

UNDERSTANDING STATE GOVERNMENT PLANNING CHANGES



Dyuralya Square, Waterloo Image: Damian Shaw

NSW Government response to the National Housing Accord

In 2022, the Federal Government agreed to a National Housing Accord with states, territories and local government, institutional investors and the construction sector, to build 1.2 million new well-located homes over the next five years.

To deliver its committed 75,000 homes per year, the State Government is seeking to mandate the allowance of six-storey buildings within 400m of public transport and four-storey buildings within 800m of commercial centres. This would affect most of the City of Sydney Local Government Area, including heritage areas.

City concerns

The City supports the need to deliver greater density near transport, but blanket development changes will have unintended consequences.

The proposed changes will undermine the careful planning that guides urban renewal precincts such as Green Square, or development in areas with considered masterplans, such as Ultimo-Pyrmont, Botany Road or Waterloo. These areas can deliver better planned density and should be exempt.

Blanket non-refusal standards, which remove the ability of councils to refuse developments for excessive floor space, will impair residential amenity and design quality as well as decrease tree canopy cover and encourage more cars and traffic.

Infrastructure planning must happen prior to any policy coming into force.

City of Sydney record of density done well

The City of Sydney is currently delivering one-third of the entire housing target set by the NSW Government



Medium density residential housing, Ashmore Precinct Image: Katherine Griffiths

for the nine councils across eastern Sydney. We have met 70% of our State Government imposed housing target within just seven years of the 20 year goal, with over 40,000 dwellings built or in the pipeline.

At 278 hectares, Green Square is one of Australia's largest urban renewal projects with an anticipated redevelopment cost of \$22 billion at completion in 2041. It will be home to up to 63,000 residents (similar to the city of Wagga Wagga) and up to 22,000 workers.

Along with master planning maximum densities, we are delivering a \$1.8 billion infrastructure plan for services and facilities including a network of streets, footpaths, new parks, playgrounds, public art and childcare.

Green Square is a working example of density done well that would not be possible under the proposed approach.

Proper planning, not one-size-fits-all

The City can contribute additional housing through effective management – upzoning and delivering increased density in a targeted way, without unintended consequences.

Green Square has additional land zoned for housing already available, which can be accelerated as needed.

In December 2023, in response to the NSW Government's Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy and commitment to a metro station, the City introduced new planning controls for Pyrmont-Ultimo that will contribute towards 4,100 new homes.

And the City has recently proposed new incentives to encourage Build-to-Rent (BTR) housing and co-living housing in central Sydney. It will add diverse housing and vibrancy to the CBD by ensuring rental housing is occupied, rather than being left vacant by investors.

Next steps

The City will continue to share this expertise and experience with the State Government to ensure its proposed changes, the most significant in a generation, are not rushed in an approach that invites property speculation, amenity challenges and unintended consequences.

We have made submissions to the NSW Government highlighting our concerns about the proposed planning changes, and the Lord Mayor is working directly with the Minister for Planning. We are asking the Government to work with councils as suggested by the National Housing Accord, focus on areas with adequate public transport, plan first before rezoning, and exempt precincts already carefully planned for urban renewal.

Getting this right is crucial to ensure a liveable, well-planned city.

Find out more bit.ly/PlanningChangesNSW

HAPPY MARDI GRAS, SYDNEY



City staff in the Mardi Gras parade Image: Katherine Griffiths

What a fabulous night of glitter, glamour, pride and progress! The City of Sydney is proud to support Mardi Gras, contributing funding, flying the Progress Pride flag over Town Hall, and City staff dressing up and dancing up Oxford Street every year. Clover has participated in the parade since the 1980s, formerly as State Member and now as Mayor. Mardi Gras shows the world that Sydney is a city that is inclusive and welcoming of all people, no matter their gender, sexuality or pronouns.

PRIDE THROUGH POLICY

Recently, the City co-hosted a Safety Summit with ACON, bringing together key LGBTQIA+ community organisations, elders, Government representatives and safety experts. This summit was tasked with finding solutions, so our streets, venues and online spaces are safe for all. Notwithstanding the many wins since the brutal arrests, bashings and discrimination in the years that followed the first Mardi Gras, LGBTQIA+ communities are still being targeted with violence and intimidation and there's still more to do to achieve true equality and acceptance.



Participants at the LGBTQIA+ Safety Summit

AND QTOPIA NOW OPEN!

The opening of Qtopia Sydney, the world's largest LGBTQIA+ cultural and exhibition space, is a milestone worthy of celebration. Once a centre of brutality towards people of diverse sexualities and genders, the former Darlinghurst police station is now a place of education, history, pride and progress. Qtopia aims to provide a safe and inclusive space that celebrates, remembers, educates and increases awareness of the rich history of Sydney's LGBTQIA+ communities. Council provided \$283,500 in seed-funding for Qtopia, which was formally opened by the Prime Minister, Premier and Lord Mayor. The City has sponsored free entry on Sundays for 12 months – so make sure you visit soon! Next door to Qtopia, at the top of Taylor Square, a former substation and public toilets are being turned into spaces for performances and exhibits. Qtopia's program at the Green Park bandstand will continue into 2024. The City is investigating a new Progress Pride flag on the road at the intersection of Forbes and Bourke streets outside Qtopia.

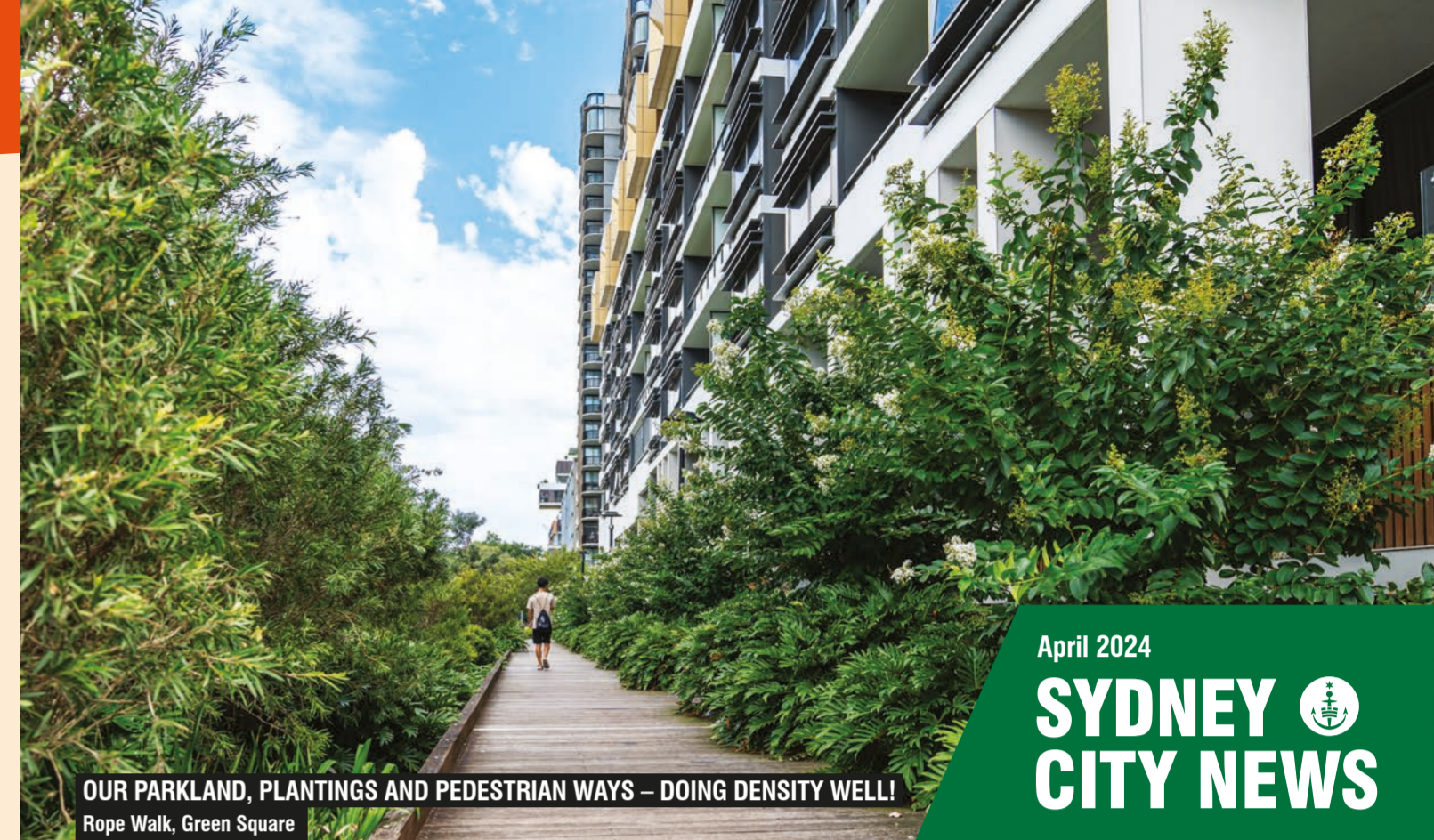


Costume exhibits at Qtopia

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OUR PARKLAND, PLANTINGS AND PEDESTRIAN WAYS – DOING DENSITY WELL! Rope Walk, Green Square

April 2024

SYDNEY CITY NEWS

DENSITY DONE WELL AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO PLANNING RULES

Sydney is in the grip of an increasing housing crisis, which is making owning or renting unaffordable for many.

Increasing supply, particularly around existing transport links, is necessary if we are to tackle the housing crisis.

But the Government's recently announced planning changes – the most significant in a generation – are being rushed in a one-size-fits-all approach that invites property speculation, amenity challenges and foreseeable unintended consequences.

Denser cities can be the healthiest, greenest, and most stimulating places for people to live with the least environmental impact.

For two decades the City of Sydney has understood this and been at the forefront of providing the highest residential densities, including Potts Point, Haymarket, Pyrmont-Ultimo and the Green Square Urban Renewal Area, which is on track to be one of the most densely populated communities in the country.

The City of Sydney is delivering one third of the entire housing target set by the NSW Government for the nine councils across eastern Sydney, and is second only to Blacktown for the largest housing delivery in NSW.

Our Local Housing Strategy, based on State Government targets, aims to provide an additional 56,000 dwellings between 2016 and 2036 and we have already met 70% of this target. **The City has also provided 1,464 Affordable Homes, with an additional 3,749 projected by 2036.**

Since I have been Lord Mayor, our broad approach is to concentrate development in former industrial and commercial areas and infill sites, where we can provide increased density alongside additional infrastructure and with design excellence.

The NSW Government's proposed sweeping changes put the delivery of our well-planned precincts at significant risk.

Without any prior consultation, the State Government is seeking to impose non-refusal standards for developments up to six storeys across much of our Local Government Area, with no consideration of local conditions, amenity and heritage impacts, or the increased demand for infrastructure and services.

We have made a submission calling for the changes to consider the City's

existing heritage provisions and strategic planning.

When I recently met with the Minister for Planning about the State's proposed changes, he acknowledged what the City is already doing to increase housing in our area and agreed to work with us.

We are working towards a positive response from Government which preserves the best of our city and also meets necessary housing targets.

AND AN UPDATE ON ASBESTOS CONTAMINATED MULCH

Having safe parks and playgrounds is a vital part of the work we do at the City of Sydney. We are working as fast as we can to clean-up asbestos contaminated mulch at affected parks.

Contaminated asbestos is affecting the whole state, and is a massive failure of state-based certification standards.

So far, testing alone has cost the City \$200,000 and many residents have lost access to some of their local parks and open spaces.

I have written to the Premier and relevant ministers requesting information about how this happened, details of their investigations and the need to introduce effective rules and stricter penalties to prevent contamination in the future.

For updates about the parks and garden beds where contaminated mulch may have been used and for current test results, visit: [cityofsydney/asbestos](https://cityofsydney.asbestos)



AND SERVING OUR GROWING COMMUNITY Award winning Green Square Library Image: Katherine Griffiths

Clover Moore

Lord Mayor of Sydney
Clover Moore AO

MORE CITY PARKS FOR ALL



A NEW, EXPANDED WIMBO PARK FOR SURRY HILLS

Our multi million-dollar upgrade of Wimbo Park is nearly complete! Wimbo Park has been a place of circus performance, stone masonry and now, respite and play. A beautiful mosaic by Peter Day tells the story of its past, with men playing marbles, a tight-rope walker and hot air balloons. It has been restored and can be found near the entrance in Bourke Street. When the State Government decided light rail would be routed through the site, the Olivia Gardens apartments were demolished, and the land handed to the City of Sydney to create a larger park. A monument to City of Sydney stone masons who quarried and fashioned sandstone on part of the site has also been reinstated.



The monument to the City of Sydney stone masons



Climbing structure at North Rosebery Park

...AND PLANS UNDERWAY FOR AN ENLARGED MOORE PARK!

The Government accepted our proposal to convert the Moore Park Golf course from 18 holes to nine, retaining the larger area of land for golf, the clubhouse, depots, parking, and popular driving range. Importantly, the remaining 20 hectares of land are being turned into much-needed parkland. Feedback is now being considered on how this new space can best be used. For the thousands of people, mostly living in apartments in the Redfern/Waterloo areas and the Green Square urban renewal zone, Moore Park is the nearest substantial green recreational space. When the fences come down, our growing community will be free to enjoy the expanded parklands. View the plans bit.ly/MooreParkMasterPlan



Moore Park extension, artist's impression

STREETS FOR PEOPLE, NOT CARS



A pedestrian friendly city

Did you know that every year, the City spends \$28 million on making the city more walkable? Now we're taking the walking strategy further. Walking accounts for 92% of all trips within our city. It's inclusive, accessible, and it reduces emissions for a cleaner, healthier environment. Walkable cities attract businesses, workers and visitors, driving economic growth. Improving pedestrian environments stimulates innovation and creates vibrant and connected neighbourhoods.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

Since we began our walking strategy, Sydney has witnessed remarkable progress from a city once clogged with polluting buses and cars. We've significantly upgraded streetscapes in areas like Surry Hills, Darlinghurst, Darlington and Potts Point, and we've created a stunning boulevard right down the spine of the city by pedestrianising George Street. We've also improved wayfinding, reduced speed limits, planted trees (700 a year) and installed blooming garden beds, enriching the walking environment for everyone. And we've made outdoor dining easier through our Alfresco program and have introduced a regular program of Sydney Street festivals.



Alfresco dining in Woolloomooloo
Image: Adam Hollingworth

AND WHAT'S NEXT?

Our next strategy is about planning for the next decade, and sets out our approach to making walking easier, safer, more comfortable and more fun. The actions include:

- Doubling the rollout of pedestrian crossings
- Helping the community to activate their streets for walking
- Reducing vehicles speeds and volumes to make it safer for people walking
- Developing better guidance for inclusive and child-friendly street design
- Promoting walking as a cultural experience
- Planting more trees and installing more rain gardens
- Enhancing outdoor lighting to improve safety.



A family enjoying Green Square
Image: Katherine Griffiths

AND GŌNG Xǐ FĀ CÁI, 恭喜发财, HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR!



Annual red packet distribution walk

We had an extraordinary start to the Year of the Wood Dragon in Sydney, with a 16-day festival of music, culture, dance and delicious food!

The Lord Mayor Clover Moore was joined by Deputy Lord Mayor Robert Kok and community leader, Zoe White, at the annual red packet distribution which symbolises good luck for the year ahead. Crowds were delighted by vibrant performances from lion dancers and loud drumming heralding in the new year.

Image: Katherine Griffiths

WE'RE ALSO INVESTING IN CHINATOWN AND HAYMARKET

There are significant capital works underway to help restore and revitalise these significant Sydney locations. We're upgrading Dixon Street, restoring its iconic gates and introducing new creative lighting. We are creating a new grants program to help local Dixon Street businesses spruce up their facades and initiate more community-led cultural events across Haymarket, and we are changing planning rules to further protect and enhance the area's unique character. To help, we are hiring a new City staff member who will work directly with local businesses and the community. The area was hit hard by the pandemic and now it's time for a fresh plan to enliven the streets and preserve the rich cultural history. Many thanks to the thousands of locals and business owners who have helped shape these plans. We're excited to keep working to celebrate Chinatown's past, while securing the future of this vital precinct for generations to come.



Dixon Street's iconic gates