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**COMMENTS REGARDING WOOLLOOWARE TOWN CENTRE CONCEPT PLAN
MODIFICATION REQUEST**

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TODAY. I AM VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION. I AM ALSO A PAST PRESIDENT OF CRONULLA RSL SOCCER CLUB AND PAST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE CRONULLA SUTHERLAND RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL & LEAGUES CLUBS.

IM HERE REPRESENTING THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, THE LARGEST SOCCER ASSOCIATION IN THE COUNTRY WITH IN EXCESS OF 18,000 PLAYERS. WE ARE CONSTRAINED BY LACK OF PLAYING FIELDS, HENCE IMPOSE STRICT RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS ON OUR PLAYERS, SUCH THAT OVER 97% OF OUR PLAYERS LIVE IN THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE VIABILITY OF SOLANDER PLAYING FIELDS, WITH 3 FULL SIZE PLAYING FIELDS AND ONE-HALF SIZE FIELD FOR JUNIOR GAMES. IN ADDITION TO BEING THE HOME OF CRONULLA RSL, IT IS OFTEN USED TO HOST OVER-FLOW GAMES FOR CRONULLA SEAGULLS AND LILLI PILLI – BOTH CLUBS WITH IN EXCESS OF 1600 PLAYERS. THE FIELDS ARE ALSO USED TO HOST STATE CUP GAMES.

SOLANDER FIELDS ARE LOCKED BY WOOLLOOWARE BAY TO THE NORTH, THE RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX TO THE EAST, CAPTAIN COOK DRIVE, TO THE SOUTH AND TOYOTA OFFICES TO THE WEST. THERE IS NO NEARBY STREET PARKING AVAILABLE TO USERS OF THESE FIELDS.

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, I AM NOT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PER SE, PREVIOUSLY, I HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE FAILURE TO PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A FORM OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION. THE DEVELOPMENT HAS PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUY HOMES IN THE AREA THAT WOULD OTHERWISE NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE. HENCE, MY COMMENTS RELATE SOLELY TO PARKING AND SPECIFICALLY HOW IT IMPACTS THE AMENITY OF THE PLAYING FIELDS.

THE REPORT PROVIDES ONLY CURSORY REFERENCE TO SPORTING FIELD USAGE IMPLYING THEY DID NOT FULLY APPRECIATE THE IMPACTS ON USERS OF THE SPORTING FACILITIES.

THE EFFORTS BY THE DEVELOPERS AND COUNCIL TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF PARKING PRIOR TO STAGE 1 OF THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

INITIAL INITIATIVES WERE:

- PROVIDING MORE PARKING ALONG CAPTAIN COOK DRIVE,
- A BUS SERVICE TO THE STATION AND
- COUNCIL INTRODUCING TIME RESTRICTIONS ALONGSIDE THE PLAYING FIELDS.

WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT, BEFORE THE RELEASE OF ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS THESE STEPS ALONE ARE INSUFFICIENT. NOTE, THE PARKING REQUIRED BY THE SPORTING CLUBS IS NOT REQUIRED 24/7 BUT RATHER AT PEAK TIMES SUCH AS SATURDAY MORNINGS. EVEN IF ENFORCED, A 4P RESTRICTION BETWEEN 9AM AND 8PM ON WEEK-ENDS IS OF LITTLE VALUE. RESIDENTS CAN PARK SAY, BETWEEN 9AM AND 1PM ON SATURDAYS DURING THE PERIOD OF PEAK PARKING DEMAND.

THE INCREASED RESIDENTIAL COMPONENT WILL DIRECTLY IMPACT THE AVAILABILITY OF PARKING AT OUR PLAYING FIELDS. THERE WILL BE A WALKWAY ON THE NORTHERN END LINKING THE SUBJECT SITE WITH THE PARKING AT SOLANDER.

THE ASSESSMENT REPORT BELIEVES THESE CONCERNS WILL BE ADDRESSED BY:

1. FUTURE RESIDENTS ADOPTING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT MODES, AND THE
2. IMPOSITION OF ON-STREET PARKING RESTRICTIONS

IT SHOULD BE NOTED IN MY OBSERVATION, THERE APPEAR TO BE NO PLANS TO INCREASE PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE AREA. I WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON THE 2ND POINT – PARKING RESTRICTIONS. THIS APPEARS TO BE THE ONLY STRATEGY TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS OF USERS OF THE SPORTING FIELDS.

CRUCIALLY, PARKING RESTRICTIONS ARE NOT ENFORCED. IF I WERE A COUNCILLER, I MAY WELL ARGUE WHY SHOULD COUNCIL ATTRACT THE IRE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS BY ENFORCING THESE RESTRICTIONS. FURTHER, AS MENTIONED THE RESTRICTIONS THEMSELVES HAVE LIMITED EFFECTIVENESS. IT IS NOT CLEAR IF THE AUTHORS OF THE REPORT UNDERSTAND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE USERS OF THE FIELDS.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY COUNCIL HAS RESULTED IN TENSION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THE USERS OF THE SPORTING FIELDS. RESIDENTS COMPLAIN THAT THEY PAY RATES AND HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO PARK WHERE THEY WISH.

SURELY, ANY GOOD PLANNING SHOULD AVOID POTENTIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS.

OUR CONCERN IS THAT THE PRESSURE ON PARKING IN THE AREA WILL PLACE ENORMOUS PRESSURE ON COUNCIL TO DELIVER A SOLUTION.

ONE OBJECTIVE NOTED IN THE ASSESSMENT REPORT, IS TO LIMIT THE USE OF CARS. IT WOULD BE IRONIC IF THE SPORTING CLUBS, BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF PARKING ARE FORCED TO RELOCATE – MOST LIKELY 5-6 KILOMETRES AWAY – FORCING MORE PEOPLE TO TRAVEL LONGER DISTANCES TO PLAY SPORT, INCREASING THE NEED FOR CAR OWNERSHIP.

IF THE AUTHORS OF THE REPORT TRULY BELIEVE THE PARKING PROVIDED IS ADEQUATE, INCLUDING FOR SPORTING CLUBS IN THE AREA, MAY I SUGGEST A CONDITION BE ATTACHED TO THE APPROVAL – PREVENTING THE IMPOSITION

OF ANY PARKING FEES OR TIME RESTRICTIONS ON THE PARKING WITHIN THE RETAIL CENTRE, CLUB AND HOTEL.

THIS WOULD PLACE ALL GROUPS IN THE PRECINCT ON THE SAME BASIS. THE PARKING PROVIDED FOR IN THE PLAN IS AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE IN THE PRECINCT – RESIDENTS, CLUB PATRONS, SPORTING CLUB MEMBERS AND USERS OF THE RETAIL CENTRE. INDEED, THE LACK OF PARKING AT SOLANDER IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN SPORTING CLUB MEMBERS USING THE PROPOSED RETAIL PARKING AS IT IS RELATIVELY CLOSE. THIS WOULD JUST ADD TO THE TENSION.

IT CAN BE ARGUED, THAT THE INABILITY TO CHARGE PATRONS OR PLACE TIME RESTRICTIONS ON PARKING, WILL NOT DISCOURAGE THE USE OF CARS. SIMILARLY, THE UNFETTERED ACCESS TO PARKING AT NEARBY PLAYING FIELDS ALSO DOES NOT DISCOURAGE CAR OWNERSHIP.

WE LOOK TO THE IHAP MEMBERS TO PROTECT OUR MEMBERS INTERESTS, SO THEY CAN CONTINUE ENJOY THESE FACILITIES FOR YEARS TO COME AND NOT BE FORCED AWAY. THIS SHOULD NOT RELY ON COUNCIL ENFORCING INEFFECTIVE PARKING RESTRICTIONS TO THE IRE OF THE RESIDENTS. IT IS NOT FAIR THAT RESIDENTS AND THE USERS OF THESE FIELDS BE PLACED IN A POSITION OF CONFLICT DUE TO LACK OF PROPER CONSIDERATION OF THEIR NEEDS. CONDITIONS ARE USUALLY IMPOSED ON DEVELOPERS TO ENHANCE LOCAL AMENITIES, SUCH AS SPORTING FIELDS, NOT DETRACT FROM THEM.

THANK YOU