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Rachel Hodge - Montifiere Application

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Date: 1/12/2010 4:47 PM
Subject: Montifiere Application
Attachments: Montefiore Objection Nov 10 Len.docx

I am writing as a concerned neighbour of the proposed development in King St Randwick.

The development substantially and adversely impacts on neighbourhood amenity and from a planning point of view is unprecedented in the local area.

I have attached a detailed commentary pointing out areas of non compliance and concern. Briefly, the impacts include:

- increased traffic and parking - King Sts and surrounding sts already bear a substantial burden from staff and visitors to the adjoining aged care facility. The expanded facility will exacerbate the existing problem.
- The bulk and height of the development is dramatically bigger than the current buildings along King St. They are not in keeping with the existing streetscape and profile of structures and are visually dominant and over-bearing.
- The buildings will overlook and overshadow the neighbouring properties with loss of natural light and privacy, especially to directly adjoining properties.
- The development will set a dangerous precedent for other developments and be likely to allow other developers to justify larger building envelopes.
- The development will adversely impact on the amenity and change the character of what is fundamentally a residential area for families.

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To Whom It May Concern,

APPLICATION NO. MP09_0188 and MP10_0044 _ EXPANSION OF THE EXISTING AGED CARE FACILITY AT SIR MOSES MONTEFIORE JEWISH HOME, 100-120 KING STREET AND 30-36 DANGAR STREET, RANDWICK.

I would like to express my objection to the above application on the following grounds:

Floor Space Ratio:

The application is excessive in relation to floor space and the proposed FSR is unsustainable.

More specifically, the 44,547m² (or 38,394 m² depending on the definition) of floor space proposed represents a breach of Council's code of some 8,300 m² (even after allowing a 0.5:1 bonus for aged care in accordance with the State Environmental Planning Policy - Housing for Seniors).

This is an unreasonable breach and is equivalent to 164 one bedroom apartments or all the floor space in Centennial Apartments complex (94 one, two and three bedroom units). This is unreasonable and unjustifiable.

The floor space is equivalent to a regional shopping centre or a regional hospital yet without the infrastructure that would ordinarily accompany such an application. Infrastructure is already at capacity – the roads are congested during childcare peaks and bus change over and there is no on street parking – yet proposed is a doubling of the floor space with little additional infrastructure.

Despite the extent of additional floor space (over 19,000 m²), the applicant seeks only an additional 57 car spaces. This represents a car parking ratio of 1/300 m² of new floor space, or 1/210 m² overall. This is highly unsatisfactory when coupled with the fact that staff refuses to park on site.

The proposed floor space represents an extreme over development of the site and will change the nature of the area to an extent that is unreasonable.

The proposal should not be permitted on these grounds.

Height:

There are substantial breaches in the height required to accommodate the excessive bulk and scale of the new buildings. These breaches are up to 10.7 m or 3 storeys in some locations.

In particular the height of Building F and proximity of this building to the boundary is unsatisfactory. A 6 storeys 60m long building along the majority of the western boundary will create undue impact on the Centennial apartments.

The buildings on King and Dangar Streets are proposed to be 4m in height along almost the entire extent of these streets without break while directly adjoining residences are one and two storey gently articulated residential homes (apart from Pindari and 2 retail/residential terraces). The height is therefore excessive, does not relate to the context of the residential streetscape and unfairly impinges on units in the Centennial.

Landscape ratio

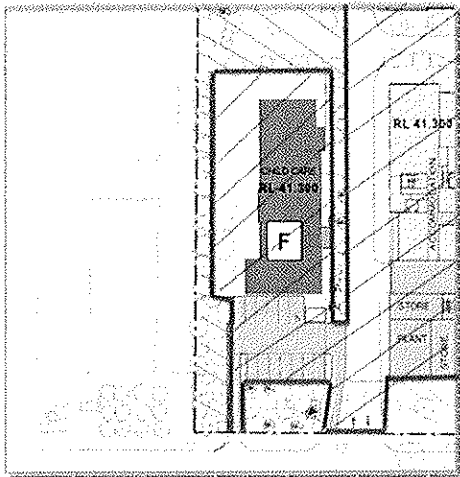
Although the applicant states that the application complies with landscaping codes, the landscaping in the boundary setbacks and street fronts is minimal where the greatest protection is required.

Many of the landscaped areas are proposed within the building quadrangles representing poor use of landscaping and lack of amenity where they should surround the buildings where they can be better used by residents in the facility and enjoyed by adjoining neighbours.

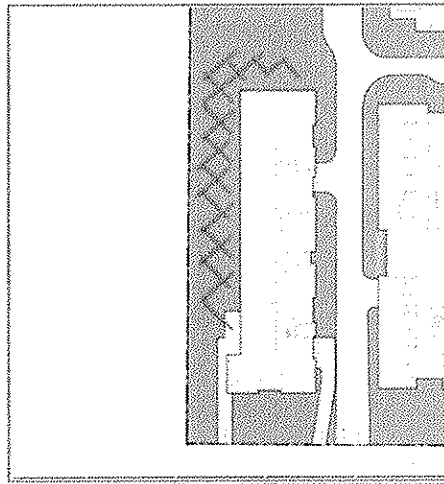
Hard surfaces such as paved areas and walkways have been included in the landscape ratio, which is unsatisfactory given the volume of circulation space required for a facility of the size and nature.

The childcare centre's play area is proposed to be located in the setback to Centennial apartments yet has been included in the landscape ratio. The area should not be included in the calculation of LSR and should be set aside for deep root planting. Further, the setback should be increased in this location and fully planted with deep root planting to accommodate the increase height / bulk / scale of this building.

Below are extracts from the application showing the discrepancy between the concept plan (left) showing the proposed building footprint of Building F (outlined in red) and the Landscape Plan (right) where the play area is included as landscaped area (hatched in orange).



Concept Plan – footprint outlined in red



Landscape Plan - play area hatched in orange

Landscaping is insufficient in the setback and inaccurate for the purpose of calculating landscape ratio. Landscaping should be extended to shield neighbours from the extent of the commercial operations intended.

Setbacks, privacy & views

The performance of setbacks established in Council's planning codes are not met as a result of the increased height and scale of buildings. The setbacks are therefore inadequately and do not protect against overshadowing, loss of privacy, loss of amenity and/or noise.

As discussed above, the setback between Building F and the Centennial apartments is compromised by use of the area as a childcare facility. This is not an appropriate location for the childcare centre.

The bulk and scale of the proposed Building F means that there will be a severe lack of privacy to the Centennial apartments, both to units facing east onto the Montifiore development and to the pool area which will be overlooked by Building F. This is particularly concerning given that Building F will accommodate aged people who are house bound and seeking visual interest.

The built form will impact on views as a substantial number of apartments in Centennial have their primary and, in the majority of cases, their sole outlook to the east over open space and landscaping. This is proposed to be replaced with a 60 m long 6 storey building, which extends high above the roof of these apartments. Without appropriate separation or articulation (i.e. breaks in the building mass as per Centennial apartments) the buildings become monolithic, oppressive and institutional.

Views from the top of the hill at King Street and adjoining streets will also be severely impacted, as will views and vistas from residences on King and Dangar Streets.

Solar access

Council's code requires that *'not less than 3hrs of natural sunlight are provided to adjoining properties and, if less exists, no net reduction in the hours of natural sunlight'*.

Solar access to east facing units in Centennial will be unfairly impacted by the bulk and scale of the proposed Building F and it's proximity to the boundary. A number of units in Building 2 are below ground level and will be blocked from receiving any sunlight if the application proceeds. Upper floor units in Building 2 and 3 will also see a net reduction of less than 3 hours and significant worsening from the loss of sunlight. This is unacceptable and unfair.

The shadow diagrams provided in the application are inadequate and do not appropriately quantify the impacts. Further analysis should be undertaken to quantify the impact on residences and the pool area at Centennial before the application progresses.

Buildings fronting King Street are sited to the north of the street and proposed to run almost without break the full length of the street. Given the wall of buildings and height (4 storeys), the setbacks should be increased and the buildings broken up to ensure sunlight to the street and to ensure the pavements do not become cold and oppressive.

Previous Masterplan

The proposal seeks substantially more bulk, scale and floor space than was envisaged and /or permitted under the former Masterplan to the extent of some 40-50%. These departures relate to number of beds, height of buildings, scale of buildings and FSR.

The Masterplan was approved after a reasonable assessment process and reflects Council and constituents view of the appropriate bulk and scale for the site. Neither the site nor the area has changed, yet the applicant believes that the site should now accommodate twice the floor space. The application does not adequately address why this appropriate or how the floor space can be accommodated in a manner that is sustainable.

SEPP 65

The application does not meet the minimum design requirements stipulated in SEPP 65 as follows:

Scale – Building F is twice the length and size of the adjoining Building 2 at Centennial. Buildings on King St are twice the height of the vast majority of residences opposite without articulation or break.

Density – The proposed density is not sustainable and is inconsistent with the density of the area. No other development has exceeded Council's codes yet this application seeks not only a 0.5:1 increase, but 8,000 m² (or 40%) additional space. The density will have unsustainable impacts on infrastructure such as roads and parking where already at capacity.

Landscaping - As noted above. If the buildings are to be higher than code, the landscape buffers must to be increased to accommodate the additional scale.

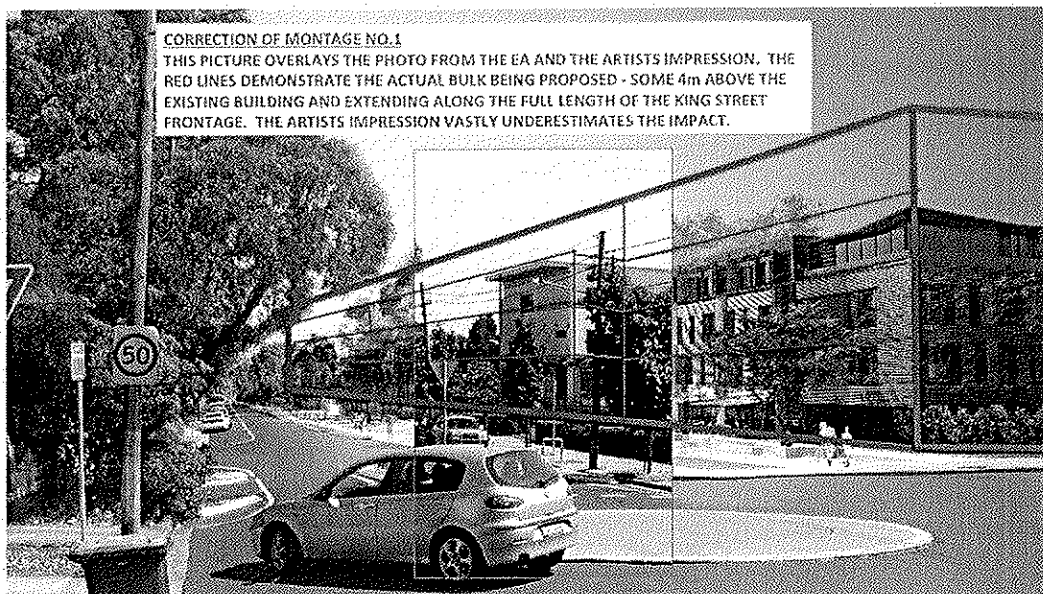
Amenity - The application unfairly impacts access to sunlight and natural ventilation to adjoining residents, in particular east facing units at Centennial and pedestrians on the footpath of King Street.

Built Form - The built form is excessive and without satisfactory articulation to allow it to integrate with the residential streetscape. The bulk results in façades that are continuous and institutional and inappropriate for the streetscape.

Although artist impressions / contextual studies are included in the application, they appear to be inaccurate in terms of the scale of the buildings and do not show the relationship of the building to the residential buildings which dominate surrounding streets

The below is a revised rendition of the likely bulk and scale of the buildings on King St (noting that the base pictures are photo montages taken from the application). As can be seen, a substantial underestimation of the bulk and scale without even showing the context of these buildings to surrounding residential dwellings.

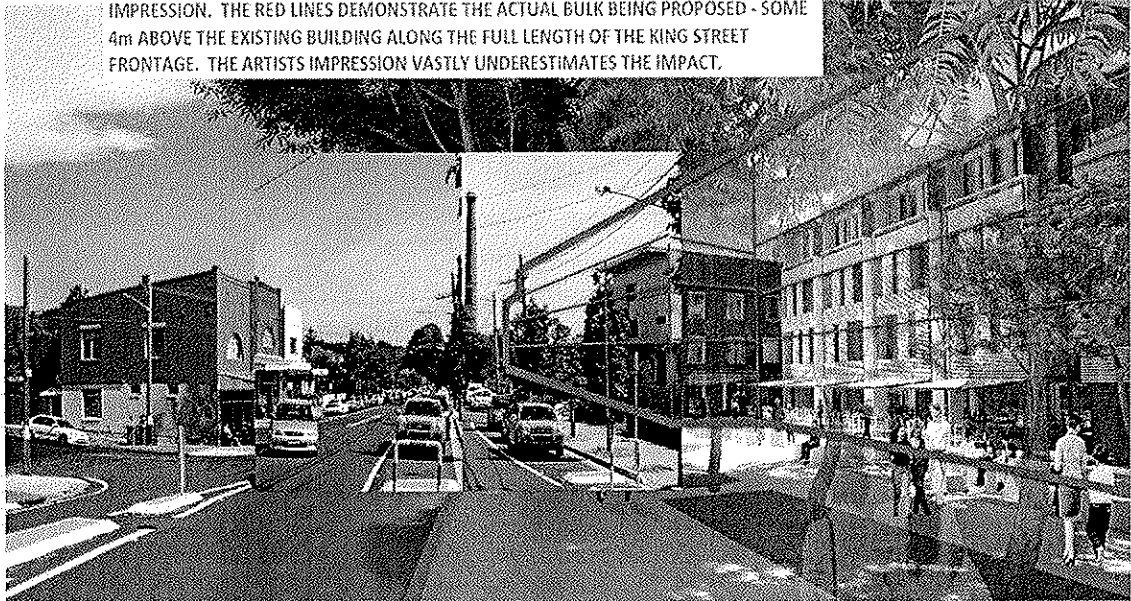
Morshams Aged Care Facility
Part 3A Concept Plan
July 2010



Photomontage 1 - View from corner of Bangor Street & King Street looking West along King Street

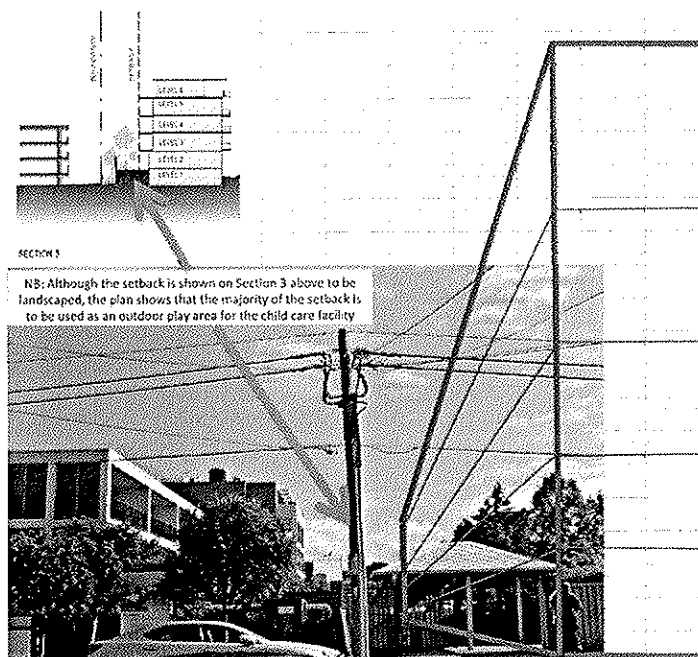
CORRECTION OF MONTAGE NO. 2

THIS PICTURE TAKES THE PHOTO FROM THE EA AND OVERLAYS IT ON THE ARTISTS IMPRESSION. THE RED LINES DEMONSTRATE THE ACTUAL BULK BEING PROPOSED - SOME 4m ABOVE THE EXISTING BUILDING ALONG THE FULL LENGTH OF THE KING STREET FRONTAGE. THE ARTISTS IMPRESSION VASTLY UNDERESTIMATES THE IMPACT.



Photomontage 2 - View from pedestrian path on the corner of King Street & Dangar Street looking West

As no contextual studies have been undertaken to show the scale of Building F in relation to the Centennial apartments, below is a representation of how Building F might relate.



Clearly Building F dwarfs the Centennial apartments and is out of keeping with the area.

Montages should be prepared by the applicant to better understand the impacts of this building.

It is also noted that the primary driveway egressing Building F is proposed to be located in the setback to the Centennial apartments. This will create undue noise and car pollution particularly given the number of car movements to and from the childcare centre during morning and afternoon pick ups.

Although it is essential that drop offs and pick ups take place wholly on site for King Street to begin to function properly in the mornings and afternoons, it is unreasonable for the driveway to be located next to the Centennial apartments when it could easily be accommodated elsewhere on the site. In fact, given that the main driveway is located on the other side of Building F, I can not see why this driveway can not be eliminated altogether.

Further, locating a driveway next to Centennial will vastly reduce the number of on street parking spaces in proximity to Centennial apartments where there is already a lack of capacity. It is prudent that the number of driveways and crossings to the facility is kept to a minimum and centrally located to minimise impact.

Commercial vehicles should not use driveways adjacent to residential neighbours as their movements are numerous and early in the morning.

Car parking

As I read it, the Montifiore Application only proposes an additional 57 additional cars to accommodate the 19,370 m² of space. I can only imagine this is a mistake.

If not, it represents an extreme ratio of around 1/330m² for a development proposed to be the size of Regional Shopping Centre or medium sized hospital.

Further, the assessment of car parking in the application does not consider volunteers working on site and the doubling of staff during shift changeovers. It also does not consider that workers do not use the on site car parking which means parking is full on the street almost 24/7.

Parking for operation of the childcare facility is wholly inadequate. The streets simply do not work in the mornings and afternoons during pick ups and the 57 car space would be appropriate if solely dedication to the childcare centre.

The childcare drop off is extremely dangerous when undertaken on the street (as it currently is) and must be improved. If permitted to remain, 100% of all drops off and pick ups must be made within the site for the streets to function properly.

Use of the Site

Although not addressed in the application, there are two incompatible uses.

Firstly, the childcare centre. It is not permissible under Council's planning codes nor is it compatible with the use of the site as an aged care facility and is not of state significance. It should not therefore attract bonus floor space in accordance with the Seniors SEPP). The childcare facility should not be permitted and should be relocated off site when stage 2 commences.

Secondly, residents at Centennial have been advised that Montifiore currently operate a commercial production and distribution facility on the site for other aged care centres in the area, i.e. the kitchens are used to make food that is distributed to other commercial kitchens and then distributed to meals of wheels recipients. This site should not be used as a distribution facility or commercial kitchen. Such uses should be relocated to a commercial/ industrial areas that can adequately provide for the commercial traffic and car parking.

Drainage and storm water

Since the last application was lodged with Council, the applicant has eliminated the proposed building in the north western corner of the site and 'cut and paste' the floor space onto Building F so that Building F is now a 60 m long, 6 storey building.

At one of the consultation meetings it was explained that this change was necessary to accommodate drainage in the north western corner of the site. It was also explained that construction in this location was proving to be cost prohibitive.

Construction costs and drainage issues are not acceptable reasons for creating buildings with unreasonable bulk and scale in other locations, particularly where the additional bulk and scale drastically impinge on the amenity of adjoining residents.

Further, Centennial has serious issues with leaking floors in the basement caused by ground water pressure. Extension of the Montifiore facility should ensure that basement issues at Centennial are not worsened and approval conditions, if granted, should include appropriate mitigation measures.

Given that the north-western area is now proposed to be used for storm water detention and landscaping, the applicant should not seek further expansion of the facility in this area in the future. The applicant has already mooted that this is their intention.

A condition of consent or covenant may be appropriate for this purpose. This application referred herein should be holistic and residents should not be asked to consider proposals seeking more density in the future (as we are now being asked to do, after stage 1 of the Masterplan has been constructed).

Community Consultation

The consultation process has been unsuccessful in that the applicant has chosen not to take on board the comments made by local resident during the consultation process. Not only have they not attempted to mitigate the impacts on adjoining neighbours, the application as lodged increases the impacts and exacerbates the concerns voiced during the process.

The only compromises offered have been those without impact on financial returns.

Changes

We request the following changes before the application is given consideration:

- **Elimination of Building F**
- **Increasing setback** of buildings on King and Dangar Street
- **Elimination of the child care facility** as it is incompatible with the use of the site for aged care and not state significant development.
- A review of all SEPP 65 by qualified design review panel
- Revised photomontages that demonstrate height of the proposed new buildings in relation to residential dwelling on King and Dangar Streets and in relation to the Centennial apartments
- Redesign of buildings on King and Dangar Streets and on the western boundary (building F) to break up the bulk and scale and better integrate with existing residential buildings.
- Review of the shadow diagrams and full analysis of impact on adjoining residents and the pool area
- Elimination of the western driveway on King St
- More information relating to the impact of Building F on privacy to adjoining residents and the pool area
- Implementation of measures to ensure ground water issues do not worsen at Centennial

- Implementation of measures to ensure there is no further development of the site
- A complete review of car parking movements and requirements where staff numbers are appropriately considered and existing issues are appropriately addressed.

What is proposed is clearly an over development of the site beyond existing codes and beyond all reasonableness.

Your consideration in relation to the above issues is greatly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

Len McKinnon
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