

**14-18 BOONDAH ROAD, WARRIEWOOD**

**MP 09 0162 WARRIEWOOD VALLEY REDEVELOPMENT –  
EXHIBITION**

**COMMENTS FROM A LOCAL RESIDENT**

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## Introduction

My family have owned a property in Mona Vale for some 40 years and we have enjoyed the low profile of the developments and the vista of open spaces in the Warriewood Valley.

I guess in Sydney there is an inevitability of ongoing development and that its not surprising to see change – but why do we have to have inappropriate change forced upon us. We have elected a local Council to ensure appropriate development in our area, and I believe they are doing a great job in making sure we are not overdeveloped to the point where this area loses the very charms that have made it a lovely place to visit and live.

As I see it the State Government is travelling roughshod over its citizens and is forcing selected areas in Sydney to conform to a process that they think is the only way ahead. I disagree.

Setting aside the confronting issue of population growth management, we have in Sydney a city that has been seriously neglected over the last 20 years and now has not got an adequate infrastructure for the existing community, let alone a rapidly increasing living density.

**My objections to this Meriton proposal are:**

- 1. The proposed development is far to big and will adversely impact the existing developments within the Warriewood Valley:**
  - a. Too many people concentrated on a small area leading to traffic problems
  - b. The buildings are too high and will dominate the skyline
  - c. The development will seriously detract from the adjacent lovely Warriewood wetlands – a natural gem in our developing suburban areas
- 2. The development represents the worst aspects of our 1990's design and architecture and fails to grasp the now vital need to incorporate sustainable design principles:**
  - a. The use of passive solar heating and natural cooling
  - b. Maximising cross flow ventilation to reduce or avoid the need for air-conditioning
  - c. Collection of all rainwater for use in the development and for each unit
  - d. Incorporation of solar or heat pump water heating. Or in the case of this development the use of gas fired co-generation as a means of providing reticulated hot water and electrical generation at the same time.
  - e. The use of solar PV for electrical generation – and currently the entire roof area could be designed so it could be used for this purpose and the equipment installed at very little extra cost because of government rebates.
  - f. The development should be required to conform to the Green Building Council of Australia which provides an excellent set of design guidelines ensuring that we do not see a repeat of the lacklustre and inappropriate development of the last century.
- 3. Meriton are endeavouring to avoid their requirement to pay the established Section 64 Developer Contribution fee**

In my view there is no justification for Warriewood Valley having thrust upon it by State regulation a poorly conceived and outdated development that does not address the important needs of the community.

## The Meriton Proposal is Far Too Big

Pittwater Council assessed the most appropriate size for this development at 142 units, and this seems to me in keeping with similar developments already approved. Huge 600 unit developments such as the Meriton proposal are confronting and I think have been proved in the past to provide a poor lifestyle to the unitholders.

The infrastructure report by Halcrow concludes in part:

“Assuming all the potential development in Warriewood Valley occurs, the nominal maximum traffic volumes based on their hierarchical classification would be exceeded on Garden Street, Macpherson Street, Ponderosa Parade, Jubilee Avenue and Warriewood Road. However, the already planned upgrades to intersections would satisfactorily accommodate the peak hour traffic.”

**This to me indicates that these roads will be close to their maximum capacity for this development only. What about future developments that will occur in the Valley?**

Anyone regularly travelling in the Mona Vale area will know that the single lane Mona Vale road to St Ives is up to capacity often very slow moving.

### **The buildings are too high and will dominate the skyline**

The 5 story units are significantly above the treeline and cannot fail to dominate the landscape from almost every angle of view.

The outcomes for height as outlined in Pittwater DCP 21 are as follows:

- To achieve the desired future character of the locality.
- Buildings should reinforce the bushland landform character of Pittwater and be designed to preserve and strengthen the bushland character;
- To ensure sites are designed in scale with Pittwater bushland setting and encourage visual integration and connectivity to the natural environment;
- Building design, location and landscaping is to encourage view sharing between properties;
- Buildings and structures below the tree canopy level;
- Equitable preservation of views and vistas to and/or from public/private places;
- The built form does not dominate the natural setting;
- To encourage buildings that are designed to respond sensitively to natural topography

There is no need for such an intrusive development.

### **The development will seriously detract from the adjacent Warriewood Wetlands**

The Warriewood wetlands are a real asset to the area and we are lucky that the vision to date by our planners has enabled the community to have such a lovely and peaceful open space. The presence of the 5 story units will bring the presence of urban development right up to the boundary and to some extent detract from the wetland experience.

There is no need for such an intrusive development.

### **Passive solar heating and natural cooling**

Passive solar heating can reduce the energy requirement of space heating by 50% and more - modern architectural design is based on providing as much heating from the sun as possible. Similarly adequate cross ventilation in the design can eliminate the need for air-conditioning.

This development seems to be sadly lacking in any significant inclusion of these principles.

### **Collection of all rainwater**

The size of the proposed rainwater tanks will result in most of the roofing water going to waste. There is ample room for the design to include much larger tanks, and the rainwater can be connected to all the units for bathroom and laundry use.

This is not something that is new and unproven – we need to include rainwater adequate tanks on all our developments.

### **Gas fired co-generation**

This development, even at 142 units in size, can benefit from the use of a gas fired co-generation plant to generate electricity and heat at the same time. There are companies that will provide such a system at little or no cost to the developer (such as Origin Energy), so there is no valid reason for this development to use inefficient technology for energy supply.

The Meriton design is based on concepts from the last century – we need to raise the bar and do a lot better.

### **The use of solar PV for electrical generation**

Meriton seem to be offering only 38kW of solar PV generation from the whole complex. Yet would cost very little more to design the roofing so that the whole area could be used for solar PV generation. The current subsidies and incentives from the Federal Government can be used by the developer to provide a PV system for many of the unit holders, thus reducing the energy needs of the development.

Meriton have not grasped the full potential of this opportunity.

### **The development should be required to conform to the Green Building Council of Australia**

There is every reason for modern developments to conform to the Green Building Council guidelines (<http://www.gbca.org.au/green-star/redfern-housing-redevelopment/2905.htm>). We are not living in the past, and we need to take advantage of modern design concepts to ensure we minimise the carbon footprint of every new development. Meritons failure to do so will lock in an antiquated and inefficient design for the next 50 years – there is simply no excuse for approving such a lacklustre development.

### **Meriton are endeavouring to avoid their requirement to pay the established Section 94 Developer Contribution fee**

Not only are Meriton proposing an enormous and oversized development, but they seem to be saying that someone else should pay for the additional works to adequately accommodate the additional community loading. This attitude reflects their approach to the whole development application – to ride roughshod over the local community and their elected Council.

**The Developer wants to drastically reduce the amount paid in S.94 Developer Contributions, from \$67,000.00 to \$22,218.00 per unit which does not meet the Pittwater Council S.94 payment requirements.**

Meriton do not deserve to get approval for this development.

### **Conclusion**

NSW should be a leading example of how to embrace new concepts and deliver development based state of the art architectural designs. The Meriton proposal is sadly lacking and does not deserve approval.

Companies like Meriton need to reappraise their approach to housing developments, and not try to ram inappropriate and last century designs through the planning approval process.

The NSW Department of Planning has a responsibility to the people of NSW to set a high standard so that all new developments represent a sound commitment to the principles of easy living and minimising our carbon footprint.

The Meriton proposal falls well short of this ideal and should not be approved.

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