

24 August 2022

The General Manager  
Northern Beaches Council

**Attention: Dave Auster**

Dear Sir,

**DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION DA (DA2022/1153)  
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW DWELLING HOUSE  
1162 PITTWATER ROAD, COLLAROY**

We wish to object to the proposed construction of a new dwelling at 1162 Pittwater Road, Collaroy Beach which adjoins our family home, to the south under the local government act.

As a country boy from Oberon, I grew to love the beach following some childhood family holidays on the northern beaches and from the many books I read as a boy.

After returning from a tour of Vietnam in the army I thought all my dreams had come true when in 1976 I found a dilapidated cottage at 1164 Pittwater Road, so derelict that no financial institution would lend on it. Eventually after seven months I bought it with the help of a small loan from the Department of Veteran's Affairs. It had been a fight but to finally live at the beach was the fulfilment of my boyhood dreams.

My wife and I married forty-one years ago but at this time, the old fisherman's cottage, which was falling down around us, wasn't suitable in which to raise a family, so we decided to demolish it and build our dream home in this dream location.

The struggle to buy the property was magnified exponentially when we tried to get our plans passed, as after the 1974 storms the council was extremely cautious about approving development on Collaroy Beach front. A rock revetment wall was built to protect the four neighbouring properties and when finally approved, the house was constructed on a reinforced concrete raft base, sitting on eleven, thirty-five feet long piers.

The stringent council regulations of the time determined our home's footprint. It was squeezed in between the regulatory setbacks from Pittwater Road as well as the beach. Consequently, the size of the home we built, was all we could build, due to Warringah Shire Council's insistence on meeting the setbacks of that time.

Sharing a love of the Federation period, we constructed the house incorporating authentic pieces collected from Federation homes being demolished in the eighties. There are over sixty leadlight windows, the cedar staircase, the front door and other pieces are from mansions in Manly. There is a story and history behind everything we collected and built into our home. Our passion to create our forever home was unwavering. This is no investment property; we are never going to leave it.

The land lost in the 1974 storms was reclaimed, turfed, gardens planted and our dream home was finally constructed.

A later DA to build garages between the road and the front of the house, was initially denied but later relaxed on appeal, considering the angle of the road to our side boundaries. Once constructed, our beautiful family home was complete.

From this home we have raised our three sons, run a business and enjoyed the amenity of our beachside existence to the full. During this time, I have continued to serve the community coaching several sports with a passion for youth mentoring and personal development and sitting on boards and committees at many veteran organisations, schools and sporting clubs. My life has been based on integrity and commitment to family, our business and community service.

Over the years we experienced many storm fronts that took away fences, gardens and land. We never complained but just lived with the vagaries of nature. Following the damage caused by the East Coast Low in July 2016 however, the owners of the eleven beachfront properties from Stuart to Wetherill Streets, decided to build a sea wall to protect our properties. More than six years later, the project is nearing completion. It has been a lengthy and costly process requiring constant co-operation and input from all participants, to ensure the integrity of the project and the protection we sought. We thank the state government and council for the support they have given us throughout this very drawn-out process.

Owning a beachfront property is a privilege.

Unlike suburban houses with high fences and trees for privacy, along this beachfront, we share the open spaces of the amenity with our neighbours, as well as views of the ocean and the iconic headlands of Long Reef and North Narrabeen. We all overlook each other's gardens. It is the nature of the location and the views we share. We can each see into the backyards of our neighbours and can wave to them on their balconies. It is a unique location allowing us all to share these special views and enjoy the amenity to the fullest.

So having struggled for over six years to protect our properties, we now face the prospect of having the amenity of our home grossly impacted and the idyllic views we have enjoyed for over forty years being obliterated. The bulk of this building and its proposed positioning, over five metres in front of our home, is selfish and just simply unfair.

In the DA View Sharing Analysis, five pages were devoted to the properties on the western side of Pittwater Road which have little views by virtue of the fact they have all the beachfront homes in front of them but six lines are offered on the impact of this development on our home.

Quote: *"Given that the proposed new dwelling is located to the south of 1164, it will have negligible impact on the views enjoyed of Collaroy Beach".*

This statement is utterly false. With a building of this bulk, set five metres in front of our home along with the planned banksias, our views of the iconic Long Reef Headland would simply disappear.

The owners of this property rented the original house and holidayed there at times but never lived in it. By contrast, I have lived here for forty-six years and this has been our family home for forty-one years.

We all built this seawall to protect our homes; not to create a land grab for owners to push further and further towards to the beach, selfishly blocking out the views of their neighbours.

Our blocks are long and angled to the south and we have all built in accordance with the council regulations at the time. This has created uneven house footprints depending on the year the homes were constructed.

Any future development applications could be evaluated considering the position of the existing neighbouring homes rather than an arbitrary straight line drawn between existing buildings, as has been used in the DA for 1162.

We encourage the council to examine this case very carefully because with other seawalls being constructed further along this Collaroy/Narrabeen beachfront, this situation will arise again. I feel that those who adhered to existing building regulations at the time and who have lived a long time in those homes, should not be penalised by any potential changes these seawalls may bring. Not all property owners would be financially able to extend their existing home or demolish and rebuild to regain the views lost from properties moving forward. Any subsequent view loss would devalue their homes.

My wife and I have sought professional advice to detail our many objections to this proposal in view sharing, bulk, landscaping, drainage, shadowing and much more, the submissions of which have been lodged with council.

As a family, we have loved our years living here at Collaroy. Growing up on the beach enriched the lives of our sons immeasurably. We built our dream home as a forever home. Now in our seventies, we have no intention of downsizing and moving from this beautiful location. We will live out the rest of our lives here.

We find it very sad that at this stage of our lives, as retirees, we are now in this stressful position of having to fight to preserve the freedom of the amenity our family has enjoyed as our home, for over forty years. We are not against anyone building their home next to us but see no reason why we all can't share the views and amenity into the future.

We will fight this proposal.

As a personal submission, we find this proposal lacks integrity, is arrogant and selfish and ask that it be refused.

Respectfully yours,

Doug and Lesley McGrath