

## **Questions from the 416 Group for Candidates in the seat of Bradfield for the Federal election 3 May 2025**

Following the good response to the 416 Group's questions to candidates at last year's Council's elections we provided questions raised by members to the main candidates standing for election to represent Bradfield at the Federal election. This time although questions were provided well in advance the exercise was less successful with only two candidates responding. Questions were provided to:

Harjit Singh – Green	No response
Andy Yin – Independent	No response
Louise McCallum - Labor	See attached
Gisele Kapterian – Liberal	No response
Nicolette Boele Independent	See attached

The 416 Group's preamble to the questions was as follows:

**It has been said that 'all politics is local'. Meaning that people are motivated to vote on matters that directly affect them.**

**The 416 Group was formed 22 years ago as a community action group - [Home - 416 Group](#).**

**It aims to represent residents in Killara and Lindfield who live near the Lane Cove National Park. That's some 750 households who shop in Lindfield and commute from Killara and Lindfield stations approximately 3km away. The area is accessed by Lady Game Drive and the roads leading to and from the Pacific Highway.**

**We thank candidates for standing to represent Bradfield in the 2025 Federal election. Our committee has prepared the following questions for candidates, and we welcome your response not later than two weeks prior to the election date. We will publish this on our website and also the local West Lindfield/Killara community Facebook page.**

### **416 Group Survey - Louise McCallum - Labor**

**1. The Bradfield electorate is a captive of its geography with limited road routes in and out due to the Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour, the steep terrain and restricted road easements. Traffic congestion is deteriorating each year. Given the proposed huge increase in new housing development and so population would you support:**

- **Federal funding for large scale commuter parking to get cars off the road and people onto trains.**
- **Federal funding for a road tunnel under Chatswood (stage 1) and under the Pacific Highway to Wahroonga (stage 2)**

The Albanese Government is committed to delivering nationally significant infrastructure that reduces travel time, supports productivity, connects to new homes and improves safety. We work closely with the NSW Government on infrastructure priorities and if re-elected will consider new proposals for joint funding through our budget processes.

Peter Dutton and his team cannot be trusted on Infrastructure or local grants. Our independent review found they left an infrastructure pipeline with an estimated \$33 billion in cost blow outs and projects that lacked any planning, strategic merit or rationale.

They paid \$30 million for land near Western Sydney Airport worth only \$3.3 million, in an act labelled “incompetent or corrupt” that benefitted a Liberal donor.

We’ll work responsibly with states and territories to ensure infrastructure is delivered cost effectively and efficiently, representing value for money for taxpayers.

## **2. The current housing crisis has many contributing factors.**

### **Would you support**

- **Matching net migration to the growth in housing supply**
- **Actions to curtail short term holiday letting of residential housing. One company alone has almost 250,000 listings. State governments of all persuasions have failed to adequately act.**
- **Taxation of residential housing that is intentionally left vacant for long periods (as has been successfully implemented in British Columbia)**

The Albanese Government is tackling the housing crisis with a \$43 billion Homes for Australia plan. This plan is making it easier to buy, better to rent, and building more homes. This compares to only \$5 billion of housing investments under the former Coalition Government.

Part of this plan is making sure immigration returns to sustainable levels. Net overseas migration has been falling for 18 months and is forecast to continue to fall. This is due to the actions taken by the Albanese Government, such as the reforms to improve integrity in international education. Labor has also banned foreign buyers from purchasing existing homes and is cracking down on land banking. These changes are helping reduce demand for housing, while we also focus on building more homes – 1.2 million over the next 5 years is the target under the National Housing Accord.

While rental reforms are State and Territory responsibilities, the Albanese Government is working with the states to consider options for better regulation of short-stay residential accommodation, as part of the Better Deal for Renters agreement – which many states have now acted on.

There is more work to do under a re-elected Albanese Labor Government, but significant progress has been made in a first term.

- 3. After ten years of work by Ku-ring-gai Council and the community, the Lindfield Village Hub development (which was for a new library, community centre, main line supermarket, shops, a park and new housing) collapsed when in November 2023 the NSW State Government abruptly demanded the return of \$9.8M funding for commuter parking. The then developer withdrew, and the project collapsed. Less than half of the streets in our area have footpaths. The Ku-ring-gai Council has a program to build a footpath on a least one side of every street. At the present rate of progress this program will take 100 years. Meanwhile for new sub-divisions in New South Wales a footpath is a minimum standard. The drainage infrastructure in Ku-ring-gai is old and badly degraded. The Council does not have the funding resource to make serious inroads in tackling the problem.**
  - **Local Government as the third tier is the forgotten child and is under resourced to provide for basic community needs. What initiatives are needed to address the fiscal imbalance problem?**

Following a decade of neglect by the Liberals and Nationals, the Albanese Government has delivered significant funding increases to strengthen the capacity of the local Government sector.

Last time the Liberals and Nationals were in government, they froze road maintenance indexation for national highways, robbing the regions of millions in road funding. We've reinstated and backdated this.

We've restored integrity and transparency to federal grant programs, launching \$1.5 billion in competitive, merit-based community infrastructure programs. This includes \$1 billion for regional community infrastructure across the country.

We're also rolling out \$1.5 billion in enabling infrastructure under our Housing Support Program.

We brought local government back to the national table, and we initiated the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Financial Sustainability of Local Government - the first of its kind in two decades and if re-elected we look forward to continuing this work including responding to the final report and working with the local government sector to translate its recommendations into tangible outcomes for local councils.

We have also invested \$100 million in active transport infrastructure, so that cyclists and pedestrians have more opportunities to walk, cycle and actively move through their communities.

Our first of its kind Active Transport Fund has provided 81 projects across the country that support safe and accessible transport options that are good for the planet and good for people. This was the most significant dedicated investment in active transport infrastructure by any Government and if re-elected the Albanese Labor team will continue to contribute to active transport projects across the country.

**4. In January 1994 a huge bushfire roared down the Lane Cove Valley with many houses lost. Fire and Rescue NSW categorise bushfires as Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic. In the last category many of our homes could not withstand a fire in these conditions, could not be defended and people would be evacuated. The World Meteorological Organization has reported that 2024 was the warmest year on record.**

- **What are your policies to arrest climate change which is contributing to bushfire risk?**

Labor accepts the science of climate change. Natural disasters are becoming increasingly unnatural and increasingly frequent. Communities are experiencing the real impacts of climate change. The Albanese Labor Government is cleaning up Australia's climate credibility after a decade of denial, delay and neglect. Labor is bringing down climate pollution now, to protect the future health and wellbeing of all Australians.

We have legislated targets for 2030 and 2050 – and we have the Safeguard Mechanism to bring down emissions from large facilities like coal and gas mines. Labor reformed the Safeguard Mechanism, which legislates limits on the greenhouse gas emissions for heavy industrial facilities, to make it effective after the Liberals and Nationals used it as a paper tiger. The emissions from fossil fuel projects are legally capped by the Safeguard Mechanism - which gained parliamentary backing and ensures that new and expanded projects reduce emissions in line with our legislated targets.

In the electricity sector our Rewiring the Nation program and Capacity Investment Scheme have us on track to deliver 82% renewable energy by 2030. Around 46 per cent of our national grid is now powered by renewables – more than halfway to reaching our target and a huge uplift from

around 30% when we came to Government. This is a policy that Peter Dutton wants to junk for a nuclear policy that extends coal and that the independent Climate Change Authority says amounts to a 2 billion tonne 'emissions bomb'.

- 5. A feasibility is currently underway by the High-Speed Rail Authority. High speed rail has the potential to reduce population pressure on Sydney by making travel from Canberra and Newcastle, their regions and beyond, much quicker. Some of the cost can be recovered through value capture. There is 70,000km of high-speed rail in operation around the world and 30,000km planned.**

- **Do you support investment in high-speed rail and how can it be advanced?**

In our first Budget the Albanese Government committed \$500 million to the early stages of developing high-speed rail, including business case works.

High-speed rail is a transformative project that will change travel between cities and provide a catalyst for economic development in regional areas.

This is more than just a transport project. It will create jobs, improve productivity and support Australia's progress on environmental outcomes.

The business case was recently provided to Government and is currently under consideration by Infrastructure Australia.

- 6. Parts of the Killara and Lindfield community have recently been blindsided by an announcement by the State Department of Education that in the future their children will no longer be able to attend Killara High School but instead the Lindfield Learning Village (former UTS campus). Some bought their homes on the strength of Killara High School's reputation. Some are uneasy about the flexible educational model practised by the Lindfield Learning Village and the instability of its leadership.**

- **Do you support choice for parents in the State educational system.**

The Albanese Labor Government wants parents to have a real choice and know that the local public school has got all the resources and support that their child is going to need. While decisions about school catchments are a matter for the NSW Government, the Albanese Government has delivered on its commitment to get all schools on a path to full and fair funding by signing an agreement with the Minns Government to provide an additional \$4.8 billion in Commonwealth funding to NSW public schools over the next 10 years.

This represents the biggest ever new investment in NSW public schools by the Australian Government. It will give parents choice, and help Australian students catch up, keep up, and finish high school.

As part of this agreement signed by the Prime Minister and the NSW Premier, the Commonwealth will provide an additional 5 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard for NSW public schools. The \$4.8 billion in additional Commonwealth funding over the life of the agreement is met by a commitment by the NSW government to remove the 4 per cent provision of indirect school costs such as capital depreciation.

Commonwealth funding will be tied to the reform needs to lift education standards across the country, including more individualised support for students, continuing evidence-based teaching practices, more mental health and wellbeing support for schools, and initiatives to improve the attraction and retention of teachers.

**7. The Lane Cove National Park is a very popular conservation and recreational resource for Bradfield. A bridge over the Lane Cove River for pedestrians and cyclists has been proposed by the 416 Group linking the bottom Fiddens Wharf Road adjacent to Redbank Oval and Riverside Drive. This would create a shorter walking loop for park visitors and a safe route for cyclists from Bradfield accessing Macquarie Park and the University. It is supported by local NPWS management.**

- **Would you extend support to this proposal?**

As previously outlined, the Albanese Government is committed to delivering nationally significant infrastructure that reduces travel time, supports productivity, connects to new homes and improves safety. We work closely with the NSW Government on infrastructure priorities and if re-elected will consider new proposals for joint funding through our budget processes.

We have also invested \$100 million in active transport infrastructure, so that cyclists and pedestrians have more opportunities to walk, cycle and actively move through their communities.

Our first of its kind Active Transport Fund has provided 81 projects across the country that support safe and accessible transport options that are good for the planet and good for people. This was the most significant dedicated investment in active transport infrastructure by any Government and if re-elected the Albanese Labor team will continue to contribute to active transport projects across the country.

**8. A frequent complaint about politics is 'short termism'. Would you support:**

- **Four-year Federal terms**
- **Any other initiatives to break the short-term focus and if so, what are they?**

The Albanese Government supports the idea of four year federal terms, which will align better with states and territories.

Whilst we are focused on governing for all Australians in the short term, including by introducing measures that help with the cost of living right now, we are investing in Australia's long term future by:

- Strengthening education across the life course from guaranteeing 3 days a week of childcare subsidies, fully funding all schools, cutting HECS debt, and making our free TAFE program permanent.
- Starting the largest housing build in Australia's history, with an ambitious plan to build 1.2 million new homes.
- Making record investments to Medicare to ensure people can see a GP for free again, setting up 87 free Medicare Urgent Care Clinics and 22 Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinics, in every state and territory.
- Opening up the next generation of economic and industrial opportunities for Australia with our Future Made in Australia plan.

The Albanese Government are dedicated to building a better future for all Australians.

## 416 Group Survey - Response Nicolette Boele - Independent

**1. The Bradfield electorate is a captive of its geography with limited road routes in and out due to the Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour, the steep terrain and restricted road easements. Traffic congestion is deteriorating each year. Given the proposed huge increase in new housing development and so population would you support:**

- **Federal funding for large scale commuter parking to get cars off the road and people onto trains.**
- **Federal funding for a road tunnel under Chatswood (stage 1) and under the Pacific Highway to Wahroonga (stage 2)**

If elected, I would consult with the community and would welcome a briefing on these proposals from the 416 Group

**2. The current housing crisis has many contributing factors. Would you support**

- **Matching net migration to the growth in housing supply**
- **Actions to curtail short term holiday letting of residential housing. One company alone has almost 250,000 listings. State governments of all persuasions have failed to adequately act.**
- **Taxation of residential housing that is intentionally left vacant for long periods (as has been successfully implemented in British Columbia)**

Housing affordability is an issue in Bradfield, as it is all over Australia. I support solutions like that of David Pocock and Kylea Tink, which adopt an approach that realises all levels of government are part of the solution and which takes many housing decisions out of political hands and puts them into the hands of independent accountable authorities. Some proposals I believe should be considered include:

- Expand Labor's Help-to-Buy Scheme - allowing the government to co-invest with households up to \$180k per year on their first home;
- Push for states and local councils to listen to communities so new houses are well built, well-serviced, and protect the environment;
- Reform tax policies to discourage speculative investment in housing – including land-banking - and make it easier for owner-occupiers to enter the market
- Increase Commonwealth Rent Assistance; and
- Increase public housing by building more public housing to reduce the pressure on the private rental market and increase stock.

A well-managed immigration system is vital to Australia's economy and social fabric. We must be responsible about how many people we bring into the country, and make sure we have enough houses, hospitals, schools and roads to sustain our growth. At the same time, migration has an important role to play in addressing critical workforce shortages in healthcare, construction, and aged care. We need to make sure the levels are tailored correctly to our available infrastructure and services – while recognising the role immigration can play in unlocking growth.

3. **After ten years of work by Ku-ring-gai Council and the community, the Lindfield Village Hub development (which was for a new library, community centre, main line supermarket, shops, a park and new housing) collapsed when in November 2023 the NSW State Government abruptly demanded the return of \$9.8M funding for commuter parking. The then developer withdrew, and the project collapsed.**

**Less than half of the streets in our area have footpaths. The Ku-ring-gai Council has a program to build a footpath on a least one side of every street. At the present rate of progress this program will take 100 years. Meanwhile for new sub-divisions in New South Wales a footpath is a minimum standard.**

**The drainage infrastructure in Ku-ring-gai is old and badly degraded. The Council does not have the funding resource to make serious inroads in tackling the problem.**

- **Local Government as the third tier is the forgotten child and is under resourced to provide for basic community needs. What initiatives are needed to address the fiscal imbalance problem?**

I would welcome a briefing by the 416 Group to better understand these and other issues raised. As a Community Independent, it is important that I take the time to gather perspectives from the broader community in order to do them justice.

We are keeping a record of issues raised and policy suggestions. If elected, I will have more resources to advocate on behalf of the community and would welcome a thorough briefing by the 416 Group. Like many in Bradfield, I believe that it's the community, not the major parties, that are best-placed to solve the challenges impacting our neighbourhoods, cities and nation more broadly.

4. **In January 1994 a huge bushfire roared down the Lane Cove Valley with many houses lost. Fire and Rescue NSW categorise bushfires as Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic. In the last category many of our homes could not withstand a fire in these conditions, could not be defended and people would be evacuated. The World Meteorological Organization has reported that 2024 was the warmest year on record.**

- **What are your policies to arrest climate change which is contributing to bushfire risk?**

On climate, I recognise that we need to act on climate change and remain competitive into the 21st Century. This means, among other things, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and investing in renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy firming and storage capabilities.

I know that nearly half of Australia's electricity needs are already met by renewable energy and because we want to bring power bill prices down now (not in 25 years' time) we need to stay the course.

In addition to that, by electrifying and becoming more energy independent, we can dampen the energy price shocks caused by geopolitical happenings which so strongly impact our cost of living and the competitiveness of our economy more broadly.

More information is provided in my Plan for a Better Bradfield distributed to all households.

- 5. A feasibility is currently underway by the High-Speed Rail Authority. High speed rail has the potential to reduce population pressure on Sydney by making travel from Canberra and Newcastle, their regions and beyond, much quicker. Some of the cost can be recovered through value capture. There is 70,000km of high-speed rail in operation around the world and 30,000km planned.**

- **Do you support investment in high-speed rail and how can it be advanced?**

If elected, I would consult with the community and would welcome a briefing.

- 6. Parts of the Killara and Lindfield community have recently been blindsided by an announcement by the State Department of Education that in the future their children will no longer be able to attend Killara High School but instead the Lindfield Learning Village (former UTS campus). Some bought their homes on the strength of Killara High School's reputation. Some are uneasy about the flexible educational model practised by the Lindfield Learning Village and the instability of its leadership.**

- **Do you support choice for parents in the State educational system?**

I am aware of the recent changes to the catchment areas for Lindfield Learning Village and Killara High School, and that the NSW Department of Education has recently pushed back the start date for these catchment changes to 2028. While this delay provides families with more time to prepare, I recognise that many local residents remain concerned about the lack of consultation and the potential impact on students, families, and property values in the area.

It is also clear there is an outstanding question about whether the local community should be offered a choice between Lindfield Learning Village and Killara High, given the different education models offered by each school. I support the option of a choice between the two learning models and has signed the petition to the NSW Parliament on this issue.

- 7. The Lane Cove National Park is a very popular conservation and recreational resource for Bradfield. A bridge over the Lane Cove River for pedestrians and cyclists has been proposed by the 416 Group linking the bottom Fiddens Wharf Road adjacent to Redbank Oval and Riverside Drive. This would create a shorter walking loop for park visitors and a safe route for cyclists from Bradfield accessing Macquarie Park and the University. It is supported by local NPWS management.**

- **Would you extend support to this proposal?**



My Plan for a Better Bradfield sets out my commitment to preserving Bradfield's beautiful environment. I would welcome a briefing on this proposal for the Lane Cove National Park.

**8. A frequent complaint about politics is 'short termism'. Would you support:**

- **Four-year Federal terms?**
- **Any other initiatives to break the short-term focus and if so, what are they?**

If elected, I would consult with the community.