

Ref: MDPE24/3818

Mr Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club
gm@nrrsl.com.au

Mr Ian Williams
Company Secretary
Vimiera Recreation Grounds

Dear Mr Morris and Mr Williams

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of North Ryde RSL Community Club and Eastwood Rugby Club about TG Millner Field in Marsfield.

I am advised City of Ryde Council is currently assessing the planning proposal to rezone the site from RE2 Private Recreation to Part R2 Low Density Residential and Part RE1 Public Recreation.

If Council supports the planning proposal and it proceeds to a Gateway determination, the Department will assess the proposal in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. If Council does not support the rezoning proposal within the required timeframes, a rezoning review can be sought.

I would re-emphasise that both the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure and I have written to the Council on several occasions outlining the position on this matter. You have been provided with copies of this correspondence. Neither my nor the Department's position has altered.

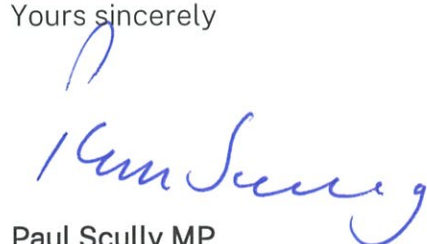
I note your comments about the implications of the Council's intent to acquire the land and its impact on Council's broader financial position, as well as obligations for infrastructure delivery. The decision to authorise the acquisition of the land is ultimately a matter for the Minister for Local Government. I note that you have copied Minister Hoenig in on your correspondence and I understand that he in turn is seeking advice from the Office of Local Government on the matter.

I am further advised that as of the end of February 2025, the Office of Local Government had not received a request from the Council for the authorisation of a compulsory acquisition.

Should you have any further questions, Jazmin van Veen, Director, Local Planning (North, East and Central Coast), at the Department can be contacted on 02 9373 2877 or at jazmin.vanveen@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

Yours sincerely



Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

26 February 2025

Mr. Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd
Cnr Magdala and Pittwater Roads
NORTH RYDE NSW 2113

By Email: jmorris@nrrsl.com.au

Dear Mr Morris,

**The Council of the City of Ryde proposed purchase from
North Ryde RSL Community Club Limited**

**Property: TG Millner Field Sportsground at 146 Vimiera Road, Eastwood
being Lot 7 in DP1046532**

Council seeks to purchase TG Millner Field Sportsground at 146 Vimiera Road,
Eastwood being Lot 7 in DP1046532 (**Property**).

As the Property is not available for public sale, Council must conduct negotiations in accordance with the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 (Act)*. This means that Council has a statutory obligation to make a genuine attempt to acquire the property by agreement prior to commencing the compulsory acquisition process.

This letter marks the commencement of the minimum six (6) month negotiation period for the purpose of section 10A of the Act. That negotiation period will end on **Monday, 26 August 2025**, unless you choose to shorten the negotiation period, which the Act permits you to do. Whether agreement is reached or the negotiation period ends without agreement, I will make a report to the Council seeking a resolution to acquire the property.

I will remain your primary point of contact for negotiations.

In addition to engaging a valuer, the Club may also wish to engage a lawyer to assist with the negotiations and acquisition process. Council will cover the Club's reasonably incurred legal and valuation fees as part of the agreed compensation package.

Council (subject to a resolution) proposes to acquire the property for the public purpose of providing public open space in the exercise of its service functions under Chapter 6 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

To assist the Club with the acquisition process, I **enclose** a copy of the Centre for Property Acquisition (CPA) brochure on the acquisition process. This brochure contains important information, including about the qualifications which your valuer

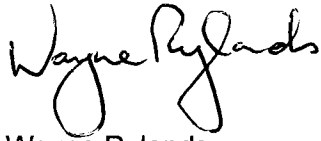
must have and the component parts of the compensation payable under section 55 of the Act.

Council proposes to acquire the property subject to all interests recorded on title, except the mortgage to Vimiera Recreation Grounds Limited and the caveat by Winston Langley Pty Limited.

You have an obligation to inform Council about any other interests in the land that you are aware of, for example, any unregistered lease holders, property development agreements and charges.

I look forward to working with you to achieve a mutually fulfilling outcome.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Rylands', with a stylized, cursive script.

Wayne Rylands
Chief Executive Officer

Ref: MIN24-1365 , MO24-14

Mr Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd
gm@nrrsl.com.au

Dear Mr Morris

I acknowledge your correspondence dated 27 November 2024, which has also been counter-signed by Mr Ian Williams, Company Secretary, Vimiera Recreation Grounds Ltd, regarding TG Millner Field.

I have attached a copy of my letter to you dated 26 October 2024. As you are aware the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure also wrote to City of Ryde Council on 23 October 2024. A copy of this correspondence was also sent to you previously.

In addition, I wrote to the Mayor about his public comments on TG Millner Field, the Macquarie Park Corridor Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), and the TOD Program. Please find attached a copy of my letter for your information. You will note from my letter that it is clear the IDP is for the Macquarie Park TOD Accelerated Precinct, as defined in the maps within the Precinct Finalisation Report. As with all TOD Accelerated Precincts, the delivery of enabling infrastructure for future growth that has been considered is infrastructure either directly within the Precinct or immediately surrounding the Precinct.

The IDP did not and does not contain any commitment or requirement from the NSW Government to either acquire or preserve TG Millner Field as open space. The NSW Government's position on TG Millner Field remains unaltered.

In relation to the Housing Delivery Authority (HDA), proposals for consideration will be selected through an expression of interest (EOI) process with established criteria. I refer you to the Department for further discussions on the EOI process.

Yours sincerely



Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Enclosed:

Letter from Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to City of Ryde Council (23 October)
Letter from Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to Mr Jim Morris (26 October)
Letter from Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to the Mayor of City of Ryde Council (28 November)

Cr Trenton Brown
Mayor
City of Ryde Council
PO Box 3615
Marsfield NSW 2122
mayor@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mayor



I refer to the City of Ryde Council's recent public comments regarding TG Millner Fields following the release of the Macquarie Park Transport Oriented Development (TOD) Accelerated Precinct Rezoning.

The NSW Government's position on this matter has not changed.

To be clear: these rezoning documents did not and do not contain any commitment, or requirement, from the NSW Government to either acquire or preserve TG Millner Fields as open space.

The references to TG Millner Field are made as "projects identified by City of Ryde Council" and as "proposals located outside the Macquarie Park Corridor".


The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is a document for the Macquarie Park Corridor, relating to the finalised rezoning of the Macquarie Park TOD Accelerated Precinct, as defined in the maps within the Precinct Finalisation Report. As with all the TOD Accelerated Precincts, the delivery of enabling infrastructure for future growth that has been considered, is infrastructure either directly within the Precinct or immediately surrounding the Precinct.

I remind you that recently, the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure wrote to Council reiterating advice that as Council is unable to nominate an acquisition authority and an identified source of funding to support a planning proposal to this effect, the Department will not support a planning proposal to rezone the site were it to be submitted by Council. This position remains unaltered.

It is misleading to residents and ratepayers for you to suggest that these documents indicate otherwise.

I look forward to you using the first available opportunity to correct these assertions.

Yours sincerely



Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

28/4/24

Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd
PO Box 44
North Ryde, NSW 2113

31 October 2024

Our Ref: D24/144042

Dear Mr. Morris

SUBJECT: TG Millner Field Planning Proposal


Thank you for your recent letter dated 25 October 2024 regarding the matter of the planning proposal for 146-150 Vimiera Road, Marsfield.

Council acknowledges the receipt of your letter and notes your position regarding the review of the VPA offer, which accompanies the planning proposal for the site.

The content of the letter is currently being reviewed by Council's team to ensure a considered response is provided. As part of this process, Council is assessing all the points raised by you, considering current Council policies and processes.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me through my Executive Officer, Janine Carr, on 9952 8052 or via ceo@ryde.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



Wayne Rylands
Chief Executive Officer

Ref: MDPE24/2899

Mr Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club
gm@nrrsl.com.au

Dear Mr Morris

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of North Ryde RSL Community Club and Eastwood Rugby Club about TG Millner Field in Marsfield. I regret the delay in responding to you.

I acknowledge your concerns regarding City of Ryde Council's resolution to lodge a planning proposal seeking to rezone TG Millner Field to RE1 Public Recreation.

I am advised the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure is aware of Council's resolution and confirms there are currently no active planning proposals for the site from the Council.

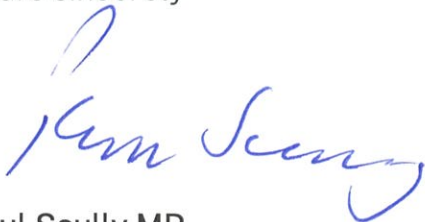
As is required under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, should Council submit a rezoning proposal to the Department, its strategic and site-specific merit will be assessed to determine whether a Gateway determination should be issued. This will include consideration of local and state strategic planning policies. Any planning proposal to rezone the land for public purposes will also need to nominate an acquisition authority.

However, I am advised that the Department has written to Council on 23 October 2024 noting that Council has been unable to nominate an acquisition authority and an identified source of funding to support a planning proposal. Given this status, the Department has clearly indicated to Council that it will not support a planning proposal. Please find enclosed a copy of the Department's letter to Council for your information.

Should you have any further questions, Jazmin van Veen, Director, Local Planning (North, East and Central Coast), at the Department can be contacted on 02 9373 2877 or jazmin.vanveen@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Thank you for bringing this to my attention.

Yours sincerely



Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

26/10/24



VIMIERA RECREATION GROUNDS

25 October 2024

Mr Wayne Rylands
Chief Executive Officer
City of Ryde
1 Pope Street
RYDE NSW 2112

Dear Mr Rylands,

**TG MILLNER FIELD
VRG + NORTH RYDE RSL CLUB PLANNING PROPOSAL
PROPOSED RYDE COUNCIL PLANNING PROPOSAL TO REZONE TG MILLNER
FIELD TO RE1 – PUBLIC RECREATION**

We refer to the following:

1. The decision of the Minister for Local Government on 4 April 2024 to reject Ryde Council's request to compulsorily acquire TG Millner Field on the basis that Council could not provide any strategic justification or funding to acquire the site.
2. Following this decision, the resubmission of our (identical) planning proposal to Council on 3 July 2024, which maintains our initial \$27M VPA offer (\$204K/dwelling) - which is more than 5 times higher than the most recent VPA entered into by Ryde Council (\$38K/dwelling) and double what has been achieved in similar projects across Sydney.
3. The adoption by Ryde Council on 27 August 2024, during the 'caretaker period' prior to the 14 September Council Elections, of a four (4) paragraph Mayoral Minute to 'develop and lodge' a planning proposal to rezone our privately-owned TG Millner Field to RE1 – Public Recreation.
4. Our letter dated 10 September 2024 to you stating that Council's 27 August 2024 resolution is an improper exercise of power by Council, requesting that this resolution be rescinded at the first Council meeting following the Council elections in that it seeks to:
 - (a) Circumvent the decision of the Minister for Local Government in April 2024 to refuse Council's application for consent to the issue of a proposed acquisition notice for the site under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*,
 - (b) Effectively block our planning proposal for the rezoning of the site prior to the proposal being assessed by Council staff on its merits against current State and Council strategic planning objectives, and
 - (c) Sterilise the development potential of our land (including the currently permissible seniors' housing) in circumstances where there is no reasonable pathway available for the Council to acquire the site for its market value.



VIMIERA RECREATION GROUNDS

5. Advice subsequently provided by Council officers that:
 - (a) Council staff are aware of the Mayoral Minute and note that there is a lot of political interest in the planning proposal.
 - (b) Council staff have advised that Council cannot rezone the land to RE1 Public Recreation unless it is also identified for acquisition by Council.
 - (c) Council staff recognise that no funds are available to acquire the site and view our planning proposal as the next best option.
 - (d) Council staff recognise that seniors' housing is permitted on the site, notwithstanding the Mayor's comments on radio, and staff do not support this – preferring to work with us in relation to our planning proposal.
6. The Ethos Urban submission dated 17 September 2024 to Council regarding the future provision of open space within the Ryde LGA and Macquarie Park corridor - which demonstrates that Council can achieve all of its 2036 open space objectives for a fraction of the cost of acquiring TG Millner Field.
7. Our first meeting with nine (9) Council officers on 26 September 2024 – 85 days after our planning proposal was submitted to Council on 3 July 2024. We note that none of these officers were involved in the consideration of our initial planning proposal in March 2022 and that the key Council officer assessing our proposal has resigned since our meeting.
8. Council officers' email of 27 September 2024 following our meeting the previous day.
9. Detailed response from Ethos Urban dated 4 October 2024 to Council's email of 27 September 2024.
10. Various correspondence from Council officers promising the issue of a formal Request for Information (RFI) from Council in relation to our planning proposal by 30 September 2024, 18 October 2024 and now 25 October 2024 – delays which Council officers have advised are due to a requirement for you to sign-off on the RFI.
11. With no mention at all of Council's resolution of 27 August 2024, Council's adoption on Tuesday 22 October 2024 of another Mayoral Minute relating to TG Millner Field – that was not placed on the Agenda prior to the Council Meeting – that resolved that:
 - Council call on the Premier, Minister for Sport and Minister for Women to reallocate the reported \$16M negotiated by the Minns Labor Government to 'bring cage fighting to Sydney' towards the acquisition of TG Millner Field.
 - Council write to the Minister for Local Government recommending that he support this reallocation, and subsequently reverse his recent decision to block Council's application 'to make TG Millner public land'.



VIMIERA RECREATION GROUNDS

Our concerns

Referencing the various matters referred to above, we make the following points:

1. It is clear that Council's professional staff have strongly supported our planning proposals – both in 2022 and in 2024. This is despite the fact that there are entirely different officers considering the proposal in 2024 as opposed to 2022, with all of these officers being well aware of the political opposition at a Councillor level to our proposal.

Our May 2022 planning proposal was described by Council officers as 'the best planning proposal that they had ever seen'.

Our July 2024 planning proposal is also supported by Council officers who stated at our 26 September 2024 meeting that they will recommend to Council that our planning proposal has 'strategic merit' subject to the resolution of a specific issue regarding 'well-located homes' that we consider is readily resolvable.

2. Without any consideration of the views of Council's independent professional staff, the Liberal Mayors of Council have introduced multiple Mayoral Minutes (Jordan Lane in 2022 and Trenton Brown in 2023/2024) that have sought to prevent our planning proposal from proceeding.

Trenton Brown's Councillor profile has not changed on Council's website since he was first elected to Council in September 2017. His profile states that 'he is passionate about stopping overdevelopment in Ryde and preserving open recreational space such as the TG Millner Fields'.

Given his preconceived and longstanding opposition to any potential redevelopment of TG Millner Field, further evidenced by his lack of consideration to date of any independent Council officer advice regarding the proposal, Mayor Brown is seriously compromised in terms of his ability to perform his duties as a Mayor/Councillor in being able to objectively assess the merits or otherwise of our planning proposal.

3. We query how the 'cage fighting' Mayoral Minute that was passed by Council on 22 October 2024 sits with Council's 27 August 2024 resolution to pursue a planning proposal to rezone TG Millner Field to RE1 – Public Recreation and reserve the site for acquisition, particularly given the comments made above by Council officers regarding the fundamental failings of this proposed course of action by Council?

If the Mayor/Council have received advice from Council officers that the Council planning proposal proposed in the 27 August 2024 resolution is unable to be pursued, we request that we be advised of this fact as soon as possible.



VIMIERA RECREATION GROUNDS

4. Our Clubs have expended millions of dollars over many years in seeking to keep TG Millner alive on behalf of our circa 30,000 members.

It is unacceptable that we are now in a position whereby the futures of our Clubs and the vast contribution that each has made to the Ryde community for 75+ years is placed in jeopardy due to the actions of a Mayor and Council who purport to seek to 'Save TG Millner Field' by financially devastating the very Clubs that have kept TG Millner Field alive for so many years.

Our letter to you dated 10 September 2024 set out our concerns regarding the 27 August 2024 Mayoral Minute, and the associated grave consequences for our Clubs, and we are yet to receive a response. This is an existential matter for our Clubs and we deserve a response from Council in relation to the points raised above as soon as possible.

Failing receipt of a response to the matters raised above by COB on Tuesday 29 October 2024, which also confirms that Council will not be proceeding with a planning proposal to rezone TG Millner Field to RE1 – Public Recreation, we intend to consider our position regarding the \$27M VPA offer which accompanies our planning proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd

Ian Williams
Company Secretary
Vimiera Recreation Grounds Limited

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Our ref: IRF24/2523

Mr Wayne Rylands
Chief Executive Officer
City of Ryde
Locked Bag 2069
NORTH RYDE NSW 1670

23 October 2024

Subject: 146-150 Vimiera Road, Marsfield

Dear Mr Rylands

I am writing in relation to Council's resolution of 27 August 2024 to prepare a planning proposal to rezone land at 146-150 Vimiera Road, Marsfield known as TG Millner Field to RE1 Public Recreation.

I appreciate open space is important to the local community and acknowledge Council's commitment to ensuring the provision of essential infrastructure.

As you are aware, a planning proposal to rezone land for public purposes must nominate an acquisition authority. It must be emphasised that the Department will not support a planning proposal where such an authority has not been nominated. In considering the acquisition authority, Council should also ensure appropriate funding is identified to support its nomination. The Department notes that Council has been unable to do so. The Department strongly recommends that Council work with the landowner considering the above information.

The NSW Government recognises we need to confront the housing crisis and support delivery of new homes with access to infrastructure and open space together. I encourage Council to continue to engage with the Department as it delivers the accelerated Macquarie Park rezonings under the Transport Oriented Development Program.

Should Council have any questions, Jazmin van Veen, Director, Local Planning (North, East and Central Coast), at the Department can be contacted on 02 9373 2877 or jazmin.vanveen@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D Thompson".

Daniel Thompson
A/Executive Director
Local Planning and Council Support

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government



Our Ref: A926026 / MO24-0567

Mr Jim Morris
President North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd

Mr Ian Williams
Company Secretary
Vimiera Recreation Grounds Limited

Via email: gm@nrrsl.com.au

Dear Mr Morris and Mr Williams,

Thank you for your letter regarding the Mayoral Minute passed on 27 August 2024 by Council of the City of Ryde (Council) to 'develop and lodge' a Council planning proposal to rezone the site known as TG Millner Field to RE1- Public Recreation.

I acknowledge your concerns and the reasons for you writing to me on this matter. I am, however, unable to be of direct assistance. Although rezoning and development are local government functions, they are not functions controlled by the *Local Government Act 1993*. I note that you have raised your concerns directly with Council and the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, which is an appropriate action to be taken.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Francis D'Lima, Manager Performance at the Office of Local Government on 02 4428 4100 or by email at francisdlima@olg.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP
Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government

26 SEP 2024

PRECIS OF CORRESPONDENCE 2 (continued)

ATTACHMENT 1

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government

OFFICIAL



Your Ref: D24/72772
Our Ref: A9034317 / M024-0372

Mr Wayne Rylands
General Manager
Council of the City of Ryde
Locked Bag 2069
NORTH RYDE NSW 1670

Via email: cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Rylands,

Thank you for your letter regarding my decision to decline approval to the Council of the City of Ryde (Council) to commence pre-acquisition procedures for the compulsory acquisition of land known as TG Millner Field, Lot 7 DP 1046532 and located at Vimiera Road, Eastwood.

I note your advice that in November 2023 Council resolved to allocate \$15 million for the purchase of TG Millner Field and note the numerous State Significant Development Application (SSDA) proposals for the Macquarie Park Innovation Precinct affect TG Millner Field which may have associated contributions made.

The Council Report of 1 June 2023 provided as part of Council's application which was considered by me at the time of declining the Council's application, detailed a market valuation of TG Millner Field at the current RE2- Private Recreation zoning at \$27,850,000. The report noted that the figure of \$27,850,000 could not be assumed as a successful outcome of a SSDA at TG Millner Field would see expectations of land valuation at \$35 million to \$45 million.

Most significantly, the report states, 'There are currently no funds set aside in Council's Reserves for acquisition'. The allocation of some additional funds does not resolve my concerns held at the time I declined Council's application.

While Council may have been in discussions with the Department regarding additional funding towards acquiring the land, at the time of my decision Council was unable to provide clarity about the matter. Prior to my decision I endeavoured to elicit from Council a clear funding pathway to acquire the land. To this end a letter was issued by the Acting Secretary, Department Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to Council's legal representative, HWL Ebsworth Lawyers on 28 September 2023 requesting further information on Council's sources of funding for the acquisition and the financial sustainability of the proposed acquisition in context of Council's current financial obligations. As a response was not received, on 11 February 2024 a request for the same key information was issued directly to Council by the Office of Local Government.

52 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001

02 7225 6150
nsw.gov.au/ministerhoenig

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PRECIS OF CORRESPONDENCE 2 (continued)

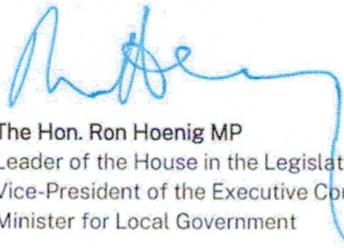
ATTACHMENT 1

My decision to decline Council's application was therefore based on the individual merit of the Council's application and the information Council supplied at the time. I also had regard to the concerns of the affected landowner.

The financial capacity of Council to acquire TG Millner Field remains a matter for Council to deal with at a local level. As indicated in my earlier letter, Council may make a fresh application for approval to commence pre-acquisition procedures once substantive financial information is provided which satisfies me that Council has the capacity to fund the acquisition.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Francis D'Lima, Manager Council Performance at the Office of Local Government on 02 4428 4100 or by email at francisdlima@olg.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,



The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP
Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government

1 JUL 2024

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government



Our Ref: A897406 / MO24-0263

Mr Nick Melas
Director
Cornerstone Group
Level 10, Park House
187-191 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Via email: nick.melas@cgrp.com.au

Dear Mr Melas,

Thank you for your representations on behalf of North Ryde RSL Community Club and Vimiera Recreation Grounds Ltd (the clubs) regarding a request for an urgent meeting to discuss the compulsory acquisition of TG Millner Field, by Council of the City of Ryde (Council).

I advise that on 4 April 2024, I determined to decline Council's application for my approval to commence pre-acquisition procedures or hold this matter in formal abeyance. I have provided Council the reasons for my decision. It is a matter for Council as to how they advise their community and stakeholders of this decision.

Although planning and development are local government functions, they are not functions controlled by the *Local Government Act 1993*. It is appropriate that you raise your concerns relating to a planning proposal by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure directly with their office at information@planning.nsw.gov.au

As this application is now closed within the Office of Local Government (OLG), it is appropriate that I decline the clubs' request for a meeting regarding this matter. If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact Mr Francis D'Lima, Manager, Performance, at OLG on 02 4428 4100 or by email at francisdlima@olg.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

A blue ink signature of The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP, written in a cursive style.

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP
Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly
Vice-President of the Executive Council
Minister for Local Government

2 MAY 2024



19 December 2024

The Hon. Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

Dear Minister,

TG MILLNER FIELD, 146 VIMIERA ROAD, MARSFIELD

Background

We refer to our letter dated 2 December 2024 which summarised the political actions of Ryde Council in relation to our planning proposal for TG Millner Field over a number of years and, in particular, the actions of Ryde Mayor Trenton Brown over the past six (6) months.

We did not expect to have to write to you again so soon but have been compelled to do so because of the financial position of our Clubs and our continued frustration at the continued vendetta by the Mayor to prevent our planning proposal from proceeding – irrespective of the financial consequences to our Clubs and the ratepayers of Ryde.

While we do not expect a response from your office given the time of year, we look forward to meeting with you in the New Year with a view to you providing direction regarding the next steps in terms of a NSW Government pathway to an objective assessment and timely decision in relation to our proposal.

Council Resolution – 10 December 2024

On 10 December 2024, the Liberal majority of Council adopted a ‘confidential’ Council Report from its CEO, to reallocate funds from Council’s ‘Ryde Central Reserve Fund’ and ‘Voluntary Planning Agreement Reserve Fund’ towards the compulsory acquisition of TG Millner Field.

This is the 5th time in the last 6 months that Mayor Brown has used Mayoral Minutes or last minute reports to seek to frustrate our planning proposal, notwithstanding multiple letters from you requesting that Council assess our planning proposal on its merits.

This resolution ignores a range of factors, the key one being that Council may have to pay \$85M for the site in a compulsory acquisition scenario - which it cannot afford - as identified by the Minister for Local Government in refusing Council’s compulsory acquisition request in April 2024.

Noting that Ryde Council reported itself to ICAC in May 2023 in relation to the improper transfer of funds between its Reserve Accounts, Council resolved last week to:

- Confidentially reallocate \$8.5M from the Ryde Central Reserve Fund (leaving a \$426K balance). This decision involves the reallocation of 95% of the Fund that relates to the most critical/visible Council project in the entire LGA, without any engagement with ratepayers.
- Reallocate \$11.5M from the Voluntary Planning Agreement Reserve Fund (leaving a \$3.5M balance). This is the Fund that holds contributions from developers that may be refundable if not expended within an agreed timeframe.



Council's resolution was based on a recommendation from its CEO that these VPA Reserve Funds be reallocated, notwithstanding that Council is still seeking legal advice to ascertain whether it can actually use these VPA funds for the acquisition of TG Millner Field.

Council has now largely returned to the point where it was on 13 October 2022 when it offered \$27.85M to acquire the site (it now states that it has \$35M available despite having now questionably reallocated funds from other priority areas to do so), while still being \$50M short of its potential compulsory acquisition exposure.

Some further points

In November 2023, Council considered a report from its then CFO regarding the financial position of Council, following a request by the Minister for Local Government that Council provide strategic justification and evidence of its financial capacity to acquire TG Millner Field.

Council's CFO (who has since left Council) made the following points:

- The financial implications of Council's VPAs have never been considered, or funded, prior to her November 2023 review.
- There is an ongoing annual VPA liability of \$5.8M to Council and Council will need to, as a priority, provide for this expenditure in its upcoming budgets as these VPAs are binding on Council.
- If this is not addressed (which it hasn't), Council will become financially unsustainable in the next financial year.

In response to this report, Council did not address any of the substantive points raised by Council's CFO, instead resolving to reduce its proposed financial contribution towards the compulsory acquisition of TG Millner Field to \$15M from the \$27.85M offered on 13 October 2022.

As outlined above, we look forward to meeting with you in the New Year with a view to our application being considered on its merits in a timely manner.

Yours faithfully,

Jim Morris
President
North Ryde RSL Community Club Ltd

Ian Williams
Company Secretary
Vimiera Recreation Grounds Limited

cc. The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government