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Subject: Online Submission

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MS Prudence Wawn
47 Riverview RD
Avalon NSW 2107
pruwawn@gmail.com

RE: DA2021/1522 - 189 Riverview Road AVALON BEACH NSW 2107

The development proposed for 189 Riverview Rd is absolutely enormous, the bulk, height and scale are excessive - yet another monolith thumbing its nose at local environment protections. So much for touching the earth lightly in a sensitive E4 Environmental Living zoning. [LSEP] Not low impact and will have serious environmental and negative aesthetic effects on the area, dominating the visual landscape from Pittwater and towering over its neighbours.

The remaining trees that survive the actual construction will struggle on land where the hydrology is completely changed by this huge building, blocking water flow down the slope, creating a drier soil profile. This will impact the health of long established trees, making them more vulnerable, perhaps also facing removal ultimately.

Neighbours battled a similar inappropriate proposal for many years at 45 Riverview Rd, where quite a number of protected spotted gums were to be lost. Initially refused in the Land and Environment Court, then later the Independent Planning Panel slightly moderated the scale of the DA. More attempts by the owners to increase the size again and remove trees created local community animosity, so the property was sold and they moved away. The trees remain, contributing to the iconic character of the area and the environmental benefits they provide, as climate change kicks in - attributes which cannot be replaced with offsets elsewhere.

We all know that this is a Pittwater Spotted Gum Forest, Endangered Ecological Community EEC here, with Stokes Point becoming one of the places on the peninsula where the canopy is under attack by McMansions. The bird life is incredible - the critically endangered swift parrot relies on these trees, as do many others. On such a steep block, they are holding the soil together and preventing erosion. The Biodiversity Assessment Report lists 16 canopy trees proposed for removal from this site - 7 Spotted Gums; 2 Broad-leaved White Mahogany; 5 Forest Oaks; 1 Grey Gum and 1 Grey Ironbark. Irreplaceable vegetation connections exist, so therefore this DA fails to comply with Clause B4.22 - Preservation of Trees and Bushland Vegetation. [LSEP] Adding to the destruction will be impacts to trees on the adjoining private properties. The most adversely affected is a substantial canopy tree immediately to the south, which according to the report will have its roots impacted in the TPZ by 29.24%. placing that tree at risk as well.

Only 9 native canopy trees would be retained, all occurring within the footprint of the site below the Foreshore Building Line. This is an endangered community that relies on the other trees remaining for its survival, all living in close association with other plant species, biologically connected through sub-surface mycelium. Their roots not only support one another, but the canopy closes gaps to shield the high winds from the south west that travel across the expanse of water, which also helps to stabilise the forest.

The loss of trees along the ridge of Stokes Point will create another ugly gap along the horizon line, something that the former Pittwater Council went to great lengths to prevent happening. This loss of canopy impacts the unique visual quality of Pittwater and significantly upsets the ecological network of plant and animal species that are becoming increasingly isolated in ever-diminishing islands of natural habitat.

Ensuring the continuing health of the trees to be retained is problematic and certainly can't be guaranteed when the steepness of the site presents such considerable construction challenges. The negative impacts to existing trees will bring about their demise when natural drainage lines are diverted, wind tunnels opened up and when soil profiles are altered, compressed or smothered.

Approval of this DA will set a precedent, resulting in still more destruction of native vegetation along the shoreline of Pittwater. The cumulative effect must be considered when so much continual piecemeal loss of native vegetation and fauna habitat is being allowed to occur on private land.

The increasingly diminished remnant Spotted Gum Forest was determined as an endangered ecological community (EEC) in the Sydney Basin Bioregion in late 1998 by the (then) NSW Scientific Committee under Part 3 of Schedule 1 Threatened Species Act 1995 (now Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016). Pittwater Council subsequently wrote to private landowners in Stokes Point advising on May 2001 of the determination of an EEC with the particular "responsibility to care for and maintain" resting with landowners. This determination has informed resident's commitment to tree protection here and should be taken into consideration by Council in regards to this development application given s.7.16 (2) Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 requires that: ^[L]~~[SEP]~~ The consent authority must refuse to grant consent under Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, in the case of an application for development consent to which this Division applies (other than for State significant development), if it is of the opinion that the proposed development is likely to have serious and irreversible impacts on biodiversity values.

As a long-term resident of Riverview Rd, I'm asking Council to refuse this highly inappropriate development application in accordance with the legislation and to help preserve the environment we have all fought to protect.

Yours sincerely, Pru Wawn