

# Speaker - Key callouts

## Save Greater Sydney Coalition

### Rally 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023.



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#### Statement from Alex Greenwich Member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly

*The proposed changes override long established planning rules to sensitively locate density to protect heritage, environment, solar access, tree canopy, healthy homes and access to services.*

*Proposed heights don't even fit in proposed floor space ratios.*

*That means the rules would allow high-rise development up to 30 story's without any strategic planning.*

*There are no provisions to deliver affordable housing. The laws actually facilitate current trends of converting buildings of many small affordable homes into just a few luxury apartments.*

#### Statement from David Burdon Conservation Director at National Trust of Australia (NSW)

*"In June 2023, it was reported that the Inner West Council was going on a heritage frenzy as it sought to list 15 electricity substations, 10 of which were already heritage listed, by Ausgrid. Later, in the very same council meeting, a councilor raised the issue of unoccupied buildings.*

*While that rage was maintained by those who opposed some heritage of those substations, the fact that the Inner West Council had 8,152 unoccupied dwellings went unreported.*

*8,152 in one council area.*

*[Shame, Shame]*

*The broader situation reveals that when you look at all Sydney councils combined, there's a staggering 163,740 740 unoccupied dwellings in Sydney".*

*[Shame, Shame]*

*"Surely a good place for a policymaker to start would be to address the housing crisis not the sweet nectar that a developer wishes to promote"*

*[Here, Here]*

## Sue Higginson, Member of New South Wales Legislative Council

...what this Minns government has put on the table does none of that. It will not see the delivery of affordable, accessible, safe and sustainable housing.

This is a short-term plan. It is a grab to the Property Development Council and Lobby and Industry. And it's an unbelievably crass, cheap grab at that. We deserve better!

the Greens have secured an inquiry into the TOD SEPP, the Transport Oriented Development and the Diverse and Well-Located Housing Program. housing program.

The government disingenuously has not made the commitment to wait until that inquiry has completed its hearings and put its report on the table

we need to keep pressuring the government to stop disrespecting democracy, to stop disrespecting this Parliament and to stop disrespecting local communities and local governments and wait until we've properly had our say because we know our case for good planning is compelling

## Zoe Baker, Mayor of North Sydney Council

...The cost of housing in North Sydney and throughout the Greater Sydney, whether to purchase or to rent, is at an historic high. Like councils across the Greater Sydney region, North Sydney Council and our community recognise this crisis and we are committed to prioritizing affordable housing and planning for growth.

...windfall profits to private development sector without delivering new affordable housing.

[Applause] It's a narrative that dwells only on the supply of new housing by the private sector and it does not touch on the other underlying causes of the housing crisis, including the taxation system, the current high cost of financing construction, nor the fragile position of the construction sector across the country post COVID.

Rushed mass one-size-fits-all up-zonings from Newcastle to Wollongong and everywhere in between will not miraculously reduce housing and rental prices.

The fact is developers are in it for profit and they will land bank until the cost of construction, falls and skills and material shortages are addressed, until the development cycle is at its most profitable

Stripping councils and communities of a voice and overriding local planning controls without mandating affordable housing and new developments, nor providing commensurate investment in sewerage, water and electricity upgrades, in open space, hospitals, schools for the new population is not the answer.

... Overriding heritage protections uniformly will diminish the character and the quality of our city. [Appluse] It doesn't have to be either or. It's not a zero-sum game! You can have medium and high density and heritage.

Work with councils and communities to allow changes tailored for local conditions, not a blanket one size fit all approach. Back good planning principles and allow local communities to deliver density done well.

## Dr Peter Gangemi, Mayor of Hills Shire Council

What is proposed is a one-size-fits-all but it will locate densities in the wrong areas. It'll destroy [Applause] the very carefully calibrated community character that we've all worked so hard to build over such a long period of time.

In my area in the hills, there's a suburb called Beaumont Hills. It's over two kilometers from any station. It just has a small collection of shops but under these changes six-story apartments could be located in narrow streets, far from stations, far from schools with capacity. This is not what we want.

A lot of councils are meeting their housing targets in the hills, along with Blacktown Council, we're two of the fastest growing areas in terms of local governments in New South Wales.

...there is a difference between Development Approvals and Zonings and actually getting houses on the ground. And what we're seeing from councils, what I see from councils is they're very good at getting, there's a lot of approvals that are there and haven't been enacted on yet. There's a lot of zonings that haven't been enacted on but that's different to houses on the ground. In the Hills we've got enough land zoned for 50,000 more dwellings, in the last 10 years 30,000 Development Approvals but only 18,000 have been constructed.

This Housing Crisis has not caused by Councils, its not caused by lack of approvals, it is not caused by lack of zonings, you cannot-zone your way out of the crisis, you cannot approve your way out of this crisis! [Applause]

So as a Council we are calling on all levels of Government, you have to look at immigration, you can't have a system where more people are moving into the Country than the construction industry has capacity to build houses for. We need sewer, [Applause] power, water rolled out in those key areas to unlock housing in those key areas.

We need infrastructure, we need schools, we need hospitals, road upgrades, active recreation in those key areas to unlock housing. Landcom are sitting on are sitting on thousands of dwellings that are already DA approved. The State Government can build those dwellings tomorrow if they so choose fit.

## Mark Speakman, Leader of the Opposition in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly

These one-size-fits-all, lazy, arrogant proposals can trash your suburbs.

We say the first thing you've got to do is engage with local communities through their local councils.

- Let local communities identify where there is space for extra supply.
- Let them identify what extra schools and hospitals and public transport and roads and sewerage you need

We know that record immigration is putting enormous pressure on housing affordability, not just for buyers, but for renters as well. So part of the solution is reducing immigration.

And part of the solution too, with affordability, is fixing our stamp duty system.

There should be incentives for empty nesters who choose to downsize. One of the reasons we've got family homes locked up is because of the high transaction costs in downsizing. There are 1.4 million people in New South Wales living by themselves or as couples in houses that are three bedrooms or larger And three quarters of

those are over 55. We don't want to force people out of their neighborhoods, which is what Chris Minns' approach is doing. We want to give them the incentive by removing transaction costs.

## Warren Fahey AM, Cultural Historian & Potts Point Preservation Group

So it's great that we're here today. And if I was the premier, I'd be a little bit nervous when I realized who is represented here today.

I think that my memories of Sydney are very different. We have lost so much of our history and it's sad...

I come from that very precious area called Potts Point and Elizabeth Bay which incorporates Kings Cross. It's only one square kilometer. It has a history, a unique history. It's the first place in Australia where we had flats, apartment living, and today we are seeing many of those apartments threatened and it also threatens what is the cultural fabric of that very, very amazing part of Sydney's history. At the moment as I stand here, there are five DA proposals which will see 174 apartments replaced by 73 apartments.

The time has come for a better understanding and protection of 20th century buildings. In another 50 years we'll look back and if we see all these 20th century buildings disappear we'll go, how the hell did that happen?

## Judy Munday, former partner of the late Jack Munday

...we still have people sleeping in railway station tunnels, pitching tents in public parks, squatting in abandoned buildings, and reportedly sleeping in motor vehicles because there's nowhere else to go. [SHAME] There's no doubt that we have a dire shortage of affordable housing and that the lack of such housing is a major contributing factor to the cost-of-living crisis.

... our government says it has a commitment to improve housing affordability. But the private property market, the free market, is clearly not going to achieve that outcome. [Applause]

The provision of quality rent controlled public housing built by the government would certainly go a long way to addressing it. This is not a new idea. Over 100 years ago, in the early years of the last century, the government of the day built public housing. Following the Second World War, our society faced a serious housing shortage. In response, the government built public housing. 26% of homes after the war were built by the government as public housing.

...the struggle to preserve the historic rocks area of Sydney in the 1970s, an agreement was reached between the Wran Government and the Builders' Laborers' Federation, which had placed a green ban on that area.

That agreement was to build public housing for Rocks residents who had been displaced during that ultimately successful battle. Flowing from that agreement, the Sirius building was constructed by the Housing Commission of New South Wales. It contained 79 public housing units ranging in size from one bedroom to four bedrooms. Its design was similar to another public housing block of units of one, two and three bedrooms.

..Security of tenure is no longer the case for public housing tenants. Some 37 years after residents moved into the Sirius building at the rocks, they were given notice to quit. They were evicted. They lost the security of their homes that had been built for them 37 years earlier.

... public housing is being allowed to deteriorate by neglect and then sold off to the private sector, thus reducing publicly owned and rent controlled housing stock at a time of great need. This loss of public stock eliminates the

price control restraint that was imposed on the free market both in terms of purchase price and rental costs by the countervailing effect of the public housing sector.

Thus rents and house prices are now at historic highs, making both ownership and rental inaccessible for many.

If we're going to increase availability, the government needs to accept responsibility for housing. We need to re-establish public sector involvement in the provision and maintenance of public housing.

This is no less a basic necessity for a decent life. Our Prime Minister famously, and like many people, had the advantage of growing up in publicly owned housing, in a housing commission home. It was no more than he and his mother deserved. They deserve that opportunity but we urgently need to reinstate such a starting life as he had, such a human right for those who increasingly are being denied it.

## Alister Henskens SC, Wahroonga, Member of the NSW Legislative Assembly

We want more housing and we want more affordable housing. Like many of us I've got two kids in their 20s who are renters and we all want to help their generation get a home but we also want to do it in the right way. Chris Minns has the wrong plan and if its implementation occurs it will not only ruin our city but it will make housing more expensive. [Applause]

Now we all know if you analyze a problem wrongly then you're likely to come up with the wrong solution and that's what's happening with Chris Minns' housing policy. [Applause] Our current planning laws have been in place for almost half a century. If they were the cause of our current housing problems, then those problems would have occurred back in the 1980s and not now. Chris Minns has the wrong solution because he's diagnosed the wrong problems.

The planning rules that we have today that Chris Minns wants to destroy was able to produce 75,000 homes completed in New South Wales in 2018 before COVID interrupted our housing supply. Now 75,000 homes in one year is the greatest number of homes any state has produced ever and our current planning laws in place. [Applause] It was achieved by the Greater Cities Commission working with local communities, working with councils, setting local housing targets and putting housing where local infrastructure made sense.

From the last election, from the last election to the announcement of these wrong housing policies, Chris Minns met with property developers on about 20 occasions. [SHAME] In the same time, in the same time there was not one meeting, no public consultation with people who care about our communities.

Our housing issues cannot be solved by drawing nice little circles around every railway station and every shopping area in Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and the Central Coast. The whole policy has gone off track and if it continues in this way the results will be disastrous. It will destroy our suburbs and undermine the Australian dream of owning a home. We need a housing policy that puts people, neighborhoods and communities before property developers. [Applause]

## Hon Paul Fletcher, Federal member for Bradfield

*...our planning system has always provided for a balance of all the relevant factors that need to be weighed up, including livability issues, heritage issues, environmental issues, and of course, the importance of affordable housing and continuing to give people the opportunity to find the housing they need. Now, there's been a lot said today.*

*The one aspect I want to touch on just briefly is that what we've seen here has been a very poor process. We saw these discussion papers issued in December. The discussion paper in relation to transport-oriented development particularly explicitly said we want comments from councils but we don't want comments from other community members. That is not a good process. That is not a way to seek the views of the community.*

*Of course, the time frame for that to come in is April this year. That is an extraordinarily compressed process, not a way to get the best ideas from citizens, from councils, from people who have been involved in these issues for so many years. So bad process leads to bad outcomes.*

## Shankar Sapkota, voice of a renter

*... I got asked to come and speak today, you know, as representing my generation, you know, as somebody who's about to start a family, wanting to purchase a home, it has become increasingly difficult.*

*I'm young, I'm going to roll up my sleeve and do everything that I can to be able to afford in the place I love. That's Karingai Council. But if I can't, then I have to walk somewhere else. But more and more of these decisions have been made for us by the state government.*

*The income, the medium income to basically in between 15 to 20 times the salary of average person in Sydney, it's unaffordable. Rents are basically through the roof and essential workers have been forced out of the city and that's what I'm concerned about is you've got your nurses, you've got your you know firefighters struggling to service the city.*

*... I lived in Marrikville, that's where I grew up. There's units there. Yes, I don't have a problem with units, but it's these small-sized apartments that don't have any purpose for a family.*

*...one of the key things I was going to mention is Opal Towers and is that what we want across Sydney? No, we don't. So basically you know we don't need a dictation from the Minns government on how we should plan in our community. What we need is a consultation that is measured and in line with community values and I just wanted to be a representation of that today coming out.*

## Trevor Sinclair – Motions from the rally

*Finished today with a motion and that motion is that*

*1/ The New South Wales government immediately withdraws its proposed housing reforms including changes to create low and mid-rise housing and the transport oriented develop program.*

*2/ Ensures all NSW local Councils retain their current planning, environmental and heritage powers.*

*3/ Investigates all alternative solutions to the housing crisis.*

*I need someone to move this motion –*

*David Reynolds – Save Greater Sydney Committee moved*

*I need a second for the motion –*

*Kathy Cowley Reynolds – Save Greater Sydney Committee 2nd the motion.*

*All those in favor say AYE [ All sad AYE]*

*All those opposed say AYE [no one was opposed]*

*I declare the motion was unanimously supported.*