

A Public Hearing at last!

Pittwater Council's independent consultants have agreed to a Public Hearing into the rezoning of Newport's public land.

Woolworths will be pulling out their big guns to bully us into a huge supermarket we don't want. One that will ruin the character and quality of Newport and will destroy the last chance of an off main road centre for Newport. Without this heart, Newport will just be a cash cow for Woolworths. Pittwater Council are of no help, having made a poor in-principle deal with Woolworths to sell our public land without having considered the community at all. They only seem to want the money.

What the Newport Community wants:

A well designed development with plenty of parking, some green space, some community facilities (child minding, library annex etc) to be the heart of an off-main road area linking Robertson road, Barrenjoey, the southern arcade and other parts of Newport. A place where the community can meet to make Newport a thriving, exciting centre. A supermarket no bigger than Coles Newport could be a benefit but not a mega store that means we have none of the above.

Please register with the council to speak at the meeting

Come to the meeting and say a few words. We understand that's not always an easy thing to do. All of us feel a bit uncomfortable speaking in public, but really, it doesn't matter how you say it (you can only speak for a maximum of 5 minutes) but please, stand up for the future of Newport. We must not let the Council and Woolworths downgrade Newport.

When and where will the Public Hearing be held?

Thursday 12 May from 10 am to 5.30 pm

Friday 13 May from 9.30 am to 4 pm

At the Mona Vale Memorial Hall

You need to register before 5pm Tuesday 10 May on 9970 1111 or 9970 1154

For further information please phone:

Newport Residents Assoc. - Kyle Hill, President, 0412 221 962,

Sue Young, Secretary 9997 2825

Newport Versus Woolies Community Group members

David Catchlove 0402 973 593, Gavin Butler 0409 395 102,

Nalin Perera 0407 017 228, Peter Middleton 0438 567 600

20 quick points about the rezoning proposal

1. SJB consultants canned the Woolworths proposal for a giant store. They said it did not comply with the Newport Masterplan.
2. The Council didn't get the answer they wanted, so asked SJB to prepare another rezoning proposal – now referred to as the “alternative” proposal.
3. Unbelievably, their “alternative” proposal gives the green light to Woolworths to use our public land for a mega store, under slightly different conditions.
4. This proposed mega supermarket is completely out of scale, excessively bulky and dominating in a small village like Newport. It is totally unsympathetic to the village character of Newport

5. If the attractiveness, quality and character of Newport is downgraded, local businesses will suffer and property values will fall.
6. This style and character issue is vital for all of Pittwater. North of Mona Vale is a collection of villages that have a strong tourist appeal. We'd lose this by building a Parramatta Road style mega store in Newport.
7. If a mega store is built, any chance of an off-main road village centre in Newport is lost. If we rezone all or our public land, we lose green space, community facilities and open pedestrian links with other parts of Newport.
8. The size of any supermarket on the site is critical. A giant store would dominate with price and range advantage to the detriment of local businesses. Woolworths will be able to grab other business as well as grocery. In supermarkets overseas, many other services are now provided to the detriment of local businesses – eg, dry cleaning, beauty services, banking, prescriptions etc. We expect our local businesses to compete, but we don't expect them to be hounded out of business.
9. A sense of place and community are important to everyone. Our lives are not dedicated to making corporate profits. A mixed village style development, with green space, child minding and library annex are not unreasonable requests in any locality.
10. Enough is enough. This is not about stifling free enterprise. If Woolworths built a Coles sized store on their own land, added to the existing Coles Newport store, we'd have almost the same supermarket floor space as Woolworths Mona Vale.
11. Typically, giant store customers load up their cars with everything they need and drive away. Newport then just becomes a bland, characterless supermarket depot.
12. We all want good parking in Newport but the Woolworths' mega model is designed to use our parking for Woolworths. However, an appropriate development that includes green space and community facilities would provide more than enough parking.
13. Staff parking for a giant store will clog up surrounding streets. Council wants to remove parking on one side of Foamcrest to accommodate large trucks. They want to run these huge trucks up Robertson Road.
14. A Woolworths' "expert" consultants' report said traffic would not be affected under their proposals. This is arrant nonsense. The streets behind the commercial area are small and narrow. The location is a noise sink, so intrusive after hours noise would reverberate through many small streets behind the development from 5 am in the morning until 1am at night.
15. If such a supermarket were built, residents would look down on a vast metal roof, equivalent to looking down on a factory site.
16. This rezoning proposal ignores the environmental, social, cultural and community values of Pittwater as a whole. These values are outlined in Pittwater Councils Strategic Plan. The hypocrisy in trying to inflict this gross development on Newport is staggering.
17. Woolworths have used pretty visuals to represent their "concept" plans in the past but these have been misrepresentations. We believe the company has used PR techniques and spin to con the local community.
18. The proposal ignores the State Government planning strategy defines Newport as a village. A village does not require this level of supermarket floor space. Available infrastructure and the geography of Newport mean Newport will always remain a village.
19. There has been an unprecedented community objection to the proposal. Over 5,000 have signed a petition against a mega store and over 3,000 have sent written submissions to Pittwater Council
20. This is about long term planning - for the next 50 or 100 years. We should pass onto our children and grandchildren a development that shows vision and sensitivity for our community.