Item 7.

Land Classification - 542-544 George Street, Sydney

File No: X073030.035

Summary

On 17 November 2025, Council resolved to acquire 542-544 George Street, Sydney, as part of the City's acquisitions to create the future square opposite Town Hall.

The Minister for Local Government granted approval for the City to compulsorily acquire the property on 23 February 2026.

On 11 September 2026, the City compulsorily acquired the freehold interest in 542-544 George Street, Sydney by way of publication of the approved acquistion notice in the NSW Government Gazette No. 372 ([NSWGG-2026-372-3]).

Under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), all Council-owned land must be classified as either community land or operational land. The community classification is intended to support the management of recreational open space and reserves. The Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) requires Council to classify land within 3 months of the date of acquisition.

The current use of the property includes commercial retail leases which requires the land to by classified as operational land up until the new square is delivered and operations are bedded in. On 17 November 2025, Council resolved to publicly notify for a minimum period of 28 days a proposed resolution to classify the land as operational.

The application of a community land classification to 542-544 George Street would be inconsistent with other City-owned land acquired and intended to form part of the future square at Town Hall. The operational land classification enables the City to manage these assets as work progresses towards delivery of the square and fulfil the City’s long-term objectives.

The proposed resolution to classify was publicly notified on Have Your Say for a period of 32 days from 11 September 2026 to 12 October 2026. No submissions were received.

This report recommends that Council resolve to classify the land as operational land. It is intended that the land would be converted to a community land classification in the future, once the new square is delivered and operations are bedded in.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council classify 542-544 George Street, Sydney (being the whole of the land contained in Lot 13 in Deposited Plan 80276) as operational land in accordance with section 31 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW).

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. On 17 November 2025, Council resolved to acquire 542-544 George Street, Sydney, as part of the City's acquisitions to create the future square opposite Town Hall.

2. The Minister for Local Government granted approval for the City to compulsorily acquire the property on 23 February 2026.

3. On 11 September 2026, the City compulsorily acquired the freehold interest in 542-544 George Street, Sydney by way of publication of the approved acquistion notice in the NSW Government Gazette No. 372 ([NSWGG-2026-372-3]).

4. Under the Local Government Act 1993, all council-owned land must be classified as either community land or operational land within 3 months of the date of acquisition. Community classification is intended to support the management of recreational open space and reserves.

5. An application of a community land classification to 542-544 George Street, Sydney at this timewould be inconsistent with other City-owned land acquired and intended to form part of the future square at Town Hall.

6. The operational land classification enables the City to manage these income producing assets as we work towards delivery of the square and fulfil the City’s objectives.

7. On 17 November 2025, Council resolved to publicly notify a proposed resolution to classify the land as operational land and to publicly notify the proposed resolution for a minimum period of 28 days.

Relevant legislation

8. The following sections of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) are relevant:

   (a) Section 25 requires all public land to be classified as either community or operational land.

   (b) Section 31(2) permits Council to resolve to classify land prior to acquisition or within three months following acquisition.

   (c) Section 34 requires the proposed resolution to classify land be publicly notified and made available for inspection by the public for a period of no less than 28 days.

Critical dates / Time frames

9. The Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) requires Council to classify land within 3 months of the date of acquisition.

10. The City compulsorily acquired the freehold interest in 542-544 George Street, Sydney on 11 September 2026.

11. Classification is required by 11 December 2026.

Public consultation

12. The proposed resolution was publicly notified via Sydney Your Say from 11 September 2026 to 12 October 2026.

13. No submissions were received.

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