

16 October, 2025

All Councillors
City of Sydney
GPO Box 1591
SYDNEY NSW. 2001

Dear Councillors,

Ultimo Pyrmont Planning Framework

Thank you for the opportunity to receive a briefing on the latest version of the changes to the LEP proposed for Pyrmont and Ultimo. We met with the City's planning team on 14 October and were presented with an outline of changes made in response to submissions on the draft, in particular the recommendations outlined in our submission (31 October 2024).

Our submission contained a total of 25 recommendations and we provided comment on how and whether the City has, in fact, met our concerns with the earlier draft LEP, noting its plan "must be consistent with the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy". We also acknowledge that the City has no control over some aspects of the plan, including the developments proposed for the 5 Key Sites – Harbourside, West Metro sites, the Star tower, Blackwattle Bay SS Precinct and the Aboriginal College for UTS in Ultimo:

Issues and General Comments

Recommendation 1 - *The NSW Government to review the targets set in 2020 to reduce the target of generating commercial space for 23,000 workers.*

Tim Wise has confirmed that the City will not propose any change to the targets set in the PPPS in December 2020, even though these targets were set well before COVID established and entrenched contemporary practices of people working from home. In email correspondence with the Department of Planning (Jazmin Van Veen) wrote on 22 January 2025 "...Council is now considering all feedback received during the exhibition of the planning proposal. Council will prepare a report detailing how it has addressed matters raised in submissions which will include issues raised by Pyrmont Action regarding the appropriate mix of residential and non-residential development across Ultimo and Pyrmont."

In an email dated 20 February 2025, Ms Van Veen wrote: Council is now leading the implementation of the Strategy which may lead to changes from what was



originally envisaged, including the sites capable of change or the intended outcomes for those sites. In those circumstances Council would justify why the change is appropriate and the Department would consider this in our final assessment."

Issue – The Council team has elected to retain the out-of-date targets despite:

- Major changes by Government to the Blackwattle Bay SS Precinct Plan, now 70% residential: 30% commercial/retail.
- The recent approval of a MOD submitted by the Pyrmont Place developers in Fig/Wattle Street changing the zoning of a Commercial Building to Residential/hotel, reflecting the lack of demand for Commercial space.

Our position – **As there is clearly a lack of demand for Commercial space, we continue to recommend Council seek changes to the mix of residential and non-residential development across Ultimo and Pyrmont.**

Recommendation 2 – *the City of Sydney to review its proposed changes to the LEP to better reflect the need for more housing near the proposed Pyrmont Metro station, enabling a reconsideration of zoning of several sites across the Peninsula.*

We are pleased to note that the City has changed its position on the zoning of 1-27 Murray Street, thus retaining its Mixed-Use zoning. We also note that the owners of 60 Union Street have applied to the Housing Delivery Authority to support their request to retain much of the existing structure, zoned Commercial and to construct additional storeys for residential use, noting its proximity to the new West Metro station.

Our position – **we support retention of Mixed-Use zoning of 1 – 27 Murray Street and retention of existing structures with residential space constructed above at 60 Union Street, both close to the West Metro station.**

Recommendation 3 – *Changes to the LEP should more closely align with the PPPS and not with the heights made possible within the Transition Zone.*

The Transition Zone was not included within the PPPS and its later introduction has resulted in an inability of planners to abide by Direction 2 in the PPPS (p25) which promotes "development complements or enhances the area". The Direction goes on to state planning principles including "heights located close to ridge lines



and stepping down to the harbour edge in the northern part of the Peninsula" (p26).

Issue – Changes outlined in the Council's latest Planning Framework (October 2025) have ignored this principle and proposes two residential towers at 1 – 27 Murray St (located close to Pyrmont Bay) such that the tower closest to the harbour is to be 24-storeys high, with the tower to the south to be 16-storeys high.

The introduction of the Transition Zone post the approval of the PPPS also enables a tower at 26-38 Saunders Street, with a height of 36-storeys close to the Blackwattle Bay foreshore.

Our position – we continue to support Direction 2 in the PPPS and oppose the Transition Zone which enables high towers to be located close to the Pyrmont foreshores.

Recommendation 4 – *Change the zoning for 1 – 27 Murray Street to Residential to provide additional housing near the Metro station in Union Street. If retaining the Mixed-Use zoning mandate a substantial increase in residential floor space.*

Our position – we support the proposed change of zoning to Mixed-Use but do not support the height increase to 24-storeys of the N residential tower.

Recommendation 5 – *Change zoning of 2 Edward Street from Commercial to Mixed-Use to enable provision of more housing near the Metro station in Union Street.*

There has been no change to either the Zoning or height of 2 Edward Street (from 24m – 86m) as proposed.

Our position - we support the changes proposed by the owner of 60 Union Street including retention of the existing Commercial premises and provision of 7 storeys of Residential space above, noting that the total height on the site will be lower than proposed by the City in its initial draft. See our comments on the Gateway building on p2.

Recommendation 6 – *Retain the current height of 48 Pirrama Road at 5-storeys; increase the current height of 60 Union Street to no more than 18-storeys; reduce the proposed heights of 1 – 27 Murray Street and 2 Edward Street to 15- and 16-storeys respectively to meet the PPPS.*



Issue – No change is proposed to lower the height of the Accenture Building at 48 Pirrama Rd, currently proposed to increase from 5 – 12 storeys, despite its proximity to Metcalfe Park, Pyrmont Bay Park and the harbour. This ignores the PPPS priorities for the Darling Island sub-precinct i.e., “transition building heights from Union Street (and higher land around Harris Street) from the harbour, so that taller buildings are located to respect privacy, open space, views etc., to and from the northern end of the peninsula from harbour heritage items and existing buildings”.

Our position - See earlier comments re 48 Pirrama Road, 60 Union St and 1 – 27 Murray Street. We support reduction in height of 2 Edward Street to 16 storeys.

Recommendation 7 – 69 – 71 Edward Street and 13A – 29 Union Street sites to retain Mixed-Use zoning with a significant area allocated to Residential Use. The heights should be no greater than 10-storeys.

Our position - we continue to support this recommendation on the basis of lack of demand for Commercial Space in Pyrmont evidenced by proliferation of long-term For Lease signs.

Recommendation 8 – The height of buildings on the 26 – 38 Saunders Street site should be no higher than the adjoining residential apartment blocks at 120 Saunders Street.

Despite receiving 64 submissions on the proposed 33-storey residential tower, the City plans to proceed with its original proposal with an additional 3-storeys (36 storeys in total).

Issue - The graphic presented in Tim Wise's presentation only depicts the visual impact of this tower to which 3-storeys have been added in the latest iteration, as viewed from the West. There are no visuals of views looking West, North or South.

We note the diagrams which purport to demonstrate that there will be more sunlight in the street than existing, the difference being 2% more. However, there are no diagrams illustrating the visual and solar impact of this tower on its immediate residential neighbours which is of far greater significance.

Our position - we continue to support a height no greater than the height of the buildings on 120 Saunders Street.



Recommendation 9 – *We support the increase of height of 1 – 33 Saunders Street to 15-storeys on condition that the site be re-zoned Mixed-Use enabling provision of Affordable Housing.*

Our position - we continue to support re-zoning to Mixed-Use to enable provision of Affordable Housing at 14 Quarry Master Drive and 1-33 Saunders Street on the same basis.

Recommendation 10 – *If the Commercial Centre zoning for 140 – 148 Bank Street is retained the height of new development should be reduced to that proposed for 1 – 33 Saunders Street i.e. 15-storeys.*

Our position - we continue to support reduction of height for 1 – 33 Saunders Street to 15-storeys.

Recommendation 11 – *We propose a maximum height of 24m for sites 80 – 84 Harris Street in line with the existing height of 100 Harris Street (24m) on condition that they are rezoned Residential and mandated to be Public/Affordable Housing*

Noting the priorities of the PPPS “ensure new development complements the low-medium rise built form, heritage items and conservation areas, and the special qualities of Harris Street”, it is our view that the buildings on the sites are compatible with the height of nearby heritage hotels as well as the new residential development on the W side of Harris Street which steps up from Harris St to Mount Street.

Our position – we continue to support adherence to the PPPS priorities within this Sub-Precinct.

Recommendation 12 – *The proposed heights for 86 – 92 Harris Street should be no greater than the existing height of 100 Harris Street ie 24m, with the height stepping down to a height of no more than 3-storeys fronting Pyrmont Street.*

Issue – The City proposes an even greater height from 27m to 33m in response to “competitive design processes”, thus compromising the PPPS principles for this sub-precinct. An earlier DA for this vacant site was approved at 15m.

Our position – we reject the height increase to 33m which is substantially higher than the adjacent 100 Harris Street.



Recommendation 13 – *We oppose any increase in height of the new building at 100 Harris Street. If a higher building is constructed it should have deeper setbacks at both the Harris Street and Pyrmont Street frontages.*

Our position - we continue to support this recommendation, in particular the need for the height of any new building to be the same as the 100 Harris St former warehouse frontage.

Recommendation 14 – *We urge the City to fund the Pyrmont Community Centre upgrade from the better than forecast surplus in its current budget and re-allocate the proposed \$10.5M recoupment of PCC funding to the \$9.1M levy expenditure to deliver the long-awaited and much-needed Maybanke indoor Sports and Recreation Centre*

We have been advised recently that an indoor Sports and Recreation Centre which will enable training of teams and competitions, run by the City, will be provided within the Pyrmont Place redevelopment of the former Council depot site. However, we still oppose the recoupment of \$10.5M from future developer infrastructure levies to pay for the past expenditure on the PCC. With the forecasted huge increase in resident and worker population across the Pyrmont Peninsula, the future developer contributions should be reserved to pay for social infrastructure identified by the existing and future communities.

Our position – we continue to oppose recoupment of past expenditure from levies needed to provide for future social/physical infrastructure needs of the community.

Recommendation 16 – 20 – 28 Bulwara Road should retain its Residential zoning and be mandated for Public Housing. We do not oppose the modest height increase to 4-storeys.

We were pleased that Council had avoided proposing any changes to existing Public/Affordable Housing sites identified by DPE as “capable of change”, in its earlier draft amended LEP. However, it appears that the owners of a number of existing such housing developments have now proposed the redevelopment of the following sites:

56 Harris Street (City West Housing)
1-5 Henry Avenue (Homes NSW)
26 – 52 Mount Street (Homes NSW)



Issue – All existing Public/Affordable Housing provides homes for those who are unable to rent/buy homes which are affordable. They accommodate communities of people who, in turn, are well integrated into the broader Pyrmont and Ultimo communities. In particular, we strongly oppose the sale of any such sites to private developers as is occurring in Glebe (82 Wentworth Park Road) and elsewhere.

Whilst we understand that new private developments will require payment of affordable housing levies, it appears that there is no mandate that levies raised in Pyrmont/Ultimo be spent on Public/Affordable Housing in the Pyrmont Peninsula. There are opportunities for new, additional such housing on publicly owned sites e.g. the old Sydney Fish Markets, the Metro station site in Union Street, the Star site and Council depot sites. (Unfortunately, the Fig/Wattle St site was sold without such requirement).

Our position - we strongly support provision of additional Public/Affordable Housing on the Pyrmont Peninsula, in particular on publicly owned sites and strongly oppose the redevelopment by public or private entities of any existing Public/Affordable Housing sites on the Peninsula.

Recommendation 17 – 46 – 48 Pyrmont Bridge Road should be rezoned Commercial Centre and its height should be increased to the same height as the commercial building opposite, in Pyrmont Bridge Road.

Our position – we continue to support this recommendation.

Recommendation 18 – We support the current Zoning of Mixed-Use at 55 – 65 Murray Street and Residential at 50 Murray Street and do not oppose the modest height increase of the former to 11-storesys.

Our position – we continue to support this recommendation.

Recommendation 19 – We support delivery of Pyrmont Street Park and recommend allocating developer levies to fund the construction of a road/cycleway tunnel under the intersection at the W end of the Pyrmont Bridge enabling delivery of a plaza at the W end of the Pyrmont Bridge.

Our position – we continue to support this recommendation



Recommendation 20 – *We support the closure of the greyhound racing facility at Wentworth Park and recommend that the NSW Government defer consideration of the future use of this site until it has undertaken a review of infrastructure needs of the current and future residential populations of adjoining suburbs.*

The PPPS (Big Move 5) Action 9 states: “facilitate the return of Wentworth Park to The community as public open space” (p40). The City supports this proposal.

Issue - Future planning for the greyhound racing site should ensure retention of the existing oval (as it is used by local schools) and smaller buildings to the south of the racing track to accommodate community/cultural activities e.g. artists studios. The grandstand should be demolished.

Our position - we support closure of the greyhound racing facility, retention of the oval and adjacent smaller buildings to accommodate community/cultural activities, with demolition of the grandstand.

Recommendation 21 – *We support provision of a multi-utility hub near the light rail stop on the 28 – 48 Wattle Street site but recommend that future development on this site has only one set-back with a height limit of 9 storeys.*

The PPPS (p63) seeks investigation of a “multi-utility hub close to the light rail stop and major roads for sustainable precinct-scale solutions e.g. integrated parking, EV charging, battery storage, recycled water and organic waste systems, or bike facilities.

Issue - As the former depot site at Fig/Wattle St is about to be developed the only other site suitable is 28 – 48 Wattle Street, Ultimo. It should also be noted that the NSW Government is proposing to spend \$40M on upgrading access to/from the LR station to the new Sydney Fish Markets.

Our position - We support provision of a multi-utility hub close to the Wentworth Park LR station at 28-48 Wattle Street, Ultimo.

Recommendation 22 – *We strongly recommend developing the Council depot site at the corner of Wattle Street and Wattle Crescent as Public Housing.*

We have been advised that as this site is part of an easement for a possible future on-ramp from Wattle St to the Western Distributor, the site cannot be developed. In the event that TfNSW decides not to proceed with the on-ramp, we urge the City to ensure that the site is made available for Public Housing.



Our position - we withdraw this recommendation.

Recommendation 23 – *In finalising the plans for the E Metro station Key Site development, the NSW Government should include a street level police station to ensure the safety and amenity of both existing and foreshadowed new residents and workers.*

Issue – Pyrmont has an increasing problem with anti-social behaviour occurring late at night. This is largely generated from patrons leaving The Casino or disembarking party boats (after heavy consumption of alcohol) that offload at the Pirrama Park Wharf. Additionally, there are extensive traffic problems including traffic violations, frequent hooning and excessive vehicle noise on Pyrmont roads. Performance vehicles roar up and down Harris, Pyrmont Bridge Road, Pyrmont Street, Murray St, Darling Drive, Pirrama Road and other streets on the peninsula, often in groups as there are no speed cameras in Pyrmont and few speed humps.

Our position - we urge Council to make strong representations to Government to incorporate a 24/7 police station within the W Metro station development.

Recommendation 24 – *In reviewing the residential/worker targets associated with the PPPS, the NSW Government should also investigate provision of much-needed social infrastructure e.g. a new secondary school campus and affordable accommodation for key workers e.g. police, teachers, emergency services personnel and those engaged in provision of culture and the arts.*

For many years, we have continued to advocate for a new primary school in Bays West Precinct and additional, accessible secondary school provision for students from Pyrmont and Ultimo.

Issue – The Balmain Junior Secondary Campus is crammed with demountable structures and public transport to and from the school is inadequate. Consensus is growing in support of additional buildings at the Blackwattle Bay Campus and we are pleased to note the City's promotion of the need for inclusion of new public educational infrastructure to serve students, not only from Pyrmont and Ultimo, but also Glebe and the proposed Bays West developments.

Our position – we support the City's identification of the need for additional public educational facilities to serve students from the Pyrmont Peninsula and future new precinct developments.



Recommendation 25 – We urge provision of green public open space associated with the “continuous harbourside foreshore promenade” (PPPS p67) at Blackwattle Bay.

The new Sydney Fish Market opens in January 2026 surrounded by huge expanses of concrete. It is also likely that areas around the new development site of the future Blackwattle Bay SS Precinct its continuation along the E foreshore of the Bay will also be heavily concreted.

Issue - Concrete absorbs and radiates heat. It is imperative to adopt best practice heat reduction strategies.

Our position - we wish to work with the City and Government to ensure provision of green open space on public land in Pyrmont and Ultimo.

Conclusion

In our discussions with Tim Wise, we were pleased to note the City's identification of traffic, congestion, parking and public transport (or lack thereof). The planners support several measures to enhance “active transport” as well as improved public transport especially for those who find walking and cycling challenging.

We have been advocating for a 389-bus stop in York Street since the City installed the last stretch of cycleway in King Street and await the Government's request for the City to include a proposal to designate a site as a bus stop in York Street.

We are also very pleased that the City is opposing the worst proposals in the Government's Western Distributor “Improvements” project. These will force motorists wishing to access the new Sydney Fish Market to detour from the Anzac Bridge to the Allen Street off-ramp, then add to the already congested traffic in Harris Street and at its corner with Pyrmont Bridge Road, before proceeding to their destinations to the West of the Distributor.

There will be no access to Bank Street, with all cars being directed straight to PB Road, then turn left into PB Road. In addition, all trucks and large vehicles, including the 501 bus and vehicles associated with the Hymix concrete batching plant in Bank Street will, similarly **must** take the Allen Street off-ramp and drive back to their destinations in Pyrmont, adding to pollution and up to 10 minutes (depending on traffic congestion) to their journeys.

We also note mention of the need for bicycle parking. The proliferation of hire bikes, in particular, is clogging our pavements and parks and we are working with the City to persuade the Government to introduce regulations into relevant



legislation which require hire bike companies to provide parking stations and to penalise those who do not return the bikes to designated parking facilities. The photo below demonstrates the need for secure parking facilities.



Given the short time provided to the community to comment on the latest changes, we trust that Councillors will have time to read our submissions. We appreciate the opportunity to again put our case to our elected Councillors.

Ken Loudon, Convenor



