

## **OBJECTION TO THE TRINITY POINT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION**

### **Introduction**

I strongly object to the Trinity Point development modification (SSD-27028161-Mod-1), both the increase in height and area, simply because exacerbates the impact of a development that I oppose, and I would have objected to SSD 27028161 had I been given the opportunity. Furthermore much of this objection addresses Section 6 of the development application – **the impacts**.

From my perspective the artist's impression of the proposed development appears as an unwanted series of 'large pimples' on the landscape. Nevertheless the planning authorities, in their wisdom, have approved of a concept application with certain limitations, which I accept. However the developer is now attempting to exceed some of those limitations, and if successful may adopt a future strategy to dismantle the remainder.

Furthermore, in my view the applicant has become so enthusiastic about the proposal that they have lost touch with reality, thus the application is 'peppered' with statements that are at least misleading if not false. Thus while attempting to restrict my objection to the impacts of the proposed modifications, I have addressed some of these misleading statements, and also touch on the cost and requirement for infrastructure improvement, both near and far, associated with the overall development.

Moreover, although I do not for a moment claim to fully understand the implications of the building and engineering problems requiring the modifications, one solution seems straightforward to me. That is to reduce the height of the buildings (and obviously the number of potential occupants) to the extent that the maximum height is within the concept limitations after the engineering requirements are met. Indeed, as demonstrated in this article, if the height of the proposed buildings was reduced to something like the average mature tree height of the nearby Conservation Area, and on the Morisset Peninsula in general (e.g. 25 to 30 metres maximum) the development would then better blend in with the surrounding landscape.

### **The Potential Impact of the Modifications**

The developer more or less claims that you can increase the height of a building by almost 10% and it will have no impact at all, and then continues to promote the building design, which in my view is based on an illusion. Furthermore, despite the ludicrous claim to the contrary by some organization called the DEM, I will easily detect this increase in height, from both near and far, e.g. along Fishery's Point Road, as it is roughly equivalent to one storey and the 'abomination' will protrude further into the skyline.

Apparently the building design is based on 'soft hill' shapes and adopts the theme of the Mountains meeting the Lake. Thus in my view the design is based on an illusion because you cannot even see the Watagan Mountains from the Trinity Point site – certainly not from ground level, nor could an observer on the roof of the proposed buildings as Fishery's Point Road ridgeline, which is adorned with remnant coastal forest, would block the view! Furthermore you could hardly describe the Watagan Mountains as 'soft

hill' shapes, as they are a series of interconnecting sandstone cliffs, some eroded with time. Therefore based on reality and the location the theme should have been Undulating Ridges and the Ripples on the Lake. Indeed I did see the ripples on the Lake, but then I was distracted by a clear view of the 178 metre stacks of Vales Point Power Station, across the Lake, which the proponent failed to mention! Giving them the benefit of the doubt, however, maybe they thought it was shutting down in 2029, but it is now scheduled for 2033, when it could possibly be replaced by a nuclear reactor!

The development application suggests that there will be no additional impacts due to the modification. One could argue that there will always be impacts, e.g. those that are obscure such as the increased length of the building's shadow causing problems with neighbors, those that are unpredictable such as increased flooding associated with climate change interfering with the sewerage system, and those associated with any increase in the number of occupants related to the buildings increase in size. Clearly more occupants would equate to an increase in light and noise pollution, an increase in traffic, and an increased threat to the State Conservation area nearby.

However the major impact of the modification will be the greater than 10% increase in noisy heavy vehicles traveling to the site during the construction phase to deliver the increased amount of building materials required to complete the project (and the trucks return journey of course). Clearly much of the material will either be sourced from Morisset Industrial Area or will have to travel past that location as it leaves the M1 Pacific Motorway. Either way it will travel through the main street of Morisset (i.e. B53/Macquarie Street) to the building site.

### **Local Infrastructure Requirements**

In general the application declares that the local roads are adequate or good. However the main access route to the development site, i.e. Morisset Park Road, is quite narrow and has double white lines in the centre for its entire length (perhaps 3 kms) from Morisset Park to its intersection with Fishery's Point Road at Bonnells Bay School. It is particularly dangerous for cyclists, as the edge of the road is eroded and prevents the bike rider from getting off the road due to the risk of falling from the bike and perhaps ending up underneath the overtaking vehicle. Nevertheless the double lines make it impossible for a vehicle to legally overtake a pushbike and give it the required 1 meter clearance, i.e. the vehicle must cross the double white lines to overtake. Therefore if an oncoming vehicle is encountered by the overtaking vehicle the latter is likely to force the cyclist from the road (perhaps with dire consequences) rather than having a head on collision with the other vehicle.

Obviously the danger will increase if traffic increases, and while being quite vague about when a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) will be produced, the developer declares (or at least implies) that there will be no increase in traffic due to the modifications despite the situation described previously. That is there will be a 10% increase in the noisy Concrete Trucks, Cranes, Semi Trailers delivering building materials along with 'Tradies' Trucks and Utes, some towing trailers, over the construction phase from the moment the project commences. (Obviously these heavy vehicles will also increase the threat to light

vehicles using the area). Furthermore with the increase in traffic, particularly the heavy vehicles, the Fishery's Point Road intersection at the School will also need an upgrade, e.g. at least a roundabout and possibly traffic lights, along with a left turning lane for those continuing on Fishery's Point Road, from the direction of Morisset and traveling down the Peninsula.

Mitigation of the dangerous situation could include the modification of the Fishery's Point Road intersection (as per the above) and a 3km long shared path along a widened Morisset Park Road. Unfortunately, if on the east side, the shared path may encroach on the State Conservation Area and due to the sensitivity of nature, it will certainly disturb the wildlife and ecology even if only in the proximity. Clearly for safety reasons it is imperative that these works are completed before construction commences on the proposed site. Moreover who will bear the cost, The developer? The State Government (because it is an SSD)? I would certainly hope it is not the 'poor old' ratepayer!

### **Infrastructure Requirements in Morisset**

As mentioned the development application is somewhat vague about when a TIA will be produced. However with 614 parking spaces associated with the development traffic impacts will certainly be significant when the proposed buildings are complete (and the impact of traffic during construction was described previously). Nevertheless the application did include a description of the town centre of Morisset - almost the opposite to my view of such!

I would argue that Morisset is well behind in infrastructure requirements for the growth that has occurred in the past 10 or 15 years, without considering the more recent 'explosion in potential growth' such as that instigated by both the development under discussion, and the low density residential areas close to Wyee Road. For example it is difficult to park in the town centre of Morisset at any time of day, there is a very limited choice as far as retail outlets are concerned, like most places the "big four" banks have long departed, there are no government services, (e.g. Centerlink, Medicare, Motor Vehicle Registrations and Licence requirements) i.e. the nearest Services Australia or Services NSW are located in Toronto 19 kms away (and there is a substantial amount of business that cannot be conducted online) And the list goes on. From an infrastructure point of view the authorities have 'fiddled' around the edges with traffic lights and roundabouts but parallel parking is still permitted on one side of Macquarie Street (i.e. the main street) and it can cause absolute mayhem during peak times when grid-lock occurs and sometimes extends right back to the M1 Pacific Motorway off ramps. Furthermore the roundabout and traffic feed in at Wyee Road is also problematic. And no doubt there are numerous road repairs required around the region.

In many ways traffic impacts associated with developments should be reported sooner rather than later, and it would be smarter if the required infrastructure was provided well before the construction of major developments commenced, as it would inconvenience fewer people (i.e. the prospective residents would have not yet arrived). Unfortunately provision of infrastructure at Morisset is an enormous and expensive problem (perhaps exceeding that of the Trinity Point development multiple times) as it probably needs a

double carriageway with at least two lanes each, along with turning lanes (as per Toronto) or a bypass, but I will leave that to the experts. However it again raises the question of who will pay for that: The developer?, The State Government (because it is an SSD)? I would certainly hope it is not the 'poor old' ratepayer!

There is some suspicion that Lake Macquarie City Council has been overwhelmed by population growth and/or lack of funds along with other events (e.g. there has been no passing lane on Freemans Drive over the steep gradient of the 'Gap' for about three years due to subsidence caused by torrential rain – Council simply closed a lane on a major arterial road along with providing some signage - and so it remains to this day. Nevertheless, housing construction commenced at Watagan Park in 2011, and apparently there are now over 1000 families living there. However, with the exception of some minor works, the required work on Freemans Drive at Cooranbong, due to the increase in local population, did not commence until about 2021, (i.e 10 years after housing construction commenced) and then it took 18 months or two years to complete. However, it is possible that Council learnt a valuable lesson from that experience. For example there is currently a low density residential development opposite Coorumbung Road, Dora Creek – the road and guttering is complete and the blocks have been serviced ready for sale, however apparently none of the blocks of land can be sold until the required modifications to infrastructure on Newport Road and surrounds nearby are complete. Indeed this should be standard practice – building construction cannot commence until required infrastructure modifications are complete!

### **Negative Impacts on the Local Community**

Although the developer produces 'positive spin' in the application there are some negatives that are not mentioned. For example in my view the suburbs of Morisset Peninsula are ideal, with large tracts of coastal forest separating each suburb, along with remnants of a reasonable size distributed throughout, and magnificent views of Lake Macquarie available at select places. One drawback, however, is that in my experience there are very few places close to the foreshore of the lake with perfectly flat open ground free of obstacles suited for very old or disabled people to go for a walk and enjoy nature, however Trinity Point is an exception.

Furthermore any demographic survey of the suburb in which I live would reveal a significant number of families, but there would be a preponderance of retirees, with many well into their retirement, perhaps just looking for peace and quiet until the end. This is simply because there is a very large Lend-Lease Lakeside Retirement Village, along with Bay Village Estate for over 55s, Bayside Aged Care, and many independent retirees living in their own homes around the suburb. Furthermore it is an absolute tragedy that Trinity Point is in private hands as it could have been developed into a relatively large Foreshore Park with public toilets, picnic tables, a playground and barbecue facilities where extended families and friends could splash around in the water, play cricket or kick a ball around for fun, along with other activities, while sometimes celebrating special occasions. Indeed Carers could have organized a short bus trip (just a few minutes away from the local Aged Care facility or even from the more distant Cooranbong) for the less

fortunate people for a picnic in the park and a great day out. But this is not to be, presumably due to the lure of the dollar!

Some may argue that public access to Trinity Point will be available when the development is complete – it certainly isn't at the moment as it has a 1.8m high chain mesh fence around it. Furthermore it is difficult to imagine enjoying yourself wandering around in the shade of half a dozen eight or nine storey buildings admiring nature, with one hundred people peering out their windows trying to determine what you are doing. Moreover maybe I have misconstrued what public access means in the development application – it may just mean that the public have access to the two restaurants, which I suspect will be all they are interested in anyway

### **Planning Instruments**

The development application indicates that it complies with several Laws and Planning Instruments, which I am sure it does. However this just means the developer's intentions are within the law. Furthermore I saw the results of a poll recently where 79% of the 1,438 odd respondents indicated that the authorities were not doing enough for the conservation of species and diversity. Therefore (allowing 28% for a margin of error) it would be safe to say that the majority of the population of NSW consider that the environmental laws and planning instruments lack the desired strength for the conservation of species and diversity!

### **Conclusion**

The proposed development will appear as if it is out of character with the landscape as there is no view of the distant mountain ranges to provide a backdrop. But merely low density housing inter-dispersed with remnant coastal forest along undulating ridges. Thus to my eyes it will appear as an 'abomination' on the skyline belonging to a city environment alongside other multi-storey buildings. Therefore rather than increasing the height it needs to be reduced, so that it better blends in with the landscape. And in doing so the engineering requirements could be carried out in the confines of the top storey while remaining within the limitations of the concept approval.

The developer claims there will be no perceptible impacts generated by the modification however this objection has outlined some associated threats from: light pollution, pollution by sewage, conservation and traffic based on a 5% or 10% increase in occupants, which may or may not occur. Nevertheless as the developer plans to increase the height of the buildings by up to 10% this will require a 10% increase in building materials which must be transported from the vicinity of Morisset Industrial area through town and along Morisset Park Road by heavy vehicles increasing noise in both the State Conservation area, and in residential areas, along with posing a greater danger to light traffic. For safety reasons it is imperative that construction be delayed until any required infrastructure changes are completed, more especially in the local area but also in Morisset. Finally it should be fairly obvious that I would like to see the development application for modification (SSD-27028161-Mod-1) rejected for the reasons identified.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment and submit this objection