

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

HIGH DENSITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE HILLS

MIKE DAVIES

The Government intends to increase the population between Mundaring, Toodyay and Northam by 45 - 80,000 people even though there is land available in the metro area to house a further 586,000 people. Nobody will be unaffected by this!

WHERE?

Parkerville, Stoneville and Gidgegannup - more are planned. These sites are high density - some blocks are 350 square metres. The Stoneville subdivision is proposed to contain 1709 residential lots housing 4500-5000 people, 71% of which will be 800 square metres or less.

WHEN?

The CEO of one of the developers said that the sewerage problems are being addressed with a view to seeking planning approval in the near future.

WHY IS HIGH DENSITY A PROBLEM?

Crime: Dense urbanisation and crime go hand in hand. People have told us they moved here from the Vines because since "Ellenbrook" was

built crime and graffiti have skyrocketed. Crime will increase - will our Police Force? Will we end up importing Midland's problems as a result of Midland's re-development?

The Health System: Can the present health system cope? The hardworking Mundaring Medical Centre knows the difficulties of getting doctors to practice in the Hills - a surgery in Chidlow completed 2 years ago stands empty. Furthermore Swan Districts Hospital is already under extreme pressure - Royal Perth is to close - more pressure. These new towns will mean huge population increases. Let's hope the newcomers are all healthy - and so are you!

Financial: People come to the Hills for the quiet life. to escape suburbia - high density will destroy that. The Hills are known for lower property values - these developments are intended to be low cost housing. It is no secret that Homeswest have been looking for large tracts of land here for the last 10 years. Will all this make your property worth more?

treatment plant". It continues to operate because 500 toilets are connected to it. It discharges treated sewage into Jarrah Creek which feeds the Jane Brook catchment and the Swan River. It was meant to water The Harry Riseborough Oval in the summer but has only been able to do so on a few occasions due to poor water quality. The systems envisaged for the new developments will be more rudimentary than Mundaring's.

It may be that the sewage will have to be pumped from here to join the Metro system via a large over ground "Golden" pipeline - coming to a road near you soon!

Social: Where will all these people work? What about the cost of travel? What will there be for the youngsters?

Infrastructure: The impact of such an increase in population (12 - 15000 people) will cause a huge increase in road traffic. Roads are planned to be widened, junctions modified.

Bushfires were a major threat last summer - with increased population the risks can only be greater. We have been told that Stoneville will lose its Bush Fire Brigade if this goes ahead.

Our power system is already inadequate. Do you really believe that an increase in population will remedy this?

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

There are ways that we can preserve the social and environmental aspects of our community without obstructing development but, it needs to be of an appropriate kind that reflects the current 'Hills Lifestyle'. Blocks need to be no smaller than half an acre, thereby placing less impact on the environment and social structure.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Visit our website www.saveperthhills.org. Register your interest with the proposed Stoneville Progress Association who can give you further information. Talk to your friends and neighbours. Contact all Council members and ask if they support dense urbanisation. Contact your local MP Jaye Radisich and ask the same. Write to your local magazine.

Not everyone will share the same views on this issue, but that is what democracy is all about - it requires everyone's involvement. Whatever the outcome now is the time to have your say. It will affect the rest of your life, no matter where you live.

If you want more information please contact Mike Davies on 9295 3979 or Lois Van Geloven on 9295 3146.

Environmental:

These developments will inevitably increase the destruction of flora, fauna and black cockatoo habitat. More traffic = more noise, more pollution, more road kill. Fertiliser from lawns, and possibly treated sewage, will enter our waterways and ultimately the Swan river.

Scheme water will need to be piped overground from Sawyers Valley but the biggest problem is sewage disposal. These developments could discharge treated sewage into local creeks as does the Mundaring Plant.

The Water Corporation's state of the art Mundaring Sewage Plant has had consistent problems with "poor water quality from the main

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Enquiries: Rosemary Monger 9274 0946