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Submission

Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C270

Central City Built Form Review

This submission is made by **Southbank Residents Association** (SRA) which is a residents group committed to being the voice of residents at all levels of government. SRA has been representing residents for the past 18 years and is highly active with lobbying and advocating for residents rights.

SRA has an active membership of about 50, with a social media following of 263 on Facebook and 173 on Twitter.

Introduction

In September 2015 the Minister for Planning introduced interim controls for Melbourne's central city built form while a review was undertaken so that permanent controls could be developed. This C270 Amendment to the Melbourne Planning Scheme is the result of that review and as such The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has invited submissions from all persons affected by the proposed amendment.

For too long now the residents of Southbank have been a secondary concern over developers. SRA understands Amendment C270 will be an improvement on the current planning scheme. However any such improvement is only relevant if the planning scheme is given the strength it needs to be respected, such as mandatory controls with no reliance on discretionary outcomes.

We, the residents, have some concerns with the current proposal.



New & Pending Applications

We believe that applications submitted for developments not yet approved should not come under the interim rules and should comply with the criteria in place prior to these interim 12-month measures.

For developments already approved, we firmly believe they should be subjected – retrospectively - to the new criteria in C270 when the Amendment is passed.

We note that existing planning permits have been rolled over time and time again in the past, until a situation arises where the permit for the development no longer meets the planning requirements of the day. As such, we would like to see a change to this behavior and a rule preventing permits from being rolled over for more than 4 years.

Uplift Calculation

While uplift calculation is an ingenious method to encourage developers to give something back to the community, we believe that in addition to considerations of public space, office space and affordable housing, the plan should have provision for vertical schools as an option presented to developers.

Most high density areas have limited access to nearby schools and often those schools are over-subscribed. This is certainly the case for Southbank and the CBD.

Furthermore, we ask that any open space proposed as part of uplift calculations be calculated on the number of dwellings in the development.

Traffic

Traffic flow and traffic management during construction should be given more weight in the Amendment and we don't believe traffic is being adequately measured and allowed for with each development application.

Shadowing

Sunlight and public space is of paramount importance to the residents of Southbank. Owing to the nature of our high-rise lifestyle, it is difficult to avoid shadows when outside, but it is promising to see the Minister has protected the Yarra River (again) and the upcoming Boyd park in Southbank.



We acknowledge the City of Melbourne is about to convert Southbank Boulevard into a linear park, and it would be nice if we could also see some protection afforded to that.

Height Controls

We were surprised (and disappointed) to see that there were no mandatory height controls in C270, and a proposed floor area ratio of 18:1. This ratio would result in a density higher than Singapore with a corresponding significant loss of amenity.

Melbourne has been crowned the most livable city in the world for 5 years running, however we have grave concerns that unless mandatory height controls are introduced and adhered to, we could lose this honour in deference to developers.

We would like to see a floor area ratio comparable to Sydney of 14:1.

Separation

No-one wants to live in a building where balcony handshakes are the norm and access to sunlight is lost due to inadequate separation and setbacks. We believe a setback of 8% (or 10 metres from the boundary) in Melbourne is adequate, so the proposed 6% setback is of concern.

Conclusion

We look forward to being able to present a more detailed response to the panel.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Penna", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Tony Penna
President
Southbank Residents Association