

Confidentiality Requested: no

Submitted by a Planner: no

Disclosable Political Donation:

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Content:

A major concern with the SEPP is childcare centres being permitted in R2 low-density residential zones without any restrictions on their location within the zone.

The "one size fits all" approach being proposed fails to recognise the diverse nature of Sydney's suburban environments and will impact LGA's differently depending on the character of the area involved.

In the case of Ku-ring-gai which has a long history of permitting child care centres throughout the low density residential zone there are many established child care centres in the area, which have a minimal impact on adjoining residences. However, most of these centres are converted residences caring for small numbers of children but childcare has changed and become a commercial business with a trend towards purpose built facilities of an increasing scale and capacity to exploit the current opportunities and justify the costs involved. In many instances they no longer fit quietly into residential streets and the planning policies need to reflect the change.

Planning policy and control instruments need to cater for the differing requirements of particular areas or situations to achieve outcomes which result in childcare centres of sympathetic design being appropriately located within residential zones.

For example, there are two centres being built in an R2 zone involving the demolition of an existing residence to construct a purpose built facility, one in a new built part of the suburb 20 metres from a public school, city bus terminus and local bus to the station and local shopping centre the other in an old built area with none of the location attributes of the other. The rules are the same for both but the impact on the local areas will be quite different.

Another example of the impact in different types of LGA is a comparison of North Sydney/Willoughby and Ku-ring-gai. Both areas have a number of public and private schools with child care centres in Nth Sydney/Willoughby tending to be in office blocks, other commercial buildings or converted houses which are far less conspicuous in the more densely developed residential streets. By comparison Ku-ring-gai is characterised by residential housing on large leafy blocks, limited commercial areas which results in child care facilities being more conspicuous and having a much greater impact on the streetscape and local amenity.

Other LGA's will have concerns about the proposed changes and if the planning instruments were drafted to reflect the fact that they will be applied in different areas and circumstances better outcome would be achieved.

Without changes to the proposed SEPP parts of Sydney's suburban character could be destroyed and heritage lost by opportunistic development leaving local residents with the legacy of unwanted buildings in their environment.

Finally, the draft SEPP effectively removes councils from the administration of the approval process allowing developers to decide where development occurs and leaving existing residents powerless to influence what happens in their environment which is unacceptable. Councils should be involved but there needs to be clear and unambiguous guideline for them and developers to follow if good outcomes are to be achieved.

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Submission: Online Submission from John Weiher of Retired (comments)

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