

26th February 2016

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

Dear Sir,

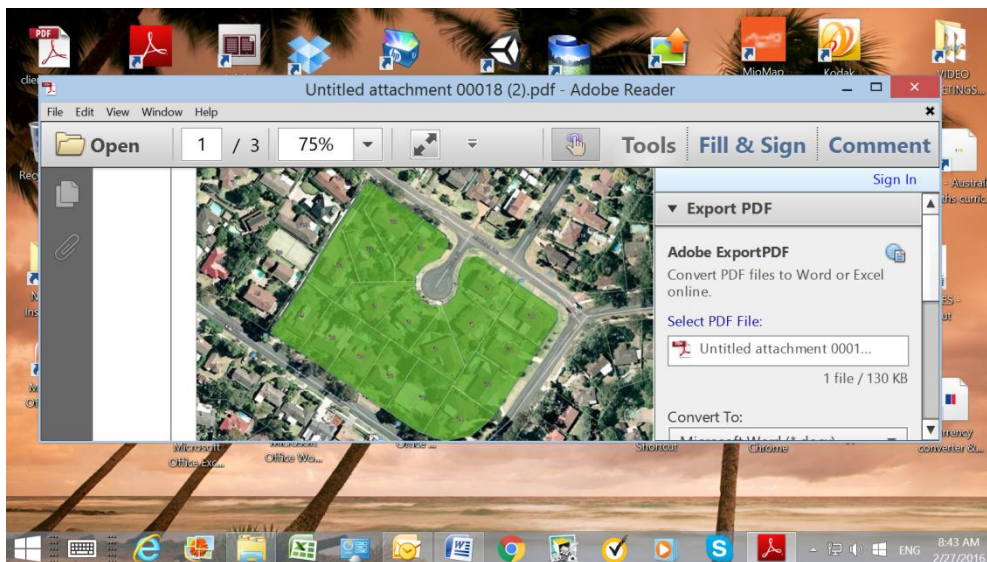
Re: Draft Proposals for Showground Station Precinct
Sydney Metro Northwest Priority Urban Renewal Corridor

Showground Road in Castle Hill being the epicenter of the Hillshire has been given the lowest zoning status by the Hillshire Council & State Planning for properties within the 800m radius of the light rail. The proposed Zoning levels by Council within the 800m radius have been inequitable and unfair, especially to those residents who have lived around this precinct for several decades.

1. Pg 10 - Desire to live near centres – you have sited Parramatta as an example – Parramatta has got it right. There are lots of high rise apartments spreading out to North Parramatta, Northmead and Westmead far away from the 800m station radius – why? Because most people DO NOT want to live on top of stations or shopping centres with noise, pollution & access to fast food centres & consequent unhealthy lifestyles. Given the choice, people prefer to live near parks, gardens or water s, especially young families! IF they choose to live near train hubs, its because there is where the majority of apartments are being planned and built by Councils & State Planners. A building strategy adopted the world over for over 200 years! – but not any more by enlightened Countries and some Councils.
2. We are a young country and should have new and innovative solutions to reducing pollution and congestion problems. We as a nation are trying to tackle the problem of obesity and promote healthy lifestyles - why then do we plan very high rise apartments closer to the station? Isnt it healthier for a larger number of people to spend 10 minutes walking to the station, than 1 – 2 minutes? Why are we using the age old magic formula of 800m? Why cant we go a little further by upzoning areas facing the 800m R4 zone to R3 townhouses, thus enabling effective R4 planning within the 800m radius. Apart from that, it would foster greater community harmony and co-operation and be a win win situation for all concerned?
3. Also let me debunk the idea that priority precincts encourage active walking, cycling etc when situated closer to transport shops and services – not true. Most of these activities are done at unpolluted parks and large botanical gardens not near busy station hubs. People who are concerned about health, prefer to breathe in fresh not polluted air. If State & Council planners are serious about community health in general they would be planning apartments 3- 500m away from busy intersections,

stations hubs etc. They need to plan and promote a healthier and safer life style and environment for our future generations. Apart from shops, office buildings, entertainment venues and small parks, there is no necessity for housing or recreation to be concentrated directly on top of or near busy noisy transport and business hubs, unless there is no other alternative.

4. Community Animal enthusiasts have voiced their concerns to the State Planning re the reduction in premises for the traditional [50 years of] holding horses, cats, dog shows etc and insufficient parking for these events in future if the present planning proposals are implemented for this precinct. I trust the State Planning will take this into account when revising their plans.
5. Pg 13 – Existing development & character & Cockayne Reserve. There used to be a bridge from Middleton Ave to Parsonage Rd from this reserve. This collapsed in a severe storm several years ago – the Council removed the debris and never bothered to replace this bridge. This footbridge should be replaced to enable easy access from Parsonage thru James Place to Middleton. On the lefthand side of the pic below you will note that there is a foot path from Parsonage Rd to Middleton Ave. This footpath can be widened if a road is required from Middleton to Parsonage. Instead State planning proposes cutting a road right through the middle of Turton place cul-de-sac to gain access to Parsonage from Middleton? Doesn't make sense & a wastage of taxpayer's funds.



6. The above screen shot also shows our properties that have formed together into ONE Pod in order to consolidate this ideal site. This site of which I am also a landowner for the past 35 years is an ideal site for R4 zoning as it has access on all 4 sides, its within 800m of the light rail, its not in an environmentally sensitive area, its on an

existing bus route & within 10 minute walk to the proposed Showground Road light rail. We had tentative offers from developers who were planning to consolidate the site by purchasing the cul-de-sac access from the Council in order to develop R4 apartments which was fully anticipated, as we are within 800m of the light rail. Since we were only given R3 Townhouse rezoning, it is now not feasible for developers to purchase.

7. I attaching a “*Showground Station Precinct R3 Economic Viability Report*” copies of which I am sure you will receive from several concerned community members in the area.
8. Furthermore, you will see that part of our Pod site faces R2 homes on Parsonage road. Since townhouses already exists on Parsonage Road, we would urge State planning to offer them R3 zoning in stage 2 of your plan to overcome the unrealistic and unreasonable proposed down zoning of our sites. This will enable us to get our R4 zoning - not only will this be fair, as we are within the 800m zone, it would also engender community harmony and approval and enable State Planning to effectively and progressively plan for the future.
9. We also notice that the set backs in your proposal are unrealistic when most existing setbacks for R3 & R4 zones are only 3m?
10. Lastly, If 10m heights are permitted within R3 zoning, why cant they have 3 storey apartments with underground parking? – this has been the case on Cecil Avenue, Purser Ave and Sherwin Avenue for more than 15 years in Castle Hill and these apartments are facing R2 lowrise/single level homes. Low rise apartment living in fact is preferred by some in the community as amenities are not over crowded.
11. Page 16 – Existing Creek lines & drainage & E2 Environmental Living. “The Cattai Creek corridor is heavily vegetated with limited public access” – that’s true but nevertheless we enjoy walking there – it’s a small precious untouched magical wilderness corridor with flora, fauna and bird life – why not preserve it and extend it accessibility by E2 zoning on land directly backing onto it – not sure but this zoning may presently exist in this area consisting of 1/4 and 1/2 acre blocks. If highrise apartments are permitted backing onto the creek, invariably environmental vandalism will occur with bottles, balls, cans, furniture and other unwanted stuff being chucked into the creek.
12. The State Govt/Council needs to acquire existing green space adjoining the creek for wider access and enjoyment of the planned large apartment community. Having footbridges across the creek will also encourage foot traffic [a healthy alternative] from Parsonage, White Cedar, Excelsior and surrounding roads to the nearby light rail station and further reduce traffic & environmental vandalism. It’s a well know

formula that open parks and creek areas discourage vandalism and encourage healthy leisure pursuits like walking, running and, walking the dog etc.

Thank you State Planning for taking the trouble to listen to our community concerns and we hope that your planners will come up with holistic and commercially viable planning [if such a thing is possible] which will benefit the whole community not just big business. State planning were surprised at the community joining together to offer large blocks – they should also be delighted because this enables them to master plan effective & equitably for the future.

Lastly, it would help if the dept can have an interactive google type map so people can magnify it and easily locate their roads and zoning plans that affect them? On a separate map integrating Castle Hill light rail zoning together with Showground light rail zoning areas would be an added bonus.

Sincerely

