

Sutherland
13 February 2014

Dear Dr Roseth & Ms Sussex,

Submission on Sutherland Shire LEP2013 process

I write regarding a number of aspects of the activities surrounding the two LEPs that were produced last year by Sutherland Shire Council. :

I believe that the amended LEP was rushed through without sufficient time for appropriate scrutiny by councillors not aligned to the then-Mayor's views, and that the original public feedback should be taken into account to rework the LEP to be in line with population requirements of the State Government, and not to exceed this.

Waratah Park Development

Our family live in an area zoned as R2, located adjacent to the area which has been referred as the "Waratah Park Development". The current zoning of this land is Zone 15 - private recreation. This area is located immediately to the south of the Cronulla railway line in Sutherland, immediately to the east of the junction with the main Illawarra railway line. This area currently accommodates a few croquet courts, a council public garden and a two-storey PCYC facility. It is immediately to the north of the Sutherland Leisure Centre and Basketball courts, and the facilities fit well with these sporting activities, so the current zoning of the area is appropriate.

The draft Sutherland Centre Strategy refers to the Waratah Park area, and states that this area as being particularly suitable for housing for older people. **I find it hard to imagine a location less suitable** - remote from Sutherland hospital and medical facilities, wedged between two major rail lines and their junction, and adjacent to a very busy and noisy open air sporting facilities (Leisure Centre), an uphill walk to shops and significant parking difficulties for any visitors that they may have due to contention with residential parking, commuter parking and sporting venue traffic. The pedestrian access to the real centre of Sutherland also would require crossing President Ave. which has been encouraged by the authorities to be a major traffic thoroughfare in Sutherland.

The draft Sutherland Centre Strategy includes the Waratah Park area as though it is a natural inclusion in Sutherland Centre. Due largely to the Cronulla railway line, this is completely not the case. There are footpaths that traverse two tunnels at the west and beyond the east extremities of 'Waratah Park', and these provide the only pedestrian and vehicular access in and out of the area. In each case these pathways provide only a limited access to and from the area, with

difficult crossings at Park Street and President Avenue.

In the second draft of the LEP following the infamous “mayoral minute” this area was marked as “deferred matter”, but there was no consultation/notification of any of the residents who live adjacent to this area. I can find NO reference to this area in the 166 page ‘amended’ LEP, and in the 21 page map package that accompanied the ‘amended’ LEP the map covering the area in question is just marked as ‘DF’. On the single page covering this area (LZN_005a) of the 21 pages of maps, I estimate that there are around 80 separately coloured areas. While some of these may be unchanged by the ‘amended’ LEP, it is not possible to determine which zones are proposed to be changed.

The zoning proposed (but possibly deferred) for this area refers to building heights of 28m, adjacent to R2 low density housing, surely an inappropriate mix of zoning.

It was subsequently reported in “The Leader” that Miranda RSL (which I believe refers to a commercial club only), whose President was the then Deputy Mayor of S.S.C. had been invited to prepare a development proposal for the area. I have been unable to see a copy of any development proposal, however The Leader has gone on to suggest that this will largely comprise a significant number of residential units. The Leader also goes on to mention that Miranda RSL has had a receiver appointed to manage its affairs.

The secrecy around what is to be proposed for this area is disturbing, and the proposed ‘deferral’ of the matter suggests that whatever proposal the council is inviting will not conform to the stated goals of the LEP, suggesting that the zoning of this area is likely to allow a much more profitable development to go ahead.

I would urge you to reject the ‘deferral’ of the zoning of the Waratah Park area, and that it remains with the Private Recreational zoning as per the previous LEP. If Miranda RSL are unable to contribute worthwhile recreational facilities to the community it should relinquish the lease on this area.

This area seems to be inappropriate for large scale multi storey unit development. Developments immediately to the north of the Cronulla railway line over the last 12 years have led to surrounding streets being clogged with traffic. The Leisure Centre car park and surrounding streets are already overflowing with cars parked by commuters taking the train into the city and the infrastructure of this area cannot support further development. Traffic at present is prevented from entering Eton Street via a locked gate, and all traffic enters the leisure centre complex from Rawson Avenue. I believe that if hundreds of units were to be constructed in this Leisure area the council would be under immense pressure to remove the locked gate and the R2 area would be subject to large amounts of traffic. This is already seen on occasions when council staff unlock the gate. Merton street usually has cars parked on both sides the road in the vicinity north and south of the tunnel under the Cronulla railway line, resulting in a single lane of traffic for a distance of around 50m or so.

It is also highly likely that the noise generated by the Entertainment Centre and its activities would cause impacts to residents of any developments in this area, leading to a decrease in recreational facilities at a time when the Shire needs all the sporting facilities it can get. The current council strategy appears to be to increase the population of the Shire above the State Government. Regardless of how well it succeeds in this, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that leisure facilities will be needed more than ever. We suggest that development of other styles would be a poor planning outcome for the whole Shire, not just the residents in the local area.

Publicity and Complexity of the LEP

When the first draft of the LEP was made available, the changes being proposed were certainly downplayed. While the council did make some indication that the LEP was available, it was not particularly prominent, and its original display seemed to be timed to avoid scrutiny.

On the S.S.C. website at the following url

http://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Building_Development/Development_Requirements/Draft_Sutherland_Shire_Local_Environmental_Plan_2013/Exhibition_Materials

There are over 100 separate documents relating to the draft LEP. Some of these documents are over 100 pages long. While I appreciate that with a plan as complex as the LEP2013 it will require a significant amount of documentation, I believe that the council did a poor job of making it easy for residents to understand what changes they could expect to see in their local area, effectively discouraging people from being able to make a reasoned assessment of the plan. The documentation I have read through is just focussed on what the proposed zonings will be. I have not been able to find a plan that clearly shows only the areas that are proposed to be changed.