

As an owner and resident in Seaview St, Cronulla I would like to register my strong opposition to the proposed change to Zone R4 High Density residential in and around Seaview St which will dramatically increase both the building heights and floorspace ratios of our area.

We moved to Cronulla from Bondi because of the vastly better amenity here: the relaxed beach life-style, the leafy urban street-scape, the lack of crowds and parking problems. Even in the five years we've been here we've seen it get much busier, especially on weekends.

Where we are, sitting up on the hill, looking out over the rooftops - you can see how well the current LEP has served Cronulla. It's like a bowl. And the buildings flow with the lie of the land. Even if you don't have views of the water you have a lovely outlook over the suburb, of rooftops and treetops.

Doubling the allowable heights of buildings in this area will destroy that.

New buildings will tower over their neighbours and block light and views. As more and more buildings are constructed at the new height limit, the bowl will bristle with concrete and glass. No longer will the trees be the dominant feature. It will be a sea of high-rises.

It will kill the character of the area. All those little two-storey walk-ups that characterise Cronulla's relaxed beachside nature will disappear.

I don't believe it will provide the affordable accommodation the council and state government hopes it will. New buildings around here are always marketed at the top end of the price range. Once they are being built at a height of 6 storeys they will need to have lifts added, which will mean much higher construction costs, higher costs of units and higher strata fees. If anything it will take away existing affordable accommodation. As the area is already so high density you will not be replacing houses with unit blocks. You will be replacing older-style character affordable unit blocks with brand new expensive unit blocks. It would make more sense to increase the density ratios of the lower density areas so the odd unit block could be built in areas which currently have predominantly houses.

My other objections are as follows:

1. Environment

Seaview St and the streets that surround it are already high-density! This area almost entirely comprises unit blocks. The current three-storey height limit means that the beauty of the street-scape can be retained, as the larger trees still exceed the height of the buildings. If buildings were allowed to 20m this would double the height to 6 storeys. As buildings went up, the trees would gradually disappear in their shadow and the natural, leafy beauty of the streets would be overwhelmed by a concrete jungle.

2. Parking

High-density buildings bring more people and more people bring more cars. It is rare for any unit block to have more than one car-space per unit, but very common for couples and families to have more than one car. The rest of these cars would take up spaces that should be kept turning over for weekend visitors and beach-goers. If the idea of these

changes is to allow developments that will create more parking by building it beneath/ within the unit blocks, it seems to me utterly counterintuitive to allow a greater floorspace ratio – thus bringing in more people and more cars!

3. Views

Our street isn't called Seaview for nothing – many units in our street, including ours, have wonderful elevated views looking east over the roof-tops and out to sea, all the way from Kurnell to the Point. Allowing any of the buildings in the basin to the east of Seaview St to suddenly double in size to 6 stories would significantly affect this view. The view was one of the main reasons we bought here and to lose any of that view would ruin our enjoyment of our home-life here, not to mention the value of our property. We also are fortunate to have a balcony and windows facing west. For us and all other residents whose units face west and don't have ocean views, doubling the heights of any buildings in Seaview St would take away our sky.

4. Communication

We were affected by the recent construction of the Bathers development on Prince St on the waterfront which has blocked part of our sea view, however we received no prior notification of the DA because we are not within a couple of streets of the building, so we had no opportunity to comment. Nor were we notified of the last minute addition of lift shafts which further impacted on our view, but also ruined the general design of the building, which had until that point been reasonably sympathetic to the landscape. If any of the dozens of buildings between us and the water in a 180 degree arc were to increase in height, it would have a significant impact on our view. Should these changes go ahead, how will Council ensure that we and other affected residents in our area will be properly notified of all future DA's in this area? (i.e. everything east of Seaview St to the waterfront from Captain Cook Drive to Dunningham Park).

5. Transparency

Council needed to make public its decision-making process and explain the reasoning behind the changes. Why were they being proposed in the first place? How was the decision made as to which areas to increase the height/floorspace ratios? And which to leave untouched? There is virtually no information in the letter sent out and I am unable to find any answers to these questions on the website.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I wish to oppose the proposed increases in height and floorspace ratios in the area bordered by Seaview St and Elouera Rd to the west, Captain Cook Drive to the north, Kingsway to the south and the waterfront to the east.

Far from providing more affordable accommodation these changes, if introduced as proposed, would make Cronulla a place where only the very wealthy few who can afford waterfront properties will be able to enjoy the views, space and amenity that, until now, have been shared by so many of us.

Kind regards,

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[REDACTED]

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