23/11/18

Channel 9 Willoughby Development; Modification of Concept Approval (M10\_0198MOD2)

Dear Commissioners

I’m writing this submission as Peter Stephenson, 20-year resident of 40 Cobar St, Willoughby and a concerned citizen who does not support the Modification proposal to change the Channel 9 Willoughby development as it is too high and too dense for the location. In addition, when reviewed it becomes apparent the modifications are a backward step from the current approved proposal which I support.

I have been involved in this development over the past 4 years as a local resident who is not against development of the site as I acknowledge that is required under the circumstances. In this spirit I’ve been part of the fully aligned group which includes the local community, local community interest groups and Willoughby Council who all feel the same way about the situation in that the development proposal is unsuitable for this site as it is an isolated site which will negatively impact our community and infrastructure in many ways.

When you consider the proposed modifications it’s obvious they are inconsistent with NSW Gov’t urban planning philosophy which is prioritises the reduction of isolated ‘spot planning’ sites as they are not part of a co-ordinated planning approach. In line with this both Willoughby Council and Northern Districts strategic objective is for co-ordinated planning across areas with consistency and appropriate infrastructure, sadly the Channel 9 site does not fall into this category and therefore needs to be considered in a manner that allows for this situation.

My specific objection to any changes to the development plan is primarily around the negative impact to the local traffic levels should there be an increase to the current proposed levels of density;

* Since the approval of the development plan by PAC and the Land & Environment Court the local neighbour and infrastructure has got busier with the completion of 2 large new residential apartment blocks on Penshurst & Mowbray Rd with the majority of residents using Edward St & Artarmon Rd as their commuting thoroughfare. This is why the Federal Gov’t recently completed re-surfacing the Edward St thoroughfare from Penshurst St to Artarmon Rd.
* The developer has used incorrect Car per Unit dwelling ratio applying the ratio for dwellings adjacent to train infrastructure which is not the case with Channel 9. The accepted distance from train infrastructure to dwellings for that ratio to apply is 400 metres whereas Channel 9 site is 1.5 kilometers which will necessitate residents to be more reliant on having a car to travel that distance. Also, the nearest shopping centre with a supermarket is Northbridge which is 1.3 kilometres from the site, again another reason why residents will need a car. This is a mis-representation of the facts.
* The developer has not conducted any new traffic studies to support the new proposal and it’s apparent the impact of the Penshurst St & Mowbray Rd apartment blocks has already negatively impacted morning peak hour traffic on Artarmon Rd. For example; on Artarmon Rd at 7.15am 20/11/18 the traffic was already banked up past Scott St and Edward St.
* The new modification proposal shows 2 traffic flows for cars to leave the site one of which is Scott St which will mean that with the extra traffic flow there will be a grid lock from 7.15am. Should residents use the alternative Richmond Rd exit this will impact Artarmon Rd and also create blockages for traffic entering Artarmon Rd from Edward St.
* It’s obvious to me that the developers have no regard for the impact of traffic flows in the local area and have not bothered to conduct a traffic survey as they already know it will be a negative impact.
* It is worth drawing your attention to the fact that this was a major contributing factor to the final PAC determination that the development should be limited to 400 apartments.

As the first part of this development progressed through planning approvals and final PAC approval the local community has been fully aligned with local community groups and Willoughby Council that the development over 350 units was too dense and too high for the isolated location. We all accept that development will occur and have worked to constructively find a fair and balanced solution. Were we happy at the final PAC decision for 400 units – no we were not for the reasons stated in this submission. That said we abided by the decision as there had been a transparent and consultative approach taken during the process with the Channel 9 management.

Since the new developer has been involved there has sadly been no consultation or respect for the local community and their behaviour, particularly with the timing of their last submission has reinforced the stereotypes we have of financially driven developers.

In this latest proposal for modification it is interesting to note that the Dept of Planning & Environment has strangely provided 6 reasons to justify the proposal proceeding which are either incorrect of not relevant and these should be pointed out;

* 1. Building heights are no greater than the existing approval  
     \* incorrect, building heights are increased, there are more storeys and greater mass  
     \* the maximum headline RL heights are maintained via subterranean construction  
     \* building 8/9 now 3.2m higher than in approved concept plan
  2. Built form on the site edges provides a transition to the neighbouring low scale  
     \* incorrect the transition on the edges are worse than in the approved scheme, the heights are higher, there is less set-back and greater density closer to the low scale residential
  3. Over shadowing is improved  
     \* minor improvement but irrelevant to the question of the number of units and housing density
  4. Open space is improved  
     \* total open space is reduced; green open space is marginally improved but at the cost of reduction in internal roads and worsened parking issues;  
     \* there is no reduction in built form
  5. Traffic generation remains acceptable  
     \* this is isolated site where residents are dependent upon cars  
     \* the 15% increase in apartment numbers will increase traffic impact by at least 15%
  6. Public benefit from the Voluntary Planning Agreement  
     \* the proposed Voluntary Planning Agreement is not for the public but targeted to the needs of the development;  
     \* the public benefit is significantly inferior to that of the approved development

To conclude;

* I request that the IPC rejects the increase in unit numbers and maintain the limit set by PAC and the Land & Environment Court
* I request that the IPC reduce the height and storey levels of the buildings along Artarmon Rd & Richmond Rd to that set PAC & the Land and Environment Court.

Your Sincerely

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