

Kate Lamb
for
Bob

Address to the IPC Channel 9 Public Meeting 27 November, 2018

Bob Taffel: Acting President, Willoughby South Progress Association Inc

As the representative of the Willoughby South Progress Association I wish to register our objection to the current modification 3 Concept Plan and support for the approved plan.

In considering the applicant's proposal to increase the occupancy of the Channel 9 development by a further 60 dwellings, the overarching question is what has changed that would cause the decision made earlier by the PAC and the L&E Court to be discarded? That decision, to limit the height and occupancy, was based mainly on the consideration of the disbenefit to the local community of a large residential development on an isolated site in a mainly single and two storey low scale residential precinct. It should be noted that the decision was accepted by the community and Willoughby Council with the view that the site would be suited to some level of residential development once Channel 9 departed. It should also be noted that the approved 400 apartments was accepted with some reluctance after Council and the community originally proposed 300 apartments as being the acceptable level of occupancy. Therefore it is little wonder that the subsequent proposals have led to over 680 objections, including Willoughby Council's, to the Modified Concept Plans. This is the sort of number one might expect generated by a major government initiative rather than a local residential redevelopment and is a strong indictment of the proponent's current plan.

Only two factors have changed since the current occupancy and height determination was made:

- i) Local school capacity has increased at Artarmon Public School and will in the next two years, increase at Willoughby Primary and Girls' High Schools. However, with the continuing influx of new residents as further development takes place surrounding the Channel 9 property, it is foreseen that school capacity will need to be further increased in the not too distant future, and
- ii) New residential development within a kilometre of Channel 9 has added almost 200 apartments most of which put an additional peak hour traffic load on Artarmon Rd.

From this it can be readily seen that the modification 3 Concept Plan provides no increased benefit to the local community, despite what the proponent would have us believe, through provision of so-called improved accessible communal open space. In fact the relocation of the originally proposed park from the Artarmon Rd frontage to the centre and rear of the property will act as a disincentive to use it by those living outside the redeveloped site. Further, the 3.2m increase in height of building E compared with the height in the approved plan, can only serve to increase the tunnel effect in that section of the Village Green. From experience in many city centres this is likely to cause high wind speeds, particularly when the wind direction is from the SE, S and SW as it is pushed up the slope from Walter St to the site boundary.

So, what can be expected by the local community resulting from the proposed increase in density?

- i) Increased demand for bus services, particularly city bound in the morning peak when it is common for buses already full to drive past the Willoughby Rd bus stops at Small St and Garland Rd. It should be noted that due to the banking up of buses approaching the city across the Harbour Bridge, there is little or no scope to increase the frequency of the peak hour bus services. The bus stop at Small St will always be favoured by those travelling to the city in view of the fact that Artarmon Railway Station is 1.5kms distant and parking there is already at saturation point.
- ii) Increased demand for parking on surrounding streets, especially in view of the fact that the length of internal roadway has been drastically reduced in the Concept Plan Mod 3. It would be expected that many visitors to the property would be disinclined to try and find visitor parking space in the underground carpark proposed. With the provision of a walking path through the bush reserve between the property and Walter St, further strain will be placed on parking in that street.
- iii) Notwithstanding the DPE's Traffic Report from Samsa Consulting dated 3 April 2018, these days, in the morning peak and on Saturday mornings, it is all too common for locals to see a continuous line of cars from the traffic lights all the way up the hill in Artarmon Rd and even further back on occasion. With cars from the property attempting to join the queue, where the proposed roundabout at Richmond Av will give them priority, it can only lead to severe exacerbation of the current situation.
- iv) Reduced set back and scaled height increase along Artarmon Rd and Richmond Av due to additional levels being added to the building along these two alignments. The buildings along Artarmon Rd are shown as 4.5m higher than the approved plan and along Richmond, 2.6m higher. Height increases and reduced setbacks also apply to the Scott St frontage.

We were disappointed to read of the DPE's support for the Concept Plan, Mod 3, particularly in view of the large number of objections, including that of Willoughby Council. One can only deduce from this that the DPE has not understood the well-founded concern of the community and Council regarding many aspects of the development. Without going into details, The DPE report, p.26 Section 6.2 Density, lists six points to justify the increase sought by the proponent. Reading these one can only come to the conclusion that all are either specious or contestable and in no way justify the increase in density. It is our opinion that the DPE report in its entirety does nothing to justify an increase of 15% to the density of the project.

The progress Association thanks the commission for the opportunity to address the determining panel and trusts that the matters presented will be given serious consideration in making a determination to reject the additional residential floor space being sought.