

# Supermarket giant in

## Mosman land buy-ups

**Buyer: Mosman Club Community Project Pty Ltd (Woolies)**

- 1. 717 Military Rd**  
Sold: October 12, 2015      **\$4.6 million**
- 2. 731 Military Rd**  
Sold: May 27, 2016      **\$1.8 million**
- 3. 735 Military Rd**  
Sold: January 12, 2016      **\$2.4 million**
- 4. 737 Military Rd**  
Sold: January 19, 2016      **\$2.1 million**
- 5. 739 Military Rd**  
Sold: October 17, 2014      **\$3.5 million**
- 6. 741 Military Rd**  
Sold: January 8, 2016      **\$3.9 million**

**Buyer: Tall Trees No 1 Pty Ltd (Woolies?)**

- 7. 40 Gouldsbury St**  
Sold: April 18, 2018      **\$5.5 million**

\* Source: CoreLogic



Picture: Nearmaps

## Chamber gives lukewarm response to Woolies plan

“MY gut feeling is the disadvantages would outweigh the advantages.”

With that lukewarm reaction, the voice of Mosman’s business community is struggling to see the upside of Woolworths potentially opening a store as part of a big new retail development

in the relatively tranquil village atmosphere.

“There will be some people who will like this, because there’s never been a Woolworths or a Coles in the area,” Mosman Chamber of Commerce president Pat Purcell said.

“But I think you’ll find the

majority of locals won’t want a Woolies here because they’ll want to keep the village feel.

“And the one big thing we advertise for Mosman, from a business point of view, is the village atmosphere. I suspect a big Woolies would work against that.”

Asked if there were any potential benefits to local businesses, she said: “It would definitely bring more people into Mosman and it could keep more people in the area to do all their shopping.”

“It could be a plus, but is this really what the locals

want? I’m not so sure.”

Ms Purcell said for Woolies to make any money out of a retail development in Mosman, it would “have to put units on top of it and include significant carparking, so it’d be a big project”.

“We luckily still have certain shops that are only in

Mosman, but when you get new and large-scale retail development it changes everything,” she said.

“If you get some retail shops as part of a Woolies development, you’ll just get the same sort of shops as what you get everywhere else.”

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# buying spree

## Woolworths link to major Mosman development plan

**Matt Taylor**

**SUPERMARKET** giant Woolworths is planning a large-scale “mixed-use development” in the Mosman town centre which could see a multi-level carpark, retail, residential and potentially a new RSL club change the face of the sleepy suburb.

The *Mosman Daily* can today lift the lid on Woolies’ secret plans which have included a complex web of property buy-ups around the Mosman Club since 2015 and continued approaches to remaining land owners around the intersection of Military Rd and Gouldsbury St.

An investigation by the *Daily* can reveal Woolies’ links to a company called Mosman Club Community Project Pty Ltd, which has gone on a buying spree of properties along Military Rd where the RSL club and Westpac Bank are located.

Documents reveal the Mosman Club Community Project Pty Ltd – which the RSL club denies any links to – was created on October 8, 2014, and has since spent more than \$18 million on six properties in the same block on Military Rd.

A CoreLogic search revealed it bought 717 Military Rd, where Flight Centre is located, for a whopping \$4.6 million on



The Mosman Club is not for sale as part of the Woolies push.

October 12, 2015, and has since splashed out big bucks for surrounding properties – 731, 735, 737, 739 and 741 Military Rd – with the actual Mosman Club (719 Military Rd) and Westpac (743) sites the last key properties on the block yet to fall to the Woolies-backed company.

A separate property out the back of the Mosman Club – 40 Gouldsbury St – was bought for \$5.5 million on April 18 this year by Tall Trees No 1 Pty Ltd, which has a registered business address in Melbourne but sources say is linked to Woolies. Woolworths did not respond to questions about whether it was behind the Mosman Club Community Project and had links to Tall Trees.

Mosman Club CEO Gerard Boyle said it had been contacted by Woolworths’ management on a number of occasions over the past year – but he stressed the

community-backed club had no plans to sell up, despite the “exciting” prices the surrounding properties were being sold for.

“As neighbours, they have told us about their future plans to potentially put in a retail space,” said Mr Boyle, whose club has recently spent \$3 million in major improvements.

“We’ve just told them we’ll be an interested neighbour. We’re not idiots. We know they’re interested in developing the site. But we can’t just sell our property. Members need to vote on it.”

Mr Boyle revealed the Mosman Club had never registered as a business name, allowing for another company to use its name.

“We find that irritating,” he said. “We did some research into this company as well and we also found the people who are driving this is Woolworths. They’ve set up this company after some

savvy person realised the ‘Mosman club’ was not registered as a business.”

He said investigations by the club found the Mosman Club Community Project’s shareholders were “from a law firm that act on behalf of Woolworths”.

Residents have also revealed to a local councillor the concept drawings for a retail development in the RSL club’s vicinity.

“Woolies is proposing a new RSL club, a Woolies under it, two levels of carparking, and some shops and residential above it,” Mosman councillor Libby Moline said. “This is not a fictitious thing.”

The *Daily* contacted Woolworths on several occasions over the past fortnight to come clean on what it was planning.

Initially it denied any “immediate” plans – but when the *Daily* presented more information last week, it confirmed it was looking at building a new store in Mosman.

“We believe that there is an under-supply of supermarkets in Mosman and the surrounding areas,” the Woolworths spokeswoman said. “We continue to review a number of opportunities in the catchment for a new store, and look forward to engaging with council and the community when we have greater certainty.”



Mosman councillor Libby Moline.

## Move will be a ‘disaster’

A MOSMAN councillor is preparing to rally the resistance to Woolies’ big plans for Mosman. Libby Moline said it would be a “disaster” for the local area if Woolworths was allowed to develop a retail precinct on Military Rd, on the same block as the Mosman Club, Flight Centre and Westpac Bank.

“Getting in and out of Gouldsbury St, with a school at the end of the street and a raised pedestrian crossing ... if you have big trucks coming and going all the time, it’s just too tight and will be a disaster for us,” she said.

“I don’t think there’ll be any shortage of locals opposing this. People will be furious when they find out about these plans.” Cr Moline said she lived at one of the properties which a company believed to be linked to Woolies bought three months ago.

“40 Gouldsbury St, as you’ve found, was sold for \$5.5 million in April. Well, my husband (James) and I paid \$28,000 for this property back in 1970.

“This is the sort of money it appears Woolies is prepared to pay to set up a development in

the area. But you’ll find this property is zoned residential and they’ll struggle to do anything with it (unless it’s rezoned for commercial use).”

Cr Moline said she had “no personal vendetta” against Woolworths, which has two stores in nearby Neutral Bay. “I’m taking this stand for the community. The gossip has been around and it’s great you’ve been able to get Woolies to provide confirmation it wants to develop here.

“My message to Woolies is ‘we don’t need you in Mosman Junction’. We have Bridgepoint shopping centre, which has butchers and fish shops, an Aldi, and IGAs at Mosman and Cremorne.

“We do not need another supermarket and the extra traffic drawn to this area.”

A member of the Mosman Club, Cr Moline said it was “critical” the club “doesn’t cave in” to Woolies. “The community needs to take a stand against this,” she said.

“Woolies has secretly worked on these plans for a long time. But they are not right for Mosman.”

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