

## 5km ACT NSW Border Zone Planning Group Inc.

*A non-profit association set up to achieve the best outcome for the land in South Yass Valley.*



Please come and discuss the situation and options at a meeting at

**Sutton Hall**

**4:00 pm**

**Sunday 24th February 2019**

### **The situation**

Land in Yass Valley Local Government Area within 5km of the ACT NSW border is at risk of being either stuck in a development freeze for 20 years or being resumed as part of an expanded ACT.

The NSW Government recently agreed to Yass Valley Council's plan to limit development to that currently permitted under RU1 rural zoning and 40 ha minimum lot size but rejected Council's request to rezone the area RU6.

According to Yass Valley Council, the RU6 zone would have included the same permitted land use as RU1 less the intensive livestock agriculture, extractive industries and trucking depots.

### **A visionless future for the land in the 5km zone**

So, without any clear vision for the future, the land along the ACT NSW border in NSW has been parked in limbo for up to 20 years, but it will eventually be developed for urban outcomes according to the NSW Government's South East and Tablelands Regional Plan.

The 20 years of uncertainty about the land is the current Council's plan. It is not an irreversible. A change of Council or the Regional Plan or the movement of the ACT NSW border into Yass Valley could result in urban outcomes well before 20 years.

### **Canberra's industrial and urban slum**

Until detailed planning for the urban outcomes starts, we can expect recycling depots, tucking depots, piggeries, chook farms and other intensive livestock activities as well as mining, large solar farms and recycling depots to be permitted in the 5km zone along the border.

We can also expect more high-density attached-housing, often referred to as instant slums, in sporadic

developments such as is approved for Ginninderry/Parkwood.

These developments will all be aimed at making a profit for the big developers such as the ACT Government rather than improving the quality of life for those living in the area.

### **What is the future of the 5km zone?**

All the undesirable developments mentioned above will change the much loved the open rural landscape in the 5km zone. The result will have the same effect on the natural flora and fauna as has happened in the high-density suburbs across the border in Canberra.

That landscape and open rural space will exist beyond 5km from the border, but not within the 5km border based on what Council and the NSW Government has approved for Ginninderry/Parkwood, in particular the effect on the highly environmentally sensitive Ginninderra Falls and Murrumbidgee River area.

You can expect the bulldozers to strip the native vegetation, displace or kill the native flora and fauna and turn the whole 150 square km into one big housing development and industrial complex.

How this affects you depends on your future plans for your land. There are basically three groups of people in the 5km zone, those that want no change, those that want to stay living in the area, retain the rural outlook and achieve the best economic, social and environmental outcome for the land, and those who believe that there is no future for them in the area.

### **The "Head in the sand" group**

Some people think there won't be any change to the area, at least not in their lifetime so no need to worry about change. They give the 20-year freeze on development as justification for their claim that nothing is going to change soon.

However massive change is more likely than no change given in the most valuable land in the peri urban area around the ACT is the 5km zone along the northern border.

The ACT population is growing and is predicted to continue to grow. This will put more pressure to convert rural land to housing. The ACT Government has a policy of limiting land sales to maximize profit and focus all development on high density housing. This policy and massive profits to be made will drive the urban development into the neighbouring NSW land.

Large urban developments that are being developed for Yass and Murrumbateman are only viable because development of more attractive land near to Canberra has been blocked, temporarily, until the profit has been made from those developments.

Once the bulldozers finish with Yass, Murrumbateman and Ginninderry/Parkwood you can expect them to all head for the border area like bees to a ~~money~~ honey pot

Change in the 5km zone is inevitable and it will be urban, the question is when will it start and who will do it?

The NSW Government advised Council in September 2018 to limit a freeze on development in the 5km zone to 5 years. That provides an indication of the timing of development, although the NSW Government recently did a backflip and agreed to the Council's 20 year freeze.

If Ginninderry/Parkwood is any indication, we can expect either the ACT Government to do the development of the 5km zone (about 150 square km in total) or the land to be given to the ACT Government in exchange for desperately needed water for the Yass and Murrumbateman developments.

The urban outcome for the 5km zone will be driven by profits, not preserving the rural landscape or improving the quality of life for those living there.

### The "Rural residential" group

The majority of landowners in the 5km zone would like to stay where they are and try and improve the social, economic and environment amenity of the area. They claim that this can be achieved by rezoning the 5km zone to rural residential. Such zones exist around Yass, Murrumbateman and most towns and cities in Australia.

Rural residential areas are highly valued for the benefits of the rural landscape, improved land management, better facilities and an overall improvement in the quality of life for those living in those areas as well as the surrounding community.

Unfortunately, the NSW Government's South East and Tablelands Regional Plan clearly states that rural residential development is not permitted as it would make it more difficult to convert the land to urban outcomes.

In other words, the NSW Government wants to limit the number of landowners in the 5km zone so that it will be easy to push them over and get their land for high density housing at minimum cost.

It is unlikely that the NSW Cabinet who controls the Regional Plan will do another backflip and allow rural residential development along the ACT NSW border.

### The "Let's get out now" group

The pragmatic approach by many landowners in the 5km zone is to try and get the best price they can get for their land and get out of the way of the tidal wave of urban development that is coming.

They are worried that the comments by Council and others about moving the border around Ginninderry/Parkwood will result in the whole 5km zone becoming part of the ACT. If that occurs, then the land would be resumed by the NSW Government at a fraction of its value as urban land and given to the ACT

Government, most likely in exchange for the ACT Government supplying water to Yass and Murrumbateman.

Who would object to the ACT Border moving north 5km? The only identifiable opposition would be the affected landowners and they represent a miniscule number of voters so would have very little chance of stopping the border movement.

The "Let's get out now" group want the NSW Government to make a clear statement about making the 5km zone an urban area and to produce a timetable. This will start the process moving and establish the value of the land as urban land before any announcement is made to resume the land.

If the announcement is made to resume the land for the ACT before a clear statement is made about its urban future, the resumption value of the land will be based on its rural zoning, not potential urban zoning. The difference in price for the land will be at least an order of magnitude, but the urban outcome will occur anyway.

### Where to now?

There hasn't been adequate public consultation so far on the best use of the land in the 5km zone. The **5km ACT NSW border zone Planning Group** was established to allow all landowners in the area to have a collective voice on matters concerning our land.

Come to the meeting on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> February and discuss the future of your land. We will invite speakers from **Yass Valley Council, NSW Government, ACT Government, Town Planner and a Developer** to give a short speech and answer questions.

More information can be obtained from the **ccepl.com.au** website or the **5KZplanninggroup** on Facebook or by email to [5kzplanninggroup@gmail.com](mailto:5kzplanninggroup@gmail.com)