

Mohamad Khaled

Bringelly NSW 2556

Dear Sir, Madame

When I looked at the new Draft Plan, I thought of an abstract artist using a brushful of blue colour applied to a huge canvas. While sitting back and looking from a distance, the artist thought he should add some other colours or shapes here and there.

What struck me about the artist AND the Draft Plan is this: A lack of vision.

I have attended a lot of forums and meetings about the Aerotropolis. The general message from the speakers has been: "We are working on an outstanding futuristic plan for the area".

Can anyone please advise the community where the future is in this proposed Enterprise Zone (see 'brushful of blue' above)? It looks like an old-fashioned design that belongs in the 19th century.

At the last meeting in Twin Creeks, the Aerotropolis Authority speakers were talking about 22nd-century plans and technology. Please can somebody tell the community what that is?

Can you identify what sort of technology humans will be using 100 years from now?

Does someone among you know how work will be conducted in the future? And how many of us will be working from an office or from home? Bob Carr when NSW Premier, once announced that Minchinbury/Erskine Park would be an 'employment mecca' and employ tens of thousands of people. Look closely now – it employs hardly one thousand.

That's what I see happening to your current Draft Plan.

Earmarking environmentally and agriculturally valuable land as an Enterprise Zone alone will waste precious land by covering it with industrial warehouses employing but a handful of forklift operators that will have a very limited employment life.

Here are some thoughts about already obvious trends in land use, technologies and employment that the Draft Plan is not preparing for.

Land use and technologies

A much better land use solution would be to copy the success of Macquarie Park, as a perfect mix for commercial and residential. Such mixed uses is the way of the future. And it would certainly be a more fitting and suitable use of this valuable land into the 22nd century, as is supposedly envisioned by the Aerotropolis Authority.

The technologies of the 22nd century – even within the current century – will quickly render most if not all the listed entries in the Enterprise Zone obsolete.

Cars of the future will be autonomous, capable of flight and of parking on top of buildings and will also require fewer service professionals. Aeroplanes will be quiet and be powered by quite enviro-friendly engines, rendering the current noise contour as an extreme.

New aircraft technologies are already emerging. For example, an all-electric commercial aircraft has been successfully tested in Canada – using a 750 hp electric motor designed in Australia.

Commercial sub-orbital space flights to commercially move people and goods across the world in a few hours have been foreshadowed since at least 2014.

How far away are personal drones for commuting? Or time-capsule travel?

These new (21st and 22nd century) technologies herald a very different future requiring much more visionary decisions about appropriate land use for this area, incorporating very different noise contours. Yet despite these prospects, before flight paths have even been announced, the Draft Plan is condemning our properties with an identified noise contour based only on current technologies. For over 30 years Australia has used ANEF system for measuring noise around airports. I urge you to remove any references to the untested NASF system in relation to noise contour from your documents to ensure that there is no confusion over where housing can be located around the Western Sydney Airport and increase the size of Mix Use zoning, to ensure future validity of the Aerotropolis Core as a vibrant place to live and work. More people means more jobs.

Employment

The largest sector of employment in Australia today is aged care, followed by early childhood education and health. Yet in the Draft Plan, these sectors will not be allowed in the Enterprise Zone precincts. By contrast, they would be a comfortable fit in a mixed commercial/residential zoning, especially in a future era with far less aircraft noise.

Technology-based enterprises are increasingly using artificial intelligence (AI) robots and employing fewer people. Even the mining industry utilising driver-less trains and machinery controlled remotely from afar.

Some nations are experimenting with the ideas of UBI (Universal Basic Income), and of shorter working weeks or fewer working hours per days. Finland, Sweden, New Zealand and Japan, for example, have already had positive improvements in productivity, job satisfaction and other benefits from such changes.

Numerous studies have for some time been foreshadowing that up to 50 percent of today's jobs will be gone within less than two decades.

What does the 22nd century have in store?

Finally ...

I strongly urge you to reconsider and revise the Draft Plan so that it takes account of these trends and properly reflects the 22nd century your speakers talked about in the last two forums and to increase the Mixed Zone in the Aerotropolis Core. Recent rains indicated that moving the CBD to a higher ground and away from flood area is a smart decision.

I request that you reconsider the definition and associated usages under Enterprise land zoning in order to preserve flexibility and future proof emerging industries which will deliver on the vision of the Aerotropolis.

In its current form, the plan has no vision. It is just someone filling a canvas with a large brushful of the same colour. Blue everywhere.

With regards

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