

**Submission
No 127**

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

Name: Peter Sutherland

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Submission to NSW State Government on “Explanation of Intended Effect: Changes to Create low- and mid-rise housing” DPIE December 2023

The proposed changes to planning policy for local government areas including the Ku-ring-gai local government area represent a repudiation of sound environmental and planning policy developed over the last century in this State. They make a mockery of the evidence-based process for declaring and protecting heritage listed sites and conservation protection zones developed in close consultation with local communities. In fact, these changes would disenfranchise local communities and local government from having a legitimate democratic say in policies and practices that effect the character and environmental amenity of their suburb. Under these proposals areas valued for their environmental amenity and heritage will be turned into an urban dystopia which will be a breeding ground for crime, depression and decline in mental health.

The proposed changes represent an ill-considered knee jerk reaction to a housing problem that has its root cause in unsustainable immigration levels that have outstripped the provision of infrastructure of all types and exacerbated lack of housing supply and affordability. Instead of these ill-considered proposals to destroy local amenity and environmental values the State Government should be putting pressure on the Federal Government to reduce immigration to sustainable levels.

The Labor Government claims to value aboriginal heritage, however, this proposal ignores all heritage values including the rich aboriginal heritage of Ku-ring-gai.

It is shameful that a Labor Government is disowning its own heritage with these proposals. In the 70s unions and Labor Governments were at the forefront of protecting the heritage and environmental amenity of Sydney. This included the internationally acclaimed work of Jack Munday and the BLF with Green Bans and Premier Neville Wran’s introduction of the Heritage Act, the Environment Planning and Assessment Act, and the Land and Environment Court Act.

As Jack Munday said back then:

“we prefer to build urgently-required hospitals, schools, other public utilities, high quality flats, units and houses, provided they are designed with adequate concern for the environment than to build ugly, unimaginative architecturally bankrupt blocks of concrete and glass...”

And further:

“If cities are going to be for people, and not just for big business, well then of course you’ve got to have areas where you’ve got sensitive development, where you’ve got nice parklands, where you’ve got the minimum of car noise traffic and car traffic, and I think this is a prototype of what could happen in all our urban areas.”

The State Labor Government would do well to honour the legacy of these trail blazers by heeding their principled approach to development rather than the proposed mindless blank cheque for greedy developers whilst cost shifting all the downside costs and environmental degradation onto local communities and their Councils.

The proposed changes will lead to the irreversible destruction of the heritage and environmental values of our region and we totally reject them. The State Government has no mandate for these proposed changes which have been introduced at Christmas in an attempt to avoid scrutiny and with legitimate requests from Councils for adequate information met with a complete lack of

transparency. The lack of analysis and evidence behind such unprecedented and far-reaching proposals is nothing less than scandalous.

Chris Minns do the right thing by the community and withdraw these appalling proposals and enter into meaningful consultation with local government and their communities.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sutherland

Concerned resident of