

Amy Watson - FW: SSD 5002-2011 Royal Randwick Hotel Development

From: Paul Chilcott <paulchilcott@hotmail.com>
To: <amy.watson@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: Thursday, 16 August 2012 10:26 PM
Subject: FW: SSD 5002-2011 Royal Randwick Hotel Development
CC: Bruce Notley-Smith <coogee@parliament.nsw.gov.au>, "general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au" <general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au>

16 August 2012

Dear Sirs,

I object to the proposed Randwick Racecourse Hotel. I have no objection to the provision of hotel accommodation on the site, but the proposed design and location of the Hotel will limit future development of the site and impact badly on the surrounding community.

More specifically, whilst appreciating the desire to locate the hotel at the end of the "main straight" being the pre-eminent position to observe the finish of horse races, the siting of this building has two main drawbacks:

1. Height of the building is unacceptable in the current location

The building at approximately 7+ levels is too high and out of keeping with the predominantly open space nature of the Racecourse's frontage to Alison Road, the only building currently on this frontage is the 4 level Administration building. To equate the height of the proposed Hotel to the rebuild QE2 spectator stand is to overlook that the QE2 spectator stand is located well within the Racecourse site.

In addition, the heritage listed Members Stand (official stand) which is located between the QE2 spectator stand and the proposed Hotel will be dwarfed and overshadowed by larger structures on each side. Given the massive redevelopment of the QE2 stand, the purpose and future use of the Members Stand is not evident. A more imaginative proposal would be to convert the Members Stand to the public areas proposed for the Racecourse Hotel and for the accommodation section of the Hotel (being that part on stilts for the current concept) to be located in the airspace over the existing Members Stand.

In summary therefore, I disagree with the conclusions in the proponent's heritage report.

2. Limitation on access into the Racecourse site impacts the surrounding residential area

More importantly, for the surrounding residential community, access to the Racecourse infield will be reduced by the proposed siting of the Hotel, which is opposite the T-intersection of Alison Road and Darley Road (and an upgrade to permit right hand turns from Alison Road into the Racecourse site is proposed as part of this application, but this is intended to meet the needs of the Hotel only).

If the Alison & Darley Roads signalised intersection is to be upgraded, being part of this application, then it should become the main entry point from Alison Road into the site and locating the Hotel adjacent to this intersection will reduce access opportunities for larger scale truck movements into the site (these being necessary for construction of stages, tents etc for special events. In a related application, being the preliminary Environmental Impact Statement for the Standing Events application (SSD5310-2012 now apparently 'on-hold'), one change suggested was to utilise the T intersection of Alison Road and Cowper Street (there is no access to the Racecourse at this point currently) for access and exit. Such a proposal is completely unacceptable due to the impact on traffic, including public transport the adjoining residential area.

At the very least, an access roadway, sufficient to accommodate large truck movements on the north-western facade of the proposed Hotel (being that space between the Hotel and Members Stand) is required.

Therefore, the access to the underground car park of the Hotel and the porte-cochere of the proposed Hotel would be better located adjacent to the Alison Road frontage (rather than to the northern facade of the Hotel) with associated redesign of the proposed ground floor of the Hotel. This would be a better adaptive reuse of the adjacent existing old turnstile entrance wall along this part of the Racecourse's frontage to Alison Road.

The current plans relegate this turnstile wall to a 'remant' which could then face the demolition fate of a similar turnstile entrance wall previously located further northward on the Alison Road frontage (demolished in 2010 per consent MP07_0092_MOD1) which was most unfortunate. Much of the existing heritage of the Racecourse site has already been demolished, hopefully the remaining items (especially the Members Stand and the turnstile wall) can be preserved.

Conclusion

The proposal of the Racecourse Hotel represents a piecemeal approach to the redevelopment of the Racecourse site. Whilst the works underway to the QE2 spectator stands including the 'Theatre of the Horse' represented an upgrade to existing facilities. The Racecourse Hotel goes beyond this with a new use for the site.

For all the talk and "concept plans" for light rail to the south-east, for which the Racecourse is a 'partner', the proposed location of the Racecourse Hotel would preclude any mass transit system being able to provide direct access (that is not having to cross Alison Road) to the spectator areas of Randwick Racecourse.

Without direct access to mass transit, this would seem to limit further the suitability of the Racecourse as an events venue compared to facilities at nearby Moore Park. As a nearby resident of the Racecourse, this would be a good thing, but I suspect it is more likely that the Racecourse will seek to negatively impact the amenity of the surrounding community as occurs each in Feb./March each year with the Future Music event.

Therefore, prior to this specific development application for the Racecourse Hotel being determined, I consider a holistic concept plan for the Racecourse site should be developed (in conjunction with the surrounding residential community). This concept plan needs to consider access points into the site including the Racecourse's frontage at the signalised intersection of Alison Road and Doncaster Avenue (currently very under utilised due to the configuration of this intersection) as well as the provision of on-site parking beyond the current poor amenity offered by surface parking. mainly in the in-field area of the Racecourse.

regards

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