

18 August 2016

Mr Gavin Butler  
President  
Newport Residents Association Inc.  
PO Box 1180  
NEWPORT BEACH NSW 2106



Dear Mr Butler

**The Newport**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 July 2016 addressed to the CEO of Merivale, and copied to the Manager of The Newport. I am the Merivale Group Operations Manager and am based at The Newport.

Firstly, I'd like to say how welcome we have been made to feel since taking the helm of The Newport. We have found the local community to be so engaged across many fronts, and it's a pleasure to instigate, and to contribute to, community initiatives ranging from a number of charitable causes to the support of local sporting teams. We have made it a priority to make a positive difference to Newport and to also improve the local amenity and offerings available to locals and visitors alike. We are very conscious to live harmoniously with our neighbours.

As you know, the outdoor area is a large component of The Newport which is enjoyed by many people. The cooler weather has brought numerous requests for heating after the sun goes down. Since the fire pits have been installed, we have received only positive feedback from our guests of all ages. The areas surrounding the pits are always the first to fill and the last to empty with customers.

To clarify the operation of those fire pits, I make the following comments:

- We are now only using composite briquettes to start the fires in the fire pits. We have found these to generate much less smoke, as regular wood generates too much smoke until the fire gets up to temperature.
- Once the fire pits reach high heat, they generate very little smoke.
- The fire pits are only used from sunset onwards, after which the kindy and school are closed.
- We only burn dry and well-seasoned timber resulting in less smoke.
- The use of the fire pits will cease as soon as the warmer weather arrives.
- Our fire pits are not the only open or wood burning fires in the Newport area, however, we of course understand your preference that there be zero open fires operated.

We note your comments regarding the "no open burn area" requirements of the Pittwater area, however, prior to installing the fire pits, we did investigate permissions relating to the fire pits and we found that we are within the regulatory parameters for their operation. The same applies to the pizza ovens. It is certainly not our intention to be dismissive of your concerns, but we have done our very best to conduct the operation of the hotel well within the relevant current laws and regulations and believe that we are within the relevant current legislation.

Please note my contact details [deirdre.ryan@merivale.com](mailto:deirdre.ryan@merivale.com) or 0426 880 344 for the future, if you need to contact us for any reason.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Deirdre Ryan', written in a cursive style.

**Deirdre Ryan**  
Group Operations Manager