

Mr Michael File
Director, Strategic Assessment
Department of Planning – Strategic Sites and Urban Renewal
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr File

I write in response to your letter of 26 May 2008 concerning the proposed Bayswood Retirement Living Village Project Application. I have been asked to respond on the Chief Executive's behalf.

The Vincentia District Town Centre and Bayview Retirement Living Village Report (April 2008) aims to address the future growth of the community of Vincentia and the surrounding areas.

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health (SESIH) are committed to healthy urban planning, with attention to the health determinants of access, safety, physical activity and social connectedness. The attached recommendations are to give emphasis to and build on a healthy urban planning approach to this proposal.

It is noted the proposal involves an increase of 166 dwellings, assuming occupancy of 1.5 people per dwelling, the population would increase by approximately 249 people predominantly aged 60 years and older. This age group is typically a higher user of health resources. SESIH uses the Department of Planning population projections to assist determining future health infrastructure requirements. According to the Department of Planning's population projections for Shoalhaven Local Government Area, there will be growth of 7,255 people between 2006 and 2011. It is assumed that the relatively small number of people identified in this proposed development is accounted in the Department of Planning's projections and therefore has already been accommodated in SESIH's health activity projections and infrastructure requirements.

For information, there is currently an undersupply of aged care beds in the Shoalhaven LGA (based on Australian Government's Department of Health and Ageing targets for aged care beds). Given the proposed age structure and number of proposed residents there is likely to be requirement for additional nursing home and hostel type beds in the area exacerbating the current undersupply of aged care beds. It is suggested, given the proposed age structure of the population and lack of aged care beds consideration be given to the supply of aged care beds in this proposal.

It is noted the proposal includes medical consulting rooms and on-site nurse's residence. It is assumed these will be operated as private practices.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Cristina Thompson, Executive Manager, Strategy, Planning and Corporate Development on 4221 6700.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Dixon', with a stylized, cursive script.

Julie Dixon

Acting Director, Population Health, Planning and Performance

Date: 8 July 2008

Attachment: D08/29933

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Recommendations on Draft Vincentia District Town Centre and Bayview Retirement Living Village from South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health

The Vincentia District Town Centre and Bayview Retirement Living Village Report (April 2008) aims to address the future growth of the community of Vincentia and the surrounding areas.

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health (SESIH) are committed to healthy urban planning, with attention to the health determinants of access, safety, physical activity and social connectedness.

The SESIH endorses the following elements of the study:

- Commitment to more compact settlements which will support mixed use developments.
- Infrastructure that increases the capacity of people to walk to services and shops.
- Identification of the needs of the ageing population of Vincentia.
- Recognition of the need to provide adequate services for the expanding resident, visitor and ageing populations of Vincentia.
- The inclusion of public domain spaces and the provision of "Arbour Walk, Canopy Walk and Broadwalk", additional neighbourhood green spaces and the proposed community facilities.
- The inclusion of local focal points in the development such as small green spaces with seating, cafes, community use and the library. The need for an informal place to meet is often identified as a requirement by local residents.
- The integration of sustainability strategies including a combination of the Green Star Pilot Tool for the retail component, a 4.5 star Australian Building Greenhouse rating and 4 Star Green Star rating for the commercial component into the development.

To maximise the health gains of the Vincentia District Town Centre Stage 1 and the Proposed Bayview Retirement Living Village within Bayswood the following recommendations are made:

Social Cohesion

Local neighbourhoods and relationships are important factors in people's sense of health and well-being. Social cohesion occurs when a community can work together and support each other. The design and layout of an environment can encourage people to interact within their community and facilitate social relationships. This includes work environments.

1. Ensure linked and integrated public transport opportunities for Vincentia and Bayswood residents.

2. Efficient provision of transport infrastructure should be a priority for each stage of the development and be ahead of the proposed pace of growth.
3. Ensure community participation, including likely workforce participation early in the planning processes and establish on-going liaison with the different communities who are well represented in the area.
4. Optimise planning for the new community spaces by actively seeking input and establishing ongoing liaison with the older community, aboriginal community, young people and families.
5. Consider the vital role of Community Transport and the increasing burden this proposed development with its increase in the number of older people would have on this service.
6. Centre operations should cater for a working population by offering services at night and on weekends.
7. Incorporate "safety by design" principles to reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour.
8. Consider design for an ageing community such as no steps at entrances, wider doorways, level routes through main areas, integrated public transport systems and accessible toilet facilities.
9. Provide linkages via walkways and cycleways to existing schools, townships, existing cycleways and local environmental hotspots.

Transport and Physical Activity

Walkable neighbourhoods, where it is easy and attractive to walk or cycle to facilities, fosters physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Physical inactivity is linked to overweight and obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers. The 2005 NSW Health Survey found that only 52% of the NSW population aged 16 years and over had an adequate level of physical activity. Health costs related to injury are also high, with falls injury amongst older people being the single highest cost. Increasing physical activity, strength and balance is known to impact on the risk of falling.

10. Consider new public transport stops within comfortable walking distance from residences and new development (400-500 meters).
11. Ensure clear crossing points adjacent to public transport stops.
12. Ensure planned shared pathways in the village area be 2.5 to 3.5 meters wide i.e. wide enough to have two walkers side by side as well a cyclist, with marked centre lines to delineate two-way traffic and encourage users to keep to left to access the facilities.
13. Provide permeable and connected street networks that encourage walking and cycling routes to the public domain spaces as well as the Vincentia District Town Centre. It is important to offer a variety of paths that are both direct and leisurely.

14. Consider the extension of the cycle lane particularly from the Vincentia District Town Centre Stage 1 to the Wool Road main road access points to the existing primary and high school. This could be via an underpass or overpass. Bicycle transport pathways and routes that link the new development and existing town centre would be ideal and promote active transport.
15. Consider the provision of preferred pedestrian access on all roads surrounding the Vincentia District Town Centre and the Bayview retirement Living Village.
16. Construct secure bicycle storage in the Vincentia District Town Centre and on the public domain spaces.
17. Ensure all planned paths link to focal points from the Vincentia District Town Centre such as to schools, shops, parks, community spaces and public domain spaces.
18. Incorporate a smooth non-slip surfacing to all paths to prevent slips and accommodate walking frames, wheelchairs, bicycles, scooters, prams and skateboards.
19. Ensure all public paths and walking surfaces are level to prevent trip hazards particularly for older people. Small changes in level at entrances, small depressions at service outlets and uneven or broken surfaces eg. poorly laid pavers, are hazardous.
20. Build footpaths on both sides of the street to access the Vincentia District Town Centre and the Bayview retirement Living Village.
21. Construct any main street paving around the developments to be durable, non slip, embedded in a cement base and even in layout, thus requiring minimum maintenance.
22. Ensure smooth transition from ramps to roads and gentle gradients that meet Australian standards (gradients of 1:14) especially for people with limited mobility.
23. Install handrails and anti-slip tread on all steps and stairs. Delineating the leading edge of each step assists people with poor eyesight.
24. Install regular drinking fountains and seating along paths and open spaces and ensure an ongoing maintenance program.
25. Ensure frequent and accessible seating in public places around and within the Vincentia District Town Centre and the Bayview Retirement Living Village. Seats that are comfortable and cater for all ages should have a long seat base, back support and arms to assist in getting up. Fatigue is often a barrier to accessing facilities particularly for older people and people with disabilities.
26. Construct large, clear, concise and frequent signage which is critical to connecting facilities and for directions to destinations, especially to cater for people with impaired vision and new residents. Use signs with symbols and pictograms with sufficient colour contrasts (following standards).

27. Ensure shade provision through planting broad leaf trees, broad canopy trees and installing shade structures. Provide shade to parks, seating and picnic areas as well as along walking and cycling paths and transport nodes. Encourage the use of verandas to provide shade and amenity to shoppers in the District Town Centre.
28. Build pedestrian zebra crossings which are raised, as these assist older adults, people with disabilities and children.
29. Optimise seating by arranging seats to facilitate social interaction i.e. positioned at right angles. Place adequate seats at gathering spaces and attractive outlooks within the surrounding areas of the Retirement Village.
30. Ensure good visibility along routes for safety and navigation, use appropriate landscaping (that is no higher than 700 mm), low walls and open fencing within the Retirement Village.

Healthy Access to Food

Access to health food and good nutrition are important for prevention and management of chronic disease. Increasing numbers of people who are experiencing poor food security may also experience malnutrition.

31. Provide a parent's room for changing young babies and for breast feeding within the Vincentia District Town Centre.
32. Provide ready access to fresh drinking water eg: bubblers.
33. Ensure on-going collaboration with SESIH in the development of strategies to cater for expanding health needs of the growing rural and remote population.
34. Consider opportunities for community gardens / community food gardens in planned public spaces.
35. Consider enabling affordable access to fruit and vegetables eg. Fruit wagons and growers' markets within the Town Centre.

Other Matters

There are a number of other matters that we would like to draw your attention to including:

36. It is noted that there is currently a Vincentia Village Centre which exists south west of the development; therefore the title of the Vincentia District Town Centre or the alternative Vincentia Coastal Village and District Centre may need to be reconsidered.
37. It is necessary to extend the existing cycleways / bike paths to cross what will be a 4 lane road to reach the schools etc from this new development and to link to the existing village centre and the other townships. This crossing will require careful planning.
38. There does not appear to be community consultation in the development of this or the approved plans.

39. It is noted the proposed developments are located in a bushfire prone area, that bushfires swept through this area in 2003 and that a bushfire consultation was conducted. However, given the proposed age of residents in the Bayswood Retirement Living Village and that people aged over 60 years are likely to have one or more health conditions further consideration should be given to evacuation of these residents and their increased susceptibility to detrimental effects of smoke during a bushfire.
40. Page 21: The building of the proposed pedestrian and cycleway connection to Collingwood Beach would be beneficial to this development.
41. It is noted the Jerrinja Land Council have been engaged for this development, it is suggested there may be other communities that it may be appropriate to engage with.
42. Maintaining the coastal integrity is an important feature of the development.
43. Page 62: the temporary shared pedestrian / cycle path should be permanent as part of Stage 1 instead (as Stage 2 is in 2016).

Reference document:

National Heart Foundation (Victorian Division) 2004, *Healthy by Design: a planner's guide to environments for active living*, National Heart foundation of Australia (Victorian Division)

Wells, V., Licata, M., Mackenzie, A, Gillham, K., Hodder, R and Butterworth, I. (2007) *Building Liveable Communities in the Lower Hunter Region*. Hunter New England Population Health.