

# SAVE HUNTERS HILL MUNICIPALITY COALITION

A coalition of community and precinct groups and residents determined to save the historic Municipality of Hunters Hill  
C/- 20 Avenue Road, Hunters Hill 2110 · Email: [info@savehuntershill.org](mailto:info@savehuntershill.org) · Tel: 0405 637 811 · [www.savehuntershill.org](http://www.savehuntershill.org)

Anthony Roberts MP,  
Member for Lane Cove,  
22 September 2013

Dear Anthony,

We refer to our email dated 24 August (Annexure A). The Government's proposed Planning laws have now reached a critical stage.

The community values your support in its strong desire for a fair and balanced planning system, one that properly protects environmental, heritage and community values, supports local democracy, and encourages well-planned and sustainable development.

The SHHMC position is clear. It is set out in detail on our website [www.savehuntershill.org](http://www.savehuntershill.org) and includes a number of submissions to Government. We strongly suggest that you personally have a close look at the whole site, including the '[Latest News](#)' and '[Important links](#)' tabs, as well as '[Photos](#)' and the video of the [Public Meeting](#) featuring our local State member.

The Minister for Planning Brad Hazzard and his Department have received 5,000 submissions on the White Paper and proposed Planning Bill. The vast majority are very critical of many of the proposals and provisions in the Bill and for good cause. Many of these detailed submissions are from leading community and professional groups and organisations, councils and individuals.

The Minister and Department are refusing to release their summary of submissions. This is in clear breach of the State Plan 'NSW 2021' Goal 31 - "The community has the right to openness, accountability and transparency". They must do so immediately.

The last 3 weeks of action leading up to the introduction of the Bill into Parliament shows why now is critical - numerous protests, censure by Alan Jones of the Premier and the Minister, a call for direct action at the Rally in Kelly's Bush, the threat by Councils of direct action and strong criticism in the media. To put it simply, many in the community are highly critical of what this Government is doing over proposed changes to Planning and Local Government – see Annexure B for further details.

The dismissive attitude taken by the Minister to reasoned community submissions has been both wrong and highly insulting. He has accused responsible community groups of "making alarmist assertions" ([17 Aug 13](#)) and "jumping at shadows", and has expressed disappointment that a "small but vocal group are alarming people by spreading wrong information" ([4 Sept 13](#)). He has accused the Better Planning Network (BPN), an umbrella group of over 420 affiliated community groups across NSW, of being "an apology for the Greens" ([Sept 13](#)). "There would be no substantive changes to the Bill" ([12 Sept](#)), he declared.

The Minister now appears to have done a total backflip and is going to make substantive changes - see SMH [‘Planning backflip’](#) 19 Sept 13. The Minister says he will delay the Bill for several weeks “to address public concern”, which is acknowledged as reaching fever pitch. He now states he is willing to consider concessions re “code assessment” and the “triple bottom line” and other substantive changes. In reality the proposed Bill is fundamentally flawed in so many ways, as detailed in the vast majority of the submissions, that it must be withdrawn and re-written.

The Director of Planning Sam Haddad has admitted publicly that his Department in the draft Bill had “gone further than the government intended” and that his staff had spread “inaccurate or misleading information” about proposed changes to the public during the consultation period. He must take responsibility and be held accountable for this and his failure to release relevant information to the public and either resign or be sacked.

The community no longer has any trust or faith or confidence in Minister Hazzard or his Department. The Minister’s arrogance, incompetence and lack of respect for community can result in but one action - his resignation or removal by the Premier. Alan Jones has publicly called for him to be sacked over this debacle ([13 Sept](#)) and we agree.

The Minister is not able to take the process forward; he is not a person who can now work with community, councils and stakeholders in designing a fair and balanced planning system.

The Bill that the Minister was going to introduce into the Parliament on or shortly after 10 September has not been revealed to the public, the announcement by the Minister on 19 September that he now has changes but no real detail – the whole process is a shambles. To say it is going to be brought back to the House in a few weeks is a nonsense.

We demand:

1. To know what is actually happening with these proposed planning law changes;
2. To know why the Government for so long refused to accept legitimate concerns raised by the vast majority of the public and representative groups ; and
3. That the Bill be withdrawn and re-written under the leadership of a **new** Minister and **new** Departmental Head; and
4. That the public be fully consulted over the provisions of any future proposed Bill and be listened to before further legislation comes before the House.

We have appreciated your willingness in the past to meet with SHHMC representatives but in recent times our requests have been ignored. As stated on several occasions, we would like to meet with you including the Mayor as a matter of urgency to get answers to these crucial issues.

Yours sincerely,



Phil Jenkyn OAM

Ross Williams Emeritus Mayor

Co-convenors – Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition

Cc Mayor Richard Quinn and SHHMC Coordinators

## Annexure A

**From:** Phill Jenkyn [mailto:jenkyn@internode.on.net]

**Sent:** Saturday, 24 August 2013 3:39 PM

**To:** lanecove@parliament.nsw.gov.au; anthony.roberts@parliament.nsw.gov.au

**Cc:** sue.clark@minister.nsw.gov.au; roselina1@bigpond.com; richardquinn@huntershill.nsw.gov.au; richardquinn@bigpond.com

**Subject:** Urgent Meeting with Anthony Roberts

Hon Anthony Roberts MP,  
Member for Lane Cove  
Minister for Fair Trading

Dear Anthony,

We refer to our email dated 14 August copy below, and to an earlier email dated 25 June attaching SHHMC submissions.

It is not only the Hunters Hill community but communities right across NSW that are angry and dismayed at the NSW Government's proposed changes to local government and planning.

The Government made two election promises amongst others, namely no forced amalgamations and returning planning powers to local communities. The actions it has taken over the last year and more have shaken the community's trust in the NSW Government. Communities are expressing a strong view that the Government either has or is in the process of breaking both these promises.

As you know SHHMC has its own website in relation to these matters [www.savehuntershill.org](http://www.savehuntershill.org) You may be interested to look at the recent 'Latest News' on our site. But there are other useful websites with considerable followings, including the [Better Planning Network](#) and the City of Sydney's [Keep It Local](#) They are all very critical of the Government.

In spite of concerns in submissions from ICAC, the Law Society and many others of a real risk of corruption from wide discretionary powers and poor drafting of the Planning Bill, Minister Hazzard has told the SMH ([13 Aug 13](#)) that "ministerial discretion would continue" and accused community groups of "making alarmist assertions" ([17 Aug 13](#)). The community is becoming increasingly concerned that the Government is simply not listening to informed community opinion.

The community has no alternative but to take action.

As you know a 'Lobby Day' took place at Parliament House last Tuesday. Many State members have already been lobbied by many groups across the State.

The Better Planning Network has just released a significant petition – see [BPN Petition](#) . This petition calls for the proposed Planning Bills to be withdrawn as they are fundamentally flawed, and sets out the reasons. Its terms are consistent with one of the resolutions overwhelmingly passed at the [Hunters Hill Public Meeting](#) held on 6 June, namely that the draft Planning Bill and other proposals should be withdrawn given their current flawed content.

Many have already signed the petition and, having looked at a number of submissions made as a result of the public consultation, clearly many others will wish to do the same.

The Director General of Planning has admitted that serious errors have occurred between what the community was told during the consultation and what was in the draft Planning Bills. This has recently been highlighted in the media - see [Herald article 13 August](#) and [Herald letters 14 August](#) and also [The Fifth Estate 13 August](#)

Banners, coreflutes, tape and other material are in the process of being prepared – see annexures for sample.

Why do we have to do this? What is the Government doing? Does it know how communities and others are feeling about these issues? Does it really care? Why is it not listening?

Anthony do you have any comments to make about all this?

We would like to meet with you, including the Mayor Richard Quinn, as a matter of urgency.

Kind regards,

Ross Williams and Phil Jenkyn

SHHMC Co-convenors



[www.savehuntershill.org](http://www.savehuntershill.org)

## Annexure B

Media Coverage 3 weeks 28 August to 18 September 2013:

[‘Jack’s Back’ TWT](#) 18 Sept, [‘Hazardous Future’](#) 16 Sept, [ABC News](#) 14 Sept, [‘Alan Jones 2GB’](#) 13 Sept, [‘Community groups protest’](#) Manly Daily 12 Sept, [‘Threats over planning laws’](#) SMH 11 Sept, [‘Alan Jones 2GB’](#) 10 Sept, [‘Community Protest outside Parliament’](#) Keep It Local 4 Sept, [‘Fighting with Hazard Tape’](#) NDT 4 Sept, [‘Hunters Hill visits Premier’](#) TWT 4 Sept, [‘Revisit planning reforms’](#) SMH 3 Sept, [‘Hands Off Hunters Hill’](#) News YouTube 2 Sept and [‘Protesters wrapped in Hazard Tape’](#) Hornsby Advocate 28 Aug.