

Submission  
No 64

**INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT  
ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 23 March 2024

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Partially  
Confidential

# Submission to Department of Planning and Environment State Planning Changes

We wish to express our grave concern with the proposed changes the Minns Labor Government is planning. This is particularly relevant to the irreversible effects this will have on communities and the character of the suburbs where drastic changes are proposed. Our objection covers the content, environment & amenities, the way they have been communicated, the lack of local Council consultation and the carte blanche proposed implementation.

We are a long-term resident of the North Shore having rented and owned various properties in lower and mid North Shore. We are now residents of Lindfield, and our major concern is the effect on the suburbs of Roseville, Lindfield, and Killara, which suburbs provide a welcome buffer for a municipality that prides itself on being green. This will quickly change under the proposed Minns Labor Govt 'One - size -fits -all' planning approach.

The proposal has obviously been formulated via a distant bureaucratic approach. There is no consideration for how, over decades, these suburbs have developed their individual character. The residents and Local Council, who live and work in the localities, have contributed to the functionality making sure the fundamental essence of the suburb is maintained. State Planning's proposal will rapidly change not only the environment and landscape, but bring with it the anti-social issues that can be seen in many examples where hasty unfettered development has occurred.

## **Our objections:**

- **Ku-ring-gai Council (KMC):** - Over the years KMC has formulated town planning solutions resulting in a considerable increase in development and catering for population growth. This has been done with resident consultation. Although there are many exiting issues relating to traffic, infrastructure, and services etc the process has maintained a lot of the character, community attributes and environment that the majority of residents desire. There is still a lot of R4 zoning to be developed in KMC. Municipal Councils have a better local knowledge than the State, hence

should be able to determine the Town Planning for growth, as precedent would dictate.

In a recent interview with Chris Minns on 2GB it was blatantly obvious he did not know his own policy and its effects on suburbs, services, traffic, & infrastructure etc. Chris Minns also stated Councils will maintain control over development approvals. This is not the case under SEPP and the 'Non-refusal' provisions. This clearly demonstrates the lack of understanding of what he and his government are proposing.

- **State Govt at odds with its own objectives:** - In a measured way with balanced planning KMC has worked towards increasing density in these suburbs. A good example is the Lindfield Hub many years in the planning to get it right. The Hub is 136 apartments with retail, open space, community services and parking for both residents and commuters. It may now not proceed because the Stated Govt has withdrawn its funding for the commuter parking component. Hard to follow!! A hypocritical and counterproductive decision with what the proposed planning policy is trying to achieve.
- **Consultation:** - It would appear there has been no consultation between KMC and or the community with State Planning. State Planning now intends to override Council, which defeats the purpose of having local Town Planning Controls. It goes against the wishes of the residents and is completely undemocratic in implementation. Changes of this magnitude should be taken to the state elections.
- **Traffic:** - This a massive problem as despite being close to train stations increased vehicle use and movement is inevitable (not everybody works near rail). The local traffic is at capacity now and with more units coming online over the next few years the situation is only going to get worse, even without further density. The proposal is unrealistic regarding vehicle ownership, traffic movements and the extent to which congested street parking will result.

### 3.

- **Infrastructure:** – No serious consideration given, but just a ‘knee jerk reaction’, working on a whim and a hope it will work itself out. Once the State has approved developments it will leave the problem to council and communities to suffer the consequences. Precedent shows councils and State Govts never get enough contribution from developers to provide adequate infrastructure, green space, traffic, and services. Across the Sydney Metropolitan area infrastructure is a major problem and with funding cutbacks coupled with the accelerated development. The proposals will make Sydney an unpleasant place to live. *Will this be the Labor Party’s legacy?*
- **Services:** – Similar issue as with Traffic & Infrastructure, i.e. a lack of, and not thought through. Similarly, services always lag development and given the State Govt proposal to accelerate development services are going to fall further behind what is required, particularly in the effected suburbs.
- **Environment:** - State Planning changes will result in the substantial removal of established vegetation, mature trees and amenity in areas that pride themselves on being environmentally friendly. This is so important for clean air across the city and achieving carbon neutrality in keeping with Climate Change aspirations. The green canopy Ku-ring-gai is known for will never be recovered and completely alter the nature of the Municipality, the North Shore and Sydney.
- **Open Space:** - No realistic provisioning within the locations of the proposed planning changes. Just look at what has happened in East Sydney where Govt is now trying to fix the problem retrospectively.
- **Socioeconomic Issues:** - Most residents have chosen to live in these suburbs because of the green environment, family orientated housing and village atmosphere. They have an expectation that these surroundings will be maintained based on the Ku-ring-gai Council planning guidelines. This includes choices made at time of purchase with consideration of how future developments might affect their property including outlook, views,

shadowing, and amenity etc. The proposed changes have nil regard for these considerations.

- **Affordable Housing:** - To develop units in historically significant suburbs is expensive. In addition, North Shore housing is a relatively expensive locality of Sydney, so affordable housing is not a realistic consideration.
- **Heritage:** - KMC has a long history of preserving its suburban heritage. Under the 'One-size-fits-all' approach to planning much of our past architecture and reference to past eras will be lost to unesthetic development with little character. We are reminded of the Sydney 'Rocks', which came so close to being redeveloped into high rise and lost forever due to the planning attitude of government being indifferent about our heritage. The 'Rocks' was thankfully saved by building 'green bans', but the issue highlighted how important it is to maintain our heritage. Let's not ignore the lessons of the past.
- **Strata Issues:** - It is well publicised that many strata buildings are not being built to acceptable standards and Strata Plans are experiencing problems keeping up with the requirements of high density living. The strata system is not up to speed and accelerated development on the scale proposed will undoubtedly accentuate the problem.
- **Other options:** - The North Shore has several suburbs where high rise is established, accepted, and have further development potential i.e. North Sydney, St Leonards, Chatwood, Hornsby and to a lesser extent Gordon. In addition to the west is Macquarie and other locations where local planning allows high density. All have transport, services, and importantly substantial retail. Roseville, Lindfield, and Killara are village suburbs with basic community shopping and very limited services. These suburbs also pose difficult traffic issues, which have not been addressed with the development that has occurred over the last 10 years. An accelerated influx of high-density developments will only create chaos.

## 5.

- **General comment:** - **a)** New suburbs, on transport nodes should be planned to take high density where infrastructure, retail & services can be planned sympathetically with the growth of the suburb. **b)** To retrofit existing suburbs with accelerated density is fraught with issues. The consequences are unknown for reasons outlined above but will be detrimental. Residents and property owners in older suburbs know what to expect under current local council planning rather than overnight changes that threaten the way of life. As pointed out in 'a)' new suburbs can be planned accordingly so those residents also know the planning parameters. **c)** Many cities take this approach with the great cities of the world having their green suburbs or burrows, London & Paris being examples rather than a mishmash of development. **d)** The State needs to decentralise and accelerate incentives to live in regional cities such as Armidale, Broken Hill, Dubbo, Newcastle, Orange, Tamworth, Wagga plus other satellite towns by providing better infrastructure, services, and transport. A shift of Govt departments both State & Federal to these areas would also assist, plus promotion of the cheaper housing and lifestyle benefits. These are the locations perfectly suited to affordable housing and population growth. **e)** The Federal government needs to seriously reduce the rapid immigration policy it is pursuing, which is creating unprecedented stress on our society.

In conclusion to drastically retrofit and change the character of an established suburb in such a short time frame is simply bad town planning where people and communities suffer. We do not wish to see our suburb dismantled in the manner the State is proposing.

We trust the State Government will take notice of the Municipal Councils, residents and rate payers and reconsider the proposal that is of serious and major concern.

19 February 2024