



Bart Bassett MP

Member for Londonderry



3 February 2012

Mrs Colleen Turnbull
Secretary
North Richmond District Community Action Association
PO Box 3078
GROSE VALE NSW 2753

Dear Mrs Turnbull,

I write to formally notify the NRDCAA that I will not be attending the meeting that is scheduled for the 20th February 2012. I attended your last meeting in good faith and with an open mind. As the State Member I wanted to hear the views of local residents and answer questions put to me on the issues to do with planned residential and aged care developments in North Richmond.

I felt that the Chair of the meeting, former United Services Union (USU), General Secretary Michael Want, was overtly biased and subjective and did not allow fair and objective debate.

This was evidenced by his refusal to allow me to address the meeting and answer questions about the issues at hand and also allowing abusive interjections from the floor against the Mayor when he was trying to address the meeting.

There is nothing wrong with free and fair debate and I, as a public figure always welcome and appreciate differing points of view and criticism of our actions. However when the debate turns personal, which happened during the Mayor's address, with interjections that were nasty and personally insulting and were not related to the subject matter of the meeting, then I draw the line.

It is for this reason that I regretfully advise that I will not be communicating with your association from now on.

As the State Member it is my duty to engage with my community and seek the views of those I represent, on complex issues that require a more detailed, thorough and considered response than mere grandstanding and personal abuse.

I speak as a local resident, who has lived west of the river for nearly 20 years, and has fought, for a better deal from governments to fix our local roads and reduce the traffic congestion and stress that we have experienced for years.

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It was the inaction over Windsor Road that lead me to run a campaign for funding to upgrade the road and build the flood evacuation route in Windsor, which we achieved and was paid for by developer contributions.

Even though I was publically taking a stand against the former Labor Government and their respective Ministers and MP's, at no time did I ever become personal or level abuse against my opponents and maintained a professional relationship with the Ministers I was dealing with over the issue. When they finally saw the logic in upgrading Windsor Road, I acknowledged their role and professionalism displayed throughout the campaign.

The former Labor Government did not fund the upgrade from Treasury instead used funds generated from residential developments that delivered the \$500 million project.

I have always said that I will never support any new developments unless there is supporting infrastructure provided and that position has not changed.

I know the problems we have experienced for years and will be demanding that a new crossing and associated upgrades to the existing road networks be a condition as part of any approval for new housing developments.

The issues are complex and we need to work with stakeholders in a professional and constructive manner to ensure that the infrastructure is built and the developments are properly planned and keep with the character and amenity of the existing residential areas.

It was the former Labor Government that told Council to identify areas that could accommodate more housing and accordingly North Richmond was one area identified. Most other areas are unsuitable due to restrictions on land usages because of flooding.

I believe that we can achieve a good quality residential development, which will not destroy the character of the area, and will deliver a new crossing of the river and road upgrades that we have all been demanding from the former Labor Government for the last 16 years.

I have listened and heard the views expressed by the stakeholders and am cognisant of the issues and how they may impact on communities such as ours. I will continue to follow this development closely and will maintain regular communication with stakeholders to ensure that we get a good quality outcome.

Yours sincerely,

Bart Bassett MP
Member for Londonderry

Cc: The Hon Barry O Farrell MP, Premier and Minister for Western Sydney
The Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure
The Hon Duncan Gay MP, Minister for Roads and Ports
The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Minister for Transport