



Newport Residents Association Inc.

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18th March 2021

Mayor Michael Regan,
Chief Executive Officer Ray Brownlee
Director Planning & Place Louise Kerr
Councillors
Northern Beaches Council
PO Box 82,
Manly NSW 1655

Dear Michael, Ray, Louise and Councillors,

Place Planning, Masterplans and Robertson Rd, Newport

The current DA for the northern corner of Barrenjoey and Robertson Roads Newport has generated c150 individual submissions in opposition. This, along with the recent (withdrawn) DA for the southern corner are just two contributors to the raised community awareness of the disengagement which will be wrought upon our village if there continues to be Council inaction in executing core components of the Newport Village Masterplan.

Only four properties directly abut this key segment of Robertson Rd between Barrenjoey Rd (the main road) and Foamcrest Avenue, which is a residential street of some remaining freestanding dwellings and a predominance of modern complexes of townhouses and several low-rise apartments.

The Newport Village Masterplan, commissioned in 2006, was put together with considerable community input and consultation during the ensuing period and formally adopted in 2014. It sets down a template for how Newport is to evolve, so that development can serve the community NOT constrain and dehumanise it.

The Masterplan took into account the existing nature of the village while indicating what needed to be done to ensure that its development would be an EVOLUTION rather than a DESTRUCTION. Pittwater Council initiated some aspects in line with the Masterplan template. These included the Main Street component, featuring: a widened median strip; the landscaping with Norfolk pines, palms and other vegetation; the definition of two traffic lanes and parking lanes in each direction; the creation of parking alcoves in the third lanes, to facilitate ready, short-term access to the main street retail outlets; the relocating of bus stops and pedestrian crossings to enhance both pedestrian safety and convenience; the closing off

of cross-traffic access at the village mid-point, further enhancing safety and expediting traffic flow; the installation of the gardens and outdoor eating pods in Robertson Rd.

Then the period of uncertainty surrounding the process leading to forced Council amalgamation interrupted the process. Northern Beaches Council has instigated some further titivating of village areas but no action has been taken on moving ahead with a program of significant action to progress the Masterplan.

In place for around a decade, the Masterplan gazetted that a key factor in seeing it realised is the conversion of Robertson Rd into a pedestrian plaza, to give the village a community heart and focus. NBC is within months of the conclusion of its first 4-year term. How long must Newport wait for Council to make a move on the road and adjacent pedestrian areas, which it controls, so that Robertson Plaza is created before it is too late for it ever to happen?

Without this Plaza, the philosophy of village masterplanning or place planning as now termed, becomes an empty, community-alienating exercise in futility.

Interestingly, the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's ***Design and Place SEPP***, currently out for public comment, expresses right up front its basic tenets as being:

PRINCIPLE 1. **Design places with beauty and character** *that people feel proud to belong to*

PRINCIPLE 2. **Design inviting public spaces** *to support engaged communities*

PRINCIPLE 3. **Design productive and connected places** *to enable thriving communities*

PRINCIPLE 4. **Design sustainable and greener places** *for the wellbeing of people and the environment*

PRINCIPLE 5. **Design resilient and diverse places** *for enduring communities*

NBC was bequeathed a Newport masterplan, for which these principles might have been written, the fit is so perfect. But plans – and principles – are worthless if they are not followed through with ACTION.

Creating Robertson Plaza fulfils these principles. Doing nothing does not.

The Newport Residents Association has had increased engagement with other community groups during the exposure of the recent Robertson Rd DAs and we are now working with them further, to amplify the urgent need for Council action to protect the essential, communal aspects of village life in Newport, now and through the rest of the century.

We look forward to specific assurances – and actions – that Council is taking control, EVERYWHERE that it has any scope to exercise control, to allow Newport to have an ongoing, people-centric heart.

Yours sincerely



Gavin Butler
President

PS There would be no Corso in Manly, no Martin Place in the city, if the councils of the day had just filed the plans and not closed those streets to vehicular traffic.

Cc Hon Rob Stokes

APPENDICES:

<https://eservices.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/ePlanning/live/Public/XC.Track/SearchApplication.aspx?id=1910785>

Facebook – Save Robertson Road - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/409043120382225/>