

Mr. Michael & Julie McCallum
57 Snapper Loop
Exmouth, WA 6707
23rd July 2021

49a Gaze Road _ Planning Approval Additional Use
Governance, Research, Policy and Grants Manager
Shire of Christmas Island
George Fam Centre
2 Murray Road
Christmas Island 6798

RE: 49a Gaze Road (The Barracks), Christmas Island: Planning Approval for 'Class 36 - Residential Building' additional use for commercially zoned property.

Dear 49a Gaze Road _ Planning Approval Additional Use,

Please find attached our 'Schedule 5 - Application for Development Approval', for consideration by Council to grant 'Class 36 – Residential Building' as an additional use for our property located at 49a Gaze Road, Christmas Island.

As advised, we also include additional supporting documentation below, to explain the rationale why granting approval supports the amenity of the area, and is consistent with Shire policy requirements under the CI Town Planning Scheme No. 2 and the Planning and Development Act 2005 (WA)(CI).

Firstly, thank you for your advice and guidance so far, your understanding of the challenges that CI can present and the practical approach you have shown is greatly appreciated.

We consider that this proposal is consistent with the intent of State and Local planning framework and offer the following evidence from those provisions:

- As you are aware, we received Building Approval for the development of Residential Premises by the Shire of Christmas Island on 20th August 2003. Thus, we formally seek the Councils endorsement of that Building Approval and grant 'Class 36 – Residential Building' as an additional use under the current zoning.
- The Barracks complex has enjoyed a mix of residential and commercial uses for nearly 3 decades, since being refurbished in the early 1990's as part of the CI Rebuilding Program. In fact, the original SoCI Rates Notice stated split zoning of Residential / Commercial. We simply request that the residential use is officially recognized in 2021.

- DPLH and SoCI state The Barracks residential area is historically significant as a reminder of the phase of Christmas Island history when the island came under the control of the British Phosphate Commission, and as such has always housed residents.
- It is well documented in both SoCI and DoITCRD assessments that there is an acute accommodation shortage on Christmas Island, and consolidation of existing housing should be facilitated and promoted.
- Mixed-use development is encouraged for The Barracks precinct in all SoCI planning strategies, with residential investment being part of that mix, that will “contribute to enhancing the appeal and vitality of the precinct”.
- The current zoning / land use anomaly also poses a massive obstruction to investment, as banks, lenders and brokers have advised it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to secure finance until land use and zoning align.
- Most importantly, this zoning / land use discrepancy has made it impossible to obtain building insurance. The approval of residential use, and the possibility of future zone amendments may allow access to appropriate insurance cover.

As property owners at The Barracks, we have found it increasingly difficult over the years in dealing with brokers, both financial and insurance, as they already view Christmas Island in a complex manner, thus options are usually extremely limited or non-existent. We are optimistic that this formal approval from the Council, for ‘Class 36 – Residential Building’ as an additional use for our property, will facilitate our options as we go forward and plan further investment in our house and Christmas Island. Ultimately, we just want to make it easier to deal with off-island institutions.

We thank Council for their time and consideration, and hope that our submission adequately addresses and satisfies the community’s needs. Please don’t hesitate in requesting further information that will assist you in granting our approval.

Best regards,

Michael & Julie McCallum.

*Commonwealth and Shire of Christmas Island planning endorsing application attached on pg.3

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1. Shire of Christmas Island Local Planning Strategy Review - Updated Strategic Directions Draft 4 - 02/03/2020

2. Shire of Christmas Island Gaze Road Tourism & Commercial Precinct Urban Design Master Plan January 2012

- 3.2 Current Land Tenure
 - Given the heritage significance of the privately held old barracks buildings, redevelopment options are limited. However much needed additional incidental development could be created on the foreshore frontage to improve the built environment. The “do nothing” option is not sustainable and would be to the detriment of the precinct as a whole.
- 4.6 Encourage Mixed Use
 - The introduction of mixed-use developments into the precinct is the best way to increase development opportunities that will contribute to enhancing the appeal and vitality of the precinct.
 - The recently completed *Accommodation Needs Assessment for Christmas Island* has revealed an acute accommodation shortage across all user groups, hesitations from investors, relatively high construction costs and a perceived land shortage. These factors will need to be considered in determining the appropriate land use mix for the precinct.
 - Many public and private development opportunities are available and the investigative nature of the stakeholders’ consultation process has provided valuable insight in terms of accommodation and commercial development opportunities. Topography, acceptable densities, retention of existing buildings and vegetation may be limiting factors whilst foreshore frontage across Gaze Road and ocean views will offer development incentives.
- 5. Consultation.
 - Uses of Barracks buildings should be commercial plus caretakers or short stay accommodation, shop, house, residential and commercial.
 - Incidental development within the Barracks buildings should be limited to a maximum of two story’s and be designed to take into account severe weather impacts

3. Report for Crown Land Management Plan for the Indian Ocean Territories (September 2009) – AG’s Department (GHD)

- 6.6 Gaze Road Tourism and Commercial Precinct
 - Most of the land in this precinct is already committed to uses that are not likely to change significantly in the future. Should these land uses be subject to redevelopment in the future, consideration should be given to the inclusion of mixed-use buildings

4. Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development & Local Government (IOT Administration) - Accommodation Needs Assessment Christmas Island & Cocos (Keeling) Islands June 2011

- 8. All business, community groups and households are able to access appropriate insurance cover by July 2011. It appears that property, building and strata **insurance covers are difficult, if not impossible to obtain on CI.**

This item is relevant to the Councils approved Our Strategic Plan 2030, Land & Economics Futures Charter 2018 and Our Future: Christmas Island Community Strategic Plan 2013.