



24 April 2018

Marcus Ray
Deputy Secretary
Planning Services
Department of Planning and
Environment

cc Amanda Harvey

Dear Marcus,

PLANNING PROPOSAL MARTIN PLACE STATION PRECINCT

Further to our discussions relating to the design excellence requirements for the above proposal, please find following my comments for your consideration.

I note that since my previous advice, further urban analysis relating to the incorporation of setbacks particularly on the south site has been undertaken by the Department.

Consistent with advice provided by myself and by the Metro Design Review Panel, I am not convinced that a rigorous application of setbacks will necessarily deliver the best outcome in this part of the city.

Subsequent to recent representation and provided the design is subject to a robust design review process to ensure a high-quality outcome, a minimum 8m setback of the south tower from the Martin Place frontage will be appropriate.

I remain of the view that the recently nominated site-specific design review panel should be regarded as the mechanism by which to test the performance and quality of the proposed design against the intent of setbacks across the site.

Sincerely,

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Martin Place View Analysis – Summary

The recently commissioned view analysis by AECOM reviewed impacts of the proposed over-station development proposed by Macquarie Bank, specifically for a commercial tower on the south side of Martin Place.

This review came to a contrary opinion concerning setback of the tower element to podium than did both the Design Review Panel and the Government Architect.

In summary, the AECOM report recommends a 12m tower setback in contrast to the 8m setback accepted by both other review groups.

Observations

The rationale for a tower on this site have been clearly articulated in the Tzannes studies and are predicated on a significant change to the status of this site due to the new Metro Station directly below. This new paradigm is further discussed by Tzannes in terms of Sydney's aspiration as a global city with Martin Place as the centre of business and commercial activity. The current controls for the site reflect a time when these were not a consideration and hence it is appropriate to reappraise the existing conditions and controls. Furthermore, the Tzannes report provides a detailed analysis of Martin Place which identifies a clear change in its nature from George Street to Macquarie Street and the need for a more nuanced or detailed response to this site.

A view analysis assesses visual impacts of new structures and should be considered in unison with other impacts and benefits. In the case of the proposed south tower at Martin Place some loss of view to the sky is apparent from the static visualisations presented by Macquarie Bank. All options presented affect the sky view however increased setbacks do reduce impacts. The quantum of this impact and hence the amount of setback is the subject of the current discussion.

The 8m setback recommended by the Design Review Panel and the Government Architect strike a balance between this single consideration and other factors.

To isolate sky view as a single element for analysis is counter to the best urban outcomes for the following reasons:

1. Sky view is not perceived in a static manner from proscribed viewpoints but is experienced in the round and in motion. Hence it is important to note the dynamic and everchanging aspect to our spatial and view experience. Single points of reference are not definitive.
2. The 8m setback is more in keeping with the streetscape as it sufficiently articulates street wall and tower whilst clearly identifying the subordinate nature of the tower.
3. A setback greater than 8m reduces the opportunity for the building form to be articulated and modelled. this potentially reducing quality outcomes.
4. The floor plates that result from a greater setback do impact on usefulness of internal space and potentially on commercial outcome.