

# Huskisson Heritage Association Inc.

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Re: Historical Development Consents Inquiry roundtable

To: Members of the Inquiry:

Having had three of our members attend the roundtable meeting held at the Shoalhaven Library, Nowra on September 10th, we are writing to express our disappointment as to what we heard from the committee regarding historical development applications (also known as Zombie DAs).

It was of grave concern that we were informed that community fears about the impact of historical development consents on cultural, indigenous or environmental heritage or on community safety were not to be addressed following the inquiry. The remit of the enquiry was only to examine policy so solutions can be found into the future. This was not clear at the outset.

We left questioning the usefulness of this inquiry and sought feedback that, if it has no interest in addressing the concerns of the communities contacted, is it indeed a worthwhile process? Could that money, time and other resources have been better spent actually addressing the issues?

The explanation on the inquiry website accompanying the call for submissions suggested that committee members understood there are significant threats posed by historical development consents. With this in mind we wrote a submission outlining our concerns relating to the Huskisson Hotel site Development Application. There are significant community concerns around Cultural and environmental heritage.

The submission included the following:

A State Planning report reproduced within the Shoalhaven DCP 2014 recommends that further development on the Huskisson Hotel Site should have regard to...

'integration with Local Context and Building Patterns (and that) the maximum height for the site needs to be considered in relation to heights within the town centre'

The Huskisson Hotel is an iconic building in the area and is a placemaking landmark. It is not just a commercial venture. It should be considered more than a commercial operation in relation to further development. Its placemaking historical significance must be taken into account.

Historically during local works at the adjoining park Aboriginal middens were uncovered while paving etc was laid. This comes as no surprise to locals who recognise the importance of the area to indigenous histories. Those middens were reburied in place, as was the best understanding at the time. The Huskisson Heritage Association has some photographic evidence of this. Given its location it is almost certain that excavations will uncover more. Considering this knowledge, management of this site must be very carefully executed.

We urge you to consider the submissions made to the inquiry including those from community groups and local government. We believe part of your committee role is to prevent further destruction of our environment and cultural heritage while meeting genuine development needs.

Please consider the concerns of the residents in this electorate.

Joanne Warren

Public Officer

Vicky Smith

Round Table Attendee