

Submission
No 67

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING SYSTEM AND THE IMPACTS
OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND
COMMUNITIES**

Organisation: Mosman Council
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1 November 2023

Ms Sue Higginson, MLC
Chair Portfolio Committee 7 - Planning and Environment
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Submitted online

Dear Ms Higginson

Submission – Parliamentary Inquiry into the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the inquiry into the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities.

Mosman Council welcomes a review of the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities and would welcome measures that would further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that would assist Mosman in preparing for the impacts of climate change and managing the risks of its effects on residents and property.

Mosman Council voted to declare a Climate Emergency in November 2019. Since that time Council has been steadily reducing emissions and aspires to lead by example and ensure environmental sustainability is systemic and embedded across its day to-day business, services and operations. In July 2020 Council committed to net zero emissions by 2030 for its operations, and an aspirational target of net zero emissions by 2040 for the Mosman community.

In April 2021, Council adopted the Climate Action Plan – Mitigation Strategy which outlines Council's commitment to mitigate environmental impacts by Council and across the Mosman Local Government Area (LGA). In November 2022, Council adopted the Climate Action Plan - Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, which is a sister document to the Mitigation Strategy and together provide Council's overall response and actions to Climate Change. We have progressed a number of initiatives including:

- Purchasing renewable energy for all electricity sites and installation of solar PV systems and batteries
- Installation of public fast chargers for Electric Vehicles
- LED lighting replacement for buildings and residential and main streetlights
- Work with and support the community on climate action
- Offering free energy assessment for unit block communal areas
- Annual planting of mature street and park trees continues, reducing paved areas and heat impacts and absorbing CO₂
- Council staff continue to enforce tree compliance with several infringements and prosecutions successfully implemented over the last year for non-compliances
- Council's continued support of registered Bushcare volunteers and the June 2022 renewal of Council's bushland restoration contracts for a further five years
- Native vegetation greater than 90% cover has increased by 5% in the last three years

- Foreshore habitat protection and restoration works have been completed through the Living Seawall installation at Ellery Park, Spit West and seagrass restoration project underway at Balmoral.
- The 2022 rezoning of R2 zoned land within the Scenic Protection Area to the C4 Environmental Living zone
- Reduction in hard stand areas for tree planting and water sensitive urban design for Mosman Civic Centre
- Continued use of up to 5% recycled content in road and footpath paving projects where possible and use of low carbon concrete in the construction of Allan Border pavilion
- Review of Plan of Managements to ensure environmental protection and enhancement.

These actions show our commitment to climate leadership at a local level.

Mosman has 24 kilometres of coastline to both Sydney Harbour and Middle Harbour which are vulnerable to rising sea levels and coastal erosion. Coastal inundation in low lying areas and the impacts of both shoreline recession and impacts from storm surge events are of particular concern for Mosman.

To reach net zero we require greater support and leadership from the State Government across all areas of climate change mitigation and adaptation. This includes policy to help streamline the planning process across the State, directed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the ongoing impacts of climate change on the environment and communities.

Policy and planning reform we need from State government:

- Greater emphasis should be placed on the timely implementation of a regional coastal zone management plan that includes sea level rise projections. Sea level rise projections should not be left to council to determine.
- Measures to reduce the impact of the urban heat island effect, including guidance to councils in terms of appropriate planning controls to mitigate impacts of the urban heat island effect and increased compliance measures to act as a deterrent to the unlawful removal of trees which result in the loss of canopy cover and biodiversity. The *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2012* only addresses impacts from projects that trigger entry into the Biodiversity Offset Scheme. The nature of development within the Mosman local government area means that the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is not triggered. The planning system should be amended to address impacts from smaller projects in areas where infill development is the predominant form of development.
- Section 2.2 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022* prevents council from enforcing standards that exceed the provisions of the Sustainable Buildings SEPP. Local initiatives should be welcomed and encouraged as a means of addressing the climate emergency rather than be blocked by a SEPP that aims to encourage the design and delivery of sustainable buildings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- There should be on-going and frequent review of BASIX provisions to ensure the tool remains fit for purpose and is kept up to date with emerging innovations and trends.
- Many councils don't own landfill sites and so have no control over emissions from waste. We need better management and planning at a State level to ensure emission reduction from waste and waste avoidance in the first instance.
- Greater leadership in the roll-out of EV charging infrastructure.

We request that the above matters be considered by the Parliamentary Inquiry and used to inform planning reforms that allow for better collaboration between State government departments and Council to inform and implement changes to ensure our communities and environment are sufficiently protected against impacts from climate change.

If you would like further information on Mosman Councils' position, please contact Sarah Wallace
Team Coordinator Urban Planning via

Yours sincerely

Craig Covich
DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING