



**PUBLIC MEETING – BUILDING HEIGHTS – TUESDAY 6TH MARCH 2018 –
SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS MADE BY PRESENTERS FROM
TOMAREE RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

TRRA WELCOMES PROGRESS ON THE NELSON BAY STRATEGY

- Many elements unchanged since 2012 Strategy, adopted by Council after 5 year process leading to a broad consensus
- Aims and Objectives unchanged

“The visual appearance and amenity of the Town Centre and Foreshore are important elements ...”

“Facilitate a distinctive town centre character”

“Building heights need to be limited in order to ensure that the natural setting of the town is apparent..”

WHY NOT RECENT INVESTMENT?

TRRA believes that major reasons for lack of recent investment in the town centre are:

- The natural economic cycle – no evidence for Council’s assertion that Nelson Bay has missed out compared to other coastal towns
- Council’s failure to implement the 2012 Strategy, and associated uncertainty

The renewed commitment by the new Council to get on and deliver the Strategy is most welcome

- Council has 30 action points in the revised ‘Delivery Program’
- TRRA is likely to support 20 unconditionally and another 8 subject to clarification –

We are not negative or NIMBY!

AGREEMENT ON MOST POINTS

- TRRA agrees that key issues that need to be addressed include:

- ☐ Parking and traffic management
- ☐ Public Domain and Infrastructure improvements
- ☐ Design quality
- ☐ Funding
- ☐ Implementation and monitoring

• TRRA is already working with the Tomaree Business Chamber, EcoNetwork Port Stephens and others (through Nelson Bay Now) to make joint submissions in support of Council’s proposed actions on these issues

- TRRA only opposes 3 of Council’s action points – **BUT THEY ARE CRITICAL**

TRRA OPPOSES:

- Proposed new town centre building height limits
- Doubling the current limits to 35 metres - 10 storeys
- Proposed new variation policy (to apply to ALL of Pt Stephens)
- Effectively inviting applications to exceed height and other limits
- Abandonment of 'incentive' policy ...
- ... which made approval of variations conditional on 'outstanding design excellence' AND 'strategic public benefit'

BUILDING HEIGHTS THE KEY ISSUE

- TRRA makes no apology for focussing on this issue – 'Save Nelson Bay from Highrise'
- Not new – comes round every decade!
- In combination, these three proposals effectively 'lift the lid' on building heights
- TRRA firmly believes that allowing buildings of 10 storeys and more anywhere in the town centre is unacceptable to the community

HEIGHTS ELSEWHERE IN TOMAREE

- Building heights not just a Nelson Bay issue
- DA just lodged for Fleet St, Old Salamander (former Colonial Ridge resort) proposing 10 storey seniors housing
- Shoal Bay battle in 1990s
- Approval of major height increases in Nelson Bay would set a precedent for other areas – where next?

Latest plans confirm 3 storey limit for current marina (as agreed in 2012)

- BUT ALSO
- Proposes allowing 2 storey buildings along the rest of the foreshore east to the ferry booking office, shown as beachfront parkland in 2012 Strategy, and as a Crown reserve for plantation and public recreation in the 2008 Foreshore Plan of Management
- Another battle to come?

THE PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS ...

... are inconsistent with the Strategy, which states: 'It is critical that the wooded ridge and headlands that surround the Bay be visible and not eclipsed by buildings' (p6) 'A significant factor in managing perceptions of the intensity of development is building height' (p60)

... are clearly contrary to most local opinion, from residents, businesses and visitors alike

As Council's new document admits:

'The desire to keep the unique coastal village and 'natural amphitheatre' character was also reinforced' (p9)

‘.. the vast majority (of 76 submissions) was against any significant increase [in height]’ (p9)

‘.. clear consensus that building heights should follow the natural slope of the land and view corridors should be preserved’ (p9)

‘...continually reinforced that they supported the existing strategy’ (p10)

- The proposed building heights will not achieve the results that Council claims:

No evidence that high rise apartments will lead to greater permanent occupancy – **and existing proof that the opposite result is likely**

OCCUPANCY of NELSON BAY* DWELLINGS, ABS CENSUS 2011 AND 2016

*Statistics for Nelson Bay State suburb (SSC). Source: ABS 2011, 2016

Dwelling Type	2011	2016
	Percentage Unoccupied	Percentage Unoccupied
Flat or apartment - 1-2 storey block	53.9%	43.6%
Flat or apartment - 3 storey block	74.8%	71.8%
Flat or apartment - 4 or more storeys	76.6%	69.4%
Total all dwelling types	43.2%	40.2%

... are inconsistent with Council’s expert advice that 8 storey developments would give the greatest profit margin on 4 of five sites tested, and that much higher buildings are not viable

- In any case, is it Council’s function to guarantee commercial returns to private interests? With a clear vision and firm controls, land and property prices will adjust
- The proposed blanket 10+ storey limit across the entire town centre would increase, not decrease, uncertainty for investment – no developer could guarantee view.

WHERE IS THE DEMAND?

- Council suggests that high rise apartments are needed to accommodate population growth
- This is inconsistent with State planning forecasts, and even more inconsistent with Council’s own recent submissions

DWELLING PROJECTIONS – 2016-2036			
	Total new dwellings	Greenfield	Infill
Port Stephens (ENTIRE LGA) (State Dept of Planning	11,000	2,700	8,300
“Nelson Bay”???(Council Delivery Program Dec 2017??)			1,120
Tomaree (Council submission on Greater Newcastle Plan – Feb 2018)		1,224	235

LIKELY SUPPLY OF NEW DWELLINGS

- In the next 10 years, the Tomaree Peninsula will see:
- 500+ new manufactured homes on sites already approved
- Continued infill by subdivision, dual occupancy, duplex and town house developments in established residential areas
- Some greenfield developments urban fringe sites already zoned or proposed as 'residential' e.g. at Anna Bay
- Other applications for residential apartment buildings (e.g. Fleet St towers)
- **This supply will provide for far more than even the highest forecasts of demand**

RESEARCH INTO HEIGHT CONTROLS IN SIMILAR COASTAL TOWNS

- TRRA has researched planning controls in many other comparable coastal towns
- Almost all have strict height limits of 7 storeys or less, with only isolated exceptions (many have 3-4 storey limits!)
- Council has provided no examples of comparable coastal towns which have benefitted from allowing high rise apartment buildings

Extracted from Powerpoint Presentation (text only) for TRRA presentation – errors and omissions acknowledged.

The Mayor and Council Planning Officer presentations will be posted when available.

Note: There no summary available of the Question and Answers taken from the floor. The comments made are however mostly reflected above.

WHAT TO DO NEXT:

Submissions to Council on

Draft 'Progressing the Nelson Bay Town

Centre and Foreshore Strategy: a Revised Implementation and Delivery Program'

Send To

landusesubmissions@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Quoting reference PSC 2007-1204V3

By 5 pm Wednesday 4 April 2018

The format for our base submission is available to cut and paste into an email (or Word document)

from a post on our

Facebook page Save Nelson Bay from High Rise

Further information on our website: www.trra.com.au