

Submission attached

MP 07_0027 MOD 1 - Modification to Shell Cove Boat Harbour Concept Plan

Response to RtS

In section “1.1.1 - The Approved Concept Plan”, the developer states :

“Specifically, Concept Plan Approval 07_0027 was granted by a delegate of the (then) Minister for Planning on 15 February 2011 for the development of:

- up to 1,238 dwellings with a total gross floor area of approximately 150,000m² comprising single dwellings, medium density and apartments;
- a business park with a maximum gross floor area of 30,000m²;
- retail/commercial/hotel/community development with a maximum gross floor area of 22,000m²;
- public open space and wetlands; and
- associated drainage, stormwater infrastructure and roads. “

These planning conditions were put in place to ensure limits were in place to avoid over-development of the site to maintain the open coastal character and village atmosphere of the area.

The proposed changes represent a significant deviation from the approved concept plan with little benefit to the community and a significant down side risk to the overall amenity of the completed development.

All the proposed changes appear to be to the sole benefit of the developer. The developer can take its benefit now but leave the community to deal with the down side issues.

The words “minor” and “not significant” appear frequently in response to the concerns of the community and can be taken as a reflection of the attitude of this developer towards the community.

The developer has provided little additional or new information in support of the proposed changes as much of the supporting information was available at the time of the original approval. The proposed modifications significantly water down the limits and controls on the developer and are supported mainly by revised “comfort statements”.

The proposed modifications attempt to push the developers benefits to the maximum. The planning approval process must look to achieve a reasonable and balanced outcome for the community.

The proposed modifications as submitted should therefore be rejected.

Building Heights

The Coastal Design Guidelines for NSW includes height limits for buildings in coastal towns of :

“6.Height

- a. Generally heights of up to four storeys in town centres.
- b. Generally heights of up to two storeys in suburban areas.”

The original development approval is in line with these principles.

The developer has given no response as to why these guidelines should not be complied with under the EP&A regulations.

3. Landmark Hotel

The developer requests to create a new sub-clause and modify the definition of the landmark hotel of 8 to 9 storeys to a mixed-use landmark (hotel) building of up to 11 storeys with no limit on GFA.

The developers own web sites states the facility as including a “Boutique Hotel: A future boutique hotel with conferencing facilities and accommodation overlooking the marina”.

The original Major Project Assessment document highlighted concerns over the scale of the proposed hotel :

7.1 Built Form, Urban Design and Landscape

Concerns were raised by the public about the height of the proposed 9 storey hotel building at the edge of the boat harbour. Due to the undeveloped nature of the site and the relatively low scale of residential development at Shell Cove, a building of that height would be a dominant feature within the landscape. In response to those concerns, the Department's architect/urban designer expert reviewed the hotel design. The expert recommended a slender tower form above a 3-4 storey high podium which will relate well to the centre's urban form, create visual interest, and better define the street and water edges. The Department is satisfied that the revised design will ameliorate the impacts of the original design, and it is reflected in the conditions of approval.

The introduction of mixed-use landmark buildings is a concept utilised in more recent times in densely developed major capital cities like Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, etc. It is not a principle appropriate to a regional, sea-side development such as Shell Cove.

The developer has again proposed a hotel development significantly greater in bulk without addressing the initial concerns of the approving authority.

Parking

The significant increase in dwelling numbers will bring with it a commensurate increase in the number of vehicles in the area – private cars, work vehicles, boats, caravans, trailers, etc. With the more compact design of the dwellings currently being constructed in the shell cove marina precinct, there is reduced storage space within the dwellings. As a result, many dwellings are using the garage as a storage area and parking all vehicles on the street, resulting in addition parking congestion. This issue is already evident in the shell cove area. Adding to this issue is the lack of available storage for boats, caravans and trailers, which can already be seen parked on undeveloped sites and roadways which will add to the parking and access issues in the future.

The developer has provided a Traffic Report which claims the 25% increase in dwelling numbers will result in only a minor 2% increase in traffic in the vicinity. This would seem unrealistic, particularly in an area of high reliance on vehicular based travel due to the very limited availability of public transport services in the area. The Traffic Report also claims that the number of additional car parking spaces required due to the increased number of dwellings is only 14. However, the comparison table excludes residential requirements for overflow parking from all dwellings in the area.

The image below is a typical morning in Mystics Drive Shell Cove. The vehicles are all owned by residents. Due to the lack of storage in modern houses, the garages are used for storage and the cars are parked on the street. This is an area of separate type dwellings. Apply this outcome to an area of dense apartment development and the effects of the lack of parking will be significant.



Open Space

No increase in public open space, remaining at 8.5 ha, despite the proposed significant increase in resident numbers.

Acoustic Mound at Boat Harbour

The developer proposes to replace the landscape mound with a 2.4m high “fence style” acoustic wall in order to increase dwelling numbers. In doing so, then require that the dwellings be forced to keep windows closed and rely on mechanical ventilation and air conditioning in lieu of natural ventilation from the prevailing sea breeze. This goes against all good environmental design principles and increases ongoing cost to the community.

In addition to the above the developer proposes the application of operational restrictions on the boat harbour – restrictions which would be difficult to enforce.

The developer also proposes “Acoustic walls of height 7 metres above the hard stand of the boat maintenance facility and dry boat stacking be erected”. This would give a “fortress” type appearance to the area.