

Katrina Burley

From: community
Sent: Monday, 17 August 2015 9:36 AM
To: Katrina Burley
Subject: FW: Updated (and hopefully final) submission with attachment re Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor - Minto Precinct
Attachments: Minto Heritage Walk - PDF.PDF

From: Laurie Porter [mailto:portmn@ihug.com.au]
Sent: Sunday, 16 August 2015 1:15 PM
To: community
Subject: Fw: Updated (and hopefully final) submission with attachment re Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor - Minto Precinct

63 Pembroke Road

MINTO 2566

Sunday 16 August 2015

Director

Urban Renewal

NSW Planning and Environment

GPO Box 39

SYDNEY 2001

Dear Sir,

Re: Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor – Minto Precinct

On Monday 10 August, I travelled (by bus) to the H J Daley Library in Campbelltown, to inspect the documentation relating to the above proposal. I also attended a “drop-in session” at the Campbelltown Civic Hall yesterday; and I wish to object to the proposal on the following bases, please.

I feel that this proposal, to have high rise apartment buildings (of potentially up to 7 or 8 storeys), and other higher-than-existing-density housing, replacing existing detached homes and backyards, is sheer lunacy!

It is also extremely insensitive and offensive to long-time existing residents of Minto, including my husband's family, which has lived in the Minto “precinct” / Minto Village for at least 118 years. It is families like the Porter family which have helped turn Minto Village into the functional and harmonious neighbourhood which it is today.

The inner portion of the Minto “precinct” has been known as “Minto Village” for a great many decades. Minto Village – the centre of the Minto “precinct” - is so-called because it was, until recent decades, surrounded by farms – in fact it was still zoned “fringe rural” when we bought 63 Pembroke Road in 1982 - and, today, although having been re-zoned to “Residential 2(b)”, it still retains a pleasant “village” atmosphere, due to its comparatively-small population and its mostly-low-density housing; and that's why most existing residents chose to buy and live here. (Now, does the aforementioned “Residential 2(b)” zoning even permit high-rise developments; or will our neighbourhood be re-zoned yet again?)

I was extremely upset, alarmed, and hurt when I read (on page 12 of the Minto “renewal” documentaion) that “There are no heritage items located in the precinct”; and I beg to strongly differ. Now, only local- and state-listed items have been considered relevant, in your study; but, in the Campbelltown LGA, heritage items may only be listed locally upon request from the actual property owners (many of whom do not want local listing to stand in the way of demolition and property development), and state listing can only be requested after local listing has been achieved. Now, few of Minto Village's former historic buildings remain today; so the likes of the 118-year-old Old St James Church in Redfern Road (which was originally built on the corner of Minto and Cumberland Roads in 1897, and which was dismantled and rebuilt on its present site in Redfern Road in 1918, and so it is considered to be “unique” because of its 2 foundation stones), 13 Kent Street (the original portion of which was built circa 1898), 23 Kent Street (built c1915), the old general store / post office on the corner of Redfern and Minto Roads (which was built c1925), railway cottage #2 in Minto Road (built 1902), and the elegant dwelling at 62 Surrey Street (built in the 1920's), are of great importance to the long-time Minto Village community. (Please see attached self-funded “Historic Minto” heritage walk brochure, which celebrates those much-loved historic buildings which remain in Minto Village today, and the early Minto Village residents who lived and worked in them). Now, the owners of these aforementioned historic buildings may have neglected to have them heritage listed; but these historic buildings are definitely “heritage items” never-the-less, and they are much-loved by long-time Minto Village residents, and so these remaining “heritage items” must continue to be appreciated and preserved at all costs; so may they be heritage-listed now, without the owners' request and / or consent, please?

I have also realised that the proposed re-opening and widening of the former narrow lane, which became the southern end of Susan Place – that portion of this “designated road” which has been used by St James' Anglican Church since approximately 1985, as it bisects the 2 halves of the Church property – will threaten the future of Minto's beloved “Old St James' Church” building, which sits at the side of this “designated” (but presently-closed) “road”.

Long-time Minto Village residents really don't want any more of Minto's history and proud heritage to be obliterated. Heritage cannot be replaced! Once it is gone, it is gone forever.

With the contents of the earlier paragraph, relating to Minto Village buildings which are up to 118 years old, in mind, it is insulting to state, on page 12, that “..... the average life cycle of a building is generally 30 to 40 years A relatively low proportion of existing dwellings in Minto have been redeveloped. This provides opportunities for a large number of sites in the precinct to be redeveloped over the next 20 years due to the condition and age of the existing building stock”. Well, how very offensive!!! In the case of our own home, for example: It is a structurally-sound full (double) brick single-storey cottage, built in 1960 – being 55 years old, it is presently well past its allegedly-acceptable “life cycle” of “30 to 40 years” of age – but I can assure you that our home doesn't appear likely to collapse any time soon!!! (and neither do any of the much-older neighbouring dwellings). Buildings were well-built in earlier days! Even much earlier builds in Minto Village, such as those of historic significance, dating back to the 1890's, as were mentioned in the previous paragraph, have already passed the test of time; and they can continue to do so, if retained. Early buildings have a “life cycle” far in excess of “30 to 40 years”; so needless “renewal” of such structures, simply because they are no longer “new”, is a waste of money and of God-given resources. Now, if my husband and I had wanted to live in a new home, we'd have bought a new home in 1982; but we wanted to live in an older home, surrounded by other older homes, in an established neighbourhood, and so we chose the Porter family's traditional home town of Minto Village. We had planned to live in our 1960-built home for the rest of our lives, and we planned to eventually pass it on to our 2 sons. We figured that our home would outlive us by many decades, and that it would see its centenary and much more. I repeat that buildings shouldn't be “renewed” or replaced just because they are no longer new. It's only the rubbish homes, which are being built nowadays, which will have reached their “use by” dates after “30 to 40 years”.

Now, with this “30 to 40 years” life span of modern buildings in mind, then **the proposed new apartment blocks will similarly have to be demolished and replaced, 30 to 40 years after they are built.** Indeed, what a waste of money and resources! Wouldn't it be better to just leave today's existing over-40-year-old buildings in situ?

Minto is old – it is older than Campbelltown – so it needs to look old! Campbelltown has retained some of its own historic buildings; so Minto Village needs to do likewise.

In addition, I have to say that my husband is nowhere near the end of his own “life cycle”, either, I'm sure. He hails from a very long-lived family. His mother, from Pembroke Road, Minto Village, will be 90 years of age this year, and his paternal aunt has lived in Minto Village for all of her 97 years. Therefore, barring an accident, my husband does not anticipate that he will be deceased by 2036 (and I am younger than he is); but, the possibility of being forced out of his / our home, by up to 7- or 8-storey apartment blocks, in Minto Village, has reduced him to a state of depression and anxiety, whilst I, upon initially reading the proposal

documentation at Campbelltown Library, was reduced to tears. I still feel extremely threatened and stressed right now – stressed to the point where I presently fear for my health. We would be forced to move elsewhere. However, as I don't drive, and we don't own a functioning vehicle anyway, we still need to be close to certain community facilities such as shops and public transport; so where else could we go?

The “renewal” documentation states that one aim of the proposal is to “provide greater housing choice”, and “provide a variety of housing types within walking distance of the station to cater for all members of the community”; but, if this proposal goes ahead, it will actually deny past, present, and future home-buyers the opportunity to own detached homes, with mature-tree-studded backyards, in Minto Village (and, believe me, homes with decent backyards, in the Campbelltown LGA, are already hard to find, even nowadays). Contrary to its abovementioned “aims”, this proposal, if approved, means that people wanting to live within easy walking distance of Minto railway station will have no option but to live in higher-density housing such as “3 to 4 storey apartment buildings, or higher”.

Your study notes state that the Minto “precinct” has a greater proportion of persons over the age of 65 (and also those over 85 years), than do the Campbelltown LGA and Sydney overall; yet the proposal expects these elderly Minto Village residents to walk or cycle to Minto railway station, rather than using public transport, if the proposal goes ahead. How ludicrous! The existing aged care facilities, etc., in Minto Village, have been so placed, so that their occupants may avail themselves of the bus transport, which is presently in very close proximity to their residences. The elderly won't be wanting to walk to the “one Minto” area, to catch a bus.

I, whilst not yet elderly, always walk to Minto railway station already, as does my husband; so we / I don't need the proposed “new shared pathways”, etc., to encourage us / me to walk there.

I know of no older person(s) who would desire to move, from a detached dwelling with a backyard, to a high rise apartment. My own parents, and also my in-laws, all chose to remain in their own homes (with backyards) for the duration of their entire lifetimes.

I was told, at the “drop-in session”, that the proposed new buildings will attract young people to Minto Village, as young people love all things new; but what about the aforementioned older people who already live here, and who like all things old, and not the new? Most of us don't want “renewal”, it believe. We like older things, as older things are made to last.

At the drop-in session, my suspicions were confirmed, in that the Centennial Stadium public parking area, along with other present parking areas, will be eliminated, and replaced by apartment buildings, etc., if the proposal goes ahead; and only one parking space will be allocated per proposed apartment, in an attempt to discourage households, in these apartments, from having more than one car. Now, you are dreaming, if you think that limiting parking spaces (to one space per apartment) will “encourage” future Minto Village apartment-dwellers to own less cars! There is already insufficient off-street parking at recently-constructed townhouses – residents there generally have more than one vehicle per townhouse, but yet only a single

garage per townhouse is provided - so what will the Minto Village streets be like if yet higher-density housing is introduced here? You can't force households to have just one car!

..... and do you really think that “new shared pathways, separate cycleways,” etc. will force proposed new medium-density housing residents to resort to “cycling and walking”? Today, relatively-new arrivals, in Minto Village, are already living within easy cycling / walking distance from the station, but they - the Bangladeshi / Indian immigrants, in particular - prefer to drive to the railway station, I have noticed.

How do you propose to have “increased rail services to meet the needs of the precinct's growth”? The rail lines struggle to cope already; and so they won't be able to cope with “increased rail services”.

Also, the telephone network is already known to be “overloaded” in Minto Village; so how will the already-strained infrastructure cope with additional residents?

In addition, Australia doesn't have sufficient water to meet the needs of its present population. Australia's optimal population is 20 million, and that has been exceeded already; so, more people mean more stress on Minto Village's, and on Australia's, already over-burdened resources.

I was told that the main purpose of the Minto “renewal” proposal is that of creating new jobs for Minto residents. The proposal may well “help create more local jobs for the community” - a proposed 1,900 new jobs in the Minto “precinct” - but these proposed new jobs cannot be sustained without a population increase in the same vicinity, to patronise these new businesses. However, with the exception of the homeless minority, Australia's present population is already housed somewhere within our nation. Now, more than half of Australia's present population increase being the result of recent immigration (and Minto has an above-average proportion of “residents born overseas”, and particularly those who were born in Bangladesh and Indian, when compared to the Campbelltown LGA and also Sydney), it stands to reason that the occupants of the proposed high rise apartments will have to also be similarly sourced from overseas; but our natural resources simply cannot support further immigrants.

By proportion, there will potentially be insufficient jobs for the multitudes which will be housed in the proposed apartment blocks and other medium-density housing in the Minto “precinct” anyway.

In addition, contrary to indications in the renewal documentation, employers, within the proposed Minto renewal “precinct”, cannot be forced to employ members of the Minto community only. Most recently-created jobs, in Minto, in recent years, have gone to non-Minto residents; so proposed jobs created within the Minto “precinct” will benefit mostly non-Minto residents, and not existing or future Minto people.

A better solution (than the Minto “renewal” proposal), to the present jobs shortage, is a return to the old system, where married women (apart from widows, and those with incapacitated husbands) were not permitted to occupy a paid position in the workforce; and couples lived more than adequately on just one income. It simply is not necessary for couples to have 2 jobs nowadays either. I, for one, have been a full time volunteer in the local community for roughly 32 years, since shortly after my marriage, so as to not take a paid job from a family with no breadwinner at all. A return to this aforementioned earlier system would free up potentially millions of existing jobs.

The “renewed” area won't remain pristine for long. Have you taken into account, for instance, the newer Minto Village residents' present disgusting habit of illegally dumping their rubbish on public footpaths (because these people have no backyards in which to store same until such time as it can be fitted into their garbage bins)? More new residents will simply mean more illegal dumping.

..... and how will more graffiti be prevented, when it cannot be prevented now, even in high traffic areas, in broad daylight?

..... and have you taken into account the overshadowing of existing single-storey properties if high rise apartment buildings are constructed next door to them?

..... and the subject area has always been flood-prone – upon request, I can show you some photos of extensive flooding in Minto Road in recent decades - hence the low-density housing types which presently exist in the area.

I was similarly unimpressed when I read, in the “renewal” documentation (on page 12), that “The precinct contains very little vegetation which is classified as Endangered Ecological Communities under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. In the south of the precinct, Pembroke Park contains small areas of Cumberland Plain Woodland and River Flat Eucalypt Forest on Coastal Floodplains” However, on the accompanying map (Figure 12, on page 11), the naturally-generated mature stand of Remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland Vegetation trees (which sprang up along a former non-perennial creek, well over 60 years ago), presently thriving in the backyards 63, 65, and 67 Pembroke Road, and at 62, 64, 66, and 68 Kent Street, Minto Village, is marked. However, a further map makes it clear that this same vegetation will not be retained, if the “renewal” proposal goes ahead. That is a real “kick in the head” for us, since we have looked after, and protected, this vegetation, in our backyard, for the past 33 years. We were told, by Council, that **the existing naturally-generated Remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland Vegetation, in Pembroke Road and Kent Street, Minto Village, is indeed endangered** and, as such, it must be appropriately cared for, and not removed, whilst it remains alive; so how is this privately-owned and much-loved vegetation suddenly no longer “endangered” and threatened, and no longer of any importance?

Campbelltown is proud to be a “green” city, not a concrete jungle!

..... and what is to happen to the plethora of wildlife which presently inhabits the Remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland Vegetation at the abovementioned addresses in Pembroke Road and Kent Street, Minto Village?

“Landscaped setbacks” will supposedly “enhance the existing streetscape” (Figure 29), if the proposal goes ahead; but the presently-“existing streetscape” doesn't need to be enhanced in this way. The presently-existing established homes, with their front garden “setbacks”, are much better than any of the “enhancing” proposed in the “Minto precinct renewal”.

The proposal aims, in part, to “improve parks and open space”; but this proposal limits open space to public areas only, and it denies the public the opportunity to have private open space at detached homes.

In addition, the proposal, to reduce “passive recreation within the precinct”, will only result in social problems again. That is, where will the children, which these higher density housing types will attract, be able to play?

This proposal is just not consistent with the Australian way of life.

The “additional teaching spaces and infrastructure at existing primary and high schools “ will result in decreased playground space; and this will be detrimental to students' health and fitness.

How many “additional teaching spaces” (which presumably means “additional classrooms”) will be required, if this plan goes ahead? The proposed high rise apartment blocks have the potential to introduce many hundreds of primary-age children to Minto Village; and these children will go to Minto Public School (which draws its students from Minto Village and Minto Heights). Now, Minto Public School is a small school, and it is much-appreciated because of this fact.

According to the proposal maps, even our nearby community centre, in Surrey Street, is to go, in favour of apartment buildings, and in favour of having Minto Village residents walk to the “One Minto” community centre in Guernsey Avenue. Now, I was recently led to believe that new community facilities must be included in all new redevelopments nowadays.

I was also alarmed when I realised that the St James' Anglican Church land is also earmarked for housing. Can Minto Village residents not even keep their church?

..... and have you not heard of the obesity epidemic in the Campbelltown LGA? This is apparently largely caused by a trend to buy prepared meals, lieu cooking from scratch, from home-grown ingredients, at home. On average, Australians eat 3 times the recommended amount of “junk food”, and the Campbelltown LGA (of which Minto is a part) has a higher-than-average obesity problem; so Minto Village certainly doesn't need any more “eating-out” opportunities. People should be encouraged to eat healthy home-cooked foods, indoors, and outdoors, but in their own backyards, rather than at public “outdoor dining” areas.

..... and, without backyards, where will future Minto Village residents grow their vegetables and their fruit, and raise their poultry, and so on? How may residents keep pets (known to be conducive to better health)?

Minto Village is already being spoilt by new residents building second houses in backyards, leaving no backyard space; so it is unacceptable to reduce this any further.

I gather a medical centre is also expected to be included in the retail area near Minto railway station; but Minto simply doesn't need any more medical centres. There are already two medical centres at Minto Marketplace, and another adjacent to Minto Marketplace, and yet another is proposed for the “Redfern's Cottage” curtilage at the rear of Minto Marketplace. Even taking into account the anticipated population increase, there won't be sufficient potential patients to justify yet another medical centre in Minto.

I have to also wonder how the owners and management of the newly-refurbished Minto Marketplace would feel about a second major retail area in Minto.

At the drop-in session, I was told that the proposal would lead to our own Minto Village property becoming substantially increased in value, and that I should be pleased about this prospect; but this is hardly reason for celebration, since we've no desire to sell, and the anticipated increase in our own property value, as a result of the “renewal”, would result in an increase in our council rates!

I grew up in the Riverina, in a sparsely-populated township called “Barellan”. My parents and I moved to Bexley (Sydney) when I was 12 years old, as I had been accepted into the selective St George Girls' High School. However, I found even the relatively-low-density detached housing in Bexley to be too crowded for my comfort. Therefore, my move to Minto Village, shortly after my marriage, was somewhat of a relief for me. Therefore, I just couldn't survive if surrounded by high rise apartment blocks.

How many more times must Minto be needlessly “renewed” before it can be deemed “completed”?

My husband's family (which, as I mentioned earlier, has lived in Minto Village for at least 118 years) has endured many “renewals” in Minto in recent decades (including the introduction, and the later demolition, and re-building, of public housing, east of Minto Village, and also the rezoning of Minto Village to

“residential” and the resulting introduction of townhouses and so-called “granny flats” in backyards). The aforementioned former public housing estates, east of Minto Village, were “renewed”, after it was found that non-detached housing, and unrelated people living in close proximity to one another, result in many social problems.

This current proposal aims to replace functional low-density housing in Minto Village, with higher-density apartment buildings, similar to inner-city public housing apartment blocks, and which will certainly also prove to be yet another mistake. This proposed “renewal” will be much worse than Minto's former public housing ghettos, which were demolished, in favour of detached dwellings. Since the demolition of these former public housing estates, east of Pembroke Road, crime in Minto has diminished substantially, and we don't want crime to return.

The 400 new “homes”, which are proposed for Minto Village within the next 20 years, have the potential to develop into many thousands of new homes, housing many thousands of residents. Now, there are 9 “Sections” in the area bounded by Minto, Redfern, and Pembroke Roads, and Durham Street; and each of these Sections originally comprised 20 standard allotments (with each of these standard allotments being approximately 20 metres wide by 80 metres deep). That's a total of approximately 180 standard allotments within the bounded area. Potentially, each standard allotment could accommodate, say, a 4-storey or an 8-storey apartment block. Let's say the reality could be roughly half and half – half being 4-storey, and half 8-storey (and I've also taken into account the old PO store occupying retail space opposite the railway station). If there are, say, 8 apartments per storey – that is, up to 64 apartments per apartment building (depending on the size of the proposed apartments, and the height of the apartment blocks) - and, if each apartment houses the present (in 2011) average of 2.83 persons per household, then that's a potential average of roughly 9,640 new “homes” (or up to 11,520 new “homes” if higher rises prove popular), if my mental arithmetic serves me correctly, and a potential population in excess of 24,450 within the bounded area, after 20 years. Oh, my goodness! That's mind-blowing! This certainly isn't the “400” potential new homes which are indicated in the proposal documentation. The Minto “precinct” actually has the potential for much-higher-than-predicted growth, as far as high rise apartment buildings and future population are concerned.

Putting the above in another way: The Minto “precinct” apparently houses 1,947 residents, mostly in detached homes, according to the 2011 census; but this number could potentially increase by a factor of approximately 12, or even by as much as 15 (an I think my mental calculations may actually be a great understatement of the potential growth), if residents are housed in apartment buildings of up to 8 storeys within the next 20 years.

Can I really live in a neighbourhood which houses, say, 24,000 other people, instead of the present 1,946 other people? I don't think so!

I also don't want to be unable to recognise my own home town / suburb in the years leading up to 2036 (or in 20 years' time, if I'm indeed still alive then); and nor do I want to be forced to “exist” in, or near, a multi-storey apartment block in Minto Village.

I am told that the “renewal” won't affect me anyway, as I may be dead by the year 2036 – one can only hope! - but I'm sure the “renewal” work won't all be carried out in just one year – the year 2036 - but that it will be a gradual process throughout those 20-odd years, and so I shall have to live through that gradual process, and I shalln't enjoy that at all.

Rather than being concerned about my own interests, however, I am concerned for younger present Minto residents, and also for future Minto Village residents.

Our neighbourhood simply does not need to be “renewed”!

If the Minto “precinct” already has more semi-detached homes and townhouses than the Campbelltown LGA and Sydney, then we don't need any more here, and we certainly don't need apartment buildings.

The present Minto Village is functional; so, as the old saying goes, “If it ain't broke, don't fix it”.

Please, leave Minto Village alone! Minto doesn't want, or need, “high rise apartments west of Pembroke Road”; and existing residents don't want, or need, any more “renewal”. Minto Village residents have a reasonably “high level of amenity” now, in low-density housing with backyard space; but we won't have a “high level of amenity” at all any more, if this disastrous proposal goes ahead.

I believe the “renewal” plan for the Minto “precinct” is a very poorly thought out proposal.

Please consider present and future generations of Australians, who may need to live near Minto railway station, and who may not have “own transport”, but who have absolutely no desire to live in, or near, high rise apartment buildings.

Please, I beg you to forget all about the “Glenfield to Macarthur Urban Renewal Corridor – Minto Precinct” proposal, as it is definitely not in the best interests of the present and future Minto Village communities.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs) Laurie Porter

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P.S. I don't think many existing Minto Village residents are aware of this proposal. I only found out when a neighbour told me that she had heard about it at a meeting. My husband and I were not notified; and other Minto Village residents don't seem to have received any notification either. Therefore, the number of objections, received by your office, will not adequately reflect the feelings of the existing Minto Village community.

P.P.S. I apologise for any inaccuracies in my above letter. I was unable to download the relevant documentation at home, as our internet is dial-up and cannot cope with large files. I viewed the documentation at Campbelltown Library; but I could not return there every time I was uncertain of my recollections or of the facts. A hard copy, for those of us who were unable to avail ourselves of same at home, so that we could continue to study the documentation at our leisure, would have been helpful.