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The Newport Residents Association (NRA) is a long-standing, community, not for profit group.

Mr. Gavin Butler, President of the association, said “Currently we are working with a community lobby – *Save Robertson Road* – on the most important issue perhaps ever to affect Newport Village and we wish to give the community at large an update on where matters are at.

“Robertson Road is the centre of our village and is the focus of the Newport Masterplan (developed in 2007) to create a heart for Newport. It is under threat by two potential developments. The first one at 351 Barrenjoey Rd, has recently submitted a new DA for a shop top housing development on the north side. The other, on the south side, is at 349 Barrenjoey Rd. The second applicant had submitted one DA which was withdrawn but it is likely another DA will be submitted shortly.

“There have been over 900 followers on the ‘*Save Robertson Road*’ Facebook page” added Mr Butler. “Allied with this we have been involved in conducting a local survey on the future of Robertson Rd with over 1,100 people taking part (in excess of 1,000 being from Newport post code 2106). 88.3% of respondents answered *Yes* to the following question ‘*Do you think Robertson Road is a unique and important place in Newport and should be assessed and developed accordingly: as the boutique, al fresco eating and community centre of the village?*’”

This situation was the subject of a Mayoral minute, endorsed unanimously by Councillors at the March Council meeting. Subsequently there was a zoom meeting on 28th July, organised by Council with representatives from land owners, Council, interested residents the NRA and Rob Stokes. This meeting was seen as a positive first step in moving toward the creation of Robertson Road as the communal heart of Newport.

On-line submissions to council on the current DA closed on Friday 20th August 2021. However NBC will accept new and additional submissions, due to a further set of modified plans being lodged, up until such time Council makes a determination. This can be

done by sending an email via "Council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au" quoting "Application Number: DA2020/1756".

Following consultation with the Council the further set of modified plans was lodged on the 27th August 2021. The Council at this stage has deemed it not necessary to renotify the public, even though these modified plans show a reduction in one complete level of parking and 26 parking places. **Further these revised plans still allow for vehicle entry from the centre of Robertson Road into the proposed 351 Barrenjoey Rd. development.** Mr Butler stated that he and the community are extremely concerned that if this DA is approved in its current form, it will demonstrate that the Newport Masterplan is not being adhered to by Council. Any such approval will set a precedent that will be detrimental to the entire village and the desire to have a "Heart to Newport". It would almost certainly make it impossible to achieve Robertson Road becoming the pedestrianised precinct envisioned in the Masterplan.

Mr Butler went on to explain that "Residents are not opposed to development – and in fact we welcome it – but it must adhere to the Newport Masterplan". He recommends the best solution is for all parties: Council, landowners of the properties on both the north and south side of Robertson Road, developers and the community to join together to create an environmentally sound solution that benefits all and of which the residents of Newport can be proud. The fact that the DA for 351 Barrenjoey Road has not been withdrawn creates a huge difficulty for this solution being achieved.

A major objective of the Masterplan is to encourage land aggregation and locating public parking underground, to facilitate a fabulous pedestrianised plaza for all to enjoy. This once in a century opportunity cannot be squandered. The community is expecting the utmost cooperation between all parties to deliver this vision for Newport.

Mr Butler said "To be able to achieve this aim requires a leader to gather all parties together and design a joint solution in keeping with the Masterplan objectives". He calls on the Council to take an active role by appointing an urban designer (internal or external) to assist in developing an amended design that will benefit everyone.

The Newport Residents Association also conducted a survey between December 2020 and May 2021 titled “*Newport Village: Future & Improvements*”, the results of which can be read using the following link <http://newport.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/NRA-Survey-Dec-2020-May-2021-.pdf>

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