

Mr Robert Domm  
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18 April 2006

Dear Mr Domm

Re: Draft Built Environment Plan

I write on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia (NSW Synod) to express concern that the Draft Built Environment Plan for Redfern Waterloo imposes height and other restrictions on the Everleigh Street precinct.

It is inconsistent with Reconciliation processes for the NSW Government to impose such restrictions on the use of Aboriginal land. The use of The Block and nearby land needs to be determined through consultation with all Aboriginal stakeholders, in accordance with the NSW Government's "Two Ways Together" policy for dealing with Aboriginal Affairs in NSW, which requires that government policy reflect the aspirations of Aboriginal people, rather than ignoring or thwarting those aspirations.

One effect of the height restrictions is to rule out the project being proposed by the Aboriginal Housing Company, although this has won awards and is consistent with the historic use of The Block.

It seems extraordinary to impose height and land use restrictions in this way on land owned by Aboriginal people, the first peoples of the land; it can only be seen as a continuation of the invasion and colonization of the land.

I urge you to reconsider this part of the Draft Built Environment Plan, and to ensure that the use of Aboriginal land reflects the aspirations of Aboriginal people, as is required by the NSW Government's Two Ways Together policy for Aboriginal Affairs and by Reconciliation.

Yours sincerely

(Rev) Harry Herbert

Executive Director

The Hon Frank Sartor MP  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

18 April 2006

Dear Mr Sartor

I write on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia (NSW Synod) to express concern that the Draft Built Environment Plan for Redfern Waterloo imposes height and other restrictions on the Everleigh Street precinct. One effect is that the project prepared by the Aboriginal Housing Company would not be able to go ahead.

I urge you to intervene and ensure that the Built Environment Plan for this precinct reflects the NSW Government "Two Ways Together" policy for dealing with Aboriginal Affairs in NSW. This requires that the plan and government policy reflect the aspirations of Aboriginal people, rather than imposing land use restrictions on the land that they own.

Reconciliation requires, as an absolute bare minimum if it is to have any meaning, that Aboriginal people determine the use of Aboriginal land.

We urge you to intervene to ensure that there is consultation with all Aboriginal stakeholders, using a process that they will recognise as reasonable and providing them with an effective voice, and that any restrictions on the use of Aboriginal land in Everleigh Street Precinct reflect their aspirations rather than the imposed will of Government. Only as their aspirations are taken seriously will the process of invasion and colonization be truly ended.

Yours sincerely

(Rev) Harry Herbert