

Objection to Proposed Multi-Storey Apartment Development

Lot 1 DP 1234229

Sanderling Ave, Hawks Nest, NSW

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to formally object to the proposed multi-storey apartment development on Sanderling Avenue, Hawks Nest.

As a regular visitor to Hawks Nest for more than 25 years, my extended family and I have developed a deep appreciation for the qualities that make this place distinctive: its low-key character, exceptional ecology and biodiversity, and unspoilt coastline.

During my visits, I have often walked the Bicentennial Track and observed the site within its broader coastal setting. On one such walk, I noticed land clearing and groundwater monitoring works being undertaken. Concerned by activity occurring in such a sensitive environment, I sought information from the council office in Tea Gardens and from a long-established local real estate agent. In both instances, I was unable to obtain any meaningful explanation as to the reason for such works.

My experience did not appear to be isolated. There seemed to be an unusual lack of transparency regarding both the ownership of the land and the nature of the investigation.

I respectfully seek a thorough examination of the circumstances in which this land was sold and subsequently rezoned from RE1 Public Recreation to R3 Medium Density Residential. It is not apparent what public benefit this rezoning has delivered to the local community, nor what meaningful consultation occurred in relation to that change.

The proposed apartment towers, together with a shared entry to the adjoining golf course land zoned RE2 Private Recreation, convey a level of exclusivity that is inconsistent with the established character of Hawks Nest.

The surrounding area to this site, remains predominantly low-scale, with caravans and single-storey dwellings set among mature vegetation. The visual amenity and scenic quality of this locality are highly valued by residents and visitors alike. The view from Yacaaba Headland looking north along the coastline towards Myall Lakes National Park, is exceptional. In that context, a multi-storey built form on Sanderling Avenue would be visually intrusive, out of scale with its surrounds, an unwanted light source, and highly damaging to the existing landscape character.

Approval of this proposal would also create an undesirable precedent for more intensive development along this sensitive and largely intact coastline.

The site also functions as part of an important movement corridor for dingoes between Myall Lakes National Park and the Yacaaba Peninsula. This area behind the dune system allows Dingoes to move between these important food sources without having to negotiate roads. Development of the scale proposed would place that movement at risk and further fragment an already sensitive landscape.

In addition, the site and adjoining land to the north contain terrestrial orchids of notable quality. While the area has a history of sand mining, the regrowth now has high ecological value. Birdlife is abundant, including black cockatoos feeding on banksia cones. Feather tailed gliders have also been sighted. The wallum sand heath vegetation in this locality warrants protection and should not be compromised by this development.

The land is bush fire prone and would therefore be subject to asset protection zone requirements. As I understand it, compliance would extend management impacts beyond the subject site through APZ and OPA measures, materially altering the surrounding vegetation interface. In practical terms, this would result in additional vegetation loss by indirect means, which is not an acceptable outcome in this location.

The requested variation to the building height control should also be refused.

I am also concerned that the applicant seeks to avoid the requirement for a fire access track on the site, despite the evident bush fire constraints affecting this land.

I was unable to identify material in the appendices confirming that the Hawks Nest sewerage system has capacity to accommodate an additional 140 dwellings. In my view, this raises a legitimate infrastructure servicing concern.

I also note that the arborist's report states that its assessment was based only on a limited concept plan, which necessarily constrains the reliability of its conclusions.

For these reasons, I submit that this proposal represents an unacceptable planning outcome for both the site and Hawks Nest more broadly. Its scale, bulk, visual prominence, ecological impacts, bush fire constraints, and unresolved servicing issues weigh strongly against approval. It would not improve housing affordability and instead introduces a private, exclusionary form of development that is out of keeping with the existing character of the area. It will not initiate any meaningful employment and brings no benefit to the community. If approved, it would also establish a harmful precedent for further intensification along this sensitive coastal dune system. I therefore respectfully request that the application be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Marcia Rackham

I recommend to the panel that they walk the track to the top of Yacaaba Headland before making any decision. I am happy to accompany you.

