
Sent: 16/09/2024 3:11:14 PM
Subject: Harbord Hotel Application Number: PEX2024/0005
Attachments: Letter re HH.pdf;

Please see attached my submission in opposition to the above proposal.

Please acknowledge receipt in due course.

Yours sincerely,

CHRIS BERTUCH

33 Undercliff Rd
Freshwater 2096

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The Mayor & Councillors
Northern Beaches Council

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

Application: PEX2024/0005 – Objection to Proposed Development of Harbord Hotel

I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms to the proposed further development of the Harbord Hotel site. The proposed development is a gross overreach by the current owners/developers and entirely disregards the interests of surrounding residents and the Freshwater community.

Current Zoning is R2 - proposed use and density not contemplated under the LEP

As Council is aware, the zoning of this site is Residential R2.

Under the Warringah 2011 LEP (LEP), R2 is a zone for land which is made up of low density housing. LEPs have statutory effect and are the main planning tool to shape the future of communities by ensuring local development is carried out appropriately.

The proposal, which seeks to amend Schedule 1 (Additional permitted uses) under the Warringah 2011 LEP, is a cynical attempt to subvert the effect of the planning law, under which the relevant zone in Freshwater has been planned and developed since 2011.

If allowed to proceed the proposal will have the effect of fundamentally changing the permissible land use from its current Residential R2 low density housing, to commercial and hospitality, nullifying the effect of the LEP.

If such a change had merit – which it clearly does not – it should be considered as part of a wholesale review of the LEP, under the State environment and planning framework and with State Government oversight, not as a piecemeal amendment to permitted use for sole benefit of a single owner/developer.

Undeniably Negative Impact on the Local Environment

Environment impact must be a paramount consideration in any planning decision, and particularly so given the residential and beachside setting for this proposal.

It is undeniable that the proposed development will have a negative impact on the local environment and nowhere does the developer seriously suggest otherwise. The construction of 37 motel and the resulting structure and increased traffic will have a disastrous effect on the current environmental balance of the local area.

The proposed structure would be a monstrous eyesore, entirely incongruous and unsympathetic to the current hotel and surrounding residences, and the park and beach that it should complement, rather than impair.

Traffic

The further development proposed unashamedly aims to increase road traffic to the area. The hotel can only be accessed by Undercliff Rd and Moore Road and traffic to the site and Freshwater Beach in summer and public holidays is already chaotic. While increased parking may superficially be appealing, it is included in the development to encourage potential patrons to drive to the hotel/motel. The parking aims to increase traffic further but would be available only to motel (and possibly hotel) patrons and staff, and the development would result in the loss of all existing parking. The result will be that hotel patrons and other visitors would use existing public parking, which is already full to excess year-round.

Also, the access to Freshwater via Oliver Street is already overused and inadequate to service the broader Freshwater/Curl Curl area. The increased traffic congestion would further detract from the beauty and amenity of Freshwater Basin and the liveability of the area for residents.

Direct Impact on Residents' Views

If allowed to proceed the development will entirely obliterate my existing views (and the views of other residents of Undercliff Rd) to replace those views with an ugly, imposing barn-like structure. My view has already been obscured by the current unfinished development work being undertaken on the site (see attached photo).

Plenty of Alternative Venues are Available

The owner/developers have not identified any need for their proposed gross overdevelopment. They speculate that it may be beneficial for local businesses, however, with the increased traffic, the local Freshwater businesses are more likely to be negatively impacted. As may the numerous other entertainment hubs and venues available for residents and visitors on the Northern Beaches, including in Freshwater – eg: The Harbord Diggers, the multitude of venues in Manly (including accommodation venues) the Collaroy, the Newport, to name a few, and of course the Harbord Hotel will continue in its current already-developed form to service the community.

Accommodation at the Harbord Hotel

The developer refers to the proposition that the hotel was “approved” with 15 rooms. This permissible use dates back to the 1935 when the hotel was owned by Tooth & Co and comprised 15 bedrooms a saloon bar, a public bar, a lounge and a bottle shop. “Harbord” was an outpost and accommodation was needed for weary travellers and

local labour. Virtually none of the surrounding residences had been built in 1935 and neither had the current LEP been considered.

If the State of NSW or Local Council considered the further development allowed under R2 zoning should permit hotel accommodation they would have included such use in the current LEP. No such suggestion was made by the then-owners of the Harbord Hotel, however the current developer/owners have iteratively sought to erode the environmental and heritage protections of the LEP through successive development applications.

Despite the owner developers' assertion in their DA that accommodation is "desirable" or "needed", they have never sought to use the existing rooms for accommodation purposes. Moreover, in its most recent non-complying DA, the owner/developers elected to transform the accommodation area and build additional floorspace for further hotel patronage and as a live music venue.

Freshwater is a residential area and not a tourist "hotspot" and does not need further itinerant accommodation, particularly in an already congested beachfront location.

Council's Promise

Council states that its

"aim is to work with the community to conserve, protect and enhance the Northern Beaches natural and built environment and to improve the quality of life for our community now and in the future through the application of appropriate building and development controls."

The proposed development would have a significant negative impact on the quality of life for nearby residents and would do nothing to enhance the Freshwater or Northern Beaches Community.

Yours Sincerely



Chris Bertuch