

Australian Institute of
Landscape Architects

23/02/2024

To
The Hon. Paul Scully MP

SUBMISSION

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (AILA)

REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR NSW HOUSING PLANNING POLICY - TRANSPORT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND EXPLANATION OF INTENDED EFFECT: CHANGES TO CREATE LOW AND MID-RISE HOUSING

PREFACE

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture. AILA leads a dynamic and respected profession: creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet.

POSITION

AILA do not support the 'Transport Oriented Development Program and Explanation of Intended Effect : changes to create low and mid-rise housing' in its current form.

AILA acknowledge the key challenges within the current NSW planning policy structure and supports the introduction of policy reform that encourages greater diversity of housing stock that, in turn, encourages greater social equity. Whilst the diversity of stock is positive, it must not result in poor quality open space and public domain, loss of heritage landscapes and degradation of green infrastructure that increases the risk to biodiversity, health and livability.

REVIEW

AILA has identified the following as key items of concern:

1. The Reforms and The Transport Oriented SEPP has some significant flaws that are not supported by AILA. These flaws include processes that;
 - a) Disregard established heritage controls including heritage conservation areas.
 - b) Disregard environmental protections of important ecological communities and natural amenity.
 - c) Lack of assessment of complex and competing urban design requirements.
 - d) Outcomes that lead to poor amenity and quality of the public domain.

- e) Have the potential to damage heritage assets.
 - f) Are based on insufficient analysis of existing qualities and potential adaptive reuse; and
 - g) Lack of sustainable planning targets to meet future climate, carbon emission reduction, tree canopy, biodiversity, green infrastructure and soil network needs.
2. AILA do not support the application of The Apartment Design Guide (ADG) as the 'principle guiding document' for the Reforms. The ADG's environmental controls are outdated and inadequate to protect green infrastructure and offset the impact of development and should be superseded by the controls identified through the Design and Place SEPP.
 3. AILA supports a master planning process. We strongly advise that Landscape Architects be embedded in this process via policy, legislation or notated as a form of Control in the Reforms to ensure the complexes of integrated disciplines, heritage, social, environmental and landscape design outcomes are considered. This is critical; as a discipline, we must be at the table.
 4. AILA is concerned that the Reforms will overrule existing and future local environmental, heritage and urban design controls.
 5. The Reforms revert to environmental controls at local government levels - this approach doesn't consider the urban forest or Country. This risks poor green infrastructure and strategic outcomes jeopardising climate-positive design and designing for Country.
 6. Better environmental and landscape design needs application across local government areas and requires a state-led approach to master planning/ strategic thinking. There is no certainty that these targets will be part of the Reforms; this risks poor social, heritage, environmental and landscape outcomes.
 7. AILA is concerned that the one-size-fits-all approach will impact State Heritage listed gardens and parks, the essential green infrastructure for cities undergoing rapid densification.

RECOMMENDATIONS (REFER ATTACHMENT A - AILA DISCUSSION PAPER, FOR FULL DETAILS)

AILA makes the following recommendations to NSW Government regarding the Reforms:

1. Modify the Housing Reforms to clearly articulate amenity and sustainability initiatives through an environmental, social and heritage lens as targets in the masterplan process for each station precinct - targets to be verified by an appropriately experienced Registered Landscape Architect;
2. Modify the provisions of Appendices B & C of the Housing Reforms to include the targets of Design & Place SEPP (notably tree planting, tree canopy and soil volume targets) rather than reliance on the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) which is outdated.
3. Plan for the appropriate provision of open space and public domain based on metrics.
4. Plan for quality green spaces and Public Domain - open space thinking to be part of the masterplan process for each precinct. Reform the mechanism of Developer Contributions to direct funds more strategically to precinct-level projects.

5. Strategically Plan for the best possible coordination and integration of all facets of design - AILA wants better controls/ planning through integrated, precinct-level thinking. The Reforms should embed this requirement into policy and require input from Landscape Architects.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - AILA Discussion Paper – Reviewing the Low and Mid-Rise Housing Reforms 2023

Attachment B – Best practice case studies

We thank you for the opportunity to outline AILA's position and invite your office to reach out to continue the conversation in person.

Sincerely yours,



David Moir
AILA NSW President

SUBMISSION TEAM

This submission has been prepared by a working group of AILA NSW members.

ATTACHMENT A : AILA DISCUSSION PAPER - REVIEWING THE LOW & MID-RISE HOUSING REFORMS 2023

INTRODUCTION

AILA supports initiatives that demonstrate best practice in sustainable housing development with strategies that will **protect and enhance the existing landscape** to deliver equitable, liveable and Nature Positive housing outcomes.

AILA believes this requires integrated delivery of a strong green infrastructure framework **working with identified landscape heritage** so essential for human health, liveability, resilience and the success of sustainable housing initiatives.

AILA calls for a Design and Place SEPP approach to **desirable public spaces, existing tree conservation and new tree planting and healthy, connected living systems** to be applied here. This means we need **to create an integrated design policy for the built environment**.

This submission presents an overview of the problems inherent in the 'one size fits all' approach, seen through one potentially **impacted State Heritage** listed garden, loved by the public. A look at what a **strategic approach** might entail, is informed by prior studies, beginning with model **responses to landscape context**, compared with the problems with the TOD. Next, **understanding what to keep**, or respond to - case studies for **data collection**, for **iterative inclusive process** and for **high quality design**, through to AILA offering to **coordinate work to find solutions**.

Prior studies and case studies are presented in Appendix A to demonstrate best practice thinking.

BACKGROUND

The Transport Oriented SEPP has some significant flaws and cannot be fully supported. These flaws include processes that;

- Disregard established heritage controls including heritage conservation areas;
- Disregard environmental protections of important ecological communities and natural amenity;
- Lack assessment of complex and competing urban design requirements;
- Lead to poor amenity and quality of public domain;
- Have the potential to damage heritage assets;
- Are based on insufficient analysis of existing qualities and potential adaptive reuse; and
- Lack sustainable planning targets to meet future climate, carbon emission reduction, tree canopy, biodiversity, green infrastructure and soil network needs.

The initiative to take a master planning approach is commendable. AILA welcomes the opportunity to review, assess and make further recommendations on all of these proposals as they take form, ahead of public release of draft masterplans and rezonings for comment.

Substantial change requires a coordinated canvassing of issues with each Council and professional Landscape Architectural expertise to guide towards inspired solutions that benefit the broader community. AILA supports increased housing density at transport nodes in general, noting each locality requires consideration of distinctive existing landscape qualities, in consultation with qualified experienced Landscape Architects:

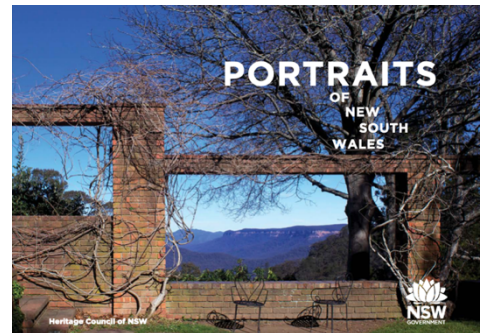
AILA commends a merit-based approach to each location, reflecting density research findings¹, rather than a blanket metric-based development measured from train stations, that responds to the terrain, existing public open space and landscape heritage of each local area. It is noted, however, that land within 1,200 metres of the 8 accelerated stations (**Bankstown, Bays West, Bella Vista, Crows Nest, Homebush, Hornsby, Kellyville and Macquarie Park**) is being rezoned before November 2024 to create capacity for 47,800 of the housing target allow completions within the Accord period. These selections were based on; planning, infrastructure, spatial data, expert advice and & feasibility analysis. **Detail of the 'expert' guidance is not presented.** Much work is fast tracked, yet the detail to demonstrate **how heritage conservation areas and items are being considered is missing.**

The NSW Housing Planning Policy would allow multi-story residential developments within heritage conservation areas, for example at Gordon, surrounding the historic public garden, 'Eryldene', **impacting the significance of the century-old State Heritage listed house, garden and its undulating ridge-line context.**

The **'pattern book'** approach is not appropriate for precincts adjacent or within heritage conservation areas and items.

This policy requires sensitive planning responses, as demonstrated by the 'Eryldene' dilemma - Refer Case Studies.

The Apartment Design Guide is cited as the 'principle guiding document' which suggests the vast suite of **recent work in NSW Government Architects Office has been sidelined** (refer point 1, and References)



Recent work to support environmental, social and heritage sensitive approaches is contained in AILA endorsed guidelines;

- NSW Government Architect Guidelines: Connection with Country, Good Urban Design, Better Placed Design Guide for Heritage and Greener Places
- DPE Valuing Green Infrastructure and Public Space
- ISO 14091:2021 Adaptation to climate change : guidelines on vulnerability, impacts and risk assessment
- AILA Carbon Positive Design
- AILA and Standards Australia : Urban Green Infrastructure Handbook
- Heritage Council NSW: Portraits of NSW
- AILA Landscape Heritage Report supported by Heritage NSW
- Design & Place SE

¹ Morley, Merrick & Pafka, Elek, 2023/04/26, "Density Done Well" in the Pursuit of 20-Minute Neighbourhoods: Navigating Fluid Discourses in Melbourne in Urban Policy and Research 10.1080/08111146.2023.2198550

DISCUSSION

AILA has reviewed the Productivity Commission Report '[Building more homes where people want to live](#)' and the [Transport Oriented SEPP](#)² and agrees with the merit based approach, in principle.

The TOD Housing initiatives supported by AILA are increased density near public transport and where people want to live, provided they meet ambitious climate, nature targets, and conserve heritage, to improve liveability and positive social outcomes.

Noting how often 'amenity' is used in the proposal, to achieve this outcome AILA recommends;

1. *MODIFY THE REFORMS TO CALL OUT AMENITY & SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES, THROUGH A HERITAGE LENS, AS TARGETS IN THE MASTERPLAN PROCESS*

These should be ambitious targets to conserve and protect existing landscape, trees, gardens and soil network to guide the delivery of the developments.

These targets represent strategic thinking and need to be applied at precinct level to be successful. The Reforms should require that targets be applied through a Master planning process for each station precinct and that it is verified by a Landscape Architect.

As a minimum, these targets would consider:

- a) Connection with Country principles
- b) Safeguarding existing heritage listed properties and management of impacts on landscape and gardens in terms of;

² <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/transport-oriented-development-program/transport-oriented-development-sepp>

- Heritage views & vistas within and adjacent to heritage areas and items
- Noise
- Microclimate
- Overshadowing
- Wind tunnelling
- Soil network from competing requirements
- Permeability
- Water Cycle to ensure soil hydration
- % Urban Tree Canopy target ensuring
- Existing canopy to be adequately understood and protected
- Biodiversity targets poorly suited to much of the microclimate of the public domain, i.e: not shade tolerant, particularly in dense building shade
- Solar access targets for public domain are very poor and should be substantially increased
- Public domain should have a much higher target for % area suitable for dwell in relation to for wind impact.

Design Excellence needs to be demonstrated in the public domain and open space. To achieve this an integrated urban design framework should be established and safeguarded to guarantee success of any amenity solutions. Amenity is not defined in the TOD Program official media release and must be clarified at the outset.

Examples of the basic requirements include;

- a) Importance of clear coordination between green infrastructure; public domain, heritage landscapes, ecology, urban forest & greening, with servicing reticulation and water cycle management
- b) The built form needs to allow dwelling level criteria for the majority of the public domain as well as achieving the Gehl people focused space 12 quality criteria for; protection, comfort and enjoyment. This includes consideration of building edge condition with public domain, proportionate to human scale, having a diversity of functions and providing rich sensory experience, including non-privatised activation.

2. REPLACE THE PROVISIONS OF APPENDIX B AND C TO REFER TO TARGETS ESTABLISHED BY THE DESIGN & PLACE SEPP

The current provisions of Appendix B and C of the Housing Reforms reference the requirements of the outdated Apartment Design Guide. The ADG's environmental controls are inadequate to protect green infrastructure and offset the impact of development on the environment. The controls have been superseded by more current thinking through the Design and Place SEPP which should be applied to the Reforms and replace the AGD references.

3. PLAN FOR QUALITY GREEN SPACES & PUBLIC DOMAIN - OPENS SPACE THINKING TO BE PART OF THE MASTERPLAN PROCESS - REFORM THE MECHANISM OF DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TO DIRECT FUNDS MORE STRATEGICALLY TO PRECINCT-LEVEL PROJECTS

The current system of Government categorises local parks and open spaces alongside stormwater and other development infrastructure, the delivery of which is the responsibility of the local Council.

The Reforms consider parks/ opens spaces to be delivered in a staged fashion, rolled out delivery of new development in these precincts and that this occurs through 7.11 and 7.12 Developer Contributions and undertaken by local Councils.

The Reforms aim to ensure "delivery of [green/local] infrastructure at a rate that will keep up with the anticipated growth". Relying on developer contributions and this staged approach to deliver holistic thinking around green spaces is adequate and unplanned and will result in piecemeal results.

This approach doesn't allow for strategic planning required for best practice green infrastructure and open space planning.

In line with Recommendation 01, AILA recommend a more strategic approach to open spaces in local government that considers wider precinct thinking to green infrastructure design that allows for cross-LGA coordination.

AILA recommends the Master planning process be applied to each station precinct and that targets/ controls for Environment, Landscape Design, Heritage. These targets should extend beyond the new precinct/ rezoning areas to ensure greater connectivity for green infrastructure.

Reform the mechanism of Developer Contributions to direct funds more strategically to precinct-level projects, including those that cross LGAs - this could be done via the Housing & Productivity Contribution fund.

4. STRATEGIC PLANNING TO AIM FOR BEST POSSIBLE COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF ALL FACETS OF THE PROGRAM.

There needs to be mandatory, detailed guidelines for the (People, Place and) [Transport Oriented Development Program](#)³ that ensures it is comprehensively coordinated with heritage, environmental and good landscape design values, together with structural and other engineering planning, so that it is delivered with minimised compromise. For an integrated design policy for the built environment, be guided by the Government Architect Connection with Country Framework, Better Placed policy (2017) and the Transport for NSW Movement and Place Guidelines and AILA Landscape Heritage Report .

All targeted jurisdictions should be assessed through this coordinated approach.

The detailed approval process should be undertaken by the individual Councils under their heritage and public domain policies, guidelines and codes. Urban design must be well considered to respond to the natural topography, vegetation, soil network, drainage, heritage conservation areas and items. It must incentivize adaptive reuse, protect historic landscape sightlines, retain existing pedestrian linkages, and creating new safe ones. Above all, the design of all public domain, open space and private landscape works being proposed must lead this integrated approach.

FUTURE BEST PRACTICE PLANNING

AILA calls for a strategic approach to housing growth that enhances existing landscape heritage for future generations:

1: Context

Look at the bigger picture issues for the whole municipality, relating to each targeted station.

³ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/transport-oriented-development-program.pdf>

In addition to the Apartment Design Guide, coordinated insights from the work already invested by NSW Government Architects Office over the past 7 years⁴, are needed to achieve better planning outcomes:

- a) Connection with Country framework
- b) Better Placed
- c) Greener Places
- d) 101 Design Ideas from NSW State Design Review Panel
- e) DRAFT Design and Place SEPP

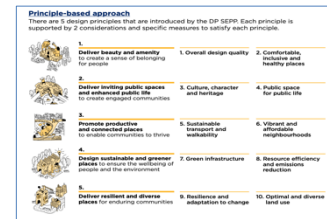
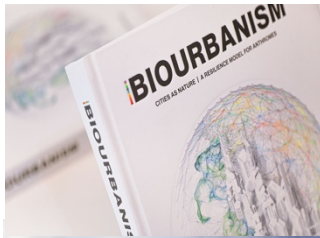


Figure 1. NSW Design and Place SEPP : Principle-based approach

Other AILA endorsed studies can be applied to achieve ESG integrated planning solutions:

- f) Climate Adaptation for Urban Settlements
- g) Carbon Positive Design
- h) Urban Green Infrastructure Handbook
- i) Portraits of NSW - featuring exemplary landscape heritage and
- j) AILA Landscape Heritage Report supported by Heritage NSW

The blanket approach spreads development based on radius from stations, in cadastral plan form, irrespective of open space, topography or 'nature positive' values. Previous urban design, in some instances, has successfully protected the natural and cultural values. Landscape Architects know how to elegantly integrate living systems with urbanization.



i) **Northern road and rail line** : the undulating, Blue gum forest dominated ridgeline of places like Gordon are not suited to larger building footprints which result in major cut fill and loss of vegetation. Housing that steps down the slope preserves the prominent forested ridgeline as 'nature' visible from most parts of the Greater Sydney region. Conservation of the forested ridgeline topography connects people with Country and the significance of Sydney as a city in a landscape of world heritage natural and cultural values.



ii) **Inner west** : A merit-based approach permits a Nightingale Apartment proposal, a ballot rental development model, in the place of a Queen Anne era church of low significance, near a heavy rail station, hospital and parkland. Merit-based strategic planning could preserve intact historic garden suburb streetscapes, like Haberfield.



iii) **Central Park, Broadway; Harold Park, Rozelle, and Green Square Zetland**⁵ are model larger developments near rail that integrate existing open space and new green infrastructure, libraries and innovative solutions to overshadowing. These quality design outcomes are not afforded by pattern book, blanket metrics.

2: Identify potential problems

The NSW Government has not consulted Landscape Heritage expertise to think through the bigger picture in terms of;

- a) Impact on heritage items and areas

⁴ For full list go to References

⁵ Perinotto, T. 2023 <https://thefifthstate.com.au/innovation/design/interview-rob-stokes-on-planning-and-housing/>

b) Problem of blanket 7-storey development benefiting developers with poor social outcomes.

3: Existing heritage conservation area protections must be understood and respected for each precinct.

- a) Are there dedicated conservation areas with the appropriate protection guidelines in place ?
- b) Public confidence in existing DCP & LEP controls are at a low point, with new SEPP overrides that mean rushed planning mistakes may cause irreversible damage⁶.

4.

4: Find solutions

AILA have Identified and recommend data collection, innovative processes and models of appropriate development from London, Sydney and Melbourne:

- a) **Achieve a balance between Housing density and Nature Positive public and private space, based on data.** learning from UK Commission CABE⁷ to articulate the value of balanced Urban Design.

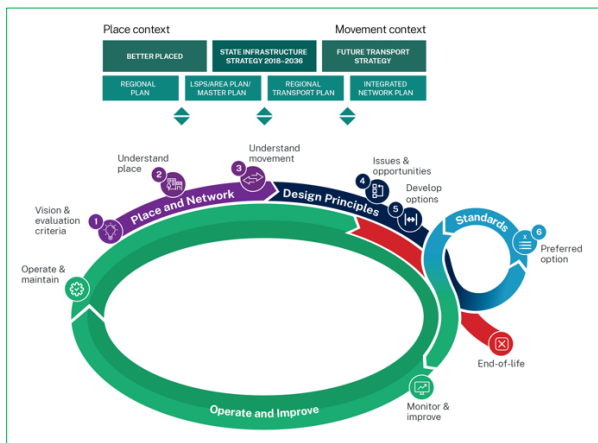


Figure 2: Movement and Place Process: How does the TOD program relate to this strategic thinking?

5: Form an alliance.

Next steps - AILA to lead:

there needs to be a lot more work on the ground regarding appropriate development sites. AILA is willing to lead a workshop to Connect with Country and Councils to find solutions for People and Transport Oriented Development in Greater Sydney that achieve world leading design outcomes;

- a) An equitable approach that respects heritage controls to sensitively balance the Climate and Nature Positive needs of the future community at each targeted station with the density needed near public transport.
- b) AILA will coordinate Local Government Urban Designers and Landscape Architects, in direct collaboration with diverse future community representatives.
- c) AILA can select an expert jury of designers skilled at generating thinking about innovative solutions that will benefit the public interest and stretch urban design ideas beyond Business as Usual, towards world leading, award winning design of which developers and the local communities can be proud.

⁶ Rob Stokes, interview by T. Perinotto, 2023

⁷ https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/fileadmin/uploads/dc/Documents/the-value-of-urban-design_0.pdf

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ATTACHMENT B- BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1 - 'ERYLDENE' Heritage landscape at risk

'ERYLDENE' DILEMMA

Eryldene was amongst the first places to be heritage listed in NSW, in 1979 and is included on the NSW State Heritage Register and the heritage schedules of the Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015 as well as being classified by the National Trust. It is also within the C7 Heritage Conservation Area under Ku-ring-gai LEP 2015.

However, its proximity to Gordon Rail Station makes it vulnerable to the proposed NSW Housing Policy planning changes to facilitate low/mid-rise housing developments in residential zones, and high rise apartment buildings within 400 m of the station via Transport Oriented Development (TOD) program. The proposed planning changes would have the following negative consequences for Eryldene and its surroundings:

- ◇ The height potential of high rise apartment buildings immediately adjacent to Eryldene's boundaries will substantially impact the conservation, use and activation of the house and garden museum. The proposed height of up to 21 metres and absence of a minimum lot size and boundary width under the Part 2 TOD Program would lead to visually overdeveloped sites, especially with the potential 30% height and floor space affordable housing bonus.
- ◇ Substantial excavation for underground car parking for such developments will affect surface and subsurface water flows - impacting Eryldene's significant camellia collection and mature garden; with vibration impacts potentially damage adjoining heritage buildings and garden structures .
- ◇ The intensity of development relative to small allotment sizes will remove or substantially compromise Gordon's landscape cover, including large canopy trees, relying on deep soil planting and impacting biodiversity, the visual character of the HCA, its microclimate and potentially increasing heat island effects.
- ◇ Eryldene's wider setting of low-rise residential development would be substantially impacted, adversely affecting its streetscape setting and historic context.

Utilizing the proposed standardized pattern book for housing designs would be inadequate for addressing the unique conditions of HCAs or sites near heritage items. Design Guide for Heritage is the relevant government guidance.

A master plan process is more rigorous and informative than a standard statement of environmental effects which accompanies a development application. Master planning by the Kuringgai Council would allow for a thorough investigation and analysis of matters, impacting HCAs and appropriate community consultation. There are numerous successful examples of master planning which have included heritage items and Eryldene could be a test case for examining how adapting the currently proposed planning controls could achieve both heritage and affordable housing outcomes. A collaborative approach is needed to ensure the sustainable existence of Eryldene ahead

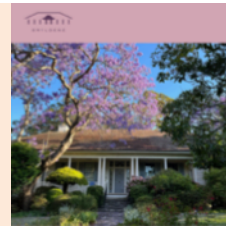


Figure 3: 'Eryldene' 1914
designed by W H Wilson for Prof. E. G. Waterhouse

Eryldene Trust:

"The changes outlined in the Explanation of Intended Effect: Changes to create low and mid- rise housing, December 2023 (the EIE Document); and Transport Oriented Development Program, December 2023 (the TOD Program), could have devastating and irreversible impacts on this national treasure" said Eryldene spokesperson Michael Waterhouse.

"The impacts are not just aesthetic but environmental. For Eryldene, such intense adjacent development threatens the garden's microclimate and its internationally recognised camellia collection, affecting vegetation health due to overshadowing, altered air flow patterns, soil moisture content variations and increased pathogens.

Located within 400 metres of Gordon Station, Eryldene is a rare and intact combination of outstanding early 20th-century architecture with a uniquely significant horticultural collection. The buildings and gardens were designed by renowned Australian architect William Hardy Wilson and Professor Eben Gowrie Waterhouse, a unique blend of cultural and natural heritage, which is looked after and opened to the community by the Eryldene Trust.

The Trust's position is that the proposed planning changes should not apply within Heritage Conservation Areas nor should they apply to heritage items and sites adjoining heritage items, especially those items listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR).

The Trust strongly advocates that the new residential development contemplated in the EIE Document and particularly in Part 2 of the TOD Program should be subject to a master plan process where the development site adjoins an item on the SHR. In these cases, the proposed pattern book design guidance should not be applicable, and a master planning approach should be mandated.

"We cannot stand by and watch as blanket planning changes threaten not only the physical structures and horticultural collections but the context and very essence of what makes Eryldene a national treasure," says Michael Waterhouse.

"We urge the State Government to engage collaboratively with all stakeholders, including the Trust, Kuringgai council, the community and heritage experts, to amend and adapt the proposed policies and controls before changes take effect – to avoid damaging our nation's history forever."

CASE STUDY 2: 'London's Trees are saving the City billions' report by Bloomberg CityLab⁸

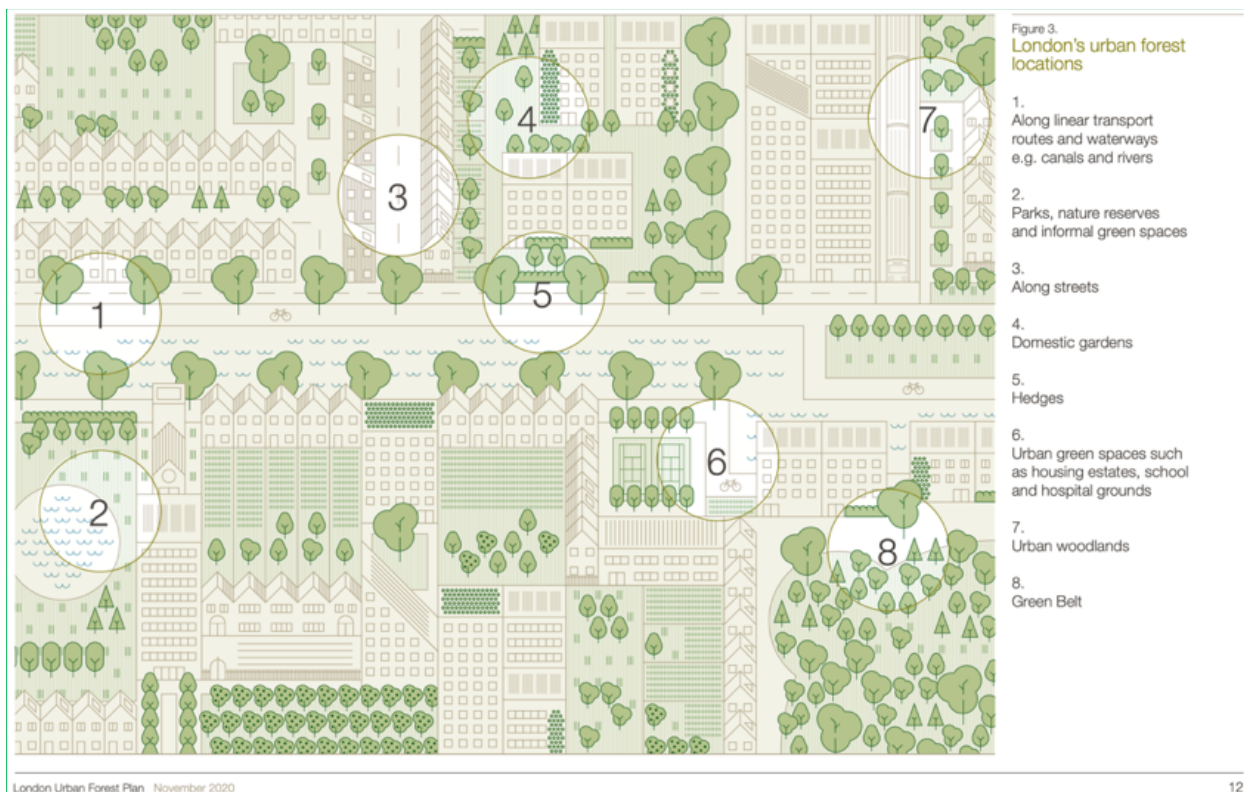


Figure 4 London's comprehensive green infrastructure strategy to better protect irreplaceable assets such as heritage trees and ancient woodlands against loss and damage

Three studies; Britain Office of National Statistics - Natural Capital team⁹, London's Urban Forest :The London iTree Eco Project¹⁰ and a University College London study¹¹ are examples of recent work that sheds new light on the value of urban trees. Together, they assess their potential to store carbon, mitigate climate change and importantly, identify responsibilities and create partnerships to protect and enhance heritage trees and ancient woodlands.

An understanding of the dimension of green infrastructure assets was gained by the study of publicly-available airborne and ground-based LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) measurements, to generate a map of carbon stored in an estimated 85,000 trees across the London Borough of Camden.

Adapt this concept for Sydney:

Sydney based Landscape Architects are analysing cities' tree canopies by working on digital twins and are trained to integrate multiple living systems.

CASE STUDY 3 : City of Sydney: listening to communities, realising a vision

⁸ O'Sullivan, F. 2020, Bloomberg CityLab Environment, 10 March <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/>

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/woodlandnaturalcapitalaccountsuk/2022>

¹⁰ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/londonurbanforestplan_final.pdf

¹¹ Published in *Carbon Balance and Management*, [the UCL study](#) Funded by the Natural Environment Research Council, in part through the National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO), supported by David Houghton, Interim Tree Manager for Camden Council and Highgate Cemetery for access to data and sites

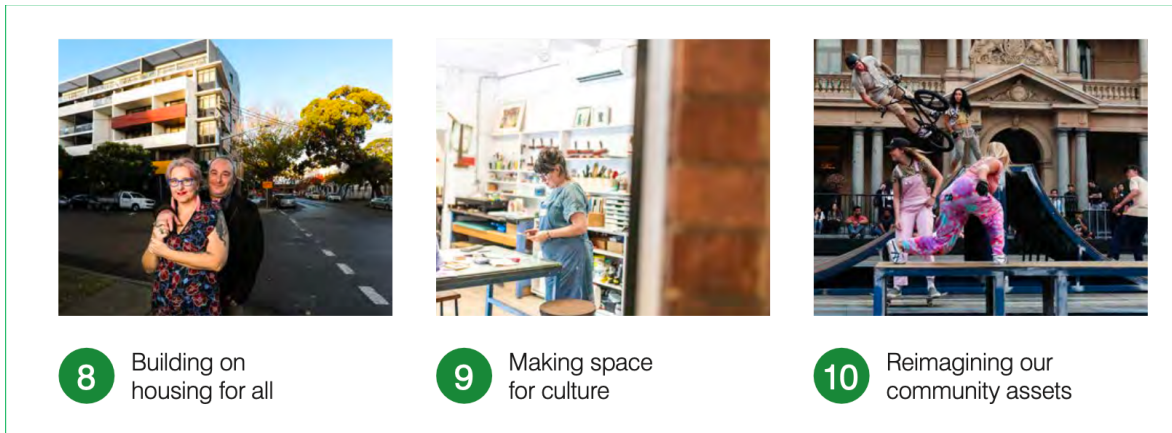


Figure 5 *Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050: Continuing the vision* These ideas illustrate how our vision for a future Sydney could be realised p17 (detail)

Former Councillor Phil Thalys and current Councillor HY William Chan reflect on innovative processes;

- engaging with citizen science methods of collecting community input,
- holding workshops with diverse citizen representatives coordinated with an expert jury to stretch the ideas to inspire 'greater good' urban design thinking; beyond self-interest and for future generations.¹²

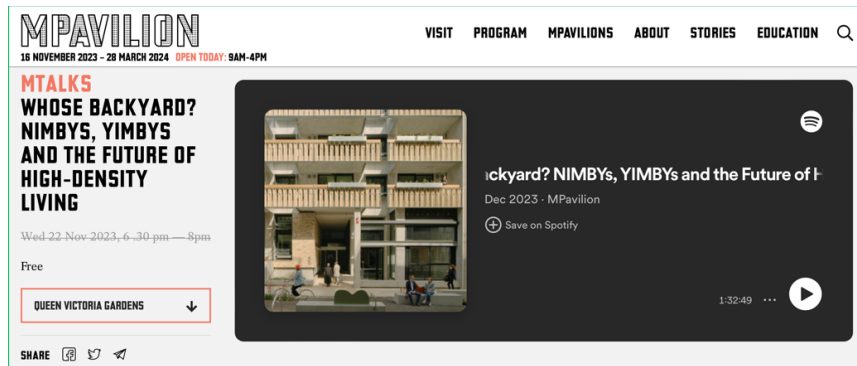
Take-away:

Lead NUANCED and ITERATIVE planning, based on precedent best practice urban design;

¹² <https://csu.global/events/green-cities-sydney-challenges-and-opportunities-in-the-city/>

CASE STUDY 4 : James Lesh and Melbourne Nightingale Housing

A panel to discuss housing and heritage; <https://mpavilion.org/program/whose-backyard-nimbys-yimbys-and-the-future-of-high-density-living/>



Key lessons are;

- The benefit of **inviting future community neighbours in to the planning process**, to understand the design motivations and imagined outcomes.
- **High quality, equitable urban environments are based on social dimensions**; impact analysis, streets for people, active mobility, active streetfronts, neighbourhood character.
- **'Well designed' does not need to be cost prohibitive**
- Well located higher density housing increasingly need to be **supported by good public open space**
- Areas where people want to live are often heritage areas- beautiful to walk around. The Victorian method of Heritage Overlays has limitations. The question, "How to retain what is important?" relies upon the ways we chose to define heritage. We need to reflect on **what we like about our heritage areas**.
- **Intersecting** issues : (sustainability, reuse, Country, inclusion, liveability) can be understood through a heritage lens that **enables heritage to reflect values of today**.
- **Developers need to demonstrate how their projects give back to the community**.
- The City Portrait project based on doughnut Economics theory looks to create **a compass for city progress** not based on growth but social values; not just in liveability, but **in equity, wealth distribution, energy production, biodiversity, environmental regeneration and happiness**.
- Guidelines are not enough. **Legislation is required**.

Take-away:

Participatory heritage conservation analysis and innovation is needed to look beyond the simplistic YIMBY v NIMBY assumptions

CASE STUDY 5

AILA holds a position to support efforts by NSW Planning to achieve increased housing density but not to the detriment of quality of life.

At 8,000 people/km², Copenhagen is ranked in the top ten for both density and quality of living. Sydney at only 2,000 people/km², falls in the lowest ten for density and for quality of life, only the top twenty. How can planners improve quality of life as Sydney inevitably accommodates higher density?

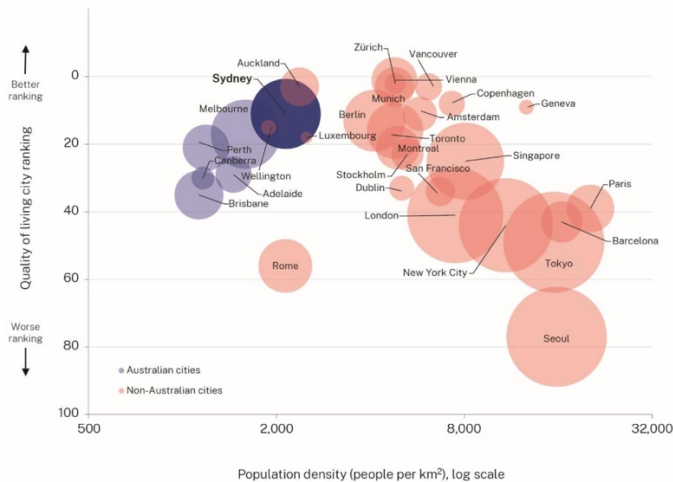
City size, climate, water, cyclability, walkability, diverse urban form, strategic tree canopy and heritage controls are among the ‘quality of life’ variables to consider.



Figure 1. Three views of Copenhagen At 8,000 people/km², Copenhagen is ranked in the top ten for quality of living. Sydney at only 2,000 people/km², falls in the top twenty. City size, climate, water, cyclability, walkability, urban form, tree canopy and heritage controls are among the variables to consider. Images Source: Consortium for Sustainable Urbanism.

Figure 8: Denser cities can sustain quality of life

Sydney’s population density compared to other cities, with bubble sizes proportional to city population, 2021



Note: Quality of life is measured by 39 indicators across 10 categories, including the economy, natural environment, political and social environment, crime and safety, and sanitation standards. To calculate population density, Citypopulation (2023) uses the population and land area data for major agglomerations, urban centres, and cities. These areas are defined by the National Statistical Offices of each country using the country’s latest data. Latest estimates for the cities in the figure are from 2018 onwards. The accuracy of estimates is dependent on the quality and availability of the data from each country’s National Statistical Office. Source: Citypopulation (2023); Mercer (2023)

Figure 2 Productivity commission: Building more homes where people want to live. 2023