



CBD: Hobart and kunanyi/Mt Wellington. Picture: LUKE BOWDEN

Ratepayers demand a low-rise city

Council has a chance to do what's in the best interests of Hobart, says **Brian Corr**

LAST October, City of Hobart voters elected eight aldermen and councillors who supported absolute maximum heights as a way of further protecting our city's heritage, view-lines, and streetscapes.

Hobart Not Highrise Inc asks that these elected members stand by their promise and support those who supported them.

In the recent Poll of Electors, the Principal Question was: Should the council support the building height limits and other recommendations made by its planning officers? To this question, 12,145 electors voted Yes, that's more than 77 per cent. Add to this 1805 electors, not included in the 12,145, who want the building height limit in Height Area I to be lower than 60m.

That's a strong clear message to the council from 13,950 electors — 88 per cent of those who voted — we do not want high-rise towers.

Public concern has not wavered over the past two years.

We have had a petition with more than 7600 signatures and three packed public meetings, all supporting a low-rise city with more protections on heritage buildings, view-lines, and streetscapes.

Also, a *Mercury* poll and another poll by local young architects showed that the majority of residents do not want high-rise towers.

On Monday, Hobart City Council has an opportunity to support its electors and stamp its mark on the history of our city.

Future generations, and historians, will see this as a landmark decision, and, in the years ahead, locals will proudly spend time maintaining and enhancing the heritage of our city.

I see a future where Hobart will encourage the exchange of information and expertise among historic cities throughout the world in close collaboration with others pursuing similar goals.

Our numerous heritage precincts, the mountain, and the waterfront, are what locals love and tourists flock to enjoy.

We don't need high-rise towers.

Hobart is a low-rise city and should remain that way. The cranes you see around the city are not for high-rise towers.

The officers' report, coming to the council on Monday, includes recommendations designed to further protect Hobart's heritage, view-lines, and streetscapes.

The recommended absolute maximum height limits are just one of the mechanisms to provide these additional protections. It would be sad to put this aside and take no action at this time.

We ask that the council approve the officers' recommendations. These would then go to the Planning Commission and back out for public consultation, with the Planning Commission seeking further information if needed.

Residents would be really pleased if this was done.

And, as the city's planning people have said more than once, all the people involved in the planning process — owners, developers, architects, city planners, elected members, members of the public — would have certainty.

A number of years down the track, the Central Hobart Precincts Plan might very well lead to further changes to the planning schemes.

Brian Corr is president of Hobart Not Highrise Inc.

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