

RYDE ASSURANCE PANEL LISTENING SESSIONS – SESSION 1

RYDE

TUESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2019

MS TURNBULL: Okay. Well, hello and greetings everybody. Thank you very much for coming here to speak to us on Chinese New Year of all evenings. I don't think we actually twigged that this was Chinese New Year when we set the date so particularly thankful to you for coming along tonight and Kung Hei Fat Choy.

And I'd also very importantly like to acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land on which we meet and acknowledge their elders past, present and emerging. My name is Lucy Turnbull. I am the Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission and I welcome you all to this Assurance Panel Listening Session.

Assurance Reviews are designed to support the effective implementation of strategic plans and to get the best outcomes for the community and for the environment. As well as this Assurance Review, the GSC is currently working with 33 local councils to ensure their Local Strategic Planning Statements and local environmental plans will deliver the Greater Sydney Region Plan and relevant District Plans and the directions contained therein. And it's important for everybody to understand that our Region Plan and our District Plans were co-created with local government and the whole wider Sydney community.

We had comments, face to face contact with over 25,000 people when we were developing our Plans and there were about 750 points of social media contacts. So, we consulted very long and widely on two occasions during the preparation of the Plans. And the local government were key partners for us in this so that our Plans, we believe, reflect - especially the District Plans reflect the visions and the priorities which the community told us were very important.

Now, the Assurance Review relevant in tonight's proceedings is being undertaken at the request of the Premier in accordance with the *Greater Sydney Commission Act* to provide advice and to make recommendations to the Premier on matters relating to planning and development in the Greater Sydney Region.

The Premier asked the Greater Sydney Commission to conduct an Assurance Review with regard to planning in this Ryde Local Government area with a particular focus on Macquarie Park Investigation Area and its broader impact on the Ryde LGA. The Ryde LGA and Macquarie Park are recognised by the Commission as being critical for the whole of Greater Sydney. For example, in the North District Plan the strategic centre of Macquarie Park is noted as being part of the Eastern Economic Corridor and is identified as being a health and education precinct.

It's also already the largest non-CBD office market in Australia and a really significant centre for jobs creation, and for economic activity. This Assurance

Review is not looking at individual Development Applications or planning proposals but at the broader strategic planning context in this Ryde LGA. As detailed in the Review Terms of Reference which is on the website, the Commission will provide the Premier a preliminary assessment identifying key matters for further analysis later this month.

The Commission will then report to the Premier fully in May with an assessment of the current situation and any steps the Commission believes we would recommend to be taken to improve outcomes for the current and future residents of the Ryde LGA.

Tonight's session is an opportunity for the Panel to listen to your views and in the interests of high levels of transparency, we're listening to people in public and it is being video-recorded. On behalf of my colleague, Deputy Chief Commissioner and Economic Commissioner, Geoff Roberts, I'd like to thank you very much for giving up your time to participate and I'd also like to acknowledge the presence of your local member, Victor Dominello and the Mayor of Ryde, Councillor Laxale. This is Councillor Laxale here. Okay, thank you.

I would like to pass over to our excellent facilitator for tonight, Meredith Jones, who works with us at the GSC and will explain further how this session will proceed. Thanks very much.

MS JONES: Thank you, Lucy. Good evening and welcome everybody. I am the Director of Engagement at the Greater Sydney Commission and I have the pleasure of facilitating tonight's session. The Assurance Panel comprises our Chief Commissioner Lucy Turnbull and our Deputy Chief Commissioner and Economic Commissioner, Geoff Roberts. Colleagues from the Commission are also here providing assistance, including Kristin, who is at the front taking notes.

Before I continue I should state that all Greater Sydney Commissioners must make an annual Declaration of Interest identifying potential conflicts with their appointed role. For the record we are unaware of any conflicts in relation to the Assurance Review. You can find additional information on the way we manage potential conflicts in our policy, which is available on the Commission's website, along with our Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy.

As you are advised in communication from the Commission in recent days, this session is being filmed and may be available on the Commission's website. The Listening Session gives the Panel the opportunity to hear your views on planning in the Ryde Local Government Area with a particular focus on the Macquarie Park Investigation Area and its broader impact on the Ryde Local Government Area.

As part of this process the Panel has also met with local Council and State Government agency staff. The Panel has also participated in a bus tour of some relevant sites in the Ryde Local Government Area.

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There are some ground rules for this evening. Before we hear from our first registered speaker I would like to lay some rules for how we expect everyone taking part in this evening to behave. First, today's session isn't a debate. Our Panel will not be taking questions from the floor and no interjections are
10 allowed. Our aim is to provide maximum opportunity for registered speakers to be heard by the Panel.

Public speaking is an ordeal for many people though you may not agree with everything that you're hearing here today each speaker has the right to be heard
15 with respect and heard in silence. Today's focus is on listening. The Panel is here to listen, not to comment. They may ask questions for clarification, but this is usually unnecessary. It will be most beneficial if your presentation is focused on issues of concern to you.

20 It is most important that every person who is registered to speak receives a fair share of time. I am going to be enforcing time-keeping rules. A warning bell will sound with one minute before the speaker's allotted time is up and chimes will ring at the five-minute mark. That's a subtle warning to wind things up. Please respect these time limits.

25

Though we'll strive to speak to our schedule today, speakers sometimes go faster than we imagine, so this evening may go faster but everybody who has registered to speak has arrived. If possible, it would be appreciated if you have presentational speaking notes if you could present that to Amanda who is just
30 walking that way - if you could give it to her at the end of the evening just for record-keeping purposes.

Audio-recording and photography of the session is not allowed, with the exception of the official recording and any media in the room for note-taking
35 purposes. Craig Middleton, from the Commission, who will raise his hands is here if there are any media in the room and they have any questions. Everyone who is speaking today will have a maximum of five minutes to present to the Panel. As I mentioned before, bell at four - chimes at five minutes.

40 When you present to the Panel can you please come to the front, take a seat at the table and begin by introducing yourself. You should also advise the Panel if you're speaking on behalf of a company, an organisation or a community group.

45 Housekeeping and safety. In the event of a fire or other emergency please make

your way out the door that you entered through and then keeping going to your right and you will find the fire exit which will take us directly outside the building.

5 Can I also ask, one of the key risks that we've identified this evening is trip hazards, if you have a bag, speakers will be getting up and sitting down and moving around the room. If you can make sure that your bag is either on your chair or underneath you, we would appreciate that.

10 The restrooms are in the same direction as the emergency exit so if you just go out the door that you came in and keep following around to your right you'll find the restrooms. We have food, coffee, tea and water if you need sustenance during the evening.

15 Finally, I would ask that everybody please turn off their mobile phones. It's going to be a very exciting evening and we want to make sure everyone can hear. Thank you. And with that I would like to call our first speaker who is Mark Grayson from Frank Knight Town Planning. Thank you.

20 MR GRAYSON: Lucky number one.

MS TURNBULL: Yes.

MR GRAYSON: Welcome.

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MS TURNBULL: Hi there. Welcome, thanks for coming.

MR GRAYSON: Thank you, Chief Commissioner. Thank you, Commissioner Roberts. I do have a presentation too if I can talk to that at the same time if that's okay by you.

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MS TURNBULL: Yes.

MR GRAYSON: So, yes - Mark Grayson from Knight Frank Town Planning and we represent a group of seven landholders for land area circa 5.7 hectares if I am able to refer to now if I can?

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MS TURNBULL: Yes.

40 MR GRAYSON: Which is referred to as the Wicks Road Civic Quarter. By way of reference if I can, Chief Commissioner, we certainly on behalf of the land owners definitely support this review process and we would hope that part of the outcome of this review process is a recommendation that certainly those proposals that do have good planning and community outcomes for Ryde are
45 unable to proceed. And I think certainly our view is that the Wicks Road Civic

Quarter certainly will deliver good planning and community outcomes for Ryde.

5 By way of reference, if I can, in terms of the map that you can see there up on the screen, so the heavy edge area bounded by red is the Wicks Road Civic Quarter and you can see it's on the effectively what we would describe as the eastern fringe of the Investigation Area and you can see it's immediately adjacent to the North Ryde Station precinct as well. And as I mentioned that comprises circa 5.7 hectares in total. It's bounded by Wicks Road on its
10 western boundary and by Epping Road on its southern boundary and by Lachlan's Line on its - the other boundary effectively - so by way of reference.

15 Importantly, also if I can point out the location relative to the North Ryde and Macquarie Park Metro Stations as well. It's approximately 800 metres distance to both of those stations. Chief Commissioner, and Commissioner Roberts I guess by way of introducing the Wicks Road Civic Quarter if I can and to get your bearings and if I can use the pointer here - excuse me - so Lachlan's Line I mentioned before, as I mentioned Epping Road, Wicks Road, the Ryde Metro
20 Station. I guess it's important to emphasise that it's completely understood the importance of a Planned Precinct in effect and the opportunity of that arises in terms of a broader connected precinct, not just to the site itself but also importantly to some of the surrounding activities and potential other redevelopment opportunities.

25 Certainly, if I can point out some of those key ones to you, Chief Commissioner, by way of reference to the ex-Peter Board High School site to the immediate west of our site. This plan, which is very much a work in progress can I say, is a schematic, which has endeavoured to understand how the site might better connect in terms of a wider whole or precinct plan and I
30 guess our view is Chief Commissioner and Commissioner Roberts is that we certainly as I mentioned before understand the importance of a plan - excuse me - that delivers a much wider community and planning outcome for Macquarie Park and in this case what we call Wicks Road.

35 By way of reference as well if I can so also then the link across Epping Road to the tennis courts and other recreational facilities and also you may also be aware of the announcement late last year by the Minister for Planning in relation to a bridge crossing from Lachlan's Line through to the Ryde Rail
40 Station as well.

MS TURNBULL: Can you just point out where that is?

MR GRAYSON: Through here, Commissioner.

45 MS TURNBULL: Yes. Okay.

MR GRAYSON: Yes. Chief Commissioner I should say. I think it's also important to really - as we would call it our immediate neighbour and our immediate neighbour is Lachlan's Line and if I can point out in terms of where we are - obviously we can see we are a boundary on this plan here - but also importantly in terms of this schematic - if I can call it that, and we can see in relation to this in fact is the Wicks Road Quarter here.

Chief Commissioner and Commissioner I guess what we would like to emphasise is the strategic merit of the Wicks Road Quarter, being within the 800 metres, the two future Metro stations, strategic location adjacent to the North Ryde Station Precinct as mentioned before. We would of course give the site within the Investigation Area. It's on the fringe of the commercial core and in itself a potential for significant local job creation. Some of the early work done in terms of the economics of it have confirmed that the existing number of 600 jobs might be in the order of 2,000 jobs in a proper integrated mixed-use scheme.

Certainly, also we emphasise importance of a Planned Precinct as I mentioned before, a significant greenspace of parkland for potential of the possible skill infrastructure as part of that broader Macquarie Park Education Precinct as also announced by government late last year and the connection to North Ryde and the station, and basically in terms of its potential for a proper Planned Precinct for the area.

MS TURNBULL: Now, unfortunately your five minutes has expired.

MR GRAYSON: I know. I had one more slide, Commissioner. Or could you indulge me?

MS TURNBULL: No - we'll give you one more minute and then - yes - okay.

MR GRAYSON: Okay. Thank you very much. So, in short - and in summary - Chief Commissioner I guess what we'd say is that Wicks Road is the unique opportunity for a large-scale integrated approach to precinct planning. They are land owners capable with the capacity to deliver infrastructure and a project of this scale. It's a site capable of incorporating large scale community infrastructure and we would also say it's unlike any other site within the Ryde Local Government Area, Chief Commissioner. Yes.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MR GRAYSON: Thank you.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you very much.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

5 MS JONES: Thank you. Excellent. Whilst our next speaker is coming up I would just like to mention that our North District Commissioner Deb Dearing has arrived, and she is at the back there. Okay. Our second speaker is Adrian Checchin from Mirvac.

10 MR CHECCHIN: Good evening, Chief Commissioner Turnbull and deputy Chief Commissioner and Economics Commissioner Roberts. Thank you for the opportunity of addressing the Ryde Assurance Panel. My name is Adrian Checchin and I am a Development Director at Mirvac. I take this opportunity to address the Panel as a long-term land owner of a strategic 2.25-hectare property located on the corner of Waterloo and Lane Cove Roads at Macquarie Park. We have owned the property since 2000. Our property adjoins the southernmost Macquarie Park Train Station. The site of the station was actually
15 owned by Mirvac and the State Government acquired it from us in order to place the station there.

20 We've had ongoing discussions in relation to planning with Council and the State Government for many, many years and we do express a strong interest in the strategic long-term land ownership and the successful redevelopment of Macquarie Park.

25 Presently, approximately 880,000 square metres of commercial stock exists in Macquarie Park, being one of the largest office precincts in Sydney, as you mentioned earlier. Whilst this is an impressive statistic, the reality of what Macquarie Park actually is, what it offers and its role into the future is very different. Some points which are pertinent to the GSC's review. Macquarie
30 Park is essentially an outdated quasi-industrial office environment with very high levels of parking. Traffic issues plague the area with most users commuting by car during AM and PM peak periods.

35 Macquarie Park Station is severely under-utilised. It ranks 65 out of 178 train stations for local trips in New South Wales. It represents one of the lowest train usage per job ratios of .11 per cent. Only approximately 15 percent of the workforce get to Macquarie Park by train.

40 It's very, very difficult to attract new commercial users to Macquarie Park. The last substantial tenancy was Optus back in 2007. In relation to supply, presently under the existing planning controls there's anywhere from between 50 to 200 years of office supply without changing anything in Council's LEP.

45 As two prime examples of how difficult it actually is to get tenants to Macquarie Park. In 2007 Mirvac received development consent for 37,000

square metres of new office space for half of our site despite actively seeking tenants for now 11 years we have been unable to secure a pre-commitment and directly across the road from us on the other side, the other station entry - Winton and Frasers have an approval for 83,000 square metres and they
5 similarly have not been able to secure a pre-commitment.

Major organisations such as Atlassian have been on the record saying that they will not consider moving to Macquarie Park and very recently our Premier she had to defend the government's announcement of Central to Eveleigh when she
10 was asked why the government would fund a new precinct when precincts such as Macquarie Park already existed. The answer that she replied was that the users of these premises are young tech-savvy entrepreneurial people and they want to work somewhere cool.

15 So, a lack of amenity and vibrancy is a fundamental issue that needs to be addressed before Macquarie Park can take its next step to become a recognised business destination of choice. To this end we commend the State Government in identifying Macquarie Park as an Urban Renewal Area. The Department of
20 Planning and Environment has done many years of work and were very enthused when they appointed the ARUP Cities Team to undertake a review on behalf of the Department of Planning and the GSC's involvement now will make sure that no stone is left unturned.

25 So, in the second quarter, as everyone is aware, of 2019 Sydney will experience a brand-new game changing infrastructure like we've never seen. The North-West Metro will be operational and Macquarie Park is six stops from the Sydney CBD. In 2024, Sydney will be further connected by the South-West Metro. A very, very rare opportunity exists at Macquarie Park to
30 allow for a mix of uses to support the principles of transport-orientated development along the metro line by complementing existing commercial, educational and health services.

If this is conceived correctly, the opportunity can create a new mixed use, active, vibrant destination. One that will change Macquarie Park from being a dreary, secondary office location of circumstance to a commercial and mixed-use destination of choice. It's very rare for an urban area of Sydney to benefit
35 from large, single-ownership land parcels where any future redevelopment impacts are minimal. Provided the balance can be achieved with infrastructure and public open space and public benefits and the like Macquarie Park could become an area that is cool - that can become an area where Atlassian does
40 want to be located. So, it could become an area where businesses of the future choose to locate amongst the vibrant group of other uses.

45 We're fully supportive of all the work that's been completed to date and we look forward to the GSC completing the Review. With active, vibrant, mixed

uses around the Metro station being the catalyst for reinvigoration Macquarie Park could be truly special. However, if we just continue in the hope that Macquarie Park will suddenly reinvigorate itself with more of the same our fear is that we'll be sitting here in 10 years' time having the same discussion.
5 Thank you, for your time.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

10 MS TURNBULL: Thank you.

MS JONES: Thank you. I'd now like to call our third speaker, Michael Butterworth.

15 MR BUTTERWORTH: I'm Michael.

MR ROBERTS: Good evening.

MR BUTTERWORTH: I might just read something I wrote earlier, if that's all right.
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MS TURNBULL: Yes. Are you from an organisation or an individual?

MR BUTTERWORTH: No. I'm a local resident.

25 MS TURNBULL: Okay, good.

MR ROBERTS: Welcome.

30 MS TURNBULL: That's great.

MR BUTTERWORTH: Thank you. Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I suspect I am one of the only or one of the very few speakers in this process who actually lives in Macquarie Park. It is my understanding that the Greater Sydney Commission was initially established
35 under the auspices of the Minister for Planning. It has now been moved to the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

So now the GSC is investigating the activities of the Department of Planning. That certainly gives the impression that when it comes to planning matters in
40 this State that the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing and that hardly builds confidence.

I think, too, that this hearing has missed a great opportunity by not holding this session in Macquarie Park. Members could have experienced the traffic and
45 seen firsthand the towering residential blocks that are devouring the business,

commercial and research sections of Macquarie Park. The original employment purpose of Macquarie Park is constantly being undermined by the Planning Department's and GSC's ravenous housing targets. And what a loss. A great, world-class university working alongside industry to drive future employment and prosperity. All diminished for a few more blocks of units. This is so short-sighted.

Then the Commission could have visited the site of the \$100 million Macquarie Bus Interchange. First promised as an infrastructure upgrade in the 2007 Bennelong Bi-Election some 16 months ago, and this project is still being spruiked by the State Government and the Member for Ryde in his current election material. No consultation with residents. Big plans but no delivery.

The unit blocks went up and they continue to go up, but the infrastructure is on the never-never. Members too could witness Waterloo Road before the RMS execute their plans for a six-lane highway which will divide Macquarie Park in two and destroy any pedestrian connectivity.

And then there's the Country Garden development at Delhi Road, North Ryde. Again, the current Member for Ryde, MR DOMINELLO MP appeared in a local paper way back in 2016 with another councillor to announce a dollar for dollar upgrade totalling \$20 million I think with Ryde Council for upgrades to Pittwater and Wicks Road. Again, the units went up. Country Garden is there for all to see but no road upgrade with the State Government now only wanting to upgrade Wicks Road and not Pittwater Road and I hear that the State Government is now saying there isn't enough money for this project.

I'm sure other speakers will like to cover other topics, but I wanted to speak finally about Lachlan's Line. Earlier this week the Premier was promoting a Minister for Open Space. What a shame this is such a late development. Lachlan's Line was publicly owned land and would have made great open space for the residents of Ryde.

MR BUTTERWORTH: Instead it was sold to developers to create a 2,700-dwelling development for 5,000 residents. Landcom promoted it as a new suburb and that's all we need in North Ryde, another new suburb crammed into an existing one.

And to add insult to injury - I know the Commissioner asked about the pedestrian bridge from Lachlan's Line to the station there. This is another good supposed great piece of infrastructure, but it will result in tree removal at Bundara Reserve which is a very rare turpentine ironbark community with an E-2 Conservation Rating. You cannot get a higher conservation rating at E-2 but for the purposes of future - of this residential development - trees will be removed there and Bundara Reserve will be impacted.

So, I finish by saying we have seen with this government - trees, the environment and the liveability of our existing suburbs always finish a poor second when it comes to development. Thank you.

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MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

MS JONES: I'd now like to invite Raymond Herring to come and address the Panel.

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MR HERRING: Good evening.

MR ROBERTS: Welcome.

15 MR HERRING: My name is Raymond John Herring. I have lived here at [redacted], Ryde for 43 years. My wife, who was born here, lived in the same house as a child except for two years. I am a retired ambulance paramedic and manager. I managed the Aeromedical and Medical Retrieval Operations Centre and I am no stranger to government workings. My statement to this committee
20 is about that which is affecting us directly as the residents of the City of Ryde.

This area is being turned into a ghetto of the future through inappropriate overdevelopment without adequate infrastructure to support the influx of
25 people in the area we know as the Ryde City. The prolific high-density construction of predominantly one- and two-bedroom apartments in the Shepherds Bay area with poor road access is a good example of bad planning practices. With no additional transport infrastructure and extremely poor road access for Emergency Services - all which need to be upgraded prior to
30 construction.

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The through-traffic in Ryde is so heavy that rat-runs are becoming a safety
nightmare for local residents. Epping Road, Lane Cove Road, and in particular Church Street run over the Ryde Bridge is impossible. As an example, an
35 accident or breakdown in any lane north or southbound causes the traffic to grind to a halt.

Late last year - I think November 2018 - two government buses, a truck and
two cars closed the entire street for over six hours. It's a major thoroughfare
40 from Mona Vale to Sutherland. Traffic from Epping Road wanting to avoid the traffic lights and congestion on Lane Cove Road travels via Wicks Road, Twin Road, Boyce Street, Quarry Road and through our suburban street of
[redacted]. Often at high speed rendering our street a danger to the local
residents. An example of that is on 24 February 2017, my Nissan Patrol which
45 is a fairly substantial vehicle was parked in the street outside our residence and
written off by a car travelling through that street, in excess of 100 kilometres

an hour. Submissions to Ryde City Council so far had no action developed and that was submitted eight months ago.

5 High-density multi-storey development in Macquarie Park end of the city is not conducive to the wellbeing of the greater Ryde community. We have seen the fiasco of swift unchecked high-rise development becoming a reality and whilst this example is not within Ryde Local Government Area, the failure of the Opal Tower, and the huge impact that that has had on the lives of those residents who bought and moved in just four months ago, in good faith, only to
10 have their dreams dashed, their lives turned into uncertainty and huge monetary loss. How many more of these fiascos are currently in progress within this Local Government Area?

15 The Ryde area is slowly being transformed into a high-density low-quality area and successive governments, both local, state and federal, are not serving the people as expected by local community. Decentralisation, efficient transport systems would serve the community better than cramming more people into less space, open up more land in the Western Sydney Basin for appropriate transport systems in place to coincide with the growth in population and reduce
20 immigration to a sustainable level.

In short stop pandering to big developers and do the right thing by the community as a whole. The elected officials are elected by us, are employed by us and yet seem to be serving big business with no regard for the effect that it
25 has on us - the people.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you very much.

30 MR ROBERTS: Thank you.

MR BUTTERWORTH: Right.

35 MS JONES: Thank you. I would now like to call Bob Meyer from Cox Architecture.

MR ROBERTS: Hi, Bob.

MS TURNBULL: Hi Bob.

40 MR MEYER: Hello. Good evening. My linkage with Macquarie Park is a bit historic because between 1965 and 1969 I was the Assistant Architect Planner for Macquarie University when it was first being developed and Macquarie Park was still part of the green belt. Some of you may know it's very lucky that the head of the Department of Planning, Nigel Ashton, happened to be at
45 Stanford University in the early 60's and saw the beginnings of Silicone Valley

with a small area where a couple of young people called Hewlett and Packard were doing some work there and he went back to the Minister and said the government should buy this land. The Minister said, "What a good idea. I've got no money left. It's all been spent at Campbelltown but why not just - why not zone it for high technology or for employment that is linked to the University in its teaching and its research." And therefore, that's what happened and that was the beginning of Macquarie Park. So, I have been very interested in it. It's been a huge success I feel just as the University has.

Now, Macquarie Park has been suggested in several strategic plans as Sydney's third centre, after the Sydney's CBD and Parramatta, it's been said that Macquarie Park could become the third centre because the number of people that could be employed in there. And that may or may not be right but - and this could be facilitated also by the new Metro stations which will open shortly.

However, what Macquarie Park lacks, in my opinion, is a pedestrian environment and an identity as a key metropolitan centre. I suggest that this could be achieved by the business park spine, Waterloo Road between Herring and Lane Cove Roads, being transformed into a first class boulevard, for want of a better name, retaining vehicular traffic but dramatically enhancing the pedestrian experience by fronting Waterloo Road with activities, such as coffee shops, restaurants, boutique shops, book shops and other activities which line major city centre streets, providing a pleasant walkable experience found in the most memorable centres in the world.

Waterloo Boulevard would allow Macquarie Park's workers and visitors, highly walkable access to the new metro stations and it doesn't surprise me when I was just told the few people who use the rail stations at the moment, because it's not a very pleasant walk from their office to those stations. Even though they're only about a five-minutes' walk. We know that without a pedestrian environment it's not very pleasant to walk to these places.

Waterloo Boulevard, again for want of a better name would allow Macquarie Park's workers and visitors highly walkable access to the new Metro stations, to the University and the newly developing shopping centre as well as new community facilities which could be located in the Macquarie Park Centre.

Waterloo Road could still cater for traffic, particularly buses, such as the Perth Central Area Transport Bus - which is a free bus serving the Perth CBD. Or the driverless shuttle bus which is now being trialled by the New South Wales Government at Sydney Olympic Park.

How can Waterloo Road boundaries be lined with activities? The original requirement was for Macquarie's buildings - the buildings to take up one third of the site. The other third was for parking and the other third was for

landscape. So, the buildings went in the middle of the site - the park - surrounded by parking with landscaping around the building leaving Waterloo Road free of any development and not very interesting at all.

5 So, if in fact more people can walk to the stations in a pleasant environment and also if it would encourage people to leave their place of work at say lunch time and communicate with others - the Brookings Institution, for instance, talks about collaboration between people in businesses.

10 MS TURNBULL: Can you wrap up please Bob?

MR MEYER: Yes.

MS TURNBULL: Yes.

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MR MEYER: Yes, and I'm almost finished here. And therefore, they could build along Waterloo Street and really provide a really fine image for Macquarie Park to help it transition to one of Sydney's great centres. Thank you.

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MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you, Bob.

25 MR MEYER: Sorry, I took so much time.

MS TURNBULL: Okay, thank you so much.

30 MS JONES: Thank you. I'd now like to call Cathy Merchant from the Ryde Hunter's Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society to address the Panel.

MS TURNBULL: There you go. Yes, you're miked up. Okay.

MR ROBERTS: Hello.

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MS MERCHANT: I'm miked up.

MS TURNBULL: Yes.

40 MS MERCHANT: Yes.

MR ROBERTS: Welcome.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you. Thanks for coming.

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MS MERCHANT: I'm from - yes, from the Ryde Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society. Now my focus tonight is limited to the protection of the environment and our serious concerns that remnant bushland is being destroyed within North Ryde and we feel this is in disregard of the stated priorities and actions of the District North Plan. And we note that a lot of the development within the Macquarie Investigation Area has occurred under the major project's approvals process and outside Council's strategic planning controls.

Now, I'll elaborate on our previous submissions which we sent through but using the concept DA for the Ivanhoe Estate master plan by way of example of how development within the MIA has failed to protect irreplaceable biodiversity. The overall planning context of the Concept Master Plan for Ivanhoe should consider that it is public land. Similarly to the M2 surplus public land development at Lachlan's Line, the Ivanhoe Place Concept Master Planning appears driven by revenue raising opportunities for the State with disregard of the broader public benefits that protection of natural areas on public land provides for future residents.

The GSC has identified an improving sustainability will involve incorporating natural landscape features into the urban environment. And we understand this city in its landscape concept. In implementing this concept, the GSC has stated the importance of protecting and enhancing biodiversity and increasing urban tree canopy.

Historically, North Ryde shale soils, like much of Western Sydney were highly valued for their agricultural productivity, and unlike the poor rocky soils of sandstone country, much of the land in North Ryde was cleared for market gardens. Now, whilst National Parks now protect local sandstone vegetation, the remnant shale bushland in North Ryde, such as at Ivanhoe Place, is not well protected within the National Parks estate. This is even though it is a very significant biodiversity value and listed as critically endangered Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forests and protected under National and State Threatened Species laws.

However, the concept DA for Ivanhoe Place submitted by a public trading enterprise but with no land owner's consent included on the application form that we could find proposes to destroy and fragment the endangered shale forest and remove over 311 trees including hollow-bearing trees. We feel this is absolutely contradictory to the GSC's objectives.

Further, supporting documents to the DA failed to identify many things. All of the threatened species on the site, the drainage lines across the site, how habitat connectivity will be achieved, the impact of deep soil excavation, the viability of future replacement trees, the installation of nesting boxes to replace removed hollows. Nor does the application make referral to the Commonwealth, for

ecological assessment of the impact of the Master Plan.

5 We are not assured by these identified inadequacies that the Concept Master Plan complies with the strategic plan. We feel that GSC should intervene to ensure the development footprint of the exhibited Concept Master Plan is modified to protect the environment at Ivanhoe Place.

10 We understood that another of the goals for the GSC was to integrate transport corridor and infrastructure planning within a strategic planning context and achieve improved sustainability for Sydney's growth. The Concept Master Plan proposes a slip road off Epping Road, through the core habitat area of the endangered forest. This seems totally contrary to the GSC's three proposed actions to protect and enhance biodiversity, one of which includes to manage urban development and urban bushland to reduce edge-effect impacts.

15 Further, the removal of a large number of trees along Epping Road is contrary to the GSC's stated intent to sustain a boulevard of trees along corridors such as Epping Road. As raised in our previous submission, we have concerns with the way major development has been progressed in the MIA. This seems via an initial concept approval but in the absence of assessment of the environmental impact of the detailed designs necessary later on.

20 Recently we saw this at Lachlan's Line as the design details of the concept approved pedestrian cycle-way bridge across Delhi Road emerged. What had been presented during the community consultative phase as a minimum impact bridge with piers mostly contained at road level or nearby had morphed into something reminiscent of the Utopia series.

25 We call it Big Blue. Big Blue will be built fully on RMS land below the road level and adversely impact in the endangered shale forest and on adjoining Bundara Reserve. Past attempts by Ryde Council to consolidate the remnant forest on Bundara had included rezoning of the adjoining RMS land to E2 for environmental protection, since part of this land contained endangered shale forest. A middle pier is now located on the E2 land and hope of ecological restoration abandoned.

30 Unlike Ivanhoe Place, the endangered shale forest at Bundara is of a smaller size and did not trigger assessment by the Commonwealth. The offset credits were determined by the new weakened State Government biodiversity process. It was paid as money to Ryde Council which can spend it on environmental projects but not necessarily projects that improve the longer-term viability of Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest in Ryde LGA.

35 It is our concern that the endangered shale forest at Ivanhoe Place will be further fragmented after the approval of the Concept Master Plan. This will

affect its longer-term ecological integrity and viability, detailed subdivision of the individual lots across the site will be progressed by the weaker State biodiversity laws, the remnant forest will not be a sufficient site to trigger Commonwealth laws. Thank you for an opportunity.

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MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you.

10 MS TURNBULL: Thank you, Ms Merchant.

MS JONES: Thank you. I'd now like to call Penny Joseph.

MS JOSEPH: Thank you.

15

MR ROBERTS: Hello Penny.

MS TURNBULL: Hello, how are you?

20 MS TURNBULL: You're from?

MS JOSEPH: I'm a local resident in North Ryde.

MS TURNBULL: Okay.

25

MS JOSEPH: And I think I have a slide. So, I wanted to speak in support of the liveability objectives of the GSC and what I wanted to propose here is a really pragmatic way that I can see that can be achieved here in Ryde. So, I live almost at Macquarie Park and I work in Parramatta and what I find is if I cycle to work - it says an hour and seven minutes there on the Google Maps - it takes someone like me about 55 minutes and I think for someone fitter than me it probably takes - you know - 30 or 40 minutes.

30

But what's really interesting about this piece is that there's a great cycleway going from Macquarie Park and it goes all the way to the end of Santa Rosa Park. And then from Meadowbank there's a great cycle way along the river. But there's a little piece and it's only a couple of kilometres from Santa Rosa Park to here that actually takes the vast majority of the time and you have to kind of detour like this to actually ride safely.

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But what's really interesting about that if you actually look on the map the link from here to here is almost all State Government land. So, there's - you know - waterway precincts, there's the TAFE facility which is being redeveloped.

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There's the train line and almost all of it is potentially - you know - State Government owned land.

And so why that's really interesting is if you speak to the community in North Ryde they have got this access, apart from here to here, to cycle ways that can take them all the way to Cronulla - this great opportunity for recreation, for
5 liveability outcomes but they don't know it. And what's especially interesting is the new education precinct in Meadowbank that's proposed. I don't know how many thousands of students are going to be there, but I just think it's a wonderful opportunity because that pathway that are proposed - that's, sorry - don't look at - I haven't actually mapped out. That's just the Google Maps
10 where it takes you. But if you actually map it out there's an opportunity to take the cycleway straight through that precinct and I think that's such an amazing opportunity because it allows kids to cycle to school, it allows parents to talk to each other as they walk to school and I think that those kinds of interactions are what creates a healthy community.'

15 So, the interesting thing I suppose when you look at the proposal is it actually takes collaboration - right? Between a number of State Government agencies, between the community, between the Council to actually achieve the outcome and as part of my professional role I've had the opportunity to be participating
20 in the GPOP GIC process which the collaboration of all the agencies and it's been such a wonderful opportunity. It's been such, I just think it's been such an amazing process and more than the cycleway I think it's the opportunity to have this collaboration where people are agreeing on a vision and outcome, building each other up, not tearing each other down, across all levels of
25 government, across the different agencies towards a common vision. And that's really what I wanted to say. If we could replicate some of that collaboration I think we could get outcomes like this.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you.

30

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

MS TURNBULL: That's a really good thought. Thank you.

35 MS JONES: I'd like to ask Sheryl Barton to address the Panel. Thank you.

MR ROBERTS: Hello Sheryl.

MS TURNBULL: Hi Sheryl.

40

MS BARTON: Good evening. Madam Chair, Commissioner Roberts and members of the audience. Thank you for the opportunity to address you this evening. Before highlighting key points of my submission, I would like to explain my background and how I'm representing not only my concerns but
45 those of my extended family, my friends and my extended networks and local

community. I've lived in the area for 43 years. I am a mother, a grandmother, a teacher in the local school, an active member in the local church and member of social clubs. I am not a member of a political party and the points I am raising this evening are frequently raised at every gathering that I attend.

5

As you can see in my submission, I am recommending a reduction in the housing targets for the City of Ryde and surrounding municipalities. Planning controls need to be returned to locally controlled plans and greater regulation of building standards. As well more weight needs to be placed on increasing environmental outcomes, with better design principles and controls.

10

I have participated in many consultation events over the past 10 years and I am disappointed that community concerns have not adequately reflected in the determinations. Our community and local environment is becoming increasingly degraded with reduced quality and amenity, over-crowding and unsustainable density levels.

15

We've got an increase in height and density with land zoning changes, eliminating recreational facilities and reducing local employment opportunities. In my mind, the system is broken. The community concerns are ignored, processes resulting in poor quality urban development which will be a burden for future generations to deal with. Due to these issues, I feel our lifestyle has been compromised in the following ways.

20

I think we have an unfair housing supply target of 7,600 for the Ryde area. It's an uneven distribution of the growth targets across Sydney and this target becomes an excuse for developers to seek an increase of the bulk and scale of their projects.

25

Number two - deregulation of building standards and controls. There are obvious building failures, poorly designed units, limited green space, poor materials, a reduction in the guarantee period to report faults, private certifiers, all leading to the ghettos of the future.

30

At local level, individual home owner can build whatever they want, even with obvious non-compliances and damage to the adjoining property and can continue to live in the property with the excuse, "Oh, but I am still renovating." And this seems to go on indefinitely.

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Then there's lack of quality designs suitable for Australian climate. They are visually bland, wind tunnels, having highly reflective surfaces and high-energy usage, for example air conditioners and clothes dryers.

40

Traffic issues - rat-runs in narrow streets, across the municipality. Queues of traffic waiting to exit side roads into larger roads, like Victoria Road, Lane

45

Cove Road, Epping Road - not enough car-parking spaces. Traffic light times not allowing cars out of local streets. Local narrow streets cannot cope with the extra parked cars and the traffic. Over-crowded public transport with trains and buses with extended peak periods.

5

Schools - overcrowded with playgrounds filled with demountables. My school has 26 demountables on the playground. We had to have an evacuation practise to see if we could all fit on the playground. Staggered recess –

10 MS TURNBULL: Sorry, which school is that?

MS BARTON: Epping West. Staggered recess and lunch times, lack of staff toilets at the back of the playground, lack of rehearsal facilities because the school has now become so large and lack of play areas. And it's just grown exponentially, and I don't think that super schools are the answer.

15

The more hard surfaces - the more heat. The west is hotter than the east as it is. The Ryde area is already, say six degrees, hotter than say St Leonards. Too many hard surfaces mean more heat and more water run-off flooding during storms.

20

Disappearing popular icons meant for community pleasure. Putt-Putt at Ermington disappeared and these last three - only because of community uproar - Macquarie Centre Ice Rink, Smalls Road School, and Tennis World at North Ryde which were all going to go.

25

In summary we need a planning system that protects the soul of the community instead of one that fast-tracks developer dollars. Thank you very much.

30 MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MS JONES: Thank you. I'd now like to invite Bev Debrincat from the International Environmental Weed Foundation Habitat Network.

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MS DEBRINCAT: Hello Commissioner.

MR ROBERTS: Hello.

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MS DEBRINCAT: Hello.

MS TURNBULL: Hi there, how are you?

45 MS DEBRINCAT: I'm very good, thank you. I'm Bev Debrincat and I'm

representing Habitat Network, Habitat Greater Sydney Landcare Network and I'm also on the Board of Landcare New South Wales and we're all not-for-profit organisations and volunteer based.

5 Today, I'm talking about Habitat Network, in particular, but we run small bird habitat corridors and we've got one in particular in Macquarie Park, which runs along Shrimptons Creek. By small birds we're talking about little tiny Fairy Wrens, Red-Browed Finch and that sized bird.

10 We're losing our small birds from our urban areas and we're particularly losing them from Macquarie Park, due to the loss of habitat, cleaning out weedy areas, lack of coordinated development for providing linked corridors and developers removing all vegetation prior to new developments.

15 What we would like to see is connected green bushland network throughout Macquarie Park to benefit the flora and fauna but also the people that are working and living within Macquarie Park.

20 Shrimptons Creek small bird corridor runs 4.5 kilometres from Macquarie Road where the Habitat Community and Native Plant Nursery and Food Garden is located, all the way down to Lane Cove River. It's a very long narrow corridor and prone to flooding.

25 Our small bird population up till about 15 years ago was quite healthy down Shrimptons Creek and now we're down to about 12 individuals superb Fairy Wrens and White-Browed Scrub Wrens. That's all that's left. The impacts and issues on Shrimptons Creek corridor is firstly Macquarie Shopping Centre is right over the top of the creek line which doesn't help for connection to Lane Cove River. The Ivanhoe Estate, which has already been talked about, is being
30 redeveloped from 350 to 3,500 residents plus a high school, plus two-day care centres.

35 Part of the Ivanhoe Estate is the Turpentine-Ironbark Forest along Epping Road, which is the main connection for the habitat corridor from Shrimptons Creek, through Macquarie University, across to Lane Cove River. We have been working with the developers who have agreed to try and save a STIF but they're still planning to put the slip road through the middle of the Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest, not to mention there's another road that's going to go across Shrimptons Creek as well.

40 Redevelopment of other sites are happening or imminent or planned and landscaped independently. No coordinated approach for shaded pathways, green or habitat corridors, green places to relax et cetera. Habitat connection around Macquarie Shopping Centre and through Macquarie University is
45 getting more and more fragmented.

5 The RMS recently removed a hundred or more trees in order to put the bus routes in to replace the Metro while it's being developed. And the RMS also cleaned up a habitat area on the County Road Reserve which they said they were going to protect but didn't.

10 So, some solutions we'd like to suggest is having detailed plans to protect and connect endangered ecological communities throughout Macquarie Park, coordinated redevelopment along the creek line around Macquarie Shopping Centre and through Macquarie University. Ivanhoe Estate to remove the planned slip road through the STIF, smart environmental redevelopment to coordinate and plan with neighbouring properties to include habitat connections, water savings, street trees, shade trees, connected walkways away from the roads, shady lunch breakout areas - I used to work in Macquarie Park and to go and have a quiet lunch you'd have to sit on the edge of the car park - and nice places just for people to go.

20 And also, there's a great opportunity - most of the councils are being pushed for additional sports fields. With all these developments it would be really nice if they started incorporating some community assets and I like the gentleman's idea of having an innovative exciting place for young people to come and maybe having some more sports facilities on top of rooftop screen gardens would actually be really nice and I finished early.

25 MS TURNBULL: Oh, Bev, thank you so much.

MS DEBRINCAT: That's all right. Thank you.

30 MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much. Bye, bye.

MS JONES: I'd now like to invite Councillor Penny Pedersen from the City of Ryde.

35 MR ROBERTS: Hello Councillor.

40 CLR PEDERSEN: Hello. Go back to the beginning of my speech. Thank you to the Greater Sydney Commission and to you Commissioners Turnbull and Roberts for inviting our community to speak. I am a councillor at the City of Ryde and a resident of East Ryde. I have just come from the Connect Macquarie Park event where council is working very closely with business stakeholders to create a sense of place and I'm genuinely excited about the ideas that I've heard there today.

45 I feel that overdevelopment of residential towers though, with a shortfall on infrastructure stands to ruin all of that. I have attended several workshops

5 regarding the Northern District Plan where I've asked in good faith how we as
councillors after having these massive Priority Precincts imposed on our
community how we can implement any of the excellent priorities you've set
out? How, when infrastructure wasn't in place before the developments were
approved, mature trees were removed, opportunities for more green space were
just built over?

10 How do we claw back some control - particularly since the State Government
has taken away virtually all of our planning powers and farmed them out to
unelected paid Panels? I would like to touch on how I believe some of the
zonings and approvals made by the State are working at odds with some of
your District Plans here in Ryde.

15 Your Commission lists improving the district's waterways as a priority. So
many residents ask me - I get asked this all the time - do we have adequate
sewerage and stormwater infrastructure to sustain these massive developments?
It's a great question. Who measures the strain these multiple Precincts will
have on the entire network of pipes and pump stations?

20 Has there actually been any water-sensitive urban design or river-friendly
building standards considered in these precincts? Our river catchments will
suffer greatly from this massive sudden development. Just look at the
proximity of the Ivanhoe development to the sensitive eco-systems we have
heard about at Shrimptons Creek.

25 We recently saw the catastrophic failure of the Northmead Sewerage Pump
Station where the walls built early last century just collapsed. There are pump
stations of that age all over Sydney that must be upgraded particularly in areas
earmarked for high density residential development. It doesn't matter how
30 much time and energy we put into community litter campaigns, in order to
improve river health, sewerage overflow rates in densely populated areas along
the river catchment must be substantially reduced.

35 The District Plan prioritises also the protection of bushland and biodiversity. I
feel the State Government ignored this priority when they forced our
community to fight off a threat to the significant biodiversity in Bundara
Reserve forcing us to campaign against them removing 28 trees that they
claimed should be removed to mitigate the effect of bird droppings on the
paint.

40 The District Plan identifies Epping Road as a wildlife corridor, yet the State
Government's approval of the massive Ivanhoe project has seen the removal of
858 mature trees. This development threatens to damage an endangered
Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest and will block an important corridor, as
45 we've heard, for small birds and other wildlife as Bev pointed out.

5 The Ivanhoe Estates footprint on the natural and social landscape has been massive, which brings me to affordable housing. Ivanhoe has been introduced to the public as a replacement for the public housing estate that existed there but what we really have are 3,500 residential units replacing 700 public housing dwellings and only 250 extra social housing units added. If this was earmarked for affordable and social housing, why was an independent school added to the complex and not a public school that could be free and accessible for everybody?

10

So, the broader impact on Ryde Local Government Area I think is very important, because I live outside the Investigation Area. The sudden increase in population there is a massive strain on local government services and increased strain on our waste recovery services when little of the waste recovery collected by the State Government is being returned to the councils for help.

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Our library services, which become very important social spaces with high-density living, are underfunded by the State and we desperately need more floor space. Our sports fields are working at capacity.

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You don't have to drive to Macquarie Park Investigation Area to feel the impact of these big developments. You merely have to try driving through what were once 50-kilometre - local streets - 50-kilometre-an-hour local streets all over the LGA - or try enrolling your kids in a class with a decent class size and a proper building. Or try hiring a space, finding a park somewhere at the shops, getting on a full bus to get to work. The impact is massive, it's sudden, it's not organic and organised in a way that allows services to keep up.

25

Our community is anxious, and they are angry. I became a Councillor to help them. I call on you to recommend to the State Government that the Priority Precincts be abolished. And that planning powers for the Macquarie Park corridor be returned to the City of Ryde so that we can implement your District Plan, create a place for our community and as your Plan strives to do and this is in your Plan, improve the quality of life for residents as the District grows and changes. Thank you.

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MS TURNBULL: Thank you.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

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MS JONES: I'd now like to call Councillor Bernard Purcell from the City of Ryde.

CLR PURCELL: Bernard.

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MS TURNBULL: Hi there, Bernard.

MR ROBERTS: Hello councillor.

5 CLR PURCELL: Thanks for giving us this opportunity. I am addressing the Commission tonight as a local Councillor and as a representative of Ryde Council on the Sydney North Planning Panel. I have only held office for 16 months but the realisation of how development is achieved in Ryde is worrying to say the least.

10

Over the last eight years, planning powers held by council have been eroded and blunted to the point where we have no say in any significant project within our own city. Our own Planning and Environment Committee which I chaired for all of three months - even though it dealt with smaller developments was subsumed a year ago by the State introduced IHAPS which have since become Local Planning Panels.

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Ryde's very first Planning Panel last year without any locally elected representative at all approved a development on Culloden Road which did not meet all DCP requirements and had three breaches to the Apartment Design Guide. Not a great start.

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The Sydney North Planning Panel is a problematic organ to bigger developments. There are three State representatives and two local Councillors that sit on that Panel. More often than not it is a three-two vote in favour of developments - sort of a stacked deck in my mind.

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While I have comfortably voted in favour of developments as part of the Sydney North Planning Panel as not all developments can be rejected - we're not silly - the very fact that there is a three-two vote means that we only have a semblance of control over our own city's planning decisions.

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Probably more significantly the State representatives have been on these Panels across Sydney for years. That in itself is worrying. These Panel members are across many other Planning Panels, and there is little change on who sits on them. They are often working within the building development industry themselves and are certainly not obviously at arm's length to development across Sydney. Now I am not calling out any individual, Deb - but I would say that there is potential there.

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It is interesting to note that Peter Debnam, former leader of the New South Wales Liberal Party is Chair of the Sydney North Planning Panel that is certainly open to potential pressure and/or land or coercion. As an example of poor outcomes for Ryde from the Planning Panel the Greenland's Project on Lachlan's Line in the North Ryde Station UAP failed Ryde residents for these

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reasons. The State sold public land to developers. The land could have been used for prized open space.

5 Council's representation on the Planning Panel was limited. It was of poor design with significantly limited solar access due to an inappropriate heights and FSR. And the Panel noted - "The Panel notes that the amount of sunlight received by this development both by apartments and the communal open spaces is less than required by the ADG - Apartment Design Guide - and believes that this is the result of an inappropriately high density that was
10 previously approved for the site by amendments to the Ryde LEP" under the urban activation.

15 Finally, I cannot see how the bigger picture of these areas with multiple developments are coordinated. Like Macquarie Park, everything has been built to stand-alone projects. Where is the forethought in making the whole area mesh and gel for all the users? Pedestrians, cyclists, motorists. We are desperately in need of a night-time economy in Macquarie Park, but with all these developments being erected as "silos" the State Government has no grand plan to make the area accessible and/or user-friendly.

20 It is only Ryde Council staff that are making real moves towards integrated design on a larger scale. Ryde Council has never had a problem meeting its housing targets and has a proud history of contributing reasonable housing supply stretching back to the post-war Ryde Housing Scheme. The State
25 interventions, the UAP's, the Medium Density Housing Code are not required given Ryde's responsible attitude to planning policy.

30 Council's controls were delivering adequate supply and were better in tune with available infrastructure and community expectations regarding density and character. State land in the LGA has been developed for high density housing. It should have been used for much needed open space and schools. Interestingly, weeks out from a state election we have multiple announcements involving the increase of open spaces and public amenity. A bit rich when
35 these places have been assumed in State-run development projects in the first place.

40 State infrastructure required to support the Urban Activation Precincts has not been delivered. Like open space promised on Waterloo Road and the intersection upgrades identified in the planning and traffic reports.

45 The developer contribution system needs overhauling. I'm going to run out of time. The State Government's essential works definition does not include much needed facilities such as community centre fit outs or skate parks as essential works. I have more but I will call it quits in the interest of brevity, but I do urge you to acknowledge that the State's planning policies are old, ad hoc and

broken. Thank you.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

5 MS TURNBULL: Thank you.

MS JONES: Thank you. I'd now like to call Saradhi Motamarri.

MR ROBERTS: Welcome.

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MS TURNBULL: Hello.

MR MOTAMARRI: You're welcome - thank you - Ms Lucy Turnbull, Greater Sydney Commissioner and Mr Geoff Roberts giving me this opportunity to
15 speak on this Macquarie area development. So of course, my general observations are applicable for your Greater Sydney Commission. So, one of the things, as a resident of Ryde for the last 10 years I've seen a significant challenge on the transport and infrastructure available in the Ryde area. So, especially, what I have seen two of the comment at one side says that people
20 should move to the public transport.

The accessibility to the main stations in this area like Eastwood, Epping, and even West Ryde Station are very poor. So, the important part that the planning Commission should look into how the accessibility can be improved to these
25 stations.

MS TURNBULL: Do you mean accessibility for people with mobility problems?

30 MR MOTAMARRI: No, no. What I mean from my transportation engineering perspective accessibility means how clean - if somebody can go there. For example, like look at the Macquarie Park Station. There is no way somebody can drop you, either you take a public transport - the morning time from Ryde Quarry Road to Macquarie Epping Junction - anywhere - it may take half an
35 hour, 30 minutes, there is probably like two to three kilometres. That is the pain that we are facing and parking at West Ryde Station is so poor. It's not adequate. And probably the planning Commission should consider may be a bus lane to these stations and maybe additional services from Sydney buses to cover these stations.

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Another important element I want to speak about is the fly-over. Probably at Church Street and Lane Cove Road and Victoria Road junction is fully saturated with the current levels of traffic and is not able to cope with the poor future development that are going to happen. So, one possibility is probably
45 directly linking Church Road all the way up to where is Top Ryde - that means

near the Blaxland Road - that means it will provide a straight corridor for the traffic that is moving towards south and north, so that simplifies a lot of issues at the various grade separated - graded intersections.

5 So, the other part I would like to say that the public buses that are actually run in a very messy route today. A bus takes a route from Church Street goes on to Victoria Road, comes on to the Church Street, comes to the Blaxland Road and turns to Lane Cove Road. It is just - is a messy part and it's creating the whole lot of congestion in the Top Ryde area. So probably they could consider
10 running the buses straight from Church Street all the way to the Lane Cove Road.

The other part I would see that in the Lane Cove Road and especially in the Ryde corridors there are no bus shelters. It's something that rains or even in the
15 very hot summer there is something troublesome for the people to stand and wait for the buses.

And other part there is the inter-suburb connectivity is also to be considered. The current plan is very poor. What I have seen in the Ryde area some of the
20 lanes which are very important corridors, they are only single-lane - Quarry Road carries lot of traffic from the nearing roads to the Lane Cove Road and other major corridors. It is a single lane road and a lot of parking on the roadside so that is actually reducing the capacity of the roads. So probably the commission should look into how all these things can be addressed.

25 And as a public interested person, and as a transportation person, I know that currently NSW Transport is not well leveraging the amount of data, statistics available to it and to do a better planning. I'm as an individual citizen ready to help the Commission as well as NSW Transport if you would like to utilise my
30 skills and ability. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

35 MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MS JONES: I'd like to call Councillor Jordan Lane from the City of Ryde.

MR ROBERTS: Welcome Councillor.

40 MS TURNBULL: Hi.

CLR LANE: Thank you Commissioners. Jordan Lane, I'm a City of Ryde Councillor and lifelong local resident. And I think firstly also I'd like to
45 acknowledge the ladies and gentlemen who are here tonight. I think it shows a lot of the concerns that the community has about this issue that they take the

time to be here tonight to listen to this. I guess my perspective is one as a Councillor, somebody who deals with community complaints by and large to do with the concerns of a growing city on a day-to-day basis.

5 Those concerns range from public transport as we have heard tonight, overcrowding, over-development, changing amenity in our community and of course the general environment and how that's impacted. What I want to bring to your attention, and I hope that you will give some consideration to is the role that we, as a council, can play.

10

I think that it is very easy for councils or any organisation to try to blame others, point the finger and absolve themselves of responsibility but the very simple reality is that, speaking specifically about our Investigation Area in Macquarie Park, this area was identified as a zone for growth and that
15 happened in 2013 by the City of Ryde Council, I think, when Mr Butterworth is here tonight was actually on Council. It was nominated as an area for that sort of growth and since that time there has been the growth that you would expect. Increase in the amount of commercial premises of late. An increase in residential premises and then all the flow-on that comes from that which is to
20 do with traffic, school populations and the whole gamut of over-population and over-development woes.

As a Council, though, we I think are missing a critical point and that is where your role is as an over-arching body to look at the Greater Sydney. I think that
25 there are three fundamental parts that we as a council are lacking in that are creating problems, not just for Macquarie Park but for the City of Ryde, generally.

The first is in relation to voluntary planning agreements - you would be
30 familiar with VPA's. That is where an unsolicited offer comes from a developer to the council with a proposal. Now these are very rarely done with a mind for the greater Sydney. They're generally done with the interest of the developer at mind who can make the maximum amount of money off their site.

35 Often they will try and offer some sort of sweetheart deal, but it is a sweetheart deal for the developer, not the community, and I have been extremely disappointed in the number of times that - not just this Council - but previous councils and councils across New South Wales have fallen victim to developers trying to sweeten the deal with a cheap shiny object or a lick of
40 paint here or a road upgrade there but nothing that is substantial or significant to actually accommodate the growth that they are bringing in as a developer. So, my view is that VPA is sweetheart deals for developers and frankly should be done away with because they do not have any broader interconnectivity in mind with the rest of the city.

45

The second is to do with the Local Environment Plan and as a council we, of course, have local controls that we set and since I have been elected I have had nothing but complaints about the current rules and it's all well and good to talk about future plans but the current rules as they stand are no good. They are broken. They are dated 2014.

MS TURNBULL: With the LEP?

CLR LANE: The LEP. It is dated 2014. That is now over four years old. My very strong view is that LEP's should almost be a going concern. As you produce it and you legislate it you should almost immediately start the process of reviewing it and the reason for that is because the amount of growth and the amount of change that is happening in our city is just far too fast to sit on it for four or five years.

I have personally tried and unsuccessfully to commence a process of that review. It has since occurred as a consequence of recent announcements and I think it was a two and a half million dollar grant to the Council to get that underway. That was almost 12 months ago, and I am still not aware of any progress having been made in that area. That is a concern to me and I think that we can do a lot as a council in that space to tell you as a commission, our local community and of course business and developers what sort of development we want in our area. But it has to be up to date. It's no good applying 2014 standards to today.

And a final point that I will make is in relation to our relationship as a council with the Department of Planning. I don't think that it is cohesive. I don't think that it is working and I'm not pointing blame at either side. I think there is an unwillingness on both ends to work collaboratively. Now whether that is because of politics, whether that is because of differing opinions within the leadership of those organisations, or whether it is because there's a fundamental disagreement on where the City of Ryde should be heading - I'm not sure - but I think as an overarching body, perhaps something that you can consider in addition to the VPA matter and the LEP matter is how we as a council engage with the Department. Because, frankly, if we're not talking - we're not achieving - and if we're not achieving then we're only letting down the community. So, thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you for that.

MS JONES: Thank you. I'd like to call Jerome Laxale, Mayor of City of Ryde, thank you.

MS TURNBULL: Welcome.

CLR LAXALE: Good evening. It's very intimate.

MR ROBERTS: Yes.

MS TURNBULL: Yes, it is.

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CLR LAXALE: Very intimate. There we go. Thank you for the opportunity. I'd like to start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land as well. Planning, over-development, Priority Precincts, lack of consultation, determination of Development Applications at odd with community
10 expectations, the lack of public infrastructure. Panel, these are the topics that are consistently raised with me as I am undertaking my responsibilities as mayor of this city.

The catalyst to all these issues, Ryde's planning woes has been to one reason in
15 my opinion - State Government intervention. The Assurance Review announced hastily at the request of the Local MP is just another example of unwanted State intervention.

So just to be clear, the Greater Sydney Commission is under direction of the
20 Premier. The Greater Sydney Commission is undertaking a review and I quote:

*To understand the work of the Department of Planning and what they
25 have been doing in this area over the past several years. Further, this review will have a particular focus on the Macquarie Park Investigation Area.*

So, to be clear, that's a review initiated by the State Government into what the State Government has been doing focusing on area that has been under State Government investigation since 2016. Our community are sick of State
30 Government intervention and State Government reviews and now we have another - at the 11th hour - weeks before an election reporting back after the election. And is it any wonder that people are questioning the motivation of this Review.

35 Today I obtained a letter by the President of Local Government New South Wales addressed to the Greater Sydney Commission and I am happy to read from it. And I'm quoting here.

MS TURNBULL: I've read that. We've read that.
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CLR LAXALE: Well, you've read that. Okay. You've read that - so while understanding the function of undertaking Assurance Reviews and issuing assurance reports was added to the Greater Sydney Commission's roles and responsibilities in late 2018.
45

President Linda Scott she says, “I am concerned that the Local Government New South Wales and that local government sector have not been briefed on how the new function will be exercised. In the absence of a briefing and sector-wide understanding the decision to subject Ryde Council to a Planning Assurance Review has raised a number of concerns and questions. The timing and the fact that there has been controversy over planning issues in the Ryde area has aroused suspicion of potential political motivation and there’s also growing speculation about which council will be next.”

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10 And I would ask to the Premier, where was this focus back in 2014 when two Priority Precincts were imposed on Ryde and Ryde was transformed forever. Why is this review into review being forced on our city six weeks out from an election? Because a series of State Government interventions are why we’re here today and it will give me great pleasure to catalogue a few.

15
20 I will touch on the strategic review of Macquarie Park and that was, as I said, announced by the State Government in 2016. This review is little more than a Trojan Horse that is aimed to lockout Macquarie Park businesses and employers and replace them with developers and high-rise residential developments. And that’s not my opinion, at the time the Australian newspaper wrote that the whole point of the review was adopted by the government - “To add housing and mixed-use development to Macquarie Park.”

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30 Nearly three years on, and you’ve heard from two developers here today who wish to add more residential into Macquarie Park, nearly three years on and we’re still awaiting some results from this review. All it has done is lead to uncertainty and speculation in the Precinct delaying more jobs in the Precinct and causing difficulties in retaining employers in the business park. What’s worse is that this review comes off the back of two State Government imposed Planned Precincts, Priority Precincts, Urban Activation Precincts - they’ve had a few names.

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These Priority Precincts have promoted the sale of State-owned land for high-rise housing development cramming an extra predicted 15,000 dwellings into our city. And these were introduced by the same government who, on the weekend, announced that they would appoint a Minister for Public Spaces to stop themselves from selling their own land - a quite extraordinary announcement.

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45 The example of Lachlan’s Line perfectly illustrates poor planning and poor State intervention. Lachlan’s Line is in the North Ryde precinct, and instead of providing much needed open space it was sold for over 2,500 dwellings despite the fact that housing targets had been set by the State Government have been met or well on the way to being met.

5 The same issues apply to the Herring Road Priority Precinct, which includes the 3,500-unit Ivanhoe Estate development. In this part of Ryde there is such a need for more open space, for transport connections, bicycle paths, bushland and education centres and this one in a generation chance to deliver that has once again taken a seat for profits.

10 So instead of providing the area with the required State infrastructure, instead of providing upgrades that would ease congestion, instead of providing open space and public schools - public schools being the emphasis - we are seeing State land used for high density units.

Then we have the Medium Density Housing Code if implemented which have dire consequences on the City of Ryde.

15 MS TURNBULL: We may give the Mayor another minute so –

CLR LAXALE: Is that okay?

20 MS TURNBULL: Yes. Yes.

CLR LAXALE: I'll read quickly.

MS TURNBULL: Yes.

25 CLR LAXALE: We've long been aware of the need to provide housing diversity and different housing options. Villas were introduced into the City of Ryde in the same year that I was introduced into this world in 1983 and reconfirmed in 1996 with the support of a certain councillor VM Dominello, who is a current Local Member.

30 Restrictions that have accompanied those housing types have evolved over the years, but they have one thing in common - they restricted the control rate of housing growth in line with community expectations. Yet again due to a deliberate and misinformed State intervention, the medium density code in its current form will send bulldozers into every street in Ryde. It will transform
35 low density streets into streets full of two-storey residential flat buildings, terrace houses and duplexes on a miniscule 12-metre frontage at the building line, instead of Council's current controls of a more reasonable 20 metres.

40 How are the outcomes of this code consistent with community expectations? They are not. Panel, we do not need any more reviews. We do not need more State Government intervention. We need a State that is focused on delivering the infrastructure that we need. The community needs more open space. We need more infrastructure that services our city. We want roads connecting
45 communities, not going through communities, and we need less high-density

units - more attention about trees and protection of our natural environment.

5 We need assurances that the City of Ryde's local character will not be completely transformed and destroyed. And that includes making the City of Ryde permanently exempt from the medium density housing code and I ask that your recommendation to the Premier be simple and succinct. Abolish State intervention in planning in Ryde. Exempt Ryde completely from the Housing Code. Abolish Priority Precincts in our city and let locals determine our city's future.

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MR ROBERTS: Thank you very much.

MS JONES: I'd now like to call Victor Dominello, Member for Ryde.

15 MR DOMINELLO MP: Commissioners, how are you?

MS TURNBULL: Good, thank you.

20 MR ROBERTS: Very well.

MR DOMINELLO MP: Alright. I'll start with my background. I'm here in my capacity as both a local resident - I live in Meadowbank. I have also lived in North Ryde for a number of years - pretty much most of my 50 years on the planet - 51 years to be precise. But my family came here about 85 years ago, had a market garden in North Ryde.

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30 So North Ryde is pretty much - the soil is in my fingernails as it were - and it's something that is very important to me this whole Ryde area. So, I'm here in my personal capacity, but also in the capacity as local MP that I have served for 10 years and a Councillor for nine years. So, I think it's fair to say I know the area reasonably well.

35 Now I was the one - I'm to blame for you being here - because I was the one that called or wrote to the Premier and the Minister for Planning asking for your intervention. Now the reason I asked for your intervention was because I personally believe as Councillor Lane has already articulated that the relationship between the Department of Planning and Ryde Council is - how shall I say - sub-optimal.

40 I don't think that we are getting the best outcomes for the people of our great area because of the poverty in the relationship and that's why I think somebody needs to come over the top and put the politics aside and put the people first because there is a lot of politics that is being played out and we don't need that quite frankly.

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I'd like to break my submission into three areas. The first area is obviously Macquarie Park which is essentially north of Epping Road. The second part is the - I'll call it suburban Ryde - essentially between Epping Road and Victoria Road and the third part is the south of Victoria Road which is essentially Meadowbank and Melrose Park.

Now in relation to Macquarie Park there has been too much ad hoc rezoning, without any reference to a strategic master plan - that is simply poor planning. And in fact, when the 63-storey proposal came before the community when we first found out about it that triggered such an enormous response that we all said, "Enough is enough. Put the politics aside. Now we need to get something done", and that's quite frankly was the trigger for your intervention.

So that is a classic example of ad hoc zoning or rezoning - it can't be done. The second part and that is the suburban part of Ryde. I am at one with Mayor Laxale. I personally think the medium density code, as it applies to Ryde's LEP, would be a disaster - absolute disaster - because Ryde's LEP has over 50 percent of the area in Ryde zoned for medium density, which is again complete nonsense.

The most important document that the City of Ryde could ever do, and produce is its blueprint - its LEP. That LEP is so woefully out of date and not up to standards with current community needs. It is a disgrace and debacle. It needs to be updated and rapidly.

Now my personal view is part of the problem that we have got here is obviously the ad hoc high-rise development, but just as big a problem that we have got is that Council has got the ability to have - if you've got two homes - two beautiful old homes, knock them down, five villas. Essentially, you're replacing four cars with 10 cars in suburban streets where you cannot move.

Now quite frankly we are meeting our housing targets here with the high rise in Meadowbank which I'll get to and Macquarie Park. The suburban parts of Ryde must remain intact. We really need to, pretty much, have our LEP reflect what you see in Lane Cove and Hunters Hill, i.e. suburban areas - no more of these villas and townhouses and like that's got to stop.

The last part is Meadowbank. If you want an example of poor planning, look at Part 3A which was the former government's institution, talk about no consultation with Council - Part 3A was as it was famously tagged the Finger of Frank Sartor because he would sign off, no reference to Council. What you saw in Meadowbank is a disgrace. There was no provision for schools. No provisions for adequate parking, roads, et cetera. We are now spending a bomb retrofitting the Meadowbank Education Precinct, the jobs park, open spaces. It needs - we can't do that again.

If I can just conclude with my recommendations. This I would really like the Greater Sydney Commission to do. One, we need to the infrastructure right. As Bob Carr famously said in 2000, "Sydney is full." The population has rapidly increased and we can't continue to do what he did i.e. don't produce infrastructure. Despite what some of the –

MS TURNBULL: Can I just note that we gave Mayor Laxale another minute. So please –

MR DOMINELLO MP: Despite what some of the speakers have said about no infrastructure we're about to open the North-West at a cost of nine billion in May. We're rebuying and rebuilding Peter Board High and Primary Catholic High School and plus there's about seven schools being built - not demountables like under the old regime - new schools. We are building infrastructure, but the infrastructure is barely catching up with the development.

So, what I am suggesting is three things. One - a master plan that the essential freeze on VPAs continue until a proper master plan is undertaken in relation to Macquarie Park that has a proper infrastructure audit. Two - that the missing middle or the suburban part - essentially has an LEP that reflects the very low density that you see in parts of Lane Cove and Hunters Hill. And, three - that we master plan the precinct in Meadowbank - that is the jobs park, the education precinct and now the Sydney Water site. Those three sites can solve a lot of problems to the challenges we currently face. Thank you very much.

MS TURNBULL: Thank you so much.

MR ROBERTS: Thank you.

MS JONES: Thank you. And I believe that's our final speaker for this evening. I would just like to say that we will be here, same time, same location on Thursday for the second session if you'd like to come along. If not, thank you so much for your time this evening. Travel home safely.

SESSION CONCLUDED