

24 September 2018

The Hon. Anthony Roberts MP
Minister for Planning
GPO Box 5341
Sydney NSW 2001



VIA EMAIL & POST

Dear Minister,

MP08_0098 MOD 13 - Construction of New Hotel and Residential Tower

I write to remind the State government of one of its promises...to keep height limits in the vicinity of the Star City development to less than 28 metres.

Promises, Lies and Betrayals

It appears to be an increasingly common practice of the State Government to bulldoze over existing local government rules to push through developments that presumably supplement state revenue or advance particular political agendas.

I have lived in Pyrmont since 2004 and have seen major changes in this area most of which have brought increased traffic, less amenity and more compromised quality of life. The proposed Star Hotel and Residential Tower is another example of politics at the expense of community.

Height

The Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012 sets height limits at 28 metres. The proposed plan takes the development height to over eight times that height across much of the site and three times the limit of 65 metres in three different sections.

Government promised that the height of the Pyrmont Power Station stacks which were abolished for the Star development would never be exceeded. Now it flouts that promise.

The reason for the original promise was to do with the dense population and unusual nature of Pyrmont's residential development, the proximity of the harbour and waterfront open space and the compromise of views for large portions of the neighbourhood.

The developer has claimed the building is in keeping with trends towards coming high rise buildings along the waterfront, but this is no more than a self-fulfilling prophecy which appears to be part of the argument made in other similar applications in the Darling Harbour area. The government seems to consider these applications discretely and not in the context of all other applications together.

Nightclub Expansion

I understand the development proposal includes expansion of the Casino night club. It appears that Star City operates outside the constraints of lock out laws imposed increasingly on inner city suburbs. There is no shortage of anti-social behaviour associated with the Casino night life.

As a local resident I hear first-hand accounts of the numerous incidents that occur in the early hours of the night at Start City, many of which I doubt any police report would be made about, out of fear of constraints being imposed on the business activities of the Casino. Those stories have included guns being discharged and vehicles being driven through glass frontages, no doubt by drunk and distraught gamblers.

Overshadowing

A building of the massive scale of the Star Hotel and Residential Tower, which is completely out of keeping with the local area, would cast a long shadow over large numbers of homes and public spaces including Darling Harbour. Calculations for shadowing seemed to be drawn from some alternate universe in which it is acceptable to steal sun access for homes which already have less than two hours a day (which is itself pitiful) so long (in the Councils logic) as that reduction is less than 20%.

It is hard to even imagine that for almost 20% of the year the sun will be blocked over Union Square which is a full block away from the proposed development, that is not to mention overshadowing of parks, footpaths and other open areas.

Views

From my home, I am constantly assaulted by the eye sore that is the Packer development at Barangaroo. The more proximate Star Hotel and Residential Tower would remove my view of the Harbour Bridge and create a more proximate eye sore for myself and many others who moved to Pyrmont relying on past government promises about the nature of future development in the area. From my house, I already have to block out the light that comes off the Casino at night. The new development will impose far more on the the night sky for many more residents in surrounding buildings and houses.

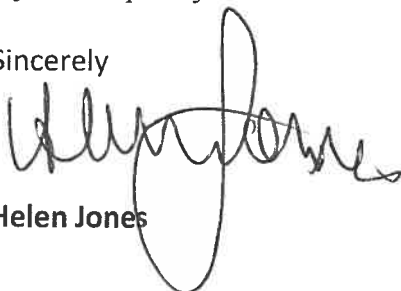
Traffic

I have watched Pyrmont change from a secluded peninsula which had easy and efficient access to connecting road systems, to a place from which one feels trapped by congestion. The government has tried to address this in part by changing intersection lighting and road markings and adding pedestrian crossings. This has not addressed the extent of the change brought to Pyrmont and on the main thoroughfare of Harris Street one routinely sees vehicles doing three point turns and Uber cars and taxis stopping mid traffic to pick up and drop off passengers.

The narrow streets and concentration of existing development in Pyrmont does not have capacity for increased vehicular traffic on the scale that the new development would inevitably mean.

I appeal to any good judgement you have to honour good planning principles and standards and reject this poorly conceived development proposal.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Jones', written over a large, loopy flourish.

Helen Jones