

Not unexpectedly, there's been some comment on our call for 5 acre subdivision from those who want things to stay just the way they have been for the last 30 years.

Fair enough. Everyone has the right to voice their opinions. But equally, we have the right to challenge those opinions, especially when they misinform.

So here is a list of some of the points raised by our opponents, and our response:

MISINFORMATION	REALITY
Suggesting that we are calling for Kellyville-type development:	Our call is for a green belt of high-quality, low-density housing, that will cause minimal disturbance to the environment, and provide Sydney with a valuable asset. It is at precisely the opposite end of the spectrum compared to Kellyville.
The precedent argument – claiming that if 5 acre subdivision is permitted, it will lead to 1 acre, then ¼ acre:	The evidence shows this is simply incorrect. 40 years ago 5 acre subdivision was permitted throughout the Shire. Did that lead to ¼ acre blocks? The exact opposite occurred. Minimum block sizes were increased to 25 acres and 100 acres, and have remained in place to this day.
Labelling those who want the choice to subdivide to 5 acres as simply motivated by greed:	Taking advantage of opportunities to provide for a prosperous future is not greed. Greed is the desire for more when you already have an abundance. Those making these calls have no idea whether any landholder has an abundance of anything (except perhaps bush). Few landholders who are calling for 5 acre subdivision are motivated by greed; most simply want choice and the right to fund their retirement, or give their children a start in life, while remaining resident in the area. That is not greed.
Creating the impression that native vegetation is under threat, and what remains must be protected at all costs:	There are 56 million hectares of native vegetation in NSW*. Supposing the entire rural area of Baulkham Hills (about 30,000 hectares) was subdivided into 5 acre lots. In that extreme case, even if landholders cleared as much as half their land (unlikely), the reduction in native vegetation in NSW would be unmeasurable - a miniscule 0.03% . In reality, most who live on acreage for residential purposes choose to retain as much native vegetation as possible, clearing only the minimum required for asset protection. Measured against the 56 million hectares of it in NSW, it is a completely insignificant amount . In reality, our call for 5 acre subdivision does not threaten native vegetation at all.
Failing to consider the rights of affected landholders when arguing for restrictions on land use:	The interests of landholders must be considered ahead of any others. Otherwise ownership becomes devalued, undermining a core part of Australian society. Many calling for restrictions on land use, particularly those calling for bushland protection, simply want to maintain a fortuitous benefit at no cost to themselves.
Suggesting that there will be significant infrastructure costs to the community if 5 acre subdivision is permitted:	This claim is incorrect. On acreage, both water and sewage can be managed without impacting upon existing infrastructure. For the relatively small number of lots that are being considered, the requirements for other utilities are either within existing capacity, or able to be funded directly by contributions. The substantial volume of through traffic justifies funding any required road upgrades from the wider community.

* (Figure from AusStats, and confirmed in the recent Productivity Commission study into the effects of Native Vegetation legislation).