

Friends of Warringah Inc

7 February 2008

Media Release

Public Meeting says No to 20 Storeys in Dee Why and the proposed Warringah LEP

Over 100 concerned residents packed the North Curl Curl Surf Club last night to discuss the proposed increase to 20 storeys in the Dee Why Town Centre and changes to the Warringah Local Environment Plan which governs future development across Warringah.

Dr Richard Michell of the Dee Why Residents Action Group gave a presentation on the Dee Why Town Centre proposal and Dr Christina Kirsch of the Brookvale Valley Community Group outlined changes proposed in the Warringah Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Dee Why Town Centre, which includes increased height limits from 5 and 6 storeys to 20 storeys.

“An overwhelming majority of residents opposed the proposed increase to 20 storeys in the Dee Why Town Centre and the changes proposed for the Warringah LEP. Residents expressed serious concern that unlike the last time the LEP was considered in the late 1990s, to date there has been no community consultation” said Friends of Warringah President, Vincent De Luca.

“Residents also expressed outrage at the inadequate time of 1 month to prepare submissions on these significant proposals and voiced apprehension that an Administrator would dictate the future of Warringah’s planning controls instead of elected representatives”.

Dr Michell revealed Council’s Traffic study that was shown to him on Tuesday that concludes that Dee Why is grid locked and at capacity. Other issues raised by residents included the adverse affects the grid locked traffic and building of the developments over the next three years will have on small businesses and shoppers.

Dr Christina Kirsch pointed out that none of the normal studies in relation to environmental protection and heritage had been conducted prior to Mr Perrson passing the motion on 19 November 2007 to set in train the proposal.

Residents also expressed concern about the precedent the decision to increase height limits could set for other areas across Warringah in the future.

The meeting passed two resolutions for the attention of Warringah Council and the New South Wales Government:

That this meeting of concerned residents:

- 1) Calls upon Warringah Council and the New South Wales Government to ensure that the proposed Dee Why Town Centre and Warringah Local Environment Plans are withdrawn immediately; and
- 2) Notes that as proposed Local Environment Plans do not have to be submitted to the State Government until 2009, all proposed Warringah Local Environment Plans be dealt with following the election of Councillors in September 2008 and extensive community consultation.

A Petition to the New South Wales Parliament calling for it, the Minister for Planning and Minister for Local Government to ensure the LEPs are withdrawn and not dealt with until elected representatives are in place was also signed by over 100 residents.

“Going through the proposal with a fine tooth comb reveals poor negotiation on Warringah Council’s part and not in the interests of ratepayers. In return for the height increase to 20 storeys, the developer has offered through a proposed Voluntary Planning agreement nothing more than “management of the proposed Town Square and the provision of a bus setback off Pittwater Road”.

“The developers are not paying for tennis or basketball courts for the kids, childcare, youth and senior citizens centre or additional transport and infrastructure. What’s worse is that the open space to be created in the new Gors Park will be at the expense of ratepayers and the Town Centre will only be available for use by the public at the discretion of Multi Plex/Vambucca – this is not good enough and not true community open space”.

“An alternate planning suggestion maintaining a six storey height limit was submitted by Dee Why Residents Action Group’s Dr Annette Sammut and Tom Peel late last year for consideration of Warringah Council. The Friends of Warringah are disappointed that the Council has not properly considered or sought to advance this solution that maintains the height limit currently in place, provides proper community open space and avoids Chatswood like high rise development” Mr De Luca concluded.