

NEWS RELEASE



18 July 2001

ESPY'S PLANNING CONTROLS ON EXHIBITION

19 July - 20 August

St Kilda and South Melbourne Town Halls, the St Kilda library and the Department of Infrastructure.

Draft planning controls for the St Kilda icon, the Esplanade Hotel, go on display for public comment tomorrow (19/7) to 20 August at the St Kilda and South Melbourne Town Halls, the St Kilda library and the Department of Infrastructure.

Port Phillip mayor, Julian Hill, said that, if adopted, the controls, now bundled up as Amendment C25 to the Port Phillip planning scheme, should ensure the retention of the Esplanade Hotel, irrespective of any other developments which may or may not be built behind the hotel now that Becton Corporation has put the whole site up for sale in two separate packages. A 38-tower, as originally proposed by hotel owners, Becton Corporation, has been ruled out. The maximum height limit is 8 – 10 storeys at the central core area and generally 3 – 5 storeys at the perimeter.

“The draft amendment also boosts the cultural significance of the Espy, now including a statement of about the Espy as an entertainment venue *par excellence* from the jazz and big band era to the more recent decades of rock'n'roll, country music, comedy and 'non-mainstream' cultural expression. No matter what gets built towards the rear of the site, it must reinforce the enduring cultural significance of this St Kilda landmark. The Espy, together with Luna Park and the Palais, makes a key contribution to the cultural identity of St Kilda,” he said.

Cr Hill said that the draft amendment also calls for the retention and conservation of the front section of Baymor Court, the Spanish Mission-style flats fronting Victoria Street.

“Future developments should preferably incorporate the kitchen wing of the hotel and former stables. Monolithic towers or slab-block constructions won't be permitted. A Residential 1 Zone will remain over the whole of the site. Previously a mixed use zone was being considered for the hotel portion of the site. Any future developers will be required to submit a conservation management plan for the existing heritage buildings on site.

“An absolute height limit of 15 metres/5 storeys will apply to the front section of the hotel. If the kitchen wing is retained, the preferred maximum height can’t be higher than the existing height of the Esplanade Hotel - 18 metres or six stories. If it is not retained, a preferred maximum height of 15 metres/5 storeys with an absolute maximum of 24 metres/8 storeys will apply to that area of the site. Naturally, any new development should be oriented towards the Esplanade and foreshore,” he said.

Cr Hill said that draft amendment included measures to ensure the protection of key views of the hotel, including those from the north-west and south.

“The amendment includes a proviso that the use of the upper levels be compatible with the traditional and evolving use and operation of the hotel. A similar proviso requires that the redevelopment of the upper levels and the balance of the site don’t create an amenity conflict with the hotel. Access, operational and service needs of the hotel will also need to be appropriately addressed. We don’t want the cultural integrity of the Espy compromised,” he said.

Cr Hill said that notices about the amendment had been sent to property owners/occupiers within an approximate 200 m radius of the Espy, eight local community groups (Acland Street Traders Association, Community Alliance of Port Phillip, Esplanade Alliance Incorporated, Fitzroy Street./Acland Street Residents Association, Fitzroy St. Traders Association, Historical Society of St Kilda Incorporated, Port Phillip Design Group and St Kilda Heritage Watch), the council planning advisory committee members, members of the Esplanade Hotel Working Group and the St Kilda Foreshore Joint Working Group, the National Trust, and prescribed referral authorities. Notices have been placed in the local papers and the Government Gazette.

General enquiries regarding the amendment should be directed to Sue Wood on 9209 6237.

“Following community consultation, the council will then need to consider all submissions received and may decide to request the Minister for Planning to convene an independent panel to consider the amendment and submissions referred to it by the council. The panel then reports back to the council. It is then up to the council to finalise the amendment and forward it to the Minister for final approval,” Cr Hill said.

Enquiries:

Carmel Shute
Council Media Officer
Tel: 9209 6163 Fax: 9525 4640
Mobile: 0412 569 356

Webpage: www.portphillip.vic.gov.au

After hours

Cr Julian Hill
Mayor, City of Port Phillip
Tel: 9645 2544
Mobile: 0419 886 541