
From: DYPXCPWEB@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au
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To: DA Submission Mailbox
Subject: Online Submission

02/12/2024

MR Aaron Sweetman
- 1 Cannons PDE
Forestville NSW 2087
[REDACTED]

RE: DA2024/1303 - 11 / 0 Melwood Avenue FORESTVILLE NSW 2087

PLEASE REDACT PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL BEFORE PUBLISHING

Dear Councillors and Assessing Officers

I am writing on behalf of my family and the wider Forestville community to express my strong and unequivocal opposition to the redevelopment proposal for the Forestville RSL Club as detailed in Development Application DA2024/1303. The proposed development raises numerous concerns that render it entirely inappropriate for approval. It represents a significant departure from planning regulations, the foundational principles of the RSL, and the broader community's expectations and needs.

1. Breach of Planning Regulations

1.1 Excessive Building Height

The proposed development exceeds the height limitations set forth by the Northern Beaches Local Environmental Plan (LEP). This regulation exists to preserve the low-rise, residential character of Forestville and protect neighbouring properties from overshadowing and privacy intrusions. Approval of this DA would set a dangerous precedent, undermining the enforceability of local planning instruments. The applicant's justification for this height breach lacks any extraordinary rationale to warrant such an exception.

Precedent: In *Randwick City Council v Mowbray*, the court emphasized the importance of adhering to height controls to maintain neighbourhood character. The council has a duty to uphold these standards consistently.

1.1.2 Misleading height calculations

The land on the southern side of the development has already been raised to provide a level bowling green. As such, the height of the building at the southern end is 1-2 metres higher than what is recorded on the plans should you take it from the undeveloped natural land slope height.

1.2 Inadequate Privacy Protections

The proposed balconies and windows overlook private residences, schools, Scout halls, and areas used by children, such as dance studios. This is a gross violation of residents' right to

privacy and contravenes the principles of the Development Control Plan (DCP), which mandates consideration of neighbouring properties' amenity.

1.2.1 '1 Cannons Pde'

Regarding my personal privacy and that of family members, the south-eastern aspect of the new buildings will look straight into my dining and living areas as well as into my backyard. This is not acceptable.

1.3 Reduction in Open Green Spaces

The DA proposes a significant reduction of cherished outdoor green spaces, which are vital for community recreation. The loss of bowling greens and family-friendly open spaces in favour of dual-use areas catering to apartment residents and club patrons undermines the public interest.

2. Violation of RSL Principles and Governance

2.1 Contradiction of Charter

The RSL's foundational purpose is to provide a community hub for veterans and local families. The removal of the cenotaph and reduction of family areas demonstrate a prioritization of commercial interests over this mission.

2.2 Breach of Registered Clubs Act

The Registered Clubs Act 1976 (Section 41E) requires that any disposal or redevelopment of core property be approved by a majority vote of the club's members at a general meeting. According to local submissions, this critical step has not been undertaken. This omission invalidates the DA's legitimacy and necessitates its dismissal until compliance is achieved.

2.3 Failure to Engage Members

The first detailed plans for this redevelopment were revealed on the council's website, with no prior consultation or vote by members. This lack of transparency contravenes the Clubs NSW Guidelines for Major Capital Works and the Club Governance Code of Practice.

3. Adverse Social and Community Impacts

3.1 Expansion of Gambling Facilities

The proposal to expand indoor and outdoor gaming spaces directly contradicts community expectations and government policies aimed at reducing gambling harm. Studies such as the Productivity Commission Report on Gambling (2010) highlight the detrimental effects of increased accessibility to poker machines, particularly in family-oriented suburbs.

Impact: Forestville is home to multiple schools and a thriving family demographic. Expanding gambling facilities undermines the club's role as a community hub and increases the risk of gambling-related harm.

3.2 Extended Operating Hours

The relatively recent extension of operating hours to 3 a.m. disproportionately benefits gambling activities and exacerbates noise pollution, antisocial behaviour, and neighbourhood disturbances. Such hours are wholly inappropriate in a residential area, particularly one with a primary school directly across the road.

3.3 Inadequate Facilities

The DA proposes replacing the current 12 male and female restrooms with just two unisex facilities. This design fails to provide adequate safety and privacy for women, children, and families. The absence of parent rooms and breastfeeding areas further demonstrates the applicant's disregard for community needs.

3.4 Impact on the Value of Local Residential Properties

Residents, who will now experience a monstrously large gambling den and residences overlooking their low-density family dwellings, will without doubt experience a drop in the value of their property. This will be an irretrievable and significant loss.

4. Environmental and Infrastructure Concerns

4.1 Traffic Congestion

Melwood Avenue is already a congested thoroughfare, especially during school drop-off and pick-up times. The proposed redevelopment would exacerbate this issue, introducing additional traffic from apartment residents, club patrons, and delivery vehicles. The DA fails to provide a robust traffic impact assessment or mitigation plan.

4.2 Construction Disruption

The proposed five-year construction timeline would inflict prolonged and unacceptable disruption on the community, including noise, dust, and safety hazards. This extended period of disturbance is a major concern for families living in close proximity.

5. Community Sentiment

The community's opposition to this DA is widespread and deeply felt, as evidenced by families who have added their signatures to this submission. Their concerns reflect the broader sentiment that this redevelopment is not aligned with the community's needs or values. The Forestville RSL has always been more than just a building; it's been a cornerstone of our community—a place where families gather, where children run freely on the grass, and where friendships are forged over outdoor meals. On ANZAC Day, the dawn service draws hundreds of locals, standing shoulder to shoulder to honour our veterans in a uniquely moving and intimate ceremony. This proposed redevelopment threatens to strip away all of that. It would replace our cherished, family-oriented space with a towering, invasive structure that looms over our neighbourhood, bringing noise, disruption, and a focus on gambling that feels entirely out of step with the values we hold dear. This isn't just about a building; it's about losing a piece of what makes Forestville feel like home.

Key Themes from Submissions:

- Reduction in family-friendly spaces.
- Overemphasis on gambling facilities.
- Lack of consultation and member approval.
- Significant privacy and safety concerns for children and families.

6. Recommendations

- Immediate Dismissal: The council should reject this DA due to its non-compliance with planning regulations and governance requirements.
- Community-Led Redesign: Any future proposals must prioritize family-friendly spaces, transparency, and adherence to the RSL's charter.
- Regulatory Review: The council should investigate whether the RSL management has violated the Registered Clubs Act or other governance standards.

Conclusion

This proposal is a blatant attempt to prioritize profit over community, heritage, and amenity. It is incompatible with Forestville's character and values, and its approval would constitute a grave disservice to the local population.

I strongly urge the Northern Beaches Council to reject Development Application DA2024/1303 in its entirety.

Yours sincerely,
Aaron and Jordana Sweetman

Many other families in our community share these concerns and have expressed their strong opposition to this development. Due to their busy schedules, they have requested that their support be acknowledged through this submission, and they endorse the objections raised herein.

- Sean Monroe (4 Cannons Pde Forestville 2087)
- Steve Hoskins and Alex Rosales (5 Mawarra Cl, Forestville 2087)
- Rebecca Reid (91 Lady Davidson Circuit, Forestville 2087)
- Emily MacMahon and Keith Jackman (6 Careebong Rd, Frenchs Forest 2086)
- Karena McLellan and Andrew Henville (14 Drumcliff Ave, Killarney Heights, 2087)
- John Paul McLoone (10/118-120 Ocean St Narrabeen 2101)
- Carol McLoone (5 Hillpine Pl, Terrey Hills 2084)
- Briony Molesworth (34 Cannons Pde, Forestville, 2087)
- Julia Palmer (30 Wellman Rd, Forestville, 2087)