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**From:** Brendan Donohoe  
**Sent:** 2/08/2022 10:10:41 AM  
**To:** Council Northernbeaches Mailbox  
**Subject:** 'DA2021/2173 Newport SLSC upgrade'  
**Attachments:** NEWPORT SLSC Final.docx;

Please find attached the Surfrider Foundation submission for Newport SLSC.

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**Brendan Donohoe**  
President Northern Beaches Branch  
Surfrider Foundation Australia  
Mob: [REDACTED]



26/07/2022

**To whom it may concern**

**RE: DA2021/2173 (amended) - 394 Barrenjoey Road NEWPORT NSW 2106**

Surfrider Foundation Australia, Northern Beaches Branch (Surfrider Foundation) objects to the amended plans for the proposed upgrade of Newport SLSC submitted for public comment on 12/07/2022.

**The amended plans do nothing to address the concerns raised by Surfrider Foundation and other objectors in relation to scale and ugliness of the proposed development. Instead, the amended DA actually represents an increase in the size of the building development being proposed.**

As per the details outlined in our original submission (attached), Surfrider Foundation believe that this Development Application (DA) should be rejected due to the enormous weight of community opinion that is unresponsive of what is being proposed on the grounds of it being an **overly large and ugly intrusion on the beach environment**.

Further, Surfrider Foundation believes that this development is in direct conflict with NBC's **declaration of a "Climate Emergency"** and its resultant **Draft Northern Beaches Resilience Strategy**, which clearly states in "Process for determining infrastructure investment projects" (Page 42, figure 22):

*"ACTION - Develop action plans based on the highest value risk resilience options per vulnerability reductions and incorporate into asset management plans*

*REVIEW - Review of the asset portfolio must be undertaken at appropriate intervals, particularly when risk profiles change, infrastructure is modified, or new infrastructure created "*

Approving the development as proposed in the DA will obviously create **another intergenerational cost** of maintenance due to forecast sea level rise. This can easily be avoided by any additional development of Newport SLSC retreating from an identified coastal erosion zone in which the current clubhouse most definitely resides.

Surfrider Foundation recommends a retreat of any new facilities required by the club, thereby saving the allotted \$2M+ slated for a beach damaging seawall to protect a greatly modified and nearing its use-by-date existing clubhouse (which was exposed as having minimal heritage value in the heritage report). The existing club could continue to be used until (not if) it is damaged further by storm activity after which time it would be demolished. The cost of the beach damaging seawall could be allocated to creating a fantastic "community developed and approved" surf club such as has occurred at Long Reef (following community outrage at two previous plans). After all it is the COMMUNITY'S BEACH and the COMMUNITY'S MONEY in play not just the desires of the committee of the Newport SLSC and its backers.

Notes:

- Surfrider Foundation is aware of a further submission made by Mr Angus Gordon (Coastal Engineer and ex-GM of Pittwater Council) expressing dire concerns with the efficacy and placement of a seawall on in front of Newport SLSC as part of this amended DA. Surfrider Foundation continues to share Mr Gordon's concerns and believe this constitutes another compelling reason why the DA should not be approved.

- Given that many of Surfrider Foundation's members are also current patrolling members of SLSCs we are well aware of the important role that surf clubs can play in saving lives as well as building community.

For further details regarding this submission please contact:

2022/467994

Brendan Donohoe  
President  
Surfrider Foundation Australia  
Northern Beaches Branch



**“RE: DA2021/2173 - 394 Barrenjoey Road NEWPORT NSW 2106**

Surfrider Foundation objects to the proposed development of Newport SLSC. This is an extremely serious matter given that **if the design proposed in the Development Application is approved it will result in a surf club building in a very prominent position on the Newport beachfront that a large proportion of the community find offensive. This will likely cause enduring resentment in the community.**

In the engagement process conducted by Council there was an enormous volume of considered feedback provided by the community opposing the design. Specifically, in respect of the 'Architectural design there were 35 supportive and **91 unsupportive comments**'. Refer pg 9 of the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report (link below).

[https://hdp-au-prod-app-nthbch-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/1316/2011/2936/Newport Surf Life Saving Club building extensions - Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report - May 2021.pdf](https://hdp-au-prod-app-nthbch-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/1316/2011/2936/Newport%20Surf%20Life%20Saving%20Club%20building%20extensions%20-%20Community%20and%20Stakeholder%20Engagement%20Report%20-%20May%202021.pdf)

Many of the comments were absolutely scathing of the proposal. Below is a typical example:  
*"The extension is a **brutal penitentiary design** that does not respect, or blend with the existing heritage building. The exposed brick and monochrome colours are at odds with the coastal surrounds. **It is incredibly ugly and unsympathetic, and (if it were to go ahead) would be a blight on the beach front.**"*

Note: At the end of this submission is a listing of a selection of comments from the Engagement Report that complained about the external appearance of the proposed design.

Despite this enormous volume of unsupportive comments, there were **no material changes to the external design from the proposal in the engagement process to what has been submitted in this DA.**

Unfortunately, the summary and findings of the 'Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report: 4 May 2021' (the Report) was deficient in that it failed to adequately summarise the depth of feeling in the community against the proposed design. As such it represented a 'watered down' version of what was said and effectively misrepresented the views of the community.

For example, the 'Summary' of the Report states:

*"The feedback collected during the consultation revealed a high level of overall support for the proposed refurbishment and extension.*

*Some respondents were not supportive of the design citing excessive size, and mismatch with the building's heritage and modern look of the new extension. Comments reflected a general preference for the new extension to match the existing building with regards to the façade design, colour, original architectural and heritage style.*

These summary comments are overly simplistic, open to challenge and significantly understate the depth of feeling in the broader community opposing the proposed design. Typically surf clubs run coordinated campaigns getting their members to write in to support their building proposals. Usually, the responses these campaigns generate are brief and done by rote. Objections on the other hand are much more difficult to organise and require real effort for submission, hence these tend to be longer and more considered. This has certainly been the case with the actual responses listed in the Engagement Report. However, this should not simply be a numbers game as the 'numbers' can be misleading concerning the broader community's view. For example, submissions on behalf of community groups tend to represent the views of between 20 and 100 members but only count as one submission. Also, in relation to the Newport SLSC proposal there has been a problem of silence due to intimidation. That is, many people in the community hold a strong view opposing this development but have been unwilling to commit it to writing given they have felt intimidated by those promoting the proposal. This includes

several members of the actual Newport SLSC who are unhappy with the proposal and have made contact with Surfrider Foundation expressing their concerns and asking them to be represented [Refer Comments on pg 82 and 96 of Engagement Report].

### Conclusion

This Development Application should be rejected due to the enormous weight of community opinion that is unsupportive of what is being proposed on the grounds of it being an **ugly intrusion on the beach environment**.

Notes:

- Surfrider Foundation is aware of a submission made by Angus Gordon (Coastal Engineer and ex-GM of Pittwater Council) expressing dire concerns with the efficacy and placement of a seawall on in front of Newport SLSC as part of this DA. Surfrider Foundation shares Mr Gordon's concerns and believe this constitutes another compelling reason why the DA should not be approved.
- Given that many of Surfrider Foundation's members are also current patrolling members of SLSCs we are well aware of the important role that surf clubs can play in saving lives.

For further details regarding this submission please contact:

Brendan Donohoe  
President  
Surfrider Foundation Australia  
Northern Beaches Branch



## APPENDIX

### Selection of unsupportive comments regarding the proposed Newport SLSC building extensions (sourced from the 'Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report: 4 May 2021')

[https://hdp-au-prod-app-nthbch-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/1316/2011/2936/Newport Surf Life Saving Club building extensions - Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report - May 2021.pdf](https://hdp-au-prod-app-nthbch-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/1316/2011/2936/Newport_Surf_Life_Saving_Club_building_extensions_-_Community_and_Stakeholder_Engagement_Report_-_May_2021.pdf)

Note: The reference numbers for the comments extracted from the report have been included.

303. *"The north end and front garages look so xxxxxxx ugly".*

305. *"The extension section design **doesn't integrate with the style of the existing club**. Recommend maintaining the current form of the Existing building with the extension".*

309. *"That box on the north side will date so quickly. Looks like all those blocks of flats developers have thrown up in new suburbs in Sydney - popping on some strips of metal (vertical blinds?) for a 'modern' look to a concrete box".*

317. *"Terribly ugly, very small improvement to public facilities".*

320. **"Over development on fragile sand dunes"**
322. **"The roller doors are quite ugly - they need to be painted. The sea wall is plain ugly"**
323. **"Please rethink the extension and make it as aesthetically pleasing on the eye as possible. We all love our Newport beach".**
324. **"If there must be more space keep the extra space separate. I am really shocked no one cares about the existing building".**
325. **"I hope in the interests of good design and maintaining the buildings value for years to come that you change the hideous existing colour scheme...."**
326. **"The grey box appended to the original building on the NW side is totally at odds with the original architecture. It's ugly. It reminds me of the "microwave" renovation at Coogee Surf Club".**
327. **"The street facing elevation - the new extension definitely looks like a boxy add-on. Would look much better if the colour were changed to match existing".**
328. **"I agree wholeheartedly with the need to extend the Surf Club, however this would have to be one of the most ugly and insensitive extensions to a charming historical building that I have ever seen in my life. Please have some regard for the existing surf club that we all love. The view from the road side of the new building looks like a 1970's nuclear fallout shelter. Absolutely horrible. The size and position is fine. The look of the proposed building is absolutely out of character. Please consider some kind of change to make the design of the new extension at least somewhat sympathetic to the beautiful existing Newport Surf Club building".**
329. **"Nothing. Totally out of concept of the existing building and unnecessary".**
330. **"Don't like the modern penchant for grey boxes"**
331. **"The contemporary addition is not at all in keeping with, or complementary to, the existing style. It doesn't enhance the character of the building, and detracts from the overall presentation of the current site".**
332. **"The back of it from the western elevation appears to not have any harmony with the rest of the building ,,,, I strongly dislike the grey concrete fin like looking areas at the northern rear face of the building proposal."**
333. **"This design is ugly it doesn't go with the original style of architecture of the building. I am actually stunned you are even considering this design. I am all for extending the surf club but please make the extension fit in with the current style".**
334. **"It just looks like the modernist style of the 70s it doesn't match the original building".**
335. **"It still looks unsightly. really you need a new building".**
- 337 **"I agree improvements can be made but the architect has destroyed what is one of the most beautiful NB clubs. Please come up with something that suits the current building".**
- 338 **"Design is not cohesive, the grey section is an eyesore. I love contemporary design but not when it ruins the beautiful historical look of a building. The design is out of touch with the history and the current community and really ought to stand out for beautiful, thoughtful design that will stand the test of time".**
339. **"Design lacks continuity with the existing building. Aesthetically there are better means of meeting objectives. Frankly, surprised it made it to this level of maturity in planning".**

340. *"The north extension would obscure the view from the residents opposite. **The design is out of character with the building and therefore the building would have no common architectural theme.** We understand the need for more space for the Club but this **should be designed into the current style of the building and blend in with the surroundings.** We would prefer a single ground floor extension"*
341. *"**The box-like design of the northern addition** is in contrast to the existing structure...."*
342. *"**The whole new wing** - it is not in keeping with the style of the original building and **looks jarring compared to the beautiful old building**".*
343. *"The architectural design of the addition. **The extension is a brutal penitentiary design that does not respect, or blend with the existing heritage building.** The exposed brick and monochrome colours are at odds with the coastal surrounds. **It is incredibly ugly and unsympathetic,** and (if it were to go ahead) **would be a blight on the beach front.** The view of Newport from Bilgola Sth Headland would also be ruined. Perhaps further consultation with National Trust Heritage architects would result in a more acceptable design with harmonious materials".*
344. *"The concrete addition on the Southern side of the building is **completely out of context with the aesthetic of the rest of the building, it looks like a concrete bunker.** I feel all emphasis is in the storage of club equipment & none given to the residents who would like a more useable community space".*
348. *"The over-all look and design seems **in vast contrast to the existing building.** The inadequate ladies toilet, the % of space that is for storage of boats and not community use".*
349. *"- **the new extension looks out of place with the existing building and a bit ugly in my opinion** - I'm concerned that the northern wall will appear to be an blank canvas for graffiti vandals....*
351. *"**Ugly and intrusive, not consistent with the architecture and beach theme of existing building and local area.**"*
352. *"That the architectural style is not in keeping with the building. Newport SLC Is an iconic Spanish style architecture building and the **proposed extensions are too different and would make the overall appearance too contradictory**".*
353. *"However, **modifications to the facade of the building itself will only serve to devalue to surf club in the eyes of tourists and the local community**".*
356. *"The extension on the Northern end **does not match the rest of the building aesthetically.***
357. *"There are two elements of the proposal that are inappropriate: (i) **The extension is too large.** It represents a significant increase in the floorspace of the existing building and substantially increases the 'bulk' of the overall building. (ii) **The extension** at the Northern end of the building is out of character with the remainder of the building. **It is a dark, box-like addition which is visually unappealing**".*
- 364 *"From an aesthetic perspective I regard the present design as **visually jarring. The neo-brutalist monolith is utterly indifferent to the existing design.** It looks for all the world like some shipping containers have been pushed up against one end of the building. So I object not only to the purpose of the extension, but to the unsympathetic visual compromise it imposes on an otherwise attractive public building".*
366. *"**The extension is an eyesore** and doesn't feel like it is in keeping with the iconic nature of the these buildings that dot the New South Wales coastline . There also needs to be some further consideration of the ladies toilets, as a parent of daughters, I want to know it is private and safe".*
367. *"From Bert Payne park, the view of the **north west corner of the extension is not really in keeping***

**with the building. It looks out of place and concrete bunkerish”.**

371. **“The new extension is unbelievably ugly”**

372 *“The proposal only seems to be in favour of those at the Kinghorn academy, which I can’t really understand. They have other facilities available to them already”.*

375. **“The extension looks like a carbuncle - an ugly addition** to a building iconic in its time- which expressed the aspiration of a generation of both sun worshippers and those who were revered for their public service. This iteration expresses neither. It's an ugly land grab - public spaces reduced and reserved for those who can pay! As for the sheer lunacy of building in the foredune which requires the protection of a seawall? ? Climate change, anyone? Doesn't anyone overseeing this project have an eye to the future, or indeed an appreciation of history when building on public land was for the public?”.

376 **“It looks the same all round except the garages and north end, which look disgusting, why waste the money”.**

378. *“The surf club is basically for the use of the surf lifesavers , and not for the use of storage purposes for social activities . The proposed extension is excessive and is 38.6% bigger than the one already there .*  
**No need to take away beachfront and make it look ugly”**

379. *“..... we disapprove of the proposed extension of the outdoor balcony area (the top left outdoor balcony of the building.....the grey sunscreen aluminum structure could be changed slightly so it is lower or moved over slightly so it in line with the higher roof of the current club. **The dark grey is also very industrial and I think an eyesore for a beautiful building.** The colours are too dark and harsh”.*

380. **“I believe the proposal is excessive in size and the design won’t tie in with the natural environment”**

381. **“The design seems to have achieved the volunteer SLSC space requirement brief at the expense of all other uses which seem to be squeezed in.** This should be a chance to not only provide the badly needed storage for the SLSC but better engage the public with a welcoming inclusive building, well designed pedestrian surrounds, improved sunlit public changerooms, highly visible and engaging council lifeguard facilities, and a strong landscape connection to interconnecting activities. Above all **it should be embracing its heritage not looking at this as a constraint. Please revisit this design”.**

383 *“The most important considerations of all new beach developments should be that they complement and enhance the natural beauty of the beach and the surrounds, as well as protecting the beach front for ALL beach goers to enjoy for generations to come. **It appears that the primary consideration of this unsightly development is the storage of competition sporting equipment.** I am not sure that this serves the best interests of the broader community”.*

385. *“No one but the club members seem to have been consulted on this development and it shows. **The addition is box like** and cuts of the view of club house on entry to the car park. ....*

387. **“Start again. Involve the community. Surf clubs designing their own buildings?? Ridiculous, undemocratic and short-sighted”.**

388. **“The building extension is ugly and intrusive”.**

391. *“I am a Newport resident and have been a local on this beach for many years. I totally agree with having adequate storage but **why destroy the current aesthetic with an ugly tack-on”.***



*"I am therefore relieved that the existing building is largely maintained. **However, I most vehemently object to the overwhelming size and brutalist design of the addition to the northern end. This addition is totally discordant with the heritage look and feel of the original building and makes no attempt to harmonise in colour, shape or character.** I also don't believe the proposed design is in keeping with the atmosphere of the Newport village. "*

