (SSD5878) Appendix B p3 claim that the student accommodation "is related to the 'family' of towers planned for this area through their similar height, proportions and the use of similar materials and patterns on the eastern façade."

This statement is self-serving. It could just as easily be argued that the proposed site for the student accommodation is situated on the Ultimo side of Darling Drive and forms part of the Ultimo precinct. Its height should be reduced to fit in with the height limits imposed on Ultimo.

The Frank Gehry building is currently being built at the Ultimo Rd end of Darling Drive. It will be 12 storeys high. If the student accommodation is to be built at all, it should be a similar height to the Gehry building. It would bookend the Ultimo Rd to Pier St section of Darling Drive and would be more visually pleasing. It would also be more attractive for pedestrians walking north along the proposed Goods Line, who, under the current proposal, will just be faced with a big, bulky mass at the end of a pleasant walk.

## **Conclusion**

I believe that the student accommodation should not be built on this site because:

- the site is too narrow for the bulk and size of the buildings
- the site is too noisy and will involve the use of expensive, environmentally unfriendly materials to ensure the students' comfort
- that a preferable and alternative site is available on which to build student accommodation
- that the proposed building will block views of the heritage listed Powerhouse Museum and
- that the site is situated on the Ultimo side of Darling Drive, not the Darling Harbour side, so that the height and bulk of the proposed buildings are not in keeping with the Ultimo precinct