

## Last chance to object to high-rise in Nelson Bay town centre

<https://bit.ly/2CHHV6W> On exhibition until 14 August 2020

*Note that there are multiple documents on exhibition – most are older supporting documents – only a few are ‘new’ and the ‘changes’ that we are invited to comment on are limited to some new clauses and maps for the LEP, and some new clauses in the DCP.*

**Key points for submissions**, suggested by TRRA are:

- Welcome most of the changes on exhibition as they implement the many aspects of the Nelson Bay Strategy Delivery Program which the community supports
- Strongly object to:
  - o the changes that would allow 8 and 12 storey buildings in different areas of the town – this is inconsistent with the ‘village feel’ which Council acknowledges as important
  - o allowing a floor space ratio (FSR) of 3:1 which is grossly excessive for a village character and for the proposed heights. Council’s own feasibility study confirms that a more acceptable FSR of 2.5:1 is viable.
- Council has failed to even acknowledge the strong and consistent community opposition to the proposed height increases.
- Council claims to be responding to what the community wants but doesn’t even mention in the ‘Community Guide’ or the Planning Proposal itself the more than 2000 submissions in 2018 – 90% of which objected to major increases in building heights.
- Council states that “The community has told us what they want in a reinvigorated centre and the vision for Nelson Bay”. They certainly did not want high-rise.
- Council has stubbornly refused to recognise that the market has consistently demonstrated that high rise apartment buildings are not the way to revitalise the town
  - o Existing medium-rise apartments have very low occupancy rates – confirmed by the Census
  - o The two tall buildings approved in recent years (at twice the existing height limit) have failed to proceed – obviously rejected by the market – their only legacy being the crane on Church St that hasn’t lifted a single brick in 4 years.
  - o The most likely outcome of increased height limits and FSR is further stagnation as landowners hold out for the remote prospect of windfall profits.
- If buildings are ever built to the new height limits, the character of our town will be irrevocably changed for the worse
- Other coastal resort areas such as Kiama, the Sunshine Coast and Sydney’s northern beaches, in recent years have adopted much lower maximum heights of 2-4 storeys. The market preference for this scale is clearly demonstrated by the many successful developments in these localities. The result has been an appealing, liveable urban character.
- In contrast, efforts to encourage development in Gosford and Forster by increasing building heights/FSR have failed or had limited success.
- There are many other ways of revitalising the town centre and attracting more permanent residents that have been proven elsewhere. These include the recent and planned infrastructure, parking and public domain improvements parts of the Delivery Program, which are welcome, subject to further consultation on detail.

We encourage you to have your say, by 14 August. Send submissions to

[RevitaliseNB@portstephens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:RevitaliseNB@portstephens.nsw.gov.au) quoting file number **58-2018-24-1-006**

For more information, contact [planning@trra.com.au](mailto:planning@trra.com.au)