

**SYDNEY**

Suite 123, 26-32 Pirrama Rd  
Pyrmont NSW 2009

**GOLD COAST**

Level 8, 50 Cavill Ave  
Surfers Paradise QLD 4217

**NEWCASTLE**

4 Crown St  
Newcastle, NSW 2300

932 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why NSW 2099  
Dee Why RSL



Design Statement  
For Northern Beaches Council  
REV.A | February 2025

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## Introduction

Altis Architecture were engaged by Dee Why RSL Club to undertake a review of the Clubs current operations in late 2023. The brief was to determine the best uses for the club's existing hospitality building to allow it to continue to be the premier hospitality venue in Dee Why and the Northern Beaches. The intension is to expand on the success of The Battery House, Courtyards and Flame Restaurant food and beverage development that was completed in 2020 and is often at capacity.

## Context

The site has street frontage on 3 sides with Pittwater Road to the west, Hawkesbury Avenue to the north and Clarence Avenue to the East. The southern end of the site is bounded with a childcare facility directly to the south on club land with a retiree living village to the south and west of the site again on adjoining club land. While the primary frontage to the club is along Pittwater Road, the primary entry is off Clarence Avenue where the car park entry as well as the main reception area are housed. A secondary entry is located to the northern end of Pittwater Road.

The site is just north of Dee Why Town Centre and within walking distance of Dee Why Beach, the B-line bus service and Northern Beaches Council.

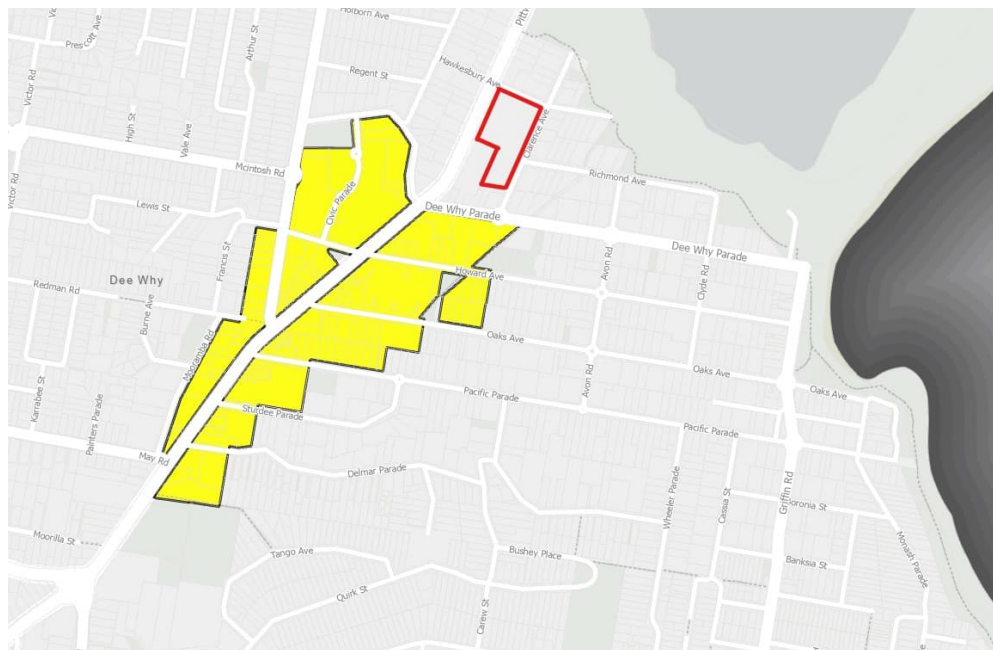


Figure 1-Dee Why Town Centre in yellow-Club site outlined in red

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The existing site currently contains the Dee Why RSL club which is a 4 storey club building consisting of various food and beverage venues including Aqua Bar and Dining (café), The Battery House (sports bar), Bistro, Courtyard (food and beverage venue) Flame (restaurant), and Tastes of Asia (food and beverage venue). The club also contains gaming facilities, an auditorium, six function rooms, a bowling centre and a car park.

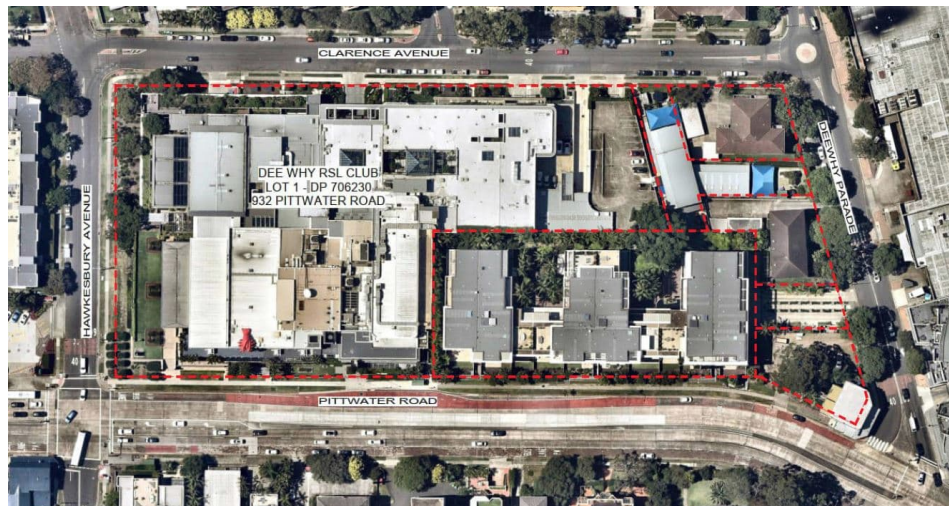


Figure 2-Existing site plan

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## Assessment of Existing Club

To determine the best course of action, an audit of the existing club and its facilities was undertaken. The results of this were as follows:

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### Utalisation of venues

On the main trading level (level 2), Battery House, Courtyards, Flame, Bistro and Tastes of Asia are at full capacity during busier periods of the week. Aqua Café is not as busy as the other food and beverage venues. Within each of the venues, it was noted that The Battery House, Courtyards and Flame fill up evenly throughout the venues with several different offers including outdoor areas, areas near windows, high seating and low seating which cater for different seating tastes amongst the patrons. In the Bistro and Tastes of Asia, it was noted that the patrons gravitated towards the eastern side of the venue and filled up the western end when the east was at capacity.

On level 3 there is an existing Auditorium, and function rooms which are large enough to cater for the clubs requirements.

### Venue Locations and Layouts

There is a good synergy between the food and beverage venues on the eastern side of the club on level 2. These venues include from North to South, "The Battery House", "The Courtyards", Flame Restaurant", "Bistro" and "Tastes of Asia". All these venues are connected to each other with the exception of the Battery House which is disconnected by the existing Bingo Room. These venues Are predominantly night time venues and share a peak patron period. The only other food and beverage venue is "Aqua Café", which is disconnected from all other food and beverage offers by both the existing gaming lounge and the main corridor that runs north south through the venue. This venue is predomiantly a day time venue. Due to its disconnected location, it is difficult to use this venue as overflow from the other venues at peak times. Refer to the figure below for the location of the various venues colour coded to indicate venues that are predomiantly used a night time and during the day.

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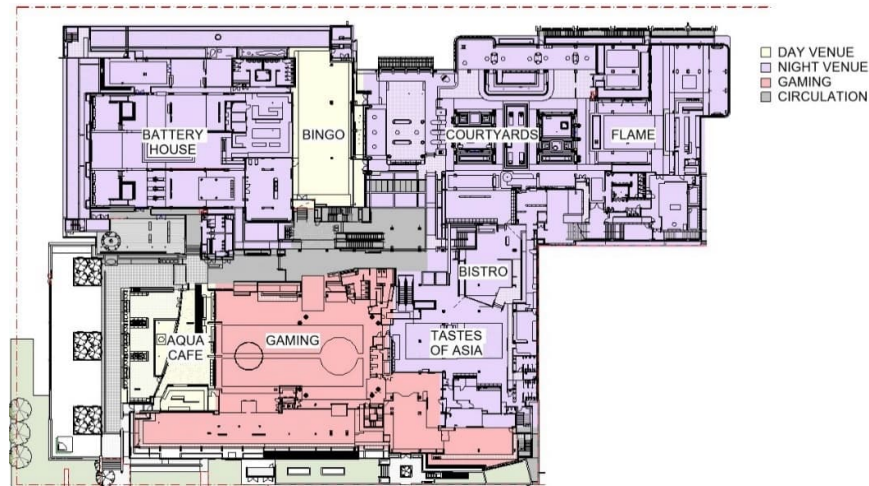


Figure 3- existing level 2

## Gaming

The gaming room has been constructed in an ad hoc manor to remain compliant with legislation like the smoke free environment act leading to a gaming floor in multiple area with long narrow rooms and hidden nooks. The gaming room also takes up floor space in the south west corner that would be better suited to food and beverage. This is also the only part of level 2 that is at the same level as Pittwater Road so is the ideal place for the club entry and also improves street activation.



Figure 4- Existing gaming footprint

## Streetscape

During the last development at the club there was a significant improvement made to the Clarence Avenue façade. While the club have always strived to present the club in the best possible way in terms of



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façade treatment, the Pittwater Road side of the building has fallen behind the Clarence Avenue side in terms of aesthetic appeal following the last development. The intent is to bring this portion of the façade to a similar level and language as the Clarence Avenue façade.

The existing entry from Pittwater Road is hidden from view as the club entry is located on the northern side of the building facing Hawkesbury Avenue approx. 50m from Pittwater Road. Due to the relatively steep incline on Hawkesbury Avenue, the entry to the club building is not visible to either Pittwater Road or Hawkesbury Avenue. This has resulted in poor street activation on Pittwater Road.

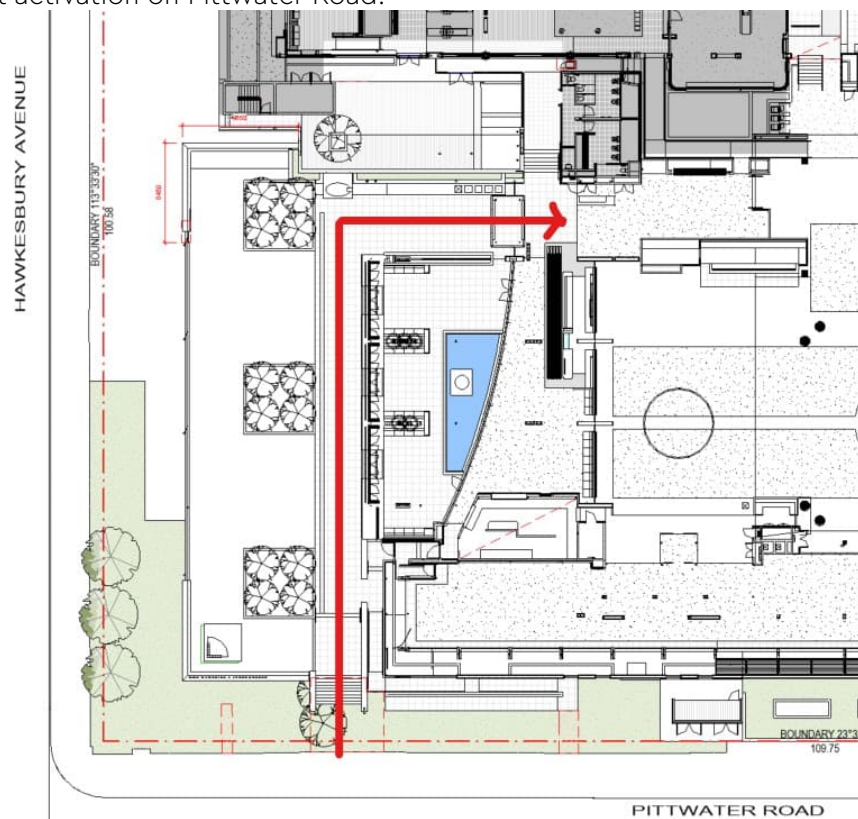


Figure 5-Existing Club Entry set back from Pittwater Road

Based on the results of the audit as outlined above, a strategic plan was developed and signed off by the club. The proposal enables the club to continue with what worked well in the last development while fixing some legacy inefficiencies in the club.

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## Proposal

The proposal includes:

- The demolition of the enclosure to Aqua Café on the northwest corner of the site as well as the existing Bingo room on the eastern side of the site.
- The internal demolition of the existing internal and alfresco gaming rooms including ancillary rooms like count rooms and comms rooms associated with Gaming.
- The relocation of the café to a new enclosed space in the location of the existing bingo room.
- The modification of gaming room footprint so that it takes the footprint of the existing Aqua Café and frees up space in the southwest corner of the club.
- Expansion of Tastes of Asia to the Pittwater Road side of the building in the area vacated by gaming.
- A new enclosure on the northwest corner of the site with a new façade befitting a gateway site as outlined in the "Dee Why Town Centre Masterplan July 2013" prepared by Place Design Group for Warringah Council
- A new entry off Pittwater Road

## Design Philosophy

The design philosophy for Dee Why RSL Club is centred on creating a community-centric space for the people of Dee Why and the Northern Beaches. This guiding principle is a key influence behind the design intent.

The intent is to:

- create an efficient layout for the building by maintaining what currently works well and repurposing the areas that don't.
- create a building aesthetic that provides a gateway building when approaching Dee Why town centre from the North.
- Improve the streetscape by creating a better connection between the club and Pittwater Road and to Dee Why town centre.
- Develop a cohesive façade by incorporating elements of the recently completed Clarence Avenue façade in the new facades on Pittwater Road and Clarence Avenue.



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### Building Layout

As noted in the audit, the food and beverage areas of the club that are located adjacent to each other on the main trading floor have been more successful than the venues that are more isolated. To solve this issue, the existing Aqua Café will be relocated from the northwest corner of the club to the eastern side of the club so that it sits between the Battery House and Courtyards. This will consolidate all the food and beverage venues on the east and southwestern side of the club. There are several benefits to this relocation.

- The Battery House kitchen was designed to cater for another venue to the south of the kitchen so the café can be added here with little upgrade to the existing kitchen.
- The Battery House and Courtyards are often at capacity on Friday and Saturday nights. The café is predominantly a daytime venue that can be used as an overflow space to both the Battery House on the north and the Courtyards on the south. This allows the club to cater for larger amounts of people at peak times while also maintaining its existing café offer during quieter morning and daytime periods.

The existing gaming room currently has an inefficient layout. By freeing up the footprint currently occupied by the Aqua Café, it allows:

- the rationalisation of the layout so that the alfresco gaming is not spread into various long skinny spaces and co-located into one space on the northern end of the site
- the southwest corner of the site to be freed up to cater for a new Asian restaurant adjacent to the Tastes of Asia food and beverage venue. As well as providing additional footprint, the venue also gets a frontage onto Pittwater Road which enables natural light to penetrate into the venue which is not currently the case. By providing better amenity to this end of the venue, it will help solve the current issue where the western side of the venue is the last to fill up.
- Relocating gaming allows for a new pedestrian entry off Pittwater Road, closer to Dee Why town centre as well as public transport as the existing southbound B-line bus stop is within 25m of the proposed entry.

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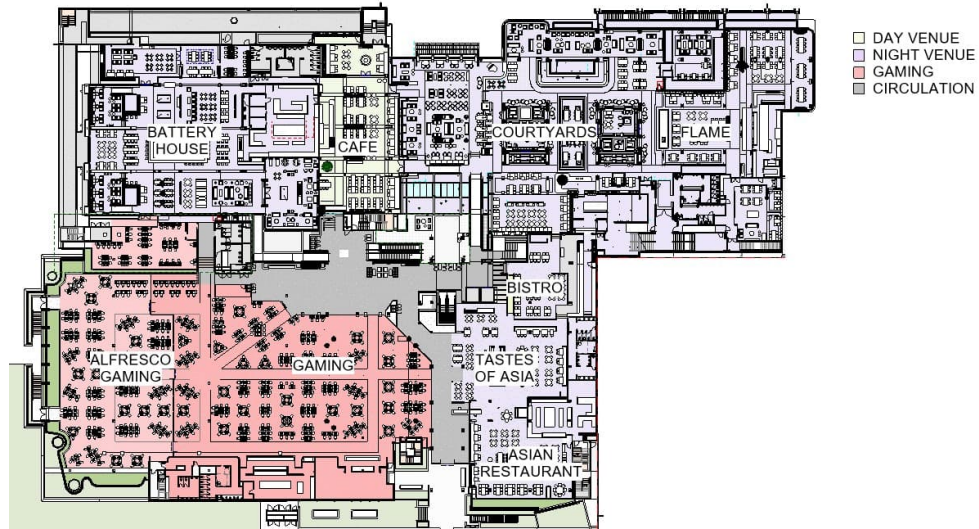


Figure 6-Location of relocated venues

## Building Aesthetic and Scale

The new facade on Pittwater Road aims to tie in with the scale of the existing facade on this side of the building. The height of the highest proposed parapet (shown in blue below) has been aligned with the existing building height as demonstrated by the red dashed line shown on the existing Pittwater Road elevation in figure 8 below.

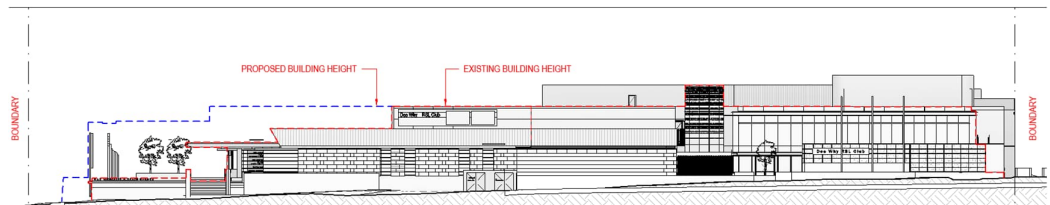


Figure 7 outline of proposed facade

With regards to aesthetics and materiality, the intent is to provide a cohesive façade by using a similar architectural language and materiality in the proposed façade as already exists in other areas of the existing building.

On the southern end of the western façade, a new entry from Pittwater Road to the clubs main trading floor on level 2 is being created. This new entry will consist of a new copper entry awning wrapping over the existing glass façade of the existing pre-function area on level 3. As well as giving prominence to the new entry on Pittwater Road, the form and materiality

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of this awning will tie in with the existing pedestrian and vehicle drop off entry on level 1 of the club on Clarence Avenue as they use the same material and are of a similar form thus providing a visual link between both club entries.



Figure 8-Clarence Avenue Entry



Figure 9-Pittwater Road Entry

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The central portion of the western facade around the gaming back of house, dispense bar and male and female amenities will consist of stone cladding. The cladding will be detailed to have a mixture of butt and expressed joints to give a patterned appearance to the wall similar to the image in figure 10 below. This pattern as well as the landscape treatment will help break up the length and scale of this portion of the façade. The façade is further articulated by a step in the façade at the intersection of the dispense bar and male and female amenities as well as the introduction of windows in the gaming back of house and female toilets



*Figure 10- stone cladding*



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*Figure 11-stone clad facade*

On the northwest corner of the site, the facade will become more sculptural in form. The intention here is to provide a statement facade, not only to the club but also to signify the arrival at the northern end of Dee Why town centre. Due to the slope in the site, the northwest corner of the main trading floor (level 2) sits above the natural ground level. The existing building has a podium area above the existing bowling centre as indicated in figure 12 below.



*Figure 12-Existing Podium*

The intent is to retain this podium and set back the level 2 façade from the

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edge to give some breathing space between the corner of the building and Pittwater Road and Hawkesbury Avenue. The facade also takes a curved form in plan to soften its appearance and reduce the bulk of the building on this end. As the façade is on front of a gaming room, it is essential that the gaming machines are not visible from the street to comply with gaming legislation. The façade takes reference from breeze block walls but with very few openings. All openings have been placed to allow light through the façade but prevent visibility to gaming machines. The screen is made up of multiple aluminium panels with stone detailing set in a metal frame.



*Figure 13-podium with setback to facade*

On the Hawkesbury Avenue side of the building the existing podium will be retained with two egress stairs exiting from level 2 adjacent to this podium. These egress stairs will be clad in dry stone and become part of the landscape buffer between the stone wall and the boundary as well as between the stone wall and the level 2 façade.



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*Figure 14-Stone Clad egress stairs*

The architectural language from Pittwater Road extends around the corner onto the Hawkesbury Avenue side of the building. To break up the length of the screen, a series of concrete blades have been introduced. These blades take on a similar form to the existing concrete blades on Clarence avenue thus helping to tie the architecture of the building together.



*Figure 15-Existing Clarence Ave concrete blades with screen infills*

While the existing bingo room is being demolished and replaced by a new café, the impact on the Clarence Avenue façade is minimal as the café is set back behind an existing parapet wall. Only a small portion of the roof will be visible above this parapet as indicated in yellow in the figure below.

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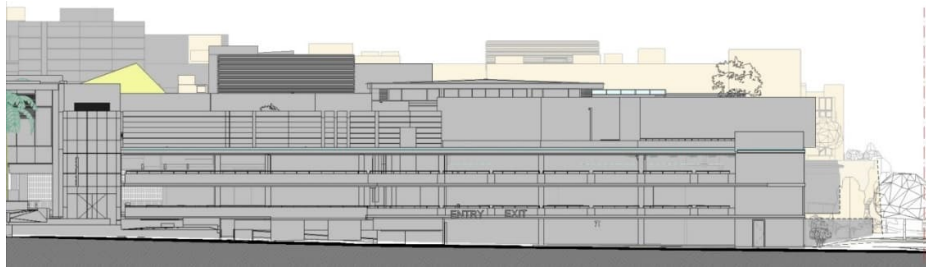


Figure 16-Clarence Avenue Proposed Elevation

The scale of the proposed alterations are largely in keeping with the scale of the existing building and generally comply with the 12m height limit on the site with the exception of a few minor elements. These elements include:

- Stair access to the proposed roof.
- A plant room enclosure and equipment
- A small portion of the proposed roof over the café.

This is consistent with the existing building which has a number of items above the 12m height limit. These include:

- Plant rooms and equipment
- Part of the existing level 3 auditorium
- Level 4 offices
- Lift overruns
- Stairs to the existing roof

For further information, refer to the architectural drawings which include height plane drawings.

The alterations generally comply with the Northern Beaches set back requirements with one exception.

The current set back control on the northern side of the building is to extend no further than the existing building. The façade above the podium complies with this and is generally set back further than the existing building as indicated with a blue dashed line below, with only the blades extending to the edge of the existing façade.

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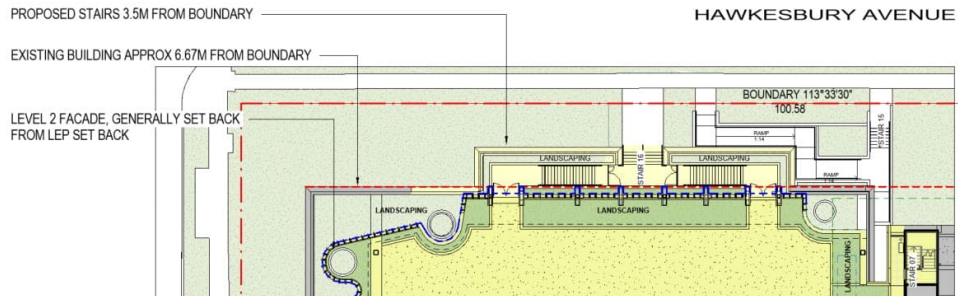


Figure 17-Hawkesbury Avenue Setback

The egress stairs from level 2 to the street do however encroach into the setback and are 3.5m from the boundary. This is consistent with previous approvals on the site where egress stairs have been approved in the setback zone. As part of this development the existing stairs and ramp from level 2 to Pittwater Road is being demolished. This ramp and stairs currently sit within the setback zone and are approx. 2.5m from the boundary, therefore we will be replacing this access with a new egress point 1m further back from the boundary.

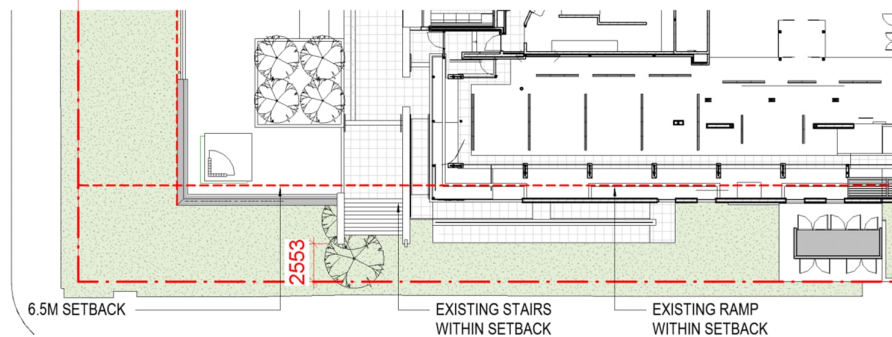


Figure 18-Existing Pittwater Road Access

As per the figures below, stairs 01, 02, 04 and 05 also encroach on to the set back from Clarence Avenue. It is worth noting that the proposed egress stairs are less intrusive than the stairs on Clarence Avenue as the distance from level 2 to the natural ground level is less on Hawkesbury Avenue than it is along Clarence Avenue.

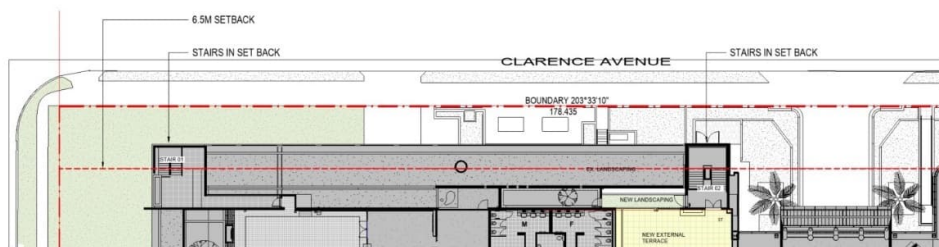


Figure 19-Clarence Ave setback North.

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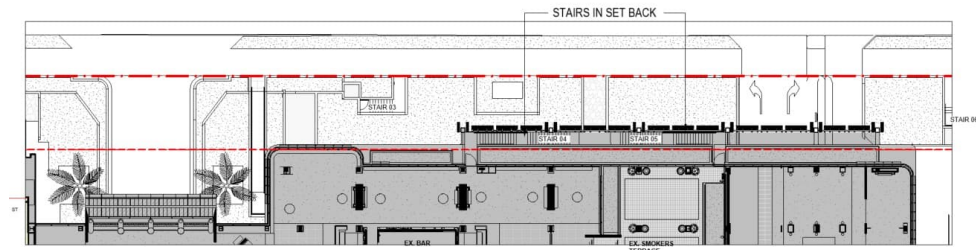


Figure 20-Clarence Ave setback South

## Streetscape

As noted, the existing building does not engage with Pittwater Road as well as it could do. This is due to the location of the entry to the club being set back from Pittwater Road (shown with a blue arrow in the figure below) as well as the large setback that on the podium to the existing café. This large set back has resulted in the podium becoming more dominant with the hospitality building slightly hidden behind.



Figure 21-Existing Club Entry

The proposal aims to improve the street scape by providing direct access from the street to the club at the southern end of the site. The relocation helps activate the façade for passersby while also providing better access for pedestrians coming from the adjacent bus stop or from Dee Why town centre further to the south. The proposed façade at the corner of Pittwater Road and Hawkesbury Avenue also provides more presence to this corner of the site. This is in keeping with the desire to create a gateway site in this location as noted in the "Dee Why Town Centre Masterplan July 2013" prepared by Place Design Group for Warringah Council



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Figure 22-Dee Why Town Centre Masterplan-Northern Gateway

## LEGEND

- 01 Northern Gateway  
Visual marker to announce arrival
- 02 Pittwater Road 1  
Entry Sequence with streettree and arrival treatment
- 03 North West Civic Carpark  
Potential built form development
- 04 Landscape Conservation Area
- 05 North East Civic Land  
Potential built form development
- 06 Clarence Ave  
Beach access from north with Town Centre bypass - street hierarchy amendments
- 07 Drainage Channel  
Boardwalk situation over current open channel creates pedestrian link to / from Lagoon walk
- 08 Dee Why Parade Corner  
Potential Town Centre arrival marker site and pocket park on visual axis from Pittwater Road north
- 09 Drainage Channel  
Boardwalk situation over current open channel creates pedestrian link to / from Lagoon walk
- 10 Warringah Council Building / Civic Centre  
Existing Civic Centre building to be conserved
- 11 Dee Why Library Building  
Heritage building to be conserved
- 12 Civic Centre Carpark East  
Opportunity for built form and public realm development
- 13 Civic Centre Carpark South West  
Opportunity for built form and public realm development

## Landscaping

Landscaping is an integral part of the design strategy and works hand in hand with the architectural design. The intent is to maintain the landscaping where possible along Pittwater Road and add to and enhance where the existing landscaping is being altered.

Along the southern end of Pittwater Road, there is a mix of green wall areas, palm trees and hedges. These will be maintained as part of the proposal

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Figure 23-Existing Landscaping Pittwater Road

Further to the north there are palm trees, a low height hedge obscuring the existing ramp entrance to the club and a grove of olive trees. As part of the development, the existing ramp and stairs will be removed giving more space for landscaping, the olive grove will also be replaced as the trees are not thriving.



Figure 24-Existing Landscaping Pittwater Road-North



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At the northern end of Pittwater Road as well as along Hawkesbury Avenue, the proposal is to replace the existing landscaping with a more structured landscape layout. This will consist of tiered planters to obscure and descale the podium as well as dealing with the steep slope in the site at this corner. This is a similar strategy that was undertaken at the entry to the club on Clarence Avenue where the height between the street and the entry level was descaled with tiered landscape planters.



Figure 25-Clarence Avenue Planters

New palm trees will be added to complement the existing palms further south along Pittwater Road as well as low level planting within the tiered planters. Additional trees and low-level plants are included on level 2 between the new façade and the edge of the existing podium.



Figure 26-landscaping Pittwater Road and Hawkesbury Avenue

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## Summary

Dee Why RSL club has been an integral part of the Northern Beaches since 1937 and today has a membership more than 71,000. The club has consistently redeveloped to grow with Dee Why and the greater northern beaches to provide a class leading hospitality venue.

The current development seeks to enhance the club further by:

- Retaining what works well in the existing building
- Providing additional food and beverage space
- relocating gaming to allow all food and beverage venues to be located adjacent to each other to patrons from more busier venues to use adjacent spaces when those venues are quieter.
- Upgrading the façade and moving the club entry help activate both the club as well as the approach to Dee Why Town Centre from the north.
- Enhancing the landscape treatment along Pittwater Road and Hawkesbury Avenue.