



## **ALLIANCE OF PHILIPPINE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, INC.**

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Independent Planning Commission NSW  
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth St  
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: Crown Cemetery Development Varroville (MacArthur Memorial Park)

Sir/Madam,

I would like to comment on the Crown Cemetery Development Varroville. My name is Violeta Escultura, current president of the Alliance of Philippine Community Organisations, with 40 affiliate member associations, 11 of which are based in the Campbelltown area. I am also past president of the Filipino Women Support Group that provides support and assistance to Filipino women in need. I am also a resident of Campbelltown for more than 20 years.

### No Cemetery in Campbelltown and MacArthur Region

Campbelltown do not have a cemetery of the proposed design and scale that will last for 100 years. In 1997, the Campbelltown Council asked for submissions for a cemetery in the area. The Varroville area was short-listed as the most appropriate for the local community as it will have capacity to meet the interment needs for 100 years. However, the Council failed to agree and provide this vital service to the community. This neglect of the local government have cause the locals to travel to a private cemetery at Leppington and pay at a higher price for a burial plot. Moreover, the capacity for burial plots of Leppington may not last for next 30 years. Where do you want the community to go?

No doubt, having a cemetery at Varroville with over 35 hectares of parklands, will benefit the community for recreational purposes, local job opportunities, and its accessibility. We do not have to travel far to visit and memorialise our departed loved ones. It will also be an area for meditation and reflection.

There is an increasing population in the Campbelltown and MacArthur Regions. The 2 regions have a combined population of 250,000 as of 2016 census. In the next 20 years, the population is forecasted to grow to more than 500,000 because the region is fast developing with more housing suburbs being developed. At the current death rate of 7/1000 with 35% preferring burial, the need for burial plots will increase in 20 years to 1,200 every year.

### Role of Government to Provide Essential Services

The local government failed to provide the facilities of a cemetery, which is a much needed service of the community. The Filipinos being religious community with 82% Catholics, believe in memorialising their beloved departed loved ones, to pray for them and celebrate the Filipino All Soul's Day. I have seen the plans for the Filipino Memorial Gardens at the proposed MacArthur Memorial Park, and we welcome it as it will give us that opportunity to keep family together and forever in one resting place. The local government failed to respect our religious and cultural belief in burying and remembering our dead, and our tradition of

keeping families together in one dedicated memorial sacred grounds. And I must say that the State Government of NSW should take on that responsibility and must not fail us this time.

Now that the development application is in the hands of the Independent Planning Commission of NSW, I pray that this Honourable Commission to consider favourably in providing a very essential service to the community that is accessible, affordable and sacred.

Sincerely Yours,

[Redacted Signature]

President/ Alliance of Philippine Community Organisations Inc

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