

INGLESIDE PRECINCT SUSTAINABILITY SUBMISSION

Setting the standard for a sustainable future

Summary

The planning process now underway for the Ingleside development is providing a good opportunity for residents to hear about progress and to contribute to the planning process. However a group of residents and Community Reference Group members are concerned at the lack of focus on the stated vision that Ingleside is to be a sustainable development.

The aim of this submission is to provide critical comment on the state of planning as evidenced at the recent round of Ingleside Workshops held in December 2014. The submission makes the following points:

- The Ingleside Vision Statement commits the development to provide a “sustainable community”. There has been no evident commitment so far in the planning process to provide any assurance that this goal will be achieved.
- Ingleside is in danger of becoming another mediocre development that is the product of a lack of foresight in the current planning phase.
- In the Table of Objectives in the Pittwater Precinct Project Plan there is no reference to the need for the Department of Planning to address the vision of a sustainable community.
- There has been little discussion or focus on the measures we must introduce for sustainable development.
- Current planning is lacking in a strong commitment to safeguarding biodiversity and wildlife.
- There has been no real consideration of the acute impending transport chaos that private car use will create when an additional 3,500 dwellings are occupied.
- To address these shortcomings and set a course for embracing sustainable development in all its aspects will require a further consultative meeting before the Planning Report is prepared.

Preamble

It is becoming increasingly clear that we must significantly reduce our impact on the planet’s ecosystems if we are to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and preserve our native species from ongoing extinction. We will fail if we proceed with ‘business as usual’. We must change the way we do business and development, and the current planning process for Ingleside does not appear to be delivering.

Throughout the world, including Australia, there is a growing number of innovative developments that have grasped the nettle and moved to meet the challenge. Ingleside is our chance to create a showcase development that shows how we can change direction and live more sustainably: meet the challenge, reap the rewards.

Neither the Reference Group meetings nor the Community Workshops have focused on developing Ingleside in line with world’s best practice in sustainability goals. In facilitated table discussions at the Workshops making Ingleside a model of sustainable development has been conspicuously absent.

In the discussions so far there has been little or no reference to the Pittwater 2020 Strategic Plan or the 2025 Strategic Plan, or its Vision, Objectives, Strategic Initiatives, Measurement and Feedback. The Strategic Plan was developed by the community together with council, and includes strategies for the Built Environment, Transport, and the Natural Environment. The Vision for Pittwater is:

“to be a vibrant sustainable community of connected villages inspired by bush, beach, and water”

It is important to note that it was created at the direction of the State Government, and is the basis for all development in Pittwater. All development in Pittwater should therefore fulfill the vision set out in the Pittwater Strategic Plan.

This Pittwater vision for Ingleside is embedded in a Council resolution of 18 February 2013, which is referred to in documents tabled at the Ingleside Reference Group Meeting of 25 September 2013, specifically requesting that the planning process provides:...

”a sustainable and ecologically sensitive development form based on the highest standards”.

To date, while every presentation by Council officers has referred to sustainability as the basis for the Ingleside development, this has not been reflected in the consultants’ presentations.

The Ingleside development will take place over 20 years or so and we need to plan for these measures now. This is an opportunity to break free from the conventional path that leads to mere tokenism, and the all too common reality of unsustainable development.

To embrace the “highest standards”, of sustainable development we recommend that the Ingleside planning process adopts the principles in the internationally recognised Living Building Challenge – Communities Tool, which sets a high standard for the design of sustainable developments. See Appendix - <http://living-future.org/lbc>

Sustainable Development Standards

For Ingleside to achieve anything even close to world’s best practice in sustainable development it would need to incorporate as a minimum:

- A sewage treatment plant with tertiary wastewater distributed to all properties in the development
- Reuse of greywater on site using small waste water gardens
- Rainwater harvesting on all buildings with appropriate use, and balancing the reduction in mains water demand with ecological flows to Mullet Creek and the Warriewood wetlands.
- Buildings that have annual net zero energy requirements, through provision of solar panels (and potentially battery storage) to provide the net electricity energy requirements.
- A significantly tougher set of BASIX building requirements to reduce energy and water needs in accordance with Pittwater Council’s *Steps to a Sustainable Home* document.
- Amendment to the BASIX SEPP, allowing local variations increasing the minimum standards, including explicit requirements for solar orientation and passive design.
- Solar powered street lighting.
- Every hot water system using solar power or PV powered heat pump technology.
- Community gardens to encourage local food production
- Measures to facilitate public transport both within Ingleside and also outside as a preferable option to car use

Environmental Controls

To provide an effective safeguard against impacts on vegetation and wildlife, the program will need to ensure that:

- The maximum amount possible of existing native vegetation is left undeveloped.
- Effective and proven wildlife corridors to enable easy movement of wildlife across the district.
- Areas of unique bio-diversity are protected from any development.

Transport

There are major problems in providing acceptable peak hour access to Ingleside. Main routes are already beyond 100% capacity during peak hours, causing significant delays, and a further 3,500 dwellings will create an utterly dysfunctional and economically counter-productive situation.

Measures to rectify this looming problem should be incorporated into the development program:

- The planning process must engage Transport for NSW for provision and coordination of public transport, including regular rapid local shuttle loop services linking to BRTs on both Pittwater Rd (south to Brookvale and Sydney) and Mona Vale Rd (west to Macquarie Park etc).
- Walkways and cycleways throughout to reduce private car dependence.

Financial Viability

At present there seems to be an ad hoc approach to provision of infrastructure, with a large degree of dependence upon the private sector. This may be a viable model, but there needs to be a clear economic pathway mapped out to ensure the vision is achieved.

One of the obstacles to delivery of well planned integrated sustainable development is the disparate interests of the plethora of owners. There are two clear strategies for overcoming this without disenfranchising current owner's opportunities to realise the value of their land:

- Sector development: this regulatory planning tool has already proven in Warriewood Valley.
- Aggregated ownership: encouraged in tandem with sector development, having suitable* larger land developer/builders buying up smaller lots gives those owners good economic returns, and also gives the best chance of good design and sustainability outcomes.

*suitable developers: those with a stated sustainability policies matched with a proven track record of high outcome developments. One has already expressed interest in pursuing this. The 'suitability' criteria will exclude at least one well known corporation.

Moving Forward

Vision

The Ingleside Vision Statement calls for a "sustainable community". Coupled with Pittwater Council's resolution for Ingleside to become "a sustainable and ecologically sensitive development form based on the highest standards", we expect Ingleside to be a shining example of how a modern vibrant community can live in harmony with nature and have a zero net impact on our environment.

To ensure Ingleside is developed in line with world's best practice with respect to achieving these sustainability goals, we request that the Planning Report (expected early in 2015) embodies clear and specific sustainability goals and makes it clear that the development is aiming for a very significant improvement over business as usual.

Objectives Update

In Table 3-1 - **Summary of Project Stakeholders and Objectives** – there is no mention of any sustainable objective for the Department of Planning. A suggested additional objective could be:

Ensuring that all aspects of the development meet or exceed the Pittwater Council objective that Ingleside will be a "sustainable and ecologically sensitive development form based on the highest standards."

Consultative Meeting

To set a course and embed the necessary objectives for embracing sustainable development in all its aspects will require a further consultative meeting before the next Planning Report. This could take the form of a special Ingleside Reference Group meeting.

Group Members

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Appendix

Pittwater 2025 Strategic Plan – Extract

Defining Sustainability in Pittwater

Council's Sustainability Policy (2006) defines sustainability as:

“development that improves the quality of life, both now and into the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends”– the goal of Australia’s National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development.

Sustainability requires living within the limits of the earth’s capacity to meet the needs of present and future generations of people, plants and animals. This requires the five interlinked and interdependent Key Directions working together and being taken into account when making decisions to ensure a truly sustainable Pittwater.

In the context of Pittwater 2025, sustainability is about considering the needs of the community, the environment and the economy to ensure future generations have the same or improved quality the current generation in relation to health, wellbeing, justice, access and equity.

Examples of similar developments

Currumbin Ecovillage

The Ecovillage at Currumbin achieves:

- Self-sufficiency in energy usage and complete autonomy in water and waste water recycling:
- 80% of site as open-space, 50% environmental reserve, and the same yield as standard development
- Food and material self-sufficiency through edible landscaping and streetscaping, household farming and other productive strategies
- Preservation of natural landforms and rehabilitation of the degraded site’s environmental integrity
- Extensive wildlife corridors, negligible vegetation loss and extensive native plant regeneration
- Cutting edge integrated water quality measures to exemplify Water Sensitive Urban Design
- Cultural Heritage honoured and integrated
- Mix of socially-oriented innovative ecological, energy efficient housing catering for diverse needs
- On-site work strategies and facilities for village and local community
- Waste recycling strategies including an innovative RRR recycling centre
- Comprehensive traffic saving strategies to reduce vehicle impacts on and off site
- Well researched administrative framework providing social equity & enduring community integrity
- Initial and ongoing social planning to foster cohesion and promote sustainable community
- Continuing education of sustainable living and development practices via the Interpretive Centre
- Sustainable economic performance both with the development and the ongoing community.

To build a house in the ecovillage requires owners and builders to meet specific building codes that encourage sustainable building practices which improve quality of life for occupants and help to reduce on-going operation costs. For example, most residents have little or no electricity bills.

The innovative project design has followed a collaborative approach with an extensive and unprecedented Community Consultation program yielding strong design input from indigenous groups, residents, stakeholder groups, referral agencies and the general public.

Currently, the final stages of construction approach completion and the project has received an extraordinary market response with over 85% pre-commitment. The Interpretive Centre, officially opened by Qld Premier the Hon Peter Beattie in December 2005, publicly showcases the project’s innovative subdivision design. The Ecovillage is a Queensland Govt

Energywise and Waterwise Demonstration Project and involves significant partnership with community universities, industry and various tiers of government. The Ecovillage has won 21 Awards from industry and Government, including the highest honour in the world, the FIABCI (International Real Estate Federation) Prix d’Excellence for Environmental Development.

The product of 11 years of worldwide research and design, **the developer established a benchmark standard for sustainable residential development, with environmental, social and economic sustainability as its driving principles.**

Narara ecovillage

<http://webfaction.nararaecovillage.com/about-us/our-vision/>

This development near Gosford has set high sustainable living goals

Mullum Creek

Design & Guidelines

To ensure the Mullum Creek vision of a sustainable and beautiful estate is achieved, guidelines have been prepared for homes and landscapes.

Sustainability is Mullum Creek's focus. We want to achieve this through excellence in home energy efficiency and solar power, water conservation, sustainable building materials and best-practice construction techniques.

Homes and landscapes on each lot will respect every neighbour's access to sunlight, safeguarding everyone's interest in energy-efficient solar design.

The estate's guidelines promote high-quality, attractive homes.

The main features of the guidelines are:

- 7.5 star energy efficiency ratings for all homes
- Generation and use of solar power
- Rainwater tanks for domestic and other uses
- Building materials and construction techniques that minimise environmental impact
- Generous building envelopes on each lot to promote the best home location and protect neighbours' access to sunlight and views
- Measures to ensure high-quality aesthetic character and appearance across the estate.

A design panel of architectural, landscape and sustainability experts will review and advise on the designs for all homes and landscaping.

A wide range of resources will be available to everyone who purchases a lot at Mullum Creek to help meet the guidelines easily. This includes free initial consultations with the estate's design and sustainability consultants, as well as access to listings of suitable professionals and suggestions for appropriate materials and building techniques.

At Mullum Creek we aim for homes that are not only light on the environment, but that are comfortable, attractive and save on energy and water bills for years to come.

<http://www.mullumcreek.com.au/>

Googong Township

Googong Township is a self-contained township located a 10 minute drive south of Queanbeyan which will eventually accommodate around 5,500 houses in a rural setting. The project will include schools, shops, community facilities, parks and playing fields.

Environmental requirements at Googong have been strengthened so that new houses built there are required to achieve a minimum 40% reduction in energy consumption compared to a standard house, and a 50% reduction in water consumption.

An innovative waste water management system has been installed which will provide recycled water to each housing lot for garden watering and toilet flushing.

In addition to these enhanced environmental initiatives, Queanbeyan City Council has developed a free Sustainable Building Advisory Service for new home-owners at Googong to encourage the take-up and incorporation of further sustainable building features to improve the comfort, energy efficiency and cost savings of new houses being built.

<http://www.googong.com.au>

The Living Building Challenge

THE LIVING **COMMUNITY** CHALLENGE IS A PHILOSOPHY, CERTIFICATION AND ADVOCACY TOOL FOR PROJECTS TO MOVE BEYOND MERELY BEING LESS BAD AND TO BECOME TRULY REGENERATIVE

The Living **Community** Challenge™ is the built environment's most rigorous performance standard. It calls for the creation of building projects at all scales that operate as cleanly, beautifully and efficiently as nature's architecture. - <http://living-future.org/lbc>