

To Whom It May Concern,

I have close associations with the township of Douglas Park and the people that call it home, regularly residing nearby to the proposed site with family members for the past twenty-eight years. It is a lovely, close-knit and small community that prizes the surrounding bushland setting, particularly the wildlife that we all enjoy sitting at dawn in the gullies or on a late-night trip home, frolicking along in amongst the bushes in and out of their burrows. The gullies leading to the river are teeming with wallabies, wombats, echidnas and possums to name a few of the not-so-shy ones that are treasured and harboured and make up an irreplaceable part of this little town. Their loss as a result of this monstrous proposal will be utterly devastating to us all.

In relation to the viability of the project, in my opinion consent authorities must evaluate the suitability of the site and the social and economic impacts on the locality under Section 4.15 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. I believe examination of the project under these provisions will demonstrate that the proposal is incompatible with the aims of this legislation.

There is a distinct imbalance in terms of spatial injustice and an inequitable distribution of cumulative impacts of this development proposal. A tiny rural town is being asked to carry one hundred percent of the burden in terms of environmental and infrastructure versus the benefits claimed by stakeholders who live in locations far remote from the Site.

The principles of inter-generational and intra-generational equity apply because the very long-lasting impacts of this development will be disproportionality laid at the feet of a specific community group for generations to come. Where a developer effectively utilizes a small regional village as a disposal site for high-impact infrastructure, adopting a justification that he is providing a public service when he is in fact visiting enormous damage upon those in the locality, the equity test has not been met in my opinion. While there may be a shortage of cemetery space in major cities, attempts to remedy the situation should not involve destroying the fabric of an unrelated rural locality. If the proponent cannot prove a geographic and strategic link between the site and the clientele the proposal claims to serve, those charged with judging the viability of the proposal should surely view the site choice as a commercial convenience rather than a strategy to provide needed infrastructure.

This looks like a huge project that will overshadow the town demonstrating an "unacceptable change in land-use character". A funeral cortege of up to 100 vehicles will clog the roads and provide further challenges for the community already behind in road network upgrades. A developer cannot expect the local government to pick up the bill for the extra strain while he profits from out-of-town clients.

Most apparent from my perspective is the qualitative concept of a community's "sense of place." The negative psychological and social displacement commensurate with the transformation of a rural, rustic corridor into a transit zone for funeral traffic from metropolitan Sydney areas fundamentally changes why people have made the decision to live there to begin with. The developer's business model relies on a profound spatial inequity involving a sacrifice of visual amenity, health and local traffic safety issues for the locals to address problems harboured by communities far remote from the location.

I hope my voice will make a valuable contribution towards the decision to stop this proposal progressing any further and look forward to updates going forward.

Kind regards,

Georgia Porteiro

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