



NORTHBRIDGE
PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Working for the advancement of Northbridge since 1919

ABN 733 956 702

PO Box 357 Northbridge 2063

October 2 2007

Mr John Owen
General Manager
Willoughby City Council
PO Box 57 CHATSWOOD 2057

Dear Mr Owen

**Re: DA-2007/525
Refurbishments for Northbridge Hotel**

The Association wishes to comment on the above Development Application. We have serious concerns in regard to hours of operation, noise, intensification and change of use, disability access and external signage.

Hours of operation

We recognize that the applicant has not requested any increase in hours of operation. However, the hotel is located in a residential area. The amenity of residents would be seriously reduced if hotel patrons (who park along Baringa Rd and other nearby roads) were generating noise from within the hotel or as they return to their cars late into the night. Hours of operation are of therefore of great concern to residents of the area and we request that special conditions be attached to any approval:

- The hours of operation are to be restricted to:
Monday to Saturday, 10.00 am to 11.00 pm
Sundays and public holidays, 10.00 am to 10.00 pm
- Patronage of the outdoor area is to cease by 10.00pm.

Any variation to these hours should be subject to the prior consent of Council.

Noise

The hotel is located in a residential area and, for the amenity of nearby residents, we request that special conditions be attached to any approval as follows:

- An LA10 noise level emitted from any point on the premises shall not exceed the background noise level by more than 5dB in any Octave Band Centre Frequency (31.5 Hz to 8kHz inclusive) between the hours of 7:00am and 10:00pm as measured at the boundary of any affected residential property.
- The noise from the premises shall not be audible within any habitable room in any residential premises between the hours of 10:00pm and 7:00am.
- A further acoustic assessment and validation report is to be carried out by acoustic consultants and submitted to Council after completion of the project, and should the acoustic criteria set out above not be met, further amendments to the structure and/or operating conditions will be required to be carried out to ensure compliance.
- No music or other noise is to be directed out over the footpath of the adjoining street or other public places.

Intensification and change of use

The owners propose that the downstairs area of the hotel would be for gaming and drinking, with no restaurant/bistro area. The dining area would be moved upstairs (thus overturning Council's previous 1999 special condition that the upstairs area should "be made available for local charities, business, community groups and local organisations at no charge"). The upstairs dining area would therefore be located as far from the downstairs kitchen as is physically possible and we question whether, longer term, the owners' intent is to close the dining area as serving it may prove to be impracticable.

Because the relatively inactive area for the community would be replaced by dining, the changes proposed would represent an intensification of use for the hotel that will impact on the limited street parking available and on noise generation.

We understand that the owners of the hotel, Winners Circle Group, operate a number of gaming hotels and their aim may be for Northbridge Hotel to become a gaming hotel.

We recognise that Council is not able to consider the social impact of gaming on its assessment of this DA. However, the Association believes that the community would be strongly opposed to a change of use from a neighbourhood corner pub and bistro to a gaming hotel. In our view, the community views extremely negatively the growth of gaming and problem gambling in NSW. We urge Council to do what it can to limit gaming activities in the hotel.

We request that the following special conditions should apply to any approval of the DA:

- The proposed outdoor drinking/smoking area should not be extended beyond its current size. No barbecues should be permitted in the outdoor area.
- The upstairs area proposed for dining should be restricted to dining. No other activity should take place in this area.
- The seating capacity of the dining area should be restricted to the areas marked on the approved plans due to limited off-street car parking.
- No gaming activities should take place in any areas of the hotel except that area designated as the “Gaming Room” on the plan submitted with the DA.
- At no stage in the future is the upstairs residential area to be converted to an area for a bar, restaurant, gaming or pool table facilities. These should remain as accommodation.

Disability access

The Association notes that the DA states: “the refurbishment does not warrant full compliance with BCA access provisions”. We ask that the previous 1999 special condition (with which the owners appear not to have complied) be included as a special condition of any approval of this DA:

- The building must comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and other relevant regulations.

External signage

It is likely that the hotel owners will seek advertising and other signage for a gaming hotel. We request that Council make efforts to limit the size and impact of such signage. A separate DA should be submitted to Council for approval for any proposed advertising signage, which should comply with Council's controls.

Yours sincerely

John Holder
Vice president

Copy: Councillors
Gladys Berejiklian MP