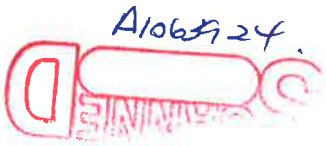

Meeting Notes:
Black Hill Residents/ Black Hill Progress Association
6PM Monday 9th July 2012

Held At: Black Hill Public School, 48 Black Hill Rd Black Hill

Attendees:

Sean Scanlon – Catholic Diocese of Maitland/ Newcastle (SS)	Doug Clark – 386 Black Hill Road
Boyd McCallum – Catholic Diocese of Maitland/ Newcastle (BM)	Anne Clark – 386 Black Hill Road
Garry Fielding – City Plan Services (CPS)	Brad Ure – 40 Black Hill Rd
David Allan - 300 Black Hill Road	Steve Ray – 4 Black Hill Road
Phil Meharg – 41 Black Hill Road	
Brian Adamthwaite – Black Hill School	**Apologies:**
Debbie Adamthwaite – Black Hill School	Bruce Doyle – 2 Black Hill Road
Peter Allan – RMB 240 Black Hill Road	
Katrina Allan - RMB 240 Black Hill Road	
Phillip Brown – Donaldson Coal	

- CPS commenced proceeding by providing a background to the site, why it was acquired by the Catholic Diocese in 2004, and what has changed since in a planning sense, to lead to the current situation
- CPS also provided an overview of the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy, and its relevance to the Diocesan site
- Phil Meharg questioned why the residents only learnt of the proposal when it was lodged at Cessnock City Council (CCC). CPS explained that this was because a Planning Panel was in place, with whom the Proponent (Diocese) had been having discussions prior to CCC having their Major Planning Powers re-instated in February 2012
- CPS then stepped the attendees through a detailed flow-chart which explained the Department of Planning 's "Gateway" process in some detail. It was reinforced by CPS that proceeding to the "Gateway" was only the first step in consideration of the Planning Proposal before it comes back for detailed Community Consultation
- Anne Clark questioned whether it was the Proponents intention to develop the site from Boundary to Boundary for Industrial Development

- CPS then introduced a Concept master plan of the Diocesan site and explained that preparation of such Master Plan was requested by the CCC Council resolution of 7/3/2012
- It was noted by CPS that the Plan is only a draft, but allowed for the requested Wildlife Corridors, Riparian Zones and Ecological Buffers requested by CCC
- Brad Ure suggested that most of the adjoin Residents would be more comfortable with the Plan if it allowed for a "Transition" zone from the proposed IN1 Industrial uses to a lower order "Environmental Living" (E4??) zoning which would encourage new Families to the area who could live on, and manage, lot sizes of 2-5 acres
- Brad Ure further suggested that these lots will complement the existing Rural nature of the area, bring vitality back in the way of young families, and provide a brighter future for the Black Hill Public School, where current enrolments are limited 86 students
- An "Environmental Conservation" buffer, as a concept was not supported by the Residents as it was felt that this land would inevitably be dedicated to the Crown or National Parks & Wildlife Services who would simply allow it to become overgrown and a fire & safety risk to the School & adjoining Residents
- CPS explained to residents that this Planning Proposal matter will next be heard again by CCC Councillors on 1/8/2012, and it was important that they make their feelings regarding the Proposal known to their ward Councillors and the General Manager/ Mayor of CCC if they wished to see it proceed further
- The Residents suggested that in principle they support the Proposal to re-develop the Diocesan site for Industrial purposes, however would like CCC to consider their request for the following:
  - An appropriate "transition" zone featuring Environmental Living/ Rural Lifestyle Lots between the Industrial Development and Black Hill Road, so that the existing Rural flavour of the area is maintained
  - That traffic impacts on Black Hill Rd & Black Hill School are appropriately managed
  - That Riparian Zones and Wildlife Buffers are identified and protected
  - That a Management Plan ultimately be created so that owners of any proposed Rural/ Residential Lots fronting Black Hill Rd are responsible for their maintenance
- The Residents suggested that on the above basis they would be prepared to sign a letter of support for the Proposal in a form which can be considered by Cessnock City Councillors at their meeting of 1/8/2012

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 7:25pm.

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PLANNING
BUILDING
HERITAGE
URBAN DESIGN

CITY PLAN SERVICES

SCANNED
A106654

Meeting Notes:
Black Hill Community Representatives' Meeting
4pm Monday 18 June 2012

City Plan Services office- No. 14 Watt St, Newcastle

Attendees:

Janet Murray (Black Hill Environment Protection Group- *BHEPG*)
Colin East *(BHEPG)*
Terry Lewin (*BHEPG*)
Boyd McCallum (*Catholic Diocese- CD)*
Garry Fielding (*City Plan- CPS*)
Jillian Kral *(CPS)*

- CPS introduced Preliminary Concept Plan, outlining how it addressed the requirements in Council's Resolution. Noted it has been submitted to Council officers, but no feedback received as yet. Noted that this consultation was being undertaken for information purposes and at the request of Council officers.

- CPS noted that proposal is compatible with and encouraged by the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS). Confirmation has been provided by Department of Planning & Infrastructure's (DoPI) Regional Director (Michael Leavey) that the strategic direction for the site will not change as part of the forthcoming review of the LHRS.

- BHEPG noted that the strategic impetus for the Black Hill Freight Hub & Employment Lands (within LHRS) was to support a container freight terminal which is no longer going ahead as it has moved to Wollongong. Expressed frustration that the freight hub and supporting industrial areas were not included in the exhibited Draft LHRS, but were included in the final document. Generally dissatisfied with the community consultation processes for such strategic documents.

- CD noted that Diocese originally hoped to construct a school and residential development on the site, but was prevented from doing so by LHRS development and implementation, which created delays for several years. Now compelled by strategic documents, specific DoPI advice and significant financial concerns, to develop site for industrial purposes.

- BHEPG suggested that freight hub and industrial uses may be appropriate north of John Renshaw Drive, where there are already significant impacts from mining, industrial development etc. However, suggested that the designation of the Diocese site as freight hub and employment lands should be considered as 'broad scale' only and subject to environmental assessment- may be more appropriate (after studies complete) to designate for alternative uses.

- Accordingly, BHEPG suggested Diocese site be excised from freight hub and employment lands use and alternative proposals considered. Believe that an industrial use of the site will be detrimental, and want development that will enhance the Black Hill community and amenity instead. Suggested alternative uses, including (in order of preference):

    1. Enhancement of land in ways compatible with The Great Eastern Ranges corridor proposals e.g. planting of carbon forests for financial gain, enhancement of biodiversity etc (printed information on this alternative provided). Noted that funds from Donaldson Conservation Trust may also be available for conservation purposes;

    2. Retention of land for rural/ conservation purposes;

    3. Development as predominantly small acreage rural lots;

    4. Development as mixed rural/ residential area, possibly including small village with limited commercial and small-lot development, surrounded by small acreages; and

    5. Mixture of small acreages and limited industrial uses adjacent to John Renshaw Drive, only.

- Overall, it was suggested that the Diocese site could act as a 'transition zone' between the industrial uses to the north and the rural/ community uses to the south at Black Hill.

- CD thanked BHEPG for its suggestions, and noted consideration will be given to the feasibility of these alternatives. CD desirous of producing a development that will be beneficial to Black Hill community. However, noted the following constraints:

    - Use of the site for industrial purposes has been directed by DoPI via specific advice and LHRS. CD has been advised that no other options are appropriate for the site. CD does not have the ability to change DoPI's strategic direction;

    - Site has remained fallow for many years and has become an extremely significant financial burden. Site must be developed as expeditiously as possible in order to halt haemorrhaging costs. Unlikely that conservation or other lower-order uses will be financially viable;

    - Site suffers from serious local contamination issues due to previous poultry farming uses. To remediate the site to a level suitable for residential or other higher-level uses (i.e. above industrial level) will be prohibitively expensive; and

    - Unlikely to be any other viable 'employment' land use options- office/ retail uses will not be supportable (due to threat to commercial centres hierarchy). Contamination issues preclude hospitals etc. Perhaps a specialist research

and technology park (e.g. Ryde research centre) but this could be difficult to attract.

- BHEPG queried if there was likely to be enough demand for industrial development on the site. Likely that freight hub won't be developed for 20-30 years because of ongoing mining concerns. CD responded that, whilst there was unlikely to be an immediate demand, the site is being considered for a longer term strategy- within an approximate 15-20 year timeframe.

- BHEPG acknowledged the efforts made within Preliminary Concept to implement significant buffers to Black Hill Road and to avoid vehicular access off that road to ensure there will be no heavy vehicle traffic impacts- a progressive outcome. Noted that the group's main concern is to protect the amenity and community of Black Hill. However suggested that additional buffering along John Renshaw Drive should be considered.

- BHEPG suggested that CD may like to prepare a couple of development options for consideration by the community. CPS noted that BHEPG could put this suggestion to the Council. BHEPG noted that consultation at early stages is preferred.

- CPS thanked BHEPG for its contribution and noted that the Preliminary Concept Plan and the Diocese's other responses to Council's resolution are to be considered by Council.

Meeting close 5:40pm.