



**Tooronga Village**

**Boroondara Planning Scheme  
Amendment C70**

**Built Form & Open Space Submission**

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# **Planning and Environment Act 1987**

## **Boroondara Planning Scheme - Amendment C70**

### **Submission on behalf of Tooronga Action Group 'TAG'**

## **Built Form and Open Space**

### **1. View of Stockland's Proposal**

#### **1.1 Stockland's Proposal Lacks Precision and Commitment**

**1.1.1** Coles Myer (the owner of the Tooronga Village and the Brickworks sites) has entered into an option agreement with Stockland to develop the Tooronga Village and Brickworks sites. In making the decision whether or not to exercise the option, the developer will make a commercial judgement on two components of value 1) the Commercial Value of the Site and 2) the apportionment of that value between it and the owner. The exercise price of the option is fixed until next year, so the variable to be determined at this time is the Commercial Value of the Site, which largely hinges on the determination of the Panel.

**1.1.2** The 'Incorporated Plan' accompanying Amendment C70 is to be read and understood with the Tooronga Village reference document. It is unclear from the proponent's brief description of the housing proposal exactly what is intended - no architectural plans and specifications are submitted and evaluation of the impact of so many newly installed residents in the new dwellings receives little attention.

**1.1.3** The area of greatest uncertainty (and discomfiture for the community) is built form and open space where the Panel and the community are asked to accept ‘indicative’ plans. Moreover, there is monumental difference between the building envelopes submitted for approval and the indicative plan proposed by the developer for Tooronga Village.

*“a range of housing types are proposed in a variety of sizes in the different precincts of the site. The dwellings that have been developed in this indicative concept”*

**1.1.4** Why the Community is Concerned? In the mid 1980s, after exhibition and consultation, the community gave its blessing to the construction of a 29,000 sq.mt. office building. You can imagine the community’s dismay with the planning process when the Comprehensive Development Zone was put in place and the building height and mass was lifted by 60% reflected in a dominating building of 46,000 sq.mt with no additional community input. Argued at the time by planning authorities that this would not create a precedent for the area, it is ironic that here we are today, now debating the height of the Tooronga Village site development in relation to the Coles Myer building, and being asked yet again to defer resolution of outstanding traffic and car parking problems. Many in the community still want the original parties to the CDZ, where they have a continuing involvement, to step forward to address carry forward problems so that a development of far more potential can evolve from the existing proposal.

**1.1.5** Nevertheless, the community must make judgment on the building envelopes and heights presented to it now. It is assured of generous

setbacks and stepping but we are expected to take this on Trust. With only this information to hand Tooronga Action Group registers the following concerns about Built Form and Open Space

- Housing Density is 6 times greater than Boroondara Average
- Building heights will sour view lines
- Buildings will tower over neighbours
- Buildings are massed on site boundaries
- Buildings will encroach on the Gardiners Creek recreational park

**1.1.6** In addition to the matters referred to above, there is little to evidence recognition of the environmental matters referred to in Clause 21.06 of the Boroondara Planning Scheme, “Create ‘Urban Village’ communities in low traffic environments, close to services and public transport”

## **1.2 Boroondara City Council’s Position on Stockland’s Proposal**

Boroondara seeks to amend Stockland’s proposal by

- Reducing the scale of the two higher building envelopes proposed for Precinct 1, occupying the site's northeast quadrant, abutting Toorak and Tooronga Roads, so as to ensure that no building is higher than the Coles Myer building and that the height of built form "steps" down the site.
- Introducing a 30m setback from the northern side of the shared bike path along the site's southern boundary, adjacent to Gardiners Creek.

- Including a statutory provision in the amendment to formalise the existing use of part of the land as a spillover staff car park for up to 500 cars for the adjoining Coles Myer office use.

### **1.3 Tooronga Action Group's Position**

Tooronga Action Group submits that the Urban Design Framework 'UDF', as the last meaningful consultation with the community, is the proper reference point for assessment of Stockland's proposal.

TAG's position on the Built Form and Open Space elements of Stockland's proposal goes further than Boroondara Council's and seeks to

- Impose an absolute height limit of the Coles Myer Office Building (UDF B1.1) as the highest point of development of the site aligned with a commitment to ensure that the built form respects the topography (UDF B1.3) and is stepped down (UDF B4.2).
  - The maximum contemplated for the UDF was 45 AHD - effectively this would reduce the height of three buildings in Precinct 1
- Reduce the intensity of the development on the site such that the site use and floor area reflect the limits of infrastructure capacity (e.g. the surrounding road network and the potential impact on the site's surrounds (e.g. Traffic and amenity) (UDF U1) and require convenient and sufficient parking to meet all its demands .....contained on site (UDF U2)

- Impose a proper set back and prevent buildings from shadowing the Gardiners Creek recreational corridor (UDF U4) and maximise and improve the quality of this open space (UDF U8). Facilitate recreational movements (cycling, walking and jogging) to and within the Gardiners Creek corridor (UDF M4)

## **2. Toorongas Challenges**

### **2.1 The Toorongas Site has many challenges**

Most challenges are well documented

- Topography
- Flooding
- Powerlines

Other regional challenges are well documented

- Traffic

Some benefits are overstated

- Access to Public Transport

### **2.2 Past (Poor) Planning is Responsible for Even Greater Challenges**

#### **2.2.1 The Overwhelming Mass of the CML Building Influences Future Development**

Already a complex site, the glowering presence of the Coles Myer office building continues to impact on the attractiveness of the site for high value residential use. Add to the impacts on neighbourhood character reported above,

- the winter shadow cast by the Coles Myer office building and car park on the intensive residential development to the west,
- along with concerns over flooding and
- the proximity of power lines and marketability of these residences is a concern.

### **2.2.2 And, Impacts Adversely on Neighbourhood Character**

The Coles Myer office building impacted adversely on the neighbourhood character of Tooronga by

- presenting over scaled building mass to residents along Toorak and Tooronga Roads and to the east (e.g. Parkin, Rix, Faircroft area)
- adding to traffic congestion along Toorak and Tooronga Roads particularly in the morning when congestion at the entrance of the CML building is worst, and
- causing overspill car parking of employees and residents in local streets

### 3. Neighbourhood Integration

#### 3.1 Neighbourhood Character

- A significant neighbourhood characteristic of Boroondara is its tree lined streets and residential open space.
- Tree lined streets are found adjacent to the subject site, and the area to the North of Toorak Road and to the East of the site is comprised of well established and quality housing. (A discussion of the surrounding neighbourhood can be found in the Appendix 2 to TAGs Policy submission)

#### 3.2 Neighbourhood Interfacing

3.2.1 The Stockland Proposal assures residents that: *“Amenity and site interface considerations have been a key issue in the development of the proposed amendment and the planning control framework it seeks to introduce into the Boroondara Planning Scheme. “*

Notwithstanding shortcomings identified in this document, Stockland is given credit for making a genuine attempt to respond to the UDF, recognising that it must put its commercial agenda first. Often, what Stockland judges to be a proper response, the community judges differently. For example, Stockland’s proposal includes

*“ Detached two storey dwellings along the eastern site interface to ensure that the scale, massing and density of development is consistent with the character of the existing residential precinct “*

The community views this element of the development as far too intense and the interface is therefore comprehensively compromised.

- 3.2.2** On the North and West boundaries Stockland's proposal presents an unwelcoming and unfriendly barrier to neighbours and to travellers along Toorak and Tooronga Roads redolent of a "Walled City".

Stockland's response to matters such as building intensity, height and massing on the boundaries and to the treatment of the recreational corridor and open space is unengaging and unfriendly.

- 3.2.3** Also, the built form adjacent to the Burke Road South Reserve *"comprising apartment style development within a three to four storey building envelope"*.

The proximity to the Burke Road South Reserve will forever change the outlook of this tree-lined park, which also accommodates a children's playground.

## **4. Housing Density, Height and Massing**

### **4.1 Housing Density**

- 4.1.1** The Stockland Proposal includes (on a 10.6 Ha. Site) 600 dwellings together with 8000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail and 3800 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space – Melbourne 2030 encourages medium density housing but this must be adjudged to be extreme in a suburban neighbourhood context.

- 4.1.2** The housing density of the development is at least 6 times greater than the housing density of the areas encompassed within 500m and 1000 m radius.

		Density per Ha	
		pop'n	h'holds
Pre Development	Radius 500 m	18.8	7.9
	Radius 1000 m	24.4	9.7
Development	Radius 500 m	135.3	56.6
	Radius 1000 m	135.3	56.6
Post Development	Radius 500 m	32.6	13.7
	Radius 1000 m	28.0	11.2
	Glen Iris	25.8	10.2
	Boroondara	25.0	10.3

**4.1.3** It is informative to compare the extreme housing density of Tooronga with the more moderate (medium?) housing density of Kew Residential Services in Kew and Kensington Banks in Flemington.

Comparison of Sites	Ha	Dwellings	Density
Tooronga (10% Open Space)	10.6	600 +retail/Offices	56.6
Kew Residential (10% Open Space)	10.6	520 (320)	19.3
Kensington Banks (10% Open Space)	10.6	1300	32.5

**4.1.4** Interestingly, Kensington Banks recently won the International Real Estate Federations FIABCI 'Prix d'Excellence' for master planning. TAG's argument for quality, not quantity, in medium density development is consistent with the Directions of Melbourne 2030.

## **4.2 Building Heights and Massing**

**4.2.1** The Urban Design Framework is very clear that the absolute height for the development should be the Coles Myer building. The developer disregards principles B1.1 and B1.3 that building heights should step down according to the topography of the site. At the time of the UDF, the maximum height was assigned in successive steps of 45m AHD moving to 30m AHD on the site boundaries. Yet, three building envelopes proposed by the developer exceed 45m and the buildings envelopes fronting Toorak and Toorong Road, and particularly on the corner of Toorak and Toorong Roads are 35m AHD and 42m AHD.

**4.2.2** Even in the two blocks bordered by Toorak, Auburn, Hall and Toorong Roads (home to two streets of light commercial activity), building heights in these streets are far lower than proposed for Toorong. Yet in this area the buildings are nestled into low lying ground and the buildings respect the topography. In the case of Toorong Village perched on top of the hill, the presence of the Coles Myer office building and buildings proposed to rival Coles Myer for height and mass would present a massive imposition on neighbours view lines and a lasting testament to the vagaries of the planning process.

**4.2.3** Mention has already been made of the unwelcoming face of building masses on Toorak and Toorong Roads which require generous setbacks active edges

**4.2.4** The Urban Design Framework is very clear. Recreational movements (cycling, walking and jogging) are to be accommodated within the Gardiner's Creek corridor that would be promoted as a recreational corridor. Further that the quality of open space must be maximised and improved. Buildings proposed to be constructed on the boundary present unacceptable massing on, and shadowing of this recreational corridor.

## **5. Conclusions**

**5.1.1** Conclusions as per **1.3**

**5.1.2** The scale of development has shifted from 'medium density' as contemplated by Melbourne 2030 to 'Extreme Development' at greater than 6 times the density of its neighbours and therefore should be scaled back.

**5.1.3** Irrespective of the Panel's determination, should the developer withdraw, the developer's intentions become irrelevant. Tooronga Action Group requests that the Panel link its determination to completion by the existing developer and that that determination be subject to proper exhibition and review of the development plan which is not yet tabled.

## Housing and Population Density Pre and Post Development

		Population	Households	Ha	Sq Km	Pop'n per household	Density per Ha		Density per Sq Km	
							pop'n	h'holds	pop'n	h'holds
Pre Development	Radius 500 m	1,474	617	78.5	0.79	2.39	18.8	7.9	1,876.8	785.6
	Radius 1000 m	7,667	3,033	314.2	3.14	2.53	24.4	9.7	2,440.5	965.4
Development	Radius 500 m	1,434	600	10.6	0.11	2.39	135.3	56.6	13,528.3	5,660.4
	Radius 1000 m	1,434	600	10.6	0.11	2.39	135.3	56.6	13,528.3	5,660.4
Post Development	Radius 500 m	2,908	1,217	89.1	0.89	2.39	32.6	13.7	3,262.3	1,365.3
	Radius 1000 m	9,101	3,633	324.8	3.25	2.51	28.0	11.2	2,802.4	1,118.7
	Glen Iris	13,925	5,521	540.0	5.40	2.52	25.8	10.2	2,578.7	1,022.4
	Boroondara	150,293	61,716	6019.0	60.19	2.44	25.0	10.3	2,497.0	1,025.4