

Committee for North Sydney

info@committeefornorthsydney.org.au



committeefornorthsydney.org.au

27 November 2019

The Hon. Rob Stokes MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

(Submitted via web)

Dear Minister

Proposal for a high quality public space in the North Sydney city centre

We appreciated meeting with Mr Michael Bishop on 9 August 2019, and with Ms Bec Mouy yesterday, to discuss the lack of public benefit associated with current plans for the Victoria Cross Metro station in North Sydney.

Lendlease is seeking approval for a 42-storey office tower above the station. As with yesterday's meeting, this letter is not about the submitted proposal – the Waverton Precinct Committee and many others have commented effectively on the application and on the manner in which it has been presented to the community. We point out, however, that there is negligible public benefit flowing from the project, despite the well documented deficiencies of North Sydney as a city centre, and the fact that this part of the city centre is the least windy, has the best sunlight, and offers the best or only opportunity for a high quality civic space.

We also point out that decisions made now may determine whether the legacy of the Metro in North Sydney is a commercial office tower with overcrowded private space outside and no public purpose inside, or a significant, even transformative, contribution to the emerging heart of the North Sydney city centre.

We think that it is in the State Government's interest that the legacy of the Metro in North Sydney should be a much better city centre. Members of the Committee for North Sydney* are convinced that the project could potentially deliver one of the most impressive public spaces in Sydney, and significant facilities, if all parties work towards this end.

A high quality civic space can be created by consolidating the setback area in front of the station, the footpath and two lanes of Miller Street. All of the present functions of Miller Street would continue, together with an essential interchange area for metro, bus and taxi users. The attached graphic shows that, in scale and orientation, the potential space in front of the Victoria Cross Metro station is similar to the very popular and successful space at East Circular Quay.

The critical next step is for any impediments to be explored and addressed. We propose that representatives of DPE Public Spaces, Sydney Metro, RMS, North Sydney Council, Lendlease and the Committee for North Sydney confer and report back to you on options for creating the best possible legacy for the Metro in North Sydney.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Dawkins
Convenor
Committee for North Sydney

* The members of the Committee for North Sydney, all North Sydney residents, are eminent practitioners in planning, architecture, urban design and related fields and local community leaders. The primary purpose: the evolution of North Sydney from a CBD to an appealing *city centre* recognised and supported by the community – a place for people.

Extract from the Committee for North Sydney's sunlight and shade study of the site at the Victoria Cross Metro station, 2019 (rotate page 90 degrees clockwise).

