

Support for Development in Appin

By Everard D'Arcy

My name is Everard D'Arcy, and my family has owned land in Appin for almost 200 years. About 43 years ago, a joint announcement by the Federal and State Governments regarding a future Tri-City Plan to include Campbelltown, Camden and Appin was released. This was followed with a Land Acquisition Act legislated in the NSW State Parliament, which impacted all farmland owners in Appin. The next move was to set up the Macarthur Development Board (MDB), later to become the Macarthur Development Corporation (MDC). This enabled the government to buy up most of the farmland, which virtually shut down the local farming industry. This aim was to prevent farmers from subdividing their land, and therefore preserve large parcels of land for future development.

All the future development land was on hold until about 20 years later, when the then Premier decided to sell-off some of the buy-back properties to developers, so they could take over the creation of the city.

In the early 1990's we finally had part of our land rezoned as industrial, after a long and continuous battle with the Wollondilly Council. That land, at Technology Drive, Appin, has since become an important part of Appin's business sector and also an important source of employment for the town, although it is way to small, as a vast majority of the town's workforce need to travel outside of the district for work. Most of these people have to travel on the antiquated and dilapidated Appin–Campbelltown road, which is a testament to the neglect of the region, placed upon the citizens of our

community by local and surrounding governments, in particular, the Wollondilly Council.

There is an atmosphere in the Wollondilly council that feels that it must maintain what it calls 'Rural Living', and therefore must reject any development plans in Appin. I fail to understand what this term, rural living, actually means. Some suggest that it refers to the preservation our surrounding (stagnant) farmlands, and the idea of having wide-open space for visual pleasure. As mentioned previously, farming is virtually non-existent due to restrictions placed upon landholders by the relevant governments, as the area has been on hold for extended periods, due to plans as it being earmarked for future development.

This idea of 'Rural Living' has been supported by a small group of local anti-development protestors, a majority of which do not even live in the area, via the use of social media (Facebook), and they are using this to exaggerate and spread anti-development sentiments with an 'Us versus Them' tactic, and spreading misinformation and blatant lies as to development plans, to further their own goals.

I ask, why should people who have this view have the right to dictate what should be happening to our land and in the area, as they are not burdened by an indefinite period of having the land that they own, being placed in limbo for nearly half a century, due to future development plans, whilst paying taxes, insurances and rates?

Furthermore, why should we be forced to send our children out of the area to go to school, to work, to shop, or to do anything really? Appin is the 5th oldest town in Australia with a rich history, and it's current overlooked and ignored

condition presents it as a stagnant rural black hole, situated between two of the largest cities in the state. This fact alone illustrates that Appin deserves much, much better, and it's treatment by the local Wollondilly Council, past and present, with it's focus on it's centre of Picton and surrounds, is absolutely shameful, and should be condemned.

In preventing residential development and infrastructure, a can of worms has opened up in the way of homes being sold up to make way for town houses and units all over Appin. This is for future residents living in Appin Township, and obviously places further burden on existing overused roads. In stopping residential development outside the town centre, council has created a dead rural wasteland, as there is not any farming activity left in Appin that can sustain a living, for most of it is owned by developers, and the remainder live on stagnant land.

My family and myself have a long and strong history in the town of Appin, both in farming and community. My father opened Appin's first petrol and service station in 1927, and we supplied mechanical services, water delivery, tow trucks, coal trucks, earthmoving equipment, and also even provided hospitality passers by, as our establishment was a major hub of the town's activity. My father even established the Appin Rural Fire Brigade in 1944; in fact we were the integral part of the fire brigade, providing our water tankers!

I would like to see Appin grow, prosper and develop into an important part of Greater Western Sydney, as it once was in the early days of the Australian colony. With respect to Appin's rich history and environment that are of course important considerations that have already extensively evaluated, Appin cannot move forward until further development occurs, and I believe that

current applications are appropriate in addressing Appin's growth in the future, and request that your department consider approving current applications for the betterment of not only our community, but also to provide transport infrastructure for Wollongong, Campbelltown and greater Sydney overall.

Yours sincerely,

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