

HIGHGATE

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Highgate Owners Corporation Strata Plan 49822

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Blackwattle Bay

Highgate is a strata scheme comprising 204 residential apartments, housing 382 residents in Millers Point (<https://highgate.com.au/>). Highgate is gravely concerned about the continued destruction of the Sydney Harbour foreshores, of which Blackwattle Bay is a major component. We reject and object to this proposal.

While the previous proposal (*Figure 1*) was appalling in its devastation of this natural asset belonging to the people of NSW, and the current proposal is somewhat improved (*Figure 2*), it remains unacceptable, primarily because of the heights of the towers, and the insufficient width of the Harbour Foreshore walk.



Figure 1 Initial Proposal for Blackwattle Bay



Figure 2 Current Proposal for Blackwattle Bay

Under the *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (NSW)* the foreshores and waterways of Sydney Harbour belong to the public of NSW and are required to be ‘recognised, protected, enhanced and maintained’. Towers of 34 storeys are inappropriate along the Harbour foreshores, create parking problems for residents and workers, and additional ‘employment opportunities’ that will go unrealised as the Australian workforce continues to contract, with further negative impacts on the economy.



Figure 3 Proposed tower development at Blackwattle Bay

The overbearing impact of these towers (*Figure 3*), created by the movement of prime publicly owned foreshore land into private hands, cannot be considered to ‘enhance’ or ‘maintain’ the Harbour foreshore. The *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 (NSW)* requires:

- (a) *Sydney Harbour is to be recognised as a public resource, owned by the public, to be protected for the public good,*
- (b) *the public good has precedence over the private good whenever and whatever change is proposed for Sydney Harbour or its foreshores,*

(c) protection of the natural assets of Sydney Harbour has precedence over all other interests.

This proposal is ensuring the interests of developers, short-term income for the NSW Government, and other private interests, but should not impinge on the public good in providing the invaluable Sydney Harbour Foreshore Walk, or Eora Journey Harbour Walk. This is an internationally important promenade that would 'enhance' the Harbour foreshore, the City of Sydney and NSW public assets for the people. It is essential that the public good take precedence in this component of the development of Blackwattle Bay.

The principles related to the public good, enhancement of the Sydney Harbour foreshores, and protection of the natural assets of Sydney Harbour are most limited in the proposal's Area 2 where the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Walk, or promenade, is reduced to only 10m. Area 2 is said to be privately owned land. It is this that hinders the continuity of a more suitable 30m promenade. The minimal offsets for this 10m wide strip of walkway that are provided within other areas of Blackwattle Bay by the proposal are completely inadequate.

There is an opportunity for Government to act in the interests of the public and to invest in the future of NSW by purchasing this difficult to develop strip of land entirely for the use of the public. Such action would increase the value of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Walk, for NSW and the country. Such a move would enhance the confidence of the public in the Government, and remove the push for development along this narrow strip of land. It would clearly demonstrate the Government respects and supports the principle that *'the public good has precedence over the private good whenever and whatever change is proposed for Sydney Harbour or its foreshores'*.

The Blackwattle Bay development sits primarily on publicly owned prized foreshore land that is mandated to be enhanced and utilised for the public good. Massive towers and a foreshore promenade minimum of only 10m do not reflect the public good and must be corrected.