



BRONTE COMMUNITY RALLIES TO "SAVE THE VILLAGE"

Hundreds of Bronte residents and their supporters will gather outside the Bronte RSL Club to protest against plans to convert the building into a high-rise apartment block and retail complex. Development proposals drawn up for the single-storey site on Macpherson Street are for a 6 storey building including an RSL club, four residential floors and a 1200m² shopping centre on street level - a retail space of approximately equivalent size to the Coogee Village retail space.

Residents say the proposals, drawn up by seasoned developer Winston Langley Burlington, are out of keeping with the existing "neighbourhood centre" zoning of the site and will dramatically increase traffic to already congested streets, particularly in summer. Current planning laws allow heights up to a maximum 13m while the 28-apartment block would extend to more than 20m.

Waverley Council is preparing a review of planning controls for the Bronte shopping strip, but opponents of the development plans, including the residents' action group known as "Save Bronte Village", say a supermarket and other shops will attract unwanted additional traffic from neighbouring suburbs. This will lead to dangerous rat-runs developing along side streets, including through Chesterfield Parade, with its heritage-listed fig trees and the Clovelly Public School, and through St Thomas Street, running past the Bronte Child Care Centre.

There are also fears for the fate of small local retail businesses in the face of larger-scale competition. The Bronte village strip is home to the Good Food Guide-listed Three Blue Ducks café and the popular artisan-run Iggy's Bakery as well as a number of family-run grocery stores. It is also the centre of the Grow It Local kitchen garden campaign.

Winston Langley Burlington has a history of involvement with controversial major re-developments of embattled club facilities such as the Cronulla Sharks and Balmain Leagues. The Bronte RSL closed its doors in June this year, a decision blamed on its 'dire financial situation'.

ENDS

WHEN: Saturday December 8, 10-11am

WHERE: Bronte RSL club, 113 Macpherson Street, Bronte

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