

Scotland Island Residents Association Inc.

PO Box 70 Church Point NSW 2105

21st February 2006

SUBMISSION TO **PITTWATER COUNCIL RE PROPOSAL TO BUILD A LEVEL 5 HOSPITAL IN** **PITTWATER ROAD NARRABEEN**

The Scotland Island Residents Association represents about 350 off-shore Pittwater families of a total of about 630 offshore ratepayers or 2,000 people.

Standard

The Department of Health's standard for access to a hospital is 20 kms and 30 minutes.

Actual Access times from Scotland Island to Hospital

We are advised that the only research on access to Mona Vale Hospital was undertaken by Professor Poulson in 2001. This report is inaccurate in relation to access times.

Access times to Mona Vale Hospital from offshore communities were seriously understated. The journey to hospital from Scotland Island, the closest off-shore community, involves up to 3 transport legs, as follows:

- community vehicle, or Rural Fire Service vehicle to a wharf,
- water taxi, commuter boat or Water Police to the mainland
- car to Mona Vale

Private transport time: 35 –45 minutes Public transport times: 50 - 80 minutes.

Similar times will apply to a hospital at Narrabeen.

These exceed the Health Department's Standard and are unacceptable.

If the main Level 5 Hospital was located at French's Forest, the situation would become intolerable – an additional 20-25 minutes is needed to reach French's Forest by car. While travel times by public transport are hard to determine several bus exchanges are necessary and we estimate a minimum additional hour if connections work

The total time needed would vary from 1 to 2 hours, depending on whether by private or public transport.

Access for holiday visitors to the Northern Beaches

The Northern Beaches area is a major holiday destination for nearly 6 months of the year. The population increases substantially at weekends and during holidays. Visitors, like residents, expect reasonable access (within the Department's Standard) to good health care, in particular for emergency cases.

It is our understanding that well over 20,000 emergencies a year are treated at Mona Vale Hospital.

A Level 5 Hospital at French's Forest will be a disaster for off-shore families, residents north of Avalon and tens of thousands of visitors to the area

Locating the Level 5 Hospital at Pittwater Road, Narrabeen

SIRA strongly supports the Council's efforts to have the hospital located at on Pittwater Road at Narrabeen rather than hours away at French's Forest

The geographic centre of the area is at Warriewood and the demographic centre, currently at Cromer Cromer, is moving steadily north.

If Mona Vale Hospital cannot be retained as a Level 5 facility, we agree with the concept of swapping Pittwater Council land at Warriewood with government land on the Mona Vale Hospital site so that the Mona Vale land can be retained by Council for community use.

We strongly support Pittwater Council and the Save Mona Vale Hospital Committee in their efforts to resolve this issue and we would like to offer any practical help that is needed.

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