

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: Webform submission from: A new approach to rezonings in NSW
Date: Tuesday, 22 February 2022 5:33:12 PM

Submitted on Tue, 22/02/2022 - 17:33

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Submission Type

I am submitting on behalf of my organisation

Name

First name

Anne

Last name

Marett

I would like my submission to remain confidential

No

Info

Email

[REDACTED]

Suburb/Town & Postcode

Corrimal 2518

Please provide your view on the project

I object to it

Submission

Corrimal Community Action Group Inc was formed in 2018 to monitor development in the local area, which includes part of the northern suburbs of Wollongong.

We wish to object to many of the proposed changes to the way amendments to Local Environment Plans are made. We believe this "new approach" puts at risk local strategic planning which will ensure land use zonings meet the objectives of the community.

The proposed changes will remove important constraints on ad hoc rezoning which are not in the interest of the communities living in the area, or long-term strategic planning. Liveable communities require thoughtful long term strategic planning. The suggested changes will provide uncontrolled opportunity for speculation, especially on the urban fringe. Such speculation threatens productive land on the edge of cities and towns, which Covid-19 has demonstrated is so important to our food security in a crisis, especially when borders are closed.

Strategic planning is achieved through LEPs and control of these must remain with local councils who are accountable to their communities. Living in the Wollongong area, we see opportunistic developers, often from Sydney and further afield, come in and demand developments that will have serious detrimental impacts on the communities affected. The suggested "new approach" would exacerbate the current situation, putting more stress on infrastructure, especially traffic, leave Councils with large bills to try and catch up on infrastructure and deal with a hostile, angry community. This "new approach" would then deny the affected communities any right of appeal. In no way could this be described as strategic planning and should not be implemented by the DPIE.

In summary, our major concerns and suggestions are:

1. Councils must retain control of the rezoning application and assessment process. The concept of allowing the proponent to have applicant status must be rejected. Transparency cannot be improved by removing councils further from the planning process. Councils are accountable, developers are not.
2. While simplifying the rezoning process and minimising duplication, while improving the quality of planning proposals may sound like worthy goals, our experience indicates these objectives are mutually exclusive and are likely to result in even more shoddy proposals.
3. Reducing processing times may result in very poor-quality proposals. We believe that blowouts in the time for progressing rezoning applications often result from inaccurate or incomplete documentation provided by the proponent. This is exactly what occurred with the application for rezoning the Corrimal Coke Works site. Therefore, arbitrary time limits and penalties on Councils for exceeding these, would be punitive and inappropriate, and should not be implemented.
4. Creating more certainty and consistency for the proponent while disempowering councils and the community is inappropriate. Our 4-year experience monitoring the rezoning proposal for the Corrimal Coke Works site demonstrated that only very close scrutiny by Council staff and Councillors finally resulted in a proposal that had any professionalism about it at all. We are certain this would not be an isolated case. Developers need to cut corners to maximise their profit.
5. The whole community consultation process must be improved to guarantee the community and independent experts can have their say at appropriate times, not just very early on in the process.
6. The community's right to appeal against decisions they "cannot live with" must be protected. Should the "new approach" be adopted, objectors right to appeal on merit must be protected for Category 2 and 3 Rezoning Applications.
7. Regarding assessment fees, we believe Option 3: Fixed and variable assessment fees, provides more certainty to councils and we support that.

Thank you for considering our concerns and suggestions.

Anne Marett

President
Corrimal Community Action Group Inc
22 February 2022

I agree to the above statement
Yes