

I would like to submit my opposition to and grave concerns about the proposed redevelopment of President Private Hospital located in President Avenue, Kirrawee.

David Wenkart, Macquarie Health Corporation's Deputy Chief Executive stated that "the redevelopment will provide employment for upwards of 700 hundred jobs to predominately local healthcare and construction workers" and that there will be new hospital entrance from Hotham Road to facilitate easier access. There will be 110 inpatient beds providing surgical, medical and rehabilitation care plus a 72 bed mental health facility".

I understand Sutherland Shire Council has declined this proposal or similar development applications twice in the past by deeming them not appropriate for the area. However, Macquarie Health have now escalated the matter to the Department of Land and Environment. Interestingly, the proposal was submitted just prior to the 2020 Christmas break, when upgraded COVID 19 restrictions had been re-introduced by the NSW government. It would be fair to question whether this was done deliberately so that there would be limited exposure to the community during the Christmas holidays and decreased distribution of the local Leader newspaper, thereby minimising the potential submissions against the proposal.

The local area has been residential for over 60 years and this proposed development is intrusive and invasive for residents in the immediate and wider area surrounding this part of President Avenue. Residents are concerned about a permanent increase in noise and traffic, their safety, their privacy and their ability to lead a normal peaceful life in an area that is not a commercial part of the Sutherland Shire.

It is clearly evident from viewing the plans that the proposed redevelopment will have the greatest impact on residents living in Bidurgal Ave. Bidurgal Avenue is not an arterial road. It is a narrow suburban road that cannot accommodate heavy traffic or more vehicles than it already does. Cars are usually parked on both sides of the street, often making it extremely difficult for two cars to drive in the opposite direction at the same time, and for residents to get in and out of their driveways. The development will make this a permanent problem, akin to living on a main road.

The development will also compromise and decrease access to residential parking permanently. Initially, construction and other related workers will be using the surrounding local streets for a very long period, given the substantial size of the project. Then facility staff and visitors not wishing to pay for parking will do the same. There also appears to be stairway access from Bidurgal Ave into the facility grounds alongside No 6 Bidurgal Ave, so an overflow of people is obviously expected. This entryway access could automatically create a security risk to nearby residents.

The proposed facility will also impact on those residents with multiple vehicles in the household, and these days, this is nearly every household. There will be no street parking for medical care visits to the elderly residents, visitors; food or other deliveries, or regular service providers such as lawn mowing, cleaners, gardeners. Currently an ambulance or fire truck would find it extremely difficult to drive down Bidurgal Avenue in any direction, so any increase in traffic and loss of parking would make it near impossible. The reality is that this could prove fatal in emergency circumstances.

President Avenue already has major traffic issues every morning during school terms. Traffic can often back up to Acacia Road. Turning left from Bidurgal Avenue into President Avenue can take up to 10 minutes during these times because traffic is not moving. Turning right into President Avenue towards Sutherland is near impossible. It can – and has – taken up to 20 minutes to travel from Kirrawee to Caringbah during these times – a trip that normally takes about 10 minutes at most.

Common sense dictates that if this development goes ahead, traffic flow in Bidurgal Avenue, Hotham Road, President Avenue and other surrounding streets will change significantly and permanently. Instances of traffic jams, traffic accidents because of impatience, more people running orange and red

lights and performing illegal U-turns, and pedestrian injuries will definitely increase because of the traffic hazard that will be created. This is a given, not a possibility.

But most importantly, the safety of residents will be compromised. Permanently. It is important to note that St Catherine Laboure primary school is one block away from Hotham Road. Every day many school children walk to and from school via President Avenue and school drop off is via Talara Road. This in itself creates its own traffic problems which will be increased by this development. Permanently. It is critical that the safety of residents and children be considered when making a decision about this development.

The other issue regarding this proposal is the demolition of Hotham House. This would be totally in conflict with the recent Heritage protection which came about after many members of the local community voiced their concerns against it. It is one of very few historic buildings left in our Shire and residents want to keep it. And rightly so.

Many local residents and concerned Sutherland Shire Community residents have asked via Facebook what they can do to prevent this development and have been provided the link to the DPE portal. However given the complex nature of registering and submitting documents on this portal, particularly for elderly or non-computer educated residents, I fear their strong opinions and concerns against this proposal may not be heard.

We are not just a group of residents who oppose change or progress. We are not just a group of residents who don't want to see better health facilities in the Sutherland Shire. In fact, residents of the Sutherland Shire have recently benefited from new health care facilities at both Miranda and Caringbah. However these facilities have been built on main roads near existing shopping centres and other commercial buildings.

The issue here is that this area is not structured for such huge redevelopment and cannot sustain the enormous impact it will have to both traffic conditions and residents. We are a group of residents who are gravely concerned about the impacts and outcomes such a development will have on our families, our health and safety and on our lives in general. As residents and rate payers, we entitled to have these concerns and voice them.

I can only hope that all of the above issues will be taken into consideration by the DLE, that common sense will prevail and that all residents will be able to have peace of mind in the future.

Yours sincerely



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