
Sent: 4/06/2020 2:06:10 PM
Subject: Online Submission

04/06/2020

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RE: DA2020/0442 - 231 Whale Beach Road WHALE BEACH NSW 2107

D. H. and R. M. Allen
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We have owned a home in Whale Beach for 20 years and permanent residents for the last 12 years.

In principle we support the redevelopment of 231 Whale Beach Rd as:
public access through the site would provide safer pedestrian access between Whale Beach Rd (WB Rd) and the beach front
provision of a beachside cafe would improve amenity for beach-goers following the demolition of the Kiosk previously at 24 The Strand, which is not to be rebuilt.
the current structures on this central, prominent site are out of keeping in scale and character with the majority of residential buildings along the beach front
the current development is devoid of vegetation or meaningful landscaping and negatively impacts the intrinsic character and visual attractiveness of the Whale Beach waterfront.

However, we oppose the proposed development as it entirely fails to address points 3 & 4.

From Whale Beach Rd

the proposed redevelopment is more than twice the height of the existing structure and does not seem to take into account the additional height of plant, the screening device and the elevated skylight on the roof top. This height is not strictly comparable with the profiles of 229 WB Rd nor Whale Beach Surf Club (WBSC) as these two buildings are set back from the road and down the slope, significantly reducing the visual impact of these rooflines.

currently, mature trees soften the visual impact of the building from the road, provide shade from the strong Western sun and ambience for cafe patrons. According to artist impression of the frontage and the documentation, these mature trees are to be removed and shading provided by a fixed awning. The plantings shown in the image are low profile or palm species that do not fulfil the functions of screening or shade provision.

providing more convenient and safe pedestrian access between WB Rd and the beach front through the property would be a great asset. However proposed public access through a private residential building raises concerns regarding security and privacy for the residents of the building. These concerns would be largely eliminated if public access was external along one of the property boundaries. This stairway provides the only access & exit points for the building. For safety in the event of an emergency it is desirable and possible in a revised plan to incorporate direct external access from individual units.

From the Beach Front

An aerial view (see plan) shows that the properties with frontages along the beachfront reduce their visual impact by, in general, following guidelines to be set back from road frontages, step down the slope and give the appearance of an acceptable ratio of building and hard surfaces to continuous areas of permeable surfaces. Massed plantings, including native species adapted to the seaside conditions, provide privacy screening, protection from strong sun and the often strong NE and Easterly winds that can reduce the amenity of ocean facing areas. In addition, and most importantly these continuous areas of vegetation contribute to the maintenance of an essential element of WB character, attractiveness & liveability and to an important extent mitigate the inevitable loss of habitat associated with development.

unfortunately the proposed development seems entirely out of scale with character of the neighbourhood. Other bulky structures such as the WBSC, which might well not comply with current requirements, serve as an example of an error that should not be repeated. This comment is not to be interpreted as a criticism of the WBSC which provides a great community service, recreational and social activities, a true and valued neighbourhood centre. the development site is prominent and steep which presents problems for stepping so many levels down the slope in order to reduce the apparent bulk of the structure. the masonry elements of the balconies, particularly on the Northern side of the structure and the jutting podium level add to the bulky appearance of the proposed structure. sadly the site currently has no trees at all and no appreciable landscaping is planned. Unfortunately the extent of the proposed development does not permit massed plantings that would be consistent with the environmental values of the area & could soften the visual impact of the proposed building, especially when viewed up the steep slope from The Strand and Surf Rd.

We hope that the Council will consider the concerns raised in submissions from the community, and require modifications to the proposed development that would promote the values that support and enhance the natural and built environment of Whale Beach for the benefit of all. Richard Cole & associates have shown considerable ingenuity in meeting a brief to maximise the development of this site. We are aware of site sensitive developments designed by these architects in Avalon and Clareville and are optimistic that they will be able to achieve this on this prominent Whale Beach site.