



Anoulack Chanthivong MP

MEMBER FOR MACQUARIE FIELDS

8 February 2021

Submission on Glenfield Place Strategy

I wish to make it clear from the outset that I am opposed to the overdevelopment plans contained in the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy.

South-west Sydney has repeatedly bore the brunt of the Liberal Government's decisions that result in overdevelopment, with the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy another nail in the coffin for green open space and suburban character in my electorate.

The draft plan is completely inconsistent with community expectations and wishes. In fact, my Stop the Squeeze survey – carried out with the threat of high-rise monstrosities looming in Glenfield – found that local residents are fed up with overdevelopment:

- 98% of respondents said they have had enough of development in their suburb
- 96% of people think developers have too much power
- 95% of residents do not support more development in their suburb
- 98% of locals say it's important to retain the area's green open space and suburban charm
- Loss of green open space, Traffic, and General overcrowding were the top three concerns about overdevelopment.

I wish to make the following comments on aspects of the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy:

Hyperbole and empty rhetoric

The Draft Glenfield Place Strategy is nothing but a glossy brochure misleading local residents to believe that high-rise and increased densification will magically transform their suburb into a utopia. The Liberal Government has failed to recognise the value local residents place on their current green open space and suburban character. Our community won't be tricked by the continual political spin.

The repetition of the sentence "*Glenfield as traditionally been an important meeting place, a crossroads for people to meet and exchange ideas and a place defined by its education facilities*" three times in the first 11 pages is just one example that the document is more akin to a marketing brochure than a planning document.

Stating "*Glenfield will be South West Sydney's premier regional sporting and educational destination for the next generation*" (page 3) is disingenuous. The draft strategy decimates the majority of agricultural and sporting land at the historic Hurlstone Agricultural High School.

Hurlstone Agricultural High School

It is unacceptable for an agricultural high school with Hurlstone's reputation and history to be swamped and dwarfed by overdevelopment.

My Hands Off Hurlstone campaign has made it clear that the community wants to retain the school land at Hurlstone in its entirety. Local residents highly value the green open space afforded by the Hurlstone farm. They do not want that green space replaced with rooftops.

Unfortunately, years of experience tells me the Liberal Government will not back away from its overdevelopment agenda for Glenfield. At the very least, the location, nature and height of the development around Hurlstone must be modified so that it is limited to low density housing with a maximum of two storeys.

A green buffer must also be implemented where the school is to interface with residential development.

Open space and trees

It is preposterous for the draft strategy to continually claim to include "*more*", "*new*" "*30 ha of additional*" or "*abundant*" open space.

The draft strategy takes 82 hectares of land at the current Hurlstone site and replaces it with mostly concrete and rooftops.

Reference is also made to "*quality open space*" within 400km of walking distance to all residents. What is the definition of "*quality open space*"?

Small pocket parks dotted among high-rise towers certainly cannot come close to compensating for the decimation of the green open space on the Hurlstone site.

The draft strategy also references tree-lined streets and "*continuous street-tree planting*". What trees will be planted? Will they be mature trees to provide shade from day one or saplings that will require years of growth to provide any real benefit?

I expect detailed answers to these questions. It is disingenuous for the Liberal Government to laud tree coverage in the draft strategy and then be unable to provide any meaningful detail.

Infrastructure

It is simply unbelievable that the Liberal Government claims infrastructure will be linked to growth (page 14). A proper inspection of the draft strategy dismantles this absurd claim.

There are numerous references to "potential" infrastructure in the draft strategy. For example, a "*potential health facility*", a "*potential future primary school*" and "*a potential community centre*" are all referenced in the document.

Similarly, the Liberal Government has made it clear an upgrade of Cambridge Avenue is "*Subject to project approval and funding availability*"¹. That is a far cry from a funded commitment with a set-in-stone timeline for delivery.

Our local community has seen time and time again the Liberal Government put the needs of developers ahead of the best interests of local residents. For example, Edmondson Park residents are still waiting for a school for their children, despite it being promised as part of the development.

Labelling infrastructure as a priority does not equal funding or delivery. A list of "*potential*" infrastructure should not be used to justify the level of overdevelopment contained in the draft strategy.

The fact is, the draft strategy does not contain a single funded commitment for infrastructure delivery. The people in my electorate are used to being overlooked by the Liberal Government when it comes to infrastructure delivery and upgrades in south-west Sydney.

The cycle of neglect needs to end. All my community wants is its fair share. The draft strategy falls well short of that target.

Parking

There is no mention of increased parking for commuters and residents under the list of potential infrastructure in the draft strategy.

It is unrealistic to expect residents to forego the use of a car just because they live near a railway station. The parking crisis overseen by the Liberal Government at Edmondson Park and Leppington are evidence that residents rely on their cars for travel.

Whilst commuters may take advantage of public transport to go to and from work, the Liberal Government has failed to acknowledge the fact local residents would be car-dependent for social, recreational and sporting purposes, particularly on weekends and outside of working hours.

Similarly, where is adequate parking for the sporting ovals? If the Liberal Government is so confident the area is to be a regional sporting hub, where are athletes and their families going to park?

The fact that many streets surrounding the proposed sporting fields will either prohibit or discourage vehicular access will only exacerbate parking problems.

Affordable Housing

The language in the draft strategy in relation to affordable housing is contradictory and confusing. Page 4 states: "*The Place Strategy will provide 5% affordable housing*". However, page 14 states: "*Up to 5% affordable housing*". Which is it – 5% or up to 5%?

¹ <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/01documents/cambridge-ave-glenfield-upgrade/cambridge-avenue-notification-2020-12.pdf>

The Liberal Government may wish to dismiss my comment as pedantic. It is not. The Liberal Government is pushing affordable housing as a key benefit of the Glenfield Place Strategy. It needs to be crystal clear how much affordable housing will be included.

The contradictory wording is further evidence that the draft strategy is more about spin than substance.

Jobs

The draft strategy claims 2900 jobs will be delivered in the Glenfield area over the next 20 years. This is a lofty statement but it is also not backed by reliable details. How was this jobs figure determined? Are these ongoing FTE jobs or temporary jobs during construction? What industries will cater for the jobs?

Developers routinely rely on the argument that high-density automatically creates ongoing jobs. Unfortunately, the reality is often very different.

Timing of release of plan

The last time the Liberal Government revealed plans for overdevelopment in Glenfield was December 2015. Since then, residents waited five years to see updated plans that further eroded green open space in Glenfield by targeting land at Hurlstone.

The Liberal Government's decision to release the Draft Glenfield Place Strategy two weeks before Christmas 2020 is disgraceful. It is clear the Liberal Government was hoping the plan to irrevocably change the nature of Glenfield would fly under the radar during such a busy time of year. The Liberal Government should be ashamed of itself.

Closing remarks

Any planning document should be consistent with community expectations and places the views of residents ahead of developers' interests. The Draft Glenfield Place Strategy does not meet that standard. The level of overdevelopment proposed in the draft strategy is unacceptable.

The Liberal Government should immediately cease its overdevelopment agenda in south-west Sydney and properly invest in the infrastructure our community needs.

Preventing overdevelopment is a crucial step in preserving suburban character and protecting our community's quality of life.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anoulack Chanthivong', with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Anoulack Chanthivong MP
Member for Macquarie Fields