

Jacob & Lachlan Wicks
54 Fishburn Crescent,
Castle Hill
NSW 2154

Attention:

Mr Rob Stokes

Minister for Planning & Environment,
NSW Government

Dear Minister,

As a resident of 54 Fishburn Crescent in the Showground Precinct, I wish to respond to the "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" as proposed by the NSW Government Department of Planning & Environment on the 5th December, 2015.

It is a huge concern to my brother Lachlan and I, that the draft "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" has several issues that will not make this precinct a desirable or workable precinct to live within, in the future. A precinct that we want to live within, in the future.

Issues like the proposed R3 zoning and other issues like the proposed vehicle links included in the proposal, will directly affect our parent's property at 54 Fishburn Crescent, Castle Hill. For these reasons we CAN NOT support the NSW Government's "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" in its current form and suggest that multiple changes be made.

The main changes we suggest are thus:

- 1. Removal of the R3 zoning and replacing it with R4 zoning**
- 2. Removal of the proposed road network through the Showground Precinct**

We will attempt to respond to your "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" by focusing on the two main areas of concern for us, namely being:

- **R3 Zoning and its inability to work in the Showground Precinct**
- **Proposed new road network through the Showground Precinct**

It is of great alarm to us that the draft strategy has a workable timeframe of over 20 years for redevelopment of the Showground Precinct. This point has been reinforced by both the Hills Shire Council and NSW Department of Planning on numerous occasions.

1. R3 Zoning and its inability to work in the Showground Precinct

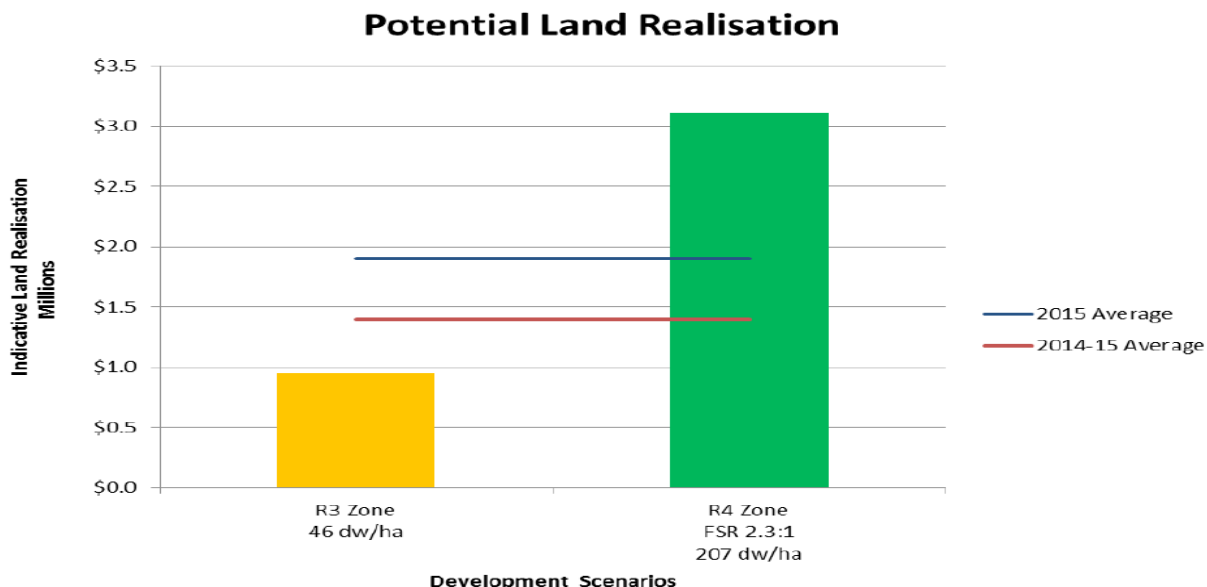
At present my parent's property has been zoned R3 in the proposal, as exhibited by NSW Government in December 2015. At these density levels, I can tell you that **there is NO incentive for my parents to sell their property for redevelopment.**

Anyone who resides in the Showground Precinct is well aware of the property prices and that the \$1.8 - \$2.3 million mark is about the standard selling price. Yes we do concede that this figure may have dropped slightly in recent months as have property prices throughout Sydney.

However, there still remains considerable interest from both investors and more importantly developers to purchase properties in the Showground Precinct and the real estate markets appetite is dictating the prices of properties.

It is our feeling that all residents who own property in the planned density zoned area of R3, WILL NOT sell their properties as there is NO financial incentive to offer them up for redevelopment.

We have seen through the APP Report (that my parents were financial contributors), that was commissioned and published in October 2015 and submitted in response to the “Hills Shire Council – Hills Corridor Strategy” that any development in a proposed R3 area is not going to be economically viable and that our parents will be selling their property to developers for less than \$1 million dollars. (See graph below)



Extracted from APP Report dated 21 October 2015

So as you can see from a simple graphic above R3 zoning will not work at present in the Showground Precinct and very possibly won't work for the next 20 years. Therefore, why should our parents sell their property for well, well under what it is really worth. They would be selling it for almost the same price as a unit in Castle Hill.

Is this realistic or viable?

In addition to this, my parents will have to move to a new residence and they will have to put their hand in their pockets for a figure in excess of \$100,000 (to cover Stamp Duty etc...) if they want a comparable property in the Hills District with the current land size they have.

They want to stay living in the Hills District and at the current prices of real estate in this area, they will NOT be able to afford a home that is anywhere comparable to what we live in at present, if they agree to sell their property under the proposed R3 zoning.

As you can clearly see there is NO incentive for the property owners to sell to developers when they could be taking a massive risk and loss in any deal that is created under the current R3 town/terrace house scenario.

For the Showground Precinct to become successful, there needs to be more significant demand created in the market and at the current zoning at R3 levels this won't be created. **Owners will NOT sell, developers will NOT develop and the area will continue to have 40+ year old houses situated right alongside beautiful multi-storey developments in the R4 zoned areas.**

Is this what the government really wants? A mixed medley of new developments and older housing or a master planned cohesive community.

I know what we would prefer as the future generation of this precinct and that is the **MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY**.

2. Proposed new road network through the Showground Precinct

If this strategy is a 20 plus year plan, then we are really concerned about our parent's ability to sell their property in the future. It is clear that they will have an encumbrance placed over the property for the next 20 year period because of the newly proposed road that goes directly through their property.

We envisage that this will severely limit their ability to offer our land up for redevelopment.

My brother and I have met personally with Hills Shire Council Officers and had discussions with Department of Planning staff at the Community Drop in Sessions held at Castle Hill RSL who have confirmed that there is to be new vehicle links planned for the Showground Precinct.

We wish to voice our concerns and let the NSW Government know that we will NOT be supporting the "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" in its present form, with particular reference to the proposed vehicle links planned for the Showground Precinct.

We have these following arguments that we wish to be considered:

1. We believe that the proposed vehicle links have been included in the draft "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" by the NSW Government with limited or zero major detailed road planning or analysis.

As a 3rd year engineering student who has been taught a great share of problem solving skills and methodology, this situation with the roads in Showground Precinct puzzles me immensely because –

How can these proposed vehicle links be included in any plans in such detail when there is NO certainty about the future plans of the Showground Precinct and almost zero detailed analysis of the road networks has been completed?

All the roads do in their proposed format is:

- **To cut the Showground Precinct in two, which means that opportunities for master planned communities will be lost for ever, as there won't be significant tracts of land for developers to produce quality urban designed living.**
2. The proposed vehicle link is designed to provide access to Showground Road, through and across Fishburn Crescent, Chapman Avenue, Dawes Avenue, Cadman Crescent, Hughes Avenue and through onto Middleton Avenue. Which is fine or is it???

Surely, there is enough streets already in the precinct without the need for additional ones. After all isn't the whole idea of the Showground Station and the 800-1000m walking radius to eliminate the resident's reliance on motor vehicles as their method of transport and encourage them to use the Sydney Metro Northwest by walking to catch the train?

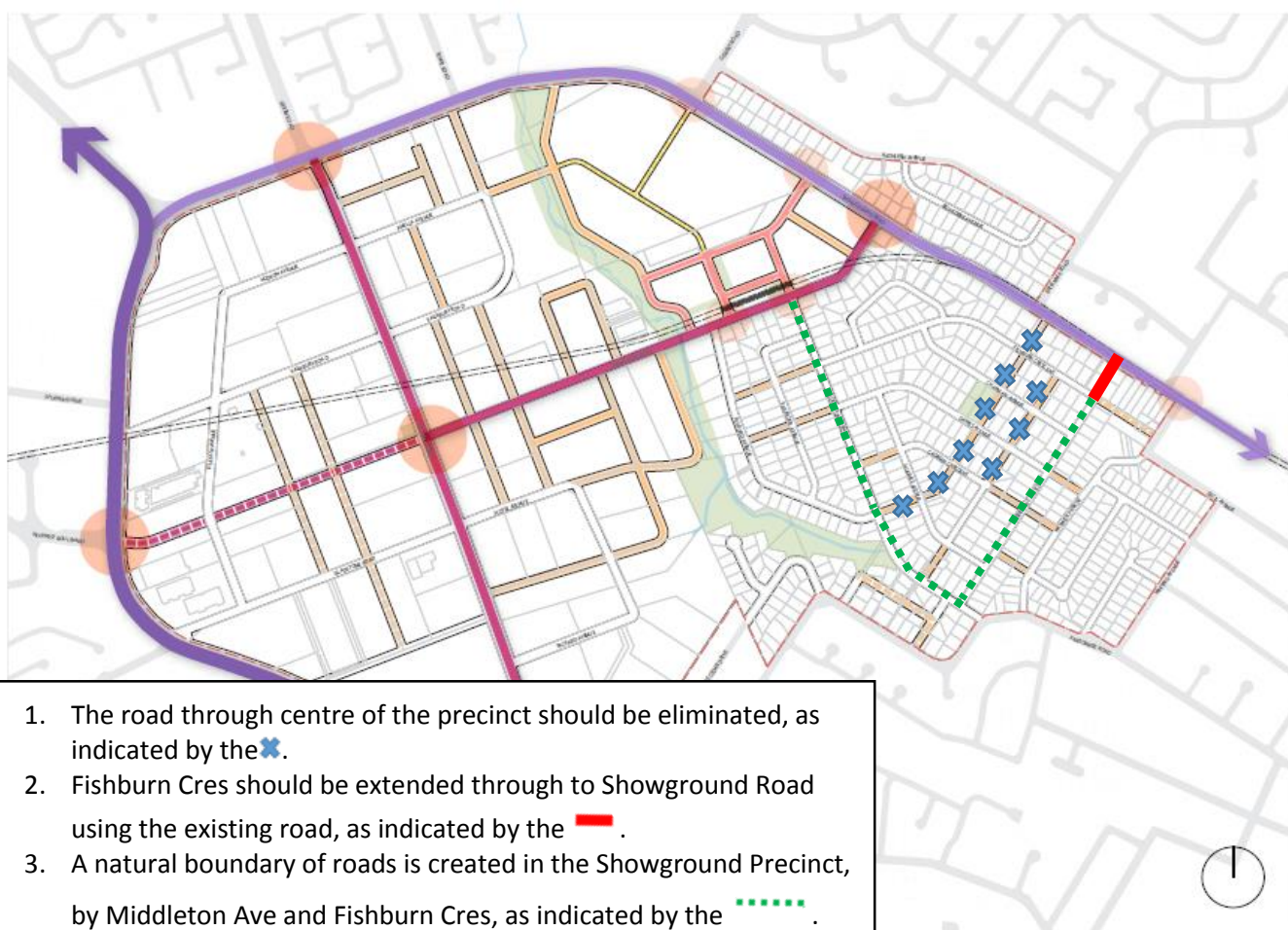
In addition to this, at present, it is totally unclear to residents, exactly how many properties would be affected by these proposed vehicle links, as there are some overlapping of property boundaries and inconsistencies on the maps presented by NSW Government in its Showground Station Precinct Proposal".

The NSW Government needs to be transparent in its planning and indicate exactly what properties and how many properties will be affected by these proposed vehicle links.

3. Surely, a simpler solution is to use the existing Fishburn Crescent stretch of straight road as a thoroughfare throughout the precinct. Fishburn Crescent starts at Middleton Avenue near the future Showground Station and ends at the southern end of Middleton Avenue, near the junction of Parsonage Road.

This thoroughfare is already in place, as are the existing streets in the precinct, which include Chapman, Dawes, Hughes, and Cadman Avenues.

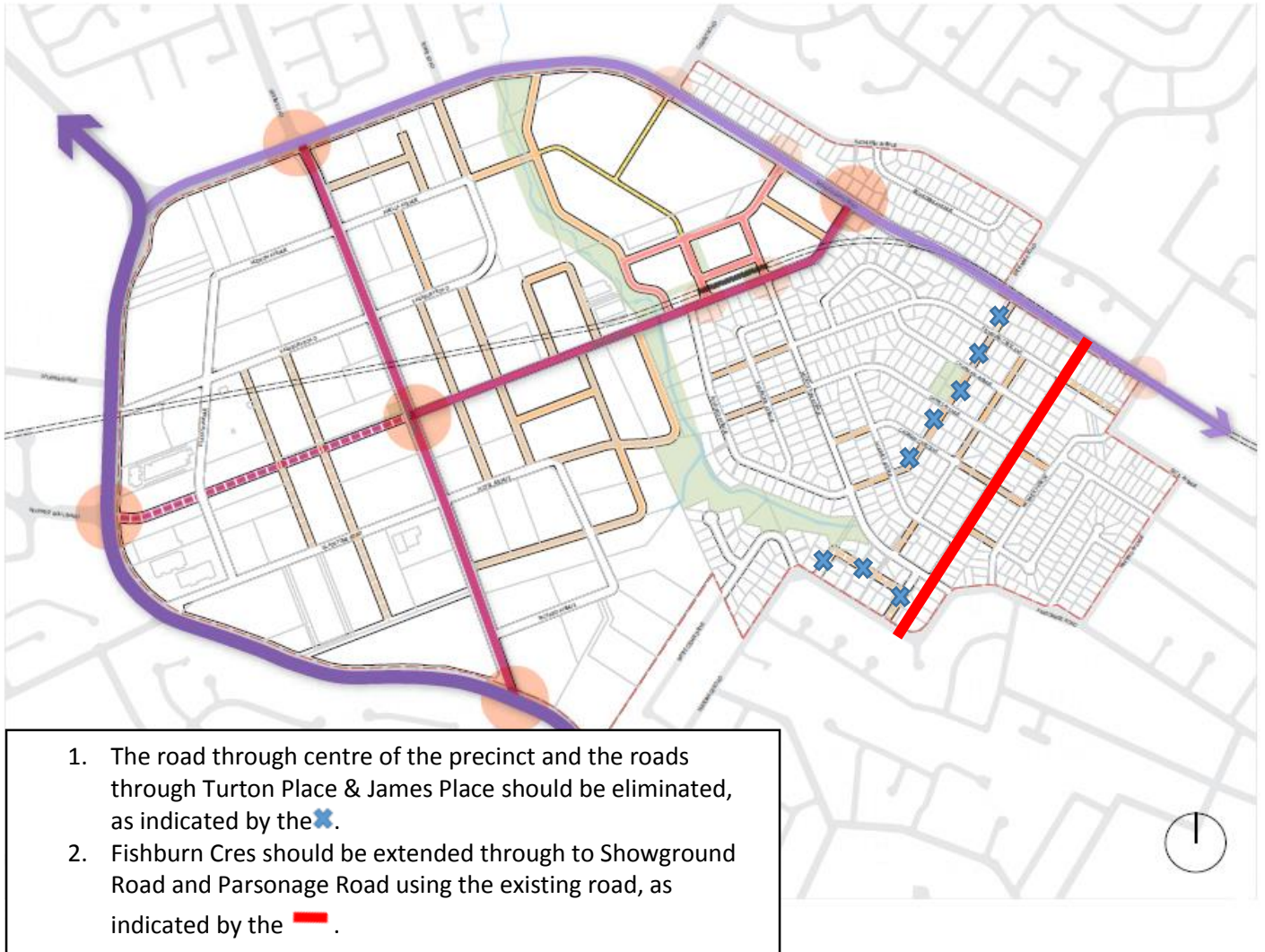
By creating a new link to Showground Road along the southern/eastern end of Fishburn Crescent, (see map below) you would be doing three things:



- Creating a natural boundary for the precinct which is defined by the roads of Fishburn Crescent and Middleton Avenues.
- Creating a safer and more practical way for traffic to exit the precinct (therefore moving traffic away from the centre of the precinct) and pushing it to the peripheral areas.
- Allowing residents to traverse through the precinct safely by walking along the existing road network and newly designed walking paths (designed by developers) to the new rail station and bus interchanges. Therefore, you eliminate the need for residents to cross a busy roadway that goes directly through the centre of the precinct.

We also suggest that the following also ought to be considered in any design of future exit roads from Fishburn Crescent onto the Showground Road:

- Having dual lanes exiting the precinct, as you want minimal interruption to the Showground Road flow. You want cars from the precinct to get onto Showground in large volumes and quickly once the lights have been phased into green.
 - Allow for the widening of Fishburn Crescent extending upwards towards the hill to facilitate any potential queuing that might be needed for the lights. Having a good 100 - 150m of double turning left lanes and possibly a single turning right lane, should facilitate smooth exiting away from the precinct.
4. We think another possible solution to solve traffic flow in and out of the Showground Precinct, involves extending Fishburn Crescent from its current format (with the suggested new extension to Showground Road) and extending it all the way through to join up with Parsonage Road and ultimately Windsor Road. (See map below)



We propose that these changes be made to aid traffic flow out of the Showground Precinct:

- The road through the centre of the precinct be eliminated and the additional roads planned for Turton Place and James Place also be eliminated from any future plans.
- Fishburn Crescent be extended from Showground Road all the way through to Parsonage Road and ultimately joining up with Windsor Road.
- Parsonage Road be widened at least 100 – 150m before the Windsor Road intersection to include an extra lane to turn left and right onto Windsor Road.
- In addition, all the roundabouts and chicanes be eliminated from between the Middleton Avenue/Parsonage Road intersection through to Windsor/Parsonage Road intersection to facilitate smooth traffic flow out of the Showground Precinct.

By creating this link from Showground Road along Fishburn Crescent through to Windsor Road via Parsonage Road you are allowing vehicular traffic to exit the Showground Precinct onto a major arterial road such as Windsor Road, rather than directing it back into the already congested Victoria Avenue area via Carrington or Showground Roads.

Surely, there needs to extra thinking put into this road network issue and we hope our suggestions will receive a favourable response as they are all valid to solving the issues of traffic flow in and out of the Showground Precinct.

Conclusion:

We the residents of 54 Fishburn Crescent, Castle Hill can definitely NOT support the "Showground Station Precinct Proposal" as proposed by the NSW Government Department of Planning & Environment on the 5th December, 2015, as the strategy is flawed in so many areas and doesn't take into consideration the needs for the current and future residents of the Showground Precinct.

We appreciate you looking into this matter and ask that you provide the residents like ourselves who are affected by the proposed R3 zoning and future proposed vehicle links, some clarity and confidence in the NSW Governments plans.

Yours sincerely,

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&

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