



PCU064283

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Department of Planning
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Scanning Room

Submission – Showground Precinct

We are writing to raise concerns with the draft proposal for the Showground Rd/Kathleen Av/Belvedere Av area exhibited by your department under the Draft Priority Precinct Proposal for the Showground Precinct.

As a family that has lived at 32 Belvedere Ave for over 38 years, we have a strong connection to the area, a good appreciation of its character and clear views on what it should look like as urban densities increase with the rezoning that will accompany the construction of Sydney Metro Northwest.

The comments below refer principally to the Central Showground Rd/Kathleen Ave/Belvedere Ave (CSKB) area bordered by 118 – 126 Showground Road, 28-34 Kathleen Ave and 32 – 36 Belvedere Ave (see attached map). Residents in this area are currently discussing the implications of the future development as a group.

In summary, the following points clearly support the view that the CSKB area should be zoned R4 High Density Residential:

1. Located within 400 metres of Showground Station with excellent walking access

- The CSKB properties (including 32 Belvedere Ave) are all located within 400 metres of the Showground Station which means they are an easy 5-10 minute walk from the station. To exclude properties within 400 metres from the Station from a R4 High Density Residential zoning is contrary to State Government Planning Policies, including *A Plan for Growing Sydney*.

A Plan for Growing Sydney specifically says, “The most suitable areas for significant urban renewal are those best connected to employment and include:

- In and around centres that are close to jobs and are **served by public transport services** that are frequent and capable of moving large numbers of people. “

The Hills Corridor Strategy says that, “the need to locate high density housing in centres with access to services, community facilities and transport is well-recognised and will support the ongoing operation of the rail link.” (p.12)

On page 12 the HCS also says: “It is generally accepted in planning terms that higher density residential development be located within 800 metres of well integrated transport networks and major services being a 5-10 minute walking distance.”

Being located within 400 metres of the Showground Station and with easy access to other services, it is logical for the properties in the CSKB to be zoned R4 High Density Residential development rather than have a townhouse zoning.

2. Inconsistencies between the northern and southern sides of Showground Road

- As pointed out, the CSKB properties are all located with 400 metres of the Showground Station, which means they are an easy 5-10 minute walk from the station. It is inconsistent to have these properties zoned for townhouses when it is proposed that properties over 800 metres from the station on the southern side of Showground Rd will be zoned for high density residential. This is an inconsistent and 'disorderly' approach to land use planning.
- The zoning inconsistencies are accentuated by the fact that different zonings are proposed for the different sides of Showground Rd. The density proposed for the southern side of Showground Rd is 300 dwellings/hectare, yet on the northern side of Showground Rd (and Kathleen Ave/Belvedere Ave) the proposed density is 39 dwellings/hectare.

3. Showground Road is a gateway, not a barrier

- We do not accept that densities on the northern side of Showground Rd should be reduced because the road is a significant barrier to access to the train station. The current pedestrian lights at the intersection of Showground Round and Carrington Avenue are within 100 metres of our property. We also note that the proposed "Potential major pedestrian link" proposed at 'New Street A' (see Figure 1 of HCS) would augment access to the station and ensure that it is within a comfortable 5 minute walk.
- We also note that in their Draft Structure Plan, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) identify the Showground Rd and Carrington Rd intersection as a 'gateway'. This leads to the conclusion that DPE sees this intersection as a gateway to a significant, high density area in the Showground Precinct, not the entry to an underutilised townhouse backwater.

4. The CSKB properties are not affected by development constraints

- The CSKB properties are not affected by typical development constraints as indicated in the table below:

Potential Constraint	Details
Areas of Potential Salinity	Not affected.
Aboriginal Archaeological Potential	Not affected.
Road Hierarchy	Site is positioned next to gateway intersection with easy access to station.
Contamination Sites	Not affected.
Bushfire Risk & Asset Protection	Site not affected.
Flood Prone Land	Not affected.
Heritage	Not affected.
Land Reservation Acquisition	Not affected.
Strata Development	Strata scheme unanimously agree to form part of the site.
Native Vegetation Protection	Not affected.
Riparian Protection Area	Not affected.

While there are 2 strata developments within the CSKB, it is important to note that the 4 owners involved are strong supporters of resident plans to jointly sell our properties.

5. With Showground Rd to the south of the CSKB site and the site favoured by a significant slope, it is well suited to multistorey development

- Showground Rd to Kathleen Avenue 'runs' south to north and has a significant slope. For these reasons, the northern side of Showground Rd is well suited to multistorey development. The slope will assist the inclusion of underground car parks, while the south to north orientation means that the development can 'step down' from taller buildings on Showground Road and lower buildings on Kathleen Avenue to allow good 'solar access' for all residents. There will be minimum shadow effects, making the development more pleasant for all residents.

6. A townhouse zoning is likely to deliver reduce amenity and commercial viability

- Ironically, by proposing town house/terrace densities in the CSKB and other areas north of Showground Rd, Council's Corridor Strategy is likely to condemn residents in this area to reduced open space and other amenity. To have any likelihood of commercial viability, town houses will need to be built to the maximum permissible densities, reducing open space and amenity. In contrast, multistorey development will encourage larger setbacks and the retention of trees and 'deep soil'.
- The commercial viability of townhouse/terrace densities north of Showground Rd appears to be very doubtful. Assuming that 4 dwellings would be constructed on each 1000 sq metres, it is difficult to see that the commercial return will be attractive to the development industry, particularly when there will be a good supply of R4 land available along the Sydney Metro Northwest corridor. With less incentive for existing property owners to sell and less incentive for developers, the north side of Showground Rd (and Kathleen Av/Belvedere Av) will be at risk of becoming a poorly planned, unpleasant patchwork of existing homes and new townhouses. It is likely to be disorderly development at its worst.

The disincentive to sell that will be imposed on residents of the CSKB area by a townhouse zoning also contradicts the intent of HCS. On page 7 the *Strategy* says: "Therefore the multi-unit housing product ... needs to encourage "empty nesters" to trade their family home for a multi-unit dwelling..." There is no doubt that a town house zoning will remove the financial incentive/viability for the empty nesters of CSKB to sell, which is contrary to the intent of HCS.

7. A townhouse zoning for the northern side of Kathleen Ave?

- Although it is outside of the scope of the HCS, the zoning of the northern side of Kathleen Avenue should also be reconsidered. These larger, 3,700 - 4,100 sq. metre blocks would be suitable for townhouses and redevelopment of this area would allow for an integrated cycleway/walkway that would link Fred Caterson Reserve (and on to the Bernie Mullane Sports Complex along the existing cycling/walking track) to the Castle Towers and Castle Hill Public School area. The cycleway could be incorporated along the creek situated on the northern side of Kathleen Avenue in those areas that are flood affected and unsuitable for future development.

Given these points, it is our view that the CSKB, and other areas between Showground Rd and Kathleen Ave should be zoned R4 high Density Residential, with consideration given to the northern side of Kathleen Ave to be zoned for townhouses and terraces.

Attachment 1



Terry and Margaret Savell