



4 Delmar Parade and 812 Pittwater Road, Dee Why

Clause 4.6 – Clause 6.7
Development Standard

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**4 DELMAR PARADE AND 812 PITTWATER ROAD,
DEE WHY**

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1.0 CLAUSE 4.6 REQUEST – CLAUSE 6.7

1.1 Introduction

This request for an exception to a development standard is submitted in respect of the development standard contained within Clause 6.7 of the Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011 (WLEP). The request relates to an application for the demolition of existing structures and construction of a mixed use development containing 4 commercial tenancies and 219 apartments over 2 storey basement containing 334 car parking spaces, lot consolidation and subdivision at 4 Delmar Parade and 812 Pittwater Road, Dee Why.

1.2 Clause 4.6 Exceptions to development standards

Clause 4.6(2) of the WLEP provides that development consent may be granted for development even though the development would contravene a development standard imposed by the WLEP, or any other environmental planning instrument.

However, clause 4.6(3) states that development consent must not be granted for development that contravenes a development standard unless the consent authority has considered a written request from the applicant that seeks to justify the contravention of the development standard by demonstrating:

- (a) that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstance of the case, and
- (b) there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard.

In accordance with clause 4.6(3) the applicant requests that the FSR development standard be varied.

1.3 Development Standard to be varied

Clause 6.7 states:

Development consent must not be granted to a residential flat building in Zone B4 Mixed Use with a dwelling at the ground floor level

The provision in Clause 6.7 is considered to be a development standard and not a prohibition in accordance with the two step test as set out in the judgment of *Strathfield Municipal Council v Poynting* [2001] NSWCA 270 (Poynting). In particular, the two step test is:

- (a) Firstly, a consideration of whether the proposed development is prohibited under any circumstances — when it is read both in context of the WLEP and as a whole.
- (b) Secondly, if it is not so prohibited, a consideration of whether clause 6.7 of WLEP specifies a requirement — or fixes a standard — in relation to an aspect of the proposed development.

In relation to the first test, in considering cl 6.7 of the WLEP “as a part of the environmental planning instrument as a whole” (Poynting at [94]), there is no complete prohibition of the development of a residential flat building in the B4 Mixed Use Zone. Accordingly, the proposed development with a dwelling on the ground floor passes the ‘first step’ in the Poynting two-step test. In relation to the second test, clause 6.7 of WLEP does fix a standard that there should not be a ground floor dwelling. Accordingly, the requirement of clause 6.7 of the WLEP is a development standard.

1.4 Extent of Variation to the Development Standard

The proposal provides the following uses on the ground floor level of the development:

- Two commercial tenancies facing Pittwater Road (located on Level 1, which is ground level at that location)
- Two commercial tenancies facing Delmar Parade
- One communal co-working space for residents
- Three live-work apartments
- Twenty-one apartments on ground floor of Buildings A and B
- Nine apartments on the southern side of Buildings A and B which whilst located on Level 1 are ground level at the interface with the southern boundary

Accordingly, the proposal provides a total of 21 ground level apartments.

1.5 Clause 4.6(3)(a) Is compliance with the development standard unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of the case?

Historically the most commonly invoked way to establish that a development standard was unreasonable or unnecessary was satisfaction of the first test of the five set out in *Wehbe v Pittwater Council* [2007] NSWLEC 827 which requires that the objectives of the standard are achieved notwithstanding the non-compliance with the standard.

In addition, in the matter of *Randwick City Council v Micaul Holdings Pty Ltd* [2016] NSWLEC 7 [34] the Chief Justice held that “establishing that the development would not cause environmental harm and is consistent with the objectives of the development standards is an established means of demonstrating that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary”.

This request addresses the five part test described in *Wehbe v Pittwater Council*. [2007] NSWLEC 827, followed by a concluding position which demonstrates that compliance with the development standard is unreasonable and unnecessary in the circumstances of the case:

1. the objectives of the standard are achieved notwithstanding non-compliance with the standard;

There are no expressed objectives for Clause 6.7.

2. the underlying objective or purpose of the standard is not relevant to the development and therefore compliance is unnecessary;

There is no expressed underlying objective or purpose for the development standard. However, the broader objectives for development within the Dee Why Town Centre under Clause 7.3 of the WLEP provide a frame of reference for understanding the purpose of Clause 6.7 and the relevant objectives are provided below:

- (a) to create an attractive living centre that sustains the social, economic and environmental needs of its community and visitors,
- (b) to ensure a balance between the provision of high quality housing with a mix of retail, business, employment, civic, cultural and recreational facilities,

(c) to ensure that development is consistent with the role of Dee Why as a major centre for the sub-region,

(i) to establish ground floor levels that are occupied by retail uses that–

(i) are highly active, accessible to the street and create a lively ambience, and

(ii) provide a mix of retail shops, cafes and restaurants at the edges of street, pedestrian areas and open spaces, and

(iii) are at the same level as the footpaths and provide opportunities for a generous promenade and distinctive street tree planting for shade and shelter,

(j) to accommodate additional employment opportunities, service functions and space for business, consistent with the role of Dee Why as a major centre, by providing at least 2 levels (including the ground floor) of development for non-residential purposes,

In summary, the key principles behind the requirement for no ground floor dwellings are:

- to achieve engaged and activated street edges
- to provide for employment floor space consistent with the role of Dee Why as a major centre

The proposed development is entirely consistent with the first key principle which is to achieve engaged and activated street edges. The entirety of both street frontages is proposed to contain commercial tenancies which are capable of accommodating retail shops, cafes or restaurants which will contribute positively to a lively street life.

In relation to the second principle, whilst it is appropriate for the commercial core of the Dee Why town centre to provide employment opportunities at ground level, the subject site is located at the very southern edge of the town centre and is largely disconnected from the commercial core of the centre. The subject site does not benefit from the extensive street frontage and through site links which are critical to the success of employment floor space and instead the site has very limited street frontage, very limited exposure, and is a deep site such that new commercial tenancies on the ground floor of the development are disconnected with the broader centre and would not succeed. There are profoundly more attractive commercial office offerings with intrinsically better attributes closer to the centre of Dee Why which will always attract tenants in preference to the subject site and development.

Having regard to the above, the underlying objective for activated frontage is considered relevant to the proposal and the development achieves this objective. However, the underlying objective for additional employment floor space is not considered to be relevant to the subject site and proposal due to its location and site attributes, and also having regard to structural change in employment floor space as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. the underlying object of purpose would be defeated or thwarted if compliance was required and therefore compliance is unreasonable;

The underlying objectives and purpose of the standard relates to street activation and employment floor space. The proposed variation will support increased residential density which will contribute positively

towards patronage within the proposed ground floor commercial tenancies. However, if the variation is not granted, the development would likely fail because ground floor commercial tenancies without a street frontage will fail in this location.

4. **the development standard has been virtually abandoned or destroyed by the Council's own actions in granting consents departing from the standard and hence compliance with the standard is unnecessary and unreasonable;**

The development standard has not been virtually abandoned.

5. **the zoning of the particular land is unreasonable or inappropriate so that a development standard appropriate for that zoning is also unreasonable and unnecessary as it applies to the land and compliance with the standard would be unreasonable or unnecessary. That is, the particular parcel of land should not have been included in the particular zone.**

The zoning of the land is appropriate because it permits residential flat development as well as shop-top housing and commercial development.

Key facts that support the above reasons why strict compliance with the development standard is unreasonable and unnecessary in the circumstances of the case are as follows:

- The proposed development is entirely consistent with the objective to achieve engaged and activated street edges. The entirety of both street frontages is proposed to contain commercial tenancies which are capable of accommodating retail shops, cafes or restaurants which will contribute positively to a lively street life.
- The subject site is located at the very southern edge of the town centre and is largely disconnected from the commercial core of the centre. The subject site does not benefit from the extensive street frontage and through site links which are evident further north in the centre which are critical to the success of employment floor space and instead the site has very limited street frontage, very limited exposure, and is a deep site such that new commercial tenancies on the ground floor of the development are disconnected with the broader centre and would not succeed. There are profoundly more attractive commercial office offerings with intrinsically better attributes closer to the centre of Dee Why which will always attract tenants in preference to the subject site and development.
- It is considered that the restriction on ground floor residential uses is more specifically intended to apply to key identified sites within the Dee Why Town Centre, noting that Clause 7.12(2) reinforces that there is to be no ground floor residential use on Sites A, B, C, D or E.
- The proposed variation will support increased residential density which will contribute positively towards patronage within the proposed ground floor commercial tenancies. However, if the variation is not granted, the development would likely fail because ground floor commercial tenancies without a street frontage will fail in this location.
- The proposed variation does not result in any unreasonable or adverse impacts.
- If the variation is not permitted, the redevelopment of the site will not be feasible as ground floor commercial tenancies across the entire site will not be able to be leased on commercially viable terms. This is especially relevant in light of the structural change in employment floor space as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This would prevent the sustainable redevelopment of the site in a manner which can deliver much needed additional housing choice in an ideal location and the achievement of an activated and engaged ground floor plane, which are all benefits associated with the subject proposal.

1.6 Clause 4.6(3)(b) Are there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify contravening the development standard?

The Land & Environment Court matter of Initial Action Pty Ltd v Woollahra Council [2018] NSWLEC 2018, provides assistance in relation to the consideration of sufficient environmental planning grounds whereby Preston J observed that:

- in order for there to be 'sufficient' environmental planning grounds to justify a written request under clause 4.6, the focus must be on the aspect or element of the development that contravenes the development standard and the environmental planning grounds advanced in the written request must justify contravening the development standard, not simply promote the benefits of carrying out the development as a whole; and
- there is no basis in Clause 4.6 to establish a test that the non-compliant development should have a neutral or beneficial effect relative to a compliant development

The variation to the development standard in this instance allows for 21 ground floor apartments. The environmental planning grounds that justify the component of the development which results in the FSR variation are:

- The proposed development is entirely consistent with the objective to achieve engaged and activated street edges. The entirety of both street frontages is proposed to contain commercial tenancies which are capable of accommodating retail shops, cafes or restaurants which will contribute positively to a lively street life.
- The subject site is located at the very southern edge of the town centre and is largely disconnected from the commercial core of the centre. The subject site does not benefit from the extensive street frontage and through site links which are evident further north in the centre which are critical to the success of employment floor space and instead the site has very limited street frontage, very limited exposure, and is a deep site such that new commercial tenancies on the ground floor of the development are disconnected with the broader centre and would not succeed. There are profoundly more attractive commercial office offerings with intrinsically better attributes closer to the centre of Dee Why which will always attract tenants in preference to the subject site and development.
- It is considered that the restriction on ground floor residential uses is more specifically intended to apply to key identified sites within the Dee Why Town Centre, noting that Clause 7.12(2) reinforces that there is to be no ground floor residential use on Sites A, B, C, D or E.
- The proposed variation will support increased residential density which will contribute positively towards patronage within the proposed ground floor commercial tenancies. However, if the variation is not granted, the development would likely fail because ground floor commercial tenancies without a street frontage will fail in this location.
- The proposed variation does not result in any unreasonable or adverse impacts.
- If the variation is not permitted, the redevelopment of the site will not be feasible as ground floor commercial tenancies across the entire site will not be able to be leased on commercially viable terms. This would prevent the sustainable redevelopment of the site in a manner which can deliver much needed additional housing choice in an ideal location and the achievement of an activated and engaged ground floor plane, which are all benefits associated with the subject proposal.

On the basis of the above, it has been demonstrated that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the proposed variation in this instance

1.7 Clause 4.6(4)(a)(i) consent authority satisfied that this written request has adequately addressed the matters required to be demonstrated by Clause 4.6(3)

Clause 4.6(4)(a)(i) states that development consent must not be granted for development that contravenes a development standard unless the consent authority is satisfied that the applicant’s written request has adequately addressed the matters required to be demonstrated by subclause (3).

These matters are comprehensively addressed above in this written request with reference to the five part test described in *Wehbe v Pittwater Council* [2007] NSWLEC 827 for consideration of whether compliance with a development standard is unreasonable or unnecessary in the circumstances of the case. In addition, the establishment of environmental planning grounds is provided, with reference to the matters specific to the proposal and site, sufficient to justify contravening the development standard.

1.8 Clause 4.6(4)(a)(ii) consent authority satisfied that the proposal is in the public interest because it is consistent with the zone and development standard objectives

Clause 4.6(4)(a)(ii) states that development consent must not be granted for development that contravenes a development standard unless the consent authority is satisfied that the proposed development will be in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives of the particular standard and the objectives for development within the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out.

Objective of the Development Standard

The proposal’s consistency with the objectives of the development standard have been addressed in detail in this clause 4.6 request.

Objectives of the Zone

Clause 4.6(4) also requires consideration of the relevant zone objectives. The site is located within the B4 Mixed Use zone.

The objectives of the B4 Mixed Use zone are:

- To provide a mixture of compatible land uses.
- To integrate suitable business, office, residential, retail and other development in accessible locations so as to maximise public transport patronage and encourage walking and cycling.
- To reinforce the role of Dee Why as the major centre in the sub-region by the treatment of public spaces, the scale and intensity of development, the focus of civic activity and the arrangement of land uses.
- To promote building design that creates active building fronts, contributes to the life of streets and public spaces and creates environments that are appropriate to human scale as well as being comfortable, interesting and safe.
- To promote a land use pattern that is characterised by shops, restaurants and business premises on the ground floor and housing and offices on the upper floors of buildings.
- To encourage site amalgamations to facilitate new development and to facilitate the provision of car parking below ground

The proposed development is considered to be consistent with the zone objectives for the following reasons:

- The proposed development is located at the southern edge of the Dee Why town centre and provides for an appropriate mix of residential accommodation and commercial use which is compatible with the emerging character of the southern end of the town centre. In this location, there is limited demand for commercial activity beyond the activation of the street edges and so the proposal provides a compatible arrangement of uses for this location.
- The proposal provides additional residential accommodation in an ideal location at the southern end of the Dee Why town centre and future residents will be able to walk and cycle to all of the services, employment and recreational facilities within the central area of the town centre, including Dee Why beach. The site is also very well located immediately to the north of the Stony Range Botanic Garden.
- The proposal successfully promotes active building fronts by providing active commercial edges to both the Delmar Parade and Pittwater Road frontages which will contribute positively to the life of streets and creating environments that are appropriate to human scale as well as being comfortable, interesting and safe.
- The proposal provides an appropriate mix of residential and commercial uses having regard to its location at the southern edge of the town centre.
- The proposal amalgamates several large sites at the southern end of the town centre and provides for an integrated underground car parking arrangement with a consolidated vehicular entry and exit point.

The above discussion demonstrates that the proposal development will be in the public interest notwithstanding the proposed variation to the development standard in Clause 6.7, because it is consistent with the relevant objectives for the Dee Why town centre and the objectives for development within the zone in which the development is proposed to be carried out. Furthermore, there is no material public benefit in maintaining the standard generally or in relation to the site specifically as a variation as proposed has been demonstrated to be based on sufficient environmental planning grounds in this instance. Accordingly, there is no material impact or public benefit associated with strict adherence to the development standard and there is no compelling reason or public benefit derived from maintenance of the standard for this particular component.

1.9 Clause 4.6(5) Secretary Considerations

The matters for consideration under Clause 4.6(5) are addressed below:

(5) In deciding whether to grant concurrence, the Secretary must consider:

(a) whether contravention of the development standard raises any matter of significance for State or regional environmental planning,

The contravention of the standard does not raise any matters of significance for state or regional environmental planning. The development does not impact upon or have implications for any state policies in the locality or impacts which would be considered to be of state or regional significance.

(5) In deciding whether to grant concurrence, the Secretary must consider:

(b) the public benefit of maintaining the development standard,

This Clause 4.6 request has demonstrated there are environmental planning benefits associated with the contravention of the standard. There is no material impact or benefit associated with strict adherence to the development standard and in my view, there is no compelling reason or public benefit derived from maintenance of the standard.

1.10 Objectives of Clause 4.6

The specific objectives of Clause 4.6 are:

- (a) to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying certain development standards to particular development,
- (b) to achieve better outcomes for and from development by allowing flexibility in particular circumstances.

As demonstrated above the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the zone and the objectives for development in the Dee Why town centre notwithstanding the proposed variation to the development standard.

Requiring strict compliance with the development standard on the subject site would result in an unfeasible development project which would prevent the achievement of the positive attributes which can be achieved by the proposed development included activated and engaged street edges and additional housing choice in an ideal location.

Allowing the flexible application of the development standard in this instance is not only reasonable but also desirable as it will facilitate a high quality and appropriate development for this location.

Accordingly, it is considered that the consent authority can be satisfied that the proposal meets objective 1(a) of Clause 4.6 in that allowing flexibility in relation to the development standard will support a better urban design outcome in this instance in accordance with objective 1(b).

1.11 Conclusion

Strict compliance with the development standard contained within clause 6.7 of Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011 has been found to be unreasonable and unnecessary in the circumstances of the case. In addition there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to justify the variation. Finally, the proposed development is in the public interest because it is consistent with the objectives for development within the Dee Why town centre. In this regard it is reasonable and appropriate to vary the development standard to the extent proposed.