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Dear Councillors,

On behalf of the Brown Hill Progress Association, representing the residents of the Brown Hill community, we the committee members would greatly appreciate clarification on the planning for future housing developments within our suburb.

We have watched with concern the increasing number of house allotments that have been subdivided to strata development with 8-10 units replacing the single dwelling and now the ever-increasing small block freehold developments that are opening up on the north side of the freeway. Our concerns are not with the allotments themselves but rather with the lack of any clear strategic direction for the whole suburb. This is allowing individual developers to subdivide and build on these acreages and their submissions are passed as long as they fit the guidelines for the small subdivision but when there are 3 or 4 areas adjacent to each other the small development becomes a much bigger issue. i.e. developments are approved in isolation ignoring their (combined) overall impact on the amenity and liveability of the whole suburb.

The main issues not being addressed are:

*** No big picture traffic management.**

In other words the individual developments are mostly court or cul de sac with the whole area funnelled into a single narrow access road that then opens onto an existing street such as Hillview Road that is really only a narrow winding albeit sealed country road that will have over 200 homes sites emptying into it . This road then faces a give way sign to get onto the busy Springs road just as it becomes a 60km/h zone. Springs Road then empties onto the very busy Daylesford Road only 30-40 metres from a blind corner and 80 metres from the off ramp from the Western Freeway.

This one way in and one way out puts extreme pressure at the end of the funnel roads and means:

- * Increased risk for evacuation in the case of emergency days such as the threat of bushfire.
- * Poor access for emergency vehicles
- * No chance of ever having any public transport as the roads are blind ended and are too narrow for vehicles the size of suburban buses. This is contrary to the stated objectives of the *Ballarat Strategy* for a “*Connected Ballarat*” (section 4)
- * No inclusion of any form of bike lane
- * **No overall planned green space between the individual developments**

All existing trees have been cleared that used to front the roads and no green pathways are included in the overall layout to give the area some green link to the well-used Gong Gong walking trail.

***No community wide plan in regard to building/living in a Bushfire Prone Area**

Brown Hill along with Invermay and Nerrina, are considered **the** high-risk areas of Ballarat to be impacted by a bushfire event. All of Brown Hill north of the freeway and a significant part of Brown Hill south of the freeway is designated as a Bushfire Prone Area. The issue of limited feeder/access roads mentioned above greatly increases the risk to people and property in the event of a fire.

We have asked questions at public meetings and Community Partnership meetings over the last 4-5 years but have not had any positive feedback or been directed to anyone that seems to have an interest. And the roads issues are always pushed towards VicRoads.

The Brown Hill area is generating probably twice as much in rates as it was 10 years ago but the generated revenue is not being seen to be directed back to a planning effort that will give some guidance to control the expansion and not put individuals at risk in the fire season or at backlogged intersections.

In summary, what we seek is a Strategic (Local Area) Plan for the whole suburb that involves input from Vic Roads, Council, developers and community and not just rely on the haphazard pockets of development that may meet current local guidelines but will be detrimental to community wellbeing and safety into the foreseeable future. Such a plan would also alleviate the current situation of individual objections, meetings, appeals and eventually VCAT hearings that occupy each new proposal. We look forward to your response and are happy to meet to further discuss and advance this proposal.

Yours Sincerely

Jason Tinnetti---- President

Brendan Stevens----Secretary

On behalf of Brown Hill Progress Association Inc.