



12 April 2011

The Hon. Bradley Hazzard, MP  
Minister for Planning and Infrastructure  
Parliament House, Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Hazzard

*Minister*

**Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy Planning Proposal**

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance to defer the making of the Hornsby Shire Housing Strategy Planning Proposal.

By way of background, over the last few years Council has prepared a Housing Strategy in consultation with the community to identify areas for the provision of additional housing to assist meet Council's housing obligations into the future. The Strategy has been prepared in response to the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy and draft North Subregional Plan. The scope of the Housing Strategy includes the identification of opportunities for an additional 2,600 dwellings over the next 10 years.

At the request of the then Department of Planning, Council prepared a Planning Proposal to implement the Housing Strategy which was publicly exhibited in March and April 2010. The Planning Proposal includes the rezoning of 23 precincts to facilitate generally 5 storey residential and mixed use developments. The precincts are located in close proximity to commercial centres and railway stations from Berowra in the north to Carlingford in the south.

A total of 3,341 submissions were received during the exhibition period with 94 percent of submissions raising objection to the Proposal and a further 2 percent stating that prior State Government commitments are required to support the increase in dwelling numbers. The major reasons for objection to the Planning Proposal are local issues including impacts on the character of the area and streetscape, and traffic and parking congestion. Concerns relating to the ability of local infrastructure to cater for the increase in demand also rated highly in the objections received.

As you may be aware, at its meeting on 7 July 2010, Council considered a report on the issues raised in submissions and reluctantly resolved to move forward with the Planning Proposal. Council was aware that ignoring the State Government's dwelling targets was simply not an option as the then Government had shown in the Ku-ring-gai Municipality that it was willing to take control and strip local communities of their influence. However, in light of the significant concerns raised by the community, Council also resolved to request that the State Government only bring the rezonings into effect subject to a guarantee that it will deliver on all necessary infrastructure commitments to meet new demand.

In accordance with Council's resolution, the rezonings were submitted to the then Department of Planning on 13 July 2010. The Department has indicated that the zoning changes are imminent. However, no date has been given at this stage as to when they will come into effect and no response has been provided concerning infrastructure provision.

At its meeting on 6 April 2011, Council considered a Matter of Urgency concerning the progression of the Housing Strategy Planning Proposal and resolved that:

1. *The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure be urged not to delegate his authority to make the Housing Strategy Planning Proposal to unelected bureaucrats, but instead to personally consider the implications of the Housing Strategy on the residents of Hornsby Shire.*
2. *The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure be urged to defer the Hornsby Housing Strategy Planning Proposal in its current form to allow Council to work more closely with the State Government in developing a proposal for Hornsby Shire that is palatable to the majority of residents rather than the current Housing Strategy, which was opposed by approximately 90% of residents.*
3. *The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure be advised that Council wishes to meet its challenges for increased densities by way of focusing in on its major centres such as Epping, Pennant Hills and Hornsby in the longer term, subject to adequate infrastructure provision for those centres and by identifying shortcomings in current housing choice in the Shire and exploring possibilities of medium densities in certain areas.*

In addition, Council resolved that Council officers write to the Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority with a view to nominating Pennant Hills as a potential precinct for renewal under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Urban Renewal) 2010 and to determine whether the Authority would be interested in partnering with Council to redevelop this precinct. Please find attached a copy of Council's submission to the Authority for your information.

Council also resolved that I write to you seeking an urgent meeting with interested Councillors and senior Council officers to discuss options for a revised Housing Strategy. In this regard, I would appreciate your advice regarding an appropriate occasion we can meet to discuss the matter.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Berman', written in a cursive style.

NICK BERMAN  
Mayor

Attachment: Letter to Sydney Metropolitan Development Authority