

Overdevelopment at Putney

Transcript of a video produced by CAPO

The following is a transcript of a video produced in March 2006 by the Coalition Against Private Overdevelopment (CAPO) – a sub-committee of the Putney and District Progress Association. The video concerns the activities of CAPO and the local community of Putney, Ryde and surrounding districts in their fight against the overdevelopment of the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney (RRCS) site in Ryde/Putney.



Hi. My name is Rolf Clapham and during the next few minutes, I'm going to tell you about the proposed overdevelopment in the suburb of Putney. It's where I live and it's located on the Parramatta River 12 kilometres from Sydney's CBD.

What may happen to Putney should be a warning to all of us. Five months ago 200 residents attended an information session on the proposed development for the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney. The Centre has been a part of the area for over 100 years, during which time has performed a valuable service for the people of Sydney and New South Wales.

However, this private not for profit organisation claim they need to sell off 90% of their site to fund a new centre, or is this just super profit for developers?

At the session, residents were told that all existing buildings would be demolished, and a 5 Storey high rehabilitation Centre would be build in its place; and to our dismay a proposal for 900 dwellings including 800 units up to 6 storeys high would be sold off to the highest bidder.

The residents were shocked that no plans had been made for the increased traffic. The local roads are already 240% over RTA recommended design guidelines. How then can you add thousands more cars a day to this?

It soon became clear that the board and CEO of the Centre weren't listening. They decided to use the NSW Government's State Significance legislation to bypass council, who twice had not approved the development, and apply directly to the Minister for planning for approval.

As members of the Putney Progress Association, we agreed to form a sub-committee called CAPO, to fight this overdevelopment.

Our first rally in October 2005 attracted over 400 people. Residents were stunned by the scale of the development, and the fact that Putney with only 1500 dwellings, is going to be increased by 60% with 900 new dwellings.

In December we had a second rally. Over a 1000 people marched the streets and voted for a low density housing proposal. The community wanted to show their disgust and took the signs to proudly show their opposition throughout the suburb.



It was then that Minister Sartor delegated a meeting with the Department of Planning. The department recognised the enormous support of thousands in the community. We really thought the department was listening, and that our concerns would be addressed.

However, is the State Government merely going through the motions? We have seen draft conditions of consent that show they have not reduced the number of units or the density, and they are still putting the traffic on to local roads and not only on to Victoria Road.

So in the end you've got to ask, why is this happening? Why does it seem the state Government are more interested in looking after the developer, than over 2500 concerned voters who have signed petitions opposing the overdevelopment.

This site is not a development area in Mr Iemma's City of Cities urban consolidation plan. This is supposed to be the 80% of Sydney that will not have its character ruined. How can State Government even consider approving this development?

So if they ignore their own policy within two months of its release on this site, what will they do to you in your suburb?

If the traffic and density issues at the rehabilitation centre site are ignored you need to show the State Government in March 2007 that ignoring any community's concerns will not be tolerated, by voting them out.

Thanks for your time. This isn't what we want for our village. Will this happen to you?