



**BEECROFT
CHELTENHAM
CIVIC TRUST INC**
the voice of our community

The General Manager
Hornsby Shire Council

Dear Sir

DA/1173/2019 - 46 Castle Howard Road, CHELTENHAM NSW 2119 - SUBDIVISION - ONE LOT INTO TWO

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust objects to the proposed subdivision on the following grounds, listed below.

The site has significant topographical and environmental constraints that, after reading the various reports, indicate the site is not suitable for subdivision. The various reports attached to the DA do not appear to be consistent with one another. There is a clear conflict between the arborist report stating only 6 trees need to be removed for the proposed dwelling and the bush fire assessment report which requires a maximum canopy cover of 15%. This apparent conflict is further reinforced with the flora and fauna report which comments on the arborist report and not the bushfire report.

The Flora and Fauna Report states that it is a limited report, based on the consultant's onsite for only 3.5 hours. While the report notes that the site has the Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest (STIF) community with a disturbed understorey, it recommends that bush regeneration and offsetting as conditions. This indicates that there is a high probability that a viable native seed bank exists in the soil. These recommendations would be very hard for Council to enforce as part of an approval. The subject site also appears to be part of a wildlife corridor. It would appear the flora and fauna report has not addressed this matter. The steep rocky site is highly likely have minimal soil depth with sandy soil low in moisture content and nutrients. The existing indigenous vegetation has probably taken many years to get established and continue to survive. Any replacement of the existing vegetation cover that may be conditioned if a dwelling is approved is likely to struggle to become established and survive in the long term.

The SEE offers an indicative building platform on the proposed lot B that is substantially undersized, together with a below minimum setback and a front setback not facing the street. The need to manipulate the DCP's prescriptive measures simply reflects the unsuitability of the site for subdivision. There are too many compromises that will result in a poorer outcome compared to the existing situation. With the climate changing with more weather extremes predicted into the future it is essential that Council adopt a strong precautionary principle in order to avoid serious problems in the future.

Lot A at the front will have minimal privacy at the rear due to the slope of the site and the size of the rear yard. This is likely to become an amenity issue in the future.

In summary, the Trust has serious concerns that the objects of the EPA Act can be achieved if approval is granted. If approved the end result is likely to result in development that will be inferior to the existing development. Subdivision is a critical step in any development approval process where any approval has the potential to lead to irreversible poor environmental decisions at the next development stage. In other words If this subdivision is approved Council will lose significant control over managing the environment in the future. The precautionary principle must be considered.

Therefore the Trust strongly recommends a refusal, as the likely cumulative adverse impacts of this development are definitely not in the public interest.

Yours Sincerely

Ross Walker OAM
President
Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust

22 January 2020