

The 416 Group
53 Albert Drive, Killara 2071
Telephone: 9416 6423
Email: mail@416group.org.au
Web: www.416group.org.au



Dear Sir/Madam

10.8.2021

Re Draft Macquarie Park Place Strategy

This submission is from the 416 Group, an environmental community organisation which aims to represent the 750 households in Killara and Lindfield west of Lady Game Drive. The Group was formed in 1997 in particular because of developments which were affecting or had the potential to affect the Lane Cove National Park and residents in Ku-ring-gai. These included noise and smells from the waste transfer station at Porters Creek and expansion plans at the time, the Transport for NSW proposal for a railway bridge through the National Park between Ku-ring-gai and Ryde and the proposal for service centres and shopping precincts on both sides of the M2 east of Lane Cove Road.

The 416 Group has recently engaged with the community and made a submission objecting to a proposed 18 storey office tower adjacent to and overshadowing the National Park on the Eden Gardens site on Lane Cove Road just outside the masterplan area.

The 416 Group's experience has been that whilst this community is affected by developments in Macquarie Park the impression of planners is that the Lane Cove River forms a barrier. This is despite the Lane Cove National Park being only a narrow valley, with slight lines to new development, with noise carrying and the steady worsening of traffic congestion affecting everyone. Added to this being in a different LGA has created a history of consultation issues for the 416 Group.

Residents in this area enjoy employment opportunities in Macquarie Park and shop and use other services in the precinct. Most travel by car because the poorly patronised bus service (565) is infrequent and in peak hours is unreliable due to traffic congestion on Lane Cove Road. Community feedback which informed the Eden Gardens submission was that traffic congestion has caused some residents to reduce their trips to Macquarie Park in favour of other locations.

The Draft Macquarie Park Place Strategy is broad in scope and the authors are to be congratulated. Conceptually however it is complex. We question whether it has adequately focused on the primary issue which is that additional development will worsen already chronic traffic congestion. The report acknowledges that 70% of people who work in Macquarie Park come by car. Houses and apartments in Macquarie Park provide parking to meet demand. The Plan proposes 20,000 new jobs and upto 7650 new homes. New workers and residents will have the same expectations and experience of the precinct as do the existing. The Plan will fail if strategies proposed are inadequate and the outcome is further demands on roads and further deterioration in peak hour travel times both for workers and residents and all those other commuters transiting the area. Whilst Covid has changed demand, the extent to which any of this change is permanent is unknown. We support basing planning assumptions of pre Covid behaviour and data.

We make the following main points:

- Development of Macquarie Park as a workplace is supported especially building on its strengths as a tech precinct and the Australasian HQ's of national and international companies
- Traffic congestion particularly in peak hours is the major issue. Including on the M2, Epping Road and Lane Cove Road. In our area, Lady Game Drive and Fullers Rd/Delhi Road are at capacity as they try to feed onto Epping Road, the M2 and Lane Cove Road. In practical terms this means waits for many rotations of the traffic lights at either end of Lady Game Drive for people in this area to leave their home in the morning and return in the evening.
- Development targets must be reduced to match infrastructure with infrastructure to come first. Moratorium on new development until:
 - Rail is extended from Epping to Parramatta as was originally planned and as a priority.
 - Traffic congestion is controlled at an acceptable level.
- Supported is that the subject area is constrained by the M2 and so buffered from more overshadowing of the Lane Cove National Park - eg does not include the Eden Gardens site.
- Supported are initiatives which tackle the core challenges at Macquarie Park. Pedestrian unfriendly, too spread out, lacks activation at street level, lacks shade and lacks pedestrian routes other than along multilane roads. Break up the campus style development which encourages car use and discourages public transport use. By way of example the walk from Eden Gardens to the nearest Metro station by the shortest route involves crossing 30 lanes of traffic
- Greater public transport is achievable when walking distances are minimised. Limit new high rise to within 400 metres of metro stations, new medium rise within 800 metres. Apply these constraints to the seven-neighbourhood strategy.
- Parking spaces in new developments limited in order to encourage reliance on public transport.
- Bus lanes and T3 lanes are supported.
- Despite expansion in recent years the Macquarie Centre precinct is at capacity on major shopping days. The Centre is inaccessible for pedestrians approaching from the north, east and south making it a driving destination even for nearby patrons.
- Developments should never overshadow the Lane Cove National Park. The multi-stage high-rise Meriton development at Talavera Road is excessive and being on the edge of the precinct, will overshadow the National Park and represents a bad planning outcome.
- Quality and sympathetic design – no repeat of the brutal oversized towers in the North Ryde Metro station precinct which were met with community disbelief and dismay.
- The Lane Cove National Park is fragile and requires investment for its protection. It is also an opportunity for recreation and understanding though improved access and interpretation. Porters Creek and Shrimptons Creek run from Macquarie Park into the Lane Cove River.
 - The native flora and fauna are under duress and in particular watercourses are infested with exotic weeds.
 - Creeks are subject to storm water surges. All development to include water retention to offset hard surface run off.
 - The National Park is underfunded and despite being in a rapidly changing urban area lacks the management and resources to respond to the duress it is under from development intensity.
 - The National Park north of De Burgh's bridge is inaccessible.

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- To improve access and in particular for cyclists commuting to Macquarie Park consider new pedestrian/cycle suspension bridges across the Lane Cove River at Fiddens Wharf Rd to Riverside Drive and at Shrimptons Creek Trail or Khartoum Rd as well as an all-weather crossing at Brown's Waterhole.
- Resolve the existing dog leg cycleway access from Riverside Drive to Fontenoy Street possibly via a combined fire break/cycleway northwest of Tuckwell Place.
- Relocate the Porters Creek waste transfer station and rehabilitate as green space and playing fields as was previously proposed as a resource for Macquarie Park residents and as a buffer to the National Park.
- Better shield the National Park from traffic noise from the M2 and Lane Cove Road.

Your Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Julian Ledger'.

Julian Ledger
President