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CITY NEWS

Harbourside highrise hit with Libs

① Posted on March 22, 2017 by Jessica Hill in [City News](#) · 0 Comments



Harbourside Shopping Centre is the site of a redevelopment proposal by Mirvac. Credit: EO1

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BY LIN EVLIN

Despite fierce objections from residents and the City of Sydney council Liberal councillors are backing the proposed redevelopment of Harbourside Shopping Centre.

Mirvac proposes to add a new retail shopping centre and a residential apartment tower on the site.

The Director of City Planning, Development and Transport, Graham Jahn argued against the proposal and said it does not meet the aims and objectives of the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 because it put private use before public good.

"Darling Harbour is a precinct for the people which is owned and operated by a public authority with open space and highly accessible and varied leisure activities," he said in the written submission against the development.

"Permanent ownership of public land through strata-titled apartments is inconsistent with the intent and purposes of Darling Harbour."

City of Sydney Liberal Councillor, Craig Chung doesn't agree and is pushing for the redevelopment to take place.

Mr Chung has also called for the City of Sydney council to work with the project developers, Mirvac.

"The Clover Moore Political Party blanket opposition to development in general misses a great opportunity to provide a wide range of mixed uses in and around Darling Harbour.

Mr Chung said the redevelopment would provide an opportunity for affordable housing in Sydney's CBD.

"Instead of engaging with the developer to produce great outcomes for the City, Clover Moore has simply rejected a great opportunity for affordable housing in Sydney.

"The floor space of the precinct shouldn't be dominated by one land use – commercial, housing, retail, tourism are all part of a broad mix needed to keep the area vibrant," he said.

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Mirvac property group purchased the Harbourside Shopping Centre for \$252 million in 2013 and had initially planned to build a new retail shopping centre and commercial office tower.

It has since updated its plans to include a new retail shopping centre and a residential apartment tower. The proposed residential tower is set to reach up to 166 metres high and have a gross floor area of 35,000 square metres.

City of Sydney Councillor, Linda Scott told City Hub she has serious concerns about Mirvac's proposal, particularly in relation to overshadowing in the Darling Harbour precinct.

"I am for a city where local business and tourism can thrive, but alongside local residents and local businesses I have raised genuine and reasonable concerns about the redevelopment of Harbourside Shopping Centre.

"The proposed 40 storey tower will plunge the harbour into darkness. Currently, visitors to the Harbour enjoy virtually unencumbered sunlight during the day," she said.

Neighbouring hotels, Ibis and Novotel, owned by Accor Group, are worried the proposed tower will impact the hotels' views, taking money away from the tourist industry.

"Hotels are an important part of the tourism industry, which is important to the local and metropolitan Sydney economy," Accor Group stated in a written submission against the development.

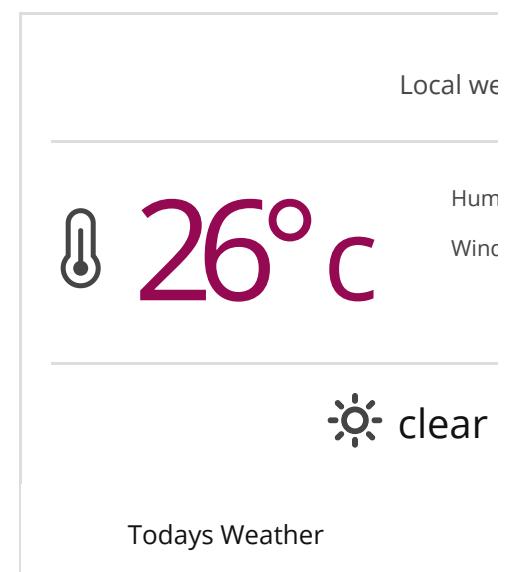
Accor group also argued the public interest is better served by protecting commercial interests rather than private residential views.

"A far greater public benefit is achieved by maximising the hotel's visitors to the cultural benefits of Darling Harbour, as opposed to views for permanent visitors," it said.

Liberal councillor, Christine Forster told City Hub she doesn't oppose the idea of a new residential tower in Darling Harbour.

"Obviously, the existing facility is dated, it's tired, it's not terribly functional, it does need to be improved and it offers a new opportunity for retail, pedestrian access and connectivity options in that area.

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"In terms of whether it's a residential tower, I'm pretty agnostic on this point to be honest – those decisions have to be made by the developer with their own economics in mind.

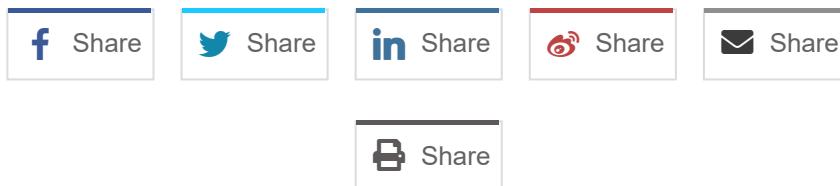
"I do see that it would be an opportunity for us to obtain some affordable housing in the area which is important because we need more affordable housing close to the city," she said.

Neighbouring businesses and the City of Sydney have taken aim at Mirvac's proposed redevelopment of the Harbourside Shopping Centre during the community consultation phase of the project.

Kate Lander, Mirvac's Group Communications Manager, told City Hub they had "undertaken extensive consultation" with the community and local land owners in developing its plans and is in the process of considering all submissions received.

"Mirvac will now consider all submissions in detail before working with stakeholders and the Department of Planning and Environment to respond to concerns," she said.

The public consultation on the redevelopment proposal closed on 14 February 2017.



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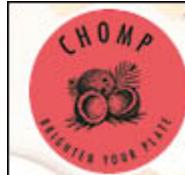
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