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**Submission to
Department of Planning and Environment
In Response to
Draft Showground Precinct Proposal**

It is clear that a lot of work has been put into this draft proposal; however, it does require certain improvements which I have listed in this document. My comments are mainly targeted toward the zoning of land North of Showground Rd.

My perspective is one that has been obtained by many years of residency in Castle Hill, most of which has been in the area concerned. I live at no. 38 Kathleen ave and have aligned myself into a pod of properties totaling 6200sqm. In addition, I have also consulted with other residents in the street. Through various meetings with other groups in our street, it has been demonstrated that we all feel the same way and are prepared to act in concert, and it is a fact that we all have similar viewpoints in that the plan has several faults. As a result so far, all residents have already been speaking with developers who are all keen to work together for a consistent outcome. We are all committed to requesting an upgrade of the proposed zoning to R4 to make our plans a reality, to the benefit of ourselves, the community generally and to the Department's stated aims.

Having read your proposal documentation, we can see the inadequacy of an R3 zoning as it will not achieve the stated aims of population increase for proper utilization of the new train station, and may very well result in lost opportunities for orderly development. We all agree the zoning should be escalated from your proposed R3 (Medium density) to R4 (High density) at least. This R4 zoning level will allow proper commerciality for the projects as the current proposed level will provide no incentive for change in the entire street. This is because the zoning restrictions will not allow buildings of sufficient capacity to interest any developers in purchasing this land for new construction at a price which might interest a resident to sell. **Your proposed zoning leaves the street fragmented in the desire for change versus the means with which to do it.**

With an R4 zoning:

- The land in the precinct north of showground rd can realize its true potential
- All existing residents have demonstrated ability to arrange consistent planning
- Taller dwellings can allow for more green space for the community
- Better access can be created for access to the new station from existing facilities
- A better building profile transitioning from the station centre will be achieved
- The better zoning enables more residents to live within 10min walk to the station
- The ability for taller buildings and larger developments will keep driveways off showground rd, safely eliminating some existing driveways in the process.
- The desired outcome for all parties will be achieved, especially including the department's desire for residential uptake.

With an R3 zoning:

- The anticipated residential take-up of the plan will fail on commercial grounds.
- The profile of buildings along showground rd will be extremely Lop-sided.
- The existing plan will cause traffic conflicts of every sort along showground rd because multiple townhouse driveways require
- An opportunity for orderly consistent planning along with green space may be lost
- The department has underestimated the community determination in this area.

The plan as it has been proposed makes a number of assumptions which I know are incorrect.

- **Incorrect Assumption #1** – This assumption is that some existing dwellers may be reluctant to commit to change as they are listed as constraints in your documentation. My house is shown as a constraint because it was constructed in 1996 and that is perceived by the authors of the report to be too recent for demolition. As the owner, I was never asked if my plans conflicted with development, however that was the incorrect assumption in your document.
- **Incorrect Assumption #2** – It was assumed in your constraints document that the old farmhouse shown as 40 Kathleen Ave (or 128 Showground Rd) would be a constraint to development as the Local Council has shown interest in the heritage aspects. This dwelling is not listed in the State Heritage register and developers tell us that the structure need not be an impediment to development in any case. Further, the building is compromised structurally and has Fibro extensions from the 1960s attached. Another similarly listed heritage building on the southern side of showground road has been zoned as R4 in your draft plan, which is inconsistently not shown as a constraint.
- **Incorrect Assumption #3** – To attempt to justify an R3 zoning for Kathleen ave precinct, it has been written that Showground rd presents a barrier to access for pedestrian traffic to the station from the northern side. This is incorrect as the existing three pedestrian crossings over showground rd have demonstrated the ability to handle major Showground events every year without incident, even at

peak event times, involving thousands of people crossing this main thoroughfare. Also, this aspect is inconsistent, as in other precincts, equal distribution of zonings which straddle main roadways similar in volumes to showground rd are shown.

Further arguments in favour of increasing Kathleen Precinct area to R4 include:

Loss of employment - The existing draft plan shows the conversion of Industrial land west of Cattai creek from industrial to residential. Rather than losing employers in the area, why not convert the Kathleen precinct to R4, as this land is closer and even includes currently vacant land?

Kathleen Precinct within 400Metres of station. – The subject land is within 400 Metres from the station, which translates to a 10 minute walk. All other stations are surrounded on all sides by at least R4 zonings within 400Metres or more.

Existing Community Facilities North of Showground Rd – The Kathleen Ave precinct is actually at the centre of community activities and the new rail station. Existing facilities North of showground rd that could be accessed by larger groups of residents with an R4 Zoning, connecting with the new station including:

- The Castle Hill Tennis Centre
- Basketball courts
- Soccer fields
- Pony Club
- Castle Hill Cemetery
- Fred Caterson Reserve
- Cycleways and Walking paths to Kellyville
- The Castle Hill RSL club
- RSL swimming centre and Gymnasium
- Castle Hill Bowling Club
- Two church Groups
- Several Child Care centres
- None of which can be found on the southern side of showground rd.....

Existing Bush Corridors – only with an R4 zoning would it be possible for a large developer to redesign the street allowing for green zones to be opened up along Kathleen Avenue as Parkways and cycle ways connecting the RSL club and gymnasium to Fred Caterson reserve and the Tennis centre as well as the Showground station. This would enable surrounding streets better healthier access to the station as well, rather than the current indirect routes.

A change to R4 provides the enabling feature to this better vision of our area.
Thanks for reading,

Peter McLoughlin