

Re: Brief re 2156 Landowners Association

BACKGROUND

At an inaugural meeting held at the Glenhaven Community Centre on 16 May 2007, attendees passed a resolution to form an Association of landowners/residents known as the “**2156 Landowners Association**”. Our members consist of landowners in the rural land areas primarily along Glenhaven Road, Old Glenhaven Road, Logie Road, Robson Road and Edgecliff Road, Glenhaven - that is; within postcode "2156" (refer **Figure 1**).

The subject lands are very much urban fringe land conveniently located east of the planned ‘major centre’ of Rouse Hill, and to the north of the ‘major centre’ of Castle Hill and finally to the west of the ‘village’ of Round Corner.

Draft North West Sub-regional Strategy

As part of the public exhibition process during December 2007 to March 2008 of the *Draft North West Sub-regional Strategy* [which, in conjunction with the *Metropolitan Strategy 2005; Metropolitan Strategy: City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future, December 2005* “**Metro Strategy 2005**”), is intended to form the basis of a future framework for local Councils in their preparation of new LEPs)], the 2156 Landowners Association has lodged a submission with the Department of Planning (“**DOP**”) with comments and arguments why the Association’s lands ought to be considered as part of the urban development and land supply.

Draft Local Strategy

As part of the public exhibition process of the draft Local Strategy by Baulkham Hills Shire Council (“**BHSC**”), the 2156 Landowners Association has lodged a submission with the BHSC with comments and arguments why the Association’s lands ought to be considered as part of the urban development and land supply.

Draft Standard 2010 LEP

As part of the *Standard Instrument (Local Environment Plans) Order 2006*, the DOP is requiring all Council to re-write their local LEPS to a Standard State-wide format with standard zones. It is our understanding that BHSC is currently in the process of migrating the existing LEP into the standard format.

Most of the 2156 Landowners Association land is currently zoned *Rural 1(c)*. [The current minimum lot size is 2.0 hectares (established by the 1977 Interim Development Order 118)].

It is our understanding that our area will, under the Standard Zones, fall within the *Residential Zones: R5 large Lot Residential*. The zone is intended to provide for

residential housing in a ‘rural setting’. The allocation of large lot ‘rural’ residential land must be justified by a strategy prepared in accordance with guidelines issued by the DOP. (*DOP LEP Practice Note: 06-002: p. 3*).

Moreover, (*Practice Note: 07-001: p. 2*) mentions that a range of different minimum subdivision lot sizes may be set within this zone on the lot Size Map.

Concerns

1. “Hole in the doughnut” and “Green zone” by stealth

The policy of only developing Greenfield lands throughout the North West Subregion (as identified and proposed in the Metropolitan Strategy 2005 and Draft North West Subregional Strategy (“**Draft NW Strategy**”)) without regard to key urban fringe lands (such as the Association’s lands) will exacerbate the “hole in the doughnut”¹ nature of such key urban fringe land and subject residents in these urban fringe lands to increasing detrimental effects (e.g. noise, pollution, traffic congestion) as more and more developments surround these key urban fringe lands as a result of the developments undertaken pursuant to a North West Subregional strategy. This is particularly relevant with the recent North Kellyville urban development located to our lands immediate north-northeast with some 4,700 new homes (14,000 plus residents) to start in 2009/2010.

A further worrying concern is, given this enormous *nearby* residential and other re-development taking place and the lack of development prospects / uncertainties for the Association’s urban fringe lands, whether we, as rural residential landowners, will have an *unofficial* “green zone” area placed on our lands whereby the nearby and/or adjoining *urban* residential developments will have the benefits associated with the rural character/aspects of our land *but* will not assist us nor contribute in any way for us to maintain our rural lands (eg increasing council rates, maintenance of land and vegetation such as clearing of noxious weeds, bushfire hazards). This is clearly unfair that one part of the community benefits at the expense of another part of the community.

2. Excessive reliance on development of existing urban lands and high density (and medium density) in those areas to meet future population growth

It is viewed that the Metro Strategy 2005 and the Draft NW Strategy places too high (if not excessive) reliance on high density as a solution to meet future growth. Some 60-70% of future growth is to be accommodated in existing urban areas with the remaining growth in rural areas that have been identified and admitted into the Metropolitan Development Program.

Such a policy appears contrary to the State Government and BHSC stated objectives of “balanced urban growth” and “garden shire image”, particularly where high-level

¹ “Hole in the doughnut” refers to rural lands being subject to developments that essentially surround the rural lands that are either urban developments or developments that are not consistent with a rural setting (eg medium density aged/frail villa housing complex).

apartment developments (10 storey plus) are being considered by planning authorities. If there is more emphasis on urban fringe land development there ought to be less pressure on development of urban land for high density housing.

Recently released figures *New South Wales State and regional population projections, 2006-2036 (October 2008)* have superseded the 2005 figures that both the Metro Strategy 2005 and the Draft NW Strategy were based on with a conclusion that the 2005 projections are some 30% underestimated.

3. New measures offering *real housing choice and affordability* are required

The Association's urban fringe lands can best be described as "In Fill" land which has been left out of previous residential land releases. The land would also be ideally suited to some form of Community Title subdivision. Subdivision into smaller Rural allotments (say, 0.5 to 1 acre minimum lot size) could also provide an opportunity to restore some of the rural character which has been lost by the onset of the urban sprawl.

The immediate proximity of the Association's urban fringe lands to urban infrastructure and facilities would mean that little additional costs would be required to support urban development of the lands.

Current minimum lot size of 2.0 hectares for the present "Rural 1C" Zoning for most of the Association's urban fringe lands is *far in excess* of lands required for the predominant purpose of being *merely* rural residency. Moreover, given that the 2.0 hectare minimum was established in 1977, *over 30 years ago*, it is *ridiculous* that this limitation continues to be raised as an authority to impede any development of our urban fringe lands. The present early 21st century community values and social standards together with the way in which our and surrounding localities have undergone tremendous changes (including technological and area developments) in over 30 years clearly supports a revision of the 2.0 hectare minimum established (and perhaps *only* relevant to) around the mid-second half of the 20th century.

This also addresses the issues of offering diversity in housing choice and affordability and balanced urban growth as raised earlier.

4. Emotive issues – rural community dying and fragmented

Communities are dying and families within our rural lands are being fragmented (due to not being able to subdivide) together with the loss of present infrastructure and facilities (eg school numbers depleting at alarming levels). Development of our rural lands will assist families staying and living within close proximity and help contribute to a vibrant rural community.

5. Draft 2010 LEP will merely reflect previous BHSC Draft Rural Land Plan restrictive and prohibitive attitude

Our concern is that the parts of the draft 2010 LEP that relate to our urban fringe lands will merely reflect previous BHSC view of no further development in rural

areas with no reduction in the minimum lot size. The draft Local Strategy adopted by BHSC on 10 June 2008 contained misleading (possibly incorrect) information about a previous Rural Land Plan having been adopted by BHSC. Referring to the BHSC history, what actually happened was that the BHSC merely resolved to have the draft Rural Plan exhibited. Sometime during December 2005, the State Government returned the draft Rural Plan to the Council, without the necessary section 65 certificate that would have permitted it to be placed on public exhibition.

Objective and aims

1. Have 2156 Landowners Association lands be to be considered and included as part of the urban development and land supply;
2. Aim to achieve this by approaching and lobbying Hills Shire Council and Councillors, State MPs and other relevant parties to present and promote our concerns and views, as well as the merits and reasoning and our arguments.

Hills Shire Councillors and other Associations

We have been in contact with:

- Mayor Bolitho and Hills Shire Councillors [(Councillors Roybn Preston, Greg Burnett & Mike Thomas in particular, and Ray Williams (former Councillor now State MP)];
- Hills Shire Environment and Planning Staff (Group Manager Michael Edgar); and
- the *5 Acres Now* Association (President Alex Davidson). Mr Davidson spoke on our behalf at the BHSC Ordinary Meeting 10 June 2008 which considered the Draft Local Strategy. During that Meeting, a motion by Mr Ray Williams proposing that all rural zones be investigated for the possibility of development was defeated by the then Mayor (Sonya Phillips) casting the deciding vote against the motion.

5 Acres Now have recently written to the new Planning Minister, Ms Keneally, requesting for consideration of their Rural lands to be developed with a reduction in the minimum lot size from 25 to 100 acres to 1 to 5 acres. Ms Keneally has referred them to a senior contact at the DOP.

We understand that the *5 Acres Now* Association is considering various ways to approach and lobby politicians and joining forces with other associations (such as ours) to put forward a common theme of reduction of minimum lot sizes.

Proposed Actions

The following is our proposed actions:

1. continue liaising with the *5 Acres now* group with a view of combining lobbying efforts for a reduction in minimum lot sizes in our respective areas;
2. continued contact with Hills Shire Mayor & Councillors;
3. continued contact with Hills Shire Council Planning Staff [Michael Edger, Group Manager Environmental and Planning. We have also been in contact with Stewart Seale, Manager – Forward Planning.]

We would like to discuss Council Planning's:

- attitude and views to our aims and views;
 - the progress of the draft 2010 LEP and how and where this will impact on our urban fringe lands and aims and views;
 - blockers and impediments;
 - advise and recommendations; and
4. contact suitable Property Consultants to act on our behalf in respect of options and strategies for the subdivision of our lands including
 - the progress of the draft 2010 LEP and how and where this will impact on our urban fringe lands and aims and views;
 - blockers and impediments;
 - advise and recommendations.

We thank you for your affording to us your valuable time and do very much appreciate the valuable information and advice you have given to us.

Yours faithfully

Patrick do Rozario

Patrick do Rozario
Treasurer

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(For)

David Parsons

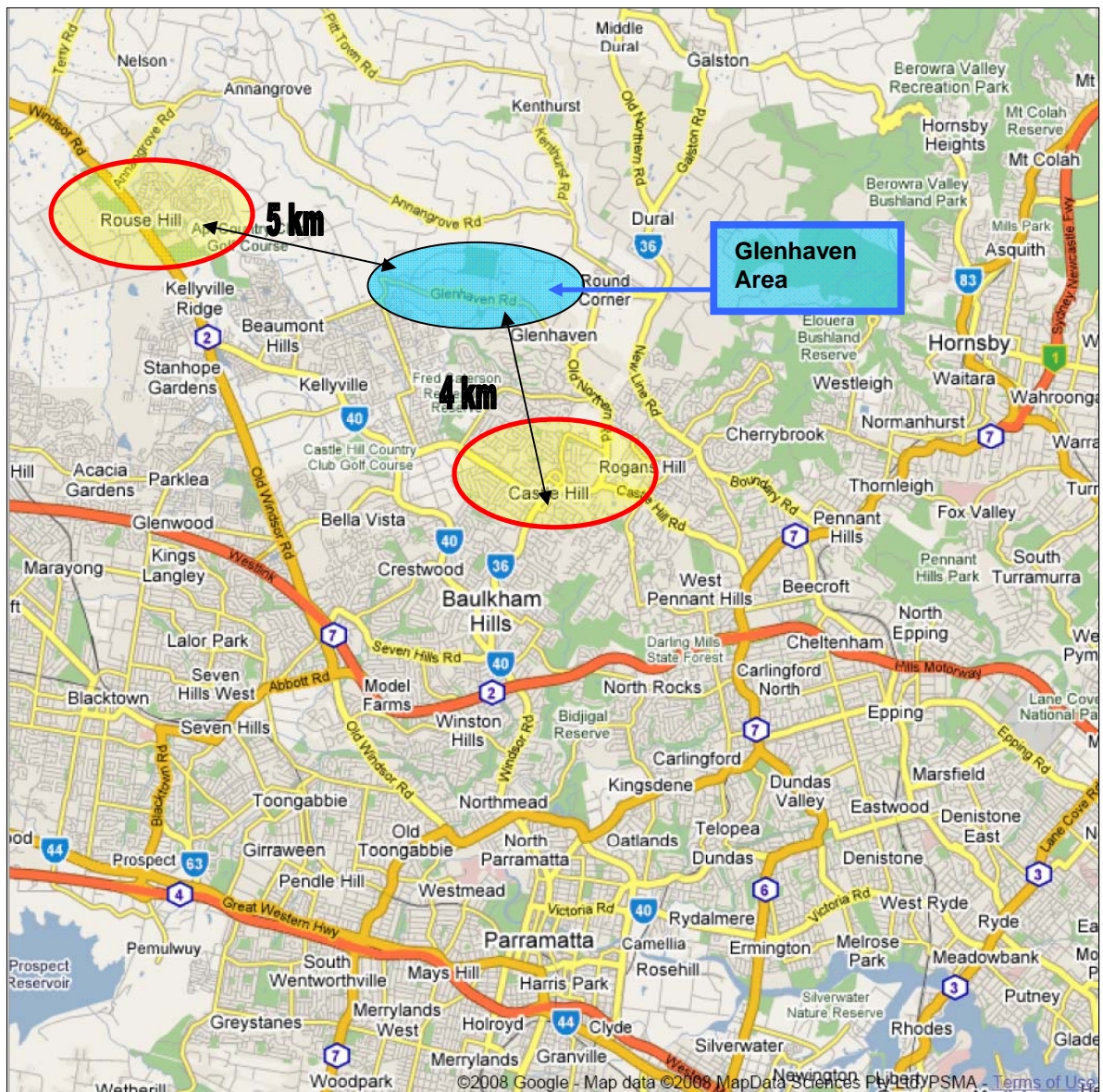
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FIGURE 1:

2156 Landowners Association – location map



Source: Google Maps 2008