

27 January 2022

Department of Planning Industry & Environment (DPIE)

Pymont Peninsular Place Strategy Implementation

The purpose of this document is to comment on four aspects of the Pymont Peninsular Place Strategy (PPPS) as set out in the recent documents provided on the DPIE website.

Height restrictions

A considerable part of Pymont is currently subject to restrictions of height on building of the order of seven storeys. This has provided a very liveable environment for residents and a friendly work place setting for commercial use. Heritage buildings blend in to buildings subject to the current height rules. New developments can be built with-in this height restriction and positively enhance the streetscape (eg see the recent development on Harris Street just south of John Street).

The PPPS has the potential to destroy the fabric of Pymont and replace it with a CBD type clone. Planning for the PPPS has been ongoing for many years, and it is doubtful if the effect of COVID on work-place demand has been taken into account. That is, in the future there likely to be a much greater emphasis on remote working, and thus less need for inner city development.

Pymont already is close to being the densest populated suburb in Australia. If any suburb does not need further residents it is Pymont.

In the Transition Zone, it is envisaged that there be a maximum height of RL90 along the northern boundary, along Bowman Street and along Banks Street between Bowman Street and Quarry Master Drive. There is then the statement “a progressive increase in height up to the Open Space Sun Access Control as the distance from Union Street and Miller Street reduces”. There are two problems here. Firstly, the extent of the progressive increase is not disclosed, making it impossible to judge the effect. Secondly, both Miller Street and Union Street have small heritage terraces that will be swamped by the proposed tall buildings.

In respect of the Open Space Sun Access Control Zone, it is stated: “New buildings have the opportunity for taller forms...” Again, there is no indication of the heights envisaged (other than the implication that the heights will be greater than RL90).

Thus despite all the documentation provided, residents in Pymont really have no idea what the effect of the new height restrictions will be.

Hence the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Reevaluate the PPPS in the light of COVID.
2. Reevaluate the PPPS in the light of the potential to destroy the existing Pymont environment; and in the light of Pymont’s already high resident density.
3. Provide definitive height levels rather than vague wording such as “taller buildings”.
4. Protect buildings near Miller Street and Union Street from being overwhelmed by larger buildings in their vicinity.

5. Provide montages of Pyrmont to show the effect on Pyrmont. There could be views of (i) Pyrmont as is; (ii) Pyrmont with the five key sites included; (iii) Pyrmont with the five key sites included plus full development of the sites capable of change.

Pyrmont Bay Park

It is noted that Pirrama Road will become an “Active Transport Loop”, which I understand is to convert from cars only to a mixture of cars, bikes and pedestrians. It is also noted that there are plans to expand Pyrmont Bay Park through connections between the Casino and the Maritime Museum, and a connection to Metcalfe Park. These proposals are welcomed.

However it is also noted that Pyrmont Bay Park is to accommodate “events”. “Generous waterfront spaces can be used for the safe staging of larger events and gatherings.” The aim is to “Create an entertainment and cultural driven landscape at Pyrmont Bay Park bookended by Star Casino and the Australian National Maritime Museum”. Pyrmont Bay Park is to have a 24 hour economy. It is to be a destination for 24 hour events driven by art and culture.

There are numerous residential areas around Pyrmont Bay Park. It is essential that residents are safeguarded against the events planned for Pyrmont Bay Park adversely affecting their right to quiet enjoyment.

Cumulative effect

Work is currently being undertaken in respect of the new Fish Market. The PPPS envisages work to commence relatively soon on Blackwattle Bay, the Pyrmont metro station, Mirvac’s Harbourside development, the hotel on the Star location and at UTS. Then there are many many sites identified as being capable of change and may be developed over the coming years. It is acknowledged that each project will have comprehensive plans around reducing noise and disruption for residents. However the cumulative effect could be disastrous for residents of Pyrmont.

It is recommended that development projects in Pyrmont be subject to noise and disruption management, not only in respect of each individual project, but also taking into account the effect of then current active projects.

Bus route 389

Bus route 389 was recently changed. The old route should be reinstated. In particular, the bus stop at the Maritime Museum should be used again, as it was heavily used by locals. In addition the former bus stop in King Street, between York and George, was frequently used by locals to access the CBD, and it should be restored.

Sincerely
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