
Sent: 7/05/2020 4:35:17 PM
Subject: DA2019/1157

Hello,

I wish to know what the status of the above DA is, and if still current - as it appears to be - to be permitted to make a belated submission. If not, let this be submitted as a letter from a resident to all the councillors.

I am relatively new to Newport having moved in to Seaview Avenue approximately two years ago. One of the drawcards for me was its village atmosphere - low-rise buildings, walkability and lack of draughty thoroughfares that I had left behind in my old hometown of Bondi.

I know I am not alone in declaring Robertson my favourite street (the real estate agent selling my place told me to head there for coffee and I have never looked back). I am part of the early "morning crew" - one of 30 or more locals that head to one of two cafes between 6 and 7am. As we did today, we stand in the winter sun while waiting for our coffees. However this development proceeds, it should not be allowed to block out the morning sun.

After lunch, the evening diners arrive - and I have to say, just before the coronavirus shutdowns - it was on the rise. With the opening of New York Pizza and the Rukus Cafe starting its summer Thursday Tacos sessions (insanely popular), together with the fairy lights on trees (council I am guessing?), there was a huge buzz in the street - kids, dogs, family groups! And everybody was eating alfresco. Now with lockdowns easing, I think alfresco arrangements for all restaurants must be mandatory given social distancing in a tight space is impossible.

I feel Roberston Street has so much unrealised potential and the above scene showed what it could become. Close it off to traffic. Let the sun shine in. Keep buildings low rise. Have more seating for the other restaurants. Make it the backbone of Newport. Let there be markets in just that one street, instead of spread around the suburb. It's hardly pleasant wandering through market stalls during weekend peak hour on Barrenjoey Road. Or turn the shopfronts around to face the carpark, which in turn could be turned in to a playground. Imagine that!

I am not opposed to the site in question being redeveloped, but it is too much in relation to the surrounding buildings and spaces. The proposed retails frontages are homogenous, and lack individuality. Look at that fantastic shop Pony Rider. It wouldn't work in a glass box next to another glass box. I am so saddened to see the building it occupies is to be demolished. I suspect that will be the end of the store here.

The store with the courtyard filled with plants for sale - another loss. Why does everything new have to be a homogenous box? Why would tourists bother coming here when they can go to Dee Why, or Bondi.

Again, I support a redevelopment of the subject site, but not in its current form. I strongly believe it will destroy the heart of Newport, and flies in the face of the marketing of the suburb as a "village".

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