
Sent: 9/08/2021 2:48:16 PM
Subject: Strong opposition to DA2021/116 521 Barrenjoey Road
Attachments: DA2021_116 521 Barrenjoey Road Sue Martin.pdf;

Dear Mr Brownlee,

Attention Anne-Marie Young

Please find attached a submission opposing the DA2021/116 521 Barrenjoey Road, Bilgola

This is a DA which is causing considerable alarm in the local community and indeed to anyone who travels via Bilgola Bends.

Regards
Sue Martin

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Mr Ray Brownlee
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Beaches Council

Dear Mr Brownlee

Re: Rejection of DA2021/116 521 Barrenjoey Road Bilgola

This development is most inappropriate and for many reasons must not be approved.

521 Barrenjoey Road, like those adjoining this property, south of the roundabout at Plateau Road, should never have been zoned for residential development. The land was originally owned by the Department of Main Roads. When they sold the land, I understand that, regrettably, it was rezoned for residential development by the then Warringah Shire Council. Those were far less enlightened times.

The reasons for my strong objections to the DA include:

Regional significance of the green gateway to Avalon Beach, Whale Beach and Palm Beach

The Bilgola Bends are iconic as the gateway to the upper northern beaches. The lines of visitor traffic snaking around the Bilgola Bends during holiday periods attest to the popularity of this area famed for its natural beauty. This is of course makes it a very valuable source of income for local businesses.

A very large and tall building at 521 would create a scar in the current native bushland and tree canopy. Approval of this development would also embolden other developers and create a precedent that would have tragic consequences for the green gateway of Bilgola Bends. The size of the scar on the bushland would also increase as the native bush was replaced by a concrete jungle.

Environmental and amenity issues

Approval of this development would devastate the amenity and environmental significance of this area.

521 Barrenjoey Road has significant remnant forest, including spotted gums, angophoras and macrozamia, all of which have historic and environmental value. The DA proposes the removal of 30 native trees.

The bushland also provides stability for the very steep slope. As the crisis of climate change intensifies, we should be protecting established trees not demolishing them, thereby protecting steep slopes, and not undermining them.

The construction of a very large building would destroy this important area of native bush. The structure would be glaringly at odds with the surrounding remnant forest and the

amenity of the area in general. Travelling the Bilgola Bends currently means driving along a winding road through a forest. It is a unique area because, unlike the rest of Barrenjoey Road, it is lined with bushland not houses.

Non compliance

I note that the architect has been most “creative” in design and justification for all the failures to comply in DA2021/116 521.

Set back non compliance

The DA seems to dismiss the significance of the side setbacks on open space and ignores the contribution of open space to the amenity of an area. To justify the non-compliance of open space because the encroachment does not affect views, privacy or overshadowing, completely misses the point. Open space is important and must be retained to protect the character of the area. Allowing non-compliance would set a dangerous precedent.

Height non compliance

The development also fails to comply with the height limitation of two storeys. To suggest that height compliance is not an issue because the proposed development is against a steep slope is unacceptable.

All DAs must comply with the Northern Beaches Council’s height limit of 8.5 m. Precedents are dangerous, especially in these times of litigants with deep pockets.

Approval of a non-compliance would set a worrying precedent. It would give a green light for additional storeys to any properties backing onto cliffs or escarpments. NBC cannot afford to repeat the development-approval mistakes of previous councils. Non-compliance because of a steep slope is not acceptable.

Car parking non compliance

The DA states

Car parking for 4 cars is provided in the proposed carport and garage.

The car parking proposal is unable to comply because there is insufficient area for the garage and car port. This insufficiency does not entitle the owner to disregard compliance. This failure to comply demonstrates the limitations and unsuitability of the site for the proposed development. Compromises must not be permitted because of the limitations and unsuitability of the site. This would set a dangerous precedent.

Traffic

One of the conditions of development when the Department of Main Roads sold these properties, was that vehicles would only exit northwards and would only enter from the south. This condition, which of course was impossible to monitor or enforce, was certainly an acknowledgement of the traffic hazard these properties presented, even all those years ago. Any excavation and building on this site will cause significant traffic hazards and delays for months.

The DA states

Construction/Works Zone No Construction/Works Zone will be required. All vehicles will load and unload from within the site.

This statement ignores the challenges provided by the topography of the site. The access from narrow Barrenjoey Road is so limited that even manoeuvring vehicles on and off the site will cause traffic delays. It will not be possible for all vehicles to load and unload from within the site and it will not be feasible for either NBC staff or the police to ensure compliance. Traffic delays and chaos are inevitable.

The DA states that the builder will take ownership of:

- *Maintaining smooth traffic and pedestrian flow with minimal disruptions to the surrounding streets and land users.*

Minimal disruption is not possible. Any vehicle movement will cause **maximum** disruption to traffic flow.

- *Undertaking works with minimal impact on residential neighbours*

This sounds good but is largely irrelevant. I understand that all but one neighbouring property are currently accessed from Plateau Road and not Barrenjoey Road.

- *Ensuring safe access and egress from the site with traffic control procedures implemented for heavy vehicle movements as required;*

This is not possible. Each access, egress and manoeuvre onto the narrow site will cause massive disruption to traffic flow.

- *Ensuring safe pedestrian passage across the site perimeter and footpath*

To what footpath is the architect referring? This is not a pedestrian area and this response suggests that this is a pro forma response rather than a site specific reference.

- *Install appropriate site safety and regulatory signage on site, and source traffic management signage.*

The reference to **Traffic management** is a euphemism for stopping the traffic around Bilgola Bends, while vehicles manoeuvre onto the site. This again sounds like the standard patten in response to this point.

The traffic delays for through traffic will be significant for months while large trucks are manoeuvred onto a small area from a narrow two lane road with limited visibility.

Tragically what has been feared for many years happened recently on Bilgola Bends. There was a fatality. The road is narrow with limited visibility through the curves and “bends”. The constant tension between cars, trucks and cyclists means that it is hazardous to negotiate. The proposed development will exacerbate the traffic flow and safety problems. There would be many months of arrivals, manoeuvres and departures of excavation vehicles, delivery trucks and tradies’ vans, causing delays and chaos for the traffic flow.

Council needs to act and reject this DA.

In assessing this DA, I trust that staff from NBC will visit the site and see just how inappropriate this DA is for so many reasons.

Travelling to the site will show the uniqueness of this iconic bushland and forest gateway which deserves protection.

Even attempting to park to view the site, will demonstrate the traffic issues.

One may have some sympathy for people who purchased these blocks but even the most inexperienced of developers would have seen the many problems and the inappropriateness of residential development here.

The ongoing approval of tree loss on private properties in Northern Beaches LGA is of grave concern. There also seems to be no mechanism to ensure that NBC supervises and enforces tree replanting as part of DA approval. In Pittwater, tree canopy is being replaced by shrubs.

Although the blocks along this area of Barrenjoey Road are zoned for development, they are manifestly unsuited. Zoning them for residential development was an egregious error that needs to be rectified.

For reasons of safety, amenity and the environment, no further development should occur on the iconic Bilgola Bends.

I urge you to reject this application and work towards changing the zoning so that there will be no future attempts at residential development in this manifestly unsuitable area.

Yours faithfully
Sue Martin OAM

CC
Mr Rob Stokes, Member for Pittwater
Mayor Michael Regan
Councillor Kylie Ferguson
Councillor McTaggart
Councillor Ian White