

Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment



[REDACTED], Narrabeen NSW 2101
[REDACTED]

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

February 25, 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment is a community group of over 1300 members and supporters whose mission is to lobby for the protection of the remaining bushland in the catchment of Narrabeen Lagoon.

Comments concerning the “New Approach to Re-zoning” discussion paper

Overall comment:

Higher-level strategic plans apply to:

- the 10 regions of NSW, through regional plans
- Greater Sydney, through the Greater Sydney Region Plan
- the 5 districts of Greater Sydney, through district plans that align with the Greater Sydney Region Plan.

Comment:

1. After all that higher-level strategic planning, it is appalling that the Government can use SEPPs (such a Senior’s Living and the Aboriginal Lands SEPP) to over-ride those same Strategic Plans.

Now, with this “New Approach to Rezoning” system, here is another proposal that has the potential to erode the value of the various levels of planning in NSW.

2. This Re-zoning proposal aims to give Government and developers more abilities to over-ride Plans that have been derived from extensive community consultation

The State Government always encourages community to become involved in strategic planning in each LGA through the development of Local Environment Plans that provide the areas for residential, employment, recreation,

preservation of natural environments etc LEP are then sent to State Government for endorsement and implementation.

This process should be maintained for any planning proposals to ensure consistency in the planning of any lands. These processes must include engagement with communities.

Any proposals for planning Proposals (rezoning applications) should first be considered by Councils to decide whether or not to submit a proposal to the State Government and these procedures must include community engagement similar to the current Council studies which are leading up to a draft LEP for the whole of the Northern Beaches LGA including the deferred Lands.

This Re-zoning discussion paper focuses solely on the rezoning processes that happen using planning proposals to make or amend LEPs or SEPPs. It does not include state-led rezonings.

One aim quoted is ...

- **empowering councils to make decisions on matters important to their communities while allowing the NSW Government to deal with matters where government intervention is beneficial**

Comment: What criteria is used to decide which matters benefit from Government intervention?

In the Aboriginal Lands SEPP, for example, the proposal is to set each proposal up as a “**Regionally Significant**” development which allows by-passing of Local Government control. This is undesirable as it removes the democratic rights of citizens who have been involved in the preparation of Local Environment Plans.

Another aim quoted is ...

- **giving private proponents control and responsibility for rezoning requests**

Comment: This is totally unacceptable, that developers could control and take responsibility for rezoning requests. There is a good reason why rezoning requests need to go through Local Government planning departments and that is, to be able to measure the request against the Local Environment Plan and the known situations in that area. The local community members are familiar with the area and need to be involved through notification from their LGA. Only when the LGA has, in a measured way, decided that a rezoning application is justified, ought it to be seriously considered.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Ron Patton, President