

CHW BREWERY TAP ROAD, Concept for Discussion - December 2020

Some key statements taken from discussion paper:

PAGE 3:

“CHW recognises that climate change presents current & future risks; timely and effective adaptation responses to a changing climate; seeks to prepare CHW for climate impacts already observed and those that will be experienced in the future”

PAGE 4:

“CHW close association with Brown Hill; redevelopment of land, current zoning ‘mixed land use’”

Definition. Mixed land use enables a range of land uses including residential, commercial, and industrial to be co-located in an integrated way that supports sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, walking and cycling, and increases neighbourhood amenity.

“Significant opportunities in Brown Hill to deliver a strong community-based outcome which carefully respects and integrates with its surrounds and the existing community; 7-star Green Star rated housing; provide a unique predominantly residential opportunity”

...but not without first:

- *Carefully considering relevant developments and strategic plans in the local area*
- *Examining the existing and proposed servicing in the context of the site and wider area*
- *Community engagement and consultation*

Guiding design principles:

- *No. 3 engage and consult the local community to achieve a supported and embraced outcome*
- *No. 4 create enduring and resilient environments that can withstand climate change challenges*

PAGE 9: *Previous project investigations*

Comments re the CHW Concept Discussion Paper

The following comments are primarily concerning a broader Brown Hill community perspective and centre on already broadly canvassed agreement through the Brown Hill Progress Association and community of the significant issues surrounding the future of Brown Hill.

The BHPA is interested to see the proposal that CHW is putting forward but has some concerns and questions for further discussion. Below is a dot point summary of our concerns:

- *Only residential development is being proposed in an area that already has light industry present. No mention of allowance for service or infrastructure provision;*
- *The Brown Hill/Gong Gong Local Area Plan, that CHW is a big part of, is still not finalised and further development should be put on hold until it is in place;*
- *Water and sewer provision for Brown Hill is already at peak capacity (CHW's own words) so where will extra capacity come from;*
- *Increased bushfire risks and decreased evacuation capabilities;*
- *The setting of a precedent for the area and flow on for more development with blocks of less than 500 square metres;*
- *Bottleneck of road traffic back to the city. The worst point is at the Caledonian Bridge that forces traffic along Humffray St and Brewery Tap Rd /Western Hwy crossroad*

COMMENTS:

1) It is disappointing that **only residential development has been considered**, this limits innovation especially when it comes to responding to the future impacts of climate change on the suburb of Brown Hill. CHW are in a unique position as a service provider and key stakeholder in the community to do something far more beneficial for the broader community and still have a capital gain for their coffers.

2) There is nothing particularly “above par” in relation to this concept re this “sustainable/eco development” housing estates. Really does Brown Hill NEED yet another housing estate like below – especially of the size proposed?



3) **It is not apparent what CHW wants from “consulting” the community?** Is the exercise just to get the community box ticked off “*to achieve a supported and embraced outcome*”? Where are the options for discussion? It all looks like a foregone conclusion that this is what CHW wants to do.

4) **Concerning the ...” but not without first”** remarks above, CHW would be well aware that the Council is in the process of producing a **Brown Hill/Gong Gong Local Area Plan**, as CHW has been a participant in the consultation process. If CHW is genuine in wanting to

consider “*relevant developments and strategic plans in the local area*” – one would think that they should at least wait for the plan to be finalised before imposing a development of such size and ramifications on the suburb.

The following has already been noted in the Brown Hill Progress Association’s initial response to Council’s Local Area Plan Scenarios Paper (March 2019), that would be relevant to this proposal:

**1) Stormwater/potable water/sewage infrastructure (4.8 Infrastructure Report)
Note - taken from input from CHW**

From the report there appears a strong indication that the water infrastructure/delivery systems are at capacity for the CURRENT level of housing. i.e. If further intensive land development occurs in the upstream catchment, a stormwater management strategy will be required to cater for the increased flow. A future Drainage Scheme for Emerging Brown Hill is essential.

- The existing system is at the limit of its capacity to supply Peak Day and upgrades are required.
- ‘Level of service’ issues currently exist in eastern Ballarat at the extremities
- The existing network requires upgrades to cater for existing and future demands.
- Continuing development in emerging Ballarat will continue to impact delivery of potable water without major upgrades.
- There are existing network capacity constraints for both sewerage and potable water systems within the Brown Hill area.
- There is currently no available wet weather capacity in the trunk sewerage network and also with significant growth in Brown Hill there may also be dry weather capacity issues for these trunk sewers also.

BHPA PRIORITIES: Until the above has been addressed further approval of residential development to be restricted to ensure that there is sufficient capacity of the infrastructure and services to be able to accommodate any further expansion. This is to apply to both the established and emerging areas of Brown Hill.

**Has CHW somehow managed to address all these issues since they put forward the above?
Or, do they not apply to their own housing development proposal?**

2) Bushfire and other emergency risks (4.5 of Infrastructure Report)

As almost all of Brown Hill, especially north of freeway, falls within the bush fire prone area, increased development in this area heightens the risk to life and property in this heavily vegetated area. Additionally, there is a conflict between bushfire controls and habitat objectives (e.g. Protection of koala habitat under the Environmental Significance Overlay –

Schedule 5) The scenario and other documents provided to the community, at this stage, do not provide any recommendations/options regarding the risk or conflict.

Planners and consultants need to be aware that in an emergency situation **Springs Road and Daylesford Road** would become major thoroughfares for residents from the growing housing estates in emerging Brown Hill and BEYOND the suburb of Brown Hill who would be making their way to the CBD and also, they are the only major roads for emergency vehicles exiting to the north.

Brown Hill is one of the highest risk areas of Ballarat to a bushfire threat along with Nerrina and Invermay. This is because on hot, dry, windy days the threat will primarily come from the north and the forested areas of Creswick Regional Park and CHW's water catchment land.

If CHW is genuine in wishing to *“create enduring and resilient environments that can withstand climate change challenges”* it needs to understand that the greatest threat for Brown Hill, and themselves, is extreme weather leading to bushfires impacting the urban fringe, which would include the proposed housing estate. It is not a matter of IF a bushfire will impact the suburb in the future but WHEN. *“Sustainably developed”* (which is an oxymoron

If CHW believes it is a “good neighbour” to Brown Hill, and considering that a major threat to the suburb comes from its own land, it could actively help alleviate the risk by utilizing this superfluous bit of land in an innovative way rather than just adding to the risk in the way of more housing.

A suggestion: There is much that could be done within the current mixed-use zoning of the proposed area which could become an innovative buffer zone between forested area and the urban residential fringe of Brown Hill. Even though such a buffer zone can not stop an ember storm impacting the suburb it could substantially stop a running fire front hitting the residential area in that direction.

As stated above, CHW is in a unique position as a service provider and key stakeholder in community to do something far more beneficial for the broader community and still have a capital gain for their coffers.

Such a “buffer zone” could incorporate various non-residential segments such as:

A community health hub, similar to Lucas, that could service the eastern side of Ballarat;

An educational facility for school groups that would focus on water management, history of the catchment area, the changes and challenges that a changing climate present. Narmbool could be a possible model to investigate. This facility could then utilise the Gong and Kirk Reservoirs, which are presently a passive and under utilised resource. On the maps presented in the proposal there is land listed as “Kirks Gardens” – Not sure what this is? Could it also be part of this broader idea?

An eco-friendly, “bespoke” commercial/light industry “park” highlighting innovation adapting to a changing/challenging future.

An information/café centre to service the above, visitors and passing trade. Being so close to the freeway and with appropriate advertising there is no reason why people would not be attracted to visit.

How the buffer zone would be developed with strategically placed water resources and tree plantings – but not with highly flammable eucalypts – buildings and roadways, will need lots of thought put into it –but is there any logical reason why this excellent parcel of land could not serve multiple purposes for far wider benefits for CHW and the community beyond Brown Hill.

3) Road issues (4.9 infrastructure report)

The report analysis concerning Brown Hill roads does not take into account that Brown Hill is a major entry point for communities north of Ballarat and travellers off the freeway it is not just “local” traffic. One of the intersections highlighted as a major concern for BHPA in regard to safety and the flow of traffic, was Brewery Tap Road and freeway access.

Currently there has been no consideration given to capacity of the intersection to manage an emergency scenario/situation either involving safe passage of residents, including those further north of Brown Hill or the movement of emergency vehicles. It was noted that the proposal to remodel this intersection was now five years old it was disappointing that efforts to implement this remodeling had not been done.

With the creation of yet another large housing estate off Daylesford Road it would substantially increase the pressure on the Springs Rd/Daylesford Rd intersection and the subsequent bottlenecks further into town.

Traffic Management must be a high priority and Vic Roads must play a big part in handling extra traffic. The whole of Brown Hill traffic enters Ballarat along Water St/Daylesford Rd. via either a 2 lane only underpass at Caledonian Bridge or along Humffray Street that is heavily parked up and has its own bottleneck at the Ainley St roundabout. The only other access route is via the very dangerous Brewery Tap Rd. and Western Hwy. intersection. Congestion is very heavy at 7:30 – 9:00 am and at the 3:00 to 4:30 school pick up times. Adding another 300 to 400 cars to the load needs a major rethink.

To sum up: If CHW is asking for the “communities” thoughts on the matter of the proposal as presented - no, the housing estate proposal is not acceptable, for the above reasoning.

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