



# Newport Residents Association Inc.

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15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Mr Ray Brownlee,  
Chief Executive Officer  
Northern Beaches Council  
PO Box 82,  
Manly NSW 1655

Dear Ray,

On the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020 we wrote to the Mayor Mr Michael Regan commending Council for saving the large eucalypt in Robertson Rd Newport which was originally scheduled to be removed following a lightning strike. Following dialogue council have cut out the dead part from the lightning strike and the tree now looks very healthy. This was a great save.

It has now come to our attention that only 3 days after submissions closed (7<sup>th</sup> March 2021) on the most recent DA impacting Robertson Rd, we see that an NBC Officer has issued a Landscape Referral Response giving approval for the removal of the abovementioned mature eucalypt, ON COMMUNITY LAND that abuts the development site. This is regardless of a number of those – and earlier – submissions emphasising the retention of this COMMUNITY TREE as an important part of Robertson Plaza.

The NBC Officer has approved an application for removal of this tree from community land based on an out-of-date arborist assessment, claimed to have been carried out on Friday 17 July 2020.

Responding to registered community concern, during August 2020 (after the above claimed inspection), NBC landscaping staff attended and inspected the tree and determined that it was healthy except for needing the pruning of dead branches resulting from a lightning strike sometime prior.

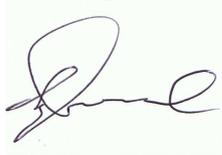
NBC records will show this pruning was carried out during last week August / first week September 2020. Since then the tree has flourished and now looks very different to the photo in the arborist report, dated 11 January 2021. The descriptions and photographs appended as evidence have NOT changed from those taken prior to the earlier report dated 9 March 2020, and are based on an inspection of Wednesday 17 July 2019.

The arborist, in his supplementary reports, identifies the tree as *Corymbia citriodora*. Yet in his original assessment report of 28 September 2019, based on the same inspection of Wednesday 17 July 2019, he identified it as *Corymbia maculata*. This tree has miraculously changed its botanical heritage from a protected species to one that has a lesser rating WITHOUT even the courtesy of a second inspection!

The supplementary reports blame NBC for the change in species identification. It is interesting that the consultant arborist values the information he claims sourced from NBC above his own learned assessment. What is obvious is that, at best, we have two materially conflicting opinions and there is no way a judgement should be taken regarding this community tree, ADJACENT to the development site, until a further, Council-appointed, independent arborist makes a detailed assessment of the tree, including DNA analysis.

We respectfully but URGENTLY request that the favourable NBC assessment for removal of this tree be withdrawn until the above inspection and analysis can be carried out and, indeed, until the total impact of this DA on Robertson Rd and its future can be resolved.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Butler', is placed over a light green rectangular background.

Gavin Butler  
President

Cc Mayor Michael Regan  
Director Planning & Place Louise Kerr  
Councillor Kylie Ferguson