

28th April 2013

RE – Residents concern with the DRAFT proposal to re-zone a small part of Cherrybrook into 2 sub-precincts to accommodate an additional 1800 homes

To: **Sam Haddad (Director for Planning) & Brad Hazzard (Minister for Planning)** at the Department of Planning & Infrastructure

Sam & Brad,

I am a local resident of Cherrybrook (15 Rochford Way) and would like you to understand my points of concern regarding the proposed changes to local streets and zoning to accommodate plans for the new Cherrybrook train station. Having spoken to several of my neighbours and local residents, I know they share the same concerns as I do.

Whilst I am overall in favour of the concept and strategic vision of the NWRL project in terms of the North West regions sustainability, I ask myself whether the DRAFT plans for Cherrybrook have taken the following points into consideration. As a resident of Cherrybrook, I question the benefit vs impact of the proposed zoning changes especially around the Cherrybrook Station precinct (not the Cherrybrook station precinct itself).

The Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPOI) confirmed at the Community Information Session on 13 April that the location of the proposed Cherrybrook station had been mainly determined on engineering and construction grounds. There were little to no planning reasons why a Cherrybrook train station, or center, was needed or desired (especially being so close to the Castle Hill hub & future train station).

The draft Strategy anticipates that 400 town houses could be delivered within the Low/Medium Density sub-precinct and 1,750 medium density dwellings could be delivered in the Medium Density sub precinct (where my home resides but is within one of many strata community titles).

- **See page 25, Figures 23 & 24 of Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan -**
<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MUaoRA5g0Xk%3d&tabid=205&language=en-US>)

The meeting papers for the 17th April meeting at Hornsby Council noted that to facilitate the projected development within the sub-precincts 300 existing detached homes would need to be demolished, resulting in a total of 1,800 additional homes

- **See Page 128 of the meeting papers from the 17th April 2013**
http://hsconline.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/businesspapers/Open/2013/GM_17042013_A_GN.PDF

Concern - Most of the study area around the Cherrybrook station precinct is proposed to be rezoned for townhouses (2-3 storey) and apartment (3-6 story) dwellings. Given the many constraints within the study area (see pages 14-15 of the Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan), the draft plans for the rezoning into 2 sub precincts are largely unfeasible and will only continue to unsettle residents within the study area generating further unnecessary fear, uncertainty and speculation.

Other Points to consider

- The proposed study area within Cherrybrook and around the station precinct is rather small and constrained by narrow roads, cul-de-sacs, small house blocks (north of the station) and several strata community titles.
- Rezoning & Redevelopment Constraints:
 - The proposed location of medium density apartments in one of two sub precincts (see page 25, Figure 24 of Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan - <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MUaoRA5g0Xk%3d&tabid=205&language=en-US>) is constrained by homes that are under 15 years old, and several strata community titles which are considered to be constraints to future development (unless of course all owners within the strata title agree to the changes as a single entity (highly unlikely)).
 - The proposed location of low/medium density townhouses (see page 25, Figure 23 of Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan - <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MUaoRA5g0Xk%3d&tabid=205&language=en-US>) is constrained by homes that are under 15 years old, a community strata title, and narrow roads that will not meet the demand of many more vehicles that additional home dwellings will bring to the area
 - The constraints described in the Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan to development south of Castle Hill Rd are equally applicable to the north (not so much from a land slip perspective but from a roads and infrastructure perspective – i.e., ***The southern half of the Study Area below Castle Hill Road contains a poorly connected local road network, featuring a number of culs-de-sac that create barriers to vehicular movement in both east-west and north-south directions...*** (see page 8 of Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan - <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MUaoRA5g0Xk%3d&tabid=205&language=en-US>)

- Many (but not all) homes are less than 15 years old, and those older than 15 years like my own are 15-20 years old. Many of these homes have been renovated since being built and some like my own are planning to be refreshed / renovated to sustain another 20-30 years of living. There are also some new homes being constructed at present in Robert Road.
- The character of the Cherrybrook area is one of low density housing, landscaped gardens and quiet, crime free streets. Whilst the new train line will bring some good value to the North West region and perhaps Cherrybrook, the proposed additional dwellings in the small study areas & sub precincts near the station precinct will impact the character significantly. This will result in traffic congestion, less available street parking for residents and visitors due to more cars, and most importantly years of living in a noisy, polluted, and visually unpleasant construction zone for many long term established residents.
- The overall impact can be reduced by limiting the construction to the station precinct and homes that have already been purchased by the project to accommodate the new station.

I propose that the rezoning of the 2 sub precincts in the Cherrybrook study area should not go ahead for the reasons stated in this letter. It is just common sense.

- Castle Hill station will be 2 mins away from Cherrybrook train station so the question needs to be asked about whether Cherrybrook remains as Cherrybrook, or simply becomes an extension of Castle Hill. The Castle Hill area, especially around the centre and Castle Towers already has town houses and apartment dwellings. Doing the same to Cherrybrook will alter the suburbs character in a way that most residents are not supportive of.
- Castle Hill Road congestion in the mornings is problematic and whilst the railway may reduce the need for some private cars, the proposed additional homes will only increase the volume of cars in the local area and make the traffic problem worst. Some commuters will still need to drive to work. Castle Hill road is a major artery road and one must ask whether Cherrybrook train station will in fact make it better or worse.
- The cost of the land/homes is very likely to be prohibitive for the majority of prospective private builders who will want to buy up existing homes & land to knock down and rebuild larger density townhouses & apartments. Whilst the economic viability of this argument is not really of concern to those making these planning decisions, common sense must prevail here as builders are unlikely to pay the premium to purchase multiple blocks to only be restricted to low / medium density housing.

- Hornsby Council's current target for increased density is an extra 2200 homes over the entire Shire. This target has already been met. This proposal suggests a further 1800 homes to one small section of Cherrybrook (has anyone walked the streets and seen what 1800 additional dwellings would look like in such a small area???).
- The forecast of 50 potential new jobs by 2036 for Cherrybrook is an indicative illustration of the small area within Cherrybrook that the plans are aiming to change.

Suggested Response to concerns – Do not rezone the areas in Figures 23 & 24 (on page 25 of Cherrybrook Station Draft Structure Plan). Rezoning these areas in reality will not add any value to the plans surrounding Cherrybrook station precinct due to the points above, and will only generate further concern, uncertainty and unrest for the people in the study area who will live their lives speculating if and when their homes will be impacted by future development plans that are clearly untenable.

If you wish to discuss any of these matters further, feel free to contact Paul Debelak on 0416198526 or pdebelak@ozemail.com.au.

Regards

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