



NORTHBRIDGE
PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Working for the advancement of Northbridge since 1919

ABN 733 956 702

PO Box 357 Northbridge 2063

March 11 2009

Councillors
Willoughby City Council
PO Box 57
CHATSWOOD NSW 2057

Dear Councillors

**Re: The Association's position on the possible redevelopment
of Northbridge Plaza and Council car park**

The Association held a general meeting of members in Northbridge on February 25. Following the release in December of sketch plans (called the "Spatial Planning Framework"), the Association's Committee felt the need to seek guidance from its membership about whether they wanted to change the resolution that was unanimously adopted by more than 150 residents at the Association's general meeting in July 2007. That resolution is attached to this letter. It does not oppose redevelopment of the Plaza shopping centre and Council car park, but with a number of conditions.

The attendance of 107 people at the February 25 meeting included six Councillors and representatives from four other Willoughby Progress Associations. It was a true public meeting, with open discussion and broad representation of residents. The younger, newer residents of the suburb were among the most vocal in opposing aspects of the Spatial Planning Framework.

In the view of the Association's Committee, the main outcomes of the meeting were:

1. The meeting did not accept the proposed Spatial Planning Framework (SPF) as a basis for Stage 2.
2. In particular, the meeting opposed the proposal in the SPF to build on the Council car park land. The Association's Committee had proposed to the meeting amendments to the July 2007 resolution some of which would have permitted limited residential building on the car park land. These were resoundingly opposed by the meeting. The amendments tabled by the Committee lapsed and the Committee continues to be guided by the July 2007 resolution.

3. There was also a large majority who opposed closing access to the shopping centre from Harden Ave.
4. Residents clearly do not understand the Masterplan process and the outcomes of Stage 1. There is a need for much more education of the community and feedback from it if the project proceeds further.
5. The existence and implications of the public's legal rights and in particular the Statutory Trust have not been communicated or explained to the public – the car park users. In the Committee's view, without understanding its rights, the community cannot properly make judgments about the project.
6. The Northbridge community has accepted Council's maximum 10% retail expansion limit as a "given". There was no discussion at the meeting about changing the restriction (although some advocated zero retail expansion).

Although it was not discussed at the meeting, the Association's Committee is concerned that a document named Technical Review Paper (TRP) will be tabled at Council as an outcome of Stage 1. In response to the first two drafts of the TRP, in July and August 2008 the Association made six pages of comments and recommendations about the TRP. None of these were included in the final report. The Association would therefore be unable to endorse the TRP if it is tabled without these comments being addressed satisfactorily.

Lastly, we note that the Masterplan is of great importance to the residents of Sailors Bay Ward. The Association asks that, whatever the nature of the Reference Committee's recommendation to Council, it defers any consideration of the recommendation until after the May 2 by-election, after which the Ward will be properly represented by three Councillors.

If any Councillor would like a copy of the detailed minutes of the Association's February 25 general meeting, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Peter McNair
President

Northbridge Progress Association Inc

RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE JULY 18 2007 GENERAL MEETING BY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

RESOLVED that this Association is not opposed to the redevelopment of the Northbridge Plaza site with a high quality shopping centre and residential units (including seniors' units) provided that:

1. Ownership and control of the car park land will remain with the community.
2. Retail space will expand by no more than about 10% compared with the current retail and other space in the centre.
3. There will be minimal impact of the redevelopment on current traffic volumes or on local neighbourhood shops and businesses.
4. Any residential units built on the site will be in keeping (that is, in height, bulk and quality) with existing residential units in Northbridge.
5. Improvements will be made to access within the shopping centre for elderly and disabled members of the community.
6. Improvements will be made to car park safety, security and convenience, whether or not the car park is relocated underground.
7. There will be minimal impact on the residents of Harden Avenue, Tenilba Rd, Northbridge Gardens Retirement Village and the Paulian Villa Nursing Home.