

17 September 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission to the Riverstone East Draft Precinct Plan

I represent the owners of [REDACTED] In reviewing the Draft Indicative Layout Plan and SEPP Maps, it is considered that very little regard has been given in the Draft Precinct Plan to the high voltage transmission line which runs through many of the properties along Guntawong Road.

It is incredibly disappointing that the State Government and Blacktown Council have not insisted on the undergrounding of these assets. Official publications of Urban Growth NSW state that *'transmission lines are an impediment to developer activity. Leadership and funding is required to manage the undergrounding of this infrastructure'*.



Figure 1: Example given by Urban Growth NSW of unsold land in Bella Vista affected by the transmission line. Urban Growth NSW undertook to underground this line to activate development of the last unsold parcels.

The Draft Indicative Layout Plan identifies land beneath the easement as residential and business land, although no built structures are likely to be permitted within the easement.

It is even more disappointing that the Draft Indicative Layout Plan would sterilise more land than appears necessary on account of the proposed street layout and zone transitions. The low density land to either side of the transmission easement in Figure 2, is estimated to be 25 metres deep (between street and easement). This depth is barely enough for a standard block. It assumes that development will either "turn its back" to the easement, or be completely sterilised by the negative perception of "living under power lines".

The State Government should be clear to property owners as to its planning intent with this subdivision layout around the transmission easement.

It may be better if streets are located within the easement, or if streets run immediately alongside the easement. In this way, more land would be available for residential development. It would also ensure dwellings look out over the open space of the transmission easement, providing passive surveillance.



Figure 2: Draft Indicative Layout Plan. Subject area indicated in red.

The only mention of the transmission lines in the exhibition material is a brief section within the Blacktown City Council Growth Centres Precinct Development Control Plan (refer extract at Figure 4). Three conclusions are drawn from this DCP provision, namely:

- Dwellings must be setback from the easement,
- The easement would be devoid of any structures, and
- Subdivision design should provide surveillance of the easement land.

On this basis, it is considered much better if the area of land located within and either side of the easement is zoned to R3 Medium Density to better achieve the objectives of the DCP and to better utilise the land effected by the transmission lines.

This design approach would:

- Provide an opportunity for the easement to be used for visitor parking, roadways, on-site detention, communal open space, tennis courts or other uses ancillary to medium density developments.
- Provide an opportunity for pedestrian and cycle links to the nearby Local Centre within the easement corridor to improve amenity and passive surveillance of the easement land.
- Provide a greater amount of medium density development, thus accommodating a larger population on useable land.

- Better absorb the negative impact of the transmission line on property values by having this impact shared across more owners and a more affordable and flexible housing type.
- Support a form of development (ie. townhouses) that can be designed to orientate dwellings in different ways, thereby obscuring sightlines to transmission towers, and reducing impacts of the transmission lines.
- Provide a logical continuity of zoning from the land zoned R3 to the east and west of the site.

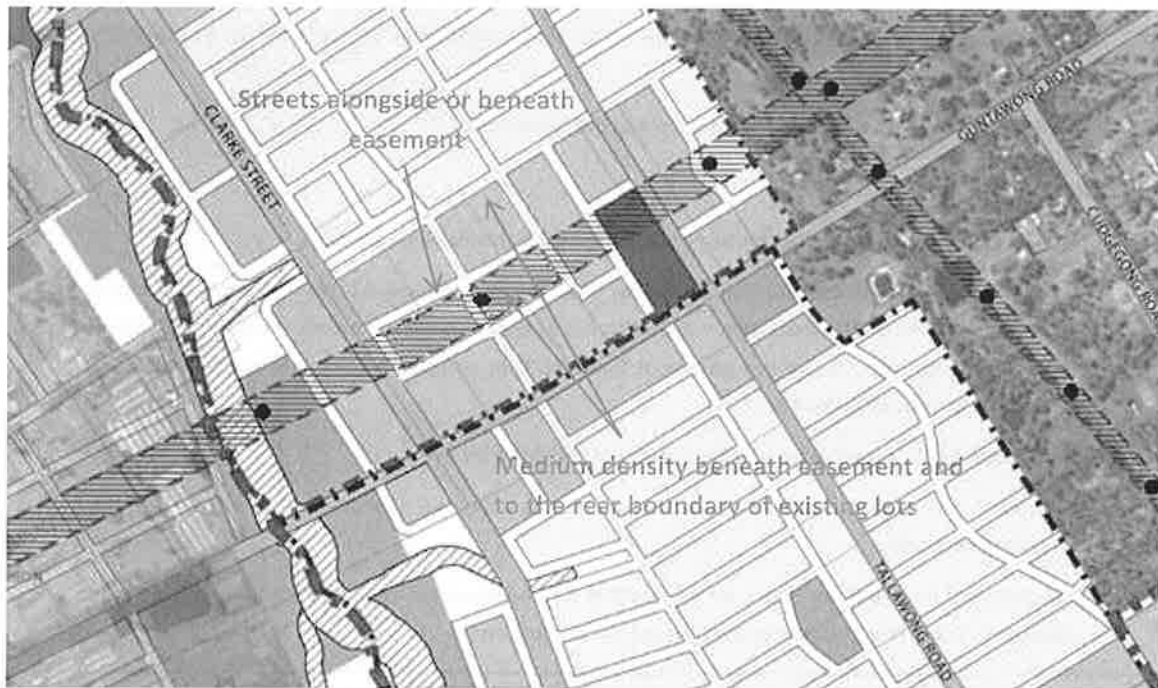


Figure 3: Suggested Changes to Indicative Layout Plan and Zoning.

Figure 3 shows the suggested changes to the Layout Plan and Zoning, with a view to locating streets and cycleways beneath the transmission easement. The changes represent a more effective use of the easement by enabling communal open spaces, parking, pedestrian links, and other uses ancillary to medium density developments, thus improving residential amenity.

Furthermore, the topography of the land (falling south to north) lends itself to support increased heights across the whole of the site, with less overshadowing and the ability to provide views across the valley floor to more residences. Floor space ratios (FSRs) and building heights should also be amended to correspond with the R3 zoning.

I trust that the matters raised herein will be strongly considered in making changes to the SEPP Maps, Indicative Layout Plan and Precinct Plan.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]

Bachelor of Town Planning (Hons.)
Grad. Dip. Cultural Heritage

4.3.1 Residential development adjacent to transmission easements

Objectives

- a. To minimise the visual and amenity impacts of transmission lines on surrounding residential areas.
- b. To provide for passive surveillance of the public lands within and adjacent to the transmission easement.
- c. To maintain the privacy of dwellings adjacent to the easements.

Controls

1. Dwellings are to be set back as far as possible from the transmission easement.
2. Low fencing (that complies with the controls for front fences in **clause 4.2.10**) or fencing that allows surveillance of the public lands within and adjacent to the transmission easement is to be used on the property boundary facing the easement from the front property boundary to a point 4 metres behind the front building facade.]
3. Landscaping is to permit views into the easement at ground level.
4. The orientation of dwellings is to permit casual surveillance of the easement, while maintaining the privacy of occupants.
5. The Principal Private Open Space for the dwelling is to be screened from view from the transmission easement, preferably by being located behind the building line.

Figure 4: Extract of Development Control Plan

References:

Urban Growth NSW, *Balmoral Road Transmission Relocation*, 2013.

<http://www.urbangrowthnsw.com.au/downloads/file/factsheets/BalmoralFactSheet2013V4.pdf>