Attachment A

Housing for all discussion paper – Engagement report

CITY OF SYDNEY

Housing for all discussion paper – Engagement report



Engagement report
September 2026

The City of Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as the Traditional Custodians of our local area.

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Introduction

Background

Sydney is one of the world's most liveable cities, known for its quality of life, diversity and strong economy. However, like many major cities, it is facing a housing affordability crisis, particularly for low- and moderate-income households.

The City of Sydney has experienced significant growth over the past two decades, delivering tens of thousands of new homes supported by high-quality infrastructure, transport and public spaces.

With Sydney expected to continue growing, more housing is needed, especially social and affordable housing. The NSW Government is calling on councils to create additional capacity for new homes and may intervene where this is not achieved.

The Housing for All Discussion paper (discussion paper) was prepared to guide community and stakeholder input on where and how more housing should be planned in the local area. It responds to a Lord Mayoral Minute "Housing for All into the Future" on 15 December 2025, requesting staff "*prepare a discussion paper to seek feedback on ideas and proposed changes to the LSPS and Housing Strategy, for Council's consideration; and as part of that work, develop an engagement plan for consultation on the discussion paper with the community, the Housing for All Advisory Panel and other relevant stakeholders*."

This engagement report summarises the key feedback and insights gathered during the public exhibition of the housing discussion paper between April and June 2026.

Purpose of engagement

1. **Inform** stakeholders about the housing challenges, proposed ideas and why changes are being considered in the discussion paper
2. **Consult** with the community, including residents, industry, community housing providers, peak bodies and government.
3. **Understand** stakeholder perspectives about:
   - where and how housing growth should occur
   - what types of housing are needed
   - where there is support or concern
   - what advocacy the City should take on NSW Government land or diverse housing needs
   - additional ideas or opportunities for more housing in the local area.

Engagement summary

Between 7 April to 19 June 2026, we invited the community to provide feedback to three important questions about housing in the discussion paper:

1. Where and how can we plan for more homes after we have done so much?

2. What should the NSW Government do to support more homes?
3. How can housing better meet the diverse needs of our community?

Engagement activities included:

- a Sydney Your Say project page with the opportunity to provide feedback via an interactive online map, online survey and/or email response
- letters sent to all residents in the council area, property owners affected by any of the 10 ideas and NSW Government agencies notifying them of the public exhibition
- two evening public forums hosted by the Lord Mayor at Lower Town Hall (Wednesday 29 April 2026) and Green Square Public School and Community Spaces (Thursday 30 April 2026)
- briefings to the City's Advisory Panels including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Panel, Multicultural Advisory Panel, Housing for All Advisory Panel and Design Advisory Panel
- consultation at the Lord Mayor's social housing forums held in Glebe, Waterloo, Woolloomooloo and Erskineville
- briefings to industry, community actions groups and NSW Government agencies.

The consultation was also promoted through social media (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn), the Sydney Your Say e-newsletter, Sydney City News and community centre newsletters.

Engagement outcomes

The Sydney Your Say page received 11,473 views, and the discussion paper was downloaded 1,962 times.

The City's Instagram post received over 45,000 organic views,460 post interactions and 33 comments. The City's LinkedIn post had 4,838 organic impressions and 2,153 post clicks/engagements.

We received **1,685 responses** during the consultation period (Table 1), counting:

- survey responses
- email responses
- comments on online map
- comments made at public forums.

Table 1: Snapshot of engagement outcomes

Description of activity	Participation	Responses
Online survey	261 respondents	261 responses
Email	232 respondents	232 responses
Online interactive map	179 respondents	656 responses
Public forum (Sydney Town Hall)	130 attendees	307 responses
Public forum (Green Square Public School)	63 attendees	229 responses
Total		**1,685 responses**

Snapshot of support

Overall, of feedback received:

- about 40% supported more housing
- about 25% conditionally supported more housing
- about 20% did not support more housing
- about 15% were neutral or unsure.

Note numbers have been rounded to allow for small differences in how feedback has been grouped and summarised.

Who responded

Most responses were from the community (mostly residents). We also received 18 responses from industry, 11 from peak bodies, 6 from community action groups and 3 from NSW Government agencies as listed below.

Industry

- Airbnb
- Altrac Light Rail
- Beam Planning o/b Markham Real Estate Pty Ltd King Street Wharf
- Blackbird Property
- Colliers Urban Planning o/b Terrace Tower Group @a South Dowling Street, Moore Park
- Colliers Urban Planning o/b Wentworth Capital 50-100 Murray St and 21A Darling Dr, Darling Harbour
- Colliers Urban Planning o/b Wentworth Capital 100-130 Harris St, Pyrmont
- Colliers Urban Planning
- Faith Housing Australia
- Mecone o/b Enviro-LCS Pty Ltd 39 - 61 Victoria Street, Beaconsfield
- Mecone o/b Invesco Real Estate 260-300 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills
- Mecone o/b SHMH Group Australia 719-725 Elizabeth Street and 1029-1031 Bourke Street, Waterloo

- Meriton
- Sydney Airbnb Host Club
- UrbanCoLab
- Urbis o/b BNP Paribas Asset Management 219-241 Cleveland Street, Redfern
- Vocational Mental Health Practitioners Association of Australia
- Women's Housing Company

Peak bodies

- Centre for Social Justice and Inclusions (UTS)
- Committee for Sydney
- Common Equity Co-operative Housing
- Community Housing Industry Association NSW
- NSW Tourism Industry Council
- Property Council of Australia
- Shelter NSW
- Tenant's Union of NSW
- Tourism and Transport Forum
- Urban Development Institute of Australia
- Urban Taskforce

Community action groups

- Friends of Ultimo
- Pyrmont Action Group
- REDWatch
- Sydney Cohousing
- Sydney YIMBY
- The Glebe Society Inc

NSW Government agencies

- Homes NSW
- Net Zero Commission
- NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Thematic analysis

This chapter summarises the overarching themes that emerged from responses.

Overview

Many responses acknowledged the need for additional housing in Sydney to accommodate a growing population and improve housing choice. Many also identified housing affordability as a significant issue requiring action.

> *"Sydney's housing crisis is chronic and deepening... The City of Sydney's Housing for All Discussion paper is a serious and well-grounded response to this challenge, and the Committee for Sydney welcomes the process and supports its central direction."*
>
> *Committee for Sydney*

While views differed on the scale, location and form of future housing growth, responses generally focused less on whether additional housing should be provided and more on how it could be delivered.

> *"I believe the proposed plan is very sensible and I like it attempts to balance everything – both residential density and urban living"*
>
> *Resident response*

Some responses highlighted the importance of long-term, coordinated planning to guide housing growth. These responses generally supported a strategic, city-wide approach that aligns housing with infrastructure and precinct planning, rather than responding to development opportunities on a site-by-site basis.

> *"The Discussion paper is an opportunity to plan for housing growth strategically rather than continuing to respond to individual development proposals on a site-by-site basis."*
>
> *Resident response*

A few industry responses also highlighted that delivering housing in major urban renewal areas requires coordinated planning, long-term infrastructure investment and collaboration between different levels of government to translate strategic planning into housing delivery.

> *"The housing challenge facing Sydney requires coordinated action across planning, land use, infrastructure, feasibility, financing, and delivery."*
>
> *Faith Housing Australia*

Some responses also commented on the planning principles underpinning the discussion paper. Rather than questioning the principles themselves, these responses more commonly focused on how they should be applied in practice. This reflects engagement with the City's broader strategic planning framework as well as the individual housing opportunities explored in the discussion paper.

> *"Importantly, planning decisions should align with the principles... which emphasise sustainable growth, respect for local character, and the provision of adequate infrastructure alongside development."*
>
> *Resident response*

Some responses commented on the respective roles of Council and the NSW Government in planning for housing growth. While some expressed concern about the impacts of NSW Government planning reforms on local decision-making, others emphasised that achieving housing growth would require NSW Government investment in transport and other enabling infrastructure.

> *" Additional housing capacity must also be matched by timely provision of enabling infrastructure... There is a strong case for the City and NSW Government to work together on sequencing infrastructure and planning decisions so that identified opportunities can move into delivery."*
>
> *Property Council of Australia*

A small number of responses commented specifically on housing targets. Responses expressed concern that targets could drive development without sufficient consideration of local planning objectives, infrastructure capacity and the suitability of individual areas. They also called for housing targets to be supported by firm commitments to public transport and other infrastructure delivery.

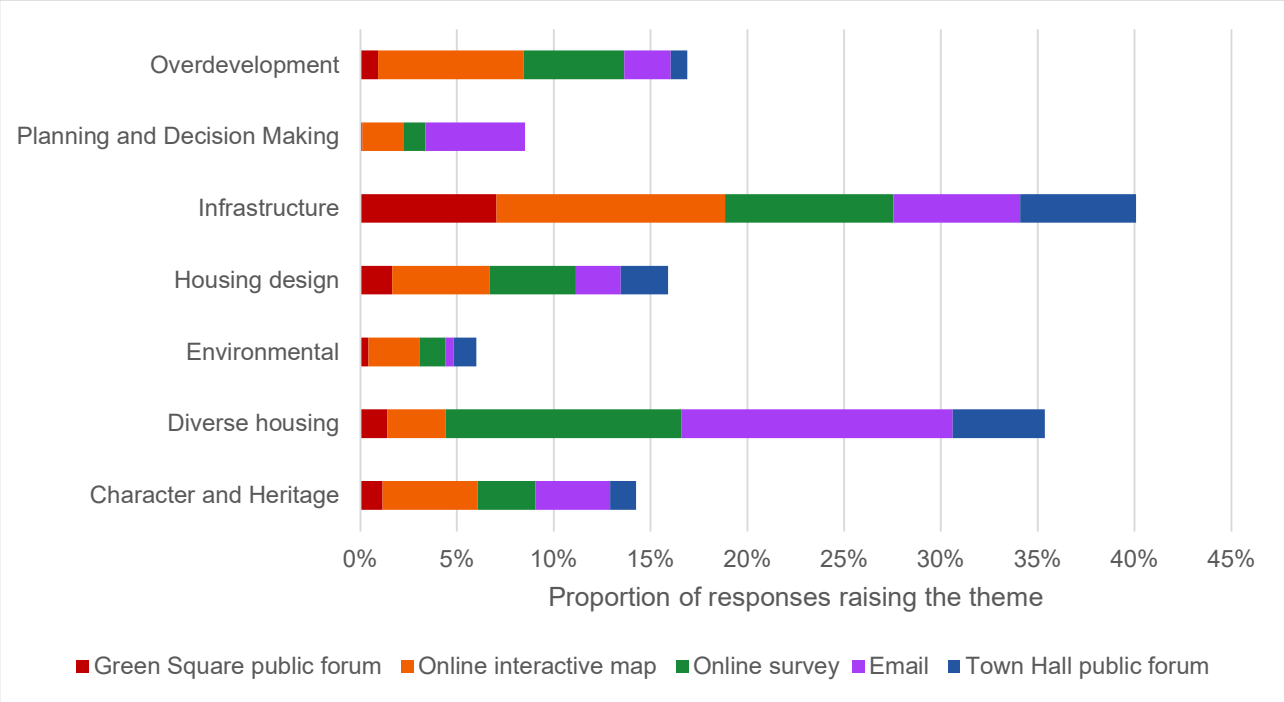
> *"Housing targets should not override local planning objectives. Housing growth is important, but it should not come at the expense of the City's own objectives..."*
>
> *Resident response*

The following sections discuss each key theme in more detail. They distinguish between responses who supported more homes, including those who suggested conditions, and those who did not support additional housing.

Snapshot of key themes

Figure 1 shows the proportion of all responses that commented on a key theme.

Figure 1: Snapshot of key themes raised in responses



The planning system and decision-making

Responses commented on the processes, controls and responsibilities involved in planning for additional housing. Responses reflected differing views about the level of planning intervention required, the flexibility and efficiency of planning controls and approval pathways, and the respective roles of the City and the NSW Government. Responses also raised the importance of feasibility, transparency, evidence and community participation in planning decisions.

Planning system and decision-making was commented on about 205 times across all responses.

Key matters raised in support or conditional support include:

- Coordinated planning and delivery: Many responses supported a coordinated approach involving the City, the NSW Government, landowners and infrastructure agencies. Responses considered that early collaboration, clear responsibilities and aligned planning, infrastructure and investment decisions could reduce uncertainty and help identified housing opportunities progress to delivery. Some also supported planning across council boundaries and transport corridors rather than planning separately within individual local government areas.

Several responses supported a stronger role for the NSW Government in coordinating housing delivery on strategically located land, provided this occurred alongside infrastructure planning and clear delivery frameworks. Others supported planning that better integrated housing with transport, employment, public open space and community infrastructure. Several industry stakeholders reinforced these views.

Faith Housing Australia advocated for stronger coordination between planning, infrastructure, financing and implementation to improve housing delivery, while UrbanCoLab supported integrated planning that aligned housing growth with transport, employment and public domain improvements.Altrac Light Rail similarly advocated for integrating transport planning with housing growth, considering major public transport investment an important catalyst for long-term urban renewal and housing delivery. By comparison, Urban Taskforce argued major transport and infrastructure projects should not necessarily precede housing delivery, arguing that increased population can help build the case for future infrastructure investment.

- Simpler and more flexible planning pathways: Many responses supported simplifying planning controls and approval processes to reduce delays and provide greater certainty for housing delivery. Suggestions included streamlining rezoning and development assessment processes, simplifying permitted uses, reducing unnecessary or duplicative requirements and providing more flexible planning controls that could respond to different sites, housing models and market conditions. Some responses also supported broader complying development pathways and greater flexibility in building height, floor space and housing typologies where appropriate.

  Industry and peak body stakeholders strongly supported this position. Meriton argued that mandatory design excellence processes, extensive conditions of consent and lengthy approval pathways significantly reduced development feasibility and delayed housing delivery. Similarly, the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) considered the proposed planning framework overly prescriptive and advocated for greater flexibility in height, floor space and precinct planning controls. Urban Taskforce also argued that planning controls, affordable housing requirements and compliance costs had become significant barriers to housing delivery and project feasibility.

- Planning should be evidence-based and transparent: Many responses considered planning changes should be based on clear evidence about housing capacity, feasibility and the potential impacts on existing communities. Responses sought greater transparency about why particular precincts or sites had been selected and how proposed boundaries, building heights and densities had been determined. Responses also said planning decisions should respond to the different characteristics, opportunities and constraints of individual precincts rather than applying a consistent approach across the local government area.

  Many responses also supported additional housing only where communities were involved before planning decisions were made. They considered consultation should occur during the development of planning proposals rather than after key decisions had already been made and sought greater transparency about how planning decisions were reached.

These views were echoed by both industry and community stakeholders. UDIA and UrbanCoLab sought greater transparency around precinct selection and boundary definition, while the Tourism & Transport Forum advocated for evidence-based planning. Community organisations, including The Glebe Society, emphasised the importance of meaningful consultation and planning that responded to local circumstances before significant planning changes were progressed.

- Planning controls should support housing delivery and feasibility: Several responses considered planning controls should support housing delivery by providing sufficient flexibility to respond to changing market conditions while maintaining appropriate planning safeguards. Responses referred to construction costs, financing constraints, labour shortages, development contributions and approval delays as factors affecting whether approved housing was ultimately delivered. Many supported planning reforms that improved project feasibility, reduced unnecessary complexity and increased certainty without compromising broader planning objectives.

  This was one of the strongest themes raised by industry stakeholders. Urban Taskforce, UDIA and Meriton each argued that increasingly complex planning requirements, lengthy approval processes and cumulative development obligations were affecting project feasibility and slowing housing delivery. Faith Housing Australia similarly supported clearer and more proportionate planning pathways, particularly for adaptive reuse and faith-owned land, while advocating for earlier engagement between proponents and the City to improve certainty.

  Sydney YIMBY encouraged planning decisions that actively facilitate housing delivery by reducing unnecessary approval delays and supporting proposals that are capable of being delivered.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- State-led and ad hoc planning decisions: Many responses did not support State Significant Development and Housing Delivery Authority pathways where they considered these processes bypassed the City's planning controls or reduced opportunities for community participation. Responses expressed concern that planning decisions could increasingly be made through ad hoc or developer-led proposals rather than coordinated strategic planning.

  Some responses also considered the City should retain a strong role in planning decisions affecting housing growth because of its local knowledge, adopted strategies and relationship with affected communities.

  Views differed significantly between stakeholder groups. Community organisations, including Pyrmont Action Group, expressed concern that Housing Delivery Authority pathways could undermine the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy and broader strategic planning undertaken by the City. Friends of Ultimo similarly raised concerns that recent State planning pathways, including the Housing Delivery Authority and State Significant Development processes, reduce the City's role in planning decisions and limit opportunities for meaningful community participation. They argued that this risked development being driven by individual proposals rather than strategic planning.

  In contrast, Urban Taskforce and UDIA considered the HDA an important mechanism for improving housing delivery and argued it should remain available alongside local planning processes.

- Planning changes without sufficient justification: Several responses did not support planning changes where they considered the strategic or evidentiary basis had not been clearly demonstrated. Responses questioned the methodology used to identify housing capacity, the selection of investigation areas and whether proposed planning changes would ultimately increase housing delivery.

  Some also considered the primary barriers to housing delivery were construction costs, financing, labour shortages and market conditions rather than insufficient planning capacity and questioned whether further rezonings alone would increase housing supply. The UDIA argued that planning strategies should distinguish between theoretical housing capacity and housing that is realistically capable of being delivered, emphasising the importance of feasibility and market conditions in achieving housing targets.

  Urban Taskforce similarly argued that planning reforms should place greater emphasis on project feasibility and market realities, contending that planning controls and development requirements were increasingly preventing approved housing from proceeding.

- Reduced planning safeguards and local control: Several responses did not support reducing planning intervention where this could weaken established planning controls, community consultation or accountability. Responses considered planning requirements remain necessary to ensure development responded appropriately to local context and delivered balanced outcomes.

  Some also expressed concern that frequent changes to planning controls could reduce certainty for existing communities, create inequitable outcomes between landowners or weaken confidence in the planning system. Responses generally considered housing delivery should continue to be balanced with strategic planning, community expectations and transparent decision-making.

Infrastructure

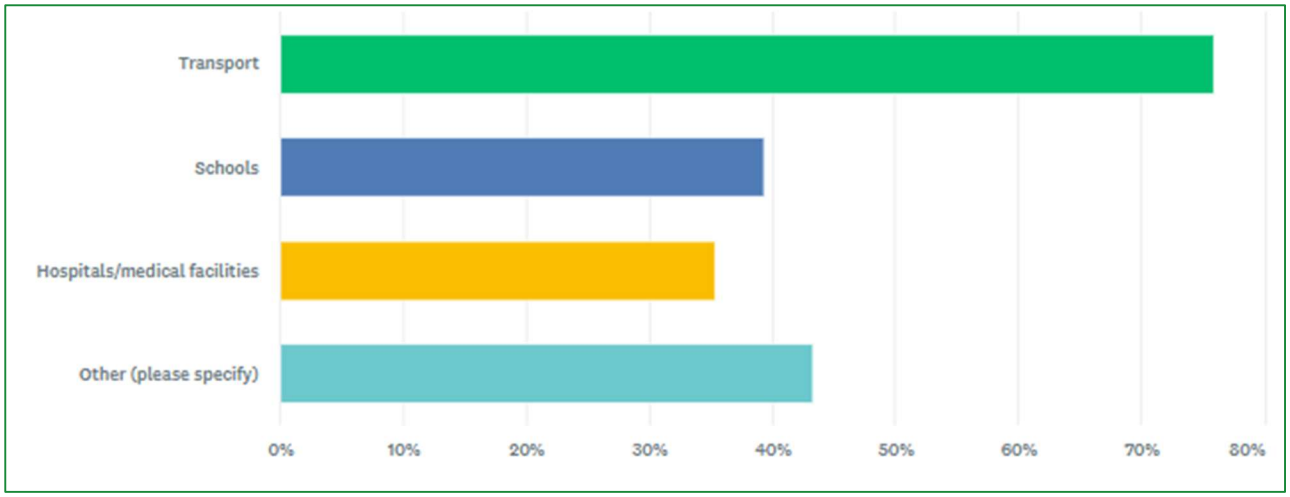
Regardless of whether responses supported or opposed additional housing, many considered infrastructure planning and delivery to be critical to accommodating population growth.

Infrastructure was commented on about 1,150 times across all responses.

Public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure, open space, traffic and parking, and general infrastructure capacity were the most frequently discussed issues. Responses also raised community facilities, utilities, schools and hospitals, reflecting a broad expectation that housing growth should be supported by timely infrastructure planning and investment. Many responses also recognised that the delivery of major transport and utility infrastructure is primarily the responsibility of the NSW Government.

The online survey sought more general responses about what extra infrastructure is needed in our local area to support more homes. About 250 people responded to this question. Around 75% selected ‘Transport’, about 40% selected 'Schools’, about 35% selected ‘Hospitals/medical facilities’, and 45% selected ‘Other’ (see Figure 2). Responses who selected "Other" identified open space, road improvements (including additional on-street parking), improved pedestrian and cycling networks, utilities (such as waste services), and community facilities.

Figure 2: Survey question: What extra infrastructure is needed in our local area to support more homes?



Source: Online survey results

Key matters raised in support include:

- Public transport: Many responses supported additional housing where public transport was improved alongside growth. Responses commonly called for expanded light rail, metro and bus services, improved transport interchanges and better connectivity. Many considered transport infrastructure should be delivered before, or alongside, additional housing, with recurring references to Green Square, Waterloo, Zetland, Broadway, Parramatta Road and Woolloomooloo.

  Faith Housing Australia and UrbanCoLab similarly supported directing housing growth in locations with good access to public transport, jobs, services and existing or planned transport infrastructure. The Committee for Sydney, The Glebe Society and Altrac Light Rail also advocated for investment in light rail, particularly along the Broadway–Parramatta Road corridor, while the Property Council of Australia emphasised the importance of coordinating infrastructure delivery with planning decisions to support the timely delivery of identified housing opportunities.

  Some responses supported improving fast and frequent public transport connections to regional centres as part of a broader approach to accommodating population growth across NSW.

- Active transport: Many responses supported additional housing if walking and cycling infrastructure was improved. Responses commonly requested separated cycleways, wider footpaths, improved pedestrian crossings and stronger connections between key destinations, including Broadway, Wentworth Park, Green Square and Moore Park.

  UrbanCoLab supported integrating housing delivery with improved walking and cycling infrastructure, while Sydney YIMBY advocated continuing to prioritise active transport, including expanding the cycleway network and reallocating road space where appropriate.

- Open space: Many responses supported additional housing if sufficient open space was provided to accommodate population growth. Responses frequently called for protecting and enhancing existing parks and green space, additional recreation facilities to be provided, and strengthening green corridors to be retained and enhanced. Wentworth Park, Prince Alfred Park, Waterloo Park and Moore Park were commonly referenced.

- Community facilities: Some responses called for additional community centres, community gardens, recreation facilities, cultural facilities and public gathering spaces to support growing communities.

  The Vocational Mental Health Practitioners Association of Australia (VMHPAA) considered infrastructure planning should include social and care infrastructure, while the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion advocated for housing developments to include community spaces, services and social infrastructure alongside new housing.

- Utilities: Some responses called for upgrades to water, sewer, stormwater, electricity, waste management and other essential services to accommodate future housing growth.
- Schools and hospitals: a small number of responses considered additional schools, health services and education infrastructure should accompany future housing growth.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- Infrastructure capacity: Many responses said existing infrastructure had not kept pace with previous development and was already operating at or near capacity. Responses frequently called for infrastructure planning and investment to occur before further housing growth, with many expressing concern that roads, community infrastructure and essential services were already under pressure. These concerns were particularly evident in Beaconsfield, Erskineville and Green Square.

  The Property Council of Australia and Mecone highlighted the need for stronger coordination between planning, transport, infrastructure and service agencies to ensure infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth and identified opportunities can progress to delivery.

- Open space: Several responses considered existing parks, sporting facilities and public open space to already be heavily used, particularly in higher-density neighbourhoods. Concerns about parks already being at capacity were commonly raised in Green Square, Zetland, Erskineville and around Wentworth Park, where responses considered additional housing would reduce access to green space and recreation opportunities.
- Community facilities: Some responses considered community facilities had not kept pace with population growth and should be expanded before further housing was delivered. Responses commonly referred to community centres, recreation facilities and local gathering spaces, with some also highlighting the need to protect existing community assets.
- Public transport: Some responses raised concerns that buses, trains and stations were already crowded, particularly during peak periods. Responses frequently referred to Green Square, Waterloo and Zetland, where they considered public transport infrastructure to already be operating at or near capacity.

  While some responses considered major transport infrastructure should be delivered before additional housing, some stakeholders expressed a different view. Urban Taskforce considered that transport investment, such as the proposed Parramatta Road light rail, should not necessarily be a prerequisite for development, arguing that additional population could instead help support the case for future investment.

- Utilities: A small number of responses raised concerns about the capacity of water, sewer, stormwater, waste and other essential services to accommodate additional housing, considering these services should be upgraded before further development occurred.
- Schools and hospitals: A small number of responses considered schools and health services had not kept pace with population growth and should be expanded before additional housing was delivered.

Overdevelopment

Common matters raised related to the location and intensity of housing growth, building height, overshadowing, traffic and parking, particularly in established low-rise neighbourhoods. Most comments were concerned that overdevelopment diminished neighbourhood character, amenity and liveability.

Overdevelopment was commented on about 385 times across all responses.

Key matters raised for support include:

- More density: Many responses supported additional housing where density was carefully managed and directed to locations capable of accommodating growth. Many responses supported medium-rise development in preference to widespread high-rise development and considered higher density should be concentrated on larger redevelopment sites, around centres and public transport, rather than established low-rise residential streets. Several responses considered areas such as Green Square should continue to accommodate higher density, while lower-scale neighbourhoods such as Beaconsfield should retain a more low - moderate built form.

  Some responses supported directing additional housing to lower-density parts of the city rather than concentrating growth in areas already experiencing significant redevelopment or that have heritage constraints. For instance, questions were asked why other blocks further up Chalmers Street and close to the Australia Post site are not being considered for higher density development.

  Urban Taskforce supported accommodating greater housing density in appropriate locations, while recognising that future development would be larger than the buildings it replaces and should be planned to achieve good urban outcomes.

  The VMHPAA supported increasing housing supply while emphasising that housing should not become a "number-only exercise", advocating for a place-based approach that supports community wellbeing and long-term liveability.

- Higher buildings: Many responses supported additional housing where building heights responded to local context and protected neighbourhood amenity. Responses commonly suggested lower height limits, generally between 3 and 6 storeys in established residential areas, with transitions between taller and lower-scale development. Several responses accepted taller buildings in appropriate locations, provided they minimise privacy impacts, protect residential amenity through appropriate built form separation and are integrated with surrounding development.

- Overshadowing: Many responses supported additional housing where development avoided significant overshadowing of homes and parks. Responses frequently called for development to maintain solar access through appropriate setbacks, building separation and height transitions. Parks and open spaces were commonly identified as requiring protection from excessive overshadowing.
- Scale and neighbourhood context: Several responses considered housing growth should be carefully planned to avoid excessive bulk, scale and cumulative impacts. Responses commonly referred to maintaining neighbourhood character, ensuring new development was compatible with existing streetscapes and balancing housing growth with liveability. Several responses also sought stronger justification for increasing density in established low-rise neighbourhoods, particularly Beaconsfield and Erskineville, where they considered the proposed scale of change was not adequately supported.
- Traffic and parking: Several responses supported additional housing if traffic congestion, road safety and parking impacts were appropriately managed through road improvements, traffic calming, intersection upgrades and better parking management. Broadway, Botany Road, Bourke Street, Harris Street and Parramatta Road were commonly identified.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- Scale and neighbourhood context: Many responses considered the established neighbourhoods they lived in had already accommodated substantial growth and should not experience further significant intensification. Responses frequently referred to Beaconsfield, Erskineville and Green Square, arguing these areas had already contributed significantly to housing supply and that additional development would erode neighbourhood character, reduce liveability and place further pressure on local communities. Many responses also considered future housing should instead be directed to larger underutilised sites elsewhere in the local area.

  Friends of Ultimo emphasised the importance of strategic planning that responds to local communities and neighbourhood context.

- More density: Many responses raised concerns that additional housing would result in excessive density and overcrowding. Responses commonly considered several neighbourhoods were already densely developed and that further intensification would reduce quality of life, increase congestion and diminish the diversity of housing forms across the city. Green Square, Waterloo, Erskineville and Beaconsfield were frequently identified as already accommodating significant housing growth.
- Overshadowing: Many responses raised concerns that taller buildings would overshadow homes, parks and streets, reducing solar access, privacy and residential amenity. Responses frequently referred to the potential impacts of taller development in Beaconsfield, around Prince Alfred Park and on park-edge locations, where they considered overshadowing would reduce the usability of public open space and negatively affect surrounding homes.
- Higher buildings: Several responses considered proposed building heights were excessive and out of scale with the surrounding built form. Responses commonly objected to proposals for buildings between 12 and 30 storeys, particularly in established low-rise neighbourhoods, and advocated retaining lower building heights that better reflected existing streetscapes and heritage character.

- Traffic and parking: Many responses raised concerns that roads and intersections were already congested, parking was increasingly difficult to access, and additional housing would place further pressure on local streets. These concerns were particularly evident in Beaconsfield, where responses considered existing traffic and parking pressures to already be significant.

Design quality

Responses commonly focused on delivering good-quality, liveable and sustainable housing that responds to the needs of current and future residents.

Design quality was commented on about 380 times across all responses.

Key matters raised in support include:

- Housing quality and liveability: Many responses supported additional housing where new homes delivered high-quality, comfortable, adaptable and liveable design. Responses frequently referred to good architecture, generous apartment layouts, natural light, cross ventilation, privacy, sound insulation, storage, accessibility and diverse housing types. Several responses also supported mixed-use development, active street frontages and larger, family-friendly apartments that could accommodate a broader range of households.

  The VMHPAA supported additional housing provided it delivers liveable environments with adequate light, ventilation, privacy, safety, greenery and access to public space, while Shelter NSW and the Women's Housing Company emphasised the importance of providing diverse, accessible and secure housing that responds to the needs of different household types.

  Sydney YIMBY also noted that higher-density housing should, where possible, avoid unnecessarily exposing residents to busy and more polluted road environments.

- Sustainable and green design: Many responses supported additional housing where development incorporated sustainable, climate-responsive design measures. Responses commonly referred to rooftop gardens, tree planting, communal green space, solar panels, water-sensitive design, urban cooling and improved connections to nature. Several responses also supported buildings that reduced urban heat, improved environmental performance and were more resilient to climate change.

  The Net Zero Commission supported housing that incorporates climate-responsive design, energy efficiency and urban greening to improve environmental performance and long-term liveability. The Glebe Society similarly highlighted the importance of high-quality residential environments, pointing to the City Quarter redevelopment at Camperdown as an example of renewal that successfully integrates generous communal open space, diverse housing and strong solar access.

- Renewal and adaptive reuse: Several responses supported additional housing where redevelopment focused on underutilised land, ageing commercial areas and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Responses commonly supported redeveloping ageing commercial, industrial and government-owned land, revitalising local centres, and converting existing buildings into housing while retaining valued heritage elements where appropriate. Parramatta Road, Glebe Point Road, Green Square, Potts Point, Central Station and former industrial land were frequently identified as opportunities to accommodate well-designed housing through renewal, alongside improvements to the surrounding public domain and neighbourhood amenity.

  Faith Housing Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) supported greater reuse of existing commercial, institutional and community buildings, considering this could increase housing supply while reducing demolition, supporting sustainability and retaining valued built fabric where appropriate.

  Sydney YIMBY similarly supported identifying additional well-connected and underutilised sites for housing, including areas around Central Station, CBD South and former industrial land, where redevelopment could accommodate substantial housing growth.

- Safety and accessibility: Some responses supported additional housing where neighbourhoods were designed to be safe, inclusive and accessible. Responses referred to active ground-floor uses, safe streets, accessible public spaces, universal design and mixed communities that supported people of different ages and abilities.

  Pyrmont Action Group similarly advocated for apartment developments to function as "vertical villages", integrating communal spaces, green areas and shared facilities that support social connection, accessibility and inclusion.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- Poor housing quality: Many responses raised concerns that additional housing would prioritise quantity over quality. Responses frequently referred to poor-quality construction, inadequate apartment layouts, limited natural light and ventilation, poor sound insulation, insufficient storage and developments that failed to deliver comfortable, liveable homes. Several responses also expressed concern about poor compliance with building standards and the long-term maintenance of new apartment buildings.

  The VMHPAA similarly cautioned against housing delivery becoming a "number-only exercise", emphasising that poor-quality housing can undermine wellbeing, liveability and long-term community outcomes.

- Context-sensitive design: Several responses considered the design of new development should respond positively to its surrounding context. Responses commonly referred to protecting heritage buildings, existing terraces, established streetscapes and local character, and considered new development should be sympathetic to its surroundings rather than introducing generic or poorly integrated built form. Beaconsfield, Potts Point and parts of Surry Hills were commonly identified.

  The Glebe Society advocated for coordinated, well-designed redevelopment that delivers generous communal open space and responds positively to its surrounding context. The UDIA similarly supported high-quality design outcomes but advocated for performance-based planning controls that allow proposals to respond to site-specific opportunities while still achieving broader urban design objectives.

- Demolition vs. adaptive reuse of buildings: Several responses opposed redevelopment where it involved demolishing existing housing or displacing established communities. Responses commonly advocated for refurbishing and adapting existing buildings, retaining social housing where appropriate and avoiding unnecessary demolition of buildings they considered structurally sound or of heritage value. Concern was raised regarding redevelopment of existing social housing estates, including Waterloo Estate and Erskineville Estate.

  REDWatch advocated for protecting public housing communities and prioritising redevelopment of vacant, underutilised and commercial land ahead of sites containing existing social housing, citing concerns about displacement and the loss of established communities.

- Sustainability outcomes: Several responses considered additional housing should not reduce greenery or environmental performance. Responses raised concerns about the loss of tree canopy, reduced solar access, overshadowing, wind impacts and insufficient landscaping, and considered new development should integrate landscape and environmental design measures that contribute positively to environmental resilience and urban cooling.

  The Glebe Society also highlighted the value of communal gardens and landscaped open spaces within apartment developments to improve environmental quality and residents' connection to place.

Heritage and local character

Heritage and neighbourhood character was a recurring theme reflecting the importance of protecting the City's distinctive neighbourhoods while accommodating additional housing. Common matters raised related to heritage conservation, local identity, neighbourhood character and adaptive reuse.

Heritage and local character were commented on about 265 times across all responses.

Key matters raised in support include:

- Heritage conservation: Many responses supported additional housing where heritage buildings, heritage conservation areas and historically significant places were retained and incorporated into future development. Responses commonly referred to preserving heritage buildings, terraces, warehouse buildings and historic shopfronts, retaining significant streetscapes and ensuring redevelopment responded sympathetically to heritage values. Several responses also supported interpretive elements, such as heritage plaques, to recognise the history of redeveloped sites. Frequently referenced locations included Cleveland House, Glebe Point Road, King Street, Potts Point, Danks Village and heritage conservation areas throughout the local government area.
- Local identity: Many responses supported additional housing where development protected and reinforced the unique identity of existing neighbourhoods. Responses commonly referred to maintaining village character, active high streets, fine-grain built form and human-scaled streets, while ensuring new development reflected the distinctive qualities of places such as Glebe, Erskineville, Beaconsfield, Oxford Street, Potts Point and Crown Street rather than creating generic development outcomes. Several responses also emphasised that each neighbourhood should retain its own identity and continue to

contribute to the City's "City of Villages" character, rather than becoming increasingly uniform.

The Glebe Society emphasised recognising the evolving character of neighbourhoods, noting that more recent architecture can also contribute to local identity and become part of a place's future heritage.

- Adaptive reuse: Several responses supported accommodating additional housing through the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings and underutilised sites rather than widespread demolition. Responses commonly supported repurposing warehouses, commercial buildings and former industrial sites for housing while retaining heritage elements and reinforcing neighbourhood character. Several responses considered adaptive reuse provided opportunities to increase housing supply while protecting the qualities that make neighbourhoods distinctive.

  A few responses also identified former wool stores as examples of heritage buildings that could be successfully adapted for housing, citing Dalgety Square as a precedent for retaining heritage character while accommodating residential use.

  UrbanCoLab supported adaptive reuse of heritage buildings as an opportunity to increase housing supply while retaining local character and identity. By comparison, Sydney YIMBY advocated for more flexible approaches that enable adaptive reuse to proceed where heritage values can be retained.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- Loss of local identity: Many responses considered additional housing would erode the distinctive identity of established neighbourhoods and diminish the City's 'City of Villages' character. Responses frequently referred to the unique qualities of Beaconsfield, Erskineville, Glebe, Potts Point and Surry Hills, arguing that increased building heights and density would result in neighbourhoods becoming more generic and losing their individual identity. Common concerns included the loss of village atmosphere, fine-grain streetscapes, community identity and locally distinctive built form. Several responses also expressed concern that redevelopment would create uniform or "cookie cutter" neighbourhoods that looked and felt increasingly alike, rather than reinforcing the unique qualities of each village. Others considered the City's villages to be important social, cultural and economic assets whose individual identities should be retained.
- Heritage impacts: Many responses considered additional housing should not come at the expense of heritage buildings, heritage conservation areas or historically significant places. Responses commonly referred to retaining heritage terraces, workers' cottages, historic warehouses and established streetscapes, and objected to redevelopment that would involve demolition or inappropriate built form. Particular concern was raised regarding Beaconsfield, Glebe, Ashmore Estate and the Erskineville public housing estate, with many responses advocating for restoration and adaptive reuse rather than demolition.

  Some responses also recognised heritage conservation areas contribute to housing diversity by retaining a mix of building types and housing choices that distinguish the City's neighbourhoods.

- Context-sensitive development: Several responses considered new development should respond appropriately to the surrounding built environment and established character of individual neighbourhoods. Responses commonly argued that increased building heights and density should be compatible with the existing scale, heritage values and fine-grain

development pattern of surrounding areas. Particular concern was raised that proposals in locations such as Beaconsfield would introduce development that was out of scale with the existing streetscape and would diminish the qualities that make those neighbourhoods distinctive.

- Urban Taskforce similarly noted that accommodating higher-density housing will inevitably change the scale of some neighbourhoods and considered further work is needed to reconcile increased density with the City's local character objectives.

Environment

The environment was commented on about 125 times across all responses.

Many responses expressed conditional support for additional housing, provided environmental outcomes were enhanced. Key matters raised include:

- Greening, open space and climate resilience: Many responses supported additional housing where it protected and enhanced trees, green spaces and biodiversity while improving the city's resilience to climate change. Responses commonly referred to increasing tree canopy, protecting mature trees, retaining deep soil, expanding green corridors and incorporating rooftop gardens, community gardens and green laneways into new development.

  Responses also highlighted the role of greening in reducing urban heat, managing stormwater, responding to flooding and sea level rise, improving biodiversity and supporting healthier, more resilient neighbourhoods. Several responses considered climate adaptation should be a key consideration in determining where and how additional housing is delivered.

  The Net Zero Commission and NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water highlighted the importance of integrating housing growth with climate resilience, emphasising that well-located, well-designed housing can support emissions reduction, urban cooling and more sustainable communities.

  Some responses considered Parramatta Road should be prioritised for housing renewal and identified Botany Road as an opportunity to accommodate more housing alongside substantial improvements to tree planting and green space.

  Others advocated for increased shade through both trees and built shade structures, more green roofs and building greening, rainwater tanks, and reducing hard paved surfaces. Some responses also supported expanding greenways to strengthen ecological connections and help communities adapt to climate change.

- Healthy streets and public spaces: Several responses supported additional housing where it improved the quality, comfort and usability of streets and public spaces. Responses commonly supported wider footpaths, additional tree planting, improved walking and cycling infrastructure, safer streets, reduced traffic impacts and the renewal of major corridors such as Broadway, Parramatta Road and Botany Road. Many considered additional housing should be accompanied by improvements to the public domain that enhance environmental quality, walkability and liveable neighbourhoods.

Key matters raised not in support include:

- Loss of greening, open space and environmental resilience: Many responses considered additional housing should not occur where it would reduce tree canopy, remove mature trees, diminish green space or compromise environmental resilience. Responses commonly expressed concern about the loss of vegetation, biodiversity, deep soil planting and private gardens, as well as increased urban heat, flooding, overshadowing, reduced sunlight and inadequate consideration of climate change and sea level rise. For example, the mature trees along Ashmore Street were raised as an important landscape feature that should be protected from future redevelopment. Other responses raised concerns that higher-density development in Rosebery, Zetland and Waterloo has created uncomfortable wind corridors and considered future development should avoid similar outcomes.
- Several responses also considered additional housing should not come at the expense of parks and open space, and that environmental resilience should be given equal priority to housing delivery when planning for future growth.
- Pollution and environmental amenity: Many responses considered additional housing should not occur without addressing existing environmental amenity issues. Responses commonly referred to traffic noise, air pollution, litter, waste management, construction impacts and poor pedestrian environments, particularly along major roads and busy corridors. Several responses said additional housing should be accompanied by measures to reduce traffic, improve air quality, manage waste and create quieter, healthier and more attractive places to live.
- Safety: Several responses stated additional housing should not compromise the safety and accessibility of the public domain. Responses are concerned about pedestrian and cyclist safety, conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, lighting and passive surveillance, and public spaces, laneways and shared areas becoming unsafe with more housing. A few responses also expressed concern that additional housing would exacerbate wind impacts and reduce privacy.

Where and how can we plan for more homes?

This section describes the responses to the discussion paper's 10 ideas for potential rezoning.

For some ideas support varied across submission types, in particular between the survey and other submission types, such as emails, online map and forum contributions. A breakdown of support for each idea is provided below.

Ultimo and Pyrmont can deliver more housing – with Wentworth Park returned

The discussion paper identified that in October 2025, Council agreed to investigate additional sites in Ultimo and Pyrmont for more housing. This was in response to community and landowner requests to look at additional sites and the NSW Government's commitment to return Wentworth Park to the City as public open space.

This Stage 2 investigation follows the City's Stage 1 planning proposal for the area and will adopt the same approach. That is, changing heights and density on sites to facilitate well-designed high-density buildings that respond to the local character and address overshadowing and wind. We'll continue to look for more space for trees and public spaces. The area will be green, designed for comfort and liveability and enjoy good access to services and transport.

What we heard

Of the 315 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 67% supported
- 15% did not support
- 18% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 77% supported
- 15% did not support
- 8% were unsure

Responses in support and conditional support, identified that it was a good opportunity to provide additional housing in a well-located area close to existing and planned transport, services, employment, education and public open space.

There was strong support for a place-based, people-focused approach to accommodating growth, where opportunities for additional housing are considered as part of broader planning for the area. Responses frequently highlighted the importance of balancing housing delivery with outcomes such as access to sunlight, wind comfort, clean air, building separation, public open space, tree canopy, and walking and cycling connections.

There was also strong support for the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy and the collaborative planning undertaken by the community, the City and other stakeholders to plan for the future of the area. Many responses supported a coordinated approach that considers housing, infrastructure, public benefits and neighbourhood character together. A number of responses expressed concern that ad hoc or site-specific planning decisions could undermine this approach and reduce certainty, community confidence and opportunities to deliver broader area-wide outcomes.

There were some suggestions and/or qualifications to support in responses, including:

- the western side of Harris Street presents a significant opportunity for residential renewal, with some responses describing parts of the street as underutilised and capable of accommodating additional housing while improving the public domain
- the heritage-listed Woolworths Metro site (former Festival Records building) at 63-79 Miller Street should be included in the City's Stage 2 investigations
- the southern end of 100 Harris Street should be rezoned to permit residential development, where residential development is currently prohibited in the E2 Commercial Centre zone
- an area-wide approach to waste management should be considered at plan-making stage to reduce noise, access and amenity issues associated with on-street waste collection
- additional housing should continue to be linked with improvements to public open space, tree canopy, walking and cycling infrastructure.

While limited in number, there were also responses that raised concerns about the City's approach established under the Stage 1 planning proposal, which led responses to generally oppose the idea. These include:

- a view the site-specific approach taken by the City resulted in fragmented, small sites “unlikely to generate significant uplift on their own” and that broad-based upzoning across the area, where future developments are determined by the market, “would be far more likely to result in meaningful housing delivery”
- concerns that Pyrmont should not continue to be planned as an extension of the CBD characterised by multiple tall towers
- concerns that existing and proposed development on parts of the peninsula, particularly the western side, was disproportionate compared with other areas
- concerns that planned and proposed planning control changes would result in overdevelopment and place additional pressure on local roads, traffic movement and on-street parking.

Connecting Green Square and Waterloo

The discussion paper identified the area north-west of Green Square Station as a potential renewal precinct. It highlighted the potential of additional housing with careful design to minimise impacts, and through a review of the heritage area. It also identified the potential to improve access through the site with new walkways and provide space for shops and businesses.

The rezoning could facilitate additional housing with buildings of 20 storeys, improvements to the pedestrian network, and a lively, mixed-use neighbourhood with businesses at street level.

What we heard

Of the 348 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 68% supported
- 12% did not support
- 20% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 72% supported
- 9% did not support
- 19% were unsure

Responses in support of the idea commented on the following aspects:

- Green Square generally is well supported by infrastructure, services and open space and is a suitable place for more housing
- this area is suited to more housing as it is close to public transport and services
- the current uses on the site are underperforming and not contributing to the area
- introducing through-site links to connect Waterloo and Green Square will improve the wider area, particularly if it is activated with retail and services at street level.

Responses providing more conditional support highlighted existing issues in Green Square could be addressed through the masterplanning and renewal of this site:

- better quality and diversity of retail and services in Green Square, including entertainment and cultural uses, and better-quality dining and shopping experiences
- improvement of walking and cycling experiences through and around the site
- delivery of more green space and affordable housing is needed
- housing should be good quality, well designed and protected from noise impacts
- minimising additional traffic impacts from new residents using Bourke Street and surrounding streets is needed
- heritage listed terrace homes on Bourke Street should be preserved
- building heights should provide sunlight and views to existing and new dwellings and reduce wind impacts.

Other responses providing conditional support highlighted issues that require NSW Government support:

- reducing traffic and traffic speeds on Bourke Street to improve liveability
- delivery of more social housing
- improving public transport services, including by delivering a light rail line to Green Square town centre and a Zetland metro station
- providing public secondary school places.

Responses that did not support the idea commented on the following concerns:

- existing and planned development in Green Square and Waterloo is already dense
- the Green Square and Waterloo area has taken a disproportionate share of housing growth and should not have to provide more
- impacts on the view corridors and amenity of existing residents
- public amenities and services such as green space, parks and schools are needed on this site rather than additional housing

- infrastructure and services generally are struggling to support the existing population of Green Square and Waterloo, and additional housing growth will add to demand
- new development delivers the kinds of retail that is already overprovided in the area, while the existing uses on this site contribute to diversity
- issues with design and construction quality of new apartment buildings.

Prince Alfred Park edges – a place to live and work

The discussion paper identified Prince Alfred Park edges as a location to investigate for more housing. The area has an authentic mix of inner-city terraces, warehouse conversions and a strong concentration of creative industries. It has unparalleled access to transport connections being close to Central and high levels of amenity overlooking Prince Alfred Park. It is a great place for more people to live and work.

The rezoning could facilitate a vibrant mixed-use precinct with new housing, employment and active ground-floor uses, while taking advantage of the area's excellent access to public transport, open space and the CBD.

What we heard

Of the 319 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 50% supported
- 24% did not support
- 26% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 83% supported
- 4% did not support
- 13% were unsure

People told us that they value the area’s unique character and heritage buildings and that they value Prince Alfred Park itself. Key reasons given for support of this idea were:

- belief the area is well suited for additional housing because of its proximity to Central Station and other transport links, Prince Alfred Park, local services and amenities
- the Australia Post site on Cleveland Street is underutilised and if sensitively designed can provide for housing and local services
- new development could contribute to the renewal of the area with more local services.

There were some suggestions and/or caveats to support that were referenced in responses, including:

- height should be limited to not overshadow the park or existing residences
- preserve the strong heritage fabric of the area with sympathetic design and acknowledgment of site histories
- retain the creative industry, cafes and local businesses
- the area should include affordable housing for key workers and students
- traffic on main roads would need to be calmed to allow for uplift
- expand the precinct boundary to include neighbouring residential areas
- new buildings should be well designed and contribute to greening.

Responses generally opposed the idea for the following reasons:

- belief that the area is already densely populated and that density is better suited elsewhere
- concern that development would affect the amenity of Prince Alfred Park and existing residences, particularly heritage terraces. Particular objection to building heights that are not in keeping with the area and will have overshadowing impacts
- concern that additional development will erode the distinctive character of the area and be detrimental to heritage
- concern additional density will cause more traffic congestion and further reduce the availability of street parking.

Renewing the Supa Centa site near Moore Park

The discussion paper identified the Supa Centa Moore Park site for possible further investigation for rezoning. The site is one of Sydney's largest large-format retail centres and is located adjacent to new public parkland planned for Moore Park, with access to major employment, education and recreation destinations.

The rezoning could facilitate a mixed-use precinct with housing above and alongside the existing retail centre, including co-living accommodation, affordable housing and residential apartments, while retaining the site's retail function.

What we heard

Of the 311 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 74% supported
- 12% did not support
- 14% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 91% supported
- 5% did not support
- 4% were unsure

Responses of support cite the following key reasons:

- the site is a major underutilised opportunity close to the CBD, with its large size creating potential for significant housing growth
- the site is well placed to accommodate taller buildings and higher-density housing, with good access to jobs, open space and nearby centres including Green Square and Zetland
- redevelopment could demonstrate how large retail sites can evolve into mixed-use precincts that combine homes, retail, greenery and broader public benefits while retaining existing services.

Suggestions and/or qualifications to support in responses included:

- strong support for improved public transport, with many responses noting the site is difficult to access without a car and suggesting more buses, better interchanges, and longer-term light rail, metro or rail connections to support additional housing growth
- better pedestrian and cycling connections are needed, particularly across South Dowling Street, with several responses suggesting bridges, land bridges or other links between the site, Zetland, Waterloo and the future parklands

- redevelopment should include a broader range of shops and services, including groceries, pharmacies, medical services, restaurants, entertainment venues and small businesses to create a complete neighbourhood
- the site should be comprehensively master planned, with walkable streets, community facilities, greenery and public spaces, rather than simply adding residential towers to the existing development
- there was support for retaining retail uses on the site, with some responses specifically seeking no loss of retail floor space and a mix of retail and housing outcomes
- several responses noted the need for larger family-sized apartments, including more three-bedroom dwellings, alongside affordable housing
- comments highlighted the need to coordinate planning with neighbouring councils and future transport initiatives, particularly along the wider light rail corridor
- some responses noted that redevelopment should improve the site's current car-dominated and poor-quality urban design, creating a more walkable and people-focused environment.

Some responses generally opposed the idea, with key reasons being:

- concerns that the site is poorly served by public transport and remains heavily car dependent
- concerns about increased traffic and pressure on local roads and infrastructure
- concerns about additional building height and density, including potential impacts on views, sunlight and the surrounding character of the area
- concerns that the site is isolated from surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly due to the barrier created by South Dowling Street
- concerns about locating more housing adjacent to busy roads due to potential noise, pollution and amenity impacts
- a preference from some responses to retain or enhance the site's existing retail and service role rather than prioritise housing redevelopment.

Renewing Broadway: UTS to Glebe Point Road

The discussion paper identified a precinct in Broadway for possible further investigation for rezoning. The “Broadway precinct” stretches from Parramatta Road to the southern edge of Wentworth Park. It is close to the University of Technology Sydney, the University of Sydney, TAFE NSW, Broadway Shopping Centre and Central Station. Entertainment and retail opportunities in the CBD, Haymarket and Darling Harbour are a short walk away.

The discussion paper noted the rezoning could facilitate a higher density, mixed-use neighbourhood with a range of housing types for young professionals, creative industry workers and students.

What we heard

Of the 341 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 74% supported
- 11% did not support
- 15% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 83% supported
- 3% did not support
- 14% were unsure

Key reasons for support include:

- the area needs renewal and some life returned to it. It is currently a very neglected, tired and uninspiring place to be in
- we need more housing, and this is a prime location and a good place for varied housing forms and types, including affordable housing and student housing
- it makes sense to locate housing close to the university, transport, jobs, shops and entertainment
- the Parramatta Road edge of the precinct is not a nice welcome to the CBD and “Sydney deserves better than this ugly street scape”.

A high proportion of responses were particularly focused on the Parramatta Road edge of the precinct. There was strong support for light rail on Broadway and a complete overhaul of the street configuration and environment along Parramatta Road to: increase connectivity, calm traffic, reallocate road space for pedestrians and separated cycleways, introduce trees for cooling and sun protection and improve traffic sequencing to prioritise pedestrians. There were concerns that Parramatta Road, in its current state, is an impediment to the renewal of the area. Some key matters raised regarding Parramatta Road include:

- the road environment needs calming. It is currently very busy, aggressive, noisy and hot (with no trees). Road space should be reallocated away from private cars towards public and active transport
- it has too many lanes, making it very unsafe for anyone not driving a car. Lanes should be reallocated to footpath and cycleway and perhaps even outdoor dining
- there are huge numbers of pedestrians all times of the day, especially students. It is very overwhelmed by foot traffic and very unsafe, with so many people on the too narrow footpath, that pedestrians can be crowded onto the road
- getting anywhere (including the CBD) by bicycle is difficult. The lack of cycling infrastructure means you have to ride on the road, which is very unsafe at the speeds traffic moves. The buses make it especially dangerous and unpleasant
- its very unsafe for the city’s delivery bikes
- a flyover or underpass should be considered to ease pedestrian congestion
- the beautiful heritage shopfronts should be retained
- with 9 lanes of traffic that prioritise cars, no bike lanes, no vegetated verges separating cars from people, the bus lanes in place are too narrow for buses to properly use, long wait times at crossings, short crossing times, it is very hostile to pedestrians
- consider slowing traffic to 40km/hour.

There were some other suggestions and qualifications to support in responses, including:

- the area is suited for more social, affordable and student housing
- while generally well connected to transport, still more is needed because of the overwhelming number of people in the area (including at the Bay Street end). Buses are often full when passing through at peak hours
- development should happen above existing buildings
- some said heritage was very important in this area, but others were keen that heritage not impeded development
- the area is a bit dead at night – but this part of Sydney should be lively. Density would liven it up

- new development in the area requires good architecture, building orientated for light and a sense of space and sustainable design, including green roofs
- the Broadway shopping centre needs a refresh
- the carpark of Broadway could be considered for housing
- the social housing estate on Franklin Street should be retained
- walking connections in and through the area need to be improved, in particular to connect the Broadway end of the precinct through to Wentworth Park and the Fish markets
- the warehouses are underutilised and could be adapted to become incredible housing
- the Bay Street Recycling Depot should be retained – it's needed to serve increased densities
- the area feels very commercial and needs activation to make it feel more like a community.

Key reasons in opposition include:

- Parramatta Road is not a suitable environment for housing. Any homes should be located away from this end of the precinct
- the Mountain Street heritage conservation area contains many beautiful buildings fronting wide tree lined streets. These buildings, and others with distinctive architectural character, should be part of the legacy we leave to future generations
- the area is already too dense and overdeveloped, the streets are dark. We shouldn't build slums of the future
- there is not enough open space with all of the development happening in the area
- Broadway is a busy road and shutting down road space to install bike lanes or light rail will exacerbate traffic concerns already experienced.

Renewing underused sites along Parramatta Road

The discussion paper identified 14 sites at the Forest Lodge end of Parramatta Road, opposite Sydney University, for potential rezoning.

The rezoning could facilitate mid- to high-rise buildings for a mix of uses including non-residential uses at the lower levels and residential uses above, including housing for students and affordable housing.

What we heard

Of the 328 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 87% supported
- 4% did not support
- 9% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 91% supported
- 3% did not support
- 6% were unsure

Key reasons given for support include:

- it is a good opportunity to provide housing for students, for people needing to access the hospital, for essential workers, as well as much needed social and affordable housing

- there is great scope for innovation to deliver housing all the way along the Parramatta Road corridor that is walkable, good cycling links, served by public transport (including light rail) and has good links to the foreshore
- these sites are underutilised and could be replaced with shops and services the community needs (such as gyms, supermarkets, banks) so it has more of a local high street feel about it
- the area needs renewal – it is very uninviting, run down and not nice to look at.

There were some suggestions and/or caveats to support that were referenced in responses, including:

- strong support for light rail along Parramatta Road to service development. Some response felt this is just a nice to have and shouldn't stop development here and that increased bus services could accommodate need. Others however felt light rail was critical
- social and affordable housing should be incorporated. It should not just be expensive housing no-one can afford
- more community infrastructure, retail and services are needed for residents and workers in the area to support redevelopment. It could also be ripe for an activation precinct. Incentives could be considered to make this happen
- more small green space and trees are needed in the area, for use of residents, but also for aesthetic reasons
- some responses explicitly supported medium density housing only (3-6 storeys), with some concern about overshadowing on roads and the adjoining housing if the buildings were taller
- care was needed in designing the new buildings, to protect existing heritage (the Officeworks building), to integrate with the low-rise housing to the immediate north (across from Arundell Street). Some responses noted that residential development should face towards Arundell Street, and where sites were deep enough that courtyard blocks might be considered
- development should be of a high quality, look good and be sustainable
- development will need to appropriately deal with the noise and pollution from Parramatta Road, for example, it must incorporate double glazing
- Parramatta Road needs taming, slower traffic is a must for a reasonable residential environment
- any renewal should take the opportunity to upgrade the footpath and make the place more interesting
- opportunity to investigate a walkway over Parramatta Road or an underpass to get residents to Sydney University safely
- a holistic masterplan for Forest Lodge village, Ross St and Arundel St is needed
- some said heritage needed protection, but some felt that allowing development was just as important
- development must incorporate shops and services for the local area.

While limited in number, some responses raised concerns and generally opposed the idea. These include:

- Parramatta Road is not suitable for residential development, specifically for health and amenity reasons arising from high traffic volumes
- concerns that there was not enough infrastructure, and that until that was fixed, there should be no more development

- general concerns about more development in the area, given current densities
- the impact on traffic and parking in the area, with some suggesting streets should be widened
- a preference that the current building should simply be upgraded, rather than total redevelopment.

More life (and living) on our high streets

The discussion paper identified high streets as locations for potential planning changes to support more housing. These streets are important community hubs that support local businesses, services, public transport and neighbourhood life.

Planning changes could facilitate a mix of shop-top housing, additions to existing buildings and new apartment development. This could allow more people to live close to shops, services and public transport while supporting local businesses and increasing activity on our high streets.

Potential locations for further investigation included Devonshire Street, Victoria Street and Darlinghurst Road, Glebe Point Road, King Street (north) and Crown Street (south).

What we heard

Of the 371 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 43% supported
- 31% did not support
- 26% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 67% supported
- 22% did not support
- 11% were unsure

Many responses supported the idea for the following reasons:

- high streets are close to shops, services and public transport, making them suitable locations for more housing
- more residents could help support local businesses, cafes, restaurants and nightlife, particularly where shop vacancies are increasing
- shop-top housing and medium-density development were commonly supported as ways to add housing while retaining active street frontages
- additional housing was seen as an opportunity to revitalise underperforming streets and increase activity throughout the day and evening.

Support was often subject to conditions, including:

- each street should be considered individually, with development responding to its character, heritage and role in the neighbourhood
- heritage buildings, village character and fine-grain shopfronts should be retained
- upper-level additions should be set back from the street and designed to reduce visual impacts
- low-rise and mid-rise housing were generally preferred to high-rise development
- affordable housing should be included, and could be encouraged through planning incentives

- local businesses, commercial floor space and active street frontages should be protected
- public domain improvements should accompany new housing, including wider footpaths, traffic calming, cycling infrastructure, street trees and landscaping
- building design should minimise impacts on privacy, sunlight, noise, wind and amenity.

Responses generally did not support a one-size-fits-all approach. Responses suggested some locations may have greater capacity to accommodate additional housing than others.

Glebe Point Road generated the largest volume of location-specific responses (about 25). Many responses supported additional housing, including shop-top housing and mid-rise development, to support local businesses, increase activity and revitalise parts of the street. Responses also highlighted the importance of protecting heritage character and carefully managing the balance between residential and commercial uses.

Many responses also supported investigating additional housing opportunities on Oxford Street (about 15), citing its proximity to public transport, existing commercial activity and opportunities for revitalisation.

Several responses identified Woolloomooloo as a location with potential to accommodate additional housing, particularly where access to public transport could be improved. Individual responses also suggested further investigation of locations including Elizabeth Street and William Street.

Comments relating to Botany Road more commonly focused on urban renewal, public domain improvements, traffic calming, cycling infrastructure, street trees and creating a more attractive pedestrian environment, alongside some support for additional housing and mixed-use development.

Responses relating to King Street generally focused on retaining heritage character, protecting commercial floor space and ensuring any future housing is sensitively designed and integrated into the existing streetscape. Several responses identified opportunities for additional housing along Victoria Street, Darlinghurst Road and Macleay Street, while Harris Street attracted mixed responses, with some responses supporting renewal and others advocating for traffic and pedestrian improvements before additional housing is considered. There were limited location-specific responses relating to Devonshire Street.

Across all locations, responses consistently identified the need for public domain improvements, increased tree canopy, traffic calming, active ground-floor uses and high-quality design that responds to local character.

Many responses did not support the idea. Key concerns include:

- loss of village character, neighbourhood identity and heritage values
- increased traffic, parking demand and pressure on local infrastructure
- impacts on sunlight, privacy, wind and pedestrian amenity
- noise and pollution associated with living on busy roads
- concern that new residents could create conflicts with entertainment, hospitality and other high street activities.

Location-specific concerns were most pronounced for Crown Street and Erskineville Road. Crown Street attracted little location-specific support for additional housing, with responses primarily focused on retaining character, managing development scale and improving the pedestrian environment. Many responses relating to Erskineville Road argued it should retain its village

character and that future housing growth should instead be directed to larger renewal sites elsewhere, although a small number of responses supported redevelopment of specific sites or limited additional housing where it respects existing character.

Mid-rise living in Beaconsfield

The discussion paper identified Beaconsfield as a potential location for more mid-rise housing. The area has a mix of detached houses, terrace houses, small apartment buildings, warehouses and office buildings. The area also has good access to public transport, shops, community facilities and parks.

The rezoning could support additional housing while maintaining good solar access, privacy and vehicle access through the area's north–south street pattern and rear lane network. Additionally, any future development would be designed to respect the area's established residential character.

What we heard

Of the 376 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 50% supported
- 27% did not support
- 23% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 29% supported
- 36% did not support
- 35% were unsure

Survey responses generally expressed a much higher level of support for investigating additional housing in Beaconsfield. This compares to email responses, comments made at the public forums and on the online interactive map, which were largely opposed and provided detailed reasons for not supporting further investigation. The themes below reflect responses received across all consultation methods.

Key reasons given for support include:

- additional housing should be provided in Beaconsfield to help address the housing shortage
- Beaconsfield is well located to accommodate additional housing because of its access to public transport, jobs and services
- broader or more flexible planning controls should ensure there are more housing opportunities across Beaconsfield and not select sites.

Some responses provide suggestions or qualifications to support additional housing, provided development was carefully planned and supported by infrastructure. Common themes include:

- building heights should generally be limited to low- or medium-rise development to better reflect the existing neighbourhood
- heritage buildings, village character and the fine-grain streetscape should be retained to preserve Beaconsfield's identity
- higher-density development should be focused on larger sites closer to Green Square and major transport corridors or sites with fewer heritage constraints

- additional housing should be supported by improvements to transport, road upgrades and traffic management, open space and community infrastructure
- new development should achieve high-quality design, including good solar access, sustainability, acoustic treatment and landscaping
- existing homes should be retained where possible, including through sensitive infill development such as secondary dwellings
- traffic, infrastructure, heritage and environmental investigations should be completed before any planning changes are progressed.

Many responses did not support additional housing in Beaconsfield. Key concerns include:

- increased building heights and density would be inconsistent with Beaconsfield's heritage character, village feel and fine-grain streetscape
- additional housing would increase traffic congestion, parking demand and pressure on the local road network, reducing pedestrian safety and accessibility
- existing infrastructure, including parks, schools, public transport, stormwater, sewer and community facilities, is already at or near capacity
- bigger housing developments would reduce residential amenity through overshadowing, loss of sunlight, privacy, outlook and increased noise
- rezoning would encourage site amalgamation and result in the loss of heritage buildings and neighbourhood character
- additional housing should instead be directed to surrounding renewal areas where higher density development has already occurred or is planned
- more detailed, precinct-specific community consultation should be undertaken before any planning changes are progressed.

Gentle density on laneways

The discussion paper explored opportunities for compact, high amenity housing on laneways in existing residential areas. This is based on the small houses that already existing on narrow streets in the local area and that we already allow garages with upper levels on laneways.

The changes could facilitate standalone, Torrens Title dwellings facing the laneway, up to two storeys high, with rooftop terraces. They could also create more attractive, walkable and safer laneways as more small lot homes are built.

What we heard

Of the 363 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 51% supported
- 24% did not support
- 25% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 70% supported
- 13% did not support
- 17% were unsure

In support of gentle density on laneways generally throughout the City, responses liked this idea because:

- the recent changes in Pyrmont already demonstrate that this model works

- it is a sensible, low-impact way to add housing choice without disturbing valued heritage streets
- many lanes are devoid of character, dirty and underutilised with capacity for change and additional residents
- this is an opportunity to increase the character of laneways and create more activation,
- it can add diversity, affordability and charm when done well
- it utilises forgotten places to build community, benefitting social and community life on laneways
- it will provide more people with the chance to live in highly walkable areas with good access to services
- smaller houses are preferred over high rise apartment buildings for increasing housing supply, both in terms of the impact on the built environment and as a preferred choice for living.

Qualifications to support include:

- the need to secure good sunlight, privacy, natural ventilation, energy efficiency and private open space, for both the original dwelling and laneway dwelling
- no loss of deep soil or tree canopy
- laneways to be improved with increased greening and shade, perhaps through planting on vertical walls and increased canopy trees
- design aspects, including roof forms and materials, need careful resolution, particularly where there may be heritage impact - with calls for sympathetic modern design rather than “fake” heritage
- appropriate traffic management along laneways, including speed and parking
- appropriate waste management, including where to locate rubbish bins and how waste vehicles will access the laneways
- performance based objectives over prescriptive, numerical criteria
- providing the accommodation is affordable, and not simply to assist rich homeowners.

Those against the idea of gentle laneway density expressed concerns that:

- the City’s laneways are dense and busy enough already, providing important services for existing homes, which will otherwise become too constrained
- loss of amenity, greenery and neighbourhood character, creating “mini slums” or “ghettos”
- there needs to be a sense of space where people can see the sky and skyline
- additional dwellings in these localities will put too much demand on existing, Victorian-era infrastructure, such as drainage and roads
- laneway dwellings will come at the expense of on-site parking, privacy and security
- removing parking from homes will push more cars onto already crowded streets, creating congestion and reducing access
- the resulting development is likely to just assist existing homeowners create more space, rather than achieving new housing supply
- terraces would be more appropriate than small, compact homes.

Nearly 80 responses mentioned specific laneways or City localities in their commentary. By far the most cited were laneways in Erskineville and Alexandria, with laneways in Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst, Surry Hills, Glebe and Potts Point also receiving more than one mention.

Almost all comments relating to laneways in Erskineville and Alexandria did not support this idea, raising concerns about the likely impact of increased laneway density in these areas on local

character, heritage, privacy, outlook, sunlight and amenity. There was also a belief that Erskineville in particular has already accommodated substantial housing growth through the Mitchell Road, Foundry and Ashmore developments, putting its village character, economic vitality and social cohesion at risk.

Almost all comments relating to specific laneways in Glebe were also against the idea of additional laneway density, believing the area to already be densely developed and questioning why lanes and backyards are not valued more highly for their benefits to the environment, local wildlife and residents' general wellbeing.

A response from the Glebe Society community group expressed cautious support, providing that community consultation, owner incentive strategies and title options support the densification, and issues surrounding solar amenity, acoustic and visual privacy, refuse collection, fire safety compliance, service access and traffic restrictions are appropriately resolved.

Comments relating to specific laneways in other areas of the City were generally supportive of the idea, given the proximity of many laneways to good transport options and local amenities and the opportunity to further broaden housing typologies and diversity.

Other comments, whilst not supporting increased density on laneways per se, saw this idea as an opportunity to improve specific existing laneways and back streets which are currently lacking activation, suffering from neglect, feel unsafe or are not managing current demands from existing uses.

Park-side living for more people to enjoy

The discussion paper identified park edges as potential locations for more housing. Locating more homes near parks would provide more people with access to green space in areas that are well connected to public transport, shops and community facilities.

Planning changes could support well-designed mid- to high-rise mixed-use buildings facing parks. Ground-floor cafes and other uses would encourage activity along park edges, while housing above would increase passive surveillance. Sunlight access and recreational uses on parks would also be maintained.

The edges surrounding Redfern Park and Wentworth Park were identified as potential first-stage locations for further investigation.

What we heard

Of the 343 responses that commented about the idea:

The survey showed:

- 63% supported
- 20% did not support
- 17% were unsure

Other responses showed:

- 71% supported
- 14% did not support
- 15% were unsure

Key reasons given for support include:

- additional housing near parks would provide more people with access to green space.

- parks with good access to public transport, shops, schools and community facilities are suitable locations for additional housing
- mixed-use development with shops, cafes and other active uses at ground level would create and encourage more activity around parks
- additional park facilities, including dog parks, cafes and recreational facilities, should be provided alongside new housing.

Some responses provided suggestions or qualifications to support additional housing surrounding parks. Key themes include:

- mature trees, green spaces and park amenity should be retained and enhanced
- building heights should minimise overshadowing of parks, surrounding homes and public open space
- additional housing should be supported by improvements to parks, transport, walking and cycling connections and community infrastructure
- new development should achieve high-quality design, including landscaping, tree planting, good solar access and sustainability
- further traffic, infrastructure, environmental and park capacity investigations should be completed before any planning changes are progressed.

Many responses did not support locating additional housing near parks. Key concerns include:

- parks should remain public open space rather than being used to justify higher-density development
- existing parks already support surrounding neighbourhoods and have limited capacity to accommodate additional population growth
- additional housing would reduce the openness, character and recreational value of parks and the surrounding neighbourhood
- additional housing would increase pressure on local roads, parking and community infrastructure
- additional housing should instead be focused on other suitable locations rather than park edges.

While most responses related to the broader park-side living idea, some responses also provided location-specific responses on individual parks, as described below:

- Redfern Park – responses generally focused on protecting park amenity, maintaining sunlight and retaining mature trees
- Wentworth Park – responses generally supported further investigation provided park amenity, sunlight and recreational use were maintained, while a few raised concerns about overshadowing and increased pressure on the park
- other parks – responses referred to other parks across the local area, such as Sydney Park, Erskineville Oval, Harry Noble Reserve and Alexandria Park. Comments centred around the surrounding areas having already experienced more density and that any more housing must consider park amenity, recreational use, carrying capacity and the suitability of park-edge locations for additional housing.

What should the NSW Government do to support more homes?

The discussion paper asked the community, industry and government for their ideas on what the NSW Government should do to support the delivery of more housing, specifically:

- what should they do with their own land, and
- their views on 2 ideas to provide more public transport to unlock housing growth.

This section describes the responses to these questions, noting there were many other responses referencing themes that are also relevant elsewhere in this report.

Developing NSW Government owned sites

The discussion paper estimated up to 7,800 homes could be delivered on 15 NSW Government owned sites under current planning controls and a further 6,500 homes on 17 sites that require additional planning. Sites identified ranged from large urban renewal sites that have already progressed through a masterplanning process, to sites where there is already adequate scope in the planning controls to facilitate redevelopment, to sites that need further investigation to better understand their potential.

The discussion paper also identified a number of existing social housing sites that have either been masterplanned, such as the Waterloo Estate, or have previously been identified by the NSW Government as having redevelopment potential. The discussion paper explicitly recognised that any renewal of public housing must deliver more social and affordable housing, as a priority over market housing, and ensure existing tenants are not displaced against their wishes and their wellbeing and safety is protected.

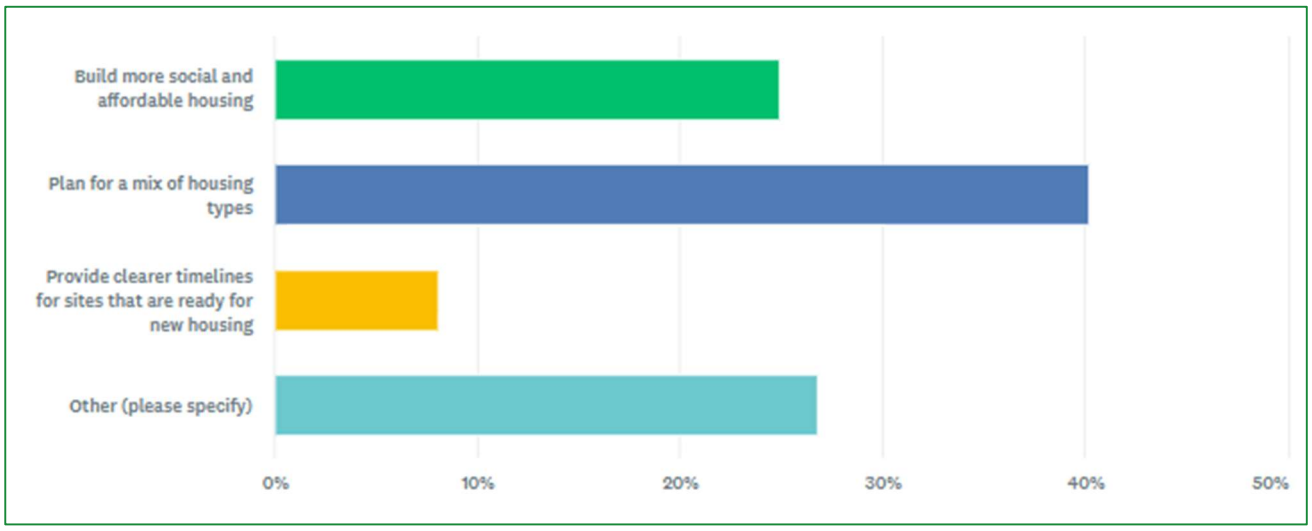
What we heard

Responses that commented on NSW Government sites either provided general advice on what action the NSW Government should take on their sites or specifically addressed a site that was identified in the discussion paper.

Most responses were made via the online survey or on the interactive map, however there was a high level of interest at the public forums and some written responses were also received.

The online survey asked respondents about the most important action that the NSW Government could do on its land to support housing delivery. 261 people answered this question. 25% (65 people) selected ‘Build more social and affordable housing’, 40% (105 people) selected ‘Plan a mix of housing types’, 8% (21 people) selected ‘Provide clearer timelines for sites that are ready for new housing’, and 27% (70 people) selected ‘Other’ (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Survey question: What action is the most important for the NSW Government on its land?



Source: Online survey results

General

Most responses generally supported the idea the NSW Government should be playing a stronger role in supporting housing supply through direct action on their own land, and that the City should do all that they can to advocate for action form the NSW Government. Key ideas, concerns and suggestions emerging from the responses include:

- that housing should be maximised on these sites to deliver immediate supply
- a response from industry says the NSW Government should take an active role in identifying sites for housing with strong strategic merit and enabling appropriate increases in height and FSR through coordinated planning pathways
- that the NSW Government should be using its own land to deliver permanent social and affordable housing with one response saying they should “build, own and operate rent-controlled housing on their sites”
- that public owned land should stay in public hands, with some saying that it was still appropriate to provide housing on the sites
- that the NSW Government should build government owned housing and apartments – and not just low-cost housing – but all types, rather than waiting for the market to solve current structural market problems. The income should be directed to funding more housing and local infrastructure
- that the NSW Government should not deflect all responsibility to council to deliver all housing on private sites when there is potential on NSW Government sites
- that any redevelopment (of NSW Government sites or otherwise) must be supported by appropriate infrastructure to ensure strong and healthy communities
- that redevelopment must be of high quality, with some noting the need for good streets, lots of trees and open space and well designed and sustainable buildings
- that residents need to be better engaged with when it comes to making decisions about their community
- a preference that NSW Government sites be redeveloped for low rise housing only
- that the City should continue its strong advocacy to increase social and affordable housing in the area, especially on NSW Government sites

- some responses were keen to focus on growing the stock of social housing, while some thought affordable housing for workers was more important
- that the absence of a public delivery timeline for housing on NSW Government sites is a direct cost to people on waiting lists and in housing stress, and that the NSW Government should be more transparent and publish a timeline of redevelopment
- a response from REDWatch says that the NSW Government sites could be used for new housing and urges the City to advocate for the delivery the social and affordable housing on these sites
- that while the redevelopment of these sites should occur, the City should not rely on these sites as the primary mechanism for housing delivery, but instead should prioritise streamlining planning pathways to deliver faster outcomes.

There were also some responses objecting to this idea, that commented:

- the NSW Government land should be retained for other uses first (mostly infrastructure) and housing last, and that there is already plenty of private land for housing, but government land once sold or developed is gone
- the NSW Government should focus on delivering infrastructure rather than housing
- there is too much density in the City already, and development of these sites would only increase pressure on infrastructure
- that relying on the delivery of housing on NSW Government land is unlikely to deliver timely or efficient housing outcomes in practice, noting many sites are currently occupied by essential services or infrastructure, making relocation complex, costly and time-consuming.

Social housing sites - General

Many responses spoke specifically about social housing on NSW Government sites, including existing social housing estates:

- a response from Homes NSW agreed that it as important that all levels of government work together to deliver more social housing in the local area
- a response from the Tenants' Union recommends that existing social housing on NSW Government owned land be maintained and increased, not replaced by market dwellings
- some responses said that the discussion paper provided adequate scope to increase housing supply, and that there was no need to redevelop existing housing estates, including a response from REDWatch that says priority should be given to the development of social housing on vacant, underutilised, government commercial and industrial sites that do not require the relocation of existing residents
- there was strong objection in responses to demolition of social housing, with many concerned that it would not be replaced in the event of redevelopment
- many responses felt that maintaining social housing estates as they are, and not replacing it with high densities, added to housing variety and was important to supporting mixed communities
- there was also strong concern that residents of social housing estates should not be displaced, and that redevelopment would disrupt their sense of security and their connections and support networks in the community
- where redevelopment was to occur, many responses spoke to the importance of treating residents respectfully, and ensuring they are housed in the area while redevelopment occurs, and have the option to return to the new housing. This includes a response from the Tenants' Union that recommends the principles for engaging with residents outlined in

Compact for Renewal, which was undertaken with Shelter NSW and the City Futures Research Centre at the University of NSW

- a number of responses felt that renewal of social housing estates was important to address old and poor-quality built stock and would increase opportunities to build more social homes to meet waitlists
- some responses spoke about their support for renewal that provides a mix of social, affordable and private housing, noting segregation of the wealthy from the less wealthy leads to poor outcomes
- some responses said that there was already too much social housing in certain parts of the local area
- some response said that renovation, rather than demolition should be first considered.

The above should be read in conjunction with responses detailed in the “social housing” section of this Engagement report.

Erskineville Estate

Many responses (about 145) spoke specifically about the identification of the Erskineville Estate in the discussion paper:

- the large majority of responses said the Estate should be maintained as it is. They objected to any renewal or redevelopment
- many responses talked about the importance of the Estate to the community, with one response calling it the “heart of the community”
- some residents of the Estate responded and were concerned that would be moved out of their home and their community, and that their hard-won housing security would be destroyed
- some responses were concerned with the identification of the Erskineville Bowling Club and urged the City to ensure that green spaces and recreational spaces should be retained as a priority, noting these are the spaces that make their community great
- many responses spoke more generally about the impact that additional housing in Erskineville would have on already strained infrastructure, on the road network, on heritage and on neighbourhood character
- some responses said that development should be located in other parts of the LGA or Sydney before any new housing in Erskineville is considered
- some responses said there was more scope for more housing on the Estate to help meet the high demand for social housing.

Newtown train Depot

A number of responses (about 20) made comment about the Newtown Tram Sheds with a range of views expressed about their future, including:

- a response said the site is a prime spot for mixed-use development, with a small community square plus greenery plus some and some mid density-housing towards the back near Angel Street
- a response said that the site should be used for green space or small scale retail, and not residential development. The response said that this part of Newtown is already too dense, and additional housing would increase traffic, noise and congestion in an area that currently provides a rare sense of calm just off the busy corridors of Erskineville Road and King Street

- a response said that even though the site is heritage, that with sensitive design, scale and development controls to preserve and amplify heritage values in adaptive re-use proposals, that housing and heritage can work together.

Other responses regarding specific sites

A number of responses commented on specific NSW Government sites that they believed might support more housing, including:

- land around Waterloo and Eveleigh
- land around Macdonaldtown Station
- public housing sites in Millers Point that warrant higher density
- the areas between Carriageworks and Redfern station (for housing and green space)
- underutilised sites on the edges of Central Station, including opportunities in selective areas to build over Central Railyards
- land on the corner of Pyrmont Bridge Road and Parramatta Road (including 30% social and affordable housing)
- Redfern public housing
- social housing on Devonshire Street in Surry Hills (for a mix of social, affordable and private housing)
- the Central Station precinct, including delivery of the Central State Significant Precinct (to further strengthen the capacity of surrounding sites to support high-density development)
- the Ibis and Novotel hotels in Murray Street (one response said that where the businesses are not working, then for homes for the homeless should be investigated. Another response from industry supported further investigation of the site for more housing)
- the car park on Erskineville Road (for 100% social housing).

Investing in infrastructure to catalyse housing supply

The discussion paper proposed 2 ideas where NSW Government investment in infrastructure could catalyse the delivery of new housing supply and deliver lasting public benefits, including:

- providing a metro station and/or light rail to serve Rosebery, and
- providing light rail along Parramatta Road.

The discussion paper estimated the investment could enable up to 11,000 new homes.

What we heard

Infrastructure - General

The need for the NSW Government to provide infrastructure that keeps pace with growth has been a key theme of responses and what we heard is described in the “Thematic analysis: Infrastructure” section of this report.

Green Square metro and light rail

There was strong interest in fast tracking the delivery of a metro station in Green Square. The ALTRAC response said that a new light rail line to Green Square and Rosebery would deliver significant benefits in Green Square. This included responses from industry and from the Committee for Sydney. Some responses said:

- Zetland is a public transport dead zone, with most areas being up to a 20-minute walk from the Green Square Train Station or Waterloo Metro
- they support a feasibility study for metro or light rail to Zetland, with findings informing future rounds of housing targets, and dwelling targets for transport-dependent precincts made conditional on infrastructure commitment
- it's so complex to get anywhere. Even going to Newtown or Marrickville requires changeovers, and busses that are too Redfern or Green square centric
- a funding decision and commencement timeline must be secured as a precondition for rezoning the identified housing precincts along the corridor
- light rail is needed instead of bus corridor along Zetland Ave, or underground metro at Green Square
- they prefer a station at East Village
- busses are insufficient to service Roseberry and Beaconsfield
- Green Square has the highest density of population in Sydney, and is a great urban renewal story, but it needs light rail and metro to sustain such high densities
- light rail could be linked to the UNSW line as an underpass for easy access
- increased density is possible with light rail or metro, but it is also important to provide other infrastructure to support growth, in particular open space
- while there are claims Green Square is close to transport, in reality it is reliant on a couple of already overcrowded bus lines
- it would reduce car dependency in this gridlocked area
- a light rail / metro solution provides the certainty and connectivity required to make mid-to-high-rise apartment developments feasible and cost-effective for the market to deliver
- Rosebery in particular is in a "transport gap", being too far from heavy rail to sustain the high-density housing the city desperately needs and extending light rail through the area will unlock housing potential
- it would allow for the reallocation of road space, creating wider, tree-lined footpaths and safer streetscapes that enhance local liveability and a healthier environment
- Green Square station is packed with people and is at capacity at peak hour
- the Waterloo metro doesn't serve Green Square. It's too far away, being poorly placed and very close to Redfern station rather than in Zetland or toward Moore Park.

While widely supported, there was a mix of views in responses about the potential of metro and/or light rail to support more density in Green Square and Rosebery. Some responses noted that it was needed to simply support the already planned densities, while others thought it would unlock even more capacity for housing.

Parramatta Road light rail

As noted elsewhere in this Engagement report, there is strong support for the delivery of light rail along Parramatta Road to support more housing in the Broadway precinct and other underutilised sites further west along Parramatta Road.

In addition, a response from ALTRAC said that a new light rail line along Broadway and Parramatta Road could conservatively facilitate the delivery of over 70,000 new homes between Central and Burwood under existing planning rules, including 20,000 new homes within the City of Sydney.

What we heard in other responses about light rail along Parramatta Road is detailed in the "Renewing Broadway: UTS to Glebe Point Road" and the "Renewing underused sites along Parramatta Road" sections of this Engagement report.

Light rail – general

In addition to the above, the ALTRAC response also said that the existing L1 Light Rail Line has the potential to support significant housing uplift in Pyrmont and Glebe, noting the line is currently operating at the limits of its capacity. It said that further investment is required to rail systems, rolling stock and civil infrastructure to enable it to appropriately meet the needs of growing housing and population in the local area.

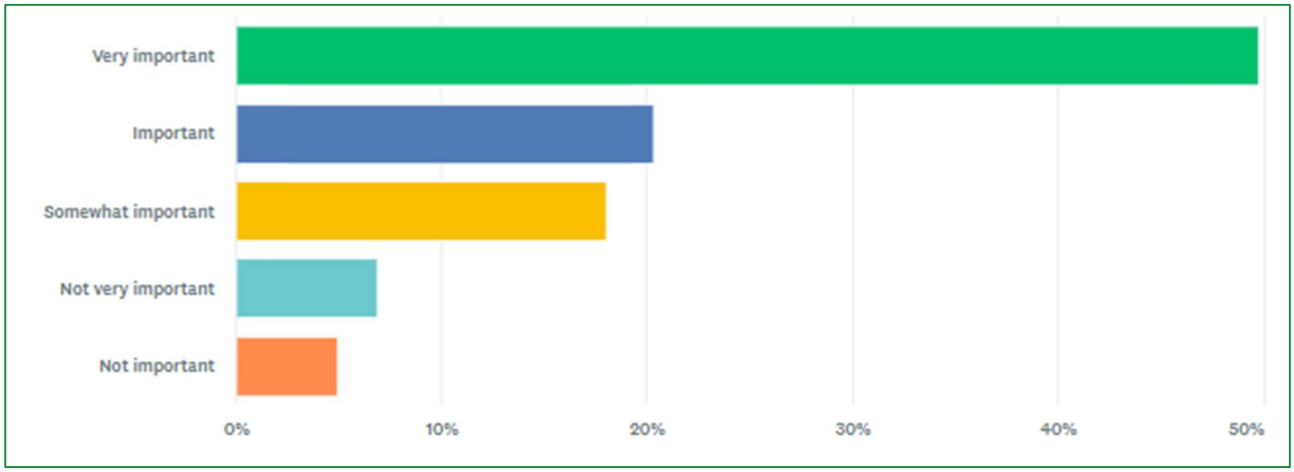
How can housing meet the diverse needs of our community?

The discussion paper explored the housing we need for our diverse community, so that housing is available for people of all cultural backgrounds, income levels, household formation, lifestyles and stages of life.

This section details the responses to specific housing types raised in the discussion paper.

The online survey sought more general feedback about how important it is that a mix of housing types is provided for different needs in the local area (see Figure 4). 261 people responded to this question. 50% (130 people) selected ‘Very important’, 20% (53 people) selected ‘Important’, 18% (47 people) selected ‘Somewhat important’, 7% (18 people) selected 'Not very important’, and 5% (13 people) selected ‘Not important’.

Figure 4: Survey question: How important is it to you that a mix of housing types for different needs are in our local area?



Source: Online survey results

Affordable rental housing

The discussion paper recognises that affordable rental housing is essential for lower income households who are increasingly unable to afford to live in the local area. It explains that the private market is not delivering enough affordable housing and that the City is using the tools available to help increase supply, including affordable housing contributions, planning controls, discounted land and grants. However, greater NSW Government action is needed, including clear targets and more affordable rental housing on government-owned land. The discussion paper also

supports working with community housing providers and prioritising permanent affordable housing, with rents based on household income rather than discounts from market rents.

What we heard

The overwhelming majority of these comments supported more affordable rental housing.

Increase the supply of affordable rental housing

Many responses supported increasing the supply of affordable rental housing, particularly for low- and moderate-income households who are increasingly unable to afford to live in the local area. Responses considered it important for maintaining a diverse community and allowing people to live close to jobs, education, services and support networks.

Essential and frontline workers were frequently identified as needing more affordable rental housing, including nurses, paramedics, teachers, childcare workers, cleaners and retail workers. The need was also identified for young people and students.

The Women's Housing Company supported increasing affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income workers and highlighted the particular housing needs of women experiencing domestic and family violence, older women, women with disability and women on lower incomes.

A few responses did not support subsidised affordable rental housing. Some considered increasing overall housing supply or allowing the market to determine rents would be a better response to affordability, while others considered social or public housing should be prioritised. Sydney YIMBY considered that increasing overall housing supply would lead to generally more affordable housing.

Make affordable rental housing genuinely affordable

Many responses supported more affordable rental housing but questioned whether housing described as affordable is genuinely affordable for the people it is intended to support. Responses were particularly concerned that rents set as a discount to market rent can remain unaffordable for lower-income households where market rents are already high.

Many responses supported rents being based on household income rather than market rents. The Pyrmont Action Group and Committee for Sydney supported the City's approach of setting rents at no more than 30% of gross household income rather than using a discount to market rent.

Shelter NSW similarly considered that affordable rental housing delivered under current NSW Government planning provisions is not genuinely affordable for many lower-income households. The Tenants' Union of NSW, however, questioned whether the 30% income benchmark adequately measures affordability for very low- and low-income households and suggested considering what income households have left after paying for housing and other essential costs.

Keep affordable rental housing affordable permanently

Many responses supported affordable rental housing being retained permanently rather than provided for a limited period. Responses were concerned that time-limited affordable rental housing provides only a temporary community benefit and may eventually return to market rents. Some considered that where developers receive a permanent benefit, such as additional development capacity, the affordable rental housing provided in return should also be permanent. This was supported by the Pyrmont Action Group, Committee for Sydney, Women's Housing Company and Shelter NSW.

The Urban Taskforce held a different view, questioning whether permanent affordable rental housing provides the best outcome for the investment required. It noted that the same cost may

deliver a greater number of time-limited affordable rental homes and supported retaining incentive-based approaches.

Increase affordable rental housing through new development

Some responses and organisations supported stronger requirements for affordable rental housing to be delivered as part of new development and rezonings. Suggestions included setting minimum affordable rental housing requirements, providing it on-site in larger developments and ensuring it is provided where additional development capacity is granted.

The Women's Housing Company supported minimum affordable rental housing outcomes in new developments and rezonings. Shelter NSW called for a minimum contribution across NSW and for NSW Government-led planning pathways not to avoid affordable housing contributions.

A few responses and industry organisations cautioned that affordable rental housing requirements need to consider development feasibility. The Property Council of Australia supported increasing affordable rental housing but considered that policy settings should not unintentionally delay or prevent new housing. The Urban Taskforce similarly raised concerns about the impact of affordable rental housing contributions on development feasibility and supported incentive-based approaches.

Use government land and partnerships to increase supply

Some responses and organisations supported using NSW Government and other publicly owned land to deliver more permanent affordable rental housing. Public land was seen as an opportunity to increase supply, particularly for households that face barriers in the private housing market.

The Community Housing Industry Association NSW called for a clear social and affordable rental housing target on all government-owned sites identified for residential development, recommending a minimum of 30%. The Pyrmont Action Group also supported a 30% affordable rental housing requirement on public land.

The Women's Housing Company supported greater coordination between the City, NSW Government and community housing providers to unlock land and funding for affordable rental housing.

The Urban Taskforce questioned requiring the NSW Government to provide permanent affordable rental housing on its land, noting competing demands for government land and revenue. It also questioned the capacity of community housing providers to deliver new housing.

Deliver secure and good-quality affordable housing

Some responses emphasised that affordable rental housing should provide secure, well-designed and well-maintained homes and should not mean a lower standard of housing. Feedback highlighted good design, ongoing maintenance, energy efficiency and effective property management. Some also supported longer-term leases to provide greater housing security and allow residents to establish roots in their community.

Some responses emphasised that affordable rental housing should be located close to public transport, jobs, schools, healthcare and community facilities. The Women's Housing Company similarly supported well-located affordable rental housing allowing residents, particularly women and other priority groups, to remain connected to jobs, services and support networks.

A few responses were concerned that affordable rental housing should not be used to justify excessive density or high-rise development in already dense areas and considered it should be delivered in locations where infrastructure can support additional growth.

Social housing

The discussion paper recognises that social housing is essential for people on low and very low incomes and is an important part of a diverse and inclusive community. It explains that demand for social housing continues to grow while supply has not kept pace, resulting in long waiting lists and increasing housing need. The discussion paper supports increasing the supply of social housing through the renewal of NSW Government land, greater government investment and a stronger commitment to delivering more social housing as part of redevelopment.

What we heard

Increase the supply of social housing

Many responses on social housing supported increasing the supply of social housing to address housing affordability and reduce homelessness and long social housing waiting lists. Responses described social housing as essential infrastructure and an important part of maintaining a broad mix of people and households within the community.

Shelter NSW called for clearer government plans and targets to rapidly grow and upgrade social housing stock, while the Tenants' Union of NSW supported maintaining and increasing public housing on NSW government and council-owned land. REDWatch also supported prioritising vacant and underutilised government-owned commercial and industrial land for new social housing where this could increase supply without displacing existing residents.

Many responses also called for more social housing for very low- and low-income households, older people, Aboriginal communities, women escaping domestic and family violence, people experiencing homelessness and essential workers.

Retain social housing in public ownership

A dominant theme was support for retaining social housing in public ownership. Many responses opposed transferring social housing to community housing providers or private developers, arguing public land should remain a permanent public asset that continues to provide secure housing for future generations.

The Tenants' Union of NSW also supported maintaining and increasing public housing on State and Council-owned land, rather than replacing existing public housing during redevelopment.

Redevelop without reducing public housing

Many responses opposed redevelopment that would reduce the number of public housing dwellings or permanently displace existing residents. Feedback commonly referred to the Erskineville Estate, Waterloo Estate, Franklin Street and Glebe Estate, with responses emphasising the importance of protecting established communities and maintaining residents' connections to local services and support networks.

Many responses supported redevelopment only where it increased the number of public housing dwellings, guaranteed residents the right to return and minimised disruption during construction. Others suggested renovating existing social housing or developing vacant NSW Government-owned land before demolishing existing homes.

The Tenants' Union of NSW advocated for infill development where possible, while Sydney YIMBY supported renewing existing public housing alongside market housing to help fund renewal and create more diverse neighbourhoods.

Integrate social housing into communities

Many responses supported distributing social housing across neighbourhoods rather than concentrating it within large estates. Responses considered mixed-income communities would promote social inclusion, reduce concentrations of disadvantage and create stronger neighbourhoods.

Some responses supported integrating social housing into new developments and opposed separating social housing residents from market housing through separate buildings or entrances. A few responses, however, considered social housing should be prioritised outside the inner city where land is less expensive and more homes could be delivered.

Deliver well-designed and well-managed social housing

Responses commonly emphasised that social housing should be well designed, properly maintained and supported by appropriate infrastructure and services. Feedback highlighted the importance of accessible design, ongoing maintenance, high-quality management and locating housing close to public transport, employment, healthcare and community facilities.

The Tenants' Union of NSW and the Community Housing Industry Association NSW called for clear principles and meaningful engagement with residents during estate renewal, including co-design approaches that respond to residents' needs and priorities.

Some responses also raised concerns about antisocial behaviour, crime and neighbourhood impacts where social housing was poorly maintained or lacked appropriate support services. Responses suggested these issues could be addressed through better property management, maintenance, tenant support and community services.

Aboriginal private home ownership and Aboriginal controlled social, affordable, elders and aged housing

The discussion paper highlights that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities continue to experience comparatively poor housing outcomes, and that the lack of access to appropriate housing increases cultural dislocation and reduces access to services, employment and education. It suggests an increase in appropriate social and affordable housing can support households staying in the local area and maintaining important community ties.

What we heard

Most of these responses supported increasing access to housing, especially affordable rental and social housing, for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Responses noted consultation with, and deeper involvement of, the Aboriginal community would lead to better designed, more appropriate housing and overall better community outcomes in the longer term.

Others supported more housing if it was designed and developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community or managed by Aboriginal-controlled organisations. Overall there was a feeling it should be located near Aboriginal community-controlled services such as the Aboriginal Medical and Legal Services. Responses noted that targeted housing for the Aboriginal community would help offset continued displacement from the City of Sydney and give access to health, education, and employment opportunities. Some responses suggested areas around Redfern and Waterloo would be the best location for maintaining community connections, and that surplus government land in these areas should include Aboriginal affordable and social housing. One response recommends community monitoring and reporting of housing outcomes as urban renewal occurs around Redfern and Waterloo.

Not all responses supported a targeted increase however, preferring that affordable housing in particular be allocated on a needs basis without any preference for gender or race.

Naturally occurring low-cost market housing

The discussion paper notes that older apartments, boarding houses and other forms of naturally occurring low-cost market housing play an important role in providing housing for lower-income households. It highlights concerns about the ongoing loss of these housing types through redevelopment, particularly traditional boarding houses, and argues that once low-cost housing is lost it is rarely replaced. The discussion paper suggests stronger measures may be needed to protect existing low-cost housing stock and support housing types that help reduce pressure on the lower end of the housing market.

What we heard

Dwelling retention

Some responses supported retaining older apartments and other lower-cost dwellings, noting they provide important housing options for lower-income households, young people and first-time renters. There was concern that redevelopment often replaces lower-cost homes with more expensive housing.

Boarding houses

Some responses commented that traditional boarding houses are an important source of affordable housing and supported measures to retain boarding houses and protect residents from displacement.

Supply of housing

Some responses emphasised the importance of increasing overall housing supply, arguing that additional housing delivery would improve affordability over time.

Council involvement

Some responses suggested a range of potential roles for council, including supporting the retention of lower-cost housing, reviewing planning requirements that may discourage smaller dwellings, and advocating for changes to state policies affecting boarding houses. Many responses also emphasised the importance of maintaining appropriate safety and quality standards.

Housing for renters

The discussion paper highlights growing pressures on renters, including rising rents, low vacancy rates and limited housing security, in an area where most households rent their home. It argues that stronger protections for renters and a greater supply of long-term rental housing are needed to support diverse and sustainable communities.

The discussion paper also identifies build-to-rent housing as a source of rental supply and raises concerns about the impact of short-term rental accommodation on the availability of homes for long-term residents. It suggests further reforms may be needed to improve rental outcomes and prioritise housing for people who live and work in the area.

What we heard

Importance of rental housing

Responses strongly supported rental housing as an essential part of the housing mix, noting that not everyone can afford to buy a home, and not everyone wants to. They highlighted the importance of rental housing for young people, older people, families, workers and the city's "transient populations", with several emphasising that people should be able to live near where they work.

A recurring theme in comments was the need for more rental housing. Affordability was also a key concern, including affordable rents, incentives to lower rents, and options for older women on lower incomes. Some responses emphasised the need for well-located, liveable rental housing with access to transport, services, sunlight, privacy and open space. A small number raised concerns about the concentration of rental housing in some areas or the potential impact of policy changes on rental supply.

Fairer and improved outcomes for renters

Many responses commented on the experience of renting, arguing that renters need greater security, stability and certainty. Longer leases were a common suggestion, with several responses pointing to European and Scandinavian models. Responses also called for stronger renter protections, limits on excessive rent increases, rent control or rent stabilisation measures, and greater security of tenure.

Many responses commented the quality of rental housing, including calls for minimum standards, safe and healthy homes, updated electrical systems, heating and cooling, energy efficiency, and proper maintenance. Some responses also emphasised that renters should be able to build a sense of belonging, including by remaining in their homes for longer periods and having greater freedom to personalise them.

The Tenants' Union of NSW supported continued advocacy for stronger renters' rights, including capping rent increases, improving minimum standards, strengthening compliance and enforcement, tightening tenancy termination provisions and reducing discrimination in rental application processes. Shelter NSW supported improved renter protections, stronger regulation of the private rental market and better quality standards and raised concerns about recent changes to evidentiary requirements for "renovictions".

In contrast, Urban Taskforce cautioned that further rental law reforms could deter investment and reduce the supply of rental housing. Several individual responses expressed a similar view, arguing that increasing rental housing supply should remain the primary focus.

Built-to-rent housing

Responses were generally supportive of build-to-rent housing, with several describing it as an important way to increase rental supply and improve rental security. Responses highlighted the benefits of professionally managed, purpose-built rental housing and supported planning incentives and other measures to accelerate delivery. Some responses argued that build-to-rent should be integrated with owner-occupied housing to support more balanced neighbourhoods.

Not all responses were supportive of build-to-rent housing however. The Tenants' Union of NSW argued that build-to-rent has so far failed to deliver meaningful affordability, long-term security of tenure and other promised benefits, noting that many developments are priced above market rents and offer standard 12-month leases. Shelter NSW cautioned against viewing build-to-rent as a

solution to the housing crisis on its own and encouraged greater focus on social, affordable and other non-market housing options.

Short-term rental accommodation (STRA)

Short term rental accommodation (STRA) was one of the most frequently discussed housing issues, with just under 150 responses commenting on the role of STRA in the housing market.

Some responses supported stronger regulation of STRA, arguing that short-term rentals reduce housing availability, remove dwellings from the long-term rental market and contribute to affordability pressures. These responses supported measures such as lower day caps, tighter controls on non-hosted STRA, limits on large-scale operators, levies and stronger enforcement. Organisations and peak bodies supporting stronger regulation included the Tenants' Union of NSW, Shelter NSW, Community Housing Industry Association NSW (CHIA NSW) and community groups including the Pyrmont Action Group.

Opposition to further STRA restrictions substantially outweighed support, accounting for more than 80% of responses about STRA. Many of these responses were from STRA hosts, property owners and industry stakeholders.

Many responses argued that STRA is not a primary driver of Sydney's housing challenges and that broader housing supply issues should remain the focus of government action. Many responses argued that reducing the current 180-day cap would have little impact on housing supply while reducing accommodation choice and placing financial pressure on hosts.

Responses also highlighted the economic contribution of STRA, including support for local cafés, restaurants, cleaners, tradespeople and other small businesses. Responses argued that STRA fulfils accommodation needs not always provided by traditional hotels, including accommodation for families, people visiting relatives, people attending medical appointments, students, temporary workers, people relocating to Sydney, and people requiring accommodation during renovations, insurance claims, floods or other housing transitions.

Several industry and tourism organisations opposed further restrictions, including Airbnb, the NSW Tourism Industry Council, the Tourism & Transport Forum, Business NSW, the Sydney Airbnb Host Club, Blackbird Property Management and Sydney YIMBY. These responses generally argued that STRA is an important part of Sydney's visitor accommodation mix and supports major events and tourism activity.

STRA in principal places of residence

Around one-third of responses opposing further STRA restrictions focused specifically on the treatment of principal places of residence rather than opposing all forms of STRA regulation.

Many responses explained that they use online booking platforms while travelling, working away from Sydney, studying, caring for family members, living part-time elsewhere, or renting spare rooms within their home. These responses frequently stated that the dwelling remained their home and would not become available as long-term rental accommodation if short-term letting was restricted. Instead, they argued the property would remain vacant until they returned.

Many responses argued that occasional hosting helps cover mortgages, strata levies, maintenance costs, retirement expenses and broader cost-of-living pressures. Several supported stronger regulation of commercial operators while maintaining exemptions for principal places of residence, spare rooms and hosted accommodation. A recurring view was that future policy should distinguish between owner-occupiers using their own home and investor-owned properties used predominantly for short-term accommodation.

Enforcement of existing STRA framework

Many responses argued that compliance and enforcement of the existing NSW STRA framework should be prioritised before introducing additional restrictions. Responses from Airbnb, the NSW Tourism Industry Council, the Sydney Airbnb Host Club, Blackbird Property Management, and individual responses supported stronger use of registration and platform data, improved compliance activity, and targeted action against non-compliant operators.

Apartment living

The discussion paper notes that, as Sydney grows, the move towards apartment living for a wider range of people is inevitable in the inner city.

Well planned medium- and high-density neighbourhoods can be great for everyone, with easy access to parks, community facilities, transport and services. However, apartments need to be designed to meet the needs of families, older people, people with disabilities and a wider variety of household types.

We invited feedback on the types of households we design apartments for and the features they need.

What we heard

Comments overwhelmingly supported the need for high-quality apartment living.

Many responses commented that apartment living is an inevitable, integral and sometimes beautiful part of City life. Higher density living was also seen as better for the environment and more sustainable, supporting walkable neighbourhoods and creating a critical mass of population to support businesses, services and amenities.

Those who did not support apartment living in any form, found it unsuitable for established, fine grain areas or a “horrible way to live”, preferring lower-density and -scale housing types.

Build for the future, not the past

A common theme in responses spoke to the need for apartment design to address changing needs. Higher standards should ensure apartment buildings are designed and constructed to better address acoustic separation, access to light, functionality of layout, privacy, security, storage and parking pressures. Long-term sustainability and maintenance are also critical issues to address at design and construction phase, including material choices, energy consumption, passive heating and cooling, utilising solar panels and enabling charging facilities. Better connection to greenery and open space was also identified multiple times for improvement in future.

Better governance and management

Many responses reflected on recently publicised issues with build quality and major failings by the development industry in safety and compliance. Responses called for higher building standards, tighter regulation of developers, and stronger, independent assessment of developments.

Strata costs and maintenance issues were also raised as ongoing barriers to happy apartment living. Body corporate and strata management systems were identified as not fit for purpose, with legislative reform, tighter regulation of strata managers, mandatory maintenance standards, and stronger oversight of building management practices needed. Apartment owners can become “trapped” in bad buildings, with renters having even less power to influence the experience in their

own apartment or building. Apartment owners can also be left to manage increasingly complex strata schemes and arrangements without any legal, financial, engineering and safety knowledge and experience.

Flexible design and family living

Responses noted that building to current minimum compliance standards will not result in apartments built around how people want to live long term, calling for flexible and considered design. Bare minimum room sizes fail to support multiple users. Addressing privacy, soundproofing, the separation of living and sleeping areas, and internal and external accessibility is important to support multiple types of occupant.

Whilst there was some disagreement between responses around stipulating an apartment size mix – with some believing this should be left to the market which should not be expected to build to circumstances that may happen in a lifetime – a large number of responses called for more 3+ bedroom apartments, especially for families. Many noted that where these larger units exist, they are currently positioned as luxury penthouses and are therefore beyond the means of most families/residents.

More generally, luxury was eschewed in favour of functionality, flexibility and affordability.

Creating community

Some responses reflected on the influence of apartment blocks on community. International cities were believed to demonstrate how apartment living can create dynamic street life and public spaces, but other comments raised issues with inactivated ground floors, anonymous entries (both internal and external), long, blank internal corridors, and poorly designed and underutilised external spaces. Others called for more shared, communal spaces, both within and outside apartment blocks, to encourage people to gather and avoid the rollout of soulless, high-rise developments.

Housing for people needing more support

The discussion paper recognises that some members of the community require housing with additional support to meet their needs, including older people, people with disability, people experiencing homelessness and others facing housing insecurity. It notes that while planning controls generally support these housing types, they can be difficult to deliver due to funding, land availability and other delivery challenges.

Providing these housing options is an important part of a diverse housing system, helping people remain connected to their community and access appropriate housing and support as their needs and circumstances change over time.

What we heard

Supported housing models

Responses overwhelmingly supported more housing of this kind. Many responses commented about the need for a range of supported housing models to meet different needs. Suggestions included group homes, cooperative housing, intergenerational housing, supported independent living, mental health housing and housing linked with care services. Overall, responses conveyed that no single housing model will suit everyone and called for a diversity of supported housing options.

Shelter NSW emphasised that supported housing should be integrated into long-term planning for housing growth, citing successful models such as Foyer and Common Ground, and linked with health and social services to better support people experiencing homelessness and others with complex needs

Integrated support services

Across all supported housing types, responses commonly emphasised the importance of integrating housing with support services. Feedback highlighted the need for onsite support workers, live-in managers, healthcare, social workers, active management and ongoing maintenance to support residents' wellbeing and successful tenancies. Responses also emphasised that supported housing should be located close to healthcare, public transport, shops and community facilities.

Faith Housing Australia also supported partnership-based delivery models involving community housing providers and other organisations to deliver housing outcomes that respond to a range of community needs.

Housing to support ageing in place

Some responses called for more housing that allows older people to remain in their local area as their needs change. This included residential aged care, cooperative housing, group homes and housing for older women at risk of homelessness. Responses said housing should be located close to healthcare, public transport, shops and community services. Some also supported intergenerational home-share models to help older people remain connected to their community while making better use of existing housing. The Glebe Society stated there is a growing older population according to the 2021 Census and called for more aged care facilities will be needed in the future.

The Committee for Sydney highlighted that high land values limit the feasibility of aged care developments in the inner city and called for measures such as discounted land and planning concessions to improve delivery.

Accessible housing for people with disability

Some responses strongly supported more accessible and adaptable housing for people with disability. Responses identified barriers including internal stairs, buildings without lifts or ramps, inaccessible public spaces and limited access to public transport. Suggestions included level access, lifts, ramps, accessible bathrooms and homes that accommodate carers and changing mobility needs.

The Committee for Sydney and Shelter NSW also recommended that Liveable Housing Design Standards apply to all housing, not just new private apartments, to better meet the needs of an ageing population and people with disability.

Need for crisis and emergency accommodation

A few responses identified a strong need for more crisis and emergency accommodation. Concern was expressed for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, people experiencing homelessness, older women and people experiencing mental ill-health. Some responses also suggested repurposing underused buildings to increase the supply of emergency accommodation.

Need for transitional housing

Responses supported more transitional housing to help people move from crisis accommodation into secure, longer-term housing. Responses highlighted the need for transitional housing for

people escaping domestic and family violence, people experiencing homelessness and families with complex needs. Responses also noted that stable housing, together with appropriate support, can improve wellbeing, independence and long-term housing outcomes.

Alternative housing models

The discussion paper notes that there are alternative models of housing delivery that can give improved outcomes for affordability, community and sustainability. They utilise different forms of ownership, tenure or delivery to provide improved and more tailored options than those available on the market.

What we heard

Responses agree a diversity of homes is needed and encourage the City to advocate for alternative forms of housing and tenure. A variety of alternative approaches are refenced for support or investigation, including tiny homes, kit homes and re-fabricated housing, micro-apartments, live-work spaces for artists, tenure models such as rent-to-buy or delivery models including Nightingale.

Some responses suggest the City should include allocate affordable housing development contributions or direct funds from the Affordable Housing grants program to alternative models.

Other responses ask for low-scale housing for women over 50, housing developments with shared facilities to reduce waste and foster community, and an end to high-rise housing.

Other responses ask for an increase in public housing on public land, longer leases for public housing, and greater access to public housing for the whole community, with the government generating income from rent. Partnerships are suggested to deliver and manage housing, particularly crisis housing, as a ‘meanwhile use’ where urban renewal is taking place. Responses note that support for alternative housing models should not replace support for supported and crisis accommodation, affordable rental housing and social housing.

Shared equity co-operative housing models

Support for co-operative housing models is raised in several responses, most commonly in the form of shared and limited-equity co-operatives. Some responses ask that the City explicitly support and foster co-ops, advocate to the NSW Government to support co-ops, and suggest the City should invest money and staff resources into developing, administering or piloting a shared-equity co-operative housing project.

Community co-operative housing

One response focuses on community cooperative housing as a particular form and asks that it be formerly integrated into the City’s planning controls and affordable housing framework, considered in future precinct plans, and be given planning protection where it comes under threat from redevelopment.

CITY OF SYDNEY