



NEWS RELEASE
The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron
Minister for Planning
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Tuesday 13 October, 2009

GOVERNMENT DECIDES PARKLEA REDEVELOPMENT NOT A MAJOR PROJECT

A request to declare a massive redevelopment and expansion of the Parklea Markets precinct a major project has been rejected by the NSW Government.

Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, said the proponent Almona had requested the Government consider its proposal to redevelop Parklea Markets and assess it as a Part 3A Major Project.

“What Almona were proposing would have sprawled across 2.5 hectares in Glenwood in the North West of Sydney and would be prohibited under the local council’s current zoning,” Ms Keneally said.

“The proposal included two hotels, entertainment centre, exhibition/convention centre, growers market, service centre, restaurants and car parking.

“Under the zoning for the Parklea Markets site in Blacktown City Council’s local environmental plan, most of the land uses proposed would not be allowed.”

Ms Keneally said before the Government made any decision on the proposed plan it was sent to the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC).

“Because of the size and scale of the proposal, the current restrictive zoning of the land and the fact the proponents had made political donations, the PAC was asked to review the proposal,” Ms Keneally said.

“The PAC raised concerns about the scale of the proposal, which was considered to have potentially had a significant impact on the amenity of local residents and nearby existing commercial centres.

“The PAC’s review added additional scrutiny and rigour to the assessment process and provided the community, the proponent and the council with certainty.”

Ms Keneally said the PAC also found that even though the proposal involved the staging of the development over a five to seven year period it was still not appropriate for it to proceed.

“Following the PAC’s review and the thorough assessment of the proposal it was clear that it would be inappropriate for the State Government to consider the proposal as a Part 3A project,” Ms Keneally said.

“After considering the current land zoning conflicts, size and scale of the proposal and the multitude of proposed uses there is no doubt that any future proposal would be best dealt with by the local council.

“For these reasons the proposal to have the redevelopment assessed as a Major Project was refused and a concept plan for the entire proposal would not be accepted if lodged with the Government.”

Ms Keneally said that as well as refusing the proposal as a Major Project she suggested Blacktown City Council address the issue of how and what the Parklea Markets land was currently zoned for.

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“This should be done as part of its council-wide comprehensive local environmental plan and in conjunction with the finalisation of the north-west subregional strategy,” Ms Keneally said.

“Asking council to do this will ensure they play an important role in directing the strategic planning for the entire Glenwood and Parklea area as it develops and grows.”

Local Member for Riverstone, John Aquillina, said the decision was good news for the local community and meant that any future proposal would be dealt with at a local level.

“The Parklea Markets are a great asset to the local community and to have this proposal refused means that the site will not be ruined by over development,” Mr Aquillina said.

“What Almona was proposing was inappropriate and did not even attempt to consider the current zonings that council have in place.

“If Parklea Markets does grow, it must do so in an appropriate well planned manner, not in the way that was proposed.

“The Government’s decision to refuse to consider the proposal as a Major Project, and directing the council to review the current land use issues is a great win for the community.”

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IMPORTANT STATEMENT ABOUT POLITICAL DONATIONS

New political donation disclosure laws came into effect from 1 October 2008 imposing obligations on certain proponents who request the Minister for Planning to consider declaring their proposal to be a major project to disclose all reportable political donations (if any) made by anyone with a financial interest in the project within the period commencing two years before the request is made.

More information on these obligations is available at

www.planning.nsw.gov.au/DevelopmentAssessments/Donationandgiftdisclosure/tabid/209/Default.aspx

The Electoral Funding Authority website shows that Almona, Parklea Markets and Con Constantine have all made donations to the Labor, Liberal and National Parties, however the request to consider the proposal to be a major project was made before 1 October 2008.

The Minister for Planning referred the request to the Planning Assessment Commission for independent advice and considered that advice before determining the proposal not be assessed as a major project.