

From: Colin Johnston [mailto:colinjohnston@bigpond.com]
Sent: Thursday, 30 October 2008 10:26 PM
Subject: DA/1349/2008 - Proposed Development at 16 Murray Road, Beecroft



**BEECROFT – CHELTENHAM
CIVIC TRUST
INCORPORATED**
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Councillor Nick Berman

His Worship the Mayor of Hornsby

Shire Offices

Hornsby

Dear Mayor Nick,

DA/1349/2008 - Proposed Development at 16 Murray Road, Beecroft

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust strongly opposes the above proposal on the grounds that it is totally inappropriate for this area in its scale, density and design. It does not reflect the surrounding patterns in terms of curtilage and open spaces, and is incompatible with the existing housing. In particular the Trust objects on the following issues:

Vegetation.

A total of 47 trees with a safe useful life expectancy from 15 to over 40 years are to be removed. This represents 76% of the existing mature trees presently growing on the site.

Proposed removals include 14 significant native trees, of which 11 are canopy trees indigenous to the site. Seven of these eleven are Grey Iron Bark (*Eucalyptus Paniculata*) that form part of the STIF community. To the best of our knowledge, this is the largest stand of Grey Iron Bark remaining in this vicinity.

Also proposed for removal are a significant number of introduced species that contribute to the cultural landscape settings and amenity of this vicinity. The combination of both native and introduced trees contributes notably to local biodiversity and must be preserved, as the species collectively make a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse effects.

Those trees proposed to be retained will be short lived, as they will be adversely impacted by extensive excavation and hydraulic installations that will alter valuable ground water and overflow drainage paths necessary to sustain large mature trees. We urge Council's Bushland and Biodiversity team to assess the vegetation on this site *as a community* rather than as single trees.

Landscaping

The landscaped area is quoted as 46% of the total area. But it is unclear how this figure has been derived from physical data, as the designated areas are small, fragmented and impracticable - with insufficient deep soil plantings, except along the driveway.

Visitor Parking

Visitor parking appears to be inadequate, with four spaces provided in the secured basement of the proposed two storey building. No provision is made for parking by disabled persons.

It is notable that vehicles are currently parked on both sides of Murray Road for most hours of the day, mainly by staff and visitors to the nursing home. The street is also a major drop-off point for high school girls, as it is impossible to stop on Beecroft Road during morning and afternoon school hours, due to clearway restrictions.

Driveway

The length of the driveway is over 100 metres with an average restrictive width of 3.5 metres. Any residence located at a distance greater than 50m from the point of ingress or egress would need to enter and leave the site in a forward direction to meet Council's requirements. This stricture would apply to all vehicles, as the length and width of passing bays proposed along the driveway are too narrow and too short.

It is also notable that the turning space at the northern end of the site does not seem adequate for delivery trucks / trades' vehicles and the like.

Stormwater Management

No details have been provided on stormwater management. Residents report that the existing drain pipes flood frequently and cannot cope with the existing catchments.

Overshadowing

This appears to be a problem for those residents living at 18A Murray Road. They will lose their northern sunlight as a result of the closeness of the dwelling proposed along the southern boundary. The residence at 18A is less than three years old and was built to comply with Hornsby Shire Council's energy-efficient housing code so that 75% of its windows face towards to north. That energy efficiency would be lost to this proposal; a comparison of floor levels indicates that the dwelling at 18A will be approximately 2m lower than the proposed floor levels of the dwelling(s) to the northeast.

Heritage

The development does not reflect the amenity of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area. The setbacks shown in the plans appear to be 2 metres or less, which is totally inappropriate for Beecroft and Cheltenham.

Multi-storey Building on a Battleaxe Block

Council generally questions a two-storey building on a battleaxe block. This building is essentially three-storey one, with notable excavation for underground parking. That arrangement is inappropriate for the site with such small setbacks. The elevations clearly indicate that portions of the proposed multi-residential building are three storeys high.

Bus stops and Traffic

The Traffic Report is based on there being three existing residences on the site, with access to Beecroft Rd. This basis is incorrect as there are only two residences and no access is planned to Beecroft Road.

The Bus stop distances quoted in the Traffic Report are incorrect. The bus stops are between 450 metres and 550 metres from the Murray Road entry to the development, which is the only entry to the site. The bus services along Beecroft Road are notably irregular, infrequent and mostly consist of express buses that run out of peak hours.

A development such as this will require the use of cars to reach shopping centres, which are at least 1km away. It will attract seniors who have an active social life and are likely to have 1 – 2 cars per household.

Acoustics

The timber paling fence and soft landscaping intended would be inadequate to reduce acoustic impacts, as an area of 30 metres is required to reduce noise by 1dB.

Waste Collection

With 12 residences planned for this site, the Trust asks whether Council will restrict the number of bins per residence. Currently, for this number of residences, Council would require the garbage trucks to go up the driveway. Such access would be very difficult, as no adequate turning space is available.

We request that Council reject this development on this battleaxe block and with very little open space, surrounded - as it is - by housing with notably different quality and amenity characteristics. Construction of the proposed development will be disruptive to traffic, and also to nearby residents - as well as the staff, residents and visitors of Chesalon Nursing Home. A development of this size and scale is most inappropriate for the subject site, and it is not in the public interest to support a development of such design and density in Beecroft or Cheltenham.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Johnston

President.