

Zoe Williamson – President Meadowbank Public School P & C

Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen

I am President of the P & C of meadowbank public school. Meadowbank is a wonderful school with dedicated teachers and has a strong community feel.

### **Slide – catchment**

The school is situated between Belmore and Gale Street on a small block of land, its catchment area takes in all the new developments in the precinct, from the railway line to Church Street.

A large number of families attending the school live in the apartments within the shepherds bay area.

As a community we support the general development and improvements to the area and acknowledge the previous generosity of Holdmark in refurbishing our school's canteen in 2013. However we do not support the recent modifications.

### **Slide - graph**

Meadowbank Public School student population has exponentially increased in the last 3 years by 75%. We predict that over the next 3 years we will see an increase of at least 125% based on current housing stock.

In this graph the blue represents the actual enrolled students, you can see the increase each year since 2013. This graph does not take into account the families who will be living in the new dwellings coming onto the market in the next few years. The modest predictions we have show in red will actually be much higher.

What this increase means, is the school is already over capacity.

### **Slide - demountable**

Demountable classrooms have been put up on valuable green open space,

Seated areas and shady trees have been demolished to fit demountable classrooms (shown in this photo).

The hall, staff room, office space and parking are over capacity.

Parking for parents around the school is almost impossible, traffic congestion and lack of safe pathways to access school make walking to school unsafe for children.

### **Slide – car park**

This is the staff car park.

**Slide - Green space,**

Green space at the school where the students play. The **only** available space now at the school to place more demountable classrooms the school will need over the coming years.

**Slide - demountables**

Meadowbank public school currently has a very good reputation, gets good results and is a preferred choice for parents in the local area, it is a draw card for young families moving into the area. However, an overcrowded facility, with its green space hidden under demountable classrooms, starts to be unappealing to prospective parents and will become less and less of a draw card for people purchasing property in the area.

Any increase to the number of dwellings within the catchment of the school will only compound the problems we already have and will be facing in the coming years.

The Planning Assessment Commission needs to hold the developer accountable to what was first agreed upon. This modification and the request for an increase in the number of dwellings can not be looked at in isolation but within the broader context of all the developments in the Meadowbank area.

**There should be no increase of the site-wide maximum dwelling yield of 2005 dwellings.**

We were disappointed to read in the modification proposal that the developer wanted to halve the space agreed upon for a community facility. We were then astounded to read that now there is a possibility that there could be a \$3.5mill donation to council in lieu of a community facility.

The inclusion of a large, flexible usable community centre is vital for the social cohesion of the new community. I fear that if council is given \$3.5 mill in lieu of a community facility that there will be no community facility. Once the physical space is gone, it is gone forever.

The massive increase in population will place significant strain on existing community facilities such as Meadowbank Public School. The schools hall and grounds are regularly used out of hours for afterschool and evening activities by community groups, church groups and individuals. This demand will only increase as the population increases, however the school has no capacity to accept more.

Holdmark is responsible for **2005** dwellings, surely they can see the benefit of one focal community facility.

To create vibrant communities you need spaces for people to gather, spaces for groups to meet, parent groups, play groups, after school activities, spaces to hire for children's parties and family gatherings when your apartment is too small to host it. We want the families who live in these dwellings and who attend the school to be happy and feel they belong - a community centre can help facilitate this.

Many families from Meadowbank school have already purchased property and are living in 'Oxford, shepherds bay' on Belmore Street. They purchased the property with the expectation that there would be a community facility. It does not seem right for the developer to be allowed to renege on this promise nor for the planning assessment commission to allow it to happen.

Other large scale developments around Sydney with less numbers of new dwellings than proposed in Shepherds Bay seem to be getting more facilities than planned for our area.

#### **Slide – other developments**

Ingleside on the Northern Beaches. The State Government has approved 3400 dwellings with a town centre, neighbourhood centre, new primary school and other community facilities

Wentworth Point – 2300 dwellings , with a new primary school and 6000 m2 of parks,

Shepherds Bay – at least 4700 new dwellings, to be absorbed into existing primary school, existing congested roads, infrastructure, strained community facilities and parklands.

It does not seem right.

We believe the community facility should remain at 1000sqm as originally proposed and be designed in such a way as to be as flexible and usable as possible.

Proposal to halve the community facility from 1000m to 500m would be a great loss. The idea to provide a voluntary contribution in lieu of a community facility **will mean that it is lost.**

It is the responsibility of the Planning Assessment Commission to make sure this expanding community gets a great community facility and the onus is on the developer to build it as initially agreed.

We do not want to see an increase in the number of dwellings above those already approved and we want to see a community facility built within the complex.