

Tim Duddy

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Darling Point

NSW 2027

The General Manager

Hobart City Council

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24 April 2020

Development Proposal for 5 – 9 Sandy Bay Road Hobart

PLN 19-641 and PLN 19-706

The Historic Houses Association of Australia (HHA) objects to the current proposal for 5 – 9 Sandy Bay Road Hobart. The HHA has over 780 paid members and over 3400 associated members and we represent the concerns and aspirations of these people regarding our built heritage.

Our association seeks to shape the future of the built heritage of Australia by acting as a ‘collective voice’ for owners, to ensure their concerns are heard and their properties are valued for the contributions they make to our society’s ‘sense of place’. Our heritage is about our future as well as our past. It is an on-going story that tells us how we have shaped our landscapes, our cities and towns – a story that tells the world who we are.

In November 2019 the HHA led a group of 15 people from Sydney on a heritage tour of Hobart and this tour included walking in the precinct of Hampden Road where we visited the Tasmanian Heritage Registered property, Markree, at 145 Hampden Road. We also visited Heathfield House at 70 Davey Street which was generously opened by the current owners to us for a private tour and dinner. The tour of the 1820’s house included a detailed explanation of the history of one of the earliest surviving private homes in Hobart. On our walking tour of Hampden Rd, Wilmot St and precinct in Hobart, we were able to provide to our group a first-hand visual understanding of how important and rare this precinct of 1820’s architecture is.

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This area of Hobart is very similar to that of Darlinghurst which is now known as Potts Point / Kings Cross in Sydney. Governor Darling in the 1820's instructed that the area of land looking over the young colony of Sydney be reserved for fine homes set on large parcels of land set in pleasure grounds. The similarity of the street design in Hampden Road to that of the Darlinghurst ridge in Sydney in the 1820's is compelling. This ridge of land looked over the town of Sydney and could be easily seen from the harbour when arriving by boat.

We were in the process of arranging a 6-day tour for 40 people which was to include this precinct of Hobart in November 2020. This of course has been postponed.

The concept of encouraging quality buildings looking over the town was not only for the benefit of the occupants but as a way of impressing those sailing into the colonies for the first time. First arrivals in both colonies would have noticed the grandeur of these homes, set in their pleasure grounds, giving each colony an appearance of sophistication, prosperity for their owners and the population. The message for the first time arrivals: *"I too can work hard, be successful and live in a fine home."*

The Hobart villas along Hampden Road and within the vicinity are rare and should be valued for their important historical significance and tourism potential. Unfortunately, in Sydney, of all the villas built on the Darlinghurst ridge, only two of the houses survive. Both are overshadowed by high rise developments and can no longer be seen from the harbour. The Hampden Road villas from the 1820's includes Heathfield, Melrose, Lumeah, Wivenhoe, Narryna, Stowell, Secheron and Ellerslie. These villas need protection and consideration.

The current proposed development's height will destroy the connection many of these historical homes have enjoyed since the 1820's with the St David's Park, Derwent River and views to other parts of Hobart. Many of the original gardens and homes will be overshadowed in both light and bulk based on what is being proposed.

Numbers 145 and 147 Hampden Road are Arts & Crafts homes built by two sisters and Markree at 145 Hampden Road is now a house museum operated by (TMAG) with the original contents and garden intact. The bulk and scale of the proposed development will block the view from the back of the house and overshadow the rear garden. We are also greatly concerned the current proposal will have a devastating impact on the heritage registered single-storey cottages in Wilmot St and the Masonic Lodge.

We believe the Conservatorium building should be heritage registered as part of the already listed Davies mosaic along Sandy Bay Road. This building is a rare example of 20th Century curtain wall design and is rare in Tasmania.

The HHA encourages Hobart City Council to identify a more appropriate scale for the development. Draft Hobart Planning Scheme identified this area as Zone 9 with a maximum height of 15 metres. It is regrettable that the Hobart Planning Scheme was not adopted as it would protect the city, its relationship with the natural environment, its vistas, its amenity and livability from the over capitalization of modest scale sites which this proposal involves.

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