

Submission with regard to the Metro Quarter, Waterloo: Waterloo Metro Quarter SSP

SSD 9393

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I STRONGLY OBJECT TO THE PROPOSAL IN ITS CURRENT FORM

The Metro Quarter

Objections:

1. Building location, density and heights
2. Insufficient affordable housing
3. No long-term affordable housing guarantee
4. Insufficient proportional public open space
5. Delayed release of the Waterloo Masterplan

Concerns:

1. Language used to describe the proposed development and continual repetition of arbitrary/mission statements
2. No mention of solar panels or wind turbines
3. Water capture and recycling
4. Problems of roof top gardens and drainage
5. Energy efficient apartments
6. Abrupt change from adjacent residential areas to the west and south
7. Traffic congestion due to bus stops on Botany Road
8. Access to Metro Quarter to/from ATP across Botany Road, Wyndham St and Henderson Rd
9. Minimising issues raised by the public with dismissive and "averaged" responses.

Agreement:

1. The metro will be of benefit to the area
2. Housing densities can be increased from original site
3. Development of the Metro Quarter while the metro is being built

Objections:

1. The proposed density of the residential towers without appropriate open space is creating towers of caged humans with little prospect of any “free range”. The proposed towers are excessively high, (29, 25 and 23 storeys do not constitute “sensitive development”). Due to the height and location of the towers on the east and north of the public plaza, during the winter months the plaza will receive minimal sunlight. So much for the bright light public open space depicted in all the documents! There is NO information regarding the overshadowing impact that the proposed Waterloo Estate redevelopment will have. While it is stated that there is investigation into mitigating the wind tunnel effect, efforts in the Green Square Precinct are less than optimal. Will these proposals be any better?
2. There is constant repetition about the 70 social housing dwellings plus 5-10% affordable housing, which is patently insufficient. This is an **abrogation of moral and social responsibility** where the government has control of and can direct a greater number of the apartments be for affordable housing.
3. Of great concern is the statement that affordable housing is only guaranteed for 10 years. What happens then? This is a traditional area where low income families have lived, and will need to continue to live to support the city and surrounding suburbs. Has it not been considered that if there was more affordable housing then there would be less demand on social housing. This development is under government control. Increase the number of affordable housing available with an option of rent to buy.
4. The proposed public plaza has minimal useable open space given the number of planned apartments. The plaza will also be a concentrated pedestrian access to/from the metro and towards Botany Road. This plaza is also proposed to host live music venues and markets. Where do the children play? Once open space is lost, it is virtually impossible to regain. Useable open space, not just open space, should be easily accessible to the people who live immediately adjacent to it. There is nothing apparent to encourage young children to play or for carers to consider bringing children to for active stimulation. Wide footpaths should not be considered public open space, as their main function is the smooth passage of pedestrians.
5. Comment is required before 30th January. Reference is given throughout the documentation (and in answer to questions to staff) to the Waterloo Estate redevelopment. This document was released over the Australia Day W/E, which is hardly time to assess that information in correlation with the Metro Quarter. It is understood that the two are inexplicably linked. However, the release of one without the other is disingenuous.

Concerns:

1. The language used in the EIS documentation tends to be overly complex, complicated and obtuse jargon. "Incubation" is linked to ideas about growth. "Legible connection" is, I believe, a pedestrian thoroughfare, "tertiary activation" being access to commercial areas (I think). "Increase permeability" is probably access. My reference to P71 Priority E20 is gobbledegook. The prime examples are "net zero buildings" and "net zero precinct", and this in relation to a hopeful future outcome! The vision statement and various virtuous optimistic statements are repeated at regular intervals throughout the documentation, making it tedious to search out and then read the actual information being presented.
2. While there is mention of rooftop gardens, ostensibly to show there is adequate open space, there is no mention of possible solar panels or wind turbines. Should not every new building, especially a government controlled one, lead the way in sustainability? Could not the wind tunnel mitigation efforts be redirected to developing wind turbines?
3. Where will water capture and storage occur. The depressed area in the plaza will have minimal effect in delaying the passage of water into the drainage system. Where is the potential to recycle water? If there is storage capacity elsewhere, the water would then need to be pumped to the roof or the proposed designated garden areas within the complex. Water recycling should be energy efficient, and work on a gravity feed system. Garden watering at the Central Park complex appears to happen during the day (noon when I was there) and sprays a mist. An inefficient watering method and watering time. What guarantees are there that the proposals for these buildings will be any better?
4. Rooftop gardens have a great propensity to cause problems which are difficult to resolve. Protection from the wind will be required for both trees/plants and residents. Shade from trees for plants and residents would be desirable.....will there be suitable depth of soil to sustain and safely grow large trees?
5. Will the apartments be energy efficient? There needs to be provision for each resident to be able to dry their laundry without using a clothes drier. Individual instant hot water systems to reduce the amount of water wasted till the water runs hot. Individual water meters to encourage efficient water usage. Double glazing on all west facing windows with external window protection to reduce the need for air conditioning. Cross ventilation for health and cooling.
6. The over station development is referred to as a "visual landmark". It will certainly be obvious with a character that has yet to show any distinctive appeal. Nothing that could be considered to be maintaining the unique character of Waterloo, which while it has high rise towers, also has extensive open space surrounding each! It will also become a visual high rise "barrier" on the eastern side of Botany Road, lacking any sign of connectivity with the adjacent suburb of Alexandria.
7. There needs to be an extra and separate bus only lane adjacent to the Metro Quarter precinct on Botany Road, running the full length of the Quarter. This will allow multiple bus stops for the various routes, with the buses then integrating back into the current traffic lanes at the traffic lights at Buckland Avenue via a bus only light. During the peak periods, which is also when bus services will be

frequent, Botany Road is busy and congested. The curb side lane is currently a clear way during both peak periods. Buses stopping causes congestion. This congestion will not reduce and is very likely to worsen after Westconnex opens. Having buses in their own lane will allow free movement of traffic and also allow safe regulated merging of buses with traffic.

8. Pedestrian access to the east needs to be acknowledged and addressed. Safe pedestrian access is mentioned with regard to Cope Street. The ATP and Redfern Station are documented as being destinations, yet there is no mention of pedestrian access across Botany Road. Botany Road and Wyndham Street are the main vehicle routes north and south, and consequently, during peak periods, busy to congested. With a significant increase in pedestrian traffic, this needs to be urgently addressed.
9. Decisions have been made with regard to the Metro Quarter. From previous experience little regard is given to public concerns, the concerns are averaged, and the responses dismissive. Public consultation is identified as being both important and considered as part of preparation for the EIS. I doubt anyone asked would agree that the proposed Metro Quarter is what they wanted or expected. What about the issues continually raised by the representatives of those in public and social housing, and by all accounts, still being raised? However, public consultation – tick.

Agreement:

1. The Metro, should it run as proposed, will be of benefit. However, given the increase in housing density in the immediate area, it will just be one other form of public transport and not reduce the demand on current services. There will also be an increase in above ground pedestrian traffic and congestion to and from local employment areas.
2. It is appropriate to increase the housing densities in the immediate vicinity of a public transport hub. However, affordable housing should form the majority of the available housing. I also foresee various difficulties in integrating private and social housing in high rise buildings.
3. Concurrent development of the over station buildings makes economic and construction sense.