

Kristina Keneally
Member for Heffron
Shop 117
747 Botany Road
Rosebery 2018

18 September 2008

RE: NORTH EVELEIGH MASTERPLAN ISSUES

Dear Kristina,

A meeting was convened on the 20 August by the former Minister Frank Sartor and community representatives, mostly people engaged with the area over thirty years, including several former Councillors with Frank. The Local Member Carmel Tebbutt also attended. We ask you to be proactive on this issue, as to date the RWA has promised consultations that respond to the issues, and nothing is delivered. The RWA's behaviour undoubtedly was a major factor in the drubbing received by Labour in last weekend's council elections.

At the end of the meeting two issues were discussed, in starting a dialogue on the future of the site, there are many others, but if we can put these to you now:

1.

Open space & the western end of the site abutting the back of the terraces in Holdsworth Street.

The Masterplan as it stands has no useful public open in an area way below even the inner city norms, and all major development sites in these areas have contributed decent parks over the last twenty years. The earlier Masterplans (there have been 3 or 4 for the area, each one gets worse in terms of impacts on the area) had a pocket park at the west end. This is a good location, particularly if it extends to Wilson Street, and it gives a breather to the backs of these terraces, which sit several metres lower than the site. The current Masterplan has a six storey building at this end, stepping up to a twelve storey building; unbelievable.

The Minister Sartor offered a decent park at this end and a substantial setback for the first building (its height was not discussed). This is a good start.

2.

Vehicular access to the western end of the site.

Road access needs to service approx 1500 dwellings and the Carriageworks functions, including the market, and some 600 staff. Some of the film industry are also now going for a piece of the Carriageworks.

The last scheme for the site proposed a new access point at Forbes Street with a roundabout. This allows for safe access, but poorly serves the principal demand which is feed back into the arterials via Golden Grove Street to both Abercrombie Street and City Road. Without explanation, the exhibited Masterplan proposes to retain the existing access to the western corner close to the intersection with Queen Street, but offset, hence hazardous.

As pointed out to the RWA in many submissions as well as with the discussions with the Minister, this is the worst possible access point. It creates circuitous access in terms of movements on the site, as well as along Wilson, as most of the traffic should be connected as efficiently as possible

to the arterials; hence via Golden Grove Street to Abercrombie, or to City Road. There are also severe conflicts with using this access point with the most important radial bike route in the inner west, Wilson Street – it is often called a bike freeway (the Lays are keen cyclists).

Keeping the existing access point encourages use of Queen Street which is one lane wide, and one way to the top end, but two way at the bottom. There is already a bad accident record at this intersection, exacerbated by the offset with the entry to North Eveleigh. All present at the meeting were agreed that this was a problem. The former Minister instructed that a working group be established of RWA staff and resident reps to examine the options (Bruce Lay's name was put forward).

We (the Lays) engaged Christopher Stapleton – Transport Planning to advise the community on the best means to access the site in terms of safety and efficiency. A secondary issue was the feasibility of ramping, given the drop between Wilson and the. (The drop is about the same with all possible options). After inspecting the site on the day after the meeting the preliminary advice was provided to us on Monday 25 August, in order for it to be considered at a meeting with the RWA on the Tuesday 26 August. I attach a copy of Stapleton's advice.

The jist of the advice is that a connection through a roundabout, with pedestrian crossings at Golden Grove Street is the best option, and that there was ample space to ramp down to grade into the site, including access to the heritage precinct. The meeting looked at the issues, but wanted the Stapleton advice tabled before further considering the access issue. Some present argued for no change; that it was too late, the consultations are over etc. This is contrary to the Minister's commitment to the people present.

The only communication from the RWA since then has been along the lines, our report is being finalised, you have had enough time. There has been no commitment to properly examine the issue, or consider the community's concerns. The RWA's consultant traffic engineer had not even included Queen Street in her modelling. She said it was too constrained to be used, unbelievable.

This has typified the behaviour of the RWA generally of going through token consultations, then ignoring the community's views and knowledge and ramping up development at every possible opportunity, except of course unless you are black and are seeking better housing. The rout in last weekend's election should come as no surprise in reflecting the community's dissatisfaction.

We ask you as the Minister for Planning and the Member for Heffron to ensure that the former Minister's commitments are honoured in these two matters.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'B. Lay' or similar, with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Bruce & Sarah Lay.