

**Submission to
City of Port Phillip**

**Redevelopment of
1-7 Waterfront Place, Port Melbourne**

by

Port People Inc

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Port People Inc is a voluntary association of Port Melbourne residents formed to promote community values in the Garden City and Beacon Cove area.

As previously submitted to City of Port Phillip in March 2012, Port Melbourne Waterfront is not just a local gateway. It is a gateway to Victoria and Australia, so it is vital to get any redevelopment right. Moreover, Beacon Cove, the area that abuts it, is an award-winning development. In 2007 Mirvac won the PCA Innovation and Excellence Award for Masterplanned Communities. In 1996 architect Stephen Bowers won the HiA's Top Home Awards Victoria, Overall Victorian Winner/Medium Density Category, and in 2002 Warrandale Industries won the Landscape Management and Maintenance award from the Landscape Industry Association of Victoria.

Part of what made Beacon Cove award winning was the integration of essential public amenities such as small parks and the **low-rise** building constructed at 1-7 Waterfront Place. The low-rise buildings within the mixed-use precinct were designed to retain view corridors, maximise light, and to offer some green areas for public relaxation.

Regretfully, these planning fundamentals have been abandoned by the plans submitted by Waterfront Place Pty Ltd and contradict the principles surrounding the covenants and design elements. We object to several aspects of the proposed redevelopment. These are as follows:

1. Building heights

The community has very recently expressed its strong objection to high-rise buildings on this site for the following reasons:

- Creation of further wind tunnels;
- Overshadowing in general and in particular the foreshore;
- Increase in traffic.

The proposed plans in fact have realised all of these concerns. They now pose a significant threat to the liveability of the community.

The existence of the present towers in the area does not create a precedent. The height of the existing buildings was bitterly fought over and the result of a reluctantly accepted compromise by all parties. Their pre-existence is **not** a justification to add more towers. If this approach is taken, then where does it end? A high rise corridor similar to what has been allowed to occur in Surfers Paradise is not what is desired by this community. If anything, these structures and their associated problems are a warning to limit further high rise buildings in the area.

2. Traffic congestion at the cost of recreational amenity

The already intolerable traffic congestion will become much worse with the traffic requirements of the suggested buildings.

The traffic study by the developers is inadequate and disingenuous – assessing the traffic for only one day and when there was no cruise ship docked is poor methodology and has led to a biased result.

We also refer to page 3 of the BCNA submission regarding the exacerbation of current traffic congestion and we fully endorse their concerns.

Port People Inc also query some other practical aspects such as planning for large trucks to access the site for rubbish collection. The plans show only one access point to the site in an already congested road zone. Further explanation is required around this.

3. Pressure on Infrastructure

Infrastructure such as roads, trams, schools and childcare in the Port Melbourne area, specifically around Beacon Cove and Garden City, is already under significant pressure. The proposed Montague and Fishermen's Bend developments will increase this. The plans for 1-7 Waterfront Place, which would add 241 residences and 430 cars, will exacerbate these infrastructure pressures and have a significantly negative effect on the liveability of the existing community. For example, the existing tram service identified by the plans already runs at or near capacity, particularly during peak hours and cruise ship season

4. Lack of Architectural Significance/Excellence & Sustainability

As noted above, Beacon Cove is a gateway to both Victoria and Australia. The development of this site is therefore an opportunity for a gateway project that makes a statement not simply about the area but about the state and the nation. However, not only does the proposed development lack any features or design reflecting or referencing the area's historical and present day significance, with its limited style accommodation, shops and cafes the development's focus is clearly on property and financial returns on investment. In our view this does not make a gateway concept.

The small size of the apartments suggests suitability for a limited social demographic. The site needs to be suitable for mixed demographics of society in order to fit with the existing community feel and community expectations.

Development of the site must also be state of the art in regard to public amenity (a token pool and gymnasium are inadequate), sustainability, incorporation of its surrounds and encouragement of a community atmosphere.

Any buildings on the site should at the very least reflect current day sustainability practices such as vertical and roof-top gardens, innovative laundry drying methods and integrated communications facilities and other sustainable energy consumption and production methods.

The community is looking for a development which has architectural excellence as a priority.

5. Significant deviation from the intended plans for the site

The plans submitted are not a minor variation but a complete contradiction of the original aspirations for the site as set out in the Beacon Cove Precinct Plan and the essence of the Covenants which were designed to keep the site "in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by Henry Pollack and Associates Architects Pty Ltd" (per City of Port Phillip).

Port People Inc supports the submission of the Beacon Cove Neighbourhood Association ("BCNA") of 17 December 2012 and also shares BCNA's concerns regarding the planning process for this site and lack of consideration for the community and the lack of opportunity for all stakeholders to make appropriate decisions. The timing of this proposal and its schedule also demonstrates a lack of commitment to and concern for the community.

Because of the history of the project, we seek clarity around the planning and approval process for this site. Thirty days to assess and make decisions regarding such a significant development is inadequate.

Port People Inc strongly urges the City of Port Phillip to reject the plans as submitted and work towards this site being developed to truly reflect the significance of the area being an historical and present-day gateway to Victoria and Australia, one that also encompasses and enhances the existing community spirit in the area.