

To: Paul Fletcher MP, Member for Bradfield

Funding for footpaths

Dear Paul

Your October 2022 newsletter included the following item:

Lack of footpaths in North Wahroonga

*I visited North Wahroonga to meet with Sorab Daver and other residents, and to see for myself that most streets in this area have no footpaths on either side of the road! This is a problem for safety (especially older residents); for parents pushing prams and strollers; for kids who ride bikes; and for everybody who would prefer to walk rather than use the car for a short trip, but is discouraged from walking because of the lack of footpaths. **I am taking this issue up with Ku-ring-gai Council.***

The 416 Group which aims to represent the 750 households in Killara and Lindfield west of Lady Game Drive has also made representations to Council about the need for footpaths in streets which have none. We have identified as priorities:

Eustace Parade, Killara Serves as a pick-up/drop off for Beaumont Rd Public School

Bradfield Rd, Lindfield Had a footpath installed in 2022 from Charles St to Carramar Rd leaving approximately 1km still to be done. No bus service and so residents walk to the nearest stop. The road, which provides access for walkers to the Lane Cove National Park, is subject to speeding, has a blind corner and is popular with car sales yard test drivers and learners.

Albert Drive, Killara Long, narrow, winding road with blind corners and crests. No bus service. Approx 100 houses. Road verges unnavigable for pedestrians

We would like to make the following observations:

- With the growth in online shopping there has been a substantial increase in home deliveries by couriers and trucks.
- Pedestrians include children, the disabled, aged pensioners and people who walk and jog for their health.
- Inaccessible road verges and parked cars mean that often pedestrians have to walk unsafely down the centre of the road.
- Footpaths are today a minimum standard for new subdivisions
- Ku-ring-gai was developed before that standard applied and now finds itself substandard despite being a wealthy local government area.
- Ku-ring-gai Council has said that its objective is for every street to have one footpath but that this objective may not be realised for 25 years.
- Ku-ring-gai Council is not a financially strong LGA.
- There is skepticism that even a 25-year objective will not be met due to the many other priorities.
- Rates are legislatively restricted and pegged by IPART and Councils face political challenges in applying for special rate variations.
- The area has generally enjoyed political alignment between Local, State and Federal representation but this has not helped with funding.

In developing its Community Strategic Plan in 2022 Ku-ring-gai Council said "Council has insufficient funding in the Long Term Financial Plan to sustainably manage and improve its existing infrastructure assets and meet community expectations."

Thus, whilst you and groups like the 416 Group may take up the issue of footpaths with Ku-ring-gai Council it seems to us that a more fundamental consideration is necessary whereby Federal and State Governments with the benefit of their taxation revenues address the problem. That should take the form of substantial grant funding to bring older residential areas upto the minimum safety standard residents are entitled to.

We would urge you to take the opportunity of the current period of opposition to develop policy to address this issue.

Regards

Julian Ledger

President

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Cc Ku-ring-gai Councillors

416 Group