

Dear Redfern Waterloo Authority,

I write to you with some concern about the Draft Built Environment Plan. I was born in Redfern in 1978. My father was previously a Catholic priest based in Redfern, working amongst others with the late Ted Kennedy. My mother was one of those responsible for the campaign that built Douglas Street People's Park. After growing up in Marrickville I returned to this area and have lived in Darlington, near Redfern station, for the past five years.

I am concerned by the tone of the Draft Plan, and by some of the assumptions that seem to underpin it. While the community around Redfern certainly has its fair share of problems and challenges it is also one of the most vibrant, tolerant and diverse communities in the country. It holds a special place in the hearts of many. It was the site of the first win of urban land by the Aboriginal Land Rights movement and it was one of the sites where working people and those in public housing successfully defended their homes from plans for slum clearance through the Green Ban movement. This is a history that is not only ignored, it is actively undermined in the Draft Plan.

The Draft Plan will transform this residential suburb into a commercial zone, eliminating much of the cultural landscape and driving out many of the current residents. It is a short-sighted plan designed to maximise the value of publicly owned assets, not a plan for the long term social and environmental sustainability of our community.

In particular I would like to raise the following concerns:

- The Draft Plan restricts residential zoning on the Block whilst applying higher residential floor space ratios to neighbouring government owned land. I view this as clearly discriminatory in its intent. This proposal is unacceptable and should be withdrawn.
- The Draft Plan proposes commercial towers to be built on Marian Park. Redfern is already short of open public space. Marian Park is an important community resource. It should be zoned open public space in its entirety.
- The oval on Redfern Public School is currently used by residents as open public space. The Draft Plan allows for building over the entire site and offers no guarantees for the preservation of open space. This zoning should be reconsidered.
- The Draft Plan proposes a road tunnel under the railway line to Wilson St. This will create additional car traffic on one of the most important cycle ways in the inner city. The tunnel should be scrapped and plans to improve and promote the cycle way should be proposed instead.
- The proposals for North Eveleigh Railyard do not respect the site's history or cultural significance. The proposal also creates large residential blocks on the railway side that would ruin public views and dramatically increase car use on Wilson St. These plans need to be reconsidered.
- The Draft Plan concentrates on commercial space. There is no clear evidence to support the need for this space. Office space is unlikely to provide suitable employment to locals in need of work and there is no evidence of a medium term shortage of office space in Sydney.
- Instead, these proposals inflate land values, transform the nature of the area and waste an important opportunity to sustainably achieve urban consolidation. The Draft Plan should be redrawn with a focus on expanding residential housing.
- The Draft Plan does not exist as part of a broader planning framework. There is no plan for traffic, for other forms of transport, for public open space, for future community needs, heritage or for affordable housing. These plans must be developed in conjunction with the Built Environment Plan, and not as an after thought. The BEP should be withdrawn until this other planning has taken place.

This Plan has the potential to completely transform one of the most important parts of the county for what appears to me to be short term monetary gain. I urge the Redfern Waterloo Authority to reconsider its approach to my community.

Yours,
Ben Spies-Butcher.
Calder Rd, Darlington.