

# Double Bay Residents' Association

## Protecting Sydney's Stylish Bayside Village

12<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear Member,

As usual, your committee has been busy since our last newsletter and we cover below some of the main issues which have occupied us.

One of our members' greatest concerns is the new **draft planning and urban design strategy** which proposes raising the height limit across Double Bay village by 50%. As you'll be aware, we encouraged residents to respond to the Council's survey with their comments on the draft strategy and we're grateful to our members who sent in submissions. Two and a half months after the deadline, we're sorry to report that we've received no feedback on the survey's results and we are following this up with the Council.

Submissions to the Council on development applications and other proposals can influence councillors' decisions. Please don't rely on your association's submission; the more the Council receives, the more impact they have. We recommend that you write about any proposal that concerns you, but please note that the cut-off time for Late Correspondence has been changed from midday to 10am on the day of the relevant meeting.

The Double Bay centre has become a 'honeypot' for property developers and the change in the deadline for Late Correspondence has created greater pressure for your committee at a time when more and more development applications are being lodged. If you are prepared to help us in any way – or know someone who could spare time to assist – please let us know.

### Development Applications

Among many current and recent applications, the following are likely to be of most concern to members.

**294-296 New South Head Road and 2-10 Bay Street.** We have been surprised to receive a new development application for this large site. Late last year, despite objections by your association and several members, the Land and Environment Court approved a mixed retail and residential development. While we were unhappy with this decision, we had to acknowledge that the design by Alex Tzannes had architectural merit. The new application is for a retail and commercial development; while the height seems similar to the earlier proposal, at first glance the bulk seems to be much greater. With Malcolm Young's assistance, we are examining the application in detail and will circulate our conclusions when they're ready. Objections have to be lodged by 26 August.

**356-366 New South Head Road.** This is the Ray White building opposite the Commonwealth Bank. We are reviewing these plans too and will circulate our conclusions. Objections also have to be lodged by 26 August.

**136-148 New South Head Road, Edgecliff (corner of Darling Point Road).** We were very pleased with the Council's decision to accept the advice of the Woollahra Local Planning Panel and refuse an application for a 12 storey residential and commercial complex on this prominent site. Its height would have been 46 metres compared with the current 14.5 metre standard; it would have had a massive floor space ratio of 5:1 compared with the current 1.5:1 standard; and it would have

exacerbated current traffic congestion in the area. Unfortunately, the developer has now appealed this decision to the Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel which will hear the appeal on 18 August. We have been assured by the Council that objections received so far will be forwarded to the panel. This convoluted process is one of the main reasons why we oppose the state government's current planning policy which favours developers at the expense of residents.

**19-27 Cross Street (corner of Transvaal Avenue).** The Sydney Eastern Planning Panel has this week approved changes to this six-storey building which will dominate Transvaal Avenue. These changes increase the building's height, which already grossly exceeds the Council's maximum permitted height, and introduce roof-top terraces which will lead to loss of views for residents on the slopes around Double Bay. To our great disappointment, these changes were supported by one of Double Bay ward's councillors, supposedly representing the community on the panel. We thank the second community representative, Councillor Mary-Lou Jarvis from Vaucluse, for opposing these changes, standing up for residents and supporting the Council's controls which this decision has breached.

### **Proposed floor space ratio and urban greening controls**

The Council is seeking feedback before 16 September on proposed controls for residential development. These include new floor space ratio development standards for low density residential development and urban greening requirements for all residential development. We haven't had time yet to consider these changes in detail and will write to you when we have done so. Meanwhile, you may like to review them and comment on the 'Your Say Woollahra' page of the Council's website.

### **Rushcutters Bay Park skate park**

Members of the Council's Finance, Community and Finance Committee were divided 4/4 at the committee's meeting on 1 August on whether to proceed with constructing a skatepark and half basketball court in the park, or to defer a decision pending a comprehensive conservation management plan. As a result, a decision will be made at the 22 August Council meeting. DBRA members who are concerned about protecting the park's green space and heritage attributes may like to send a submission to the Council in time for this meeting.

### **Excavation**

The damage to surrounding properties from excavation is of concern to many residents. We have made a number of recommendations to the Council for changes which would restrict damage, and we are pleased to report that some of these have been accepted. We are concerned, however, that the amendments to excavation controls will not apply to the Double Bay commercial centre where they are most needed. We are drafting a further submission recommending further changes which we believe should be made to protect residents and other property owners, and we'll let you know when this is ready.

### **Other issues**

If there are other issues which concern you and you would like to discuss, please contact one of our committee members.

Best wishes,  
Anthony Tregoning  
President