

Comments on the Herring Rd Precinct

I am a long time resident of this area and have seen significant changes in the area from when I first lived in the area around Herring Rd as a student in 1990 (for five years) and since returning to the area in 2000.

I understand the need for more housing in the area and the logic of some units, however the planned changes seem to be too much and will cause drastic changes to the area and the community. I am glad that there is an effort for an overall plan however there needs to be more community consultation as this consultation did not reach a large proportion of the community that will be affected by the proposed changes.

My comments on the plan

❖ **Statement in proposed plan: Excellent transport infrastructure provides easy access to metropolitan jobs and city culture**

It is true that there is good transport providing easy access to city jobs and culture, however it is a different issue if you do not work in the city or if you have a family and need to get children to day-care, pre-school, school or extra-curricular activities. For example, I work in Strathfield and there is no way I would be able to go about my daily life without a car. I drive my children to school for before school care, drive myself to Eastwood station and struggle to find a park (whereas there is no free parking available around the Macquarie University Station so this is not an option), catch a train to work, and then after work I have to return to pick up my children from school or after-school care and either drive to after school activities in the area or home. On weekends our family completely rely on a car because all the children activities, even the local ones are not possible to access with public transport, and other outings are rarely easily accessible by public transport, unless we are going into the city. The main family we visit are in Balmain and Merrylands, and is not easy accessible by public transport. There is also still a large number of commuters either driving into the area or passing through the area to get to other places (e.g. Epping Rd., Vimiera Rd. through to Talavera Rd.)

❖ **Increased building heights and densities**

I believe there is a great importance to limiting heights of building propose and ensuring that there is enough building separation. The proposed building heights are excessive and will completely change the community.

An extra 5400 dwellings in the areas would most likely mean at least another 11,000 people in the area. The area will not cope with such a large number of people, there are not enough transport facilities, or community facilities such as health, schools, and recreational.

❖ **Opportunities for new and improved park, spaces, playgrounds and community facilities**

The precinct plans seems to only talks about existing parks and spaces, it does not explicitly set up new parks and spaces within the new proposed residential area.

At the moment there are good areas of parks, open spaces, playgrounds and community facilities for the current population, however demand/use of these has noticeably become higher and hence busier. There is a great need to ensure that there will be enough of such spaces with the proposed increase of dwelling and therefore population growth.

Especially within the area of the high rise apartment. There needs to be more planned and dedicated parks and space for young children, school age and teenagers to “play”, engage and socialise, especially considering that most of the proposed new residential buildings will be high rise. Children and teenagers need space to move, otherwise there will be greater dependency on electronic devices and overuse of these will lead to social and behavioural issues.

I lived in an apartment in Cottonwood Cres. when my first child was born. Every day we would walk and go out at least for a short time for him to play in one of open spaces around the unit. He was able to socialise with other children or just be outside in the outdoors, and when older to run around. We also used all the paths on the weekends to take him for walks and explore the area, walking as far as the North Ryde shops or in the opposite way to Waterloo Park. If there is not dedicated park areas and open spaces allocated within the proposed new high rise buildings there will not be spaces for children to experience just being children.

Sport facilities also need to be considered. For example currently the closest swimming pool is located at Macquarie University and it is always extremely busy. There is a wait list for swimming lessons. I also have used other swim schools in the area, currently Homebush Olympic Swimming pool, and previously Ryde Aquatic and Ryde Carlile, all have wait lists and are very busy.

❖ Better street connections and intersections

I do not see any benefit of adding a short street to connect Lachlan Avenue with Cottonwood Cres. I lived in Cottonwood Cres off and on for over 5 years, I never had any issues with driving via Peach Tree Rd. to get from Lachlan Avenue to Cottonwood Cres or vice versa. This seems a waste of money and a shame to lose any public park/space!

❖ Residential car parking

The proposal for car parking is not sufficient. The proposal for 0 spaces for studios, and 1 space only for 1 to 3+ bedroom dwellings is not realistic. The proposal will change the composition of the community. It will have families with older children, as well as University students living in shared arrangements. The likelihood is these households will have more than one care.

The visitors parking proposal of only 1 space for 10 dwelling will also put extra pressure on street parking which is not available. Even now we have students of Macquarie University who have no easy public transport access from their residence to the University using free street parking around the area. I do not believe they should be made to pay. There is not enough street parking for visitors or overflows from units in the Herring Rd precinct.

The comparison shows that all other areas have more parking requirements than the proposal for Herring Rd precinct.

❖ Schools, Before and After School Care, Day-cares and Pre-schools

In the plans there is no analysis of the availability of places in schools, Before and After School Care, Day-cares and Pre-schools. The FAQ says that *DEC is undertaking a detailed analysis of the impacts of the new development on the provision of school places in North Ryde*

http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Portals/0/DeliveringHomes/Herring_Road_FAQ_June_2014.pdf

It also states that local schools can cope with demand in the interim. I believe that this is not true and is not good enough. All the local public and indecent primary schools are overflowing, these include Kent Rd. Public School, Eastwood Heights Public School, Eastwood Public School, as well as St. Anthony's. All of these schools have had to install demountable classrooms just with the current population growth, and will most likely have to add more demountable classrooms in the next school year.

Schools need enough space for the classrooms as well as areas for children to play. The ever increasing number of demountable is already effecting and reducing the amount of open space for children in schools.

High Schools in the area have also increased in numbers dramatically. Increase population will put even more strain on these schools and their facilities.

There are wait lists for Day-cares and Pre-schools in the area, also in some places waitlists for Before and After School Care which severely effect families especially when both parents have to work or need these facilities for other reasons.

My children both used day-cares in the area, and were on waitlists for years before being able to get in. The increase in population will put an enormous strain on these facilities, even longer waitlists and increased stress on parents.

Regards,
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