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Pymont Peninsula
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment
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Email – Pymont.peninsula@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

Directions for Pymont Peninsula Place Strategy

The Property Council of Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback in respect of the ten initial directions that will inform the development of a future Pymont Peninsula Place Strategy.

As Australia's peak representative of the property and construction industry, the Property Council's members include investors, owners, managers and developers of property across a broad range of asset classes, including residential, commercial, industrial, hotels and retirement. We are an industry that employs approximately 1.4 million Australians.

Our interest in the Pymont Peninsula relates to its economic potential with new emerging industries and growing tourism focus. The study area hosts many of the city's leading education and tourism oriented institutions, including the University of Technology (UTS), TAFE NSW Ultimo, the ABC Ultimo Centre, the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC), The Star, Sydney Fish Market, Powerhouse Museum, the Australian National Maritime Museum, Google's Australian presence and headquarters for many television, radio and print media companies.

Following our review of the ten initial directions, our comments are provided below:

Direction 1 - Development that complements or enhances the area.

New or upgraded buildings fit with the Peninsula's evolving character.

Response: Pymont-Ultimo was radically transformed with apartment developments in the 1990s in a post-recession environment under the "Building Better Cities" program. The next wave of transformation must respond to the emergence of technology jobs within the Innovation Corridor that has been identified in the Greater Sydney Commission's Regional Plan and Eastern City District Plan. Objectives 15 and 18 of the District Plan specifically refer to the western edge of the CBD becoming more competitive, stronger and connected.

We welcome the development of a place strategy that can facilitate the realisation of these objectives. Accordingly, future planning controls that encourage the relocation and establishment

of emerging industries and international tourism are needed. Given the constrained geography of the Sydney CBD the only opportunity for expansion is to the south and west.

A process should be identified where it is possible for new landmark buildings (both residential and non-residential) to be achieved exhibiting a very high standard of design excellence, as has been possible in places such as London with the development of The Shard and 'Gherkin' buildings.

Direction 2 - Jobs and industries of the future.

Investment, innovation to boost jobs, creativity, tourism and night life

Response: The Greater Sydney Commission's Eastern City District Plan identifies the need for a stronger and more efficient Harbour CBD, which includes the Pyrmont Peninsula. While the study area currently has a considerable presence of education and entertainment jobs, there is a growing emergence of more knowledge jobs, including start-ups in creativity, design and IT. Accordingly, Pyrmont's place strategy should give greater recognition of this trend and consider what is an appropriate built form to accommodate these jobs in the future place strategy.

Direction 3 - Centres for residents, workers and visitors.

New, lively and attractive centres for everyone to enjoy

Response: It is important that the development of the place strategy value community and the services needed for a community to thrive. Pyrmont and Ultimo have several existing centres where residents can access local services and the strategy should investigate opportunities for further centres where appropriate.

Direction 4 - A unified planning framework.

Clearer rules delivering greater certainty and investment

Response: The Pyrmont peninsula, including Ultimo, is characterised by a rich diversity of land uses including low rise and medium density-housing, employment, tourism, media operations and educational facilities. A period of rapid development commencing with the redevelopment of Darling Harbour and many other former industrial sites has seen a mix of both good and bad planning outcomes realised.

A patchwork of planning instruments have applied to the review area in the last few decades including *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No.26 - City West, Darling Harbour Authority Act 1984* and *Darling Harbour Plan No 1, State Environmental Planning Policy No 41 - Casino Entertainment Complex* and *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005*. Many former industrial sites in Pyrmont and Ultimo were transformed into residential apartments during the 1990s under these planning controls.

It is also relevant that between 2005 and 2011, Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act) and *State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005* applied to certain categories of residential, commercial and tourist development and on certain 'declared' sites.

Today, much of the peninsula is subject to the local council's planning controls, being the relevant provisions of the *Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012* and *Sydney Development Control Plan 2012*. The exception to this being The Bays Precinct and Darling Harbour which are identified as State Significant Development (SSD) sites pursuant to *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011*. Also the provisions of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* and *State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017* are relevant considerations for certain land within the review area.

Following the finalisation of the *Greater Sydney Regional Plan* and the *Eastern Harbour City District Plan*, there is now a requirement under section 3.8 of the Act for councils to give effect to the relevant district strategic plan. That process recently commenced with the release of the City of Sydney's draft Local Strategic Plan (LSPS). Council has a statutory requirement to update its local environmental plan to implement the regional and district plans.

The planning controls applying to this area must be updated as soon as possible to give effect to the provisions of the new strategic planning documents prepared by the Greater Sydney Commission. It is also important for the planning framework relevant to the review area is simplified to attract business investment into the innovation corridor, including the Pyrmont Peninsula.

It is desirable for all relevant controls to be consolidated into a single planning instrument instead of simply adding a new layer of planning controls that will sit over the current planning rules.

Direction 5 - A tapestry of greener public spaces and experiences.

Better spaces, streets and parks; a rich canopy of trees; and access to the foreshore

Response: Pyrmont and Ultimo are highly urbanised neighbourhoods that have some areas of significant open space and some small pocket parks. The place strategy needs to accept that this is a heavily constrained landscape and that places such as Pyrmont's waterfront parks and the Fish Markets provide a benefit the community.

Consideration of how the few existing places and open space can be utilised by the area's future population is necessary.

Direction 6 - Creativity, culture and heritage.

Celebrating Pyrmont Peninsula's culture, heritage and connections to Country

Response: The review area comprises a number of vastly different neighbourhood areas that have evolved over time. There is a rich history to the land going back beyond European settlement and the early colonial period characterised by industry and maritime uses.

The Pyrmont Peninsula has clusters of heritage terrace houses, multi-storey apartment precincts such as Jacksons Landing, the entertainment precinct that extends from Darling Harbour towards the Maritime Museum and The Star's entertainment precinct and the significant higher education precinct of southern Ultimo.

The future planning controls for this precinct need to respect and enhance the rich history of this area, including its existing character and, also establish the framework for the future potential of each precinct.

Direction 7 - Making it easier to move around.

Safer, greener streets integrating with new public transport

Response: For the Pyrmont Peninsula to accommodate the levels of growth expected, there must be an appropriate investment in new infrastructure. Some parts of the peninsula have reasonable accessibility but other parts will need to be augmented to serve the growth in residents, workers and visitors.

It is important that new transport links are developed to ensure sustained growth and ability for residents and employees to access their homes and workplaces within the review area. The Department should be collaborating with Transport for NSW at this early stage to identify the

opportunities for new mass transport services (including Metro and ferry services) that can be developed on the Pyrmont Peninsula.

Direction 8 - Building now for a sustainable future.

An adaptive, sustainable and resilient built environment

Response: The development of the Pyrmont Peninsula should be a leading example of built environment sustainability, including schemes that exhibit the highest qualities of design excellence, inclusion of cutting-edge energy efficiency and technological innovation. This should be expected to be adopted in both the private and public domains.

Direction 9 - Great homes that can suit the needs of more people.

A diversity of housing types, tenure and price points

Response: A diversity of housing types and tenure within the review area is supported. There are several ways to encourage housing diversity and ensure its delivery. This will be one of the many areas to be discussed and argued in the future. Nevertheless, the Pyrmont Peninsula has had a long history of affordable housing initially under *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 26 – City West* and now under Sydney LEP 2012. The long term mix of housing types and tenures should be reviewed and considered in the place strategy.

Direction 10 - A collaborative voice.

A cohesive, agreed approach to bring about the best outcomes for Pyrmont Peninsula.

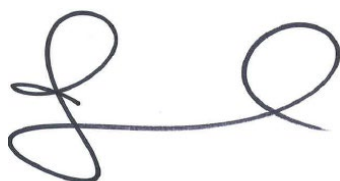
Response: The development of a Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy has to be a collaborative exercise in order to reach a desirable outcome. The process needs to together all interested parties within the NSW Government, including transport agencies, the City of Sydney Council and key landowners to find the best way to deliver the future vision of the precinct. Despite the challenges involved with achieving this, Pyrmont cannot afford years of paralysis and indecision, it also needs strong leadership.

Next Steps

It is positive to hear that the Department's eagerness to kickstart the conversation about Pyrmont's future and that it will be focused on the development of the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy. The recognition of the need for the review and its timing demonstrates a clear understanding of the State Government's commitment to business investment in NSW.

We look forward to participating in the next round of consultation regarding the planning for the Pyrmont Peninsula. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Troy Loveday, Senior Policy Advisor, on 0414 265 152 or by email tloveday@propertycouncil.com.au

Yours sincerely



Jane Fitzgerald
NSW Executive Director
Property Council of Australia