
From: DYPXCPWEB@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au
Sent: 26/06/2025 2:39:18 PM
To: DA Submission Mailbox
Subject: TRIMMED: Online Submission

26/06/2025

MR John Gilmour
2 / 4 Tuam PL
Killarney Heights NSW 2087
[REDACTED]

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

Objection to Development Application DA2024/1303

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Objection to Development Application DA2024/1303

I write to lodge my strong objection to DA2024/1303, on both community and planning grounds. This proposal reflects poor priorities, minimal transparency, and a complete failure to engage the community in shaping the future of a vital local institution.

1. Disrespect for Community Heritage

This DA proposes the relocation of the Cenotaph, a monument that has stood on the RSL precinct for decades. The Cenotaph is hallowed ground - a site of remembrance and respect. Its removal to a corner near sports courts is inappropriate and deeply insensitive to veterans and the broader community.

2. No Genuine Community Consultation

The board claims they have "informed" members - but they have not consulted us. There has been no survey, no public forum, no member vote, and no opportunity to shape alternatives. This shows an autocratic approach that disregards the very community the club exists to serve.

3. Misallocation of Funds

At the 2025 AGM, members were told about urgent repairs like a leaking roof - but instead of addressing those core issues, the board spent \$1.3 million of club funds on a redevelopment feasibility study. That money could have fixed the roof and bolstered reserves (already sitting above \$5 million), ensuring financial health without incurring massive debt.

4. A Misguided, Ill-Fitting Development

The proposed 55+ retirement units are aimed at an affluent, narrow demographic, despite the club's primary and growing user base being families with children and teens.

This redevelopment:

- Removes open green space loved by families
- Fails to create adequate outdoor play and relaxation areas
- Does nothing to serve the club's largest active demographic
- Prioritises property development over community wellbeing

The new plans bury a small "play area" deep within the structure - a far cry from the vibrant green space that families currently use and enjoy.

5. Missed Opportunities for Real Growth

Instead of overdeveloping, the club could:

- Expand family offerings: barefoot bowls, food and wine festivals, mini-golf
- Enhance outdoor space usage for kids and parents
- Embrace a model that supports both community and sustainable income - all achievable without destroying what makes the club appealing today

6. Lack of Transparency Around Costs & Risks

This is a \$70+ million redevelopment, yet members have seen:

- No financial model
- No projected returns
- No risk assessment
- No explanation of how debt will be serviced
- No business case that justifies this scale of development

The board has not demonstrated how this plan benefits members financially or socially - because it likely does not.

7. Summary of Technical and Planning Objections

In addition to my community concerns, I submit the following key technical objections, which are further detailed in the attached document:

- Excessive building height in breach of the Local Environmental Plan (LEP)
- Loss of privacy and inappropriate sightlines into homes, schools, and youth spaces
- Loss of vital green space, replaced by token and inaccessible play areas
- Major construction disruption with no mitigation plan
- No credible traffic study, despite foreseeable congestion
- Internal design flaws, especially around toilet access and unsafe gaming floor layout
- Overbuilt, out-of-character form that ignores Forestville's village zoning
- No consent from members, and no transparent consultation process

Conclusion

This redevelopment proposal serves neither the majority of club members nor the local community. It disrespects heritage, ignores demographics, misuses funds, and prioritises overdevelopment without a clear return.

I urge Council to reject DA2024/1303 in its current form.

Sincerely,

John Gilmour]

Attachment:

- Technical Objections to DA2024/1303 - Community Submission

Technical Objections to DA2024/1303 - Community Submission

1. Excessive Building Height (Breach of LEP)

- Building exceeds height limits under the Northern Beaches LEP (approximately 30% above the legal limit).
- Height calculated from artificially raised ground (former bowling greens), not the natural slope.
- Sets a dangerous precedent for overdevelopment in low-rise Forestville.

2. Privacy and Overlooking

- New balconies and windows directly face residential homes, schools, and youth-focused spaces (e.g. dance studios, Scout halls).
- Serious impacts on family privacy and child safety - a breach of Development Control Plan (DCP) principles.

3. Loss of Community Green Space

- Bowling greens and outdoor areas lost or converted to dual-use zones outside the licensed club premises.
- No equivalent replacement for safe, open recreational space.
- Diagrams depict Council-owned strip land as part of the development's "green space," which is misleading.

4. Construction Impacts (Years of It)

- Noise, dust, heavy equipment, and traffic disruptions will span multiple years.
- No meaningful mitigation plans provided.
- Major impact on schools, elderly, and day-to-day life for nearby residents.

5. Traffic and Congestion

- Increased vehicle load on Melwood Avenue and nearby community roads.
- No adequate traffic study addressing school hours, weekends, or event times.
- Prolonged congestion expected during both construction and operation.

6. Internal Design and Gaming Area Concerns

- Development drawings are marked "subject to change," yet they are used to justify the DA.
- The gaming room is centrally located and overly prominent - not a peripheral function.
- Gambling area appears to exceed the hospitality and dining footprint.
- Toilet access is severely limited - only 16 unisex toilets proposed for the entire complex.
- No dedicated family or parent facilities.
- Half the toilets are unreachable without passing through or near the gaming area - poor for children, families, and vulnerable visitors.

7. Built Form and Character

- Entirely out of scale with surrounding dwellings and village zoning.
- Forestville is defined by low-rise, community-scaled development - this proposal contradicts that.
- The hilltop position will make the structure dominate the skyline.
- Retirement units serve a narrow demographic and do not align with local needs.

8. Lack of Member Consultation or Consent

- No member vote has occurred on the redevelopment of core club land.
- No meaningful options or alternatives were presented to members.
- A board of eight cannot credibly claim to represent the community without asking for feedback.