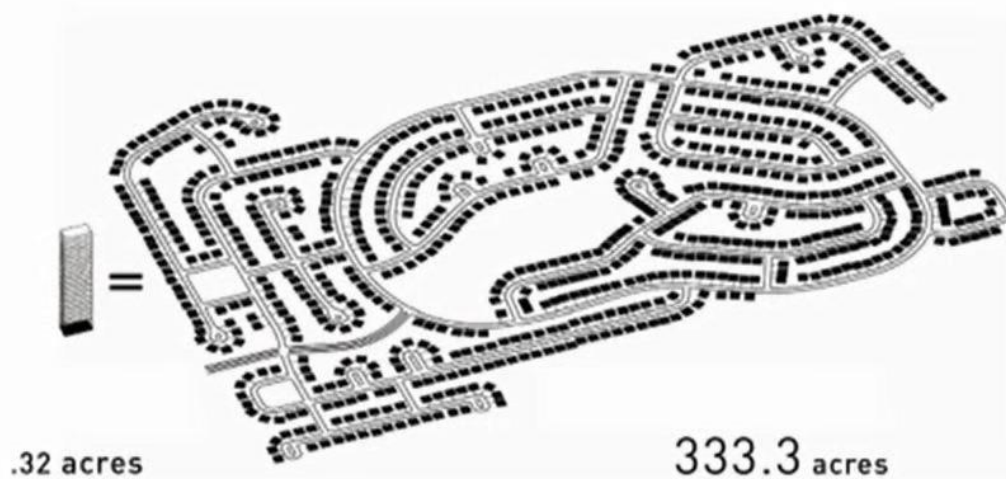


Wilton, Appin, Mt Gilead and Menangle Suburban Sprawl Proposal

The proposal to rezone Wilton, Appin, Mt. Gilead and Menangle to low density complying R2 single use suburban sprawl based around the private motor vehicle as the prime means of transport is using an outdated model of urban planning. This approach is very inefficient, environmentally destructive, and socially isolating, and the single use zoning that is proposed has long ago been rejected as creating dead, dormitory suburbs. Single use low density sprawl not only destroys the nature of the area on which it is built, effectively 'selling the farm' to developers, it condemns that land for ever from being remediated. Once the concrete and bitumen has been laid, it becomes virtually impossible to convert the land back into its rural and agrarian original purpose, as it is prohibitively expensive, and also the detrimental affects on soil from starvation from being encased in concrete are very long lasting and hard to fix.

The model of good urban planning has shifted away from what was tried in Los Angeles and countless other US cities in the 1950s, and most cities are now working to reverse that policy, preserving their green spaces by building a clear dividing line between urban and rural areas. This is so in US cities that heretofore were very reliant on the motor car to drive suburban sprawl. That means that these cities are embracing more compact density, with mixed use zoning, a far more efficient model, and which has a clear division, ending at a boundary where rural lands begin at that point, thereby preserving surrounding green spaces.

The bloated suburban sprawl of low density for residential for Appin, Menangle and Wilton (apart from encroaching on Sydney's main water supply channel, surely also posing a reckless planning risk) continues this outdated methodology of housing people. What is proposed is a hark back to an outdated urban planning model that became very fashionable in the 1950s, with great hopes attached to it that by the very laws of mathematics and physics, were doomed to failure as an urban planning model. It is therefore very surprising, and also very disappointing to see such a model being proposed here when there are a multitude of better alternatives of urban design, configuration and density. The following diagram illustrates the point about inefficient land use and privatisation of the landscape well:



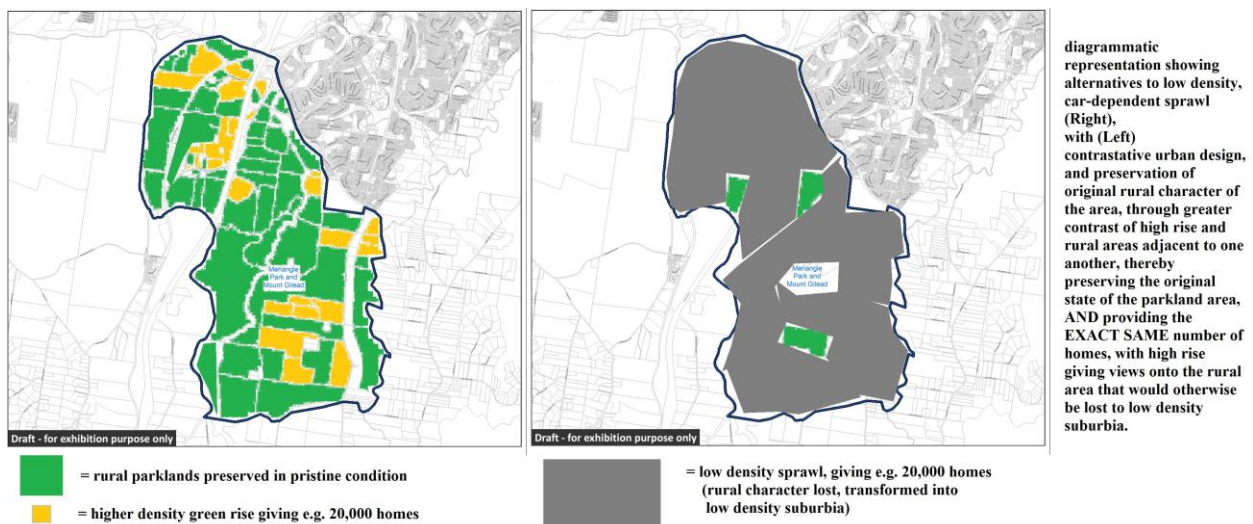
Of course high rise is not the only option as the alternative; there are many, many alternatives to complying low density R2 sprawl. These alternatives should be scoped first, and if it is deemed necessary that housing should proceed in this pristine rural location - a point I would very strongly dispute given Sydney's existing massive footprint and resulting inefficiency, as well as the existence of many disused brown field sites, industrial areas and existing low density R2 much further in to the city centre that could easily be rezoned - then it should be far more compact than proposed.

To take an extreme example purely to illustrate this point, housing 20,000 people in a 2,000 acre area, could be housed over

1. 100 acres, leaving **1,900 acres** for green space and recreation, OR
2. 2,000 acres leaving **0 acres** of green space and recreation.

However, the current plan for low density complying R2 zoning is way towards the latter end of the spectrum (option 2) rather than the former (option 1). Unfortunately this is the outcome of the autopilot of complying low density zoning, which is the default zoning from a bygone era before population explosion or climate change and environmental sustainability, or the economic inefficiency of suburban sprawl for that matter, became issues of concern.

As can be seen from a hypothetical zoning proposal diagram of the Mt Gilead/Menangle area, options 1 and 2 can again be seen, with option 1 (left) preserving the majority of the space for parklands and continuing rural activities, while option 2 (right) swallows up the entire area in low density suburbia, substantially a clone of any other suburban suburb, encouraging car use, and losing the rural nature of the area for ever.



At a time when cities the world over are moving towards a compact design, preserving their environmental heritage, and finding that mixed use is far more economical, it seems to me to be a very strange decision to apply a business as usual, suburban sprawl approach to this land release.

Sincerely,

Yanis Garrett