

21 November 2018

Mr George Dedes
General Manager
City of Ryde
Locked Bag 2069
NORTH RYDE NSW 1670
E: cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Dedes,

Re: Planning Proposal 112 Talavera Road, Macquarie Park

The Urban Taskforce thanks the City of Ryde (Council) for the opportunity to comment on the Planning Proposal (PP) for 112 Talavera Road, Macquarie Park. Our comments are provided below for your consideration.

Planning processes must not be hijacked for political gain

An objective assessment of the PP for 112 Talavera Road, Macquarie Park has been compromised due to the relentless fearmongering of political figures around issues of housing, density and development. The normal, rational approach of assessing development applications and planning proposals, such as the PP for the development of this site, on their merits has been hijacked and instead used as a mechanism for politicians to garner votes for the state election in March 2019.

It seems unfair for local politicians to attack developers of new projects, particularly when the development in question in this instance supports the objectives and aims of strategic plans which have been approved and supported by the NSW Cabinet and by City of Ryde Council. Developers spend a great deal of time and money in negotiating with government authorities to develop suitable plans and proposals such as the proposal for 112 Talavera Road. To find that the project becomes a political punching bag a few months before a state election gives a terrible impression to potential developers and investors and completely undermines the NSW planning system.

We urge Council not be swayed by emotional political games and to use an unbiased and rational decision-making process to determine the proposal on its merits and according to the process.

The PP achieves many significant strategic objectives as outlined in the NSW Government's *A Metropolis of Three Cities* and North District Plan

- **Increases the supply of housing**

- The PP has the potential to provide an additional 360 dwellings, increasing the site capacity from 900 dwellings to 1,260 dwellings at a time when Sydney is gripped by a housing affordability crisis;
 - This additional 360 dwellings is a significant contribution to the 7,600 five year (to 2021) target for the Ryde local government area. The potential additional 360 dwellings represent 4.7% of Ryde's five-year housing targets set by the Greater Sydney Commission in the *North District Plan*.
- **Provides affordable housing**
 - The PP proposes to dedicate to Council 7% of the Floor Space Ratio uplift as Affordable Rental Housing equating to 27 dwellings;
- **Achieves the aim of the '30-minute city'**
 - Macquarie Park is one of the most significant urban centres in Sydney and Australia. The proposed increase in residential capacity provides more homes within walking distance of these employment opportunities as well as jobs in the rest of the Eastern Economic Corridor identified in *A Metropolis of Three Cities* stretching from the Harbour CBD, through St Leonards to Macquarie Park. Macquarie Park is also highly accessible to Sydney's second CBD, the Greater Parramatta Metropolitan Centre.
 - The site is well serviced by public transport, being located within 350 metres of the Macquarie Park Station, which is to be upgraded as part of the Sydney Metro by mid-2019, with a frequency of trains running every four minutes during peak times;
- **Provides a quality design and urban form and more open space**

The proposal will result in much better outcomes for this site when compared to the current planning controls, as outlined below:

 - Increasing the height of the building controls will facilitate development of 4 slender towers (instead of 6 shorter buildings) reducing the number of buildings and overall floorplates across the site, creating more communal open space opportunities and better solar access
 - Splitting the ground plane planning of the site will provide for a continuation of the linear green space to the south west, following the former alignment of Shrimpton Creek
 - Replace the dominant 30-storey wall along Talavera Road with a low-rise edge and taller buildings set back in a staggered form away from the street
 - Increase the area of open space by 40% and sunlight to make that space from 36% to 91%
 - Increase the separation of buildings that will provide better sunlight and ventilation with less overlooking well in excess of the planning requirements
 - Improve the overall appearance and design of the building via a design competition to ensure a high-quality outcome of this prominent 'gateway' site.

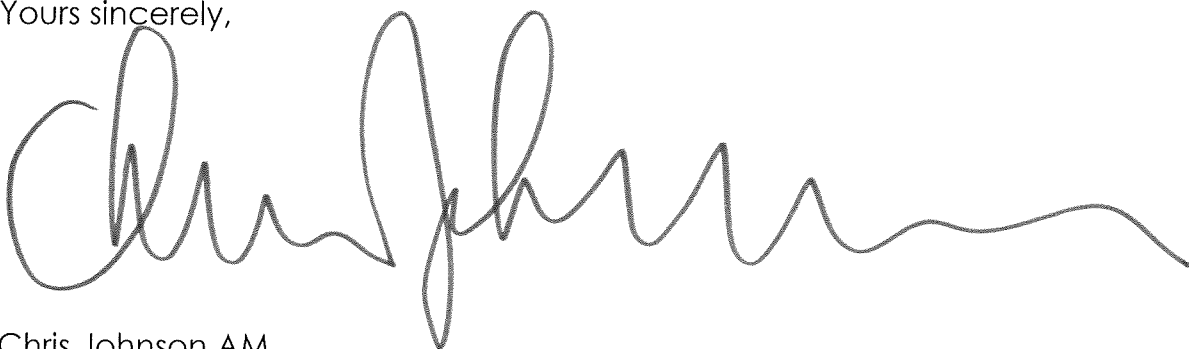
In summary, the PP for 112 Talavera Road is an excellent example of where new development should be built in Sydney. The site is 350 metres from a metro rail station, located close to a major expressway (the M2), close to the employment opportunities in Macquarie Park and is next to the vast open space network of the Lane Cove National Park. On top of this, proponent of the project is contributing a massive \$78 million in amenities and infrastructure for the local community.

State government traffic authorities and City of Ryde Council is are both supportive of the PP. As outline above, the changes to the building envelopes for the site is much better than the cramped, squat buildings permitted under the current planning controls. The extra height will open up the ground plane to sunlight and provide more open space. This is one of the benefits of taller buildings as they can create much more parkland and open space for the residents and local community.

The NSW Government has clearly encouraged major development in Macquarie Park. In fact, it is hard to think of another precinct in Sydney which is better suited for significant new housing development. The NSW Government is bringing the North West Metro line through Macquarie Park which will stimulate new development. Macquarie Park is now Australia's fourth largest economic centre, providing substantial employment opportunities. The state government has also supported the establishment of Macquarie University, a hospital and a major shopping centre, all of which have helped to make Macquarie Park a major mixed-use urban centre. The Greater Sydney Commission has also identified Macquarie Park as a major urban centre suitable for growth in the *North District Plan*.

The Urban Taskforce is always willing to work closely with the Government to provide a development industry perspective on these issues. Please feel free to contact me on telephone number 9238 3927 to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Johnson', with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

Chris Johnson AM

Chief Executive Officer

Urban Taskforce Australia