

To: [Council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)

Re: Planning Proposal - Ralston Avenue (Belrose)

Dear Sir

I am dismayed at yet another proposal to, slice by slice, remove bushland from beyond the strict legal limits of the national park. This new sub-division may come with various developer contributions, but the DA is for residential development. And it is residential development without an integrated transport solution, such as a train or tram line.<sup>1</sup> I say this because northern beaches streets are already clogged with traffic, as many people drive to and from work,<sup>2</sup> which is out of the area for almost 40% of people.<sup>3</sup> Add to this that Sydney lost its last tram in 1961,<sup>4</sup> and we seem to be a community ever more dependent on the car and congested roads

Therefore, the developer should really be offering far more than some parkland, sports-fields and a bike or horse trail, as reported in the Manly Daily.<sup>5</sup> I am equally sceptical about the euphemism affordable housing. I think it is code for developer building a lot of third rate medium density buildings, with (potentially) sub-standard imported materials.<sup>6</sup>

There is also the question, referred to earlier, of whether the road system would ever be able to cope with the increased population and traffic. It doesn't cope now, which is why I try to time my appointments and travel with non-peak periods. Furthermore, there are alternatives to making people live in high rise boxes, which are arguable far more hospitable all round.<sup>7</sup> Housing affordability is also a question of taxes and charges (e.g.: State stamps duties and other land taxes),

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Jim Longworth, *Forgotten Railways of the Northern Beaches: Proposed Lines, Street Tramways, Industrial Tramways*, Office of Rail Heritage, 8 May 2009, <http://www.nswrailheritage.com.au/docs/library/NorthernBeachesRways.pdf> as at 20 April 2014; see also *Northern Beaches Rail Line | Transport Sydney - Posts Tagged 'Northern Beaches Rail Line'* <https://transportsydney.wordpress.com/tag/northern-beaches-rail-line/> as at 21 April 2014, from which you can find a link to Transport for NSW (Transport Projects Division: Project Development Services), *CBD Rail Capacity Rail Futures Investigations – Engineering & Construction: Interim Summary Report*, 24 May 2012, Revision 0.8, Status: Draft, [http://images.smh.com.au/file/2014/01/29/5115403/1\\_Futurerailplan.pdf?rand=1390985051657%29](http://images.smh.com.au/file/2014/01/29/5115403/1_Futurerailplan.pdf?rand=1390985051657%29) as at 21 April 2014

<sup>2</sup> See Northern Beaches Economic Profile, which specifically showed that 55.1% of people travel to work by car, as the driver - <http://economy.id.com.au/northern-beaches/travel-to-work?WebID=15> as at 25 June 2017

<sup>3</sup> See *Residents place of work by industry* - All industries, <http://economy.id.com.au/northern-beaches/residents-place-of-work-industry> as at 25 June 2017

<sup>4</sup> See e.g.: Margaret Simpson, *Sydney's last trams*, posted on February 25, 2011 <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/insidethecollection/2011/02/sydneys-last-trams/> as at 19 April 2014

<sup>5</sup> See Robbie Patterson and Kathryn Welling, *Open to affordable housing*, Manly Daily, Saturday, June 10 2017, News, p.7

<sup>6</sup> See Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Broadcast: 27/05/2015, Reporter: Madeleine Morris, *This is the hidden potential killer in Australian buildings*, <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2015/s4243787.htm> as at 25 June 2017. While this broadcast was talking about high rise buildings, I often wonder how the standard medium density duplex is built, given the speed of construction

<sup>7</sup> See for example, Tiny Houses Australia, <http://www.tinyhousesaustralia.com/about-tiny-houses-australia/> as at 25 June 2017

as well as property speculation, and community expectations, amongst other things. For some in government to say glibly that medium density/infill is something we must all accept<sup>8</sup> is not something I will accept. One doesn't think it is asking too much for Terrey Hills to have some trees on the hills, nor that "The Forest" area in general should be a forest. Equally, until DA's come with transport solutions that mean people won't be reliant on their cars to get about, I do not think development like the DA proposed should be supported. Sports-fields and bike trails don't really address our area's major transport and infrastructure problems. Therefore, I'm happy for the land to stay as it is, on this Goggle map.<sup>9</sup>

[Redacted]

Yours faithfully,

Adam Johnston

25 June 2017

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<sup>8</sup> The (now former) Planning Minister has previously said we must accept medium density living and ever growing numbers of apartments and duplex dwellings (the "fast food" of modern housing, given the speed of construction). E.g.: Leesha McKenny (Urban Affairs Reporter), NSW planning: *Density the price of convenience, says Goward*, May 31, 2014, Sydney Morning Herald, <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/nsw-planning-density-the-price-of-convenience-says-goward-20140530-399v5.html> as at 29 August 2014. I disagree and, draw your attention to concepts like Small Houses Bliss, as viable alternatives, <http://smallhousebliss.com/category/tiny-houses/> as at 29 August 2014

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.google.com.au/maps/place/Ralston+Ave,+Belrose+NSW+2085/@-33.7355008,151.1990457,3821m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x6b12a9e1c0aba52b:0x86e0f670cf1e631d!8m2!3d-33.7279289!4d151.2102484> as at 25 June 2017