

FEDERATION OF WILLOUGHBY PROGRESS ASSOCIATIONS

Please address all correspondence to Hon. Secretary at :-
9 Cawarra Road, Middle Cove, NSW 2068, Phone 9958 4879 Email : osmec@inet.net.au

2nd May, 2013

The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP
Minister for Planning & Infrastructure
Governor Macquarie Tower
Level 31, Farrer Place
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Minister,

Re: Channel 9 Willoughby Site – Part 3A Development Proposal

Following a meeting with the Developers of the Channel Nine site on 2nd November we wrote to you expressing our concern with respect to the limited time that the Applicant had allowed for consultation and our regret that the Applicant had chosen the path of the Part 3A process rather than genuine community consultation.

A second round of consultations to review the developer's Concept Plan was held on 11th April for core stakeholders, principally Willoughby Councillors, Council Officers and delegates of local Progress Associations. It became obvious that little had changed from the original proposal, the scale of the development, in terms FSR and building heights and the proposed number of units remain essentially the same. Buildings ranging in the main from 6 to 18 storeys with FSR 1.98 : 1, or 2.04:1 for the two options presented.

The developers had paid no heed to the concerns raised in the first series of meetings and it is clear that they view the consultation process as a formality, as required under the Part 3A planning process. Their intention has been to exact the maximum commercial gain from the site to maximize their return and 'screw' the community.

We shall briefly enumerate our objections to the developer's proposal.

1. Consultation - The developer has ignored the community's concerns regarding the social impact that their development would have within the Willoughby wide area and the region. The developers have made no genuine attempt to engage with Willoughby Council to see how development of the site might fit with Willoughby City strategic planning.
2. EMR Issues - The developer advises that the Television Tower will remain as this belongs to a different party and will continue to transmit. Many residents expressed safety concerns regarding Electromagnetic Radiation particularly with respect to children in the 16 and 14 storey tower blocks which are planned to be built in close proximity to the tower. When the suggestion was put to school principals as a suitable school site they scorned the idea stating that no parent would risk sending their child to such a site. You may wish to verify that viewpoint with your colleague the Minister for Education, Mr. Piccoli.

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3. Site Population – The developers propose 585 units for the site, the approximate breakdown they provided was :25 dwellings (presumably 3 bedroom), 15% x 1 bedroom (84 units), 70% x 2 bedroom (292 units) and 15% x 3 bedroom (84 units), which would put the site population at between 1500 an 2,000, with an estimated 300-500 being of school age.
4. Schools – The Government is already aware of the severe overcrowding in both Primary and Secondary schools throughout the Willoughby and North Shore region, until such time as that issue is sorted out the Government cannot permit the influx of another 300 – 500 children into the Willoughby catchment. This would also equate to the requirement of an additional 4 -6 buses required to transport them.
5. Traffic – The Traffic Impact Report is a nonsense, as is the suggestion that the development would only generate the same amount of traffic as the site currently does. Under questioning at the meeting, the author of the Report was shown to have little understanding of the real impact of the traffic which would be generated through the proposed development .
The Artarmon Road / Willoughby road junction is one of the busiest in Willoughby, particularly at peak hours and weekends (which had not been considered). We estimate that the proposed development could see a MINIMUM of 750 vehicles added to the roads in the area through this development. Even if only half of working adults used their cars in the course of their employment, an additional 700 person using public transport would account for an additional 10 buses in peak hour. The Willoughby – City service is already at saturation level as the Minister for Transport, Ms. Berejiklian will attest.

Since Part 3A Developments are your Ministerial responsibility ,we strongly urge that you intervene and insist that the developers scale back this proposal to a realistic level and engage with both Willoughby Council and the community in more meaningful discussions.

Yours faithfully,

E.J. Wilson
Hon. Secretary

cc: The Department of Planning & Infrastructure
Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for Transport, Member for Willoughby
Hon. Adrian Piccoli, Minister for Education

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