



# BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST INC

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The General Manager  
Hornsby Shire Council

Dear Sir

## **DA 1583/2016 Proposed Seniors Housing of 184 Beecroft Rd Cheltenham**

The Trust strongly objects to DA1583/2016 being a seniors housing development at 184 Beecroft Rd Cheltenham. The grounds for objection relate to inadequate reports and to its failure to satisfy the senior housing SEPP objectives.

The development proposes to remove 7 indigenous trees that are part of the endangered Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF) community. The tree loss include 5 precious Turpentines. This is considered unacceptable especially after the loss of indigenous vegetation on the adjoining senior housing development at 186 Beecroft Rd.. The Flora and Fauna Report tends to tone down the significance of the vegetation onsite, attempting to present an argument that the proposed loss of indigenous vegetation onsite will not have a severe ecological impact. However, the Trust argues again that after the tree loss on 186 Beecroft Rd the cumulative effect of vegetation loss of the STIF community in this highly visible section of Beecroft will have a devastating impact on the heritage and biodiversity of Cheltenham. This development removes too many of these wonderful trees that are ideal for suburbia.

The Arborist Report states that non indigenous trees are exempt from Council Tree Preservation Order (TPO). However as the site falls within a heritage precinct these trees are not exempt and should be fully assessed. The report is structured around the proposal, stating that certain significant trees will be removed regardless of their significance and compensation measures can be used to replace them. The Trust argues that any housing design should have sufficient flexibility to work around constraints such as significant trees and seek to preserve them.

The Trust notes that the significant vegetation is located at either end of the development site that lends itself to an opportunity for any development to work around and preserve as much as possible the existing vegetation. This proposed development tends to overdevelop the site to the detriment of the vegetation. Regardless of the view presented in the Report root zones are likely to be severely impacted by the size and proximity of the development to the trees. A peer review of the Arborist Report is requested.

The Trust believes the balance between development and preserving the environment is skewed in favour of development. The development is too large for the heritage precinct. Council's DCP states *Replacement buildings and associated landscaping elements should be sympathetic to the characteristic features of the Heritage Conservation Area.*

The Trust accepts that the retention of some of the Turpentines attempts to satisfy the DCP but the Trust can't understand how the proposed single building with its bulk and scale can possibly satisfy Council's DCP. Furthermore referring to *Hornsby DCP 9.3.4 Demolition Desired Outcomes* , it states

*a. Development that does not detract from the qualities of the Heritage Conservation Area and which are positive elements in the streetscape.*

How will be proposed bulky structure that will look like an intrusive block of units from the street have any positive elements and not detract from the HCA of Cheltenham? It clearly doesn't achieve the desired outcomes in council's planning controls.

The Trust's position is supported by the Design principles in Division 2 of the Seniors housing SEPP , that states,

*Cl 33 Neighbourhood amenity and streetscape The proposed development should:*

- (a) recognise the desirable elements of the location's current character (or, in the case of precincts undergoing a transition, where described in local planning controls, the desired future character) so that new buildings contribute to the quality and identity of the area, and*
- (b) retain, complement and sensitively harmonise with any heritage conservation areas in the vicinity and any relevant heritage items that are identified in a local environmental plan, and*
- (c) maintain reasonable neighbourhood amenity and appropriate residential character by: (i) providing building setbacks to reduce bulk and overshadowing, and (ii) using building form and siting that relates to the site's land form, and (iii) adopting building heights at the street frontage that are compatible in scale with adjacent development, and (iv) considering, where buildings are located on the boundary, the impact of the boundary walls on neighbours, and*
- (d) be designed so that the front building of the development is set back in sympathy with, but not necessarily the same as, the existing building line, and*
- (d) embody planting that is in sympathy with, but not necessarily the same as, other planting in the streetscape, and*
- (e) retain, wherever reasonable, major existing trees, and*

The proposed development clearly does not satisfy the SEPP's design principles with respect to ALL the above listed design principles.

In order to reinforce this view the Trust insists that the cumulative effect of this development with the seniors housing that has been approved next door at 186 Beecroft Rd , must also be considered. In hindsight the Trust's original objection to the seniors housing at 186 Beecroft Rd at the time has been vindicated. 186 Beecroft Rd is an overdevelopment and the Trust does not want the same scale and bulk of seniors housing adjoining at 184 Beecroft Rd.

In summary the Trust strongly believes the proposed seniors housing development at 184 Beecroft, as submitted, does not satisfy the Seniors Housing SEPP . A lesser development may be acceptable, but it must fully address the matters of consideration under sec 79c of the Environmental planning and Assessment Act 1979. Clearly, this DA does not do that. It must be refused as submitted.

Yours sincerely

Ross Walker  
Vice President  
Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust

3 February 2017