

Helen Mulcahy - Submission re Lewisham development

From: Tamara Winikoff <tamara@visualarts.net.au>
To: <Helen.Mulcahy@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 4/4/2013 6:26 PM
Subject: Submission re Lewisham development

Dear Ms Mulcahy

**Re: Application to Modify Major Projects MP08 0195 78/90 Old Canterbury Road
Lewisham**

I am writing to follow up on the submission from the No Lewisham Towers Inc Committee re the above proposal from the developer to challenge some of the conditions attached to the concept plan approval.

The reason for this correspondence is to raise with you the urgent question of ensuring some reasonable design quality for the development.

I understand that Meriton has made a request to be exempted from the Director General's Design Excellence guidelines for individual buildings.

On behalf of the local residents, the No Lewisham Towers Committee (of which I am the chair) tried to persuade Marrickville and Ashfield Councils to share the creation of a Design Review Panel. Its purpose would be to provide expert assistance to the two councils in their having a much higher level of responsibility than in the past, resulting from the above development and that being proposed for the adjacent Allied Mills site in the creation of virtually a new suburb.

Sadly we were not successful.

This means that without the requirement for a Design Competition approach, there will be no expert oversight to ensure that there will be at least some degree of design quality in the development.

What is currently being proposed does not give us confidence that the developer has this objective in mind. It proposes poor quality urban landscape and very undistinguished 'off the shelf' architecture.

From looking at the Design Excellence guidelines, I see that the grounds for exemption are that "demonstrated design excellence will be achieved, such as where concept drawings are submitted for a manifestly outstanding building, and the architect has a reputation for delivering buildings of the highest quality". The current DA proposal lodged with Marrickville Council does not demonstrate that either of these requirements are met, so I can see no legitimate grounds for exemption.

Through a a small competition of 3 chosen architects judged by a jury of 3/5 members we would feel much more confident that a result we can live with will be possible.

In such a major project as this, it is important for the Department to ensure that a good quality urban environment and architectural excellence will be provided both for new and existing residents.

Being required by a jury of experts to meet good design standards would be a much more

likely formula for success than relying on the judgement of a developer like Meriton (with all due respect).

The inclusion of a public art strategy would add further value for the people who use the space both as residents and travellers through the development to other destinations. The cultural experience provided by good architectural design, art and built and natural landscape adds immeasurably to the quality of people's lives.

I am also concerned at the very poorly designed proposals for pedestrian and vehicular traffic including:

- the placing of a roundabout at the light rail stop creating significant pedestrian and car conflict
- excessive traffic impact at this roundabout caused by the change of car park entry creating a long ramp along the western boundary of the development
- the deleterious impact of this ramp on the ground floor units of block A and B
- lack of good public pedestrian and cyclist permeability through the development
- lack of connectivity to the proposed open space in the Mills development.

I respectfully request that you put yourself in our shoes and try to imagine what it would be like to live with what is being proposed for our much loved suburb.

I therefore strongly urge you and the Department to not to allow an exemption from the requirement to meet the Director General's Design Excellence guidelines and public art contribution, nor to to allow the bad traffic design to be approved.

Yours sincerely

Tamara Winikoff
35 year resident in Victoria Street, Lewisham.