

Box Hill and Nelson Progress Association
PO Box 3197
Rouse Hill NSW 2155

President: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Secretary: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

16th June, 2025

Bronwyn Sandland

IPART

Dear Bronwyn,

We have reviewed Draft Report - Assessment of The Hills Shire Council Contributions Plan No 15 - Box Hill Precinct - May 2025 published by IPART about the current review of Contributions Plan 15 – Box Hill Precinct (CP15).

Whilst we accept the reasons for increasing the contribution rate, we still strongly object to the wording changes that Council proposes for Section 2.21 and Section 3.9 as the changes signal that Council is not intent on delivering essential local infrastructure within the timeline of the Contributions Plan unless funds are sourced through Grants. In particular, it is unacceptable to remove the following sentence from Section 3.9:

“It is intended that facilities identified within the works schedule to the Contributions Plan will be delivered within the time period.”

The Practice Notes criteria include that **“The proposed public amenities and public services can be provided within a reasonable timeframe.** A timeframe for Box Hill infrastructure was decided at the commencement of the Plan 11 years ago. Council has made very little headway in meeting their responsibility to provide **essential infrastructure** for Box Hill to date and should not be able to walk away from the reasonable timeframe criteria by removing this sentence. This removal indicates that Council DO NOT intend to deliver the works within the timeframe of the Plan, despite residential development proceeding at a much quicker rate than that outlined in the Plan over the last 10 years. If Council do not intend to complete the works in the timeframe of the plan, then the work schedule dates in the Plan are meaningless. It is not a Plan to deliver the infrastructure it contains – it is only a Plan to collect as much as possible in Contributions.

Further, your review appears to indicate that Council’s actions to suspend a large number of Plan items are justified. Whilst the last review did indicate that considering whether some works can be removed from the Plan is one option to reduce the shortfall, all the works Council propose shelving remain in the Contributions Plan as they are essential infrastructure items. Their indefinite delay negatively impacts both residents and developers . The longer they are delayed the more costs will continue to blowout. This is not justified. Council’s stance, at this current point in time, that the only options they will consider are to receive \$210 Million in grants or to refuse to provide essential infrastructure to that value which is included in the Plan is unreasonable. Less than 6 months ago we were told the deficit was \$182M, now it is \$210M, where will it be in another 5 years?

The works remain in the Plan but removing the above sentence in Clause 3.9 removes Council’s responsibility to proceed with infrastructure works in line with development. Whilst grants from State and Federal governments would be very helpful and much appreciated, they are not the only funds that Council has at their disposal to fund the shortfall in funding that they face. Council is not contributing any other Council funds when surrounding councils are progressing their essential infrastructure much more quickly by doing precisely that. They do have reserve funds which are used for spending in other areas of the Shire which should also be considered for Box Hill. Besides considering other funding sources, Council should also be considering how to

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reduce spending elsewhere so that essential infrastructure is prioritised. Box Hill should not be suffering as it is.

In the Contributions Plan all the items of essential infrastructure for Box Hill are listed. There are approximately 100 items on this list. So far, regardless of how much land acquisition has been completed, only about 10% of actual infrastructure has been delivered despite development proceeding at a much faster rate than originally anticipated. Works on the 2 intersections currently in progress started approx. 18 months ago and are not yet complete. Despite the last IPART review pointing out that Council is behind the development in delivery, construction has not commenced on any new items in more than 12 months.

However, the Contributions Plan Schedule of Works, Council indicates all the remaining works are planned to be completed by 2036. That means there are around 90 items that still need to be finished in the next 11 years. We are not seeing sufficient ramp up in delivery. Council tell us we will see a few items started in the next few years. That number falls way short of how much needs to be done to finish within the Contributions Plan time period. Each year that construction is pushed further away just further exacerbates the cost blowouts in the plan.

This is why it is so important that the current wording in Clauses 2.21 and 3.9 which retain the intention and responsibility to deliver the works within the Plan timeline and in line with delivery should remain in the Contributions Plan.

We would really appreciate our concerns being taken into consideration and the proposed amendments to these 2 clauses be withdrawn so that Council is not absolved from its responsibility to provide essential local infrastructure. We need to see a faster rollout of the essential infrastructure this community desperately needs. It should be noted that it is not only Box Hill residents who are impacted by Council's decision to delay infrastructure in Box Hill – it is also residents of all surrounding suburbs who use Box Hill roads or who have to share playing fields, etc.

Yours Faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Box Hill and Nelson Progress Association

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