

Response of Strata SP71356 and Strata SP74803 on the findings and recommendations of the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) to Shepherds Bay S75 Application by Holdmark Property Ltd (thereafter referred to as Holdmark)

1. Introduction

Strata SP71356 of 143 Bowden Street and Strata SP74803 of 2 Bay Drive, Meadowbank are two of the five apartment blocks making up the Shepherds Bay village and are the apartment blocks that are most adversely impacted by Holdmark's S75 Application and the DPE's assessment report (includes the recommendations). Specifically, Strata SP71356 and Strata SP74803 are most concerned with and object to Holdmark's modification application for the construction of a 24 storey building and the DPE's recommendation to increase from the approved 10 storeys to 15 storeys for Stage A.

We would like PAC to seriously consider our two stratas's concerns and comments on Holdmark's application for a 24 storey tower to be constructed on the Stage A site.

2. Concerns and Comments

2.1. The residents of SP71356 and SP74803 with their balconies and/or windows looking onto the waters of the Parramatta river and the Ryde Bridge currently enjoy an unimpeded scenic water and bridge view set against a harmonious unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore. The proposed 24 storey building will adversely impact this rare and unique panoramic scenic view of the bridge, water and their surroundings. We therefore object to the construction of any building that has more than the approved 10 storey.

2.2 The overall character of the Meadowbank Foreshore is also negatively impacted by a 24-story building rising just adjacent to the Ryde Bridge and the Parramatta river. We are of a view that a 24 storey building on Stage A is completely out of character with the Meadowbank Foreshore and is in fact an eye sore. The buildings in the Meadowbank Foreshore have not more than 10 storeys and the building on the Stage A site should also be restricted to a 10 storey building. We would also like to emphasise that the surrounding buildings to the Stage A site are between 4-8 storeys in height.

2.3. We disagree and are at odds with the view that Meadowbank is in need a 24 storey tower that functions as a "gateway" to the Ryde LGA and as a landmark for the broader locality, including the adjacent river. Nothing could be further from the truth. We really just need a small building, ideally of 4 storeys or less on the Stage A site that will blend into its surroundings, and, in doing so, provides the harmonised effect to the unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore. Given its proximity to the Parramatta river, we are of the view that the approved 10 storey building on the Stage A site is already too tall.

2.4. Given its destructive effect on the overall visual character of the Meadowbank Foreshore, we are also of the view that a building of more than the approved 10 storeys on the Stage A site represents a stake or a dagger plunging into the heart of the Meadowbank Foreshore and is therefore objected to.

2.5. We would like PAC to note that the somewhat unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore is already set in motion up when the Shepherds Bay village comprising of five separate but closely coordinated developments that were completed long before Holdmark lay its first brick on the Meadowbank Foreshore. The Shepherds Bay village has set a benchmark that Holdmark in their building constructions to-date has not even come close to. We are proud to say that the present Shepherds Bay village is a very well thought out and well designed development that is intended to bring about a modern village atmosphere. We urge and challenge all building developers in the Meadowbank Foreshore to achieve or blend into this unique modern village character and atmosphere. All five strata buildings that make up the Shepherds Bay village are built as an integrated whole to deliver a modern village and in this respect the Shepherds Bay Village has successfully delivered. The Shepherds Bay village has two supermarkets, a liquor outlet, a fruit and vegetable shop, a cake and bread shop, a dental centre, a medical centre, a post office, a news agency, a pharmaceutical, a childcare centre, a tobacco shop, a two-dollar outlet, beauty shops, restaurants, coffee shops and other retail facilities. The Shepherds Bays village also provides an impressive Community Centre, a park dedicated to dogs only, beautiful and spacious gardens that blend into and interlaced into the five strata buildings and well designed pathways and walkways that take anyone through all the five stratas that make up the Shepherds Bay village, even one on a wheel chair. In addition, it also has an imposing pavilion built on generous high grounds just across the recently upgraded Meadowbank ferry terminal. The spacious high grounds with the pavilion built on it are just adjacent to the waters of the Parramatta river, thereby providing ideal picnic settings to the public as well as providing the million dollar scenic views of the waters of the Parramatta river, The Ryde Bridge, and the Meadowbank rail bridge. All the public amenities and facilities were delivered with all the five stratas within the Shepherds Bay village built between only 4-8 storey buildings. We challenge Holdmark to emulate the standards set by the Shepherds Bay village for its remaining building developments in the Meadowbank Foreshore or that matter any developer who has a genuine aim of contributing to the unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore.

2.6. There is the exposition that a 24 storey landmark tower built on the Stage A site will offer a plaza, supermarket and other retail facilities that Meadowbank badly needs. In terms of retail facilities, Meadowbank is more than adequately served by the Shepherds Bay Shopping Centre located in the Shepherds Bay village and the nearby Top Ryde Shopping Centre. There is also the much publicised \$3.5 contribution to build an additional community centre that is a standalone (in place of the Community Centre already agreed to and approved to be built within Holdmark's developments) as well as the provision of public housing. But we do not want all the above-mentioned contributions, if the prize to be paid by the Meadowbank residents is the construction of a 24 storey building that brings about the above-mentioned very adverse impacts to the Meadowbank Foreshore. It is simply too high a price to pay by the residents of the Meadowbank Foreshore and is thus completely unacceptable.

3. Conclusion

We would take this opportunity to highlight the wisdom of the then PAC in laying out a number of strict conditions attached to Holdmark's Approved Concept Plan, with one of the paramount condition being the restriction to a maximum 10 storey building constructions for all the approved stages of Holdmark's developments. In the light of the foregoing, we therefore implore PAC to reject Holdmark's SS75 Application and demand that Holdmark adhere to the building conditions prescribed for their building constructions as per the Approved Concept Plan.