

Bronte RSL Site Redevelopment

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BRONTE RSL SITE REDEVELOPMENT

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Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) [6.08 p.m.]: I will update the House on the proposal to redevelop the Bronte RSL site at Macpherson Street, Bronte. I have spoken twice before in this place about this ongoing saga because it is very important to residents in my electorate and particularly those in Bronte who will be most affected. To provide some history, the financially struggling Bronte RSL entered into an agreement with Winston Langley Burlington to redevelop the site. The developer's proposal for high-rise apartments and a large Harris Farm supermarket is a gross overdevelopment of the site. The local community rallied against the outrageous proposal, which would completely destroy the amenity and character of the existing Bronte neighbourhood. The community is fully backed by Waverley Council, which voted unanimously against the proposal. In July last year the Joint Regional Planning Panel also rejected the proposal on the grounds that its size and bulk was excessive and that it was ultimately not in the best interests of the local community. I agree with these sentiments wholeheartedly.

Whilst it is clear that the Bronte RSL site is in need of redevelopment, the proposal put forth by Winston Langley Burlington is far in excess of what the community and the council want or need. One would think those reasons would be enough to put to rest any further discussion on this proposal, given that local communities are best equipped to decide such matters for themselves. Recently, the Planning Assessment Commission [PAC], decided to permit yet another assessment of Winston Langley Burlington's proposal. After this decision, the local community feel as though they and their council have been completely ignored. They do not feel that the Planning Assessment Commission has taken into account unanimous local opinion that the proposal is completely unacceptable. The proposal will exceed current council guidelines by 7.5 metres on the front of the building and is double the height restriction in the middle of the building.

The presence of a supermarket would mean delivery trucks would cause serious traffic issues in a currently quiet residential area and create a dangerous situation for schoolchildren from Clovelly Public School, who will have to share the road with those trucks. The only encouraging aspect of the Planning Assessment Commission's determination is that it states that the proposal lacks any merit. This means that Winston Langley Burlington will need to submit an entirely new proposal. However, for long-suffering residents of Bronte that is not of much comfort because it still does not accept their clear rejection of the proposal. At the forefront of the local community campaign is Stephen Lightfoot, who founded the action group Save Bronte. Stephen has been an excellent voice for local residents throughout this process. I thank and commend him for the important work he is doing on behalf of the entire Bronte community.

Last October I led a delegation of representatives from the Save Bronte campaign and from Waverley Council to meet with the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. I felt it was important that local residents were given the opportunity to voice their valid concerns directly to the Minister, especially given the way in which this particular redevelopment will change the shape of their neighbourhood. Most residents of Bronte accept that the current Bronte RSL site is well overdue for some form of redevelopment. It is an old building that is in desperate need of renewal. All that residents are asking for is a redevelopment that is in keeping with the existing character of Bronte. They want a reasonable outcome for their local area and to date Winston Langley Burlington's proposals are completely unreasonable. The monstrous proposal is about nothing more than maximising profits at the expense of my constituents.

I fully support the efforts of Stephen Lightfoot and the Save Bronte campaign. I will join with the Waverley Council and Bronte residents in taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure that they get a reasonable outcome for their local area—meaning a redevelopment proposal that compliments, rather than destroys, the unique character of Bronte.