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**Sent:** 24/11/2020 1:19:22 PM  
**Subject:** Canon scan  
**Attachments:** 0214\_201124132121\_001.pdf;

Scan attached

15 October 2020

The Honorable Michael Regan  
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Mr. Phil Lane – Planner, Northern Beaches Council  
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Dear Sirs/Madam;

**RE: DA2020/1063 – Stadium lights at John Fisher Park**

The purpose of this petition is;

- 1) To strongly object to the installation of Sporting Floodlights at John Fisher Park, and
- 2) Raise serious questions concerning the probity and process being followed by Northern Beaches Council in proposing this application.
- 3) Highlight the significant Safety Liability that Council has failed to address in this application and will be unable to resolve.
- 4) Detail that the notification of this proposal failed to notify residents on the Southern side of Bennett Street nor any of the houses on Stirgess Ave. This shows no understanding of the traffic impact this flawed proposal would have had and treats local residents with contempt.

In the past decade the Northern Beaches region has experienced a significant increase in population placing pressure on existing resources including playing fields.

Council had proposed to repurpose a section of Warringah golf course for playing fields but has stepped away from this plan instead proposing lights on John Fisher park. The signatories to this letter submit that this proposal is a completely inappropriate solution and one arrived at without regard for the significant but obvious concerns raised in this letter. As such we submit that an independent review of the decision is warranted to investigate Council's conduct, competency and any conflicts of interest regarding the proposal to install high powered lighting at John Fisher park both with respect to the conduct of council members and officers.

The local community is aware that the Mayor of Warringah has a conflict of interest on this issue due to his direct support of several sporting organisations. Whilst the Mayor's support for these codes is laudable the local community believes the Mayor's role is to first and foremost represent them ahead of vested interest groups where areas of conflict arise. Questions may be asked of the Mayor if removing himself from such a serious debate is really providing tacit or direct support to these clubs.

The scope of the independent enquiry should include but not be limited to;

- 1) The competency of the Planner that prepared the Statement of Environmental Effects, and the Council officer that accepted the report attached to this application needs to be independently reviewed and examined.

There is no Traffic Report and no Acoustic Report tendered as part of the application. These are the two areas which will have the most significant impact on the local area resulting from this application. To conclude that neither impacts are significant to require independent reports is either ineptitude or deliberate negligence and obfuscation. The Planner preparing the report clearly demonstrates very limited knowledge of the local area.

Just to be clear this is the only location on the Northern Beaches where field lights have been proposed where dedicated parking fronting the fields is NOT provided and where a road does not run directly along the front of the fields. The traffic and safety impact of this factor is very significant.

To provide an opinion that the usage will not have an acoustic affect on the local residents is insensitive, ill informed and offensive. To not undertake a proper Acoustic Study shows no understanding on the current noise impact of the Futsal at the Harbord Bowling Club. Council is either negligent in its application or aware of the significant issues an Acoustic Report would raise and is therefore deliberately avoiding to commission one. Again there is no buffer between the fields and the adjoining residential area unlike almost every other example of playing fields which have proper and adequate car parking provided and also buffer and diffuse noise.

The impact of traffic and acoustic disturbance caused by the planned lighting and sporting visitors as a result of this submission would be severe if it were to be approved.

- 2) Currently the fields at John Fisher Park are being used for sporting activities every afternoon of each weekday and all day on both Saturday and Sunday.

During the weekend especially, because no parking has been provided for these fields this lack of available parking means that visitors are forced to park on both sides of the street along Bennett Street, Holloway Place, Manuela Place and Stirgess Ave which provides significant congestion (as highlighted in blue in map below).



The result of this congestion is that only one car at a time can drive in one direction up any of these streets.

This situation leads to heated exchanges and dangerous driving as people lose patience whilst they wait, and as the traffic backs up. Cars then often speed along the narrow street once they perceive an opportunity to move. **This is increasingly dangerous and Council officers need to be personally held accountable should any person or a young child, heaven forbid, be seriously injured or killed.**

Imagine magnifying this situation to the evening time when it is dark and light is very limited, and visibility is greatly reduced. The risk of injury or death to young children either visiting the area or the local residents that live in the street is unacceptable and Council must be held accountable for this risk. There is a very real reason why every other sporting field has parking provided and this reason is for safety in order to avoid this unacceptable risk to life.

Visitors are also unable to park in the Bowling Club, situated nearby, because it is used for Futsal each evening of the week, and for which the Bowling Club provides adequate parking for. This is a similar situation to Weldon Oval which already has lights but once again benefits from a dedicated carpark. This is a very different situation to John Fisher Park.

One of the significant reasons that the Harbord Bowling Club's application for the Cambridge Markets, located in the same location as John Fisher park, was withdrawn was because it;

- a) failed to provide adequate parking, and
- b) had an adverse impact on the amenity of the neighbourhood.

Both impacts are exactly the same for the proposed lights on John Fisher Park and Council should once again have the application withdrawn.

- 3) Northern Beaches Campus parking has significantly and increasingly impacted the area. In direct contravention of undertakings provided by Council during the original DA process where it is stated that all student parking would occur in the car park fronting Harbord Road. The reality is that every morning from 8.30am the local streets, including Bennett, Manuela, Brighton and Holloway Place are increasingly congested with students parking in direct contravention to Councils undertaking to local residents. Clearly undertakings from Council

hold very little weight or reliability and residents cannot again be treated in such a manner given the significance the impact these lights will pose.

- 4) The parking in Holloway Place is currently under significant pressure. Number 3 Holloway Place has 12 residents with only two parking spots allocated which means the balance of residents, which are over 55 year old, are forced to park on the street. This is increasingly more difficult during the day due to student parking, however at night they can currently achieve a spot within close proximity to their accommodation. This will all change should the DA be approved.

This pressure on parking in Holloway Place has already led to stressful situations occurring between local residents whereby rangers are being called to book offending vehicles as the struggle for parking spots increases.

In addition to this the bin collection for Holloway Place occurs early Wednesday morning. Therefore, on Tuesday evening the street's residents place all their bins on the verge fronting the North Western side of the street. If sporting visitors park until late in the evening in the street the residents will not be able to put out their bins until after 9pm, at the earliest, which is an unacceptable outcome and an excessive inconvenience on these local residents.

- 5) These fields will not cope with constant use, as they need to recover. Council have recently touted the use of synthetic fields to replace grass where excessive use is planned. This would be an environmental travesty and hugely detract from the local amenity and enjoyment of surrounding residents and the existing users of the playing fields.

These synthetic fields breed significant bugs and viral strains (as demonstrated by a rugby player almost losing his leg through infection from one of these fields recently).

Also the additional heat generated from these synthetic fields will increase heat in the area and contradict any global warming initiatives that council is seeking credit for introducing.

Council would have no choice but to install synthetic fields as the overuse would mean the struggling fields would never recover.

- 6) The continued growth of AFL needs a proper solution. The code has expanded rapidly in the last 3-4 years taking a significant footprint across John Fisher Park from the initial location of Weldon Oval. Many of these players come from areas well outside of the local community and we would be pleased for the club to provide a list of all its members and addresses so it can be discerned the level of impact of these changes to these people in contrast to the local residents.

The club boast more than 800 members which is a staggering number and well in excess of a typical local club. Such a club should spread the load by having facilities in several locations which also match where their players live.

- 7) Surely training can occur from after school till evening time and if additional time is required numerous teams could be catered for on Weldon Oval where parking is provided. All codes face this competition for space and have numerous teams sharing ovals. It appears to be a

selfish approach from Mr Varasdi who appears focused on growth as his only goal without regard for the impact on the local residents, noting Mr Varasdi lives in Dee Why.

- 8) The local residents have unfortunately witnessed the acoustic impost from the Futsal operations at the Harbord Bowling Club. Council have previously advised that this activity would finish at 9pm and noise would be minimized. Despite numerous approaches to Council noise regularly and loudly emanates from the Futsal Courts well past 10.30pm, including cheering, yelling and whistles. Once again a situation whereby Council has failed to live up to the undertakings it provided to local residents. Local residents wish not to be fooled again. This also raises a question on the approval granted for the Futsal usage and whether a proper approval exists.
- 9) The Council amalgamations were put forward as providing significant benefits and savings however the real impact appears to be that local communities have lost their voice. It appears that the Curl Curl Ward Councilors have provided no assistance in standing up for the affected residents and in all honesty have really presided over a dereliction of their duties and should be called to account for this.

The following petition is signed by local residents who seek a voice and are extremely determined to stop this excessive and intrusive Development Application proceeding.

We will seek independent review and an investigation into Councils approach, as it appears Council is unwilling to protect its constituents from the gross mismanagement of its assets.

Signed

Local Residents

## **Floodlights on John Fisher Park**

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