

The \$70m Taj on the Swan

These plans for a \$23 million superblock are what has been spicing up the gin and tonic chatter of Peppy Grove



**MARK DRUMMOND
EXCLUSIVE**

This is what Australia's most expensive house could look like.

It is the "two-storey, Indian-infused luxury residence" which Pankaj and Radhika Oswal plan to build in the heart of Perth's most elite suburb, Peppermint Grove, on the eight lots they bought last year in Warren Anderson's long-vacant superblock.

The land alone cost the Oswals more than \$23 million to buy and Mr Oswal has revealed that his family planned to spend at least twice that amount building and fitting out their new home, bringing the total cost to about \$70 million.

Designed to the traditional Indian principles of Vaastu Shastra, the plans include parking for 17 cars, a temple house, separate gymnasium building, swimming pool, an observatory with a revolving roof and extensive formal gardens and water features. The main house has six bedrooms facing into two central garden areas. A saltwater aquarium will cover an entire wall.

The Oswals' house plans have dominated the gin and tonic chatter at the neighbouring Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club and the Peppermint Grove Tennis Club and been a hot topic at dinner parties throughout Perth's affluent western suburbs, since the

couple revealed in *The West Australian* in June that they planned to build "a little India" on their amalgamated 6600sqm block.

However, Mr Oswal denied he was about to build a Taj Mahal in a neighbourhood which was home to the likes of property developer Nigel Satterley, Multiplex heir Denby Macgregor, real estate agents Mack Hall and John Mair, businessmen Peter Prendiville, Brett Fogarty, Gavin Rezos and Geoff Allen, accountant Ross Norgard, magnate Chiu Chi Wen and Mr Anderson.

"It's not a Taj Mahal, it's far from that," Mr Oswal said. "It's not a place where you can bury dead people. It's not going to stand out like a mosque."

Mr Oswal said that rather than having a house built on each of the eight blocks, his mansion would cover only 30 per cent of the combined 6600sqm site. He said the design conformed to council planning requirements, although some of the distinctive domes extending beyond the 10-metre height limit.

He said a scale model of the building was being made to show the neighbours how the house would fit on the terraced block, which is bounded by Keane Street and Bay View Terrace.

A submission made to the Peppermint Grove Shire Council on behalf of the Oswals states "the building has been carefully scaled to fit into the existing environment and although palatial and exhibiting a certain grandeur, is not ostentatious."

"A key design objective for the development is for the proposed residence to appropriately reflect the family's cultural and spiritual heritage. The development is easily befitting of the stature of residential development in Peppermint Grove and represents an asset to the local community."

The Oswals' mansion plans are another symbol of the great wealth being generated in WA's resources boom. The Oswals are the Indian family behind the \$700 million Burrup Fertilisers gas-processing plant on the Burrup Peninsula. They want to build a second \$1.2 billion ammonia urea plant but cannot source adequate gas supplies.

A council spokesman said the Oswals' house plans would be considered at this month's council meeting.

Neighbour Mack Hall said yesterday he looked forward to seeing the Oswals' house plans. "But if it goes above the 10m height limit, everyone will object," he cautioned.



Elaborate: An Impression of the proposed six-bedroom home on Keane Street and Bay View Terrace designed to Vaastu Shastra principles and incorporating a temple and observatory



Pankaj and Radhika Oswal photographed during an evening at Burswood.



THE NEIGHBOURS



Denby Macgregor



Brett Fogarty



Ross Norgard



Nigel Satterley

