



# Bonny Hills Progress Association INC.

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The General Manager

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

PO Box 84

Port Macquarie NSW 2444

**CC Ben Roberts**

**Re: DA 2017 – 1046.1: Seniors Housing Lot 2 Beach St DP 1091253**

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above DA for a Seniors Housing development of 44 apartments on Lot 2 Beach Street, Bonny Hills.

**The Bonny Hills Progress Association (BHPA) is strongly opposed to the proposed development.**

The reasons for objection are detailed below.

## **Background**

BHPA's position is taken with these points in mind:

- Lot 2 is zoned Rural and was recently cleared of old growth timber ostensibly to improve productivity of the area for goat farming.
- The proponent has since 'realised' that it is not viable for rural production and will be more viable for residential development.
- Council has under consideration a proposal to rezone Lot 2 as partly E2 and partly R1.
- The current DA relates to the eastern side of Beach St, in an area Council proposes to rezone as R1.

Council's rezoning proposal has been strongly supported by BHPA following a major community backlash to the recent clearing of old growth timber on Lot 2. That timber was of high conservation value as koala and wildlife habitat and was part of a wildlife corridor along Saltwater Creek from the coastal vegetation strip to inland forest.

## **Grounds for objection to the Development Application (DA)**

There is considerable community concern about the development of this site, close to the beach on low lying land, because of its unsuitability to the village nature of Bonny Hills, inadequate infrastructure and destruction of amenity.

It is the first of these, however, that is the principal reason for the community's objection: that is, the proposed development flies in the face of the village character of Bonny Hills as it is now, and which the community wishes to preserve.

Council held two meetings in Bonny Hills in 2017 and 2018 aimed at canvassing community views and inputs regarding Bonny Hills' future development. Residents' aspirations were for sensitively planned village development melded with the natural environment. The type of development proposed here is the complete antithesis of these desires.

The two meetings confirmed the Community's previously agreed Vision for Bonny Hills which was re-endorsed at the above meetings and is now enshrined in the Bonny Hills Community Plan. This Vision is for Bonny Hills to retain its 'village atmosphere' while preserving the natural environment.

This vision is supported in Council's Urban Growth Management Strategy which establishes Principles for Residential Growth, of which Principle 6 directly impinges on this situation:

### ***Coordinated precinct planning***

*Residential development will be coordinated at the precinct level to enhance the character, natural qualities and economic development opportunity of each area in the public interest and consistent with the preferred long-term growth scenario.*

The Urban Growth Management Strategy also states the following:

### ***"Apartment living in Lake Cathie & Bonny Hills***

*Apartment living is only appropriate near the proposed village centres in the urban release area of Rainbow Beach." (Vol.2, Page 53)*

It is important to note that there is little objection to residential development in Bonny Hills but 44 apartments on this site is clearly inconsistent with what the Bonny Hills community and Council intend. It would be a gross over-development of the site, creating a density that is unprecedented and inappropriate in the area.

BHPA submits that the above argument is more than sufficient for Council to dismiss this DA out of hand and requests Council to act accordingly.

While its focus has been on the above, BHPA could not fail to observe technical deficiencies in the proposal:

- The DA does not appear to allow for an adequate Asset Protection Zone within the proposed R1 envelope. That would suggest the developer wishes to

use the proposed E2 zone to the north for this purpose. That would be a clear breach of the law.

- The DA is dismissive of the risks of flooding, storm surge and the shallow groundwater table. There is no evidence on which this cavalier attitude can be based. The proximity of the proposed development to the beach indicates a very real risk that any of these events would flood, at least, the underground carpark, and do greater damage at worst.
- The DA proposes a footpath that leads away from the beach, the least likely one that would be used by unit residents. It makes no provision for the improved footpath and lighting they would need for access to the beach, Surf Club and multi-purpose shop. As part of this a safe pedestrian passageway on the eastern side of the Saltwater Creek bridge would need to be installed as this is where most people walk to and from Rainbow Beach.
- Council is already aware that the Bonny Hills community is already very sceptical and concerned about the capacity of existing infrastructure.

Approval of this DA would be utterly inconsistent with the community's aspirations and Council's plans for retention of the village character of Bonny Hills. Approval would also subject unit residents and everyone else who lives or visits Bonny Hills to serious risks. Those risks include flooding, storm surge, fire and traffic.

We strongly urge Council to reject this application.

If you would like to discuss these objections further, we will be only too happy to oblige.

Yours sincerely,

John Drinan

Secretary

BHPA

21 September 2018