

DAREBIN APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
c/o Terry Scully
52 Christmas Street,
Northcote 3070

23/09/07

The Secretary
Select Committee on Public Land Development
Legislative Council,
Parliament of Victoria,
Spring Street,
Melbourne 3000

Dear Sir,

SALE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS

Darebin Municipality has no clearly defined 'green wedge' area, apart from land surrounding Darebin Creek that is shared with Banyule Council. Accordingly, the few scattered parks in the municipality and even the land abutting the railway lines take on extra importance.

The Northcote Activity Centre Draft Structure Plan drawn up (under the umbrella of M2030) to comply with maximum population density in a major activity centre, (*i.e. Northcote*) has as a stated objective (p.92-RS-03) "to better utilize areas of vacant railway land for housing or support uses to complement the station and surrounding uses," and more specifically as policy (p.92-RS-P1) "Redevelopment of poorly utilised railway reserve land is supported, particularly on the east side of the railway line for housing and support services to the activity centre." Utilisation of the western side of the railway line has already occurred with the construction of 3-4 storey buildings, (Melway 30 F7) (known to the inhabitants on the eastern side of the tracks as the "Berlin Wall" due to its extreme ugliness) and with the proposal in the Draft Structure Plan (p.52-Area AR-P16) of 8 storey buildings along Herbert Street.

If there is further development along the eastern side (Melway 30 E8-7) the trains will be running through a canyon. As the Epping railway service is already severely overcrowded and earmarked for more frequent trains to cope, (with the utilisation of railway land by housing, there would be insufficient space for a third line)

the noise of trains passing through this canyon would be almost continuous and would be intolerable for residents. This problem will also arise in the Preston activity centre which also surrounds the railway line. (Melway 18 G7)

In addition, the ascetics of the parklands are also under threat. Since the previous Planning Minister, after the application for 2 towers (1x12 & 1x10) at Northcote Plaza (Melway 30 G8) had been called in, approved the application with no consultation with the local residents, there has been simmering resentment and much trepidation that these towers overlooking All Nations Park will deprive the community of the panoramic view promised from the lookout. These towers will effectively block-out the western horizon and therefore the sunset, replacing it with two buckteeth towering over even the High Street buildings behind them, restricted as they are to 5 storey limits by the council. In addition, approval has been given for a piazza (presumably fenced off) to intrude into the parkland.

Other developers have taken heart from the Minister's ruling and have also submitted outlandish plans for buildings to dominate what little open space there is. A case in point is 350 Separation Street (Melway 30 J8) (23 x 2&3 storey townhouses on 2600 sq. metres) overlooking Rubie Thompson Reserve. If this trend continues soon all of the reserves in the municipality will be bases of craters in permanent shadow from high rise buildings. (If this causes the grass to die out, can we still nominate the reserves as green areas?)

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Terry Scully', written in dark ink.

Terry Scully
President DADA

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