

APPIN

WHAT'S THE RUSH?



DISCUSSION PAPER 2023



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APPIN - WHAT'S THE RUSH BACKGROUND

Minister for Planning and Minister for Homes Anthony Roberts announced on Wednesday 2 November that the NSW Government would be fast-tracking 19,000 homes in South West Sydney, of which **16,000 are in Appin**.

He said that the Government was “fast-tracking the assessment of three large, complex and interrelated proposals, as part of the Government’s \$2.8 billion package to improve housing supply in NSW.”

The Minister’s stated that “while planning proposals are normally lodged with councils in the first instance, the State will assess these proposals given their combined significance, complexity, and strong housing and environmental benefits if approved.”

The three proposals in the process of being lodged are:

- A 1,284-hectare site for around 12,900 new homes, including affordable housing, (Walker Corporation)
- A 300-hectare site for up to 3,000 new homes along Ousedale Creek (Ingham’s Property Group)
- An 876-hectare site for up to 3,300 new homes (Lendlease).

Wollondilly Council’s initial response has been swift and strong. A media statement issued by Mayor Matt Gould said, “We are bitterly disappointed at the NSW Government’s rushed announcement and that once again we are seeing them rubber stamp massive residential developments in an area that completely lacks the most basic infrastructure to support it, and without any meaningful commitment to roads, public transport, schools, hospitals or other essential services.”

Wollondilly Council’s position has been that in regard to the NSW Government’s Growth Areas, **we want to see Wilton as the priority so we could create a ‘great new town’ there**. The view is that it is way too early to start building houses at Appin, and it is counterproductive to have growth areas competing against each other for basic infrastructure. Opening up another massive development front at Appin would see growth areas competing for the same bucket of money to put schools, health and education in place.

Council believes the State Government should be focused on **delivering the infrastructure needed to fast track the delivery of homes in Wilton**, where the land has already been rezoned. Delivery of thousands of new homes is only being held up by the failure of the Government to provide basic enabling infrastructure.

Council is **still waiting for important road connections** to be built, for public transport, for schools, and for a hospital. The Department of Education has been silent on plans for a new high school.

Jobs are a big concern. Residents of these proposed developments will be travelling very long distances to access employment with inadequate public transport connections and road networks that are already struggling. The NSW Government has no strategy for jobs in the growth area.

The NSW Government is dismissive of environmental concerns. The developers claim that koala corridors, have been considered. However, the fact is that Wollondilly’s unique disease-free koala population will be severely impacted with the construction of 16,000 new homes. The development,

including intended corridors, has inconsistencies with Principles for Koala Protection in the Greater Macarthur and Wilton Growth Areas in Advice dated May 2021 prepared by the NSW Office of Chief Scientist and Engineer. Food trees will be decimated, road strikes increase exponentially, and there is no way to offset these devastating impacts as there is no evidence of koalas being relocated successfully. Other local threatened plant and animal species and endangered ecological communities may also be negatively impacted.

Other environmental concerns include maintaining a healthy Upper Nepean River. The Upper Nepean River currently has good water quality and has a lot of passive and active recreation value to the community. It also has significant biodiversity value. Such a significant development can negatively impact the Upper Nepean and compromise water quality making it vulnerable to biodiversity loss, weed infestation, loss of swimability and other recreational values as well as the flow on effects for downstream communities.

The elected Council was removed from the strategic planning process in Greater Macarthur, and have been requesting a briefing all year from the State Government following the State-led technical assurance panel in which staff were not allowed to share information with the elected body.

Wollondilly isn’t against providing its fair share of appropriate development for Greater Sydney, in fact it is one of very few councils that are exceeding our housing targets.

Wollondilly Council needs to have input into these plans. Along with Wilton, the new developments in Appin would effectively triple the population of the Wollondilly Shire. Without basic infrastructure in place, health services, education and jobs to support the population, this could be a disaster. Housing on its own does not create healthy, liveable communities.

Overall, **the State Government’s approach** to growth in Appin (and Greater Macarthur generally) is **inconsistent with the strategic planning commitments and principles that they espouse in their own plans and strategies**.

For example, in **A Metropolis of Three Cities** the NSW Department of Planning and Environment includes directions for Greater Sydney including ‘a city supported by infrastructure’ and ‘a well-connected city’ which seems to be forgotten in this rush to fast-track Appin, with developer proposals being rushed through without any commitment to sufficient road connections or community infrastructure.

The Greater Cities Commission **Western City District Plan** says that “Greater Sydney is a successful and growing city, but to become more liveable, productive and sustainable, it needs additional infrastructure and services in the right places and at the right time.” As it stands, residents moving into the 16,000 homes in Appin will have no hospital, schools, or long-term jobs, with long commutes to neighbouring local government areas drastically impacting the liveability of the suburb.

We do note that **Campbelltown City Council** has a different view to Wollondilly and supports the State Government’s plans, seeing the proposed development as a way to deliver the upgrade of Appin Road.

Wollondilly Shire Council recognises that the **rezoning is expected to proceed despite our objections and concerns**. With this in mind, it is critical that the right planning framework and infrastructure is provided to support the existing and incoming community.



APPIN GROWTH HISTORY

2018

NOVEMBER

GREATER MACARTHUR 2040

An interim plan for the Greater Macarthur Growth Area was released by Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)

2020

MARCH

WOLLONDILLY – LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT (LSPS)

Contains Council's Position on Greater Macarthur, that Council will continue to advocate that Greater Macarthur should not be developed before appropriate infrastructure is in place. Appin development will require:

- Major investment in transport and social infrastructure
- Conservation of natural vegetation and protection of koalas
- Integrated water and waste management
- Connected, walkable and cycling friendly places
- Public open spaces
- Access to jobs, education, health and services.

JULY

TECHNICAL ASSURANCE PANEL (TAP)

Proposed to Council staff

AUGUST

REQUEST TO JOIN THE TAP

Walker submitted request to joining the TAP

1 FEBRUARY - 30 JUNE 2022

TAP PROCESS STARTED

This included specific working groups such as Heritage, Transport, Infrastructure Contributions, Open Space, Sydney Water, Design and DCP and Bushfire.

2019

DECEMBER

GREATER MACARTHUR 2040

'What we heard' - DPE

SEPTEMBER

COUNCILLORS BRIEFED

Councillors were briefed by the DPE on the TAP for the first time

OCTOBER

LETTER TO DPE

Council sent a letter to DPE to agree to participate in the TAP

FIRST TAP MEETING

Council sent a letter to DPE to agree to participate
First TAP meeting occurred (inception meeting)

NOVEMBER

SIGNED PROBITY PLAN

Staff signed Probity Plan (Note: as new staff came on board they too signed the agreement)

FIRST TAP MEETING

TAP conducted a site inspection for the Greater Macarthur land release area – Appin

2021

FEBRUARY

TECHNICAL ASSURANCE PANEL PULISHED

Technical Assurance Panel (TAP) information is published on DPE website – Councillors advised by email.

TAP PLACED ON PAUSE

TAP placed on Pause for 5 months

AUGUST

TAP RECOMMENDED

DECEMBER

GREATER MACARTHUR 2040

Greater Macarthur 2040 Community Update brochure was released by DPE

2022

AUGUST

COUNCIL STAFF SUBMISSION

Council staff submission sent to DPE at the conclusion of the TAP process

SEPTEMBER

LETTER OF ASSURANCE

Department of Planning and Environment
– Letter of Assurance to Walker

2ND NOVEMBER

MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND HOMES

Minister for Planning and Homes
– Media release for 19,000 homes Planned for South West Sydney.

- Three Planning Proposals announced – two of which are located within Wollondilly.

WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- State enabled infrastructure to support a new community
- Local infrastructure that is funded in advance (sequencing and staging with Wilton)
- Protection of the environment
- JOBS
- A voice for the Wollondilly community into the fast tracking of the State designated Growth Area
- Influence key stakeholders to deliver the best quality liveability outcomes for Appin, Wilton and the Wollondilly Shire

WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR?

Local and State VPA **before** the rezoning of land will be critical for roads, open space and community facilities.

Critical transport infrastructure

- An upgraded/new road and pedestrian connection between Wilton and Appin, direct connection to the Hume Freeway and Appin Road upgrade
- A public transport connection between Wilton and Appin (rail and rapid bus)
- Public transport connections between Appin and Campbelltown (rail and rapid bus)
- Commitment and planning of new road links to get people safely in and out of Appin including during emergency events like bushfire
- Upgrades to Appin Road that cater for traffic flows and public transport and provide safe crossing for wildlife, increase active transport with bike/walking lanes and safety upgrades to the road
- Local road network that supports active transport that is all accessible and on both sides of the road
- Linking of public open space areas with active transport connections – share paths etc
- Outer Sydney Orbital 2 – option finalised (and announced to ensure viability)
- Without transport connections to jobs, residents will have to travel to neighbouring Council areas

Education facilities to meet current & future demand

- Commitment to and the early establishment of primary and high school sites i.e. Stage 1 or 2.
 - » There is currently only one primary school in Appin which is not equipped to support growth in population. The nearest high school is Ambarvale High School in Campbelltown.

Essential Health Services to match population

- Health Services within Appin must match the population. Sufficient land needs to be allocated to allow delivery of primary health care facilities to bring Wollondilly in line with the NSW average per capita provision. Wollondilly has an existing shortfall in GP and primary health services, so Appin would need to provide extra in order to tackle this shortfall.

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Protection of natural biodiversity

- Koala safe crossings of main roads and key corridors protected early in development stages
- Realistic measures to protect established wild life corridors, including koala habitat, and how these will be implemented in an urban landscape
- Retention and management of vegetation for all flora and fauna preservation, urban heat and amenity of the area
- High quality, connected and diverse open space
- Maintaining the good condition of the Upper Nepean River
- Protection of local threatened plant and animal species and endangered ecological communities
- Retention and management of vegetation for all flora and fauna preservation, urban heat and amenity of the area
- Ecologically Sustainable Development that supports a resilient and healthy community and environment
- Continuing to integrate Traditional Owners into all decision making.

Protection of Historic and Heritage value of Wollondilly

- Protection of existing village from negative impacts of development
- State Heritage Item listing (Appin Massacre site) and an approach curtilage finalised.

Water

- Integrated water and wastewater management, including planning and a commitment to service growth.
- Sydney Water must provide a clear plan that demonstrates that housing will be serviced **before** development applications are received for the housing.
- Water Management should be consistent with Council's Integrated Water Management Strategy, which have a defined outcome of zero impact to watercourses.

Clarity on process from DPE

- Clarity on the process for the State assessed Planning Proposals, so that the community, key stakeholders and Council understand the proposed step and their timing.
- Detailed master planning needs to occur prior to rezoning
- A Development Control Plan should be finalised prior to development

Rezone employment lands

- Rezone employment lands at Wilton to support job growth for the existing and future population of the Shire.
- Housing has been prioritised over employment generating land, which is left to Council to resolve and progress.

Funding commitment from both sides

- All state parliamentary parties to commit to providing a sufficient funding envelope to provide the infrastructure required to support the proposed growth before any development commences.

KEY MESSAGES

- Council opposes the fast-tracking of major residential developments in an area that lacks basic infrastructure to support it.
- As covered in Wollondilly 2040, Wollondilly's LSPS, Appin development will require:
 - » Major investment in transport and social infrastructure
 - » Conservation of natural vegetation and protection of koalas
 - » Integrated water and waste management
 - » Connected, walkable and cycling friendly places
 - » Public open spaces
 - » Access to jobs, education, health and services
- The rezoning is not consistent with this.
- Before these developments go ahead, we want meaningful commitment to roads, public transport, schools, hospitals and other essential services, as outlined above.
- Houses are needed, but so are jobs!
- Why the rush? Appin will not be a healthy, liveable community if we don't get jobs and infrastructure before housing.
- Why not 'fast track' infrastructure at Wilton where the land has already been re-zoned and ready to deliver the housing that is being called for? Council is facing a number of challenges in Wilton relating to servicing, the impacts of development on the road network and the lag between housing and the planned delivery of critical road links. The rezoning of land in Appin for 16,000 homes is likely to further disperse State Government investment in water, waste water, roads and public transport.
- We need to look after our existing community and make sure we don't create problems for future generations.



THE PROCESS

TOUCH POINTS

- 18 November 22 - Gateway Determination announced for Walker Corporation Appin Planning Proposal (13992#7)
- Public Exhibition – Gateway Determination requires exhibition of Planning Proposal within one month of Gateway (by 16 December) and finalisation (i.e. land rezoned for urban development) by 17 July 2023.
- Council prepared a submission
- DPE briefed Council on the Greater Macarthur / Appin on 29 November

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

At the November 2022 Council meeting, as part of the Mayoral Minute (10.1 File 12275#776) Council resolved to:

10. Commence a campaign highlighting the significant lack of infrastructure, impact on our chlamydia free koala colony and other challenges presented by the proposed development of the Greater Macarthur Growth Area within Wollondilly, noting that there is at least an estimated \$1.2 billion dollar shortfall.





Wollondilly
Shire Council

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