

THE DARLING POINT SOCIETY INC

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25 November 2021

Mr N Economou
Manager – Development Control
Woollahra Municipal Council
By email

Application Number: DA 2/2017/3
Applicant: Darling Point 1 Pty Ltd
Property (ies): 1 Mona Rd (aka 80-84 New South Head Rd) & 9 Mona Rd & 90 New South Head Rd, DARLING POINT

Dear Mr Economou,

I refer to previous representations made by the Darling Point Society (DPS) to Woollahra Municipal Council (Council) about Development Applications (DAs) that refer to the above properties. These DAs have been made by different parties and appear to have “minor modifications” to an “original” and approved DA (DA 2/2017/1) lodged some years ago.

While the current DAs have been “modified” slightly compared to the “original” there have also been some significant “modifications” to the adjacent environs of the properties that are the subject of the above DA.

Most notably has been the creation of a Clearway along the vast majority of New South Head Rd (NSH Rd).

The Clearway is a sad indication that NSH Rd has reached a “tipping point” in terms of the volume of traffic that can be accommodated. Other roads in Sydney that have suffered this fate are Parramatta Rd, Oxford St, Military Rd, etc. Efforts to redress the traffic issues now being experienced by the relevant Councils are belated and will be protracted and expensive in the short, medium and long term.

The loss of parking spaces in NSH Rd due to the introduction of the Clearway has had many unforeseen impacts.

It has meant that Parents and Guardians of children who attend the East Gymnastics and KICK Learn to Learn Centres at NSH Rd are now required to park at significant distances away from those Centres.

These Parent and Guardians come from as far afield as Rose Bay, Vaucluse, Dover Heights and the inner west. Many have expressed concerns about the lack of parking and they know of other Parents and Guardians who do not attend the Centres due to the lack of parking in the area.

Of those that do attend, there have been cases where they have had to park near the roundabout at St Marks Church. The children enjoy the walk to the Centres but are exhausted after they have had their classes and have had to go back up the steep hill to get to their cars.

Managers and staff at the Centres are concerned that Parents and Guardians who initially attend the Centres found that parking was so extremely difficult that they decided to seek Centres which are further afield but have much better on street parking facilities.

Most recently a new commercial enterprise has occupied a building at 68 NSH Rd. This enterprise (Wynstan Blinds) has a number of vehicles that have required parking even before they have opened the premises for business (albeit temporary for pick up/drop off of materials etc). DPS considers that following the opening of Wynstan Blinds a number of clients/potential clients, who will inevitably visit the premises, will require parking. To suggest that they will all utilise public transport is bordering on the ridiculous. Yet another "Straw added to the Camel's back".

DPS has been advised that to overcome critical shortages of on street residential car parking spaces a number of other Municipalities have converted "first come – first served" on street parking to parking that is reserved for vehicles with an appropriate Council Parking Permit.

This appears to be a very sensible way of ensuring that residents are assured of at least some parking in the area. DPS considers that at least Eight (8) "Residents ONLY Parking Permit" spaces be provided along Mona Rd. At least Four (4) such spaces on each side.

A similar number of spaces should be provided along Darling Point Rd where it meets NSH Rd.

DPS considers that any approvals provided under any of the DAs currently under consideration by Council MUST continue to have a condition that Parking Permits will not be issued to any Residents/Tenants/Customers of the above Properties.

DPS considers that irrespective of the efforts being made by statutory bodies and "Interest Groups" to reduce the number of motor vehicles on roadways there is a continual annual increase in their number. This continual increase exacerbates parking problems.

Public parking is becoming an increasing issue that must be addressed by statutory bodies. To this end DPS considers that Council should explore the possibility of requiring developers to not make a simple "one off" contribution to public parking at the time of a redevelopment (or new development) but to also make a contribution toward the maintenance of such parking.

The proposal for a significant redevelopment of the Edgecliff Centre should require those developers to build Public Car Parking at the Centre- for example, above the Bus Terminus. The options for construction, then use, of such parking appear to have not yet been considered. Options could include -

- Developers to build and commercial operator to manage;
- Developers to build and Council to manage;
- Full fee structure for all parking;
- Subsidised parking for residents;
- Subsidised parking for Public Transport Users;

- Free parking for residents;
- Free parking for Public Transport Users;
- Etc
- Etc

DPS considers that the establishment of 9 Commercial Spaces does not adequately address the impact that some commercial enterprises will have on the environs of the properties.

The Wynstan enterprise currently has a relatively small of vehicles that require “temporary” parking.

What conditions will Council impose on these Commercial Spaces to ensure that there is no further impact on the increasingly limited residential parking in the environs?

- That only Owner/Operator enterprises with a limit of less than 5 persons be permitted?
- That enterprises require Owners/Employees to use Public Transport?
- That enterprises require any Customers to use Public Transport?
- Etc
- Etc

How will Council monitor the number of Customers who use street parking to attend these enterprises to ensure that there is no degradation of residential parking at any hours of the day and night?

Attached are copies of DPS objections to DAs 2017/1 and 2017/2. The comments about internal car parking and on street parking being woefully inadequate apply equally to this DA.

Similarly, DPS concerns about Entry and Egress to the property appear to again not been addressed.

DPS is aware that construction activity will be “temporary in nature”. DPS is not aware how demolition/excavation/construction traffic will be managed given that NSH Rd is now a Clearway for a significant portion of the day.

Will Council require such traffic to turn left at Darling Point Rd and traverse downwards along Mona Rd to where Mona Rd will be “blocked off” to “normal” traffic wishing to turn left or right into NSH Rd?

Such a requirement would create significant traffic issues along the very narrow “slip road” and also cause a traffic issue where the “slip road” joins Darling Point Rd. The “join” is managed by a Stop sign, however there is no road marking to indicate where traffic is to stop.

OR

Will Council require demolition/excavation/construction traffic to turn left into Mona Rd and require this traffic to perform a “U turn” at the roundabout at St Marks Church before proceeding downwards toward NSH Rd? Presumably the above “blocking off” of to “normal traffic” would also be proposed.

(DPS considers that any demolition/excavation/construction traffic would prove impossible to undertake a “U turn” within Mona Rd.)

OR

Will Council require that a lane in NSH Rd be “blocked off” for demolition/excavation/construction traffic?

OR

Council will provide an alternative method of catering for the volume of demolition/excavation/construction traffic that would be required for the period of the works.

Irrespective of which of the above is undertaken DPS considers that the impact on the thousands of vehicles that use NSH Rd on a regular basis will be HORRENDOUS.

Advice that “an appropriate Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is to be provided to the Council” will not “cut the mustard”. The TMP must have widespread promulgation and consultation with all parties who will be impacted by any large scale works along NSH Rd.

NSH Rd (together with Oxford St) is a significant carrier of tourists and any disruption to their experience will have an adverse effect that will not become immediately noticeable. When tourists who get stuck in traffic jams return to their place and/or country of origin they will relate their “bad experiences” much more vociferously to many more potential tourists than their “good experiences”.

DPS is not aware if Council has had the foresight to advise ALL Federal, State and Territory Tourism Agencies of the potential disruption to international and national tourists during the period of any altered traffic arrangements in order to accommodate the “short term duration” of demolition/excavation/construction traffic that will be required for the proposed works.

It appears Varga Traffic Planning Pty Ltd (Varga) provided Council with a “Traffic and Parking Assessment Report” in May 2021.

That Report appears to fail to address some fundamental concerns raised by DPS in its previous submissions to Council. For example -

- There is no indication that Varga has sought advice from the appropriate bodies who support Disabled Persons. If they had they would have been advised that Parking Spaces for Disabled Persons require some 50% greater width to enable doors of both sides of any vehicle to open fully and still allow a wheel chair to pass between the door and any wall or other obstruction.
- The location of the Entry/Egress driveway in Mona Rd is extraordinarily close to the intersection with NSH Rd. The very significant INCREASE in parking spaces potentially afforded to the development will, in the opinion of DPS, cause confusion and potential traffic accidents for the following reasons –
 - If vehicles attempt to choose to turn right to traverse upwards toward Darling Point Rd; and
 - If vehicles choose to turn right into NSH Rd.

Vehicles exiting the development MUST ONLY be permitted to turn left into NSH Rd.

The Development Consent (DC) issued for DA2017/1 advises at D.5 that –

“Also, due to a lack of on-street parking a Work Zone **may be** required during construction”
(Emphasis added.)

By its own admission Council considered that at the time of issuing the DC that there was a lack of on-street parking in the vicinity of the proposed development. Since the time of that DC the lack of on-street parking has been exacerbated due to the introduction of a significant Clearway in NSH Rd.

It is inconceivable that Varga can now state that the development is – “... not expected to result in any unacceptable implications in terms of network capacity.”

DPS also considers that the DC condition that “...a Work Zone may be required..” is simply not workable. Should the development proceed then a Work Zone **MUST BE** provided by the developer.

The use by Varga of the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) Guidelines for *office blocks* appears to DPS as being inappropriate. DPS believes that the type of enterprise that will be based in the proposed development will be of personal customer service for example - grooming. These enterprises have “ high value” individuals as their customer base. These individuals drive to obtain their services.

Offices typically have a “static” number of people working in them with few customers visiting them.

It would be interesting to observe what Varga’s conclusions would be if a similar development proposal was lodged for a similar sized proposal in Military Rd.

In conclusion, DPS again strongly objects to the granting of the original DC, to the subsequent amendments and to this DA 2017/3.

Kind regards



Charlotte Feldman

Chair

Darling Point Society Inc.