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28/11/2024

MR Matthew Murray
4 Tabora ST
FORESTVILLE NSW 2087
[REDACTED]

RE: DA2024/1303 - 11 / 0 Melwood Avenue FORESTVILLE NSW 2087

In regards the proposed DA2024/1303 Forestville RSL club.

I generally support the concept of renovating the club and major rebuilding. However, I request significant changes to the layout of the proposed new club to reduce gambling visibility and the size of gambling and pokies areas. The reduced areas for gambling should be set aside for new alfresco social/family areas with native trees.

In more detail, I request:

- There should be no areas allocated to gaming or gambling. If gaming areas cannot be excluded, then the layout should be changed so that pokies, gaming, gaming themes or pokies imagery are not visible from where people pass or sit when visiting the club, e.g. the bar, families walking around, children playing in open areas etc (see below for a more detailed analysis). In practical terms, the entrance to the pokies/gaming area should be an unmarked side area, not central to the club.
- There should be no alfresco gaming area, and no area allocated for smoking pokies. If an alfresco gaming area must exist, then this should be extremely small, and truly alfresco and exposed to the rain to actively discourage pokies and gaming.
- There should be a significant outdoor/alfresco non-gaming area for people using the club to socialise, drink, eat and generally be a family area so that children can run around as they currently do. Forestville is a green place. The Club needs to follow the spirit of why people moved here. A new social alfresco area should have native trees planted to sit under for shading and environmental purposes.
- Finally, I also request a deeper analysis of the proposed layout of the club and how this relates to the evidence base on gaming use and promotion. To support this analysis, I provide some further information below.

Analysis

The DA should consider the wider evidence of the negative impact of gambling in communities. For example, Monash University found "Just living close to a gaming venue increases the likelihood that you will gamble, face an increased risk of bankruptcy and experience poor mental health". <https://impact.monash.edu/health-economics/gambling-the->

closer-the-pokies-venue-the-greater-the-loss/

The central visibility of pokies machines, pokies themes, 'gaming display' as part of the entrance to the pokies areas is incompatible with a club seeking to promote itself as a family and community venue. This casual gaming visibility is a deliberate form of indirect marketing and promotion, seeking to socialise pokies as 'normal' to people and children. This should be recognised as an advertising strategy and designed out through changes to the layout.

The open exposure to adults and children to gambling through the casual visibility of pokies and pokies imagery is also against the spirit of the Clubs NSW Code of Practice. The submitted Report "Operational Plan of Management Amended" (Part 10) references "adherence" to the Clubs NSW Gaming Code of Practice. However, for me critical principles of the Gaming Code of Practice are not cited in Part 10 of the Operational Plan of Management. For example, the Gaming Code says "Where practical, gaming machines must not be visible from childrens' play areas or childcare centres". I interpret play areas as being anywhere children may play, eat or socialise. Given the current proposal would seem to actively maximise visibility of gaming machines or gaming displays, the proposals cannot be said to meet the Clubs NSW Code of Practice.

Also, the general visibility of gaming and large focus on pokies areas is incompatible with the Draft Community Strategic Plan.