



The General Manager
Hornsby Shire Council

DA/1244/2021 - Demolish 5 existing dwellings and the erect 33 self care Seniors dwellings - 15B Penrhyn Avenue, BEECROFT NSW 2119

Dear Sir,

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust objects to the proposed seniors housing development, DA1244/2021, for the following reasons.

In general, there is an overall impression that the applicant is seeking maximum yield at the expense of better design, amenity and privacy. While there is general compliance with the minimum SEPP requirements, there are a number of issues that require attention. The Trust would also prefer more generous dimensions for matters like private open space and setbacks. The Trust is after quality development and while market forces may not be a matter for consideration, the applicant should still be encouraged to provide a higher standard of housing.

The basement parking and driveway No2 associated with dwellings 14 and 15 appear to have a zero setback from the side boundary. Combined with the slope of the land any excavation in this area is likely to be in excess of 4 metres. This is a major issue as there is a swimming pool on the neighbouring property directly above this boundary line. The setbacks of the below-ground driveway and carparking should reflect above ground setbacks, consistent with Council's planning controls.

Driveway 2 appears to have 2 right angled corners rather than curved corners, that potentially create turning issues for vehicles.

The battle axe handle of No 579 Pennant Hills Rd is identified as the main pedestrian access to public transport. In order to achieve the necessary grade requirements a vertical travel lift arrangement is proposed half way along the access handle involving a 2.3 metre change in elevation. The Trust questions the merit of such an arrangement. While this may provide a solution it may not be ideal for various reasons such as maintenance requirements.

The site is far from ideal for a seniors housing development as the 'steep' topography demands excessive amounts of cut and fill and reconfiguring the natural ground levels. It is also noted that, because of the site's steepness, significant amounts of excavated fill has to be removed from the site. The documentation tends to understate the quantities of fill required to be removed.

The Morris Goding access report makes a number of conditional statements, (like paragraphs 4.2, 4.3 and 7) that further design analysis is required in order to comply. With the overall steepness of the site, with slopes being greater than 1 in 10, these conditional statements should be clarified at this early stage of the development.

The site has a small street frontage compared to the overall site. The shape of the site opens up to interpretation how the rear 25% of the site should be defined for single storey dwellings. This should be clarified as it may be a critical issue when matters such as privacy, grade compliance and amenity are assessed.

The proposed garbage disposal arrangements, as outlined in the Waste Management Plan, is a major concern. The reduced number of bins, 8 x 240lt, is reliant on council disposal twice weekly for red and yellow, and for green bins fortnightly. This equates to up to 16 bins out on the kerb twice a week, with these bins standing on the kerb for about 4 days a week. The bins will tend to become a permanent feature on the kerb. The small street frontage, with 3 driveways proposed, is likely to create a cluttered, if impractical, kerb side bin arrangement. Also the bins are likely to be placed exactly where commuters and pedestrians tend to walk to access the footpath that leads up to Pennant Hills Rd.

The plans show the bin storage area being very close to dwelling 4, about one metre away. This far from ideal and presents a design of this important entry point to the development as being cluttered and congested.

The Trust strongly recommends that waste disposal should be handled on site rather than on the street.

The minimum setbacks from Penrhyn for dwellings 1 -4 is far from ideal. A development of the scale that is proposed should have a substantial setback. By adopting a minimum setback the scale and bulk of the development will tend to dominate the streetscape and therefore to be out of character with the rest of the street.

With a greater setback, there will also be the opportunity for more substantial vegetation screening (like trees), which would assist in softening the development's appearance from the street.

Where appropriate, turning bays should be identified in the basement car parks.

The Trust would like to see additional visitor parking. Penrhyn Avenue will provide no on-street parking relief if there is a large family gathering at one of the dwellings, let alone two functions at the same time. Due to the isolation of Penrhyn Ave from plenty of on street parking, there should be more visitor parking.

There will be a significant loss of existing vegetation due to the amount of earthworks required to be carried out on this steep site.

The landscaping plans do not provide any substantial native tree replacements. Blueberry Ash appears to be all that is provided.

With the inevitability of a massive increase in electric vehicles and solar energy storage within 10 years, the dwellings should be designed to allow for charging of electric vehicles and future battery storage. Solar panels on the rooftops should also be considered at this design stage.

The impact on the neighbourhood during the construction phase should be carefully planned.

Access to the site by the builders via Penrhyn Avenue is not ideal and there will be issues. While the Varga traffic planning report commented on traffic volumes and off street parking within the proposal, the report does not comment on the impact of increased traffic that is compounded by the existing issue with commuter parking in Penrhyn. The narrowness of Penrhyn with its existing vertical and horizontal alignment warrants further analysis as to the best way to avoid road safety issues during construction and also in the future.

The Waste Management Plan notes that no fill will be reused on site. As the site is steep the total amount of fill removed from the site via Penrhyn will be substantial. The estimated volumes listed in the waste management plan appear to be under estimated and therefore misleading.

There is a clear nexus between road safety in the local streets and this proposed development. Improved road safety measures will be useful, such as footpaths and parking restrictions in Penrhyn, a roundabout at the Hannah St intersection, a chicane in Hannah St; all constructed by the developer prior to any substantial commencement.

Also it would be wise that the dwellings 1-4 facing Penrhyn are constructed last so construction vehicles can park and manoeuvre off the street.

The geology of Beecroft and Cheltenham supports numerous aquifers and natural springs. There are numerous recent developments where sub surface water flows has been a serious problem. With deep excavations required on site there is a high probability that sub surface water will be discovered. Therefore further research is recommended at this design stage.

In summary, the proposed development of 33 units as currently outlined in DA1244/2021 is considered not to be in the public interest for the various reasons outlined above.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Walker OAM
Vice President
Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust
10 December 2021