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## **REF: Menangle Park Land Release and Development**

I am writing to oppose the wholesale over-development of the Menangle Valley (The Menangle Park and Menangle area). This area straddles the Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly LGAs. I oppose the over-development for the following reasons:

### **The disappearance of more A2 Agricultural land in the Sydney Basin, in particular Menangle Park and Menangle.**

- The Menangle Valley is basically the last untouched A2 grade agricultural land bank in the Campbelltown / Macarthur area, north of the Nepean River. Former A1 and A2 Agricultural lands along Camden Valley Road, The Northern Road and around Elderslie, Spring Farm, Gregory Hills, Harrington and Oran Park and Narellan have already, or are earmarked to disappeared under a sea of concrete and micro-housing. If Menangle Valley (Menangle Park and Menangle) go that way there will be nothing left. The result will be no A1 or A2 Agricultural land in

the southern part of the Sydney basin. The next are of agricultural land being the Southern Highlands, and that area is already under-threat from coal mining. Menangle Valley' disappearance will be is a tragedy for the people of Sydney, as this area from the 1820s has been and still is a food producing area for Sydney.

**The destruction of the biological genetic beginnings of**  
**European Agriculture in Australia.**

- The Menangle Valley is the historical epicenter of European food production in Australia. It is the start of it all. It is the place where the five escaped cattle from the First Fleet in 1788 were found in 1795, which had multiplied to 65. So it is the biological birthplace of Australia's beef industry. It is where the sheep industry started with the development of the Merino by John Macarthur in the 1820s, so it's where the Australian Wool industry began. It is where the first successful wheat crops that didn't fail were grown, so it is the place where the Australian Wheat industry started. It is also where Australia's first commercially viable wine industry began.

So, why was the area so successful? Because it was fertile agricultural land, and it still is! Destroying the Menangle Valley with 3500 plus houses is akin to letting developers cover Sydney's Headlands and Sydney Harbour Foreshore National Park in houses and high-rise. It wouldn't be allowed to happen, and either should the destruction of Australia's agricultural birthplace.

### **The destruction of Aboriginal Agricultural Heritage.**

- Before European cattle discovered the fertile Menangle Valley, regional aboriginal clans used it as a vast hunting ground. Over millennium, using fire, they turned the valley into a grassed savanna land to encourage kangaroo, wombats and other native fauna to graze. From the surrounding hills (which *UrbanGrowth* want to cover in 1500 houses) they could view and organize their hunting parties. So destroying Menangle Valley will be destroying aboriginal agricultural heritage extending back thousands of years.

### **The destruction of European Architectural Heritage.**

- The Menangle Valley is the home of over a dozen heritage properties, either listed on the National, NSW State or National Trust register. Some properties are listed on all three. The earliest date from the 1820s. These properties still sit in their original rural curtilage. Destroy their vistas and sight lines and you destroy the properties historical and cultural significance in the landscape.

### **In conclusion.**

- The Menangle Valley has to be saved for the present and the future. It is the birthplace of Australia's European agricultural beginnings. It is truly a site of National Significance. The area can't be allowed to be buried by developers (with the government's blessing) under another sea of concrete. Too much of Sydney's prime agricultural land has already succumbed to this and you can't eat concrete.

We aren't against housing being built, but built unseen behind the valley's hillsides. And areas such as the hillside below historic 'RIVERVIEW' facing the Nepean River are left as it is, as grazing area. The same with the lands around Glen Lee (1827) and The Pines (dating from Governor Macquarie's land grant of 1810). Much of the area's significance is about vistas as well as the agricultural quality of the land.

I would encourage all levels of government to think again about the over-development of the area and create the *Macarthur Agricultural Park* (MAP) in the same way as the NSW government is developing the *Sydney Western Parklands* and the 313 ha community farm (Precinct 9 - Horsley Park). What's good enough for the citizens of Western Sydney is good enough for citizens of the Macarthur area, especially as the Menangle Valley is the birthplace of our agricultural tradition.

Yours sincerely,

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&

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