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RE: DA2019/0619 - 13 A Ocean Road PALM BEACH NSW 2108

Mr Jordan Davies
Northern Beaches Council
1 Park Street
MONA VALE NSW 2103

Dear Sir

RE: DA2019/0619 - 13A Ocean Road PALM BEACH NSW 2108

I would like to comment on the proposed development of a pool, spa and inclinator at 13A Ocean Road. I live at No 11 Sunrise Road and was not included in the houses notified of the plans, presumably because it was perceived that I would not be impacted by noise, over-shadowing or loss of visual amenity. However, I would like to make a submission on the proposed development.

Background

My family has had a presence in Sunrise Road for over 70 years, with houses at No 22 and No 11 that are located at the top of the Sunrise Hill escarpment.

I am aware of the difficulties in building on Sunrise Hill as the slopes are prone to slippage and the area has been identified by Council as being geotechnically hazardous with a high potential for slippage. The terrain is very rocky with "floaters" and extensive ridges of solid sandstone under the soil. After heavy rain considerable volumes of sub-terranean water seeps down through the rocks.

The impact of this instability is clearly visible to residents with:

- The large rock, known as "Black rock" which sits between the road and the beach, falling from a rock shelf on No 22 Sunrise Road at some point in the past;
- A recent rock fall spilling rocks on to Ocean Road from No 22 Sunrise Road earlier in the year; the concrete blocks and safety fencing to prevent further spills are still in place on the verge of Ocean Road, just north of 13A Ocean Road.

Properties along the Sunrise Road escarpment have routinely used rock bolts to stabilise rock-faces but these have been used on a "set and forget" basis ie they are not subject to regular or routine inspection after the initial installation. Given the highly corrosive, salt-laden environment along the escarpment this is a dangerous strategy. I am aware that the cliff below 22 Sunrise had rock bolts installed in the 1960's but they had been almost entirely corroded by the end of the 1990's and had to be totally replaced.

The east facing escarpment of Sunrise Hill below numbers 18, 20, 22 and 24 Sunrise Road is primarily a green space, with houses at the top of the slope and with native vegetation covering the lower slopes. Officers in the former Pittwater Council were insistent that the east facing escarpment of Sunrise Hill should maintain its well vegetated appearance to maintain its aesthetics when viewed from the sea.

The commitment to protecting this appearance was the basis for Pittwater Council rejecting a Development Application by the owners of 22 Sunrise Road to install an inclinor from the house to the beachfront. (DA N0530/98)

DA2019/0619

My concern with the proposed development is twofold.

1. Geotechnical Stability

The proposed pool site is on a very steep section of the block. The obligatory geotechnical report prepared by Douglas Partners identifies that the hazards for the new development are:

- Downhill creep or rapid failure of footings supporting the proposed new works;
- Rapid collapse of the large detached sandstone boulders on the 'mid-level' or 'upper section' of the site.

The "Slope Instability Risk Assessment" rates the risk of these factors as being "low" but the impact as being "Medium to Major" or "Major". A swimming pool with 40 tonnes of water sliding down over the shotcrete rockface would certainly be of concern to anyone in the house at 13A Ocean Road and pedestrians in Ocean Road.

I note that the Geotechnical Report is very conservative in its assessment of the site and the Site Preparation requirements:

"Based on the records held by our office, it is expected that any of the excavation into the shotcrete covered face for footings or anchor points will be within sandstone, siltstone or shale bedrock. It is possible that any excavation behind or through the shotcrete could intersect rock anchors or dowels that have been installed into the rock face behind the shotcrete.

Care will be required if rock anchors are encountered to ensure that the anchors have been destressed prior to the cutting of any strands. Additional slope support measures may be required to support the shotcrete wall and these will need to be installed progressively as the existing support measures are removed."

It is clear that a more detailed assessment of the geotechnical hazards of the site needs to be undertaken before any construction is commencement and that any approvals should contain specific requirements to mitigate the risks of failure of the foundations.

I also note that the maintaining the ongoing integrity of the shotcrete rockface is essential and to maintain the integrity of any development it is necessary "for the property owner to adopt and implement a maintenance and inspection program". I suggest that a maintenance and inspection program should be formalised in the approval with a requirement that the annual or bi-annual reports should be forwarded to Council.

2. Sunrise Hill Escarpment

As noted above, the former Pittwater Council was insistent that the visual amenity of the

eastern escarpment Sunrise Hill should be maintained with a wide band of native vegetation presenting a "green face" to the ocean. Any proposals for development of structures such as inclinator were rejected so that there would not be any scarring of the escarpment. The construction of stairs leading down from Nos 20, 22 and 24 was permitted to provide pedestrian access to the beach for the residents.

The approval of the granny flat development at 13A Ocean Road has already adversely impacted the visual amenity of the escarpment and I suggest any further development on the site needs to be carefully considered. The photo montage submitted with the DA shows heavily landscaped grounds below numbers 14 and 18 with the houses standing proud on the skyline. The actual photo of the escarpment on Google Paps shows that the montage is not a true representation of the actual situation; the escarpment is not landscaped, and the houses do not provided a large silhouette on the skyline. The stairs leading to the beach are essentially invisible in the vegetation.

In summary, I suggest that:

- Council should carefully consider the provisions to apply to any further development on the site. With a new granny flat development in progress at the top of the block and a heavily excavated, shotcrete covered escarpment at the bottom of the block it is essential to ensure the integrity of any further construction.
- Council recognize that the approval of an inclinator for 13A Ocean Road will establish a precedent for the Sunrise Hill escarpment. It is highly likely that No 22 Sunrise Road would resurrect their DA for an inclinator to be followed by submissions from Nos 20 and 24. The visual amenity maintained by previous Councils would be lost.

Yours Sincerely

Deidre Broad