



Overview of the Ryde Assurance Review Panel's Technical Reports to the Premier



7 June 2019



On the request of the Premier, the Greater Sydney Commission (the Commission) has undertaken an Assurance Review of planning (Review) in the Ryde Local Government Area (LGA). The Review and its reporting occurred in two stages.

The Review Panel, led by the Chief Commissioner, Lucy Turnbull AO, worked with State and local agencies and listened to community and business stakeholders to understand what has been happening in the Ryde LGA and how things could be improved.

This is a less technical summary document of the findings and recommendations of the Panel's Stage 1 and 2 Reports. Full details of the Panel's advice to the Premier are available on the Commission's website: www.greater.sydney.com

Planning and development context

As part of the Assurance Review the Panel considered recent planning and housing development in the Ryde LGA:

- Ryde LGA's housing supply target for 2016 to 2021, is 7,600 new dwellings as set out in the North District Plan.
- This target was based on the City of Ryde's existing planning controls and the level of development anticipated to occur across the LGA at the time it was set.
- In recent years the demand for housing in Ryde LGA has been very strong. This means more housing has been built more quickly than expected.
- For example, there were over 4,500 housing completions in the three years between 2015/2016 and 2017/2018. This was almost double the housing completions in the Ryde LGA in the prior three years following the Global Financial Crisis.
- This strong demand for housing in recent years could result in the LGA exceeding the original (2016 to 2021) housing target by close to 20%.
- Sometimes development can take many years to be started and completed. This means that development investments made in the past few years in Ryde LGA may not be built for several years to come.
- This gap between the time of investment, approval and completion may still occur despite recent State Government decisions to pause new residential planning proposals and defer commencement of the Low-Rise Medium Density Housing Code in Ryde LGA.
- According to a recent forecast by the Department of Planning and Environment, if strong demand continues, it is possible for 10,000 new homes to be built in Ryde LGA between 2018 and 2023 based on existing planning controls.
- **This is not a government target, but is an estimate based on what is already possible if market trends remain the same.**
- It is also important to recognise that high levels of housing development are being experienced in the neighbouring areas of the Ryde LGA.
- This combination of factors is why it's so important that the City of Ryde work with its local community and business stakeholders, along with the Commission and other State Government agencies, to update local plans and its housing strategy, to reflect this growth and have good infrastructure co-ordination and governance in place.



What did the Review Panel find?

The concerns expressed by residents and businesses across the Ryde LGA are understandable.

The Ryde LGA is considered to be a great place to live and work. It has also experienced intense housing market activity in recent years.

The NSW Government has committed significant investment in infrastructure in and around the LGA, however much of it is in the process of being built and / or improved.

Challenges are now being experienced because of the difficulties in delivering the right infrastructure, quick enough to keep up with Ryde LGA's unprecedented residential growth.

It is important that the resident and business communities of the Ryde LGA can be assured that residential growth and change is aligned with the infrastructure needed to support it.

How will the recommended actions in the Report make a difference?

The Panel's recommended actions to the Premier, as set out in its Stage 1 and Stage 2 Reports, are designed to help address these challenges through good planning and good co-ordination. The recommended actions also propose that key areas in the Ryde LGA receive focussed attention to deliver great place-based outcomes.

In short, the recommended actions include:

- **A Ryde LGA Co-ordination Group (RCG)** to bring together the key organisations responsible for planning infrastructure in Ryde LGA, including the City of Ryde council, the Department of Planning and Environment and Transport for NSW;
- **Preparation of Master Plans for the Macquarie Park Investigation Area and the Meadowbank Education Precinct and surrounds** which are proposed to enhance job creation, open space and services to support existing residential development;
- **Maintain the pause on new residential planning proposals** and the delayed commencement of the Low-Rise Medium Density Housing Code, and pause the finalisation of existing residential planning proposals, to allow the introduction of the new co-ordination arrangements to take effect and new plans for the area to address key issues;
- **Supporting the City of Ryde to work on important local planning issues** through the development of its Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Housing Strategy with the local community. This work will set out the strategic planning vision for the LGA and help inform future local housing targets. The Commission has an ongoing assurance process for local strategic planning;
- **Responding to local issues** raised during community consultation, including the investigation of improved cycleway connectivity across the Ryde LGA and better pedestrian amenity.

Anticipated next steps

June 2019	Ryde LGA Co-ordination Group commences meeting, work commences on Master Plans, including stakeholder engagement.
July 2019	City of Ryde Council commences exhibition of its draft LSPS.
by Mar 2020	Finalisation of Ryde Council's LSPS and submission to the Commission's assurance process.
Mid 2020	Finalisation of the Macquarie Park Investigation Area and Meadowbank Education and Employment Precinct Master Plans.