

SAVE HUNTERS HILL MUNICIPALITY COALITION

A coalition of community and precinct groups and residents determined to save the historic Municipality of Hunters Hill
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The Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP
NSW Premier
Level 40 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
5 December 2013

Dear Premier,

Re: Flawed Planning Bill 2013

We attach earlier correspondence dated 22 September and 13 November 2013 together with an Analysis of the Planning Bill 2013, as introduced recently into Parliament.

Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition (SHHMC) is a community organisation whose aims include the preservation and protection of the historic Municipality of Hunters Hill, its heritage and community values and its local democracy. Our website www.savehuntershill.org contains submissions and information relevant to the NSW Government's proposed changes to Planning and Local Government, including correspondence directed to you as Premier.

We continue to express our considerable surprise, disappointment and grave concern that the Government went ahead and attempted to pass the deeply flawed Planning Bill into law.

Our earlier correspondence outlines clear breaches of election promises and Goal 32 of the State Plan 'NSW 2021'. It outlines the Government's breach of trust with community, widespread community anger and concern, and how that has played out over time. It sets out in detail the reasons why the Minister for Planning and the Director General of Planning should both resign or be sacked. This correspondence needs to be read.

Well now it has all come to pass. What a disaster for the Government. A flawed Planning Bill heavily amended by the Legislative Council, now rendered unworkable and withdrawn from Parliament until February 2014. This amended Bill remains fundamentally flawed, we repeat fundamentally flawed, it is not capable of amendment and must be totally withdrawn.

Endless submissions, letters and emails sent to Government requesting, pleading and then demanding that it not pursue this fatal path - ignored, ridiculed and dismissed. While it is a very necessary and timely rebuff for the Government, it is the community that has felt the pain and the anger. It was all totally unnecessary.

We state again in the strongest terms that the community no longer has any trust or confidence in Minister Hazzard, the Director General of Planning, and those in the Department of Planning responsible for this flawed Bill and its communication to the public. The level of incompetence, arrogance and lack of respect for community must result in but one decision – resignation or sacking.

This would then allow an opportunity for community, business and others to engage in a real and genuine effort to achieve a fair and balanced planning system – one that properly protects our environment and heritage, is transparent, provides certainty, and encourages well-planned growth and jobs with supporting infrastructure.

For this effort to be successful however requires a serious rethink by the Government. It requires a new Minister and supporting team. If this doesn't happen, the community is not going anywhere, it is not going away, it is galvanised, it is angry and it is very determined. And so it must be. This whole planning reform process has been a shambles.

Communities expect Government and local members to be able to respectfully engage with them, to answer difficult questions and justify decisions and actions. It is called accountability and transparency. It is mentioned in the State Plan.

Is it therefore asking too much to receive a detailed and considered response to our concerns and correspondence?

Kind regards,



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This letter was also emailed to office@premier.nsw.gov.au and kuringgai@parliament.nsw.gov.au on 5 December 2013 10:12 PM