

11 SOUTH DURAL PLANNING PROPOSAL

At its meeting on 15 December 2016, Council considered a Mayoral Minute concerning progression of the South Dural Planning Proposal. Council adopted the recommendation (in part) to write to the Hon. Duncan Gay, the then Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight requesting an urgent response to confirm the NSW Government's position concerning the commitment of State funds for upgrades to the regional road network in accordance with the business plan for the Proposal and timing of delivery for any such funds.

A response has been received from the then Minister acknowledging the proponent's position that road network upgrades are required including works to New Line Road and Old Northern Road to a value of \$158 million to support the proposal. However, the then Minister notes that he has been advised that this figure is significantly lower than estimates by Roads and Maritime Services which indicate that the necessary road works will cost in excess of \$300 million.

The then Minister states that although the proponent is offering to contribute \$73.3 million towards the upgrades, only \$27.7 million of this is direct funding, with \$45.6 million being recoverable only via "satisfactory arrangements" provisions and the remainder of the balance, to the value of \$84.7 million, to be funded by the State Government. The then Minister concludes that, considering the significant cost and relatively low number of dwellings proposed to be delivered (2,900), the project is unlikely to compare favourably on a cost benefit analysis to other areas such as the North West Priority Growth Area when prioritising Government expenditure.

Submissions have also been received from Mr Julian Leeser MP, Federal Member for Berowra, The Hon Matt Kean MP, Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation and Mr Damien Tudehope MP, Member for Epping. The local Federal and State members are consistent in their concerns that the existing infrastructure is inadequate to support the proposed development, an appropriate funding plan for the necessary road and service upgrades has not been prepared, and the intensity of the development would dramatically change the character of the area. In addition, approximately 5,000 submissions have been received with the large majority of submitters objecting to the proposal.

Council's resolutions to support investigations into the urban release of the precinct were conditional upon preparation of an agreed plan for the delivery of the upgrade of the State road network and other supporting infrastructure to support development of the precinct. The State Government has not confirmed its commitment to the business plan submitted with the proposal which is a critical requirement to support the orderly development of the precinct. Although South Dural is a logical extension of the urban area, the infrastructure package submitted by the proponent lacks detail and certainty to support the intended development outcome. Therefore, the Planning Proposal is not feasible in its current form.

The Hills Council is also currently considering two planning proposals for urban residential development in the area which are equally constrained by the road network. It is evident that the land on the urban fringe is under development pressure to transform from rural to urban use. A coordinated and holistic planning strategy is required for the area to avoid ad-hoc planning outcomes

resulting from site specific planning proposals and proliferation of senior housing developments. Even if these planning proposals are not progressed, the capacity of the State roads in the area requires immediate attention.

Traffic modelling to support the South Dural Planning Proposal identifies that a majority of road links bordering the precinct are at, or very near, capacity. Some road sections would already meet the criteria for road upgrades based on current traffic volumes, while many others can only support a small amount of background traffic. Future development of the North West Growth Centre will continue to place further pressure on New Line Road which requires a re-prioritisation of funding resources and a regional solution to local traffic issues.

Accordingly, Council should discontinue its evaluation of the Planning Proposal until such time as the State Government works with Hornsby and The Hills Councils to develop a clear vision for the rural areas in the region and endorses and commits to the implementation of an infrastructure and funding plan to cater for existing and future development.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council write to the Department of Planning and Environment to advise that Council has discontinued its evaluation of the South Dural Planning Proposal until an agreed infrastructure plan is prepared to service the precinct with the support of the State Government including costings and timeframes for upgrading New Line Road and Old Northern Road.
2. Council write to the Minister for Planning and Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight requesting an urgent meeting with the Mayors of Hornsby and The Hills Council's to discuss the opportunity for the State Government to work with the Councils to develop a clear vision for the rural areas in the region including an infrastructure and funding plan to cater for existing and future development.
3. Council write to the Minister for Planning to request that no planning proposals be progressed within The Hills, Hawkesbury City or Blacktown City Council areas that generate further traffic on the existing road network around South Dural until a functional plan for upgrading the regional road network is prepared.
4. Council write to local State and Federal members advising of Council's resolution and seeking their support and assistance in the implementation of the above actions and facilitating discussions with the State Government.
5. Subject to the written agreement of the proponent and at the proponent's cost, the consultant team engaged to undertake an independent peer review the Planning Proposal be requested to finalise a report on the proposal indicating the status of the evaluation and outstanding issues based on the current information and assessment undertaken to date.
6. All persons that have made submissions on the Planning Proposal be advised of Council's resolution.

STEVE RUSSELL

Mayor

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

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