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**From:** Diana Ryall  
**Sent:** 13/09/2024 1:38:15 PM  
**To:** Council Northernbeaches Mailbox  
**Subject:** TRIMMED: Submission from Friends of Freshwater  
**Attachments:** HARBORD HOTEL REZONING.docx;

Please find enclosed a submission from Friends of Freshwater

Regards, Di

Diana Ryall AM  
on behalf of Friends of Freshwater

e: [REDACTED]  
w: [freshie.org.au](http://freshie.org.au)

## HARBORD HOTEL REZONING

### Response from Friends of Freshwater



In response to the rezoning DA for Stage 3 of the Harbord Hotel redevelopment, 'Friends of Freshwater' is aware of the benefits of short-term accommodation in the basin and the strong opposition to the current proposal especially from those who live close by. We have been criticised for not putting our views out earlier. However, we have sought to ensure that we were fully briefed on the DA and had reviewed the DA submissions through the Council website and comments through Facebook.

This has led to the statement below:

For many years, the Harbord Hotel has had accommodation for up to 15 rooms at the upper level of the hotel, although in recent times this was seldom available and was used as the former owner's home. This area is being repurposed by the Hotel as part of the approved Stage 2 of the redevelopment as a space for a conference venue and live music facility. As part of Stage 3, the Hotel is now seeking approval to rezone the site to allow the construction of new accommodation on the current parking area. The three-stage plan was presented to the community 3 to 4 years ago and the current DA is essentially consistent with that plan,

It is our view that community engagement sought on this current proposal has been lacking by both the Council and the Hotel which has led to significant community concerns both real and perhaps speculative. The Council only contacted a small group of residents immediately impacted by the development, whereas this is a proposal that affects a much broader area. Friends of Freshwater was contacted and invited to attend an informal information session. To our knowledge no broader community engagement was undertaken.

At the current time, there is no significant facility providing short-term accommodation in the Freshwater basin. There appears to be a demand for this style of accommodation judging by the number of enquiries made to the Hotel and short-term accommodation providers currently available. Having alternate short-term accommodation available may increase the availability of houses and apartments for longer-term leases.

This would be a boon to the many businesses that find it hard to survive in Freshwater as demonstrated by the turnover rate of many of the shops especially over the winter period.

However, there are several issues with the current proposal. The stage 3 proposal has been put forward as a 'concept plan' rather than an actual DA planned build. This has fuelled concerns especially that if the rezoning DA is approved then the next DA may be quite different to the concept plan. There is also a concern that there may be a Trojan Horse effect across other R2 sites in the basin. Unfortunately, developers are known for their 'creep' approach in building DA's, and it is understandable that some of the community is concerned about this.

If we assume that the 'concept plan' is effectively the plan that will come forward in any subsequent DA then the following are of particular concern:

- a) The number of rooms proposed seems excessive – as the concept plan shows most of the land being utilised. It would be more in line with the community if there was some open space included and fewer rooms.
- b) The noise component from a pool would impact neighbours as 'pool entertainment' would be bound to occur.
- c) The absorption of 64 Undercliff Rd would act to reduce affordable housing in the neighbourhood and is not part of the current Hotel footprint.
- d) The bulky nature of the development seems to overpower the heritage building and this would be ameliorated if the number of rooms was reduced.
- e) That there would be additional traffic around an already crowded area in Freshwater.
- f) The limited transport available from the village (the 167 is an hourly service in the evening) would increase road traffic.
- g) There should be a taxi/Uber pick up and drop off included in the plans preferably in the basement.
- h) As stage 2 is not yet completed it is not obvious what noise issues may occur and how Stage 3 may exacerbate this.
- i) It is essential that the 8.5m limitation is retained. In almost every house along Undercliff the house is set back and thus the 8.5 limit starts further into the block.

In relation to the last point, the current NSW government appears to be seeking to increase height limits in many locations. As such, rezoning this site may open a Pandora's Box leading to further development 'creep'.

For the reasons above, Friends of Freshwater is not able to support the current proposal. We recommend that further consultation be undertaken with the local community, to seek constructive feedback and allay some of the concerns expressed. Most importantly, how the final DA will relate to the conceptual plans currently being put forward.