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Our ref: F2004/07907
Your ref: Green Square

21 October 2008

The Chief Executive Officer
City of Sydney
GPO Box 1591
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Andrew Thomas, City Plan Development

Dear Mr Thomas,

RE: Green Square Urban Renewal Area – Proposed Planning Controls

This letter is in reference to the public exhibition of the Green Square Urban Renewal Area Background Paper.

Randwick Council has commented on previous occasions on a number of plans and development applications for the area, particularly those relating to Victoria Park which directly borders the West Kensington heritage conservation area. It is noted that the Background Paper generally reflects the current planning controls, including the Victoria Park Masterplan, however, the following issues continue to be of significant concern to Council and our community.

Transport

As a result of development in the Green Square area, there has been increasing levels of traffic passing into Randwick City and Lenthall Street and the Todman Avenue intersection at South Dowling Street are near capacity. Randwick Council continues to express concern that adequate public transport, including east west connections, has not been provided, particularly important given the area is a major employment hub and town centre in the Metropolitan Strategy.

With the majority of development in Victoria Park being beyond a reasonable walking distance of Green Square rail station, the bus system is the most likely means of public transport for residents of this area. However, there are only two bus routes which pass the site and it appears that the majority of Victoria Park will be constructed before any increase in services will be made. Council believes it will be a much more car dependent population unless significant public transportation and walking/ cycling infrastructure improvements are introduced prior to further population increases.

Density and height

Relating to transport infrastructure, Council questions why the tallest and largest developments continue to be concentrated along South Dowling Street/ Southern Cross

Drive, with relatively little public transport, rather than in areas closer to Green Square and the established train and bus services.

The Victoria Park Masterplan, and now this Background Paper, notes the reason for these buildings, up to 26 storeys in height, is to provide 'landmark' towers. However, this area is not a landmark location and the need and argument for four 'landmark' towers in this small section of South Dowling Street, in addition to those proposed in the redevelopment area between O'Dea Ave and Lachlan St, is not valid or appropriate and higher density buildings should be relocated to more accessible and suitable areas near Green Square rail station.

This 'wall' of tall buildings is likely to cause overshadowing and impact on the visual amenity of the area and the privacy of West Kensington residents; and has a poor relationship with the low density one and two storey heritage conservation area. This remains a major concern for Randwick City and our residents.

Open Space

While it is noted that several sites have been identified as new open space areas, these all appear to be smaller passive recreation spaces or spaces with dimensions unable to support playing fields etc. There is a growing demand for active recreation spaces such as ovals associated with the increasing population across Sydney, and the City of Sydney needs to provide for this demand. Adequate land must be preserved in the City's new planning controls to cater for larger active recreation uses.

Conclusion

Randwick City Council strongly encourages the City of Sydney to ensure that:

- adequate public transport, pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure is provided before further development to reduce private car use and the associated traffic impacts on the local road network;
- the tallest and highest density buildings be concentrated around the Green Square rail station and the high capacity train service;
- that the bulk and scale of development addresses the different scale of development across South Dowling Street in the West Kensington Heritage Conservation Area; and
- the new open space reservations are of a suitable size to allow for ovals and other active recreation facilities (whether built now or preserved for the future) to cater for needs of the increasing population.

Please contact Ross Anthony, Strategic Planning, on 9399-0982 if you have any queries regarding Council's submission.

Yours faithfully,

Karen Armstrong
Manager – City Planning