

25 August 2016

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The Secretary  
NSW Department of Planning and Environment  
Housing Land Release  
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SYDNEY NSW 2001

[community@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:community@planning.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Ms McNally

### **SUBMISSION ON THE GREATER MACARTHUR PRIORITY GROWTH AREA**

I am writing to you to convey my family's support for the government's latest plan to include Appin into the Macarthur Priority Growth Area.

Our family has lived and owned land within the proposed Priority Growth Area at Appin for around 200 years. As one of the earliest pioneering families of the Cumberland region and Appin area, our family has a long and rich history that dates back to the establishment of the NSW colony. In the early days of the fledgling colony, finding suitable farming land close to Sydney was vital for the provision of supplies, and such land was soon discovered at Appin. In order to procure adequate farming of the land, land grants were issued to ex-convicts and free-settlers in order for them to establish farming properties and contribute supplies to the colony. Laurence D'Arcy, a family ancestor, received a land grant at Appin from Governor Macquarie, hence leading to our family's establishment at Appin.

Appin is the 5<sup>th</sup> oldest town in Australia, having been established in 1811, and its origins are based on farming. Over the past 200 years, farming and dairy played important roles in the everyday lives of most people on land in the Appin area. However that is not the case anymore, and has not been the case for decades. Commercial farming in the area is now virtually extinct due to restrictions placed upon landholders by relevant governments, effectively freezing the land, as planning authorities earmarked the area for future development almost 50 years ago.

The Sydney Region Outline Plan was a land use and infrastructure scheme for metropolitan New South Wales released by the State Planning Authority in 1968, and it included Appin as part of a new city centre in the south-west. Appin was further identified as a growth area in 1973 when the State Planning Authority released plans for a future Tri-City to include Campbelltown, Camden and Appin. This was followed with a Land Acquisition Act legislated in the NSW State Parliament, which impacted all farmland owners in Appin. The Macarthur Development Board (MBD), later renamed the Macarthur Development Corporation (MDC) were then set up, to enable the government to buy up most farmland, which virtually shut down the local farming industry. Some of our land was acquired by compulsory acquisition. This aim was to prevent farmers from subdividing their land, and therefore preserve large parcels of land for future development.

We have in our possession a copy the booklet 'The New Cities of Campbelltown Camden Appin: Structure Plan' that was printed by the State Planning Authority of New South Wales in 1973, that outlines the Tri-City plan. Although it was printed over 40 years ago, it is interesting to note some of the forecasts it makes about Appin:

'Appin is proposed for major urban expansion between 1990 and 2000.' (Pg. 112)

'Rapid population growth to 170,000 is planned from 1990 onwards.' (Pg. 113)

'Extensive commercial facilities are planned in an area about 80 hectares' (Pg. 113)

'Industrial areas of about 700 hectares are distributed in 5 estates' (Pg. 113)

It is obvious that these plans were indefinitely put on hold, and many circumstances have changed over the years, but in 1973 and subsequent years, people were told by government authorities that this information was accurate and factual, with some landowners being forced to sell their land, or being prevented from subdividing their land.

When Appin was identified as a growth area in the 1973, landowners such as ourselves thought we would be able to benefit one day from our land being rezoned. Instead we have had our land sterilised for 40 years with restrictions, the inability to subdivide, and yet having to pay high rates and Land Tax for land that is in limbo. It has been a long and painful wait for long-time landowners, and indeed some have passed away after having waited for over 4 decades.

All the future development land was put on hold until about 20 years later, when the then Premier decided to sell-off some of the buy-back properties to developers, so they could take over the creation of the city, along with providing financial support towards vital infrastructure such as roads etc.

In the early 1990's our family finally had eventually had some our land rezoned as industrial, after a long and continuous battle with the Wollondilly council. That land, at Technology Drive, Appin has since become an important part of Appin's business sector and also an important source of employment for the town, although as it is of a relatively small size, a vast majority of the town's workforce need to travel outside of the district for work.

We were hopeful last November that Appin would be included in the Strategic Plan for Macarthur, but were again disappointed when the government excluded Appin from the plan, in preference for allowing the release of Mt Gilead and Menangle Park. Now, the recent formal inclusion of Appin into the Macarthur Growth Centre at least makes our future clearer, and even in the event that rezoning does not occur for many years, at least the Priority Growth Plan gives us certainty.

Most people who live in Appin support the inclusion of Appin into the Growth Centre, however please be aware that there are a small but vocal minority in Appin protesting against Appin's inclusion. Please understand that they do not represent the majority of the community, and they want improved services but not the development needed to pay for it.

We support well-planned growth in and around Appin because development will bring to the area in vital infrastructure, such as public transport, schools, employment opportunities, quality roads, as well as shopping centres, restaurants, etc. It is sad to think that 26 years ago Appin was forecast to be in the beginnings of significant growth centre, and yet remains a forgotten town in limbo. That, however will hopefully change soon, and development if it is done well because it will give Appin a future instead of condemning it to live in the past.

Yours sincerely

The D'Arcy family.