

## Submission to NSW Government Planning & Environment - February 2016

We are the owners of 58 Fishburn Crescent Castle Hill, NSW.

We recognise that the NSW Government Planning & Environment is the deciding government authority for the Showground Station Precinct plan. Prior to the NSW Government Planning & Environment plan in December 2015 we were members of a large group of residents united by common interest. This common interest was to sell together to support the development plans in the precinct. We were waiting for the plan that clearly consolidated our group to sell. Following the plan this group has now split. Some residents will now not sell, some are not talking to each other, some are on the market, a few are united to sell and others have become disillusioned by the government planning process. Why?

In December 2015 when the NSW Government Planning & Environment created a dual zone R3 and R4 plan divided by a new road in the plan within the existing boundaries of Showground Road, Fishburn Crescent and the Fishburn Crescent alleyway to Showground Road. This was the time that the group of residents divided. Now following your December 2015 plan and the submissions from property owners such as ourselves we hope our ideas are reviewed and listened to for a better outcome. Therefore we wish:

- To have a viable, commercial and practical solution to the densities in the Showground Station Precinct,
- Unite more residents to support the government planning positions,
- Maximise the selling opportunity as residents,
- Support the State Governments Master Plan,
- To see the future Northwest Rail Link be a great success,
- Get the best possible outcome for all concerned and
- Move on with our lives with greater certainty.

It is all very exciting and promising we think, but we need your assistance.

### A summary of main points and questions are:

- **Groups** - We were included in large groups of residents but the current NSW Government Planning & Environment exhibition divided the group into smaller groups. The plan included not just two zones R3 and R4 but the proposed roads divided residents and created smaller potential building lots.
- **Economic Viability** - Our property is not valued sufficiently under the R3 proposal at an amount equal to or greater than the current market value. The economic viability of the R3 does not allow the sale price of the blocks to be greater than the current market value of the properties. The value is better under the current zoning, R2. Our property is devalued by the current State exhibition with an R3 zoning, so why would we consider selling? Note, we will sell with the right zoning that allows our property value to be greater than a normal sale value of a similar house in Castle Hill outside the precinct with a

good financial incentive to actually make it all happen. Moving house is disruptive to people's lives and they will not move unless motivated or incentivised. If you review which residents on the Showground Station Precinct are on the market at the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2016 it will include R4 zoning only. The R4 zoned residents are motivated and incentivised by your plan. We have attached a document prepared by others members in our residents group called "Appendix on Economic Viability – A Residents Perspective- 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016". We ask that you review this document.

- **Master Plan** - We hope to achieve a State Government Master Plan. This means we would need to sell with other residents to allow the plan vision to be fulfilled. R3 does not work as mentioned above so unless a new zoning is made, for example R4 at the correct densities/heights/FSR we will NOT sell. Note that Fishburn Crescent will not be a great place to live, if many other residents in this part of the precinct are being developed over the years and there are building trucks in our street and large residential buildings next to our property.
- **Boundaries?** - The exhibition does not follow the natural road/lane boundaries, why?
- **Roads** - The idea of proposed roads on existing blocks is confusing for us as property owners and therefore how do we sell to potential development buyers? You can only get the roads built if a developer buys the relevant blocks of land. The new roads reduce the blocks buildable area and therefore value.
- **Stamp Duty and Affordability** - When I sell my existing property I will have to pay stamp duty on the new property when I relocate in NSW. A property sale in NSW creates stamp duty and the government Treasury will receive more duty, so how do I afford this when my property is currently valued less on an R3 zoning than the current R2 zoning? The government gets more stamp duty but I may have to move as I do not want to live in a construction site.
- **Politics, voting for an ideology does not get you a good result** - As Castle Hill is a safe Liberal seat and not a marginal electorate at any level of government we often in this electorate come second to a Labor seat or marginal seat when government is spending money. This is very concerning. E.g. the development of Showground Road controlled by State Government. This road has not been developed to four lanes, from Carrington Road to Pennant Street despite the need by residents and local road users. I (Matthew) have been travelling in Castle Hill for 38 years. As a married couple we have lived in Castle Hill since 1993 and voted Liberal since 1986. It amazes us that all the talking over the last 20+ years by the controlling body (State Government), with the local government and the QIC (Queensland Investment Corporation who owns Castle Towers) has not resulted in Showground Road being developed to four lanes to operate efficiently. Why? Government has not listened to supporting voters. We paid taxes/duties to have this road built and then roads are built in new and marginal electorate

areas. E.g. Stanhope Gardens, Stanhope Parkway. Look after those people that voted for the current Liberal government.

- **Stamp Duty/ State Revenue** - It seems strange that the State Government Treasury will benefit financially from three (3) rounds of Stamp Duty payable on the exiting land when sold in the future. This is a BONANZA for the government:
  1. The sale of our properties to a developer.
  2. The current residents will purchase new replacement properties in The Hills Shire area or within NSW most likely.
  3. The purchase of the final developed residences be they terraces, townhouses or units by the new residents.  
(So the sooner the zoning provides the incentive for residents to group together and sell, the sooner the revenue flows to the State Government Treasury.)

Other points and questions in more detail are in random order and we request that they are considered and amended in the future plan.

### **Distance from the Station**

The stated importance of land within the 800m distance from the train station so government should zone our property R4 but your plan does not zone our property R4, why? There is no logic to the zoning of R4 vs R3 in the current plan given the importance of the 800m zone from the train station.

### **Master Plan**

There is a need for a better master planned approach for the Showground Station Precinct for all the original medium density areas, as per previous NSW State Government documentation publically available. E.g. 2013 Plan.

Larger blocks of available land will create a greater opportunity for developers to achieve the State Government's master plan. Our group has already split but will reform if the zoning provides economic viability to sell. If residents do not form into larger groups and stay together, then the developers will not gain access to the required land area. If residents stay together in larger groups, this will importantly prevent cherry picking and maximize the opportunity for large planned site development to take place in the future.

In the precinct there are many groups of residents willing to relocate to allow for the area to be sold and developed to achieve the master plan outlined by the NSW Government Planning & Environment. We are willing to sell and relocate if the opportunity is created for all to benefit.

Random development spread over 10 - 20 years is disrupting lifestyle and reduces the ability to build sizable infrastructure services; this is not attractive to government or residents. E.g. water and sewerage services required for medium density.

The area within the precinct can become a “blank canvas”, for example: Middleton Ave and Fishburn Crescent, which are within the 800-metre zone to the train station. This is a perfect opportunity for a complete master planned approach and if residents sell together the optimal forms of housing and infrastructure can be achieved.

### **Economic Viability**

There needs to be economic viability so that the current residents have financial incentive to form large groups and jointly sell their properties. E.g. the R3 zoning values our properties at less than the current market value.

### **Controlling Body - NSW Planning & Environment, not the Council**

At the recent discussion forums at the Castle Hill RSL we were told that NSW Government Planning & Environment followed council zoning. Why? Whilst this may be the historical process it could be limiting or short-sighted as the council is not in favour of the densities the state government wants to achieve in the Precinct. The council has also despite putting out a plan failed to communicate with residents on the zoning issues or development solutions. The council knows that they are not the controlling government body. We suggest rethinking the zoning to achieve the master plan and incorporate “Spot Zoning” as recommended/suggested by NSW Government Planning & Environment employees at the recent Castle Hill RSL Forums.

### **Resident Groups**

It is expected that our existing group will reform with other residents into a larger group and we will have the opportunity to sell a large site for development if the plan is reviewed and changed accordingly to R4. This will benefit the planning and development opportunity in the Showground Station Precinct.

### **New Roads**

Why would you put new roads in that are not symmetrical and create further issues in the precinct? The proposed new roads across the Showground Station Precinct near Fishburn, Chapman and Dawes do not flow with existing roads surrounding the precinct (e.g. Britannia Avenue) and this makes no sense. If a road is needed to run into the precinct, it should run from Britannia across Showground Road into the precinct. An example of this problem that highlights the issue, is the Showground Road intersection with both Rowallan Avenue and Cecil Avenue, because the problems are obvious at this intersection;

- Traffic lights in wrong location,
- Dangerous right-hand turns and
- No right hand turn signs (which are ignored by some motorists unfortunately).

Do we really need another intersection like this on Showground Road? This example is a dangerous and messy intersection.

The straight line of a proposed road and residences being R3 and R4 is altered by the state plan at Cadman, Hughes and Middleton Avenue to allow R4 to number of the existing residents. This MAKES NO SENSE and we believe R4 should extend to the northern side of Fishburn Crescent. We are all within the 800metre zone.

A road from Fishburn Crescent to Showground Road on the southern end near the alleyway makes a lot more sense for vehicles coming in and out of the Showground Station Precinct.

### **Natural Boundaries**

We would suggest using the natural boundaries created by former state and local government called “roads and laneways” to divide zoning boundaries e.g. Fishburn Crescent as a natural boundary and the laneway from Fishburn Crescent to Showground Road.

We believe that with Showground Road as a boundary for the R4 zoning should be from the Fishburn Crescent laneway to Carrington Road and run west from Showground Road covering Fishburn Crescent and Chapman Avenue.

### **APP Corporation Submission**

We would request you review the APP Corporation Pty Ltd Town Planning submission which we have supported financially for the proposed amendments to the Showground Station Precinct plan.

### **Green Space**

The level of green space shift is not maximised by the current draft plan and is:

- Diminished under R3 to 100sqm per existing block of 1000 sqm.
- Existing residents with 1000 sqm currently have between 650-700sqm of greenspace.
- R4 offers 250sqm per 1000sqm.

So the R4 option green space is better than the R3 green space given the precinct will have greater green space under R4 and importantly accommodate greater densities. This works within the master plan of State Government.

### **Time Frame**

We request a clear time frame for the finalisation of the precinct plan is requested so that resident can plan their lives and stay united to sell in larger groups realising the master plan. We can keep a large group of residents united if we know the timetable. Remember the rail line opens in 2018/19 and is ahead of schedule. Will the Showground Station Precinct be ready for the Northwest Train line?

## **Hills Shire Council Submission**

Please find attached our October 2015 submission to The Hills Shire Council. This highlights a number of points made to local government at the time relevant to the Hills Shire and the development of the Showground Station Precinct. It was noted and presumably minuted at the following Hills Shire Council meeting that we attended, that many of the councillors had not actually read the 600+ submissions lodged by local residents and lobby groups. Was the council ever really interested? Refer to the document "Council submission October 2015".

## **NSW Government Planning & Environment Community Forums**

Importantly we attended both the RSL Community Forum in January and February 2016 that encouraged residents on the following points:

- "Spot Rezoning" could be achieved with large groups formed, despite the Hills Shire Council position on zoning.
- Residents were encouraged to make their views known and applauded by the NSW Government Planning & Environment planning team for banding together in large groups, seeking to sell together and allowing the State Government to achieve its master plan.
- Planners were appreciative and warmly accepted logical points made at the forums.
- Fishburn Crescent should open onto Showground Road at the existing alleyway.
- We were encouraged to put in a submissions to the NSW Government Planning & Environment so that residents in the our group and many other groups of residents have met numerous times and decided to support the APP Development Pty Ltd submission and individual property submissions.
- NSW Government Planning & Environment staff verbally recognised the economic viability of the current plan does not work for R3 within 800 metres of the train station.
- Off-street parking would be greater with underground R4 developments than R3 terraces and townhouses.

We thank you for the opportunity to meet recently, put forward our idea's, review our submission and importantly listen to our thoughts with a view to achieving a better outcome.