

**TO: Director Urban Renewal  
Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001**

**SUBJECT: REZONING OF THE KATHLEEN AVENUE PRECINCT AND  
NORTHERN PORTION OF SHOWGROUND RD.**

SIR,

My name is Stephen McLoughlin and I am a long term resident of 128 Showground Rd. Castle Hill where I abide with my wife Deidre McLoughlin and our family.

We have been following the rezoning of the Castle Hill Showground precinct with intense scrutiny and absorbing the ramifications for ourselves and our neighbours with which we have been in extensive contact.

We are requesting that the proposed R3 zoning for the above site and the wider Kathleen Avenue precinct be rezoned to R4 High Density for the following reasons:

- We are in close proximity proximity to the proposed Showground Station and wholly within 400 metres radius, 10 minutes walking distance of the station. As I understand it the current best practice as identified in A Plan for Growing Sydney calls for higher densities around high frequency public transport. Allowing higher density on our site would assist the State Government meet their housing targets.
- Urban Design – We note that the proposed zoning immediately South of our property on Showground Rd has the following characteristics (a) Zone B2 “Local Centre”, (b) building height zone Y2 54 metres and (c) Floor Scape Ratio of 3:1.  
There will be a huge discrepancy in regard to building height from The Southern to the northern side of Showground Road, i.e. from 54 metres (18 stories) to 9/10 metres. The Showground Station Precinct Proposal proposes building heights to be 10 metres north of Showground Rd but limits height to 9 metres on our property to the Northern side of the road.
- The proposed rezoning limits our property to Townhouses or terraces on the northern side of Showground Rd will impact negatively on the Showground Station precinct. In discussions with our neighbours, potential buyers for our land and developers the capital these structures would generate will not provide enough funds for us to relocate and so we would be better off If we did not develop nor sell under the zoning regime as proposed in the draft Showground Station Precinct Proposal. This is the general view of all the residents we have spoken with in our immediate neighbourhood. We believe that an integrated planning approach to the entire precinct would deliver better urban planning outcomes. The existing housing stock on the site is of an age where

redevelopment is likely and there is considerable co operation between the residents regarding amalgamation in order to obtain better planning outcomes.

- In contrast, multistorey development allows for larger setbacks and the retention of deep soil supporting trees. With the construction of townhouse/terraces there would be a significant reduction in the trees and lawns which is not in keeping with the treed character of the Kathleen Avenue Precinct and the general Hills area. As a landscaper of over 30 years experience I have seen first hand the implementation of town house developments where the land is largely used to provide extensive driveways and buildings right up to the property boundaries giving limited scope for landscaping and pedestrian thoroughfares. I believe therefore that developments utilizing townhouse and terrace dwellings are an inefficient use of space.
- In consultation with town planners and architects we have employed we are advised that the predicted residential uptake of 350 dwellings in the proposed R3 areas in the Showground Station Precinct (page 18 of NRWL Corridor Strategy) will not be achieved with town houses due to the poor returns for developers. This is because the price that would be offered to existing land owners would not be an incentive to sell and move elsewhere.
- An R4 zoning would encourage greater amalgamation as larger sites are more desirable to developers and motivation for amalgamation (with appropriate zoning) is high among local residents of the Kathleen Avenue precinct. Along with the other residents we have signed a petition requesting the rezoning of the Kathleen Ave area to R4.
- Amalgamation of the properties in the Kathleen avenue precinct would reduce the need to access Showground Rd, a policy of the RMS being to restrict new vehicular access to Showground Rd., and would improve the streetscape of both showground Rd and Kathleen Ave allowing for more deep soil planting.
- A change in zoning to R4 would increase foot traffic to the perimeter of the new Centre increasing vitality along its northern perimeter and allowing freer access to the showground precinct centre and the new railway station.
- Much of the infrastructure needs of the area will be financed through section 94 contributions and rates which would be increased with the availability of more apartments.
- The current proposal is not consistent with the 2013 NRWL Corridor Strategy and Showground Road Station Structure Plan. The R3 town/terrace house zoning would not make best use of the nearby expensive railway infrastructure and result in a poorer return to the railway owners. Higher densities near the railway support a larger number of people able to easily access this infrastructure. As our land is within 450 metres walking distance and wholly within a 400 metre radius to the station, we reason that the land zoning should be at least R4.
- We believe that with a low uptake offered by the rezoning as presented that development would be patchy resulting in a 'cookie cutter' approach, with poorly integrated design rather than a holistic plan for the precinct.
- The current proposal for town houses will result in developments which are often characterized by poor streetscape presentation, dominance of car parking

facilities and poor landscaping. Rezoning to R4 will ensure that all development will be subject to SEPP65 which improves design outcomes such as building separation and landscape requirements including deep soil planting.

- I believe that a higher population density close to the railway station would allow more people to travel by public transport without car reliance. Transport is a major greenhouse producer and public transport is an opportunity to reduce carbon monoxide and particulate emissions.
- We live in the timber cottage on the site which is of local heritage significance and is a small 6 room cottage (10.6 metres wide x 12 metres deep). It was placed on the Baulkham Hills Heritage Study list in 1993 as representative of its type and is not regarded as rare. The listing actually states that it is of low significance. The proposed R3 zoning will see the single storey cottage surrounded by 2 – 3 storey townhouses.

If the zoning were to revert to a higher density the amalgamated site planning would allow for sufficient curtilage adaptive reuse of the structure. The presence of the heritage listed cottage is not prohibitive to future redevelopment for high density housing and we have been advised that it could be incorporated into an overall strategy for the area as a café or childcare centre.

- The whole length of Kathleen Ave is within 800 metres of the Showground Station entrance, and Showground Road has an existing 24/7 bus service. Thus it would be very attractive for residents to commute via the train or bus. Showground Road is not a barrier to pedestrian traffic as there are three sets of pedestrian crossings in parallel at traffic lights in close proximity to Showground station.

In conclusion we believe that the current Showground Station Precinct Proposal for an R3 Medium Density zoning is inappropriate for our property.

The land's proximity to Showground Station makes it a prime candidate for Transit Orientated Development and the proposed height limit of 10 metres will result in poor transition from a high density, high quality local centre to two storey townhouses.

This will detract from the quality of the gateway entry to the new precinct.

The townhouse developments will lock in strata titled two to three storey development for decades to come and limit future growth.

Yours sincerely

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