

- MS LEESON: Good morning. Good morning and welcome. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I'd also like to pay my respects to their elders past and present and to the elders from other communities who may be here today.
- 5 Welcome to the meeting today on the proposal from the Star Entertainment Group Limited, the application, seeking approval to modify the project approved for the Star Casino at 20-80 Pyrmont Street, Pyrmont, to provide a new hotel and resident tower within the existing casino complex.
- 10 The proposal seeks approval for changes to the existing building, including creation of new commercial tenancies and upgrades to existing landscape and the public demand, demolition of part of the existing building and construction of a 237 metre tower approximately 66 storeys providing 220 hotel rooms, 204 residential
- 15 48,799 square metres of gross floor area, special event lighting, new signage and site-wide signage upgrades, site-wide cumulative noise controls and management, upgrades to plant, stormwater and flooding infrastructure and strata and subdivision to create five lots.
- 20 My name is Dianne Leeson. I'm the chair of this IPC panel. Joining me are my fellow commissioners Stephen O'Connor and Adrian Pilton. We are assisted by Alana Jelfs from the Commissions Secretariat and Adam Coburn from Mecone Consulting who are assisting the Commission Secretariat on this project. Before I
- 25 continue, I should state that all appointed commissioners must make an annual declaration of interest identifying potential conflicts with their appointed role. For the record, we are unaware of any conflicts in relation to our determination of this modification application. You can find additional information on the way we manage potential conflicts in our policy paper, which is available on the
- 30 Commission's website.
- In the interest of openness and transparency, today's meeting is being recorded, and a full transcript will be produced and made available on the commission's website. This public meeting gives us the opportunity to hear your views on the assessment report prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment before we
- 35 determine the modification application. This meeting is one part of our decision process. We also meet – met with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, City of Sydney Council and the applicant, and visited the site. The commission may also convene with relevant stakeholders if clarification or additional information is required on matters raised. Records of all meetings will be
- 40 included in our determination report, which will be published on the commission's website. Following today's meeting, we will endeavour to determine the – the application as soon as possible; however, there may be delays if we find need for additional information.
- 45 Before we hear from our first registered speaker, I would like to lay some ground rules that we expect everyone taking part in today's meeting to follow. First, today's

meeting is not a debate. Our panel will not take questions from the floor, and no interjections are allowed. Our aim is to provide maximum opportunity for people to speak and be heard by the panel. Public speaking is an ordeal for many people, and though you may not agree with everything you hear today, each speaker has the right
5 to be heard and the right to be treated with respect. Today's focus is public consultation. Our panel is here to listen, not to comment. We may ask questions for clarification, but this is often unnecessary. It will be most beneficial if your presentation is focused on issues of concern to you.

10 It is important that everyone registered to speak receives a fair share of time. I will enforce timekeeping rule. As a chair, I reserve the right to allow additional time for provision of further technical materials. A warning bell will sound one minute before the speaker's allotted time is up, and again when it runs out. Please respect
15 these time limits. We have quite a long list of speakers today, and it's in everybody's interest, I think, to stick to those times. If there are issues you are unable to address or you feel you could not completely address in the allocated time, we would encourage you to provide a written submission to the commission. Written submissions should be made to the commission within four – within seven
20 days of this meeting.

Though we'll strive to stick to our schedule today, speakers sometimes don't show up or decide not to speak. If you know someone will not be attending, could you please advise Alana. I note that the commission received two – two late applications to speak. Under the commission's public meeting guidelines, it is at the discretion of
25 the chair of the public meeting to grant late applications to speak. In this instance, due to the number of speakers scheduled today, I have decided to grant these applications. I'd also like to point out that on the handout on your chair there is an error in the notes beneath the list of speakers. It currently says:

30 *The assessment report and recommended conditions are available on the IPCN website.*

This template was produced in error, and that should have read:

35 *The Department's assessment report and instrument for refusal are available on the IPCN website.*

So we apologise for the error. It was a – a – an error in picking up the wrong – the wrong template. If you'd like to project something onto the screen – and some of
40 you already handed it in – please give it to Alana before your presentation. If you have a copy of your presentation, it would be appreciated if you could provide a copy to the secretariat after you've spoken. Please note any information given to us may be made public. The commission's privacy statement governs our approach to your information. If you'd like a copy of our privacy statement, you can obtain one from
45 the secretariat or from our website. Finally – and you'll be pleased for that – finally, I would ask that everyone present turn their mobile phones to silent. Thank you, and

I will now call first speaker. And I will call Clare Brown and Richard Francis-Jones on behalf of the Star Entertainment Group.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just – just - - -

MS C. BROWN: Thank you for the opportunity to present to the panel today. I'm a – I – my name is Clare Brown. I'm a town planner with Urbis. And joining me partway through the presentation will be Richard Francis-Jones of FJMT. We're speaking to the key issues that have arisen from the Department's assessment report and the community submissions that have been made in relation to modification 13 application.

15 As the chair of the panel has pointed out today, the modification 13 application is more than just the Ritz-Carlton hotel tower. Whilst that is a key element of the proposal, it also relates to the neighbourhood centre, the ribbon development, and if – oh, sorry about that. So in the top right-hand corner of the slide up there, you can see the Ritz-Carlton tower development. Below that you can see the ribbon, which includes a range of facilities for residents and visitors to the site. There – below that is the neighbourhood centre. The image where you can see – it's third down – is a range of improvements internal to the Star site itself, being new food and beverage precincts, new retail outlets, general upgrades to the site. And as we move around the site, there are improvements to infrastructure, parking, traffic and access.

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The planning pathway that the application has undergone is that this is a modification to a major project application. It has been made under the section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, and it is – that pathway is preserved under the transitional regulations. The Minister has the power to modify the application, and the IPC, present today, is the Minister's delegate, because there are more than 25 submissions made. The pathway that is under section 75W means that the development standards, being the height and floor space ratio under City of Sydney LEP, does not apply to this proposal, nor does City West REP number 26.

35 Now, the modification 13 application has undergone quite a lengthy and detailed process. It commenced back in February 2016. SEARs were issued by the Department in 2016; amended SEARs were then issued in May 2016. Following that, a design excellence process was undertaken and was completed in December 2016. Between December 2016 and 2018, there was detailed design work undertaken, community consultation, and consultation with agencies. That then culminated in the preparation of an environmental assessment report, a Response to Submissions report, notification of those applications, and then a final determination report, which is the Department's report before the commission today.

45 Importantly, one of the key issues that has been raised in the Department's assessment report is strategic context. The presentation today will demonstrate that the site is located within the harbour CBD of the eastern city, as identified in the

Greater Sydney Region Plan and the Eastern City District Plan. The Department's assessment report identifies that the proponent's justification for a tower fails to adequately respond to the local character of Pymont. The report identifies that Pymont is characterised by an established low-to-medium character while
5 supporting reasonably high levels of density. Furthermore, the report states Pymont is not specifically identified in any strategic planning policy to accommodate future growth in the form of very full – tall towers or significantly increased density. However, this statement is in direct contradiction to section 3 of the Department's assessment report, which specifically outlines how the proposal is in fact consistent
10 with the Greater Sydney Region Plan and the Eastern City District Plan.

The report identifies that the proposal fosters productivity through the growth in jobs, housing and hotel accommodation, with good access to public transport within the harbour CBD contributing to a walkable and 30-minute city. The report also
15 identifies that the proposal will be consistent with the Eastern City District Plan as the – as it will deliver social infrastructure, foster healthy communities within the proposed community centre, reflecting the needs of the community now and in the future. The Department's assessment report also identifies consistency with other strategic policies, such as Transport 2056, Sustainable City 2030, and the Visitor
20 Economy Industry Action Plan 2036.

So the – I would also like to identify that the Department's assessment report relies upon independent design advice. So the Department engaged an independent designer. We're concerned about the reliance placed on that advice by the
25 Department because, as identified in his report, he – he provided his advice only on four pieces of material: an urban design context report, the visual impact assessment, peer reviews of those reports. However, the modification 13 application and Response to Submissions report go to some 40-plus technical reports, architectural design plans and environmental assessment report, and it appears that the
30 independent expert was not provided with that material.

In terms of strategic context, there's – as I've said, the site is within the Eastern City District Plan. It's in the Innovation Corridor. And it identifies the need to promote tourism, conferences, entertainment and culture which contribute to the harbour
35 CBDs attractiveness and to attract internal talent – international talent. I – I apologise. The Innovation Corridor is also split into nine precincts. The site is located within the Darling Harbour Precinct. So in terms of strategic context, the site is within the harbour CBD, the Innovation Corridor and the Darling Harbour Precinct. The proposal can be justified strategically because the Star is within the
40 Sydney – Sydney Harbour CBD and the Innovation Corridor. The harbour CBD is Australia's global gateway and financial capital. It's the engine room of the Greater Sydney – Sydney's economy. And to remain globally competitive, the CBD must be a magnet for skilled people and a powerhouse for creativity. The proposal is located
45 in the Darling Harbour Precinct. It's not within Pymont and the historic area – the – the – the low-scale heritage precinct of Pymont.

The – the – modification 13 is based on Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements that were issued by the Department of Planning in February 2016 and May – amended in May 2016. The – there was a design competition undertaken in accordance with an alternative design process which was provided for under the

5 SEARs, and the requirement was that the process be endorsed by the Department of Planning, and this, in fact, did occur, as noted in the letter which is on the screen. In terms of historical context, the historical context of the site is the Pymont Power Station, which, when it was built, was the third-tallest structure within Sydney. In terms of its contemporary context, the site is within the Darling Harbour Precinct.

10 The built form of structures within the Darling Harbour Precinct are as shown on the screen today, and whilst it is of a similar height, the bulk is certainly different to a number of the proposals that had been approved or under construction at the moment.

15 The Ritz-Carlton tower is definitely a more slender and tapered built form than that of many of the other proposals. The design excellence process, as I said earlier, was subject to the secretary’s environmental assessment requirements. It was an alternative design process and the Department reviewed the brief with no negative comments provided. Any subsequent concerns that had been identified within the

20 assessment report were wholly unanticipated in the context of the competition that was carried out, with both the Department and City of Sydney attending throughout the competition and were observers. The design excellence brief which was signed off by the Department included a tower form. So it is of a bit of a surprise that there is an issue taken in relation to a tower. Now, I would like to hand over to Richard

25 Francis-Jones, who is the architect for the project.

MR FRANCIS-JONES: Thank you. So this was part of the documentation that was provided in the design competition. One of the key requirements of the design competition was to try and mitigate and minimise environmental effects which may

30 result from this development. This image here shows you the Star site, and the red dot at the very northern end is the proposed location for the tower, as identified in that envelope that was provided to all the participants in the competition. There are very few sites in this area which can accommodate a tower without negative environmental effects on the areas around them, both public and private. One of the

35 attributes of this site is that it sits right at the northern edge of the entire site, which means a lot of the overshadowing actually falls within the site.

This is an extract from the panels from our design submission that were put on public exhibition at the time. One of the things that we looked very closely at was how

40 could we develop a form of tower and proposal that could minimise environmental effects. This was one of our early studies and it incorporates some key strategies. One of those was the profiling of the tower that diminished at the lower level in order to open up areas around the lower level of the tower for view sharing, but also to allow setbacks at this lower level. We also introduced a neighbourhood or

45 community centre into the brief. We proposed this as part of our design submission. And then another proposal we made was actually to reduce the height of the tower from that which was shown in the competition brief.

Now, one of the reasons why we proposed reducing the height of the tower was because we looked closely at the overshadowing impacts on Union Square. And while it was true, and I think the height of the original brief was determined based on winter lunchtime sun access, so there is no shading of this space between 12 and 2 on 21 June, at 11 o'clock on 21 June there was a shadow which was shown there. So we projected that angle back to reduce the height of the tower by about 24 metres and ensure that there was absolutely no overshadowing on Union Square in the middle of winter. This also reduced the impacts of the tower on the view line from Martin Place. The reduction of the width of the tower was to allow a setback at this point to mitigate wind and scale effects at this northern end of the site around Jones Bay Road, but also to open up some views from some of the surrounding lower-scale residential development.

Now, as a result of our submission, the design panel endorsed our proposal. They also endorsed the proposal for the addition of a neighbourhood or community centre into the project brief, but they believed in their evaluation of the proposed design, that the taller scheme should be put forward to the Department for their consideration. So here you see a section through the DA proposal which shows the height as it was originally stipulated in the design brief. This shows you the height that was part of our original competition submission, and this shows two photo montages of those two differences. This is the DA currently under consideration and this is the original competition submission.

Now, Union Square isn't the only public space around this site, and I mentioned that's the full site that you can see there but there are also other public spaces, including cliff top walk, Pyrmont Bay Park and Pyrmont Bridge approach that we looked at very carefully and were assessed in terms of their environmental impact, particularly sun. The Department of Planning's assessment measured the impacts on Union Square as moderate, but those on Pyrmont Bay Park, Pyrmont Bridge and the cliff-top walk as minor, and we checked that aligned with our own analysis.

Now, apart from public open space, there's also another very important component to consider, and that is potential shadowing effects in winter on peoples' apartments or home, particularly the private open space, their balconies, or into their living spaces. This is a diagram that goes – bit hard to read but I will quickly talk you through it – from 9 am to 3 showing the sweep of the shadow of the proposed tower in mid-winter, and it shows you, also in red, those residential developments in the surrounding area, and it identified three areas that could potentially be impacted and were subjected to much more detailed analysis. Looking at the plans of those units and looking carefully at the overshadowing impacts. When we did that we established that all of those impacts were well below the thresholds established by the Australian Design Guide, and this was an analysis which, I think, was also shared by the Department of Planning in their assessment, which assessed those impacts on private spaces as acceptable.

Another part of our proposal was to consider the transitional nature of the way in which the development address Pirrama Road, the harbour, and then extends to the

north into Jones Bay Road, and we developed a scheme that looked to reinforce the entertainment and retail character of Pirrama Road at this point, with a boulevard and increased retail opening out onto it, and then a transitional arrangement as you move up the hill where there is the hotel porte cochere. And then as you move north to the intersection with Pyrmont Bay Road, there was the community centre or neighbourhood centre and the address into the residential development above.

So the idea is that it goes from an entertainment focus to a more private and community and residential character, and this was reflected in the treatment of the architecture at this point, with the address to the boulevard nature of Pirrama Road, the hotel porte cochere and then as you rise up the hill, going around the corner to Jones Bay Road, there is the neighbourhood centre and then around the corner the entrances into the residential apartments about. The neighbourhood centre itself is a five storey neighbourhood centre about 1700 square metres, which incorporates bookable areas for community groups, drop-in areas and informal areas for community use. I now hand back to Clare.

MS BROWN: I would like to just briefly touch on a couple of the key issues raised in the community submissions. Richard has already addressed the visual impact and the overshadowing, so I won't repeat those. In terms of visual impact, Architectus undertook a visual impact assessment in accordance with the requirements of the SEARs. The SEARs required that approximately 30 viewpoints be analysed. Architectus undertook an analysis of 105 separate viewpoints and then did a specific analysis – being public viewpoints, and then did a specific analysis of some 24 private views.

In terms of the visual impact assessment itself, the visual impact assessment concluded that based on the assessments against all relevant standards and guidelines, it is considered that the overall visual impacts of the proposal on both public and private views, including the cumulative impacts, is acceptable. This Architectus report was then peer reviewed by Dr Richard Lamb and also David Moyer, and both of those peer reviews have concluded that the impact is acceptable. I note that neither the Department's assessment report, nor the independent urban design expert advice on which the Department heavily relies is based on any demonstrated methodology. It appears to be primarily opinion-based.

Another issue that was raised in submissions was the impact on the pedestrian environment by wind. Now, there was extensive wind modelling undertaken and, as Richard has pointed out previously, design changes were incorporated to ensure that the final design submitted did not adversely impact the pedestrian environment either within the site or in the public domain surrounding the site. The wind assessment concluded that the redevelopment, as documented, will have limited environmental impact on the ground plane from a wind perspective. The Department's report said that,

Should the project proceed, it is likely to have acceptable wind impacts for pedestrians within and around the development.

Another key issue that was raised in community submissions were impacts of traffic, car parking and access. The proposal, as pointed out, incorporates a number of traffic upgrades, changes to the taxi rank from Jones Bay Road, new Pymont Street carpark entry and exists, so that there is a redistribution of traffic in and around the site to address existing issues relating to congestion within Pymont, and there are an additional 220 spaces proposed. It's important to note that the Department of Transport did not raise objection to the proposal and, in fact, provided the Department with conditions of approval.

10 Finally I would just like to speak to the public benefit. As Richard pointed out, the proposal incorporates a five-level neighbourhood centre. Analysis was undertaken during the design excellence process that found there was a need for additional community space within Pymont. This has been accommodated on site. The application, when originally lodged, proposed the delivery of that neighbourhood centre, both the construction and fit out and then the operation and funding for the operation for 30 years. The proposal as now before the panel, is that the community centre will be funding for the life of the lease remaining on the Star, which is 76 years from today. That is the end of the submission.

20 MS LEESON: Thank you very much. If I could now call David McNamara from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

MR McNAMARA: Good morning everyone. Thank you to the commission panel for inviting the Department to attend and address today's public meeting. My name's David McNamara. I'm the director of Key Sites Assessment. The Key Sites Assessment team has led on the whole of government assessment for this proposal. I would like to say from the outset, the Department's assessment and full position on this proposal is contained within our detailed assessment report. I don't have time today to talk to all the issues raised by the community but they are covered in a robust and reasonable manner within that report. It's available on both the commission and the Department's website. This morning I'll speak to five specific matters.

35 MS LEESON: Sorry, David. Perhaps if you speak to the microphone.

MR McNAMARA: Yes. This morning I'll speak to five specific matters, the process, the proposal, what is the modification request actually seeking, why is this proposal a modification, the site and its surrounds and our assessment. The proponent first approached the Department about modifying their project approval in August 2015. Following several months of meetings and consultation, the Department issued SEARs in February 2016. The proponent then prepared and lodged a first draft of their environment assessment in July 2017. At that point, the Department was not satisfied that this version had adequately addressed the SEARs.

45 In the next 12 months, further drafts were prepared and work was undertaken and, finally, a third version submitted in August was accepted by the Department as containing enough information to put the project on public exhibition and allow it to

be assessed. So at this point in the process it's very important to remember the Department is really saying, "The information can go on exhibition. It's time to seek the community's views". We haven't endorsed anything at this stage. The modification was exhibited.

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MS LEESON: Sorry, David. I didn't quite catch that last statement.

MR McNAMARA: That the point in the process when we allowed it to go on exhibition is merely that, that it was satisfactory to go on exhibition. We've in no way endorsed it in any other way. The modification was exhibited for 28 days from mid-August till mid-September. A total of 144 submissions were received from varies parties, from council, from government agencies, from industry groups and the public. There were submissions both in support and opposition to the proposal. The key concerns raised in the submissions included height, the scale and location of the tower, overshadowing, heritage, view loss impacts, density and overdevelopment, traffic, car parking impacts, operational noise impacts, wind and lighting impacts. Also cited were the various public benefits that would flow from a proposal of this type and also, conversely, the view that there was a lack of genuine public benefit.

20 The proponent provided two responses to submissions in November and January. These responses, importantly, they provided additional information to assist the assessment, but they did not change the fundamental nature or the extent of the modification being sought. The Department's recommendation was finalised and submitted in July to the commission and I'll speak to aspects of that in a few moments. As noted earlier, this proposal is not just for a new hotel. The image on the screen is a section from the architectural drawings. It shows the orange at the top, 220 additional hotel rooms. The blue section through the middle, residential apartments, 204. And the pink down the bottom-right is a new neighbourhood centre, approximately 1700 square metres.

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So all up, this proposal represents around 48800 of GFA additional on the site. Of that, 50 per cent is luxury residential apartments. 42 per cent is hotel and the remaining eight per cent comprises the neighbourhood centre, upgraded and new amenity areas, food and beverage areas and back of house. Again, for the avoidance of doubt, the Department was requested to assess a modification proposal for residential, hotel and casino-related uses, including a new 237-metre tower.

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So now, how is this a modification? Some people have raised that in their submissions. Well, the modification application is being considered as a part 3A modification under 75 of the Act, and that distinction is important. Certain environmental planning instruments, such as the Sydney LEP, they don't apply in the same way they would to a normal state significant development application as they apply to an approved project under part 3A. For example, residential use on this site can be allowed under 75W but would be prohibited if the project was any other type of development application.

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There are two important considerations for a decision-maker with respect to the 75W planning pathway. First, the power to request the modification. The project was originally approved under part 3A. It may be modified under 75W as long as the request was lodged prior to 1 March 2018. As noted earlier, this request was lodged
5 in December, clearly before that cut-off date. The second consideration. The scope of a modification that could be considered under 75W is very broad, much broader than any of the other provisions for modifications under the Act. The Department has accepted that the proposal could be assessed as a modification because it seeks to change the terms of the approval to add, vary and change the conditions.

10 Now, these provisions of 75W, they are very broad, as noted earlier. There's no equivalent limited on the power to modify as there is within other parts of the act, which sets substantially the same test. That doesn't apply here. So there is, helpfully, some case law to provide guidance on testing the scope of a modification
15 under 75W, and it asked that the decision-maker must consider that the modification has limited environmental consequences beyond those already assessed. So from the Department's perspective, it is what it is. The proposed modification can be made and it can be considered under part 3A and 75W, and those provisions are very broad and we prepared our assessment on that basis. The previous presentation from the
20 proponent went into some detail to describe the site and its surrounds, so I'll skip over what I was going to talk to in that regard.

Just briefly, there are heights around the area of Pyrmont to the south within Darling Harbour. There are already clusters of tall buildings that frame the waterfront. You
25 can see here in this image from the proponent's design – one of their design documentations, there are examples of taller buildings to the south of Pyrmont Bridge, including the Ibis and Novotel hotels, the ICC Sydney and associated Sofitel hotel. Those buildings range from 50 metres to 133 metres, and the Sofitel Hotel defines the northern extent of the cultural, leisure and entertainment precinct of ICC
30 Sydney. There are also clusters of tall building existing at or recently approved around Barangaroo and Cockle Bay. Those buildings have a strong relationship to the CBD. They define the western edge of the CBD. Those buildings, again there's a range of heights. Approximately 90 to 180 metres for Cockle Bay and 170 to 250 or so metres for Barangaroo.

35 Turning to our assessment. Following a detailed merit assessment of the proposal, the Department does not support the modification, in particular the scale of the proposed tower. The Department is not satisfied the proposed modification's impacts are acceptable or that they can be appropriately mitigated. We have no uses
40 with the uses proposed. We accept the residential can be proposed under 75W and a hotel is a suitable for the site. However, the key issues in our assessment relate to the strategic justification of the tower, visual impacts, amenity impacts, and the balancing of these against the public benefit offered by the proposal. I will now speak to each of those key issues.

45 From a strategic justification point of view, the proponent's justification relied very heavily on the proposed tower contributing to what it calls an emerging global

waterfront precinct. Something defined by the tall buildings of Barangaroo, Darling Harbour and future development over to the west in the Bays Precinct. The Department considers that the proponent's suggested global waterfront precinct cannot be relied upon to justify a tower in this location on this site. Firstly, that

5 concept does not have any planning weight. It has not been subject to community consultation as part of a strategic planning process and it is not part of any current or proposed council or government planning policy. The concept is also reliant on matters which have not been committed to. It's reliant on a metro station at Pyrmont which has not been committed to and it's reliant on future tall towers within the Bays

10 Precinct, the scale of which is unknown. Simply put, the Department considers it both a premature and uncertain argument.

Secondly, Barangaroo, Darling Harbour and the Bays Precinct are designated as identified sites within the State and Regional Development SEPP. This recognises

15 their significance to the state. The Star can be differentiated from these sites as it's not located within an identified precinct. It's not located in an area specifically designated for significant future growth, including additional height and floor space in any adopted planning policy. I'd also not there's been no request to make the Star site an identified site, or no request for it to be a state significant precinct.

20 Thirdly, that proposed tower is located a significant distance from the established clusters of tall towers in Barangaroo and Darling Harbour. It's over 100 metres taller than the next-tallest building on the western side of Darling Harbour, which is the ICC Hotel, and more than 80 metres taller than a proposed tower on the Harbourside

25 Shopping Centre which is still under assessment. To the west. When in the future there would be some tall towers considered for the Bays Precinct, the significant separation distance – it's almost 700 metres or so – is considered too great to inform in a positive way a new strategic context.

30 Put simply, our assessment found the Bays Precinct is too far away to justify a proposed tower on the Star site. Tall buildings within the Bays Precinct would not mitigate the isolation of the proposed tower or create a new cluster of tall buildings or a new tall building precinct. The Department's assessment considered a more reasonable-built form context for the site is one defined by the established area of

35 Pyrmont, which is characterised by low-to-medium scale development, and Pyrmont has a wide range of height controls from as low as six metres through to the 66 metres. Pyrmont is not identified in any strategic planning policy to accommodate future growth in the form of very tall buildings or significant increased density.

40 The Department's assessment concludes that the proposed tower failed to adequately respond to this existing and planned future character. Now, it's important to note the Department's assessment does not state there can be no growth or no additional height in Pyrmont. But the question of should there be any taller buildings in

45 Pyrmont was not the question put before us as the decision-maker here – to recommend to the decision-maker, I should say. Our assessment and any determination of this modification must be confined to the merits of what is proposed and the facts as they currently are.

Talking briefly to visual impact, we previously noted that the LEP controls don't technically apply to this modification, so, therefore, the Department considered the appropriateness of the tower's bulk and scale in context against the planning principles established in the Land and Environment Court case of Veloshin v
5 Randwick Council. In summary, the key aspect of the Veloshin principle is that where there's an absence of planning controls, the assessment of the proposal should be based on whether the planning intent for the area appears to be the preservation of the existing character or the creation of a new one and answering the question of whether the proposal looks appropriate in this context. We have a couple of images
10 here taken from our assessment report and visual impact assessment prepared by the proponent to give you an understanding of the context of the building.

The Department had very strong concerns about the proposed tower in relation to these principles and, therefore, the appropriateness of the modification, and the
15 Department was uncertain that it could support it. So to assist those conclusions that we're reaching and to inform the assessment, we engaged an independent design advisor to provide specific advice to consider if a tall tower form is appropriate in the location and, given the wider urban context and also that the results of that independent study raised concerns in relation to visual impacts, contextual
20 appropriateness and development precedent.

Having regard to the proponent's visual impact assessment and the independent design advice, the Department's assessment has concluded the proposal failed to address the Veloshin planning principle for the following reasons. The proposed
25 height and bulk significantly exceed the height and bulk of existing buildings and surrounding the site and across the Pymont peninsula. It's inconsistent with the existing and desired future built form of Pymont. It's at odds with the predominant low-to-medium-rise scale of the surrounding area and it's isolated, overly dominant and does not look appropriate in its context.

30 Turning to public benefit. The Department's assessment balanced the identified impacts of the proposal against the public benefits offered. The Department considered the public from the project include both economic and social benefits. The delivery and operation of the neighbourhood centre, creation of almost 500
35 construction jobs and 265 operational jobs, standard developer and affordable housing contributions totalling approximately seven and a half million, and broader economic benefits related to jobs, a new hotel and upgraded facilities. There are also benefits from the project insofar as we didn't find it had any negative impacts in terms of wind and ESD, and so you have to balance that as well when you're
40 thinking about the public benefit.

So the Department supports the neighbourhood centre as a direct public benefit, subject to the inclusion of appropriate management conditions and ensuring it's
45 available to the local community in perpetuity. However, other than the neighbourhood centre, the nature and type of public benefits, we feel, are typical for a development of this scale and not unique. Economic benefits to the state are part of any major development. They don't override all other planning considerations. The

Department does not consider the public benefits identified to be sufficient to offset the impacts that would be caused by a residential tower in this location.

5 Lastly, talking to design excellence. The proposed development was subject to an alternate design excellence process, as allowed by the SEARs. The building represents the winning design of a design competition and the Department was satisfied that the alternate design process was carried out in accordance with the brief. It is important to clarify the role of a design excellence process. It's a process but it's not a substitute for a planning approval. It's a prerequisite, albeit an important one, to the lodging of an application or a modification and for that to go on exhibition and be assessed.

15 The Department notes the overall assessment of design excellence is not only restricted to the architecture of the building. It also needs to consider the urban context, general character of the area, and the visual impacts of such a tall building. This conclusion is supported by the comments of the design competition panel on urban context, who recommended, and I'll quote from The Star's own documentation:

20 *The project needed to demonstrate how it could relate to the planning for other areas west of the CBD, including Darling Harbour and the Bays Precinct.*

25 The Department does not consider that the proponent demonstrated an acceptable relationship between the proposed tower and its existing and planned future built form. Briefly, just in conclusion, the Department doesn't accept the proponent's justification of the global waterfront precinct. This concept has no planning weight and does not form part of any government policy. The Department agrees with the independent design advice, that the proposed tower would appear isolated, overly prominent and unrelated to its context within Pyrmont. The Department considers the tower is contrary to the planning principles established in the Veloshin case. It is inconsistent with the existing and desired future character of Pyrmont and would not appear appropriate in its context.

35 The Department acknowledges there are economic and other benefits that would arise. However, these are not considered sufficient to outweigh the impacts identified in relation to the tower and its inappropriate relationship to the immediate and wider area. The Department concludes that the proposal is not in the public interest and is not wholly consistent with object C and G of the Act. Firstly, it would fail to promote the orderly use and development of land and, secondly, it would not promote good design and amenity of the build environment. I thank you for listening today. I would note that after today's meeting the Department would be happy to clarify for the panel anything in our report or anything that is said today and respond to the things that are said by others at the meeting today. Thank you.

45 MS LEESON: Thank you, David. If I could now ask the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore. Thank you.

MS MOORE: Good morning, thank you for asking me – for inviting me to address you on behalf of the city. I do like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of our land and pay my respects to elders both past and present and acknowledge the people of the many nations who live in our city. So
5 you have received the city of Sydney’s submission on the Star Casino’s proposed luxury residential and hotel tower in Pymont, and you’ve heard expert evidence from our director of planning, Graham Jahn.

10 The city supports the Department of Planning’s recommendation that you reject the proposal. This decision is not just about the future of Pymont. The decision is about the credibility of the planning system. The Department’s report notes that the tower’s built form would appear isolated and inconsistent, in heightened form, with surrounding buildings, that it would inhibit views from public vantage points, adversely impact on the character of Pymont, overshadow public spaces, such as
15 Union Square, Pymont Bay Park and Pymont Bridge.

The report also notes that the casino’s global waterfront precinct concept has no planning weight because it is not reflected in any strategic planning policy. This is a point of vital importance, because it is through the development of strategies and
20 controls that the community is consulted about what should dictate the future of their built environment. As residents of Pymont have expressed to me, their suburb is a successful example of urban renewal guided by master plans and local environmental plans with established parameters for development.

25 The casino’s proposed residential hotel tower undermines the community’s vision for the area and the Department’s recommendation reflects their concerns. The recommendation also upholds the fundamental principle of the planning system, that a common agreed framework must apply to all, be developed in consultation with communities, business and developers and be based on rigorous research, not on ad
30 hoc decisions by governments to accommodate interests of the powerful.

As an open letter to this panel that appeared in yesterday’s Sydney Morning Herald signed by over 70 members of the planning and design community and a number of elected State and city representatives said, “The final decision on Star Casino’s
35 proposed tower in Pymont will go to the heart of maintaining the community’s faith in the planning rules are applied fairly to all”. But powerful vested interests are campaigning that the assessment of the Department and the community’s opposition is set aside.

40 To date, News Corp’s Daily Telegraph has published 42 articles critical of the recommendation, including six front pages, eight editorials and four op-eds. The Telegraph criticism of the Department’s recommendation rests on the implication that Pymont is somehow devoid of planning vision and that Sydney urgently needs more high-end hotels to maintain its status as a tourist destination.

45 These misrepresentations must be corrected. With so much at stake the panel must base its determination on facts, not the rhetoric of powerful interests in the media.

Pymont has a planning vision, initially inspired by former Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe's Building Better Cities Program that sought to create more liveable cities. Pymont became one of the earliest examples of urban renewal which has resulted in a transformation from an industrial area with a residential population of
5 300 to a densely populated residential/commercial area with 14,500 residents.

The planning controls contained in our Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012, which was endorsed by the State Government, were developed through extensive consultation. They envisage a 28-metre development for this site, consistent with the
10 low-to-medium scale development and character of the eastern side of the peninsula. Now this community is being asked to accept a massive intrusive tower more than eight times this height. This would be the most significant departure from valid planning controls in New South Wales history and would be inequitable to all other
15 developers, landholders and investors.

Pymont also has a burgeoning startup sector. It requires supporting infrastructure, such as a metro station linking it to the CBD and metropolitan Sydney to reach its potential, but it is through democratic, consultative processes the vision for Pymont should evolve, not ad hoc proposals by powerful interests with no consideration for
20 context. The process by which this casino tower proposal has come about is anything but democratic.

The Star Casino's proposal was submitted through a discredited and now defunct part 3(a) of the Planning Act. Treasurer Dominic Perrottet in a press release on the
25 12th of February this year, 2019, described part 3(a) in this way: "Labor oversaw a planning system defined by part 3(a) which a former ICAC Commissioner stated had a high potential to facilitate corrupt conduct, and which was used to override the interest of local communities". So that's what the treasurer said just in February. Even though the Baird Coalition Government repealed the infamous part 3(a), Star
30 Casino was allowed to submit its application for the residential hotel tower before us today.

The city understands the urgent need for hotels and prioritised hotel developments, approving over 5,700 rooms and other visitor accommodation in the past five years,
35 for example, in 2017 the city approved a six-star 28 storey Yuhu Hotel in Circular Quay. The applicant requested the minister to delegate his determination functions to the city and we approved the application in just five months following a competitive design process. This elegant tower is currently under construction.

I recently turned for the Voco Hotel, a 15 floor, 300 room hotel in Haymarket, which will cater to tourists from Asia. The developers and architects worked with
40 the city on a design that ensures sun access to one of the city's parks with a striking, sloping green roof. These examples demonstrate our ability to effectively assess and approve development applications that rely upon controls that have been developed
45 in consultation with all parties and applied consistently.

The situation with the casino is in stark contrast. The proposed luxury residential tower contains 204 apartments on 33 to 35 levels. The remaining 22 storey hotel is relatively small compared to those being built elsewhere in our city, and it is the lucrative luxury apartments that are the main driver of the casino floor's height – I'll just repeat that. The lucrative luxury apartments are the main driver of the casino tower's height, is what I meant to say.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: And who will certify their quality?

MS MOORE: Unlike other waterfront developments, such as the iconic Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, this proposal by a private entity, a casino, that provides little, if any, public benefit, despite being on public land. To summarise, the city supports the Department's recommendation to you. We object to the Star Casino's proposal, because it is 200 metres above the height controls. It will have negative impacts on the public domain, causing overshadowing of parks and public places. We object because the tower contains 35 floors of luxury apartments, when the controls, that were endorsed by the State Government, explicitly prohibit residential on the site. We object because this application was submitted under the defunct and discredited piece of legislation. We object because the Pymont community has told us that they don't want a 237 metre tower dominating their suburb skyline and harbour foreshore. Finally, and most importantly, we object because this proposal, if approved, will seriously undermine public faith in the planning system.

People will ask, "Where to from here?" and so do I. The people of New South Wales deserve a planning system that is grounded in fairness. They deserve to be engaged in an honest conversation about how their suburb should grow and develop and about the need to balance peoples' interest with the need to support our growing economy. Planning controls should be adopted through a democratic process, then reflected in the built environment and these controls should apply to everyone, whether you are a local resident, a business or a gambling magnate. I urge you to do the right thing for the people of Pymont and the people of New South Wales and reject this proposal.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I can now ask Margy Osmond. Thank you.

MS OSMOND: Good morning. My name's Margy Osmond from the Tourism and Transport Forum. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today. I would like to start by acknowledging the traditional owners and their elders past and present. Just a small introduction on the Tourism Transport Forum. We're the national advocacy organisation for the tourism industry. So Sydney in Australia is on the cusp of a new visitor economy led growth phase, there's absolutely no doubt about that.

We've seen very significant growth in international visitors, up three per cent to 8.4 million, and they're spending a very tasty \$44 billion every year. They want, and expect to see, a range of different types of styles of accommodation options at a

whole range of different price points. Sydney is Australia's gateway city when it comes to tourism, and in a strange kind of way that means we have a larger responsibility than just Sydney.

- 5 We do represent the health of the national tourism industry, and we really do have to maintain a strong pipeline of investment in hotels and other venues to meet that growing demand, and not just a growing demand for more, but a growing demand for better, newer, fresher.
- 10 Strategic significant private tourism investments not only benefit visitors and boost the visitor economy, but they will increase local amenity. This \$500 million investment would boost tourism and therefore the local economy through jobs and a whole range of benefits, yet the planning Department's 140-page report contains a paltry six mentions in passing of the tourism industry. Development will create jobs.
- 15 It'll provide around 1,000 construction roles over the development stage, and an additional 500 ongoing jobs once its fully operational.

Together with other attractions like the International Convention Centre and the future Sydney Fish Market, this will become a really outstanding entertainment and tourism hub for Sydney. Here in New South Wales, the tourism industry already

20 employs 183 people directly, and it is fast becoming the underpinning of this State's economy and the Australian economy. It's expected that while the number of percentage of Australians employed in this space has sat at about 4.95, it will reach nearly eight per cent of total employment by 2022. It is a critical part of the future of

25 our economy. Jobs in tourism are already higher than jobs in financial services, agriculture, mining, and are also set to leap-frog even manufacturing in the same year of 2022. It is and will be the sector most likely to supercharge the economy.

But significant tourism growth needs content to continue to grow, and for those operators with a strong connection into Asia – and that, by the way, is the largest

30 group now of Australian tourists – they will tell you that fresh content and high-end accommodation is king in that market; it makes all the difference.

From TTFs perspective, Sydney, as I have said, is that gateway city and has a need to be vibrant and constantly refreshing its offering with developments like the Ritz-

35 Carlton. We are concerned that the extended and vexed process that related to this development will send exactly the wrong message to potential future investors who are vital to the future of our tourism market. This would be an awful outcome for Sydney and it would be an awful outcome for Australian tourism. Thank you very

40 much.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Margy. If I could now ask Elizabeth Elenius to come forward.

45 MS E. ELENIOUS: Thank you, Commissioners. Today I am representing members of Pymont Action Incorporated but also many of my friends and neighbours who have expressed alarm about the scale and impact of this so-called modification on

their lives and its implications for the future of our neighbourhood. My presentation is based on the premise that the Independent Planning Commission will make its determination based on the planning laws and rules now applying to the Ritz-Carlton site and its Pymont context, not some dream of the greater Sydney Commission.

5 The major issue raised in our original submission on the modification and our further response to the proponent's response to submissions has been recognised by assessors in the Department of Planning, that this extraordinarily high tower sets a precedent for future development in Pymont and possibly beyond.

10 Indeed, they've described it as an exemplar for a transition from a suburb that we know and love now to something else that's totally undefined. Proponents of recent major developments proposed for sites in the vicinity for Pymont continue to site the Sofitel Hotel in Darling Harbour, a rules-free precinct, as the rationale for proposing even higher buildings. The Ritz-Carlton proponents are no exception, siting the
15 Sofitel, the recently approved Cockle Bay redevelopment and the proposed Harbourside redevelopment as justification for their 61, 63, 64 storey tower.

Even more alarming is the statement in the environmental assessment report of the proponent that the Pymont Peninsula continues to undergo renewal, and would be
20 broadly considered as an area in transition with future development opportunities likely to be informed by large-scale redevelopment occurring within the immediate and broader context of the site. The response to submissions refers specifically to the proposed Bays Precinct transformation and it is difficult not to draw conclusions from the fact that the architects for the Ritz-Carlton are from the very same
25 architectural practice commissioned to develop the master plan for the current Fish Market site. Join the dots.

We are pleased that the Department of Planning has stated that the proponents suggested global waterfront precinct cannot be relied upon to justify a landmark
30 tower in the location of the Star, and does not accept the proponent's contextual or strategic justification for a tower in this location, yet its reported in the Daily Telegraph of the 8th of August that the Western Harbour Alliance, which includes the Star and other key stakeholders within the precinct has been actively involved in planning for the future of Pymont since 2014. This is news to us. The alliance also
35 includes the Sydney Fish Markets, but significantly no community representatives, yet aren't we key stakeholders.

The alliance is run by the Committee for Sydney, again a body with no community representation, which is providing vision for how the tourism hotspots from
40 Barangaroo to the Fish Markets could become more vibrant. We also note that the Greater Sydney Commission has been asked by the Premier to review both the opportunities for and constraints on further redevelopment of Pymont and Ultimo. The Minister for Planning has assured us that the current legislation, planning processes and rules are the ones which apply to assessment of this proposal.

45 Pymont is still the area of highest urban density in Australia with a residential population of over 13,000. This former largely industrial suburb has been

transformed over the past 30 years or so into a vibrant residential/commercial precinct through a relatively orderly planning process involving the development of master plans, which by and large meet the parameters and zoning set in local environment plans and DCPs.

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Those of us who bought our homes in Pymont did so on the basis of these plans. They provided what we thought was certainty. Little did we know that Pymont was about to undergo yet another transition, as confidently stated in the environmental assessment report and endorsed by the independent think tank the Committee for Sydney. We have outlined the reasons why we opposed modification 13 and why we don't wish to see such towers replicated across our suburb.

10

Our views have been endorsed by the Department of Planning. These include overshadowing of public spaces, that's been described earlier; three instances of noncompliance with ADG guidelines whereby solar access to any part of the residence is reduced to below two hours; noncompliance with the current zoning of the site as commercial by the addition of 205 residential apartments; exacerbation of existing traffic and parking impacts, noting that the site is bounded on all sides by narrow, local roads currently choked with waiting taxis and buses, lacking access to public toilets with drivers urinating in nearby private residential property.

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The inadequate public transport serving Pymont has not been addressed by proponent by order of the Transport for New South Wales. This lack forces visitors to the Star to use private vehicles, thus exacerbating Pymont's traffic woes. We ask why were they not allowed to assess transport. The usefulness to the community of the proposed neighbourhood centre is limited by five huge structural columns and a stairwell which break up any space that might have been used for performances or meetings and by its circular configuration. Affordability and community access to the proposed centre remain undefined.

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I should just add also that in addressing public benefits virtually all the employees currently of the Star and its associated developments are served by in-house catering, so there's no flow back of benefit from their large workforce into our local commercial areas, and that's unfortunate. We have outlined our rejection of the proposal as a modification in our submissions and deplore this attempt to circumvent current planning requirements, including those of the Sydney LEP 2012.

35

The SEARs require the proponent to demonstrate that the proposal has limited environmental impacts beyond those already assessed for the major project approval '08 and any subsequent modification to that approval. The tower's height alone represents a dramatic increase over that approved in the approved master – major project approval, and subsequent modifications and we agree with the Department's assessment that it would appear isolated and overly prominent and unrelated to its context within Pymont, not Darling Harbour, to the detriment of local and wider views. They also consider that the prominence of the tower would be both significant and detrimental to those public views and are not consistent with the impacts that may be reasonably expected from an LEP compliant envelope.

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Elsewhere, the response to submissions reports that the Star sought to use the now repealed part 3(a) of the Environment Protection Act '79 and the 2005 State Environment Plan to enable upgrade and refurbishment works. The proposed 61-story Ritz-Carlton tower can hardly be described as an upgrade or refurbishment, and should be rejected as a modification on these grounds. Furthermore, the proponent failed to meet one of three criteria required to be met under schedule 2 of the EP&A transitional regulation, namely, that it had to be determined by the 1st of September 2018.

10 If Sydney needs yet another hotel to house international high rollers in competition with Packer's phallic monstrosity at Barangaroo, let it be developed in accordance with current standards and rules, ie, be compliant with 2012 LEP and complementary with the established area of Pymont. Given that the Star reported a 35 per cent fall in VIP turnover associated with the current controversies regarding the operations of the junkets supplying the high rollers to both the Star and the Crown, it is likely that the business case for a new upmarket hotel no longer stacks up. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Elizabeth. Just to let everybody know we'll probably take a short break after speaker 11, Katherine O'Regan, just so people can take a deep breath before we move on. I now ask Philip Thalys to come to the front. Thank you.

MR THALIS: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. Needless to say I'll be speaking against the casino tower in support of the Department of Planning's recommendation against this imposition on Sydney. Over the last 25 years, Ultima and Pymont has stood as a model of urban redevelopment in Australia, a too rare unique partnership between Federal, State and Local Governments to rejuvenate an under-utilised peninsula in – on Sydney Harbour.

30 By any measure it has been an ongoing success, and I think you can also measure that by the number of Pymont residents in the room today to support the public interest. The exception in Pymont has always been the Star Casino, a huge block that has long imposed undue impacts on the area. In 1993 its discordant heights were justified, matched to the four slender stacks of the old Pymont power station. That was then, as now, thin justification for the Star's bulky buildings, already the largest in Pymont.

We've heard today that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has clearly shown the multiple reasons why this tower should be rejected. It's isolated, it's overly prominent, it's inconsistent with the character of Pymont, it's inconsistent with planning precedents, it's not in the public interest. The Lord Mayor, Clover Moore, for the City of Sydney has not only highlighted the substantial planning arguments against the proposal, she has also stressed it is fundamentally undemocratic and inequitable to all other landowners in Sydney both through its process and its form.

We've heard that there's a 22-storey hotel within, but that's bolstered by a much larger component, and we saw that clearly in the section the Department of Planning put up, that includes 204 apartments. Its height, we've heard, has been reduced to 237 metres, whereas we've also heard that Pymont heights at – are in fact between six and 66 metres and that 28 metres is the dominant height in the immediate context, and to add to the Department of Planning's points about the tower's isolation, it's also worth – if you know Pymont – know that the vast majority of its neighbours are either strata title buildings or very low heritage buildings. That is they won't be changing no matter what the Greater Sydney Commission's review reveals. It will always stick out like a sore thumb.

Now, the Lord Mayor went through the boosters of this exceptionalism – or the exceptionalism of this proposal. It's worth stating why this proposal, or the benefits – or the self-proclaimed benefits that this landowner is seeking to gain. First of all, they're invoking – in fact, they're using part 3(a) of that piece of legislation that has rightly been repealed because it was so discredited, and the Lord Mayor quoted from the current treasurer about the very valid reasons why that was rejected. As we've heard, also, this is a modification. Well, has anyone else in the room, or in fact in Australia, had a 61-storey modification approved.

What sort of planning principle will that serve for New South Wales. How could that be seen as good planning. We've heard that it's been four years in process. Well, sorry, plenty of people have been in – caught up in planning for much, much longer than four years, and many people with far more reasonable applications and cases, in fact, so – we've also heard that the proposal has 30 storeys of apartments. Well, again, who in New South Wales – which landowner in New South Wales has benefitted from such largesse of 30 storeys of apartments allowed to be submitted on their site. Surely everyone in this room, including the suits up the back, would love that opportunity, because it's plain inequitable. The Lord Mayor has told us – one minute? Is that - - -

MS LEESON: You have one more minute.

MR THALIS: The Lord Mayor has told us about the thousand of hotel rooms that have already been approved in the city, 5,000, and we'll hear about the booster, about the thousands of jobs, well, no, many of those are subcontract jobs and they've got work, anyway. You could simply approve a hotel within the height limits and have the benefits as stated. To conclude, in the 20th century Sydney built the twin marvels of the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, the symbols of our city. Brilliant public works whose engineering and architecture are unsurpassed by any city in the world. Do we want, in the 21st century, our city to be defined, our planning to be defined by the twin totems of greed sitting across the waters of Darling Harbour.

Crown Casino's tower should sit as a beacon for everything we should never allow again in New South Wales. We shouldn't let – why should future generations look back in horror at this – there's been a lot of clapping – this legacy of blatant

profiteering, of appropriation of public land? This was our land, and the stewardship of it should have kept in public hands. I implore the IPC, on our behalf, to defend the right to a better city; to give priority to the public interest over vested interest; to reject this proposal outright. Thank you.

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MS LEESON: Thank you. If I could now ask David Miles to come to the lectern.

MR MILES: Morning, everybody. My name is David Miles. I am a long-term resident of Pymont and probably, in this room, will be shortly regarded as a heretic. I support the tower. I think it's an excellent design, and I love it. My first exposure to Pymont, I think, was about nearly 30 years ago when I was still at school, and a school-sponsored program was sponsored by CSR, and I walked there every day – well, every week for six months, walking through this industrial wasteland of Pymont with nothing there, with 12-foot high grasslands on decrepit sites behind the Point Hotel, thinking, “How did it get to this?” And I applaud what's happened since then. Pymont has grown; Pymont has developed. Pymont now has some 15,000 residents, and less than half a per cent of them oppose this project publicly – less than half a per cent. And the number of people in this room from Pymont now – I mean, there's, what, 40 people here?

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We're a sample.

MR MILES: 15,000 people. And I've talked to so many people in Pymont. I've talked to so many people in Pymont over the last year or more on this - - -

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Haven't talked to me.

MR MILES: - - - and most people recognise that Pymont is a growing place. There are some 1200 apartments in Jacksons Landing.

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UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Show us the statistics.

MR MILES: And most days, you could fire a cannon down Bowman Street.

MS LEESON: Thank you. If we could please refrain from interjecting. As I said at the outset, everybody has the right to be heard and to have a different point of view. So if I can just ask you to let the speakers proceed, and I'm sure you can have a robust debate later on. Thank you.

MR MILES: I mean, there are emotive arguments in all of this, and there are lots of inconsistencies. We have Philip talking about, “This will always stand up as a outlier because of the strata – status of the building surrounding it.” Yet others say it'll be a precedent and therefore there'll be more. You've got a number of people saying, “We support the Department of Planning's position”, except the Department of Planning also accepts that you can put residential in there with a hotel, and yet people are saying they don't want that. So there is always inconsistencies in this, and it's always going to be emotive.

45

Now, for the last 15 years that I've lived in Pymont, I accepted that Pymont was going to grow. It was going to change, and it was not always going to stay as it is. Having said that, one of the other things that I've noted, living in Pymont over the last 15 years, is that most people I talked to kind of see Pymont as almost two parts.

5 There is the part which is the outlier of Pymont, as it once was, of The Star; and that sits over there, east of Pymont Street down to the foreshore, and it extends round into Darling Harbour, and we've always seen it that way. We've always seen that as a separate part of Pymont.

10 The heart of Pymont is Harris Street and the surrounding area around that right through to the residential development of Jacksons Landing, some 1200 apartments that have made Pymont what it is today, because were it not for that development, nothing would have happened. Yet we've seen great things happen. We've seen venues like the Terminus Hotel, shuttered closed for 30 years, has been beautifully
15 redeveloped and opened. We've seen 100 Harris Street re-emerge as a hub for start-ups, which was sitting there basically dormant. None of that is changing. From the developments that have happened with the Sofitel, the ICC and all the development down at Darling Harbour extending around, nothing has changed to the amenity and culture and history of Pymont as it is now.

20 I think, as we go into a new future for Sydney, we need to attract investment. We need to have hotels. We need to have those facilities available. It will not change, in my view, the amenity of Pymont. It is over in that kind of other part, which, you know, I have always seen as an extension of Darling Harbour, from right round there
25 when you get to the Pymont Bridge Hotel, the Maritime Museum and the Star Casino itself; Google, Fairfax and now Nine that sits down there at the foreshore. That is not the heart of Pymont. The heart of Pymont is up in Harris Street and those areas around there.

30 And, you know, this tower is going to look straight over my place. I'm not fussed about it whatsoever; it doesn't bother me. That's part of living in a big global city. It has to grow. It has to change, and we cannot accept that everything has to stay exactly as it is. And the fact that 5000 people, as I understand it, went through and had a look at the display and yet so few people have objected to this, the fact that
35 only 120 submissions were put in at all, let alone only 80 that were opposing it, of a population of 15,000 – that, to me, is representative of very, very little. And if we want to find out what the people of Pymont actually want, let's go and ask them.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes. Yes.

45 MR MILES: Because I have. I've been doing it for the last two years, and I can barely find anyone outside this room that opposes it. So I support the proposal.

Pymont's got to grow. It'll be good for Pymont. It'll be good for local business. It'll be good for New South Wales, and I support it wholeheartedly. Thank you.

5 MS LEESON: Thank you, David. If I could now ask Ken Louden. Thank you.
And if I could please remind everybody, just a little quietness while the speakers are giving their presentation. Thank you.

10 MR LOUDEN: Firstly, thank you for allowing myself and the other interested parties to provide our views and comments. My name is Ken Louden, and I'm a future resident of Pymont, having bought an off-the-plan apartment, and I'll be settling this year. My concerns regarding this plan appear to align to most other objections from the community, the local member in New South Wales Department of Planning and the Lord Mayor, who spoke earlier. I concur with the Department of Planning's report, and I would like to comment on a number of areas today that I
15 hope will assist the Commission in your determination.

The areas I wish to briefly talk about are the proposed location and scale of the tower, their process of modification attempting to justify the tower and the 200 or so apartments proposed within the tower. Pymont, as it's been said, is currently a
20 mixed commercial and residential low-rise suburb. When you're on the harbour, perhaps in a ferry, this suburb complements the high-rise buildings, the skyline and the vision and the planning of the CBD and Barangaroo. Pymont is not zoned as Barangaroo, nor is it part of Darling Harbour. All past developments in or around Pymont appear to have been respectful to some old landmarks, which – some were
25 on that screen before – which have restricted height. It would also appear that they recognise current planning rules and, as such, again, respected the community, the environment and its location.

30 My wife and my rationale in buying into Pymont was its low-rise environment, its proximity to the city and its village-like feel, which has been said previously – the culture and the feel of Pymont. When you walk over the Pymont Bridge, you know you're in the CBD. Pymont has a nice ambience, and it's a great walking suburb that, although a very dense residential suburb, appears to carry this density quite well, which I can only assume is due in part to part – to – due in part to the past
35 developers, the planning decisions of the past in accordance with current laws and rules. A 60-odd-storey tower appears totally out of context and unnecessary upon the landscape, the horizon and the community.

40 Another disconcerting area to me, in particular, relates to The Star trying to seek this redevelopment as a modification. Surely, this is a new development as their current commercial footprint does not include residential apartments. I also personally found it quite dismissive of The Star in responding to some objections that their 60-odd-storey tower would not set a precedent.

45 In the current political and public environment regarding better planning, better certification, the independence of committees and reviews around misconduct, and the increased level of focus on accountability and better compliance, this

modification 13 to erect a 60-odd-storey tower is just wrong. Stating the obvious, a vertical city of some 200 apartments would place significant and material pressure upon the suburb now and its local infrastructure now, which appears totally unnecessary for a hotel casino modification. I still do not have a problem with a new
5 low-rise commercial hotel, but I do object to the modification plan to create a mixed residential/commercial tower complex.

Finally, I do recognise the concerns about overshadowing, views being impacted and the consequences of a precedent, and other speakers both before me and after me, I
10 think, are far more elaborate and technical, and they can speak on those areas. To conclude, I sense the decision of the IPC will be a tipping point around how future plans should be more transparent with the community and the stakeholders and should respect compliance with current laws and rules. I ask that the IPC uphold the Department of Planning's report to reject this modification and not delay your
15 decision due to reviews regarding development opportunities that may or may not come to pass. Thank you for your time.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Ken. If I could now ask Chris Johnson to come. Thank
20 you.

MR JOHNSON: Thank you, Chair. I'm just trying to get the system working here. I've got a PowerPoint presentation, which I just want to go through fairly quickly. I've basically got 14 points I want to make. Each of them has got an image up here, and I'll use those to position it. The Eastern – whoops, I've lost it already. Excuse
25 me, I've lost the image for some reason. I don't – oh, no, it's come back again. If you just stand in the middle, I think it would be fine. Look, the Eastern City District Plan is the big document that actually sets the future for this part of Sydney. It's a really important issue. It was issued in March 2018, sets the agenda for local environmental plans, and it's really a dynamic document that actually we need to all
30 listen to. But within that document, page 46, there is this statement:

The district's many great places also include neighbourhoods in leafy suburbs like Bellevue Hill and Strathfield, inner-city mixed-use places around Potts Point and Surry Hills, and the city high-rise areas of Pyrmont and the Sydney CBD.
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There's a clear statement here in the District Plan that we will be moving into a more high-rise look for the Sydney CBD and for the Pyrmont Peninsula, but the Department seems to have moved into a different tone in recent times. They've
40 produced this document, Local Character and Place Guidelines – came out during the caretaker mode, in fact, of government, February/March this year – and it sets down a whole lot of statements about how important local character is to maintain this character. I think it's a difficult document in that it actually has statements like:

45 *These controls –*

it talks about DCPs, development control plans –

often seek to preserve or replicate the main architectural or urban design elements of a place.

5 This document basically is about stopping growth, freezing and protecting the existing character of places, and it now seems to have built in to a number of recent decisions from the Department of Planning. St Leonards South is a good example of this, where they've said any new development five minutes from a railway station should look like the existing character of all the houses. So I think there's a backward move happening in the Department, from my position.

10 But cities grow; just look at Sydney CBD. This was about 80 years ago. This is Pymont in a way now, the low-rise, medium-rise buildings that are actually sitting there. But it's now moved up into a much taller sort of structure. The city's grown dramatically, and it doesn't do this everywhere across the whole metropolitan area, 15 but in key locations, which is where development occurs, and we are very pro-growth.

The Urban Taskforce is about development in the future, and we're moving from a city of 5,000,000 up to 8,000,000 in the next 30, 40 years. Growth has to go 20 somewhere. Our position is it's better to confine growth to smaller areas with taller buildings rather than spreading growth over the whole metropolitan area of Sydney. So we've done a new vision for how Sydney could even grow to this sort of development. We could get an even stronger position for Sydney, picking up the images of Manhattan, New York and those sort of places.

25 But also we want to sort of raise the issue that often there are key buildings that set the tone for the next step. These are intergenerational buildings that move us from the current character into a new character, and this is where debates about the character of Pymont become very relevant, I think. So Australia Square, when it 30 was built, was eight times taller than the surrounding buildings, just like the proposal in Pymont. It became, however, now, very much part of the whole CBD and the whole city. Same with the GPO: the GPO in Martin Place, eight times taller than the surrounding terrace houses and most of the buildings around there. These two buildings became the catalyst for the future of Sydney CBD as a global city, setting 35 us on a path for being a major contributor at a world level.

And The Star, I think, has been led on a bit by the Department of Planning. I know the presentation implied that it was never any commitment to what was actually 40 going to occur, but the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements – people were talking about SEARs, but the secretary is the secretary of the Department of Planning. The secretary, the key person in the Department of Planning, is giving lists and instructions. "Do it this way. Produce this information. Run a competition – design competition. Make sure the government architect shares that."

45 All the signals are that government is sort of somehow supporting what's actually happening here, and I think that's a very difficult position for applicants. Applicants

put an enormous amount of money into trying to get a project to work. If they're encouraged to do this in a way that implies everything's going okay, it's a very duplicitous process, I think, and we need to be much more open about how this works.

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But the City of Sydney – their housing approvals are dropping fast. This is a graph from the Department of Planning's own housing monitor showing the drop in housing approvals, 59 per cent over the last two years. We need more housing in the City of Sydney. We need housing, which can be well on Pymont as well.

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But also the city, when it has talked about this issue of not having apartments in a building like this, is also being duplicitous. Within their own draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy, they say commercial 50 per cent, residential 50 per cent is what they actually want in their new buildings. So they're looking for a mixed-use approach to building. It's exactly what The Star building is doing. It's getting a mixture of uses of both residential and of commercial, which is the hotel component.

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But I think, importantly, the Premier of New South Wales, who is in charge of the Greater Sydney Commission, has come out making some very strong statements about wanting Pymont to be open for business and ready to be taken to the next level. This is what I think is a key issue. "Next level" means not just freezing it as it is, moving it into the next level. And she goes on to say – at the bottom there, the Premier wants to see Pymont as a vibrant residential, entertainment and innovation hub. So there's a key here about moving forward.

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I think the big debate here is, are we really moving forward in a positive way to a bold future for both Sydney CBD and the Pymont Peninsula or are we trying to stop and freeze some of these areas so developing doesn't really occur? Department of Planning report, in my reading of it, overly plays up the local character to remain. They produced a very negative report, I believe, about the proposal; seems to prefer existing low-rise character of Pymont. Proponents – this is a quote from their report:

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The proponent's justification for a tower also fails to adequately respond to the local character of Pymont.

If this happened in the Sydney CBD, we would still be two-storey terrace houses. We've got put move forward into being a strong and bold city. So here's an image of Pymont looking similar to Sydney CBD 70 years ago. So just as Sydney CBD has become an iconic high-rise city, so too can Pymont. So here's Pymont, very similar to that 1950s/40s-type image of Sydney, which has now moved into a dramatic new look and a new approach.

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So my belief is that we need to move forward, and the Urban Taskforce agrees with the Greater Sydney Commission that both the Sydney CBD and Pymont are the high-rise areas, as stated in the Eastern Sydney – City District Plan, and we agree with the New South Wales Premier that Pymont must be open for business. So just

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as the GPO in Martin Place and the much later building, the Australia Square tower, initiated the growth of surrounding areas into high-rise precincts, so too can the Ritz-Carlton Star building be the catalyst for Pyrmont's development as a high-rise area. So we've done our own image as to how this could actually move forward. So we
5 want to encourage a future look, a future dynamic Pyrmont Peninsula that looks a lot more like this.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Chris. If I can now ask Katherine O'Regan. And after Katherine has spoken, we'll all take a – probably a 10-minute break and then we'll
10 reconvene. Thank you.

MS O'REGAN: Thank you. I'm Katherine O'Regan. I'm the executive director of the Sydney Business Chamber. I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also
15 would like to thank each and every one of you coming today. This morning, I think you've definitely shown, you know, this kind of forum is fantastic for participation, and your passion is evident. Thank you, Chair and Commission members, for the opportunity to discuss what I think is an integral issue to the people and businesses of Sydney, that is, the construction of a world-class hotel and a residential tower
20 complex in the western harbour precinct.

As many of you may know, Sydney Business Chamber is a leading advocate for Sydney as a global and competitive city. We're a division of New South Wales Business Chamber, and Sydney Business Chamber, together with our counterpart in
25 Western Sydney, represent over 145 leading corporations. We identify, develop and promote public policy issues that drive the economic growth and the sustainability of our great city.

Our members are multinationals. They're iconic brands, they're government
30 agencies, and they represent a broad cross-section of the Sydney economy from retail, infrastructure, property, aviation, education, tourism, banking, sport and the arts. Our members are based within the CBD and the Greater Sydney Basin. They often are the first to understand and feel the impacts of local changes. Our submission highlights that there is a need for an integrated and modern approach to
35 planning so that our city can provide jobs and the amenities that it actually deserves.

Now, we all know the building guidelines for Pyrmont have been in place since the mid-1990s. And over the past two decades, our city has evolved into the nation's
40 number 1 global gateway. Pyrmont, too, as we've heard, has seen rapid change in this period, transforming from a semi-industrial inner-city suburb nestled on a working harbour to the next-door neighbour of the city's most visited local and international tourism and entertainment precinct, stretching from Barangaroo to the fish markets.

Pyrmont has become a part of the city's exciting new super precinct, and its planning needs to suitably reflect and complement its role as an integral part of the western
45 harbour gateway. Last year, Darling Harbour attracted some two and a-half million

international visitors. And in the first year of operation, the new International Convention Centre has delivered 900 million in economic benefit to New South Wales. This was resulting from more than 1.77 million overnight stays and the creation of nearly 6000 full-time equivalent jobs for the local economy.

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It's critical to recognise the positive impact of Sydney's ICC doesn't stop at the harbour precinct border. Through their supply chain and a focus on the quality and diversity of the food and wine offering, some 12.2 million produce was sourced from regional New South Wales, and all this only a picturesque 10-minute walk from the proposed new development we're addressing here today. In fact, Darling Harbour has demonstrated a capacity and capability to bring together 4200 local residents, two and a-half thousand workers, some 80 business and restaurants; and along with the students and the hotel visitors, this is the size of a thriving small-town population, and they're there every day.

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The Sydney Business Chamber supports the application by The Star for the new Ritz-Carlton tower complex and sees this new development as an opportunity to support the continued growth of the emerging western harbour precinct. Now, we know that The Star is already a major economic hub. It employs 5000 staff and it welcomes more than 14 million guests to our city each year. In 2018, The Star's input to the state revenue was some \$290 million. The propose Ritz-Carlton hotel and the residential complex will add to this, delivering 1000 jobs during the construction phase and over the next three years. And with the completion, there'll be over 700 permanent full-time jobs.

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Commissioners, everybody, we're all conscious of the potential economic headwinds. We are conscious of the impacts, of the worsening in the unemployment rate. This makes the opportunity to create real and sustainable jobs critical to the livelihood and the wellbeing of the people and families of Sydney. Economic headwinds can also impact investment attraction, and to date, we've seen how successful private sector investment in rejuvenating Darling Harbour as a key business and tourism estimation can actually make sense. And, again, here, we have The Star and the Ritz-Carlton bringing 400 million in private sector investment to benefit our city.

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As well as the economic outcomes, I'd like to address the equally important issue of local community and benefits, and I know many here are passionate about that one today. Integral to the character and the quality of the design is the dedicated visitor spaces specifically for local residents. In essence, not only do we have the opportunity for a prestigious six-star hotel, but a premium-quality neighbourhood centre. This would be accessible to everyone. The centre provides five levels of mixed-use community space for the local neighbourhood, and that's some 1690 square metres.

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Initial consultation has indicated the Pymont community is in need of a new playground, need of recreational halls, meeting rooms, drop-in centres and study spaces. And true to the commitment to connecting and being local, the final usage of

the neighbourhood centre will actually be determined by the community. It's worth noting that there is no other such space, multipurpose integrated community hub, available for the people of Pymont.

5 Commissioners, as you're aware, it's been recognised that the current planning instruments are in need of review. They need to be updated to reflect how best we bring together key elements of the western harbour precinct, enabling Sydneysiders and tourists alike to experience all of what this great city and this precinct has to offer. The planning instruments need to recognise that our city has changed and that
10 the attraction and flow of people is across precincts and that we are a city of opportunity.

In summary, this proposal has been well designed, thought out with suitable deference to local residents' concerns, along with generous beneficial elements built
15 in and secured for some three decades. This proposal presents the next step in the exciting future of the expanding western harbour super precinct and a clear and exciting vision for a new era of the Pymont foreshore. With the economic and employment outcomes clearly on offer, this proposal is a great opportunity to put in practice what we've heard earlier, that the Premier's recent assertion that Pymont is
20 open for business and is part of a new and expanding Darling Harbour redevelopment in our city of opportunity. I thank you again for all your time today and welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Katherine. We will now take a short 10-minute break, if
25 you'd like to stretch your legs, and we'll reconvene at 11.25. Thank you.

RECORDING SUSPENDED [11.14 am]

30 **RECORDING RESUMED** [11.26 am]

MS LEESON: Thank you. I will ask William Vasilij Schlusser to please come
35 forward. I think we probably have as many people in the room now - - -

MR SCHLUSSER: You're looking at him.

MS LEESON: There's going to – thank you very much. If you'd like to come
40 forward and everyone else take their seats. Thank you.

MR SCHLUSSER: One, two, three. Can they hear me?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Yes.
45

MR SCHLUSSER: I have no presentation. Shall we continue the meeting? Thank you. Dear members of the Independent Planning Commission, Dianne Leeson, Mr

Stephen O'Connor and Adrian Pilton, I am addressing the IPC specifically because today they will be the decision-makers as to this project – the proposed project will go ahead or not. Today's meeting and then its conclusions are the last hurdle for the Star Entertainment Group that needs to scale the hurdles before they can
5 implement what I am objecting to, and that is expand this gambling enterprise among a growing peaceful residential peninsula that is already overloaded with motor traffic. Please go along Harris Street and see what's going on there.

10 The peninsula Pymont area need another five star hotel as is proposed as I need a hole in my head. Okay? This is – and I say that as a long-time resident of Sydney. Who am I? I've been in Sydney since 1960, first in Wentworthville, then in Collaroy, and now in Thompson's Corner, West Pennant Hills. I'm a professional automation engineer who has contributed in the last 25 years considerably to the wealth of the countries around us, such as Malaysia, Singapore and Korea by
15 constructing and operating offshore platforms, producing oil and gas, which was called the black gold in times gone by, and, therefore, I consider, as a resident and as an engineer, I have – I have a justification to be here and talk about this proposal.

20 We seem to be all agreeing already, including the IPC, that the proposal has to be rejected. The Planning Commission, you, everybody, many people are against this proposal, and yet – therefore, the decision is not a factual decision to be made, but a political decision. The important thing is that this is now – has become a political issue, and, as our prime – premier says, we are open to business, not the business I am talking about, but she objects to what we are trying to say to the government:
25 reject this proposal.

I have three specific points I want to make. The first one is Star Entertainment Group is a casino. They have sugar coated all their presentations by eliminating the word casino. Casinos are gambling institutions. Gambling, all sorts of machinery,
30 producing tremendous profits for the owners, but not adding any value to the economy. I am a – how can I say? I am endeavouring to touch the emotions of our decision-makers, because facts that are presented today and for a long, long time do not motivate people into decision-making, and politicians are guided by their emotions, not by their – by facts. Facts are not motivations. I'm asking the
35 commission to convince our politicians into the right direction, that is, reject outright the proposal.

40 Emotionally, I want to touch you because the gambling industry, the industry that is an insult to the operations of gambling. Gambling is an immoral activity and we are trying to expand it. The purpose of the new hotel is nothing else but to increase the gambling area. The whole first floor of the existing Star Hotel is a gambling – is a casino. We are putting the hotel there immediately without having to go outside. You can go to the first floor from the hotel and continue and – not continue, but engage in your gambling endeavour.

45 I am personally affected by the effect gambling has on this city, this state and this country. New South Wales is known for its capital city of gambling. We have the

largest number of poker machine per capita in the world, and we are trying to expand this here. My wife has been diagnosed as a pathological gambler. It is a medical disease which is incurable, and we are doing this and we are promoting this type of disease. It is worse than alcoholism. It's worse than smoking. You cannot cure PG,
5 pathological gambling, unless the gambler admits herself that she has a problem, and my wife hasn't done that. So that's the first point, and a very important one. We have to reject this proposal.

10 The vision of the commission says to max – it is maximising benefits for the common good. I cannot see anything how we are maximising the common good in this proposal for the people of New South Wales. We need more skilled jobs. We don't need casino workers, construction workers. We need skilled people who can support the modern technological economy coming, and, finally, we need to return to a sense of history – a sense of history into the Pymont and Darling Harbour district
15 by providing facilities with integrity and not just providing vicarious entertainment at a theme park.

Darling Harbour and Pymont for 100 years, say starting from 1850 to 1950, produced the wealth of this country. We have exported wool, wheat, all other
20 commodities, potatoes, you name it. We have imported machinery from all over the world through Darling Harbour, not Circular Quay. Darling Harbour was the creator of wealth of this country for 100 years, and we have to respect that heritage by implementing integral – integ – implementing facilities of integrity and – of integrity.

25 Future generations will curse us today if today's decision-makers – unless they have respect for history, act for the common good and have a genuine sense to protect vulnerable people in our community from harm. None of these noble impulses applies to this proposed Building Application. Thank you, Commission.

30 MS LEESON: Thank you, William. If I can now ask Maximillian Bak.

MR M. BAK: Good morning everyone. Dear member of the IPC Planning Commission Panel, first of all, thank you very much for the opportunity to address you today, this morning. And I have been a resident in Pymont for more than seven
35 years. And I appreciate this is not, perhaps, an impressive period of time relative to many fellow residents gathered here today. However, as a member of the strata community of the Sydney Wharf Apartments at 56 Pirrama Road, I have been actively interested in developments in our suburb and in our immediately adjacent neighbourhood, such as Barangaroo and Darling Harbour.

40 Both of which have seen significant evolution over the last – over the last few years, as many of you know. Pymont is a truly exciting and vibrant suburb supported by its central waterfront location, at the doorstep of everything our city has to offer. It is made of a unique blend of true residential neighbourhood interspaced with small and
45 large businesses, ranging from start-ups, creative industries, to the likes of Google. It is also, it also undeniably plays a very key role in Australia's visitor's economy

thanks to the Fish Markets and the Maritime Museum and The Star, all within its boundaries.

5 This exciting blend and location, a walking distance away from both work and – and entertainment destinations is precisely the reason why people chose to call Pymont home. It is therefore not surprising that I have been excited at the prospect of a Ritz-Carlton development, as it stood only to enhance the appeal of our area, but also to cater to all of Pymont’s stakeholders, i.e. provide the destination for the locals, for the visitors and for the workers. It would provide additional employment
10 opportunities and it also sought to add a community centre, recognising the need for one in our neighbourhood. I have been actively engaged with The Star as part of the Community Consultation Group from the very beginning of the approval process for this development.

15 The Consultation Group represented interests of a wide mix of local residents and interest groups. And I would be surprised if any of them disagreed that it was – that it was an exemplar process of how a developer community engagement should work. There have been no precedents I am aware of in our local area where a developer sought to engage with the local community in the way The Star had in relation to this
20 project. With physical update meetings held at least quarterly over a period of a number of years. We were all encouraged by that level of engagement and felt included. The community had been involved throughout the design process.

25 And we were given multiple opportunities to meet the architects, openly express our feedback and raise concerns and any issues in these forums. As a result, I feel that I have, as have many others, had a say in arriving at the final design which the subject of this application. I must also, therefore, admit that I find it quite disrespectful of the time many residents devoted to this project to be now reading Department of
30 Planning’s reports claiming that there had been no community consultation process planned for the area. As a resident of one of the closest buildings to the proposed development, located directly opposite, I am clearly aware of the tower’s height and it’s allegedly imposing structure.

35 In fact, we would be the ones to be most affected by it. Yet, I believe that the proposed building to be truly iconic in nature, exhibiting an excellent and well thought out design through its sculptural architecture. And it will no doubt be a landmark for both Pymont and the City of Sydney. The architect behind this concept is one of the most reputable in our country. And by drawing on local
40 character of the area through incorporating such elements as sandstone, he arrived at a design the city will be proud and deserves. You must not forget that Pymont is a central, energetic and ever evolving part of the world-class city.

45 And this development would only add to its unique character while supporting our community and creating a new exciting destination. I strongly believe that to claim that such a central location needs to remain low rise is – disingenuous, self-serving and short sighted and does not recognise the global status of our city, and its constant evolution as a destination for residents and visitors alike. I would like my city to be

open to the world, open to tourism and open to business. In its determination, the Department of Planning explicitly denied Pymont the label of a global waterfront precinct. I think this is deeply unfortunate, that a body responsible for the future vision of our city is unable to recognise its potential and support it. Global precincts
5 don't just appear on the world map, instead, they are created by people with vision. I very much hope that the Independent Planning Commission is able to give that vision a life. Thank you very much for your time and concentration.

10 MS LEESON: Thank you, Maximillian. Zena Vaassen. Do you have that electronically for the

MS VAASSEN: No. I tried to, but – sorry. I do have copies for you, hard copies, which I can give to you.

15 MS LEESON: This presentation will be somewhat difficult to see. The graphics are quite small, at A3. We will endeavour to put these onto the Commission's website as quickly as we can so that everybody has the opportunity to have a look at those. So, I'm sorry, we don't seem to have an electronic version of it. If you care to stand to be able to see it, feel free, otherwise we will ask you to explain your points as clearly
20 as you can so we can understand from the back of the room what your points are. Thanks.

MS VAASSEN: I'll be speaking to these photos, just turning quickly, actually. There is writing at the bottom of the photos for the people to look at. Thank you for
25 this opportunity to speak. Our home at 16 Pymont Street will be adversely affected by the development of this tower directly behind our property, which we see significantly reducing our privacy, increasing the wind tunnel effect in our area, and blocking precious access to direct sunlight. We purchased 16 Pymont Street over 25 years ago, prior to the Star Casino being built on the old power station site. Since
30 then, we have been close neighbours to the Star via the corner of Jones Bar Road and Pymont Street.

But, more directly, via the rear of our house, looking over Jones Bay Road. Six of
35 our eight rooms open via windows and doors looking to Jones Bay Road. Two bedrooms, the bathroom, the dining room, the kitchen and the family room. Our house is part of the heritage conservation area. It is listed on the LEP as having local significance and acknowledged in Star modifications of the last decade as sensitive receivers. In 1994, the Star had strict height restrictions placed on it by the state government to protect the amenity and quality of life of its neighbouring residents.
40 The Ritz-Carlton tower vastly exceeds the extent of this 1994 order and threatens the liveability of our home.

The mod 13 development application and response to submissions completely ignores the severity of overshadowing of our terrace home, which will be extensive,
45 on either side of the winter solstice. In direct contradiction to the submissions, we actually do see over two hours of direct morning sunlight each day throughout winter. The morning sun is crucial to us during the winter months, as it is the only

direct sunlight that six rooms and the backyard receive during this period to sustain our garden, provide light, and naturally warm our living spaces. Critically, the morning sun also helps to reduce brick and timber deterioration from dampness in a heritage listed building.

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I mention our garden. In our backyard, we have 107 potted plants, and elevated garden, four mature trees. Plus, in the six rooms with direct sunlight, there are another 20 indoor plants. The tower will block direct sunlight to our garden and trees. Light is crucial to plant survival, as well as our health whilst living there.

10 These trees and plans mitigate Jones Bay Road noise pollution, light pollution, wind-tunnelling, plus increase our privacy. The increased wind tunnel conditions at ground level have been classified by the Star as suitable for public access ways and suitable for pedestrian sitting, standing and walking. Our home is within this wind tunnel. Are these expected conditions suitable for residential living?

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With an increase in wind gust coupled with overshadowing will make our home a very inhospitable home throughout late autumn and winter. One large tree on our property partially obscures vistas from the proposed residential and hotel tower into our dining room, living room, kitchen and backyard outdoor living space. This one tree loses its leaves for months each year, exposing our home and us. Even if all leaves in fact, this tree is not large enough to block the upper levels of the proposed tower from seeing into two bedrooms and the bathroom windows. We strongly oppose mod 13 tower for a multitude of other reasons. Sorry – mod 13 for a multitude of other reasons.

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Further car motor and horn noise as well as human waste that will be continue due to the taxi rank on Jones Bay Road; cigarette smoke entering our home on still evenings due to the smoking balcony on Jones Bay Road; gaming machines in semi-open areas heard from bedrooms through closed windows; lack of CCTV police or security after dark, keeping constantly presence on all Star perimeters; ongoing lack of letterbox drop information for identified construction management, local disturbances for residents. The proposed retail function event food and beverage tenancies to run along Jones Bay Road, ground level 1, 2 and 3 are designed to create lively and reinvigorated spaces.

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The Star is sharing Jones Bay Road with residents. We ask that these spaces, including the neighbours centre and Cells Plaza close before 10 pm weekends and 8 pm Sunday and public holidays. Finally, the prominence of the tower would be both significant and detrimental to us and our property; the tower would be imposing when viewed directly from the conservation area we are located within. The tower's shared view will be overshadowing in proximity to our local heritage home. Thank you for listening.

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MS LEESON: Thank you. If I can now ask Raema Lancaster.

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MS LANCASTER: Good morning. For the last 10 years, I have owned and lived in an apartment in Pymont, in close proximity to the Star. I actually live in an area that

was referred to later as not being the real heart of Pyrmont, but I am pleased to have this opportunity to address you about the current redevelopment plans. I've carefully read the widely researched and detailed report of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, and I strongly support their decision to reject the proposal of the Star to build a skyscraper that would accommodate a new Ritz-Carlton hotel and would incorporate new luxury residential apartments.

There are very many reasons for my objections to the Star's proposal, a lot of them have already been put forward, but I will list them and elaborate as time allows, but will put further details in the back of this and present it as a submission if I can't say everything. I object to the excessive height, build, bulk, dominating visual impact. The fact that it's an isolated skyscraper placed totally out of context with its low, medium-high surrounds. I object to the extent of overshadowing that would result from such a tall structure. I have to say here that our objections – the people that have supported this have assumed that the objectors are against development of all kind. That isn't so. We object to this particular tower at this particular time in an unplanned way at this particular site.

I object to the many special lighting displays that are planned to emanate from the tower. There are 57 special event lighting displays that will almost certainly illuminate the whole suburb of Pyrmont for weeks at a time. I object to the total disregard of the staff of the current established planning regulations. I object to the total difference of the Star to the area as a whole, and its ignoring of the 2018 report of the Greater Sydney Commission. I am concerned about the great increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic in a suburb which already has the highest population density in the country. I object to the facile invention by the Star of the concept of global waterfront precinct, and this sets the precedent for the uncontrolled development of further waterfront sites at the whim of individuals who decide they would like a development.

And I especially object to the to the underlying assumption that the success of a city depends on its globalisation and its attraction to big business tourists. The wooing of the local community by the inclusion of a neighbourhood community centre in the new tower is something that concerns me greatly, and I hope I can say something later about that. And another point that hasn't been raised is the building site of this monstrous tower would mean a massive construction area where we would have at least three years – that'd be the absolute minimum – of road closures and bus service disruption. With the recent just minor increase in the height of the tower, the bus route 389 was totally relocated. And, finally, I object to the recent statements and actions of our premiere.

Now, just expanding a little bit. I note a few alarming comments in the Star's application. They say the tower would be part of a global waterfront precinct skyline, and they ask us to consider the tower in its current and future context. It seems pretty clear that they're hoping to position themselves for maximum commercial gain in a future where they envisaged skyscrapers lining our shores. Their vision of the future is globalisation, homogenisation and the allure to tourists

and big business is criterion for success. For the 13,000 – I said 13,000, I’ve learned today it must be 15,000 – residents of the 2009 postcard, our wellbeing is defined by quite different issues, and our quality of life has to be balanced with planned and orderly development. There has, in fact, been much well-planned urban renewal in
5 Pyrmont over the last 30 years. The suburb’s now an appealing mix of new apartments, small shops, old pubs, refitted wool stores and big industrial buildings, early 19th century shops and terraces. It has a village atmosphere, wonderful waterfront parklands, is a very pleasant and desirable place to live. It is a tourist destination in its own right. And, apart from the travesty, the unbelievable travesty,
10 of dismantling the Powerhouse Museum, we have valued and celebrated our history. We reject the suggestion by the premiere recently that we need a facelift. We do not need either skyscrapers or vastly more tourists in our already crowded home. And that brings me to the last point, the recent comments and actions of our premiere. For someone who said recently, in the case of conflicting views, that we should
15 respect due process, it was breathtaking hypocrisy for her to personally endorse the Star’s application, thus overriding the conciliate assessment of her Department of Planning and undermining it, and then, in the next breath, realising that the Star’s plans did not fit in either with the 2018 vision of the Greater Sydney Commission, she asked the Commission for a further assessment, giving them five weeks to get
20 back to her. Now, the Star’s plans have been - - -

MS LEESON: Excuse me, Raema, we’ve gone over your time by a few minutes.

MS LANCASTER: I’m over, am I?
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MS LEESON: Yes.

MS LANCASTER: Okay. I will stop.

30 MS LEESON: If you would like to formalise that submission to the IPC, and I’ll talk to that at the end of the meeting, but if you’d like to put that in a submission, then we’ll consider all of the information that you have there that you’ve not been able to come - - -

35 MS LANCASTER: Yes, I’ve got it. I will.

MS LEESON: All right.

MS LANCASTER: Yes, I’ve just about finished.
40

MS LEESON: Thank you.

MS LANCASTER: I was just going to say let’s home the Greater Sydney Commission manages to consult with other than The Star stakeholders. Thank you
45 for listening.

MS LEESON: Thank you. Thank you, Raema. Michael Hodgson, please.

MR HODGSON: Good morning. Thank you for letting me speak this morning. I thought it might just be appropriate to just offer a brief background to myself and why I've asked to address the panel this morning. I came to Australia about ten years ago. I had a career in food television, working on brands such as Jamie Oliver and River Cottage.

And in arriving in Australia, I established a business specialising in creating food festivals, things such as MasterChef Live and Gourmet Escape. And I was honoured to be asked then to become a food and wine adviser for Tourism Australia about five years ago, when we launched the Restaurant Australia global campaign. I also sit on the board of a national marketing business which represents the top wineries in Australia, where we're developing and then marketing the winery experiences globally.

So it's against that background that I really wanted to address the panel this morning, to outline the potential that this development has to create a world-class dining precinct, the benefits that that can bring both to the local precinct but also this country's tourism aspirations.

I thought it might just be worth outlining a little bit about what food tourism means. Some people tend to confuse the issue. It's sort of an element of sort of cultural reflection. But in essence it is about creating food and wine experiences, unique memorable food and wine experiences. And if that principle's not necessarily understood, it's importance certainly isn't. Everybody understands the importance of tourism to this city but one in five of those dollars is spent on food and drink. It's essential to tourism.

Tourism Australia, about five years ago, conducted a very in-depth commission on tourist habits and for all their key markets, including China, US, the UK, they asked people about what the most important factors were in a choice of destination. And after you took away security and value for money, the most emotive number 1 was food and drink experiences. So just to put that in context, that sat above anything from beaches, natural wildlife, heritage, history. It was the most important factor in a choice of destination.

This country has an incredible ethnic diversity. I think if that is combined with the freedom from sort of traditional culinary restraints and then you mix that with the incredible produce we have in this country, we are better placed than – I honestly believe – any other country in the world to be the leading food and wine destination.

Now, whilst one hopes that when tourists come to this country they would visit the wineries and the country regions, the reality is that most of these experiences are going to be confined to the major cities that tourists based themselves in and that's the opportunity and challenge that we're facing. Tourists, particularly international ones, are looking to destinations that can offer that luxury accommodation, entertainment, retail outlets and multiple dining options all in one place. It's

convenient, attractive and less stressful for people with barriers of language and transport.

5 In addressing this demand, places like Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, they've been very bold and ambitious in both their design and scale and the resort's become more than just a collection of different amenities or attractions. It's actually become the driver for visitation in itself. It has become a global tourist destination. And so from a food and beverage perspective, the scale and diversity are critical to this.

10 It's important to be able to offer visitors both a range of options, being able to go from breakfast to dinner, across cuisines from, say, Italian through to Japanese. But also to be able to find something that's familiar for them as well. But people are looking in these locations for something quite special, something unique.

15 You're going to hear from Paul Carmichael, who is very humbly – he's very humble at the back with Australia's top chef but we know through research and anecdotally that visitors are looking for that particular angle of view, the backdrop, the waterside, that special location and that is what Star is seeking to deliver through this development and why this is such an opportunity.

20 A lot's been discussed about the merits of bringing the Ritz-Carlton brand and further accommodation to the city but I want to point out that the development is more than that. As part of the plans, The Star will create a significant number of venues, up to 15 new food and beverage opportunities.

25 What would make these restaurants and bars special, however, is that they're located on the top of this open sky deck, the newly created ribbon that overlook both the harbour and the backdrop of the city's iconic skyline and within the Ritz-Carlton itself. Extraordinary food prepared by world-class chefs with the unmatched vista.
30 That is what creates unique memorable food experience. That is what people photograph, talk about, post on social media.

This recognises that the background of this – the diversity and unique position of this destination, overlooking the world-renowned harbour, is the opportunity to create a
35 world-class tourism destination to help market Sydney to the world. And just before I finish up, if you wouldn't mind literally 30 seconds - - -

MS LEESON: If you could be quick, thank you.

40 MR HODGSON: Thirty seconds, because I've heard a lot of comments about the impact on the community. In terms of overall global dining trends, the concept of eating out rather than entertaining or dining in has shown consistent upward trends. There are many factors behind that, whether that is declining domestic skills, the impact of food blogging, explosion of cooking shows.

45 But what is undeniable is in every city in Sydney, and in particular Pymont, with the highest density, is that residents want to eat out and eat locally. I'm not talking about

fine dining but a set of different and diverse casual dining and bar concepts. This development and the ambition that Star is approaching with it will create these options right from the start.

5 So in conclusion, there is must to be excited about the potential of this precinct. It's incredibly rare to get the opportunity to create a world-class dining and entertainment precinct that can appeal both to locals and tourists, all with the tailwind and support that this country's food culture can deliver. Thank you.

10 MS LEESON: Thank you, Michael. If I can now ask Carol Giuseppi.

MS GIUSEPPI: Thank you to the chair and commission for giving me the opportunity to present in support of the Ritz-Carlton development at The Star. My name is Carol Giuseppi. I represent the Accommodation Association, which
15 represents over 2000 accommodation, hotels, motels, serviced apartments and resorts across Australia.

Sydney is the main gateway city to Australia. You've heard that many times. But 45 per cent of passenger traffic is through Sydney airport. For the year ending March
20 2019, Sydney had 31 million domestic visitor nights with 11.5 million staying hotels, motels and serviced apartments. During the same period, Sydney received 82.3 million international visitor nights, with 8.5 million staying in hotels, motels and serviced apartments.

25 And many of you talked about the economic contribution and questioned the economic contribution of the industry. In fact, accommodation contributes 2.2 billion in gross value add to the New South Wales economy and tourism contributes 31.86 billion in gross value add to the New South Wales economy.

30 After a long period of stagnation in hotel supply post the Olympics, over the past five years, over 4000 rooms have come online in Sydney city, a factor of a strong stable economy, state government investment in demand drivers such as business events and major events, growth in key markets such as China, with improved aviation access and the federal government's Open Skies agreement with China.

35 While there has been a slight softening in demand in the Sydney market with hotel occupancies averaging 86 per cent in the financial 2018/19 year, the hotel market is performing well. However, for continued growth, we need to ease the capacity constraints in the market. For continued growth in visitation and contribution to the economy of New South Wales, we need to ease those capacity constraints. STR
40 figures – and STR collects data for the industry – show that there 23,700 hotel rooms in Sydney city, with the total contracted pipeline for Sydney city of close to 7000 rooms.

45 However, history points to the considerable risk of even half of those half of those hotel rooms eventuating. A factor of current market dynamics, access to finance, the availability of sites, the considerable constraints in terms of planning and

development and the nature of the proposals and the proponents. The difficulty of making standalone hotels stack up is demonstrated by the fact that 35 per cent of the proposals – of those proposed projects, of those close to 7000 proposed projects, are underpinned by mixed-use. So approximately 3000 of those rooms are underpinned by mixed-use.

So the Lord Mayor referred to the Yuhu development. The Yuhu development consists of a 59 storey residential tower and a 25 storey hotel and commercial precinct, with 220 hotel rooms. 4-6 Bligh Street is underpinned by a commercial precinct. Making hotels stack up in this city is extremely difficult and if we go back to capacity constraints, we will not be able to manage the demand and the growth in demand from high value business markets and international visitor markets.

Exacerbating this difficulty is the considerable investment required to build a world-class hotel. Currently, only nine per cent of hotel rooms in Sydney are categorised as luxury. Sydney and Melbourne, in absolute terms, have fewer than 4000 luxury rooms, whereas most global cities have greater than 10,000 rooms in the luxury category. Investment in luxury hotels is essential if Sydney is seeking to attract major international conferences and high-spending visitation.

Business events Sydney research shows that international business event visitors spend on average twice as much as leisure visitors during their trip to Australia. In addition, business events provide benefits to Australia well beyond the economic, in terms of trade and investment. Luxury hotel rooms are necessary to capitalise on the investment in the 1.5 billion international convention centre opened in December 2016 and Katherine O'Regan already referred to the economic contribution of that in the 2019 financial year report, which they've just released. It talked to economic contribution to New South Wales of 900 million from the International Convention Centre.

The proposed Ritz-Carlton is therefore a much-needed addition to the Darling Harbour Precinct. It will be built just 500 metres from the International Convention Centre, supporting the drive to attract visitors from the high-spending international business events market. We support this proposal by The Star for a number of very important reasons: (1) it addresses the shortages of luxury hotel accommodation in the market, as outlined above. It's important in attracting international business events and contributing to the Sydney and New South Wales economy, as outlined above.

The Star is a proponent – and I talked before about some of the barriers in terms of investment and the likelihood of some of that hotel stock coming online. The Star is a proponent that has a sophisticated understanding of investing, developing and building hotel accommodation. Not every proponent is that sophisticated. As demonstrated by the opening of The Darling, which has won the prestigious Forbes Travel Award two years in a row, a Forbes Travel Guide star rating is the most coveted award in the global luxury travel sector. As part of the development, the Star will be opening world-class facilities – and many of you talked to it, and

Michael, prior to me, talked to this – for all Sydneysiders, inclusive sky lobby bars and restaurants. There has been a number of submissions to the night-time economy. We – there’s much-needed activation of the night-time economy in Sydney, and this is one of the precincts that will drive some of that activation of the night-time economy.

Investment in hotel supply also increases the capacity of the visitor economy and creates employment opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers. Some of you seem to feel that hospitality only attracts unskilled workers. In fact, we have done a lot to try and talk about the career paths in – in this industry, and the Star has been a fantastic proponent of that. With 8000 employees, the Star is recognised as an employer of choice and has been instrumental in the formation of the Sydney School of Hospitality Excellence, an initiative between industry and TAFE New South Wales to promote long-term career and educational opportunities within the hospitality and hotel environment. And, lastly, investment in the hotel is estimated to add 800 million to gross state product by 2030.

In conclusion, the Accommodation Association and the broader tourism industry welcome the development of the luxury Ritz-Carlton hotel by a reputable, sophisticated hospitality company that has made a huge investment in the visitor economy, added to the fabric of Sydney with world-class facilities, and provides not only employment opportunities but training and career pathways for – for people – for students within this industry. Added to that, we will gain an internationally recognised brand in the form of Marriott International. We therefore strongly support the proposal by the Star. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Carol. If I could ask Paul Carmichael to come forward.

MR P. CARMICHAEL: Good afternoon, everyone. I won’t take too much of your time. I’ll just tell you a little bit about who I am. My name is Paul Carmichael. I’m a chef. I moved to Sydney about four years ago. I’m from a very, very small island in the Caribbean, and as a regular guy, I could empathise with everyone who lives in Pyrmont at how scary change can be, coming from a very, very small place myself. But I am a chef and a curator of experiences. I – you know, I live in hospitality, and I cater to pretty much everybody in this room. So all I can speak on is the things that I love and the things I know about.

What I do know is that dining is a very important part of life. Everybody here eats. Everybody here has to eat. And in my entire career, my 20-something-odd year career, it’s been a pleasure to just, like, serve people. I can’t say right or wrong, good or bad, but what I do know is that where there’s dining, when you build that, people will come. I can also say that there’s – everyone in this room will want to go to places that are great. They’ll want to go to places that are good. And my job entails part of that. It entails, like, just developing ideas, developing fun things for people to do. But I also need, like, the space, and people need the space to do so. Like someone said before, there’s plenty of opportunities for skilled workers.

There's plenty of opportunities for people like myself to come and thrive in a country like this, in such a – an amazing country, an amazing city.

5 I love Sydney. I'm a resident here. I live in Glebe. And I really have no – I'm not coming from this as – like, from an emotional point of view. I'm just coming from a very logical point of view as far as where dining could be very, very impactful to a community. It could bring people together. It could bring more people here. And, you know, it could keep your bellies full and keep you happy. I mean, it's just really basic for me. And that's – I'm not really going to take much more time, but that's
10 really all I have to say. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Paul. If I could now ask Eddi Cohen.

15 MS E. COHEN: Whilst you're setting up, I thank you for giving me the opportunity. I, too, am a long-time resident of Pyrmont, starting in the early days when my next-door neighbour was a very well-known brothel at the corner of Harwood and Pyrmont Street Road. Some of you men are smiling. That gives me some thought here. With my bedroom looking on to one of their bedrooms. I'm also a business owner, also have been here for, oh, close to 30 years now, with my
20 business and my life here.

I want to start out by saying I am here, obviously, to say why the decision must stand, and I have to point out something based on all the previous speakers. If you'll notice, we have the Star Ritz and the Barangaroo, which those of us in Pyrmont have
25 fondly referred to as the duelling towers, the duelling phallics, as was said by another speaker, the lightsabre. Lately, it's become the starship. All of this becoming the duelling egos between these two properties, and I say that because if you remember the original proposal back in 2013 – whose slide I did have and I've taken it out – was a low-rise, two – two-level – or two wings of hotels. No residential. There was
30 hotels, \$25,000 suites. But that was put up as contested against the Star – I'm sorry, against the Crown, because they wanted to put their big monolith up. Once their monolith went up, the Crown revisited what they wanted, and what evolved was obviously this.

35 So when we look now – I'm an educator. I'm a clinician. I'm a healthcare provider. I'll tell you right now, a picture paints a thousand words. It's interesting the media is not here any more. They got the words, the soundbites they wanted. So let's talk fast. You look at these pictures, and I don't care what anyone says: Pyrmont has been – will always be – a relatively low-rise to medium-rise property. Oh, okay. It
40 is ultimately us, the community of Pyrmont, who's going to pay the price for these developments. So when you take a look now – and it's interesting that the Urban Taskforce had a presentation, because I remember when this came out in 2016, when they looked at the vision of Pyrmont at 2040 with this absolutely abomination of a new CBD that was going to be extended from the other side, and that in fact we were
45 going to become the Pyrmont-hattan of Sydney, and, in fact, that beautiful iconic walk over the pier was now – over the bridge is now going to lead into a secondary Manhattan, if you would.

Pymont is predominantly a residential community, so families, professionals, seniors and students. It has been, it will be, and in our future, it will continue to be that way. Everyone has quoted the fact that in the 30-year renewal, this regeneration, this renewal of Pymont, from when I lived there when we had the brothel and it was
5 the old, daggy harbourside and everything was kind of low-rent district there, that it transformed itself from a former industrial area into the most densely-populated suburb in Australia. Why do we all want to live there? Because of the amenities. Because of the ambiance. Because of the village. Because of the community. And the fact we are close to the CBD. We're not in the CBD. We're adjacent to the
10 CBD.

The biggest point here that everyone is neglecting is Pymont does not have the infrastructure to support a development of this size. Most of the roadways are two lanes, some narrowing to one lane. Jones Street and Bay, coming around to the front
15 of the Star, at one point it's a single road that's coming around. We already are overwhelmed on Pymont Bridge Road from all the traffic coming off the Anzac Bridge and all the traffic coming up from Wattle Street, from all the traffic coming off the flyover from the city. We are the single artery in and out between the CBD and outwards. And yet nobody seems to recognise what they issues will be when we
20 have an overwhelming structure like the Ritz-Carlton.

Now, the Daily Telegraph – and I don't know what their motives are. I don't think any of them live in Pymont. But I find remarkable, they keep on quoting the issue about Jacksons Landing is a high-rise precinct, therefore we are not a low-rise
25 precinct. Forgive me, but when you look at Jacksons Landing, it is on a downslope built at the foreshore. From here it goes up the hill to the flatlands of Pymont. I live in an area just adjacent to Darling Harbour. When I look out from my property, there's the Anzac Bridge. There's Jacksons Landing. No, its height is equal to The Darling. So when you say it's been built up, it actually does not loom over, tower or
30 obscure any of the visage that we have in Pymont.

So we have to understand that when we're looking at this – and I – God forgive me for Channel 9 – I'm sorry they're not here – but when I saw this the other day, I did a quick hold on my television and I said, wow. This says it like no other picture does.
35 You have 271 metres with the Crown over here, with a cluster of other equally large, imposing structures, with more to come, and then you have this oasis here, the Pymont peninsula. This is what we're talking about. This is where we're talking about how it's going to affect us in Pymont. Now, ironically, going back to what's been done in the past, if you look starting in 1973 with the MLC Centre coming all
40 the way up from completed and soon to be completed high-rises – some of them going up as 274 metres, the Crown at 271, etcetera, etcetera – what's the common denominator, here? They're all in high-rise precincts in the CBD. They are not in Pymont.

45 We have to accept the fact that for those of us, we are the ones that are affected by, ultimately, your decision. I wish to you to note these pictures, because one of the big complaints I've had for a long time is the reflective light coming off from all these

glass edifices. This is from my property in Pymont, looking across. Now, this is out of my bedroom window and my verandah window. So I not only get the pleasure of – of the Star, if it goes through. I get the pleasure of the Crown. Notice, it's not even completed and already what's happening. This blinding light is coming from the CBD, and where's it hitting? Not only our residences, but I can tell you, certain times of year when I walk up Pymont Bridge Road, I suddenly get blinded by the light coming from across the way, as do the drivers coming up. So when we say that the overshadowing, the light reflection, all these things are not an element, I beg to differ, because it is, and it's proven.

10 The other thing is the street congestion. This is outside my window, Pymont Bridge Road. You can't quite see here the traffic is backed up, but this here is that left turn down Edward Street going to the Star. This now is also backing up the traffic on Harris Street and going back down towards the bridge. This is a chronic problem. I have spoken to the Star about it. We also get people coming off here, coming up from the Star, coming down Pymont Bridge Road, and right here – there's a lane here called Edward Lane – everybody makes a U-turn, blocking the traffic from the other direction. We do not have the infrastructure. So the effect on the local community cannot be ignored.

20 Again, this is a view from my property. I actually have – I've cut off part of it. This is showing toward the CBD. The – I – my view of the Crown is right here. But I want you to notice the visage that I have coming from my verandah coming across. There's a joke in Singapore – and I found it interesting the other speaker mentioned Singapore and the Marina Bay Sands, because I'm exquisitely familiar with that because I do work in Singapore. Singapore knows how to build high-rises. They know how to incorporate – and they have no choice. They're a 20 square mile city state. That's not us. So when you take a look here, here's the new alleged property for the Star. Here is my property here. Don't tell me that I'm not going to be affected. I will wake up every morning and throughout the day I will be staring down the gullet of the Crown and the gullet of the Ritz-Carlton.

35 So when we take a look at what is a summation of what's going on here, it's real simple. The impact on us – and it's been said, so I'm just kind of reiterating – congestion, overshadowing, blinding sunlight, changes in ground temperatures and environmental effect. I could tell you, when the ICC was built in Darling Harbour – and those glass panes, when the sun hits it, you can see the reflection on the cement walkway, and as you walk through it, all of a sudden you feel like you've been hit by blinding light and a heat ray. Same thing happens from the city.

40 Vehicular congestion. We've already talked about it. And, obviously, you add 222-room hotel and the 204 luxury apartments, don't tell me these people aren't going to have cars, and they're going to be impacting these small streets on Harris, Jones, Edward, Pymont Bridge Road. High-performance cars. No one has really addressed this. We have had for years hooning up and down the streets in Pymont, particularly Pymont Bridge Road, particularly out by Jacksons Landing, and where are these coming from? Good majority, the casino. Just go into the casino, and

you'll see they have their Ferraris, Lamborghinis and all those cars on show there. The disturbance and the fights, the trash on the streets.

5 Construction noise. I found it interesting the gentleman from Parramatta Road said, "Well, we're the closest property, and it's not going to bother us." Yes. That's the property that has that wharf that looks out onto Barangaroo. I'd kill to be there. Thank you, but I will hurry. And then what's going to happen is, the people who are really affected on Jones Bay, they're the ones that are telling you. You are going to have construction damage to the buildings. Think of what's going on right now in
10 Sydney. Residences in proximity to immense size and scope of the DA with years to complete, overwhelming hell. So the bottom line is, we're a low-rise precinct. The CBD, it – we're not an extension of the CBD, and our development is choking the quality of our life.

15 So, very quickly – this is important. I decided to go to social media. You want to know what it's like to live in Pymont and not have a vested interest in this property? It's a quiet, friendly village, only minutes from the city. Inner city living at the best, so close to the CBD, lots of trees, great park, great proximity to town light rail. But
20 sadly, the sleepy family that – that existed is now gone, between the construction phases. But this is the important one. Construction to go on for years. Pymont is getting noisier by the day. Major building sites drilling through sandstone six days a week for at least two years. Tourist bus lining the streets. New building site in Harris about to start with more horrible drilling and dust for years. And to cap it off, if you're on the waterside, the State Government is redeveloping Glebe Island to
25 include a 24-hour concrete factory. Shame on the council and the governments. The most important thing is health. We're all going nuts with the way the development is handled. On top of that, people are looking for the Star, coming back and hooning around at 3.00 am. Again, here, quickly, drunks, street sweepers, all the hired Lamborghinis, never-ending construction.

30 So, this is Pymont. For those of you that haven't been in Pymont, come visit us. This is what you find. And you want to hear something really ironic that no one's mentioned? Right here, opposite the Star – because this is Union Square – the Crown has opened up a small, discreet members-only club. Has anyone seen that?
35 Doesn't that make you wonder? If I was there at Crown, I would. And what you're looking at is low-rise – they – now, we do have taller buildings in Pymont. We are not against the chef having his ability to have fine dining. We're not against jobs. We're not against development. What we are against is the obscenity, the finger in the sky to Pymont that is going to be against everything that we hold dear and what
40 we love about our way of life. So we are asking that you not shut down the Star that they want to do things, but remember their first development was not a high-rise. It only came in as an answer to Packer's monstrosity.

45 And so, now, you want to know what this is not Pymont. This is a legacy that you will leave us, and trust me, it will be something we all regret. Go back to them. Say, "We'll work with you. Go back to your lower-rise. You don't need to make" – how many hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars out of 220 high-rise luxury

apartments? Who, by the way, who's going to buy that? Us? Who's going to buy them? You know the answer. It's going to be offshore investors. So at the end of the day, it's an – it's an opportunity for the Star to make unbelievable amount of money. I thank you. I'm sorry for rushing. But I hope that I've at least brought
5 together what the other speakers have said. Thank you very much.

MS LEESON: Thank – thank you, Eddi. If I can ask Hank Opdam.

10 MR H. OPDAM: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Hank Opdam, and for transparency, I'm a current employee of the Star Entertainment Group. But many, many years ago – 20, in fact – I actually became a resident in Pymont, and over the years I've been inspired by my friends and family who come to the area and say that the place has been transformed from what it used to be as a – an industrial wasteland
15 into something that's exciting. It's a good mixture of – of residences and of commercial. And I feel as though the Star has had a lot to do with that.

In my opinion, I think the Star should be commended for what it's brought to the area: the fine restaurants, the high-end retail, you know, the entertainment centre, and certainly the theatre as well. It's those things that have added value to – to my
20 property, in my opinion. Forgive me for a second. I guess I could probably point out one thing that has bothered me a little bit, and that is that while the Star has been able to do these wonderful things, some other parts of the area haven't, and I'm still very disappointed that year after year the Fish Market is still actually to deliver anything, so maybe things will come good on that front.

25 As a former engineer, I do understand that, you know, people are concerned about the high-rise. The city of Sydney is growing; the CBD should grow with it. The CBD is full of lots of high-rises, and it's a bit difficult to extend off to the east because of the open spaces that are there in The Domain, so certainly to the west and
30 into Pymont is an opportunity. I feel as though it can extend all the way through Darling Harbour and connect up to those high-rises in Jacksons Landing. In summary, I support what the Star's trying to do. I support that – you know, the idea that it's going to bring some – some, you know, activity to the area in the short term with the construction, and I certainly do appreciate that it's going to make – Australia
35 is going to benefit from the international tourism that comes from the Ritz-Carlton. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Hank. We now have Paul Rigby.

40 MR P. RIGBY: Good morning, everyone. I've got a bit of a cough, so you're going to have to bear with me. I represent Foundation Theatres, who own and operate the Sydney Lyric Theatre which is located at the Star. We're actually an independent business from the Star, owned by one individual. We play host to large commercial
45 musicals. We sell over 1.1 million tickets a year to our shows, and we're a tourist and entertainment destination for adults, families and school groups. Some of the shows we've played at our theatre – I – I broke the PowerPoint turner, sorry. Some of the shows that have played – that have played at our theatre over the years include

the Australian premieres of Strictly Ballroom, Matilda, and the Carole King musical, Beautiful. In 2018 we hosted the worldwide smash hit Book of Mormon for its one-year run in Sydney. In the coming years we're hosting Billy Elliot followed by the Australian premiere of Shrek The Musical, and next year we're hosting the
5 Australian Opera's production of Secret Garden. In 2021 we're hosting the Australian premiere of the worldwide smash hit musical, Hamilton.

Our patrons come not only from Sydney but also from outlying areas of New South Wales as well as other parts of Australia and overseas. In an average year, 150,000
10 of our patrons must stay in Sydney overnight to – to attend an overnight performance. The intrastate, interstate and overseas markets are crucial for the success of our business, and this segment of our market is supported by the New South Wales Government through Destination New South Wales, who supply – who provide support for musical theatre producers, who must deliver overnight visitation
15 numbers to their shows to receive that funding. It's also through this funding that Sydney is able to secure first-run premiere musicals ahead of Melbourne.

In order to develop and grow the theatre industry in Sydney, it's crucial for us to continue and develop and drive that overnight visitation. Visitors to Sydney who are
20 here to see a show or who – who choose to see a show while they are here like to have a hotel accommodation in close proximity to – to the theatre. We've also found that our patrons enjoy the dining experience as part of their theatre visit. Providing dining options at various price points within close proximity to the theatre is essential to our theatre offering. The enhanced and expanded hotel options within the
25 Pyrmont precinct as well as the – the additions that the Star is proposing to its food and beverage operations allow us to enhance our theatre offering and attract producers and patrons to see our shows. We believe that the community – community benefits from a vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape, and musical theatre forms a part of that landscape and appeals to all demographics. For this
30 reason, we strongly support the Star's proposal. Thank you.

MS LEESON: Thank you, Paul. That now brings us to our last registered speaker, Scott Gibbens.

35 MR S. GIBBENS: Thank you so much. I appreciate the opportunity. I may need, if I may, because a couple of speakers didn't show up, if I could have an extra couple of minutes, I'd appreciate that. Thank you. My name's Scott Gibbens. I am a resident of Pyrmont. I've been a resident for 17 years, along with my family, and we've watched Pyrmont grow from the beautiful village that it is into a slow-moving,
40 polluted car park. Here's the thing. The Star as it is, I enjoy it. The hotels that – that are there, I enjoy them. I go to the Star and I have a lot of fun. A lot of what the Star has is not very well planned. If you go down Edward Street and you try and get out of where I live, often we're blocked with lollipop people telling us we can't move because the Star's trucks, trying to get into their loading docks because of the
45 wonderful shows, it's blocked. That's existing. It's not going to get any better if it's bigger. It's not. It will get worse. But we're neighbours, so we don't complain. We're neighbours. We're good.

But here's the problem. The Star, the developers, the Ritz-Carlton and the PR company don't care about the neighbours. All they want to do is build something that is totally out of character of our district. Totally out of character. For who? Only for them. Maybe the American investors. But it's not for the people of
5 Pymont. And if it is for the people of Pymont – and it's wonderful that they want to give us this five-storey beautiful thing for the community – just do that. Do that. Be a good neighbour. Build the five-storey thing and say, "Look, we're doing something for you, and we don't expect anything back." We don't expect all of this – eight times over the limit. Eight times? Lucky eight, they call it. I don't think so.
10 I don't think so.

The casino is a gambling establishment. They've taken their gamble. They chose red and it came up black. Accept the referee's decision. Accept that. Be grown up about it. You tried, you played, you lost. If I or anyone here go into the casino, they
15 have rules. They have rules. They have security. They have doormen. They have people there who make sure with all of their cameras that you do not go by the rules. And yet here we are. We're sitting here because they wouldn't accept the referee's decision. They don't want to work by the rules. The rules said no. Accept it. Be a grown up. We're not saying don't build. Don't build that. Build within the
20 limits. You are allowed to go eight storeys. That's fine. Do it. Don't try and go eight times over that. That's wrong. Just wrong.

So is Pymont already overdeveloped? Yes, it is. So the PR companies, their shock jocks, their newspapers that they've got on side, the drama that they've cried to –
25 tried to create within the community: by golly. Those people don't live in Pymont. They might arrive at 3.00 in the morning, and they might say, "What traffic?" But you try to get into Pymont near the Star during any event, whether it be soccer, football, Christmas, New Year's Eve: any of the events, it is a drama. So really, they've gambled and they've lost. It's over to you to make sure that Pymont – the
30 people of Pymont, the community of Pymont – wins. Thank you for your time.

MS LEESON: Thank you. That concludes the public meeting today. The commission will now adjourn. And it has a lot of documentation and materials to consider. It has the output of today's public meeting to consider as well. So we will
35 do all that in a very careful fashion, and in due course we will make our determination on the process. So I thank you all for attending today, and I'd like to thank you all for your passion, both for the project and those that have concerns about the project. Most of you were very eloquent, and I would like to thank you very much. Thank you.
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RECORDING CONCLUDED

[12.41 pm]