

**Submission
No 42**

**INQUIRY INTO ACQUISITION OF LAND IN RELATION TO
MAJOR TRANSPORT PROJECTS**

Name: Mr Vineh Charan

Date Received: 22 June 2021

22 June 2021

Dear Committee Members,

I'd like to submit to your inquiry underway into Land Acquisitions for Transport projects.

I am the owner of _____ Riverwood, NSW, 2210. This has been our family home for the last 28 years. My elderly parents are the occupants, and like our previous neighbours (may they rest in peace), they consider this their resting place.

On Thursday 17 February a new commuter car park was announced in Riverwood. Subsequently it was revealed the NSW State Government has plans to forcibly acquire three family homes with only 90 days' notice under accelerated timeline. We left Fiji Islands to better our lives in Australia, to avoid the turmoil of the 1987 coup where Fijian Indians minorities were treated unfairly, only to face loss to our home in Australia.

The four level car park was announced in a residential zoned area with little communication with the community, including those that have been told they are losing their family homes. It seems like the media was aware of the location before the three families.

I have a number of concerns about this proposal:

- It will result in my parents losing their family home of twenty eight years.
- My parents are forced to move they will be removed from the community where they have lived happily for more than twenty eight years.
- My parents will have greater difficulty accessing vital services including healthcare and the support networks they have established and access to shops without the need to drive or rely on public transportation. Both are elderly and have heart condition.
- No feasibility studies done to date that has been shared with the community.
- There has been no project plan for TfNSW to share with us or the community at large.
- The lack of alternate solutions bus service during peak hours, alternate car parks where no homes would be affected and yes there are three or four to choose from.
- Lack of information on the project.
- Georges River Council was "not" aware of this project, yet the Council sold their car park (abutting the three family homes) to TfNSW in November 2020.
- The lack of transparency overall by the MPs, Council and TfNSW.

The process is flawed. TfNSW are acquiring the property, uprooting families and their livelihoods, without proper due diligence nor feasibility studies and most importantly the department has not showed no empathy. The Just Terms Act has no empathy.

Neither I, nor my parents, oppose the commuter carpark. We oppose to the loss of our family home of twenty eight years. The family homes should be the last resort to acquisition, after all alternate options investigated are exhausted and found to be unviable. On 11th March 2021, TfNSW representatives confirmed to me that there were no plans, no

feasibility studies done, no budget for what was reported in the media as a \$19 million project.

On 6th March 2021, the families met with Mr Mark Coure MP, portraying their concerns and sort for assistance, where he took down six action items that he said he will attain to for us. There has been nothing but silence. I was able to speak to Mr Coure after several attempts reaching out to him and his office, only to find out that he “didn’t have 5 minutes spare” to attend to our matter. Please see attachment (Mark Coure MP 20210521.pdf) as proof of ignorance.

I requested a meeting with the Minister for Transport. The Ministerial office was kind enough to reply. Please see attachment (Transport Minister Response_2021-05-19 19-52.pdf).

Further proof of ignorance when Georges River Council wrote to Mark Coure MP, the Federal Minister for Banks, The Hon. David Coleman MP and Transport Minister The Hon. Andrew Constance MP. (Attachment - GRC Letters 20210514.pdf) No reply from any.

I truly believe that the elected people have let our families down.

As I understand the law, only the State of NSW can reject the compulsory acquisition. To this effect, I am unsure how this inquiry will assist the three families at Riverwood, however as our family home is risk here, I will eagerly fulfil my duty to defend our homes.

Thank you,

Vineh Charan