

Joint Submission of Strata Plans SP76502 and SP72626 Objecting to the Assessment Report and Recommendations of the NSW Department Planning & Environment (DP&E) on the S75 Application submitted by Holdmark Property Group (thereafter referred to as “Holdmark”) for their building developments in the Meadowbank Foreshore

1. Introduction

Strata Plan SP76502 of Angus Lane with [REDACTED] units and SP72616 of [REDACTED] Bowden Street with [REDACTED] units have great concerns on and accordingly object to Holdmark’s S75 Application and the New South Wales DP&E Assessment Report and recommendations. We are two of the five strata making up the Shepherds Bay village and it is our understanding that the other three strata of the Shepherds Bay village have also lodged their objections to the Assessment Report and recommendations of the DP&E. Specifically, we object to Holdmark’s application to seek

- *increases in building heights to Stages 3, 9 and particularly Stage A,
 - *amendment of the Future Assessment Requirement 3A to allow for more than one storey on the steeply sloping land in Stages 2 and 3, and,
 - *the exclusion of future development within the Stage A building envelope from the maximum dwelling and parking caps across the Concept Plan site.
- Our strongest objection is directed at the modification application to increase from 10 to 24 storeys for on the Stage A site.

2. Concerns and Reasons Behind Our Objection

2.1. Need for compliance to conditions attached to the Approved Concept Plan

Following a detailed review and assessment, the previous Planning Assessment Commission in its wisdom had clearly detailed out very specific important complying conditions attached to the Approved Concept Plan. Among these important complying conditions are the restriction to building heights and the maximum dwelling and parking caps to across the Concept Plan site. It was clear the previous Planning Assessment Commission, in setting out the restriction to building heights and placing the maximum dwelling and parking caps on the Approved Concept Plan site, had clearly wanted to prevent the building of additional apartment units over the approved maximum number on Holdmark’s Approved Concept Plan site in the Meadowbank Foreshore. By it’s S75 Application, Holdmark is clearly trying to wriggle out of the requirement to observe the “maximum dwelling and parking caps” condition in order to be able to build excessive additional apartment units over and above the maximum dwelling cap. Holdmark’s S75 Application is purely profit driven. We therefore implore the now-in-sitting Planning Assessment Commission to require Holdmark to comply with the building height restriction and the maximum dwelling and parking caps across the Concept Plan site. In doing so, it would send out a clear signal to Holdmark and other developers that conditions set for any Approved Concept Plan need to be respected and complied with unless there are compelling reasons to submit any S75 Application. This would go a long way in discouraging unnecessary and unfounded S75 Applications, like Holdmark’s

S75 application, before DP&E and as a consequence, a likely less need for the subsequent setting up of Planning Assessment Commissions to undertake assessment reports and recommendations and the organising of public hearings and the unnecessary involvement of the public.

2.2 Damage to the Unique Character of the Meadowbank Foreshore.

The Shepherds Bay precinct on the Meadowbank Foreshore has been described by developers as a landmark urban rejuvenation project that is transforming the dilapidated and neglected industrial land on the Parramatta River into a vibrant waterfront community. The evolution of the unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore was set in motion when the Shepherds Bay village was conceptualised, designed and developed some 12 years ago, with Holdmark coming much later..

All five strata making up the Shepherds Bay village are built as an integrated whole with well thought out walkways, stairs and lifts enabling access to all the five strata, even by one on a wheelchair. Designed as integrated modern village with modern facilities and amenities, the buildings making up the five strata ranges from 4 to 8 storeys in height and housing more than 800 apartment units. Generous gardens and open spaces interlace with the buildings within the Shepherds Bay village.

The Shepherds Bay village houses, among other things, a shopping plaza and a community centre, called the Shepherds Bay Community Centre. The village plaza which provides over 10,000 sqm of retail space plus all the other shops and outlets are within walking distances, thus relieving the need to use the car. The village plaza houses two supermarkets, a fresh fruits and vegetables outlet, a childcare centre, a dental centre, a medical centre, a pharmaceutical, a post office, a news agency, a childcare centre, a cake and bakery, grocery shops, restaurants, coffee shops, eateries, beauty shops and a liquor shop. To top it all, the Shepherds Bay village has set aside spacious and generous high grounds adjacent to and overlooking the Parramatta River, with a pavilion built on it. The unobstructed high grounds provide the public with unobstructed million dollar views of the Parramatta river, the ferry terminal, the Ryde bridge and the iconic Meadowbank railway bridge, with the pavilion available to the public to hold picnics or parties. The pavilion can also be used by anyone for fitness exercises, meditation. Or one can simply walk around the open spaces or sit on the grounds or benches just to enjoy the million dollar scenic views of the land and water of the Shepherds Bay precinct.

The Shepherds Bay village has set a benchmark that Holdmark in their building constructions to-date has not even come close to. Instead, Holdmark and other developers have moved in to exploit and sponge on the services, amenities and facilities provided by the Shepherd Bay village and profit obscenely with its construction of unattractive box like taller buildings. Considering the number of apartment units approved for the Approved Concept plan, Holdmark had not contributed its fair share to the Meadowbank Foreshore in terms of public amenities and facilities, services, retail facilities, infrastructures, open spaces, and parks and gardens. We call for the preservation of the now evolved unique character the Meadowbank Foreshore. Holdmark's S75 Application for modifications to Stage 2/3 and Stage A is clearly intended to enable the

construction of significantly additional apartment units over and above the dwelling caps placed on the Approved Concept Plan. Also the modifications sought does not fit in to the now evolved unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore, especially with their application to construct a 24 storey building on the Stage A site.

2.3. Damage to the visual skyline and the overall character of the Meadowbank Foreshore

Currently, the Ryde Bridge, the ferry terminal, the Meadowbank Rail Bridge, building structures between 4-10 storeys and the Parramatta River provide a very distinctive visual skyline and backdrop, thereby providing a very unique overall character of the Meadowbank Foreshore. Any building higher than 10 storeys will do permanent damage to the visual skyline and the overall character of the Meadowbank Foreshore. A construction of a 24 storey building on the Stage A site will be a stake or dagger plunging into the heart of the Meadowbank Foreshore.

We are therefore of the view that any building of more than the approved 10 storeys on the Stage A site is completely out of character with the Meadowbank Foreshore and is, in fact, a permanent eyesore.

2.4. View impacts-view loss/degradation

Many residents of the Shepherds Bay village with balconies and/or windows looking into the Parramatta River and the Ryde Bridge currently enjoy unimpeded panoramic bridge and water views set against a harmonious unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore where there are building height restrictions and buildings can only have a maximum of 10 storeys. Other apartment units near the Parramatta shoreline also enjoy such million dollar views. The modification application to build a 24 storey building on the Stage A site will destroy this rare, scenic bridge and water view. View loss and/or view degradation will be very severe with an out-of-character 24 storey building built right next to the Ryde Bridge and a stone throw from the Parramatta River. In short, the view loss and/or view degradation from a 24 storey building on the Stage A site is unacceptable.

2.5. Laughable "gateway and "landmark exposition

We disagree and are at odds with the view that Meadowbank is in need of a 24 storey tower that functions as a "gateway" to the Ryde LGA and as a landmark for the broader community, including the adjacent river. Nothing could be further from the truth. Driving Holdmark's aggressive push for a 24 storey building on the Stage A site are greed and obscene profits. Many apartment units in a 24 storey building on the Stage A site will have will have great views, particularly the Sydney CBD skyline and the Harbour Bridge views and as such, will command premium prices. It is all about greed and profits as far as the proposed building of a 24 storey building is concerned.

The residents of Meadowbank do not want or need a 24 storey building as a "landmark" or a "gateway". We want the unique character of the Meadowbank

Foreshore be preserved and not be distorted (as a 24 storey building will precisely do). We do not want our present panoramic bridge and water views be degraded by a 24 storey building right next to the Ryde Bridge and right beside the Parramatta River.

2.6. Worsening Traffic Congestion

Except for weekends and public holidays, traffic congestion is getting worse by the day as more and more new apartment units are built, and, as more and more out-of-area motorists do rat runs to avoid the ever busy and congested Victoria. It is not uncommon to have to wait for 4-5 traffic light changes before a vehicle motorist is able to turn right from the Bowden Street-Victoria Street intersection into the Victoria Street. While improvements to the Meadowbank roads and the installation of traffic lights would help ease the traffic congestion, it would also at the same time encourage even more out-of-area motorists do cat runs to avoid the busy and congested Victoria. Even with road improvements and the installation of traffic lights, the main roads of Meadowbank, particularly Constitution Road and Bowden Street, would remain congested during peak hours as than 10,000 people make the Meadowbank Foreshore their place of residence. This is because there is already over-development in the high-density Meadowbank Foreshore area. As such, any application for additional apartments over the already approved number should be refused.

2.7 Inadequate schooling facilities to support the expected growth in residents

The expected influx of more than 10,000 people into the Meadowbank Foreshore will place a demand for school places where the Meadowbank Public School is simply unable to meet. This has been confirmed by the representative of the Parent, Parent & Citizen Association, Meadowbank Public School in a presentation to PAC in the public meeting on 5th December 2016.

2.8 Additional Apartments over and above the dwelling cap set for the Approved Concept Plan

It is abundantly evident that Holdmark's S75 Application is all about building additional apartment units over and above the dwelling caps set by the first PAC. An additional 41 units will be gained if the modifications application for Stage 2/3 is granted. As with the modification application to increase from the approved 10 to 24 storeys on the Stage A site, Holdmark is shying away from even mentioning the increase in the additional units that will be secured. This is because the public will be horrified upon knowing the mind boggling additional apartment units that will be secured from the increase from 10 to 24 storeys. To be able to build additional apartment units above the dwelling cap imposed, it is also necessary for Holdmark to also receive approval for their application for "exclusion of future development within the Stage A building envelope from the maximum dwelling and parking caps across the Concept Plan site".

3. Conclusion

The first PAC set up to assess and made recommendations on Holdmark's Concept Application, MP09_0216, made a number of conditions attached to the Approval Concept Plan with the dual aims to prevent the lodging of the S75 Application to built additional apartment units over the maximum dwelling caps placed across the Approved Concept Plan site and the delay in delivering public amenities and facilities. Holdmark's S75 Application seeks to do exactly that, namely the building of additional apartment units over and above the dwelling cap imposed on the Concept Plan site. Holdmark has not been able to furnish good reasons for their application. We view Holdmark's S75 Application with grave concerns as the modifications sought will result in further over-development, adverse impact on the visual skyline and unique character of the Meadowbank Foreshore, view loss and/or view degradation, worsen road traffic congestion and put further strain on existing public infrastructures, facilities and amenities. In particular, the application for a 24 storey building to be built on the Stage A site must be rejected. As there are no good grounds advanced by Holdmark for the modifications sought, we implore PAC now in sitting to uphold the conditions as spelled out in the Approved Concept Plan and requires Holdmark to observe the complying conditions as spelled out by the previous PAC. In short, we would urge PAC to reject Holdmark's S75 Application, where it comes to breaching the maximum dwelling caps and the timely delivery of public amenities and facilities.