

Attention: Tia Mills
 Department of Planning

31 March 2025

Dear Ms Mills

RE: SSD 76303959 UPA Seniors Housing 1610 Pacific Hwy, 1614-1634 Pacific Hwy and 5 Munderah Street Wahroonga

Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment (FOKE), established in 1994, is a community group dedicated to the protection of Ku-ring-gai's built and natural environment. FOKE appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed redevelopment for expansion of the UPA site, including construction of 132 units in 6 buildings. The development site is zoned R4 but under a State Significant Development (SSD) and Senior's SEPP the development benefits from a bonus 25% in FSR and Maximum increase in height of 3.8m.

FOKE raises the following concerns:

ROSTREVOR

The EIS recognises that the house built in 1898 has heritage value Figure 22: *Existing Rostrevor House*. FOKE supports the retention of the Federation building. It understands it is not heritage listed but hopes the minor demolition of additions at the back noted in the EIS page 10 Figure 8., will not result in any loss in the integrity of the building. No details have been provided.

Given the age of the house, it would not be unusual for asbestos to be found. Before any consent is given, a full hazard assessment should be undertaken.

DESIGN ISSUES

- For Building 4. the minimum back setbacks of 6 metres to level 4 and 9 metres from level 5 create issues of overlooking of private space and loss of privacy of adjoining buildings at 1-3 Munderah Street, particularly given the sloping terrain to Munderah Street. The impacts could be improved by enforcing a larger setback, fitting screens or obscured glass.
- The decrease of 16.6% in solar access to 1-3 Munderah (97.6% to 81%) is significant and must be addressed.
- The bulky Buildings 1, 2 and 3 facing Pacific Highway are intrusive compared to other built-up lots in the area and out of character. In particular, the visual bulk of Building 2. impacts on the public realm significantly, contrary to the KAA Report conclusion. FOKE believes that the impact is underestimated as medium. Claiming the tree planting will lessen visual impact in 15 years, is unreasonable. Measures such as set back of the top stories to lessen bulk should be imposed.
- The KAA Report downplays the visual intrusion of Buildings 1, 2 and 3 by noting the dark colour of the Attic top floors lessens the visual impact. However, the visual impact remains.
- Building 6. will dominate, impact visually on privacy of neighbouring properties in Ada Avenue and not fit into the streetscape of the local street as it exceeds the height and bulk of neighbouring properties in Ada Avenue which are 4 storeys only and 5 storeys in Munderah Street.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY (EIS)

- The staging of demolition and construction for the proposed development currently lacks detailed information on its impact, including the effect of vehicle traffic on nearby residential buildings and their residents.
- The exact height of buildings is not specified nor relative heights to adjacent neighbouring residential stated.
- The EIS states the Construction Management Plan is preliminary, making it impossible to fully assess the impacts of the project on neighbouring properties.
- The EIS, Figure 60, Stage 1A *Enabling Works*, shows the demolition of Norcott House and 1610 Pacific Highway. Should it be assumed that vehicular entry and exit will be via 1610 Pacific Highway and the main entrance, given that the temporary driveway through 5 Munderah Street is set to be established in Stage 1B? It is suggested that these driveways be used to alleviate traffic on Ada Avenue and Munderah Street throughout the project.
- Prior to considering any consent, an investigation must be conducted to ensure there is no contamination that would necessitate land remediation in accordance with the EP&A Act. The possibility of contamination is real given the age of the buildings being demolished or partly demolished. (Rostrevor built in 1898, Killoran 1610 Pacific Highway in 1950 – John Oultram, *Heritage Impact Statement 2.0 Historical Development*).

ECOLOGY: Critically Endangered Blue Gum High Forest remnants

Portions of the site are identified on the Biodiversity Map as Blue Gum High Forest. The BAM Assessment identifies 0.02 hectares (200sq metres) of Blue Gum High Forest within the site. FOKE believes the biodiversity impact has not been adequately assessed and the survival of the remnant is at risk. An alternative route for construction vehicles must be implemented and review of the underground basement parking links adopted.

- The EIS notes it has been retained for restoration and rehabilitation and states the Narla Biodiversity Report acknowledges that key impacts have been addressed via the avoidance of development within the area of biodiversity value. In fact, the Narla Biodiversity Report acknowledges the native vegetation within the Subject Land is proposed to be impacted as a result of the proposed development.
- Partial clearing of the site is to occur however no details are provided.
- EIS Figure 48: Cut and Fill Plan (Civil Drawing by Northrop), Excavation plans and Figure 64: Stage 2 Construction (AJC Drawing DA1103) show that an underground link between carparks of Building 6 and Building 4 (No. 1610 Pacific Highway) pass under at least part of the BGHF remnant. Removal of soil containing seed bank and excavation disturbance of the root system of canopy trees will destroy the vegetation.
- The Traffix Construction Management Plan Appendix A. shows the path of construction vehicles on the edge of the BGHF remnant to be retained. This will impact negatively on the survival of the vegetation. See Narla and Traffix photos over page.



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CONSTRUCTION NOISE NUISANCE AND ANNOYANCE is not a planning matter.

However, the nuisance and safety concerns associated with traffic management in this area should be reassessed. The main entrance to the existing site is via Ada Avenue, which is a narrow local suburban street opposite Abbotsleigh School's vehicular entrance. There are existing vehicular conflicts especially during school times.

- Using the 5 Munderah Street property for construction entry and exit over the 3.5 years of construction of Stage 1 and 2 causes noise, dust and traffic impacts and safety risks to adjacent properties. The existing Pacific Highway entrances should be used during the works to relieve truck movements in the local side streets.
- 5 Munderah Street will provide parking for the Phase 1. Demolition and Construction however, off-street parking for Phase 2 is not specified.
- Transport for NSW generally discourages vehicular access via Pacific Highway. However, due to impacts on neighbouring streets and safety concerns, an appeal to for access egress from Pacific Highway to the site is warranted.

SUMMARY

FOKE believes that the impact of the proposed development on biodiversity, and neighbouring properties has been underestimated.

Measures to reduce the bulk of buildings and impacts on private and public realm must be considered. An alternate route from Pacific Highway for construction vehicles would avoid impacts on the BGHF remnant and it would avoid construction vehicle impacts on residents in neighbouring properties.

The traffic management plan must be reconsidered accounting for the location of the development near school zones, safety risks and the impact of construction vehicles using side streets over a lengthy time of 3.5 years.

Before consent is given, hazard investigation must be undertaken.

Yours faithfully,

Kathy Cowley

Kathy Cowley

President

cc. Mayor and Councillors Ku-ring-gai Council

cc The Hon Alister Henskens SC MP Member for Wahroonga

cc Matt Cross MP Member for Davidson

cc The Hon Paul Fletcher MP Member for Bradfield