

19th August 2021

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Blackwattle Bay redevelopment submission
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

On-line submission

Re: Blackwattle Bay State Significant Precinct Study

I write regarding *Blackwattle Bay State Significant Precinct Study* prepared by the Infrastructure NSW (INSW) and the accompanying *Explanation of Intended Effect to (EIE)* to amend the corresponding planning instruments.

The Urban Taskforce is supportive of the plans for new a new mixed use precinct as a logical extension to the "established and evolving commercial, residential and entertainment industries that define Pyrmont."

Urban Taskforce welcomes the precinct study as an excellent example of place making. The public open space is generous, and this is made possible by increased height afforded to some of the building sites. The proposed heights are a logical response to the feasibility of a development that will deliver considerable public benefits in terms of foreshore access, public spaces and other community infrastructure.

Notwithstanding this support, the Urban Taskforce is concerned progress on the broader Bays precinct is not progressing at the same rate as Blackwattle Bay. In the interests of maximising community benefits, it is logical for the timing of delivery, for all of the renewal precincts across 'The Bays', to be together.

The Urban Taskforce encourages the Government to be bold in the catchment and the approach in delivering a Strategy for the entire Bays area. Boundaries should seek to maximise development and public domain opportunities (and not be limited to arbitrary lines on a map or State Government controlled land). Such an approach will realise and benefit from the \$20Billion investment in the Metro line, the development of the new Sydney Fish Market and the subsequent significant opportunities for public domain and access improvements including harbourfront linkages and crossings.

Logical extensions to the boundaries to be covered by a 'linked' Strategy and approach include modest areas to the north of 'Bays West' and a much larger area to the south of the Bays West to link with the Fishmarkets and Blackwattle Bay. This wholistic and strategic approach will best place industry and Government to

work together to realise The Bays area's full capacity for living, recreation and working.

Accordingly, to provide a more integrated approach which reflects both the proximity and connection afforded by the new and existing Metro stations and recreation, pedestrian linkages, housing and job opportunities, **Urban Taskforce recommends** a linked Strategy and planning approach that incorporates a boundary from the industrial zoned sites north of Robert St, Rozelle and down to the Light Rail Route through Glebe and around to include/join with the Blackwattle Bay Precinct.

The absence of an infrastructure contribution scheme with the Precinct Study and EIE provides no clarity on how the required infrastructure will be funded or delivered. One third of the proposed new floor space at Blackwattle Bay is located on private land. The ambition to complete the proposed harbour foreshore extension and public domain improvements relies on this private development and therefore could impede the delivery. Additionally, Government should be mindful of the Hymix concrete batching plant operations directly adjacent to the Government land that impact the attractiveness of the new homes and offices.

Urban Taskforce recommends that in the setting of levies:

- development feasibility is closely considered and
- opportunities for a broader precinct with a shared infrastructure contributions scheme across the Bays area is explored.

Development across the new and extended precinct should be brought forward to align with that occurring in Blackwattle Bay to enable the planning, funding and early delivery of considerable public domain benefits, particularly those near the Metro - way beyond what is currently anticipated. This would avoid the Government having a new Metro station completed with only modest public domain and community benefit evident, or worse, the perception of a white elephant investment that, once established, is difficult to overcome.

Urban Taskforce recommends precinct planning is accelerated beyond Blackwattle Bay with a view to aligning development delivery and public domain works. An acceleration of development would enable early delivery of public benefits, a strong contribution to the making of a viable "place", and the simultaneous delivery of new commercial, community and residential built form before or as the new metro service is provided.

Urban Taskforce notes the design parameters under the Precinct Study are quite resolved. This approach limits the innovation and creativity that a development partner could bring to the Precinct. Prescribing the mix of uses for each building may limit the attractiveness to a future developer. Precinct scale opportunities including climate resilience and transformation that responds to future technologies are less likely to be achieved given the rigidity of the design requirements.

Accordingly, **Urban Taskforce recommends** amendments to planning instruments avoid being overly prescriptive and instead focus on building envelopes and an open approach to land use.

The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have given even greater impetus for streamlined, certain development approval and planning processes. A fit for purpose rezoning and assessment process across the Bays area is critical to ensure projects can obtain consent and commence as quickly as possible.

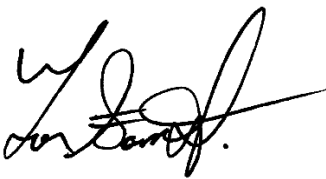
Given that the renewal of the entire Bays precinct is such a significant opportunity for Greater Sydney, and consistent with the planning process for Blackwattle Bay, the **Urban Taskforce recommends** that the entire redevelopment of the Bays area be rezoned via a (State-lead) State Significant Precinct Planning process and that DAs, subject to a certain capital investment value, are also classified as 'State Significant Development' with the Department of Planning and Minister for Planning being the consent authority.

This assessment pathway for the area will avoid confusion and ensure that the valuable economic opportunity presented is not squandered by local Councils.

Table 1 includes a summary of all Urban Taskforce recommendations

The Urban Taskforce is always willing to work closely with the Government to provide a development industry perspective on proposed policy and planning changes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Forrest', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Tom Forrest
Chief Executive Officer

Table 1:

Summary of Urban Taskforce recommendations

	Urban Taskforce recommendation
1.	To provide a more integrated approach which reflects both the proximity and connection afforded by the new and existing Metro stations and recreation, pedestrian linkages, housing and job opportunities, Urban Taskforce recommends a linked Strategy and planning approach that incorporates a boundary from the industrial zoned sites north of Robert St, Rozelle and down to the Light Rail Route through Glebe and around to include/join with the Blackwattle Bay Precinct.
2.	Urban Taskforce recommends that in the setting of levies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development feasibility is closely considered and • opportunities for a broader precinct with a shared infrastructure contributions scheme across the Bays area is explored.
3.	Urban Taskforce recommends precinct planning is accelerated beyond Blackwattle Bay with a view to aligning development delivery and public domain works. An acceleration of development would enable early delivery of public benefits, a strong contribution to the making of a viable “place”, and the simultaneous delivery of new commercial, community and residential built form before or as the new metro service is provided.
4.	Urban Taskforce recommends amendments to planning instruments avoid being overly prescriptive and instead focus on building envelopes and an open approach to land use.
5.	Given that the renewal of the entire Bays precinct is such a significant opportunity for Greater Sydney, and consistent with the planning process for Blackwattle Bay, the Urban Taskforce recommends that the entire redevelopment of the Bays area be rezoned via a (State-lead) State Significant Precinct Planning process <u>and</u> that DAs, subject to a certain capital investment value, are also classified as ‘State Significant Development’ with the Department of Planning and Minister for Planning being the consent authority.