

16 August 2013

Sam Haddad,
Director General,
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39,
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Mr Haddad,

Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct

The Urban Taskforce understands that the Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct will facilitate the rezoning of the precinct to permit new development including apartments, maritime facilities, open space and community facilities thereby supporting much needed urban renewal. We support an approach to planning where key precincts are identified and then site specific planning is carried out to enable the amendment of a Local Environmental Plan to permit otherwise prohibited development. It is essential that the State Government be able to drive local planning reforms such as this. In this regard, we are strong supporters of the Urban Activation Precinct process.

We have reviewed the documentation placed on exhibition including the proposal, planning report and draft Development Control Plan. We find this package of material to be clear and comprehensive, hopefully sufficient to demonstrate to local communities that the planning for urban renewal is carefully considered by planning authorities.

We are encouraged to note that the Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct Proposal states that:

Like any major renewal area, the project will likely evolve over time. **Flexible** planning controls are proposed to guide development¹

This idea of flexibility is supported by the adoption of a mixed use zoning across the majority of the precinct. However, upon review of the draft development control plan, there seems to be less room for flexibility. The draft development control plan is rather prescriptive and goes as far as to identify the actual sites where additional height will be permitted. We understand that this may have been derived from detailed urban design studies, but planning controls should avoid selecting actual sites as "winners" in height and FSR. As soon as a plan singles out a particular site for special treatment or bonus, the market has little flexibility to respond. It is far better to apply a maximum building envelope across a broader area and then permit the market to select the most appropriate site/s for development when feasible.

Notwithstanding the above, we continue to support the Urban Activation Process and encourage the urgent selection of additional precincts for consideration.

Yours sincerely

Urban Taskforce Australia



Chris Johnson AM
Chief Executive Officer

¹ NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure July 2013, *Wentworth Point Urban Activation Precinct Proposal*. pg. ii.