



ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE JONATHAN O'DEA
The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TUESDAY 20 AUGUST 2019

LINDFIELD VILLAGE HUB

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (19:14): In the past 12 years the Ku-ring-gai area, including Lindfield, has absorbed a large number of new dwellings after the previous Labor Government required the rezoning of various local areas to accommodate high-density residential dwellings. The Lindfield Village Hub, a planned development by Ku-ring-gai Council, is now pushing the limits of the community's tolerance further by suggesting buildings of up to 14 stories in Lindfield. The history of the Lindfield Village Hub began when the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government proposed to buy a council-owned car park to build an above-ground commuter car park. The community welcomed the car park commitment, but suggested improved local amenities be included in the plan, enlisting the support of the council.

The Government acquiesced and subsequently moved some of the proposed commuter car parking spots to the eastern side of Lindfield as part of the separate Lindfield Village Green project. In October 2012 Support Lindfield, a local community group, was formed as a local community voice. It is a dedicated and skilled community-based group that promotes sensible redevelopment in the public interest. It focuses on delivering valuable community facilities in a reasonable way that has broad local support and public input, and not at the cost of unacceptable overdevelopment. Whilst I support a balanced and sensible new Lindfield Village Hub, I cannot support the application as currently proposed by Ku-ring-gai Council, nor does Support Lindfield.

Normally the community would look to council to resist such a proposal on its behalf, but I chose to speak at a council public forum last week about the proposal on behalf of the community due to the apparent, or at least perceived, conflict of interest within council. The development area in question was only up-zoned from a community land car park to permit seven stories of residential development because the council promised to build a range of community facilities within the proposed development. Needless to say, after almost four years the council has not delivered on that earlier commitment and agreement with the local community. The maximum height permitted for any building in Lindfield is currently seven stories, and now the council wants to spot rezone on its own site for up to 14 stories. This would set a bad and dangerous precedent, and is extremely hard to justify.

Whilst there is public interest in enhanced or extra community facilities, that does not justify the overdevelopment proposed. It is generally viewed as excessive, with defective methodology and insufficient transparency on costs and benefits, including for the existing library site earmarked for sale by council. The public has clearly rejected the current proposal. The council must communicate with the community in a

much better fashion. The delivery of new dwellings in the Ku-ring-gai Council area over the past 12 years has more than satisfied previous State Government requirements. Should further action be required to deliver additional housing in the future, the council should consider how it might rezone for additional residential buildings across the whole municipality, rather than just on one site to its own advantage.

I reiterate my support for a sensible Lindfield Village Hub project for the community that includes commuter car parking funded by the State Government. However, I confirm that I cannot support the current proposal, primarily because it is not in a properly balanced public interest. Also, a pedestrian bridge over the Pacific Highway, which is a related issue, is something I strongly support. I intend to relay my views to the New South Wales planning Minister, as appropriate, following the council's decision at its meeting tonight.

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (19:18): I thank the member for Davidson for his passionate contribution in support of the wonderful suburb of Lindfield, which is a classic suburb designed in accordance with the principles of the garden suburb movement. It has a mix of great architectural styles and has an important character that is important to maintain. I listened with concern to the comments of the member for Davidson. Obviously the Government is keen to ensure that we have a greater supply of homes, and different types and tenures of homes. But they do need to be designed appropriately in the right places, supported by the right infrastructure and developed in accordance with a vision determined by local people. Hopefully the council can work with its community. I will listen intently to the representations of the member for Davidson following the council's decision this evening.

The Hon. Jonathan O'Dea MP
Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly
Member for Davidson