



Department of Planning and Environment
The Minister of Planning The Hon. Anthony Roberts

Submitted via <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/ingleside>

**Re: Submission for Ingleside Precinct by the Serbian Orthodox Church of St Sava
(Trustees: Nikola Lukich, Kosta Nedeljkovic & Duro Radan)**

Dear Minister,

We refer to correspondence received from Northern Beaches Council 19th and 22nd December 2016 (to the Trustees) in which it proposes: compulsory land acquisition, and other aspects of the proposed land release for the Ingleside precinct. We support the overall intent to create additional housing. However, prior to any decision and final determination, we ask that you review the following submission and address our concerns.

Our parish is a Christian Community which has prospered for nearly seventy years and intends to continue this tradition for decades to come.

The land and every structure on it has been consecrated (*dedicated formally for a religious purpose*). Not just bricks, steel and concrete but they represent the tireless sacrifice over the decades by parishioners, members and supporters past and present. In every sense our Parish is a Community Project. Everything on the site has been donated or purchased through the tireless work and donations of its parishioners, importantly without any State or Federal funding.

The proposed map shows roads dissecting the entire site, environmental conservation zones and ecological corridors all of which impact our property directly. Significantly, it appears that the Wilson Avenue access and Parish residence is to be removed and an ecological corridor created? Should we be forced to relinquish this section of land, we would expect a similar or greater area in return to facilitate our desire to expand our community activities on the current site. In addition, a proposed road seems to pass directly adjacent or through the existing Church? We would also recommend a buffer zone around our site to minimise noise and amenity impact for any future medium density development. These issues represent the greatest concern for our parish.

We have no desire to sell our land to developers. On the contrary, we want to continue and expand our community projects like: pastoral care, aged and child care services that directly impact our local community. In addition, continue to operate as a place of public worship.

We seek an urgent explanation of what is proposed for our site and would encourage you to visit our Parish at your convenience to see firsthand a thriving Christian Community facility.

On behalf of the Parish of St Sava and The Trustees

Nik Lukich (Trustee)

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Parish of St Sava was established on 26th February 1949 and was the first Serbian Orthodox Church in Australia. It is part of the worldwide Serbian Orthodox Church with its See in Belgrade Serbia which became autocephalous in 1219AD. The current Patriarch is His Holiness Irinej. The Australian and New Zealand Diocese is one of forty Dioceses throughout Serbia, United Kingdom, Western Europe, the Americas and Australia and New Zealand. The current Diocesan Bishop for Australia and New Zealand is His Grace Bishop Siluan.

About 1950 the Parish received a gift of land and built a multi-purpose Church-School hall at 36 Vineyard St Mona Vale which was consecrated on the 3rd January 1954.

The Parish acquired the current site at 5 Wilson Ave Ingleside (approximately 1.7 hectares) in August of 1981. During the early 1980s approval was given by Warringah Shire Council to construct a Church and in late 1990 a School Hall. The current church building was consecrated on the 9th February 1991 and the School Hall was consecrated on the 6th November 1995. The balance of the site is made up of a car park for approximately 120 vehicles, sporting areas, and open space. The presbytery includes: parish residence, office and diocesan quarters (approximately 320m²). The residence and offices were consecrated on 26th April 2009 and is located on the Wilson Ave entrance. Refer Site Survey and Aerial photo (Appendix 1.)

The Church interior (approximately 1000m² of walls and ceilings) has been frescoed in traditional Byzantine Iconography and represents an important aspect of Orthodox religious tradition and art. Our Church is unique to the Northern suburbs of Sydney and was proclaimed a Pro-Cathedral on 23rd October 2006. It is worthy of Local Heritage listing. (Appendix 2)

The Parish (one of seven Serbian Orthodox parishes in Sydney) encompasses the north-eastern area of Sydney and stretches from Palm Beach to Manly and North Sydney and westward to Chatswood and St Ives and numbers about 2000 parishioners. The Parish is governed by a Managing Committee elected by financial members and has three sub committees, namely the: School and Folklore Group, Ladies Auxiliary and Youth Group and is governed by the Constitution of the Metropolitane of the Serbian Orthodox Church (A & NZ).

The Parish activities can be categorised as follows:

- Religious
- Educational
- Cultural
- Entertainment
- Sporting

The Parish and its site are the focal point for all the above activities and has a **thriving community** at its core. A brief explanation of each of these categories is provided below along with a section dedicated to our Future Plans.

Religious

The Orthodox Church is one of the oldest Christian Churches in the world dating back to apostolic times. It has many religious services which are performed throughout the year. Also, the celebration of “Feast Days” or “Patron Saints Days” are regular events in the Church Calendar. (Appendix 3)

Religious Services include:

- Liturgies performed every Sunday (usually 9am to 12noon)
- During Easter, a midnight service is also performed
- Feast Days and Saints Days
- Vespers (usually late afternoon or early evenings)
- Matins (mornings and during Easter Midnight Matins)
- Christenings
- Funerals
- Weddings
- Requiem services and
- A variety of specific blessings.

At each of the services a choir may perform which currently numbers twelve persons who have rehearsals once per week. At each religious service, it is traditional that church bells are rung at relevant parts of the service. The use of candles is another important aspect of religious expression within the Orthodox Church. Approximately four times per year, parishioners partake in the making of candles which are made from pure bees wax and cotton twine and are made on site.

Educational

Currently each Monday and Friday evenings scripture and Serbian language classes are held for children aged between 5 and 18 years of age. Also English classes are held for those parents and grandparents wishing to improve their English language skills.

The Serbian language syllabus and classes are within guidelines provided by the NSW Governments Community Languages program. Scripture classes are in English and Serbian and cover the Old and New Testament and Holy Tradition within the Orthodox Church.

Cultural

Folkloric dancing has been a part of the community’s activities since its inception. Today we have six groups totaling some 120 children ranging in ages from 5 to 20 years of age. Rehearsals are currently on Friday and Monday evenings from 6pm till 10pm. Recently, a group of mature age adults (30+) have also formed a group who have rehearsals until 11pm on Fridays.

These groups have all performed at local cultural events, folkloric festivals, market days and visit interstate parishes from time to time and have also travelled to Serbia.

Entertainment

The Parish holds approximately eight (8) dinner dances per year which are well attended by families ranging from the very young to senior citizens. Visiting music acts and drama performances also appear throughout the year. The Parish has a restricted Liquor License and is licensed to sell alcohol.

In addition to Parish functions the School Hall is hired out to Parishioners, friends and the wider community for a variety of functions from: weddings, christenings, 21st birthday's parties, wakes and other functions. The revelries of such functions and dances often extending well into the night.

Sporting

At present the Parish has some fifty active bocce players who play most Friday evenings, weekends and public holidays. Two bocce fields are located at the eastern boundary adjacent to the hall.

Several members and parishioners are involved with the Dee Why Swans soccer club who play in an over 30 competition within the Manly Warringah Football association.

FUTURE PLANS

Currently several projects are being considered by the Managing Committee of our Master Plan. Some are in very early stages of development and others are well progressed. Subject to council approval they include the following:

Retirement Village

- Proposed Retirement village. The Serbian Orthodox Diocese for Australia already owns and operates a retirement village facility (St Simeon Village, Rooty Hill) and consideration has been given to have a similar facility on our site and is being actively pursued.

Child Care Centre

- Feasibility study has been prepared and discussion has taken place with a major child care provider. Although, at present this project has had reduced focus by the Committee and the child care provider, we do expect a revival in the medium term.

Outside garden area

- Café style environment for use by parishioners and visitors.

Church Hall Improvements

- Additions and alterations are being considered. Second story class rooms, extension of hall area, and redesign of kitchen area of some of the options.

Connection to main sewer line

- An initial feasibility study has been undertaken to consider connection to Sydney Water sewer system which is located approximately 1000 metres (by road) from the Parish's property.

Events Centre

- Utilisation of existing school hall for additional functions available for the wider community, weddings and similar.

Landscaping

- Although the site does have reasonable number of trees and shrubs, additional landscaping for the Parish property on certain sections of the boundary maybe required.

Other projects may also be proposed by members, parishioners or the wider community from time to time which the managing committee may decide to pursue.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Local Press

Over the years the frescoes at our Church have been highlighted in several articles in *The Manly Daily*: 25th August 2006, 21st October 2006, 12th July 2007, 18th April 2008, 16th September 2010, and 24th September 2016.

Elected Local, State and Federal Members

Formally Pittwater and Warringah Councilors have attended numerous celebrations and feast days at our Parish.

Our local Federal Member The Hon. Jason Falinski MP recently attended our Parish 29th Jan 2017 and was kind enough to say a few words in Federal Parliament Refer YouTube link.

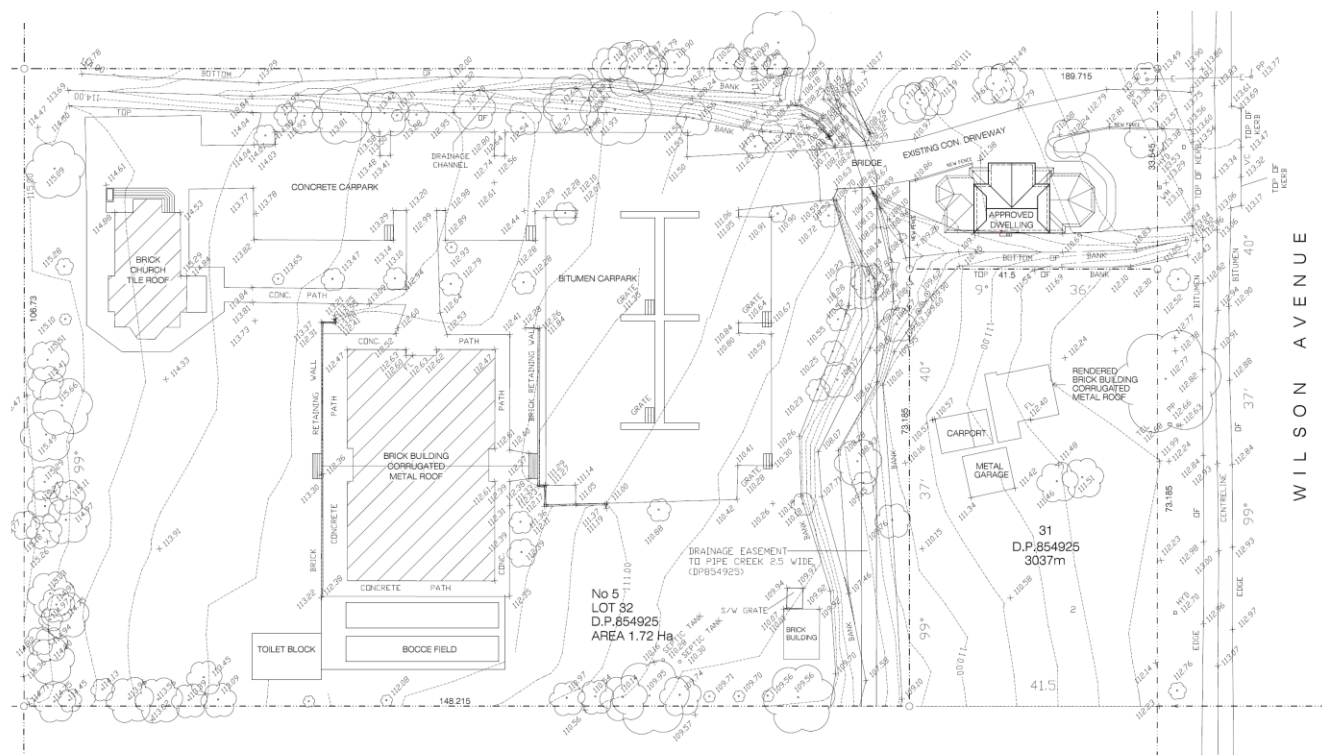
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WP9I3P7HZB4&feature=youtu.be>.

The Hon. Rob Stokes has also visited our Parish and mentioned his visit in the electorate newsletter.

Web Site

Our web site www.stsava.org.au has additional historical and other information about the Parish.

Appendix 1



Aerial Photography Courtesy Google





Church Interior completely frescoed, commenced February 2006 and Consecrated on the 23rd October 2010.



Dome section - Christ *The Pantocrator*

Appendix 3

Major Feast Days	Date
Christmas	7 th January
Synaxis of Theotokos	8 th January
St Arch-Deacon Stefan	9 th January
Circumcision of Lord	14 th January
Theophany	19 th January
St John the Baptist	20 th January
St Sava	27 th January
Synaxis of Three Hierarchs	12 th February
St Tryphon	14 th February
Presentation of the Lord	15 th February
Annunciation	7 th April
Synaxis Archangel Gabriel	8 th April
St Lazarus (Vrbica)	*
Palm Sunday	*
Good Friday	*
Easter	*
Ascension	*
Pentecost	*
St George	6 th May
St Basil of Ostrog	12 th May
Sts Cyril & Methodius	24 th May
Sts Constantine & Helen	3 rd June
St Prince Lazar of Serbia	28 th June
Birth of St John Baptist	7 th July
Sts Peter & Paul	12 th July
St Nedelja	20 th July
St Elijah	2 nd August
St Panteliemon	9 th August
Venerable Mother Angelina	12 th August
Transfiguration of the Lord	19 th August
Dormition of Theotokos	28 th August
Church New Year	1 st September
Synaxis of Serbian Saints	7 th September
Beheading of St John Baptist	11 th September
Birth of Theotokos	21 st September
Exaltation of Holy Cross	27 th September
St Petka	27 th October
St Petar of Cetinje	31 st October
St Demetrius	8 th November
St Archangel Michael	21 st November
Entrance of Theotokos	4 th December
St Nicholas	19 th December

* Feast days are moveable per lunar calculations for Easter. The Serbian Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar, which adds 13 days to the currently used Gregorian calendar.