

18 September 2015

Department of Planning and Environment
Riverstone East Draft Precinct Plan Exhibition
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Riverstone East Draft Precinct Plan – Exhibition

The Urban Taskforce has reviewed the Riverstone East Draft Precinct Plan and associated documents. We have provided a number of comments for your consideration.

Development controls should maximise density around railway stations

The North West Rail Corridor provides housing in the Riverstone East precinct with excellent access via train to employment in the Global Economic Corridor, in particular Castle Hill, Norwest, Bella Vista and Rouse Hill. A *Plan for Growing Sydney* notes that in the future there is the potential for an extension of the North West Rail Link from Cudgegong Road towards Marsden Park, making the Riverstone East Precinct even more accessible in the future.

The development controls applicable to the Riverstone East Precinct should permit developers to deliver high density residential development, particularly in the portions of the Riverstone East Precinct within an 800 metre radius of Cudgegong Road railway station.

Infrastructure contributions must be fair and equitable

The Strategy states that the Blacktown City council is preparing a Section 94 contributions plan for land within the Precinct, combined with the Area 20 Precinct to enable Council to collect contributions from developers towards the costs of essential infrastructure including local roads, drainage infrastructure and open space, which is anticipated to be exhibited in 2015 by Council.

While we accept that there is a need for additional infrastructure associated with increased density, and that property developers must bear a reasonable proportion of the cost of this infrastructure, the reliance on developer contributions and particularly voluntary planning agreements to fund this should be reviewed. Major infrastructure which is outside the scope of the baseline requirements to deliver housing but is still fundamental to supporting the new population should be funded through alternative revenue frameworks which spread the cost to residents over time.

Development controls must be achievable

Some of our members have mentioned that there is a mismatch between the proposed height and floor space ratios on some of the sites within the Riverstone East Precinct. Where the proposed floor space ratio is too high for the permissible height, redevelopment is not likely to occur as the FSR is not achievable. If redevelopment does occur, it is often of poor quality due to design strategies, such as deep floor plates and/or siting the building below the street level, are used to achieve the permissible FSR. Both scenarios result in poor building

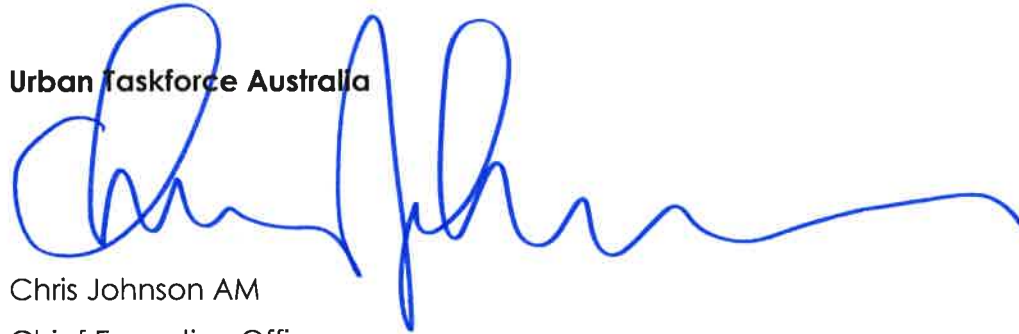
design with compromised daylight and natural ventilation, awkward room layouts that may be difficult to use, and often negative impacts on neighbours or the streetscape.

We suggest that the controls are tested, and building heights maximised to ensure the permissible FSR can be achieved. We also suggest a 'loose fit' between the height and FSR to ensure space within the height for a future building can be modelled in response to site specific considerations or constraints. More space within the building envelope gives future building designs the capacity to address privacy, solar access and to shape the bulk and scale of a building.

We are always willing to provide a development industry perspective on planning and property development issues and we would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss these issues in more detail. Please feel free to contact me on telephone number 9238 3927 to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Urban Taskforce Australia



Chris Johnson AM
Chief Executive Officer