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Sent: 3/02/2022 9:05:38 PM
To: DA Submission Mailbox
Subject: Online Submission

03/02/2022

MS Dianne OHara
- 2 King ST
Deakin ACT 2600

RE: REV2021/0045 - 5 Skyline Place FRENCHS FOREST NSW 2086

To the Assessing Officer
Northern Beaches Council

APPLICATION NUMBER: REV2021/0045

I am writing in regard to the above section 8.2(1A) Review of Determination - Review of Determination of Application DA2021/0212.

Project Independence (PI) is a not-for-profit social enterprise that provides a unique and sustainable home ownership solution for people with an intellectual disability. PI has worked extensively with the applicant, Platino Properties, on the Skyline Place development to provide 10 apartments for residents with an intellectual disability.

PI was disappointed when the Northern Beaches Council failed to support the mixed use development proposed by Platino, and again later when it was refused by the Planning Panel. I note that as part of the ongoing review process, Platino has made significant amendments to the proposed development to reduce the height and scale of the buildings in order to address Council's concerns.

PI continues to strongly support the proposed development and urges a reconsideration of the decision to refuse the DA. PI does so on the basis of the substantial benefits the mixed use development offers to people with an intellectual disability - both in terms of achieving home ownership and integrating into a vibrant local community.

CONSISTENT WITH COUNCIL AND GOVERNMENT POLICY SETTINGS

The proposed development is consistent with Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 (DIAP). The plan 'identifies a number of key strategies and actions to address the needs of people with disability and improve access and inclusion for everyone'. The latest progress update on the DIAP by Council (2019-20) reported that 'Disability inclusion is now embedded in our planning and project management frameworks for future plans and works, including plans to encourage affordable and adaptable housing'.

Further, the DA for Skyline Place is a fantastic example of where the planning system can operate to achieve an outcome that is completely in accordance with the objectives of the SEPP - to provide for housing specifically designed for seniors and people with a disability in a

location that is ideally located to provide access to a wide range of services and facilities such as shops, medical services, transport and recreation.

NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Home ownership rates for people with an intellectual disability lag far behind the rest of the population. The need of this disadvantaged group for appropriate housing solutions cannot be overstated. In March this year, Anglicare found that of over 25,000 homes available for rent in Greater Sydney and the Illawarra, only five properties were affordable and appropriate to a person on a disability support pension.

It is further noted that the number of NDIS participants in Frenchs Forest and its surrounds is expected to increase from 2,613 to 3,245 participants in FY 2023.

PI believes that the mixed-use development proposed by Platino is an innovative use of the Frenchs Forest site. The development will not only provide homes to help meet a significant gap in the market, it will also actively assist PI residents achieve full integration into the local community. The deliberately diverse residential base, commercial facilities and range of recreational services available on-site is an attractive and innovative addition for PI and its residents. We believe the integration will provide our residents with a range of employment and volunteering opportunities both on-site and within the nearby community.

SUPPORT FOR REVIEW OF DETERMINATION

I urge Council to consider the significant unmet housing needs of people with an intellectual disability and the considerable social benefits and opportunities that are offered by the scheme in assessing Platino's Review of Determination REV 2021/0045.

Yours sincerely,

Dianne O'Hara
Chief Executive Officer
Project Independence