

Submission to NSW Government Planning & Environment

FRG South February 2016

(FRG South is the Fishman Residential Group South inclusive of residents in Fishburn Crescent and Chapman Avenue, Castle Hill, NSW)

We are a group of eleven (11) residents or landowners from 35 Fishburn Crescent to 13 Chapman Avenue, Castle Hill with many residents having common boundaries. We recognise that the NSW Government Planning & Environment is the deciding government authority for the Showground Station Precinct plan. Following the release of the NSW Government Planning & Environment plan in December 2015 from our original group of 29 residents in a pod united by a Joint Venture Agreement our group changed as follows:

- 15 resident split away forming a smaller group with an R4 zoning and are on the market,
- 3 residents withdraw from our Joint Venture Agreement and
- We, the remaining 11 resident remain in a smaller Joint Venture group and importantly are a part of this submission.

The residents who are a part of our Joint Venture group in Castle Hill are:

35 Fishburn Cres	Matthew & Mirella Erwin
37 Fishburn Cres	Yong Hwi Kim & Jenny Ji Young Park
39 Fishburn Cres	Chi Hoi Fung & Man Yi Poon
41 Fishburn Cres	Patricia Ann Smart
43 Fishburn Cres	Steven & Jenny Chapman
45 Fishburn Cres	Chunbo Gao
47 Fishburn Cres	Gary & Judy Polmanteer
3 Chapman Ave	Clarence & Maureen Burton
5 Chapman Ave	Kerry & Andrea Georgiou
11 Chapman Ave	Cherold Marie Plummer
13 Chapman Ave	Terry & Dianne Waugh

The point in time being December 2015 when the NSW Government Planning & Environment created an R3 and R4 zoning plan divided by a road in the plan, this was the time that our group of 29 residents split. Prior to this time we 29 residents all in agreement to sell our properties to achieve the State Government's Master Plan, maximise the selling opportunity as residents, who would then be obliged to move on with their lives.

The group wanted to make a number of points that we believe will improve the Showground Precinct Plan.

Summary of main points:

- We were in large groups but the current NSW Government Planning & Environment exhibition resulted in the dividing the group into smaller groups
- The current exhibition does not follow the natural road/lane boundaries.
- The idea of proposed roads on existing blocks is confusing for residents and potential buyers
- The economic viability of the R3 does not allow the sale price of the block to be greater than the current market value of the properties. All properties are devalued by the exhibition.
- Our group wishes to achieve a State Government Master Plan that sees our properties included in the R4 rezoning.
- The State Government Treasury will benefit from three (3) rounds of Stamp Duty payable on the exiting land when sold in the future:
 1. The sale of our properties to a developer
 2. The current residences will purchase new property 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.

Points and questions in more detail are in random order and we request that answers are provided directly to our submission or included in the future plan in more detail:

- Our group questions why our Showground Station Precinct is a priority precinct but the plan outlines the timeframes of 20 years to achieve resident density results. How is this a priority precinct?
- The stated importance of land within the 800m distance, that allows for safe, easy walking to and from the station, with minimum streets and driveways to cross and more open spaces for residents to enjoy are missing under this plan. The R3 plan will not provide this safety outcome with all the driveways required for multiple townhouse type dwellings.
- 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.
- 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.
- Larger blocks will create a greater opportunity for developers to achieve the State Government's master plan. If residents do not form into larger groups and then stay united , then the developers will not gain access to the required land area. If residents stay together in larger groups, this will importantly also prevent cherry picking and maximize the opportunity for large planned site development to take place in the future. The Master Plan will be achieved.

- 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.
- There is the current prospect of random development spread over 1 - 20 years, disrupting lifestyle and infrastructure services, which is not attractive to government or residents. Groups of resident will NOT form easily over so many years, the opportunity to sell large blocks to develop infrastructure and build new residences on the site is NOW amongst existing residents. The NSW Government Planning & Environment can seize this opportunity now!
- The area within the Showground Station Precinct can become a “blank canvas”. For example re-zone between Middleton Ave and Fishburn Crescent R4, which is within the 800 metre zone to the train station e.g. no town houses, units, granny flats, group houses or businesses. This is a perfect opportunity for a complete master planned approach and if residents sell together resulting in the optimal forms of housing can be achieved.
- At the recent discussion forums at the Castle Hill RSL we were told that NSW Government Planning & Environment followed council zoning. 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 Showground Station Precinct.
 - Has also despite putting out a plan, failed to communicate with residents on the zoning issues or development solutions.
 - Knows that they are not the controlling government body.
 - Appeared that party politics played a major role in determining the best outcome for the Hills Shire.

We suggest that government rethinks 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.

- Another point of view was why not increase the Showground Station Precinct to the 2013 proposed draft to include more R4 to assist the housing shortage as part of the master plan this would remove the need for the re-zoning of the food bowl areas in outer Sydney areas.
- Proposed new roads across the Showground Station Precinct near Fishburn Crescent, Chapman Avenue and Dawes Avenue do not flow or run into the existing roads surrounding the precinct (e.g. Britannia Avenue). This makes no sense and is a continuation of an existing problem on Showground Road. So if a road is needed to run into the precinct (and we do not think it is), it should run from Britannia across Showground Road. An example of this problem that highlights the point to be made is the Showground Road intersection with both Rowallan Avenue and Cecil Avenue. The problems are obvious at this intersection and have not been adequately addressed by government;
 1. Traffic lights in wrong location, it should cover both intersections,
 2. Dangerous right-hand turns from Rowallan Avenue and
 3. No right hand turn signs from Showground Road into Cecil Avenue (which are ignored by some motorists unfortunately).

What a dangerous intersection this on Showground Road, do we really need another intersection like this on Showground Road?

NOTE we advocate a rezoning to R4 note another road but the point highlights the issues of the road.

- Creating parks next to existing council parks devalues resident's property and makes it unsaleable to a developer or other purchaser. What developer is going to buy a park or which government authority will purchase the property for the proposed parkland?
- Parks really need to be incorporated into the development plans for the area, to provide recreation facilities for future residents. However, these recreation areas need to be carefully planned. A piecemeal approach (e.g just adding to existing parks) will have a negative impact both to current owners, whose property prices would be affected and to potential developers, who would want the freedom when purchasing these properties for development, to have freedom of design.
- Our group 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.
- Our group 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.
- Terraces create the need to have multiple driveways entrances some 6-8 metre apart which increases the number of vehicles crossing the footpaths. We believe that residential units create a safer pedestrian environment, as only one driveway is required per complex/building. Noting the entry or exit and the distance apart for a unit complex is much great than 6-8 metres.
- It is expected that our group of 11 residents will reform into a larger group of 29 residents and we then will have the opportunity to sell a large site for development if the plan is reviewed and changed accordingly.
- Terraces do not offer adequate parking for more than one car per residence.
- Terraces do not offer visitor parking like a medium density complex, so the local roads will be greatly congested if only on street parking is available. The on street parking would also restrict access for council services like rubbish removal and essential services access for example the Fire Department.
- Additional roads create greater crossing zones for pedestrians accessing the station. Will there be lights or pedestrian crossing for residents including children and the disabled?
- The proposed road from Showground Road is a straight line on the plan and runs between residences on the R3 and R4 zoning has been altered by the NSW Government Planning & Environment at the following road of Cadman, Hughes and Middleton Avenue to allow R4 zoning to number of the existing residents. This MAKES NO SENSE that the zoning is altered at this point. As a united group we believe the R4 zone should extend to the northern side of Fishburn Crescent to Middleton Avenue. We are all within the 800metre zone.
- Will there be alleyways or suggested alleyways on the final plan between some buildings to allow safe pedestrian access to the train station.
- Some residents believe that with Showground Road as a boundary for the R4 zone should be from the Fishburn Crescent laneway to Carrington Road and run west from Showground Road covering Fishburn Crescent, Chapman Avenue and Dawes Avenue.
- The level of green space shift 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 and R3 offers 100sqm per existing 1000sqm.

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

- 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. This would avoid having single blocks surrounded by united residents ready to sell. It will enable developers to purchase large blocks of land without isolating blocks within larger grouped residences.
- Importantly the RSL Community Forum in January and February 2016 encouraged residents on the following points:
 - “Spot Rezoning” by the NSW Government Planning & Environment 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.
 - The residents were encouraged to put in submissions to the NSW Government Planning & Environment. So the residents in this Joint Venture and many other groups of residents have met numerous times and decided to support the APP Development Pty Ltd submission, household submissions and this FRG South submission.
 - NSW Government Planning & Environment staff recognised the economic viability of the current plan does not work for R3 zone within 800 metres of the train station.
 - Off-street parking would be greater with underground R4 zoned developments than R3 zoned terraces and townhouses. A better traffic solution.
 - The plan was not finalised and would change to provide a better outcome based on the community response and submissions.

In summary there are numerous points made by our Fishman Residential Group South. We would be happy to discuss the document with the NSW Government Planning & Environment in person and would arrange our committee of three (3) to meet with the NSW Government Planning & Environment team if you required. A contact email for the group is merwin35@bigpond.net.au

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 for the State Government, the Castle Hill residents and those residents in The Hills Shire.