

Media Release

Over 900 residents say NO to 20 Storeys

Over 900 concerned residents packed the Dee Why Town Triangle on Saturday to see a blimp flown at 85 metres high depicting the height of the proposed 20 storey tower and to rally against the proposal.

At the meeting, Dr Keith Amos proposed the following motion which was adopted unanimously:

“This meeting strongly objects to the inappropriate plans for Dee Why Town Centre currently before Warringah Council, we demand that the Warringah Local Environment Plan 2000 remain unamended until plans more in scale with the Dee Why environment come before an elected Warringah Council, approved by a popular mandate”

Dr Richard Michell of the Dee Why Residents Action Group spoke extensively on why he felt the proposal was “inappropriate for Dee Why”.

Dr Christina Kirsch of Brookvale Valley Community Group spoke about her “fears for the Brookvale” and how the precedent set in Dee Why would follow to Brookvale.

Friends of Warringah Inc President, Vincent De Luca stated “this is now the second meeting where an overwhelming number of residents have opposed the proposed increase to 20 storeys in the Dee Why Town Centre and called for it to be withdrawn pending the democratic election of Councillors in September, however, Mr Persson continues to arrogantly dismiss community concerns and push ahead with this outrageous proposal that seeks to destroy our quality of life and create a precedent for high rise developments across Warringah”.

“Residents continue to express outrage at the inadequate time to prepare objections to the biggest proposal ever to come before the community. Dick Persson argues the proposal is not different to previous proposals, but that is completely untrue”. He has rejected requests for an extension to the public comment period and the community has until this Friday 14 March 2008 to comment on the proposal.

“It is not Mr Persson’s role as a public servant to dismiss community opinion, treat objectors with contempt and disdain and play politics by attempting to discredit opponents of the proposal so he can dictate the future of Warringah’s planning controls” Mr De Luca said.

Dr Michell revealed Council’s Traffic study that was shown to him concludes that Dee Why is grid locked and at capacity. “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” Mr De Luca said.

“The developers are not paying for tennis or basketball courts for the kids, childcare, a 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”.

A Petition was tabled in the New South Wales Parliament last week calling for an independent investigation into Warringah Council’s handling of the proposal and that the proposals be withdrawn pending the election of Councillors in September.

The Honourable Marie Ficarra MLC, a Member of the Parliament’s General Purpose Standing Committee that oversees Local Government has also questioned the Government on Mr Persson and the Dee Why Town Centre (refer Questions on Notice attached).

Shadow Minister for Local Government, Chris Hartcher MP has also questioned the Government on Mr Persson's contract and appointment as Administrator of Port Macquarie Council (refer Questions on Notice attached).

Pittwater MP, Rob Stokes has made representations to the Ministers for Planning, the Environment and Local Government about the proposal and has stated the "future of Dee Why ... will have flow on effects for my community of Pittwater" (refer letter dated 6 March 2008 attached).

Manly MP, Mike Baird also raised his concerns about the proposal last week during debate in the Parliament stating "The Dee Why town centre development is a huge proposal and an elected council should have the final say on it rather than the current arrangement".

Federal MP for Mackellar, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop also sent members of her office to Saturday's rally in support of the community.

On Tuesday night Mr De Luca will present to the Council nearly 900 letters of objection from residents (Manly Daily took a photo of Friends of Warringah with all the objections at Saturday's rally). "It is clear the community does not want Mr Persson handling this matter, his ability at remaining impartial has been seriously compromised by his adverse comments about objectors, his public statements of support for the proposal and questions raised in the Parliament. He should fall on his sword and withdraw the proposal and leave it to the elected representatives to determine the matter in the best interest of the people of Warringah" Mr De Luca concluded.

For more information please contact:

Mr Vincent De Luca OAM – 0414-990-551
Dr Richard Mitchell – 0417 255 726
Dr Christina Kirsch – 0411699 266

Ms Ficarra to the Minister for Lands, Minister for Rural Affairs, Minister for Regional Development representing the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health)—

- a. Did Mr Dick Persson, the Administrator of Warringah Council, issue a Media Release on Warringah Council letterhead dated 9 November 2007 supporting the proposal to increase the height limits of the Dee Why Town Centre to 20 storeys, which also included the name and contact details of the private developer's media spokesperson, prior to making a decision at the Warringah Council meeting on 13 November 2007?
- b. Did Mr Persson voice his support of the proposal in the Manly Daily on 10 November 2007 and in the ratepayer funded council column in the Manly Daily, prior to making a decision at the Warringah Council meeting on 13 November 2007?
- c. At the Council meeting of 13 November 2007 was Mr Persson abusive and dismissive and did he denigrate members of the community who objected to the proposal, contrary to the Council's Code of Conduct, meeting practice and Local Government Act 1993?
- d. Will the Minister and Department of Local Government ensure that an investigation into Mr Persson's conduct is undertaken?
 - i. If not, why not?
- e. In view of Mr Persson fettering his discretion and breaching the principles of administrative law in relation to the proposal regarding the Dee Why Town Centre and Warringah Local Environment Plan, will the Minister appoint an alternate Administrator to consider all proposals in relation to the Dee Why Town Centre and Warringah Local Environment Plan?
 - i. If not, why not?

Answer—

I provide the following details in response to your questions:

1. to (5). The role of an administrator is to carry out the functions of the council under administration that are normally undertaken by the council's elected representatives.
Administrators and the councils under their administration are subject to the same level of departmental and public scrutiny as any other council.
The role of an administrator is to carry out the functions that would normally be undertaken by the elected representatives of the council, including policy making, ceremonial functions and exercising community leadership.
Any member of the community who feels they were treated contrary to the Council's Code of Conduct should write to the Director General of the Department of Local Government providing details of the alleged breach.
Upon receipt of any complaints in regard to this matter, the Department of Local Government will review and assess the matter.
There are no grounds for appointing an alternative Administrator.

Question asked on 4 December 2007 (session 54-1) and printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 34](#).

Answer printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 36](#).

1505—DISPLACED DIRECTOR GENERAL

Ms Ficarra to the Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for the Central Coast, and Minister Assisting the Minister for Finance representing the Premier, Minister for Citizenship—

1. On what date did Mr Dick Persson become a displaced Director General?
2. At the time of displacement, what was the date of expiration of Mr Persson's SES contract?
3. On what date was Mr Persson's SES contract renewed and on what terms?
4. What is the date of expiry for Mr Persson's current SES contract?
5. Is Mr Persson subject to the Code of Conduct for Senior Executive Service Officers?
6. Will the Premier ensure that the issues raised in the Question on Notice 1274, asked on 4 December 2007 are fully investigated by the Department of Premier and Cabinet?
 - a. If not, why not?
7. Following Mr Persson's representations to you for the appointment of the Director General of either the Premier's Department or Cabinet, what were the reasons for not appointing him?
8. Is Mr Persson's appointment as Administrator of Port Macquarie Council a result of the Government's refusal to appoint him a Departmental Director General?
9. What Boards and other organisations has the Government appointed Mr Persson to and what is the salary for each appointment?
10. Does Mr Persson have an SES Credit Card?
 - a. If so, what has been the expenditure on that card for the following financial years:
 - i. 2003/2004?
 - ii. 2004/2005?
 - iii. 2005/2006?
 - iv. 2006 to present?
11. Is it true that Mr Persson has a Warringah Council Credit Card and that on more than one occasion he has been required to pay back certain moneys due to such payments not falling within his role as Administrator?
 - a. If so,
 - i. Is this conduct contrary to the Code of Conduct of Senior Executive Service Officers?
 - ii. Will you ensure that Mr Persson's use of the Warringah Council Credit card is fully investigated by your Department?
 - b. If not, why not?
12. What salary will Dick Persson receive as Administrator of Port Macquarie Council?
13. Will he receive two salaries and other allowances for being Administrator of both Port Macquarie and Warringah Council?
 - a. If so, what is the total amount of salary, allowances and any other payments he will receive for the period 4 March 2008 to 30 September 2008 as Administrator of both Councils?
14. What is the total amount of salary and allowances Mr Persson receives for all his State Government appointments?

Question asked on 4 March 2008 (session 54-1) and printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 39](#).
No answer has been published

1507—DEE WHY TOWN CENTRE AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN

Ms Ficarra to the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure, and Minister for the Hunter representing the Minister for Planning, Minister for Redfern Waterloo, Minister for the Arts—

1. Has Mr Dick Persson and/or any officer of Warringah Council met with you over the last two years?
 - a. If so,
 - i. on what dates?
 - ii. what was the purpose of such meetings?
 - iii. what issues were discussed?
2. Has Mr Dick Persson and/or any officer of Warringah Council met with any of your Departmental officers?
 - a. If so,
 - i. on what dates?
 - ii. what was the purpose for such meetings?
3. Has Mr Dick Persson and/or any officer of Warringah Council met with you over the last two years to discuss the Dee Why Town Centre and the proposed Dee Why Town Centre LEP?
 - a. If so,
 - i. on what dates?
 - ii. what was the purpose of these meetings?

Question asked on 4 March 2008 (session 54-1) and printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 39](#).
No answer has been published

1500—PROPOSED DEE WHY TOWN CENTRE AND WARRINGAH LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLANS

Ms Ficarra to the Treasurer, Minister for Infrastructure, and Minister for the Hunter representing the Minister for Planning, Minister for Redfern Waterloo, Minister for the Arts—

1. What is the Minister's response to the Petition I tabled on Tuesday 26 February 2008 concerning the proposed Dee Why Town Centre and Warringah Local Environment Plans?
2. Will the Minister refer the Petition to his Director General and ensure that the request of the Petitioners for an independent investigation of Warringah Council's handling of the proposals are the subject of an independent investigation?
 - a. If not, why not?

Question asked on 4 March 2008 (session 54-1) and printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 39](#).
No answer has been published

1499—PROPOSED DEE WHY TOWN CENTRE AND WARRINGAH LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANS
Ms Ficarra to the Minister for Lands, Minister for Rural Affairs, Minister for Regional Development
representing the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Assisting
the Minister for Health (Mental Health)—

1. What is the Minister's response to the Petition I tabled on Tuesday 26 February 2008 concerning the proposed Dee Why Town Centre and Warringah Local Environment Plans?
2. Will the Minister refer the Petition to his Director General and ensure that the request of the Petitioners for an independent investigation of Warringah Council's handling of the proposals are the subject of an independent investigation?
 - a. If not, why not?

Question asked on 4 March 2008 (session 54-1) and printed in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 39](#).
No answer has been published

2166—DICK PERSSON—APPOINTMENT AS ADMINISTRATOR OF PORT MACQUARIE COUNCIL

Mr Chris Hartcher to the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Mental Health)—

1. (a) What process was undertaken prior to Mr Dick Persson being appointed Administrator of Port Macquarie Council?
(b) Was his appointment a merit-based selection?
2. On what dates has the Minister and/or his Director General met with Mr Persson since January 2006 and what was the purpose of such meetings?
3. On what date did Mr Persson's SES contract expire after he was displaced as a Director General?
4. On what date was Mr Persson's SES contract renewed and does that contract have provision within it for performance reviews?
5. What salary will Dick Persson receive as Administrator of Port Macquarie Council?
6. Will he receive two salaries and other allowances for being administrator of both Port Macquarie and Warringah Council?
7. If yes to (6), what is the total amount of salary, allowances and any other payments he will receive for the period 4 March 2008 to 30 September 2008?
8. (a) Does Mr Persson have an SES Credit Card?
(b) If so what has been the expenditure on that card for the following periods:
 - i. 2003-2004?
 - ii. 2004-2005?
 - iii. 2006-2007?
9. Will Mr Persson receive a Credit Card from Port Macquarie Council?
10. (a) Will the Minister refer the issues raised in Legislative Council Question on Notice 1274 to his department for proper investigation?
(b) If not, why not?

Question asked on 4 March 2008 (session 54-1) and published in [Questions & Answers Paper No. 49](#).
No answer has been published