

Submission
No 217

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 28 March 2024

Partially
Confidential

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By email: [REDACTED]

Dear community representatives,

I can understand that Transport Oriented Development might, if done properly, facilitate the use of public transit, walking and cycling, as primary modes of transport and might support vibrant, diverse and liveable communities in appropriately identified areas.

However, Transport Oriented Development is not meant to be “snap” imposed nor uniformly applied.

Heritage is not meant to be “snap” re-zoned.

I am concerned that the proposed “snap” re-zoning around Roseville station (and others) risks scrapping heritage and diminishing rather than improving amenity.

The Lord / Bancroft Heritage Conservation Area and adjacent Heritage Conservations Areas should be respected and protected and removed from any Transport Oriented Development re-zoning in Roseville.

What I understand is the proposal

My understanding is that the government has proposed a “snap” re-zoning of land within 400m of Roseville and other stations (source: release dated 7 December 2023).

The “snap” re-zoning will permit 6 storey buildings up to 21 metres in all areas within 400m of Roseville Station.

This will directly affect Hill Street, Clanville Road, Trafalgar Avenue, Oliver Road, Martin Lane, Roseville Avenue, Lord Street, Bancroft Avenue, Glencroft Avenue, Victoria Street and indirectly beyond. The re-zoning will apply to Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs) and in the official release, we are told to “expect significant change” in these areas.

The plan appears in the form of an item on the “news” page of www.planning.nsw.gov.au for 7 December 2023 and with some other detail from 18 December 2023 on a separate content page.

The changes are meant to be introduced by a State Environmental Planning Policy, known as a SEPP, but that SEPP is not available. The changes will apply in addition to a new “diverse and well located homes” policy.

We have not been provided with the feasibility studies or expert reports or methodology of that analysis.

There seems to have been no notice to or consultation with the community in the apparent feasibility analysis prior to reporting by select media outlets just before 7 December 2023.

That the proposal is called a snap re-zoning hints at a rushed program lacking in the necessary consideration and collaboration required for Transport Oriented Development and risks diminishment of, rather than enhancement of, the very value of Roseville and other areas.

Proper planning means involving the community and consideration of the value of a place

My concern with the proposal is not about no development of any form anywhere.

My concern advocates for planning properly. It would not be fair to label that as NIMBYISM including because of the steady development history of Roseville. KOPWA aged care service facilities, Roseville College and St Andrew's Anglican Church have all received development approvals to increase their amenities. Following heavy development along Victoria Street, recent Roseville approved developments include "Juliett", "Seymour Residences" and "Rosewood". This is in addition to the adaptive re-use of a number of heritage items (which prevents the waste of the embodied energy in an existing building which would result from its demolition).

When development is done well, it can consist of sympathetic changes to meet current expectations of comfort and function. Old places can be adapted and re-used, which can extend the life of the area's homes for new generations. That might add value to a place, improve amenity and liveability and support local investment and economy.

Following proper review and analysis, some parts of Roseville outside the HCA areas, might be able to accommodate further low to mid rise additions. However, there are a number of infrastructure considerations which arise given the 3000 students (1500 morning and afternoon) which are already delivered to and from Roseville College and Roseville Public School each day often via Hill Street and Bancroft Avenue; the area's overland flow issues as identified in the Middle Harbour Southern Catchments Flood Study dated 10 February 2023. Hard surfaces associated with new roads, footpaths, roofs, driveways and urban infill and reduced vegetation cover would stop rain soaking into the ground causing extra water to run across the ground as overland flow, leading to greater runoff being generated posing a flood risk; how open space amenity is to be provided; canopy protection and improvement; and general traffic impacts.

Among other questions, can Hill Street and Bancroft Avenue safely handle more cars (which inevitably comes from more units) given the daily 3000 student movements (1500 each way) in an already very narrow and congested street where cars can mostly only drive one at a time during peak pick and drop off times? (in this regard, can I suggest a site visit to Hill Street and Bancroft Avenue this week between 8am and 9am when school returns). Can the overland flow areas be built on without adversely impacting "downstream" lots? What greenspace is proposed to be added or expanded so that new community members have a shaded green area to play? What facilities will be made available to the new community to meet the statement need of creating walking distance amenity – will a library branch or park be added? How will non automobile journeys be ensured? These matters should be examined and addressed now rather than leaving it to individual assessments later. Sorting out these matters now creates certainty for residents and likely developers.

Heritage and Transport Oriented Development

Transport Oriented Development should not be the same at all stations. That is not remarkable or inappropriately protective.

The World Bank provides that Transport Oriented Development is not meant to be applied uniformly across an entire city or transit network. It only works where you improve not diminish the quality of the urban environment or where you are improving transit access to a booming area.

Transport Oriented Development is meant to involve: people centred design and thinking; significant planning considerations to ensure that congestions and blockage does not result; early business case assessment; well considered and inclusive planning; include other infrastructure like water/sewer etc (see WSP website).

There is some guidance on how to do this when what is involved is heritage. When development is proposed affecting heritage places, the Burra Charter provides that that should involve understanding a place; involve the communities associated with the place; caring for a place's setting and providing an appropriate use; and using available expertise.

None of this has occurred. No public consultation seems to be proposed. There is no trial, no master plan, no testing.

So far as built and natural heritage is concerned, the Hon. Barry O'Keefe, AM, Then President, The National Trust of Australia (NSW) 2002 said *"Any great city ought to be able to boast an area such as Ku-ring-gai. In many cities of the world the values that are characteristic of Ku-ring-gai would be regarded as the things to be preserved. These values are universal."*

The Lord Street/Bancroft Avenue Heritage Conservation Area is of historical and aesthetic significance as an area of Federation style housing. This is not using an electrical substation to prevent development.

Volume 48 (2023) of the Historian, the official journal of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society Inc. includes some of the history of the area. Relevant history can also be found in the hundreds of heritage impact statements the planning legislation has required applicants to lodge with development applications in the area.

Reasons for protecting heritage are well known. They include:

- *Enriches our vibrant communities and quality of life by enhancing streetscapes and providing spaces where cultures can be shared.*
- *Helps us learn why things are the way they are.*
- *Helps us understand different cultures and histories, supporting our understanding of others and helping build stronger more inclusive communities.*
- *Can be sustainable – with good design, cultural heritage awareness and small modifications to existing buildings.*
- *Can help support local economies by attracting visitors and providing employment.*
- *Protection can also mean taking care of everyday community spaces.*

As David Burdon (architect and conservation director of the National Trust (NSW) puts it in the Sydney Morning Herald article dated 15 January 2024, heritage is "a way of helping to ensure important places are maintained into the future and requiring new elements to be well considered".

What also makes Ku-ring-gai and Roseville unique and special, in addition to its built heritage is its bird life, gardens, 'urban forest', green space. 690 fauna species live in Ku-ring-gai. The snap rezoning threatens this with clearing of mature trees and plants to make way for apartments and which will in turn create large areas of hard surfaces which will significantly contribute to the 'heat island effect' increasing the heat related impacts of climate change, making increased temperatures and extreme hot weather events more severe. This would be absolutely devastating for the Lord / HCA and adjacent HCA, streets which are famous in Roseville and the State for their large significant mature trees which line these streets and which are also contained in its beautiful established gardens.

So far as climate matters are concerned, there is more research emerging that Low-rise environments are more space and carbon efficient, while high-rise buildings have a drastically higher carbon impact. (see Greentech media).

Whatever is the sweetspot is in terms of sustainability, this blanket Transport Oriented Development program in its current form and application cannot be the solution because part of the problem is that

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there has been no consultation and it seems no option to provide feedback. This is the same in relation to expanding local tree canopy. Roseville requires more green space and tree canopy, not less. The creation of large hard surfaces results in more heat, fewer trees and more water runoff.

A snap re-zoning which without consultation, without notice, without planning, without understanding and maintaining the quality of a place offends all the proper planning principles and puts at risk the very purpose of Transport Oriented Development. Indeed, we have received correspondence from developers including a letter stating , "Following on from our recent success with our luxury waterfront project in Drummoyne We are seeking to replicate a similar luxury development in the (sic) Ku-ring-gai" (letters can be shown to you which shows that housing affordability is clearly not the goal).

It ignores evidence regarding the embodied energy in existing buildings and that higher buildings are not necessarily more efficient.

In Roseville's case it ignores the Heritage Conservation Area and ignores existing infrastructure and overland flow limitations.

As Geraldine Brook's (Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author) rightly states in her Sydney Morning Herald article of 20 January 2024, "Don't throw nature and heritage under a massive concrete pour that will only enrich developers and leave all the rest of us wondering: just where did our unique and lovely city go?" and as David Burdon "Let's keep our existing special places that contribute so much to the character of our city and fix our efforts on those places that that need uplifting... By destroying our conservation areas, Sydney will not only be destroying perfectly good existing housing, but also a vital part of its soul and we will all be the poorer for it."

Next stage for planning properly

Heritage conservation areas should be removed from the program firstly. Otherwise, master planning should occur to identify appropriate places, consultation should occur, successes and failures should be observed from other locations already ripe for development (eg Parramatta Road or parts of the pacific highway).

Until then it was unfortunate and a massive disruption to the market (which included some properties in active campaigns) for a snap re-zoning to be reported by the media before notice to the public affected by it.

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Roseville

Resources

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/news/a-shared-responsibility-the-plan-to-begin-addressing-the-housing-crisis-in-nsw>

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/transport-oriented-development-program/transport-oriented-development-sepp>

<https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/transport/publication/transforming-the-urban-space-through-transit-oriented-development-the-3v-approach>

<https://www.wsp.com/en-gl/insights/transit-oriented-development-framework-for-success>

<https://www.wsp.com/en-ca/insights/ca-creating-complete-communities>

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/heritage/conserving-our-heritage/burra-charter>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2017/jun/high-rise-buildings-much-more-energy-intensive-low-rise>

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/getting-building-height-right-for-the-climate>

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Sustainable-living/Prepare-for-extreme-weather/Flooding>

https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/hptrim/information-management-publications-public-website-ku-ring-gai-council-website-environment/middle_harbour_southern_catchments_floodstudy_finalreport.pdf

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Planning-and-development/Planning-policies-and-guidelines/Strategies-and-management-plans/Ku-ring-gai-Urban-Forest-Strategy>

<https://foke.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Notable-Quotes-for-Ku-ring-gai.pdf>

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Planning-and-development/Heritage/Heritage-conservation-areas>

https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/hptrim/information-management-publications-public-website-ku-ring-gai-council-website-urban-planning-and-policies/15_06_21-c32_clanville_conservation_area.pdf

https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/hptrim/information-management-publications-public-website-ku-ring-gai-council-website-urban-planning-and-policies/15_06_21-c36_lord_street_bancroft_conservation_area.pdf

https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/hptrim/information-management-publications-public-website-ku-ring-gai-council-website-urban-planning-and-policies/15_06_21-c35_the_grove_conservation_area.pdf

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/protection-vic/>

https://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/heritage-protection/heritage_info_pack/

<https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Planning-and-development/Planning-policies-and-guidelines/Strategies-and-management-plans/Ku-ring-gai-Urban-Forest-Strategy>

<https://khs.org.au/the-historian/>

<https://www.environment.act.gov.au/water/riverine-flood-maps/flood-risk-and-flood-map-information>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/site-5/health/healthyliving/flash-floods>