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 Culburra Beach
 NSW 2540
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West Culburra Concept Proposal, Application Number SSD 3846

I object to the West Culburra Concept Proposal SSD3846 and list below the reasons for my objection.

My main objection is that this development is excessive and does not meet the future needs of Culburra Beach.

CULBURRA-ORIENT POINT FORECASTS

I have used the population forecasts for Culburra Beach-Orient Point prepared by .id for Shoalhaven City Council as they appear on the council website.

.id maintain that the forecast from 2016 to 2031, as the short to medium term, is likely to be the most accurate and useful forecast information for immediate planning purposes.

Number of Dwellings

These figures show an increase of 208 dwellings is expected for this period.

The total number of dwellings expected in the West Culburra Concept Proposal is 433.

Considering that in the years since 2016 there has been infilling on empty and subdivided plots and town house developments around East and West Crescent, some of the predicted increase is already built in Culburra Beach with more in the planning stage.

Forecast Population

The forecast population increase is from 3550 people to 3809 by 2031 ie +259 people.

Currently there are 2.2 people per household. Multiplying this number by the number of dwellings proposed, this comes to 952 people, many more than predicted in Shoalhaven City Council's forecast.

The South Coast Sensitive Urban Land Review recommended "limited" development expansion adjacent to the existing commercial area.

OVERDEVELOPMENT

Taking these points into account, the West Culburra Concept Proposal is a very big over development.

IS IT APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT?

Needs of the Aged and Low Income Population

Forecast age categories indicate that by far the greatest increase in population groups is amongst the Seniors and Elderly, those from 70 years old to 85+ and there is also a significant low income group of people. This plan has not considered their needs at all. It does not address SEPPS for affordable housing or seniors or people with disability.

Integrated and Medium Density Housing

These categories of housing are located near to the shopping centre but the height limits requested indicate that they will be more than one storey. There are no drawings of them so it hard to tell. They will be within walking distance of town. However, they will present back fences to the town entry on Culburra Road and will be very dense with no open space and no landscaping detailed. Not suitable for the aged and not a good welcome to the town. A more modest number of these houses as single storey residences with appropriate landscaping would probably benefit the town.

Retailers Needs and Social Benefits of Culburra People

According to the proposal the Culburra Beach is “characterised by a small, ageing population with a high proportion of non-working residents (retired) and low household income levels. This is creating issues for the viability of retailers and business in the town centre.” The plan is to stimulate the economy through the increased number of new residents. There is also a claim “that there will be an increase in community facilities and community building/connection and that social cohesion and community ownership will be created through new town centre living opportunities.” The evidence for this is not in the proposal. The plan fails to indicate how the development would provide increased employment. Further industrial land has been set aside but there is currently no demand for it.

How will it Relate to Culburra Township?

Landscaping is minimal in all areas of the development, limited to rows of spaced trees in the large housing estate. The area is not part of the Culburra township. It is a featureless, dense suburb tacked onto the side of a sewerage treatment plant, removed and bearing no relationship to the rest of the township with its larger parcels of land, gardens, trees, grass verges and varied housing styles. The building sites are relatively small and, given the current trend for large houses, they will present a street front of double storeys, double garages and double concrete driveways. Sites will be mostly hard surfaces creating maximum storm water runoff. The plan has no suggestion of how the suburb will look.

Fire

One road in and out, with minor tracks nominated, provides the only exit route in case of fire coming onto another single exit main road.

Transport

Residents would need at least one car, but probably two, per dwelling to drive to work outside Culburra, go shopping locally and in Nowra, drop family at school and childcare, go to the beach and sports facilities, drive to the boat ramp, drive to the vet and medical services. Parking is already at a premium at peak times in some areas of Culburra. How will these places cope with significantly more numbers of cars? I don't think there would be many more bus passengers on the bus to Nowra-Bomaderry.

ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL EFFECTS

Loss of Forest

A large area of at least 47 ha of good condition Currumbene-Batemans lowland forest would be cleared. It is home to many native species including those displaced by the 2019-20 bush fires and would be a significant loss of habitat.

Aboriginal Middens

Aboriginal middens along the Crookhaven River shore are significant and at risk of being damaged. Pollution from urban runoff would impact the Crookhaven River, its wetlands and the valuable oyster and fishing industries.

THE NEEDS OF CULBURRA

Excessive numbers of new housing will not meet the needs of the Culburra community. Basic retail shops such as the supermarket, the chemist and the post office will always survive.

The remaining shops cannot be guaranteed success by increasing the volume of houses. Much of the retail problem is caused by the strung out nature of the shopping. Some real research into how the retail precinct could be made more attractive, more functional and more cohesive would help.

What is really lacking is a real town centre. The ideal place may be right where the commercial site and some medium density houses are located on the plan. A grassed area with gardens; seats to sit and chat and drink coffee and eat lunch; a small playground; sloped grass seating so that concerts, outdoor movies, public ceremonies could be held. It would be a real outdoor communal space for all people in Culburra, visitors and residents, to meet and it would be visible from the main road. Now, wouldn't that do something for community, cohesiveness and welcome to Culburra Beach.