

THE DARLING POINT SOCIETY INC

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Councillor Susan Wynne
Mayor of Woollahra
By email

Dear Susan

DRAFT EDGECLIFF COMMERCIAL CENTRE PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

Dear Susan,

Due to the confines of the pandemic and under the pressure of a deadline of 17th September, The Darling Point Society and significant other planning and architectural professionals and many affected parties, held an online symposium this week in an attempt to come up with a meaningful submission to Council of our highly concerning thoughts regarding the ECC Draft Strategy.

The consensus was that there has not been anything like sufficient public consultation and most of the residents are not adequately informed of what is planned, other than increased heights, increased FSR and ensuing density and loss of amenities along with further traffic increase and congestion being proposed for a whole precinct.

Council has had to cancel several public information sessions due to Covid, resulting in an unfortunate and appalling lack of public consultation for this major Draft Strategy, which is going to drastically change our surroundings permanently, we feel, to a significant and worrying degree.

We write now to you as the primary authority in charge of this Draft Strategy and are copying our request here to Dave Sharma and Gaby Upton to demonstrate how important we consider our responses are as to the damaging effect of the ECC - in its present form. The changes envisaged will have detrimental effects on many hundreds of residents, their environment, their health and mental wellbeing.

Could we urgently request that you consider a deferral of Council's deliberation on this Draft Strategy until at least one month after the end of Covid lockdown so that a Covid-safe symposium can be conducted at Council (rather than a noisy railway station or outdoor park location) where a fulsome meeting of residents with Councillors can occur.

In an atmosphere of Council and community cooperation we want to convey to you the extent of any compromise that we will find acceptable in bringing about increased redevelopment and expansion, at the same time as improving amenity and enhancing spaces that are community sensitive and congenial to cultural activity.

We understand that the improvement of the ECC is important especially in the context of The Reform Action measures, and we ask that more time is given to getting it right for all concerned

- the Council, the planners and the community that is directly affected by it. We do not want to sacrifice fairness, best practice and good design by fast-tracking something that is the main eastern gateway to our beautiful city which will be irreversible.

We trust that you will see your way clear to granting this deferment for such a major proposal.

We look forward to your early response.

Kind regards,
Charlotte Feldman
DPS
President