



PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE
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HHT Gladesville Master Plan submn 16.9.21 F

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Re: **Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan**

The Hunters Hill Trust makes the following comments on the Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan.

We acknowledge that Hunters Hill Council has now completed this long overdue process, undertaken in 2018, and has scoped the Master Plan to include the area from Junction Street up to Pittwater Road. Nevertheless, we do have concerns that the block form of the Plan, as presented, does not provide sufficient clarity in envisioning changes that may be permitted in future, particularly for Blocks 1, 2 & 3. Additional definition is required to have confidence that the Victoria Road streetscape will be retained within its historic context and with its existing character respected.

We are most concerned, however, about the three development options set out for Block 4, the Gladesville Shopping Village. These proposals will not satisfy the community as being consistent with key aspects of Council's strategic plans relating to the future of the site. We point out that the first two Precedent Images are quite misleading as examples of the open spaces proposed.

In addition, required documents such as the Economic feasibility analysis and Traffic study, stated as supporting the proposals, were either not made available for public scrutiny and assessment or were provided during the course of the exhibition period.

In Council's *Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 Your Vision for our Future*, the goals include to: 'Develop and implement a commercial centre/village centre improvement program' and also to 'Continue to revitalise the Gladesville precinct as a low impact community hub' using 'Place based planning to support the role of village centres as a focus for connected neighbourhoods'.

These Strategic Objectives do not reconcile with what is now being proposed for Block 4.

As we know, amending the LEP in 2012, to allow the Block 4 site owner to develop to 10 storeys in height (34 metres) and include 180 units, occurred without community participation in the re-zoning decision and was not well received. **For the draft**

Gladesville Master Plan to be approved by local residents, the current Floor Space Ratios of 2.3 to 2.7 must be retained and the LEP controls not further amended.

The previous Development Application for this site some years ago, based on the existing LEP and FSR, was soundly rejected by the community, as were the proposed 'trade-offs' for access to greater open space and 'design excellence'. Ultimately the DA was refused by the NSW Department of Planning.

The Trust believes that there is no justification to now allow further density and FSR of 3.1. Trading off high-rise towers up to 19 storeys in height for supposedly more open space within the Gladesville Shopping Village is unacceptable.

The layouts, as suggested for the site, are unlikely to facilitate open space that could accommodate the 'town square' or social hub that residents, shoppers and visitors would wish to see. Thus, additional financial benefits would clearly flow to the developer from greater density but with very limited benefit, if any, provided to the local community. It is unfortunate that there was no minimum requirement for public open space established when the site was sold and that community benefit now has to be a bargaining point.

It is equally regrettable that the heritage item at 10 Cowell Street was not adequately protected. Having delayed for many years, following the 2005 Davies Report that recommended its listing on Schedule 5 in the LEP, Council finally listed the timber cottage but without its curtilage. This unusual exclusion seemed designed to enable the removal of the house to another site and allow greater development density, unencumbered by the heritage item.

The Trust does not support removal or relocation of this building. Either option would be detrimental to the character and heritage of the area and inconsistent with Council's stated dedication to preserving local heritage.

It is also vital that, as this core precinct is shared between two Local Government Areas, the community is assured that there is a high level of collaboration and co-operation between both Councils in how Gladesville Town Centre is developed and managed as a cohesive entity.

Urban renewal projects should also create the opportunity to apply sustainability principles and to enhance native vegetation and tree canopy, mitigating for changing climate. The Gladesville Master Plan should provide for this.

Conclusion

While we accept that the COVID Lockdown restricts Council's ability to manage a more reactive exhibition process, some attempt to include the visuals of what is being proposed, displayed within the Shopping Centre, is a basic requirement to assist in comprehending and responding to proposals within the Master Plan. Perhaps this will occur for the next stage in assessing the extent of development that is likely to be acceptable to the local community.

Gladesville is recognised as having an established character. These values need to

sensitively inform its future development and ensure its commercial as well as social viability. While town planning improvements are welcome and necessary, the Trust believes that greatly increasing population and building density resulting in further traffic, parking and over-crowding will not be supported.

The local community must have confidence that the Gladesville Master Plan will reflect their own future needs and aspirations.

Traffic issues and inadequate parking facilities are already of increasing concern, even without the greater housing and population density proposed in the Master Plan area. **It is also critical that the much-needed public car park at 3A Cowell Street remains as such, is not sold off and/or developed and is included as permanent carparking usage within the Hunters Hill Local Environment Plan.** The car park is important for providing easy-access parking for the Post Office and nearby shops in Victoria Road, as well as a welcoming, low-key open space.

Council's report of 19 July 2021 states that a traffic study was undertaken by McLaren Traffic Engineering which included a catchment analysis. This study was published belatedly on Council's website but is clearly inadequate for the community to be able to review the traffic projections for the proposals set out in the block studies.

The economic feasibility analysis by Atlas Urban Economics is not published on Council's website or on the website of Atlas Urban Economics. The community cannot consider the economic justification for the proposals set out in the block studies or measure any public benefit without this document.

Overall, re-development within the Gladesville Town Centre should be consistent with the existing character, streetscape and heritage values of the local area and contribute to improved urban amenity and liveability.

The Hunters Hill Trust is opposed to all three options for Block 4 within the Master Plan and the increase of the FSR to 3.1, as proposed. We consider that greater definition is needed to properly assess the block form applied to describe proposals for Blocks 1, 2 and 3.



16 September 2021

Alister Sharp, President