



Demanding clarity on the future of the Hawkesbury

Description



(Edit– 27th June: The motion I put to Council on the 26th passed 11 votes to 1. Audio of the debate can be accessed below:)

Original post:

The whole messy process that has unfolded since March about road corridors has brought the issue of development in the Hawkesbury into focus.

Everyone can see the massive surge of housing and commercial building that has marched down Windsor Road and is now knocking on our door. Indeed, some of this urban development is even now in our Council area, because the “Vineyard Precinct” of the North West Growth Sector (NWGS) is within the Hawkesbury City boundaries.

Residents and landowners on acreage properties adjoining the NWGS are justified in their concerns that this development will eventually overtake them as well. Everyone is entitled to some certainty about their future on the land, which includes some of the Sydney basin's diminishing stock of prime and currently productive agricultural land, plus remnant Cumberland woodland.

As a Councillor, I've tried to apply pressure to planning officials with the State Government to be honest and co-operative about what the long term future of these areas are, largely defined by the suburbs of Oakville, Maraylya, Vineyard, and even parts of Pitt Town and Cattai.

What I've received are mixed messages, and this isn't good enough. Some of the documentation associated with the Outer Sydney Orbital hints at areas "north of the Vineyard Precinct" for some kind of industrial use. The "SEPP", a planning zoning that makes the NWGS possible, actually encompasses a far larger area than the current development. Speculators — real estate types and developers — are fomenting rumours about currently rural areas being re-zoned for future development and this is inflating prices, which inflates land value, which inflates your rates. I've said more about this in the video I made about the corridors proposal. [Check it out.](#)

The consequence is a persistent sense of dread, and an inability for residents to know what their future looks like, even while they are being rated out of existence on the properties that they bought with a working wage, and wanted to retire on.

Council has a particular responsibility here. Later this year we are renewing what's called our "Residential Land Strategy". This exercise will set out Hawkesbury Council's desires for what areas will take what degree of development over a longer timeframe. Regardless of where you sit on the question of growth, Council needs to manage what could or should happen, and where. [Here is the link to the current strategy](#), adopted in 2011.

In the RU2 and RU4 zoned acreage properties in the south eastern part of the city, our choices could range from "no change", to "detached dual occupancy" (meaning two houses on a five acre lot, but under one title), to "large lot rural subdivision" (like we see at Windsor Downs, with block sizes at a minimum of one or two acres), and then upward through a range of subdivision options that resemble what we see on the eastern side of Boundary road. I am emphatically not in favour of that outcome.

However, for Council to deliberate well, we deserve clarity from a range of state government departments, including the Department of Planning, Transport for NSW, and the Greater Sydney Commission. And of course, the public also have a right to know, and my gut feeling is that we have not had full disclosure from these agencies.

I am therefore moving the Notice of Motion you see below at the Council meeting next Tuesday (26th June), and I invite you to spread the word, come along, and register your support for this call for honesty and clarity about what the government's long term plans are for our homes.

[Notice of Motion - Development outside the NWGS](#)

Category

1. Uncategorized

Tags

1. Development
2. urban sprawl
3. Vineyard stage 1
4. Oakville

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councill

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