

**Submission
No 174**

**INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT
ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the inquiry for the Development of the Transport Oriented Development Program.

My family has lived in the same area in Sydney all of my life (since 1975), and my husband and I bought our family home in the same area in 2005 after it became heritage conservation area. So I have a strong sense of place, history and community. And a few years living elsewhere during my twenties for comparison and perspective.

I am alarmed at the sudden onset of this housing plan for a housing crisis that took years to create and the lack of clarity about what the plan entails exactly and the lack of collaboration with the residents of NSW in the lead up to the announcement and in the brainstorming of solutions for the situation we face. The document attached to the submission due on 23 February was vague, leading me down a rabbit hole to try to make sense of it - a waste of precious time in a race against a machine that has been in full motion for some time. The intended outcome seems predetermined. And this submission feels futile given the SEPP planning instrument that exists and is being used but I'll make it anyway.

In September 2023 it was reported that "NSW Premier Chris Minns has revealed he is in favour of high immigration even though Sydney is very unaffordable and congested - so more foreigners can build new high-rise apartments." (<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12543233/NSW-Labor-Premier-Chris-Minns-reveals-wants-immigration-surge-Sydney-pushing-house-prices.html>). This raises many questions about what Chris Minns already knew and withheld from the public about his housing plans and the role of mass immigration in both driving and justifying the housing plan whilst more importantly adding unsustainable pressure to the already overstretched housing supply.

I would hope that in considering related issues that the Legislative Council and Department of Planning would consider the bigger picture and ask questions that could form the basis for a well-considered response.

What kind of society do we want to raise the next generation in and how does our environment shape us as a people? We have evolved as our national anthem suggests with "boundless plains to share" and yet we are forcing the next generation (including both new and old Australians) into

overcrowded cities and higher density living. Without the hope of a backyard to evolve our hearts and minds.

The housing plan seems short sighted and out of touch with core Australian values and our way of life. Perhaps you could all reflect on our National Anthem and ask how these plans reflect the collective song that we were raised to live by and raise our children to believe means something:

"For those who've come across the seas We've boundless plains to share; With courage let us all combine To Advance Australia Fair."

There seems to be a complete lack of courage to listen to Australians and combine our efforts to advance our country into the next phase.

It seems politicians have given in to the temptation of relying on mass immigration to plug up any holes in the economy or population. As the child of immigrants I am grateful for this country for the life we have created in it and as part of it. But I despair at the misuse of immigration to obfuscate real issues and create bigger ones that will damage the hopes and future of the next generation.

Women have advanced their careers and employment rights only to find that the combined efforts of couples in relationships is still not enough. The median price for a house in Sydney is around \$1.6 million and for most people two salaries will only buy an apartment unless you have an inheritance to prop you up.

It seems we need to go back to the drawing board. Rethink the actual potential and reality of what we can achieve and what resources are needed to support families so that all Australians can work towards the Australian Dream of owning their own house.

The current model projects a sense of hopelessness. More people than housing. The population growth strategy is exacerbating the housing crisis that obviously did not get created a few months ago when Minns foisted his plans on us.

What are demographic plans for the future of NSW and Australia and how does the Federal and State Governments speak to each other to ensure there is enough housing for existing residents before growing the population through immigration?

What are the needs and rights of the child to have access to their parents who are overworked, over stressed and live in a home that is not over crowded?

What is the impact of overcrowded homes and lack of a backyard to the mental well being of individuals and society?

What is overcrowding and severe overcrowding and what can be done about it?

https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/810123/overcrowding-and-severe-overcrowding-policy-evidence-summary.pdf

A deeper exploration of the consequences of this higher density housing plan, need to be explored.

Stressed parents are more likely to take out their frustrations on their children. How will overcrowded housing disproportionately impact boys, many of whom struggle in small spaces, and the intergenerational transmission of trauma evidenced in intimate partner violence.

Given “There are also clear gender differences, with boys more likely to experience corporal punishment than girls...” (In what circumstances are children more likely to experience corporal punishment, Corporal Punishment, Key Issues, AIFS, 2017. (A copy of this source available at <https://twitter.com/tatianaschild/status/1368026709337903104>). And “men who had experienced violence, including corporal punishment, during childhood, were more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence, hold inequitable gender attitudes” (<http://endcorporalpunishment.org/wp-content/uploads/thematic/Family-violence-briefing-2015.pdf>).

Adequate housing as a Common protective factors for child abuse and neglect

<https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/risk-and-protective-factors-child-abuse-and-neglect>

More is known about the importance of accessing morning sunlight for sleep and mental health. How is building up going to impact the lives of those on the side of the building that does not get to see morning sunlight? People are rushing. They won't have time to potter around in public spaces before they go to work to pay off their homes.

What is the experience of Australians who were raised with a backyard downsizing and raising the next generation in apartments versus immigrants who are used to raising family in an apartment? Who will set the standard for the future and how will this change our culture and society? What will set Australia apart from other nations if we cannot offer a unique life in this wonderful country?

What is the population growth strategy and how can the government create an environment to encourage Australians to feel safe enough to have more children?

This whole plan was proposed to solve a housing crisis and yet it seems that the solution is the problem.

The direction the NSW Government is headed means families will get pushed into raising children in apartments and higher density living. The NSW Government has essentially redesigned family life, our society and culture without consulting us about our future.

I also wish to make some comments about the planning instrument that has been used. The State and Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) meaning a snap decision can be made on the whim of the leaders in power that can change the future of our country, without a parliamentary vote. This is undemocratic and stressful to realise that these powers even exist.

I understand there is a legal requirement for the government to adequately consult the public. With all this talk about the importance of giving Aboriginal Australians a Voice, it seems the same political party has actively suppressed the voice of all Australians and refused to seek out our ideas and input. The same political party that has been pushing for the ACMA misinformation and disinformation bill that would essentially silence dissidents. This government has demonstrated contempt for the people.

The history of our country was built on collective efforts. Meanwhile the same government is placing the responsibility of their plan on the people, claiming it is 'A Shared Responsibility: The plan to begin addressing the housing crisis in NSW' (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/addressing-housing-crisis-nsw>). If it is truly a shared responsibility how come we were the last to hear about the plan? A shared responsibility implies a shared problem. But they are the creators of the problem by adding undue pressure on it with mass immigration. We have no choice about the impact of immigration on supply. And why didn't the Department of Planning send home owners and residents a notice of their intention to enact the biggest land rezoning in Australian history and let us know of the shared problem to come up with a shared solution? Instead the plan was slipped in before Christmas, with no media coverage about the way it would impact our communities.

It is one thing to knowingly purchase property on land that is zoned for road expansion in the decades to come and another for the government to make snap rezoning changes like this. It is unfair and undemocratic. It also creates a sense of hopelessness and panic. Whilst my neighbourhood hasn't been listed as one of the 39 TOD suburbs it COULD be added down the track. What protects us and our homes from the government's power to rezone like that and to massively increase the population in any one year placing pressures on housing? Why should we take responsibility for bad governance?

Why aren't there long term plans to provide housing, decentralising to take pressure off the big cities? We know what the natural population growth is and the government has control over who it lets into the country. It's no mystery. There are no excuses for the lack of long term planning. What mechanisms are there to put the responsibility back on government to make long term plans and to control immigration when housing is insufficient?

What about learning from history and from elders past and present. The Sydney Harbour Bridge connected northern and southern suburbs through the CBD - it wasn't built in a few months. The Sydney Opera House was a collaborative effort. Sydney Lotto was created to fund it. Where there's a will there's a way, It seems there's a lack of will to collaborate with us and to make long term plans to take the pressure off the big cities. The government could target immigration to build infrastructure to encourage Australians to move to other parts of the country. "In 1949 many migrants with engineering or construction skills and experience in working alpine conditions were

targeted for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme." (<https://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/newaustralia/building-the-snowy/index.html>). Can we look to other countries for inspiration? Wasn't Las Vegas built in the middle of the desert? What about a technology centre?

Very disappointed to see the lack of imagination and collaboration. It's not like we can't see evidence of how this will turn out. Look at the way Hurstville, Chatswood and Epping and how agents advertised to foreign markets. How many brick homes have been demolished? How many art deco apartment blocks have been replaced with tall apartment blocks. The cost of body corporate, maintaining elevators and living in communal buildings? Not everyone can afford or wants an architectural design either. Are we going to simply throw out the efforts made by the brickworkers who built this city? Wasteful, unnecessary and costly to the environment. Not to mention the way overdevelopment pushes people out of their homes and their communities.

It takes years to create relationships. Connected communities are security systems. This is a national security issue too. You are breaking down grassroots security systems. And the more stressed out and dense the population the more this will be expressed in crime and despair.

You are turning this into the city of darkness. Handing the keys of the State to the developers. Disrespecting democratic process. How do you measure cultural shifts and impacts? This is not just for the Department of Planning but for every department of government to work together with the people. That would be a shared plan and responsibility.

I hope the Department of Planning scraps these housing plans and all future use of SEPP and start again.

Your sincerely

Tatiana Schild