

Greater Sydney Commission

Western Harbour Precinct including the Pyrmont Peninsula Planning Framework Engagement Report

September 2019

Executive summary

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has requested the Greater Sydney Commission (the Commission) review the effectiveness of the planning framework to deliver the Government's vision for the Western Harbour Precinct and Pyrmont Peninsula, as the western gateway of Sydney's CBD. The Terms of Reference for the review can be found on the Commission's [website](#).

Listening to the community, industry and other stakeholders is always at the core of the Commission's work. For this review the Minister specifically asked the Commission to "provide an important opportunity for stakeholder views to be heard on the future development of the area".

The Commission's engagement program involved:

- Listening Session - a panel of Commission staff listened to a range of stakeholder views about the future development of the area
- Online submissions – stakeholders were able to provide feedback through a portal on the Commission's website
- Technical briefings – State Government agencies, City of Sydney Council, Inner West Council and the University of Technology provided technical briefings relevant to the Terms of Reference including the status of relevant planning policies, projects and projects in the study area.

During the engagement period:

- 21 stakeholders participated in the Listening Session
- 219 submissions were received through the online portal
- 14 technical briefings were received.

Whilst there were differing views regarding the appropriateness of the current planning framework put forward by different stakeholders, common themes that emerged were:

- the current planning system arrangements within the Review Area are complex, and it can be hard to understand the application of planning controls and their relationship to the vision for the area
- there is a need to give more certainty on planning processes and timeframes and strengthen collaboration between State Government agencies and the Local Council
- some infrastructure is perceived to be at capacity, including open space, recreation facilities, social infrastructure, community facilities and primary education services
- there is a need to improve transport connectivity, particularly pedestrian and cycle links east-west and north-south across the Peninsula and to provide greater capacity on the Light Rail
- there is a need for more consistent and ongoing consultation and engagement
- the area is already successful in attracting innovation enterprises and there is a need to maintain and enhance the village nature of Pyrmont, its heritage and liveability and its attractiveness to residents, visitors and innovative businesses.

1. Introduction

In August 2019, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces requested the Greater Sydney Commission (the Commission) review the effectiveness of the planning framework to deliver the Government's vision for the Western Harbour Precinct and Pyrmont Peninsula, as the western gateway of Sydney's CBD. The Terms of Reference for the review can be found on the Commission's website. The Minister specified a need for the review to "provide an important opportunity for stakeholder views to be heard on the future development of the area".

Listening to the community and stakeholders has always been an important part of the Commission's work, therefore an engagement program was designed that provided several opportunities for views to be expressed during the review period. These included:

- Listening Session - a panel of Commission staff listened to a range of stakeholder views about the future development of the area
- Online submissions – stakeholders were able to provide feedback through a portal on the Commission's website
- Technical briefings – State Government agencies, City of Sydney Council, Inner West Council and the University of Technology provided technical briefings relevant to the Terms of Reference including the status of relevant planning policies, projects and projects in the study area.

This report outlines the engagement process and what the Commission heard from the community and other stakeholders including:

- A summary of engagement activities
- Key themes heard during the engagement period
- A summary of technical briefings.

2. Summary of Engagement activities

Introduction

On 30 August the Commission invited the community and stakeholders to participate in the Review engagement program through:

- Advertisements in local newspapers (including City Hub and Central Sydney) (Attachment 1)
- Social media on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn (posts were geotargeted to ensure coverage in the review area and 10km radius around it)
- Emails to local community groups in the review area and peak groups representing industry, social and environmental interests (Attachment 2); and
- Newsletter message to around 1,200 people on the Commission's mailing list database.

Listening Session

A Listening Session was held at University of Technology Sydney on Thursday 12 September 2019.

Applicants were asked to outline their interests in the [Review Terms of Reference](#) when submitting an Expression of Interest to attend the Listening Session. All applicants were invited to the Listening Session (refer Attachment 3 – List of Attendees).

The Listening Session Panel comprised:

- Acting Executive Director, City Strategy – Stephanie Barker
- Chief Operating Officer – Danielle Smalley
- Senior Project Officer – Dan Bright.

Chris Leeds, an independent probity officer from Procure Group, observed the Session.

At the start of each meeting a short introduction was read by the Chief Operating Officer covering the following points:

- Noting the review was being undertaken at the request of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
- Confirming there were no conflicts of interest for staff or Commissioners taking part in the review
- Confirming the participants were not registered lobbyists
- Specifying the review was not looking at individual development applications or planning proposals, and was focussed on the broader strategic planning framework
- Highlighting the focus of the review was to establish the appropriateness of the existing planning framework to deliver the Government's vision.

Participants were allocated 10 minutes for each meeting. Commission staff did not comment on the input of participants and only asked questions if clarification was required.

Participants in the Listening Session are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 - Listening Session participants

Group	Details*
Elected representative	Alex Greenwich MP, Member for Sydney
Local community groups	Glebe Society Pymont Action Inc. Ultimo Village Voice
Local residents	6 individuals
Industry representatives, including industry peak bodies and landowner representative groups	Committee for Sydney Urban Development Institute of Australia Urban Taskforce
Planning profession	Planning Institute of Australia (NSW)
Major landowners	Citi 88 Celestino & Urbis Emag Apartments & Urbis Macroplan (Representing Vision Land) Mirvac & Ethos Urban

* Note some groups had more than one participant attend

A transcript of the Listening Session is available on the Commission's [website](#).

Online submissions

Submissions were received through a portal on the Greater Sydney Commission website, with 219 received. Stakeholders who made a submission are listed in Table 2.

When making a submission people were asked to respond to the following three questions in 300 words (for each question). They were also able to attach any supporting documents:

- The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* identifies the Western Harbour Precinct and Pymont Peninsula as an emerging Innovation Corridor - a gateway to global Sydney CBD. How appropriate and effective is the current planning framework in achieving this vision?
- How appropriate and effective is the current planning framework for the Western Harbour Precinct and Pymont Peninsula in delivering quality places for people to live, work and visit?
- Is there anything else you would like to highlight, including any relevant planning documents applicable to the Western Harbour Precinct and Pymont Peninsula?

Table 2 – Submissions received

Group	Details*
Local government	City of Sydney Council Inner West Council Local Government NSW
Local community groups	Bays Community Coalition – Annandale Better Planning Network Friends of Pyrmont Community Centre Friends of Ultimo Glebe Society One Darling Harbour Pyrmont Action Inc Pyrmont Community Group Save the Powerhouse Campaign
Residents, and local workers and business owners	162 submissions
Visitors	26 submissions
Social, transport and heritage peak bodies and organisations	Bicycle NSW City West Housing Inc National Trust of Australia Shelter NSW
Planning industry	Planning Institute of Australia (NSW)
Industry peak bodies	Committee for Sydney Property Council of Australia Restaurant and Catering Australia Sydney Business Chamber Western Harbour Alliance
Major landowners	Celestino Ethos Urban representing TOGA Macroplan representing land owner Mirvac Mirvac (Harbourside) SJB Planning representing the Doltone House Group University of Technology Sydney Urbis representing Emag Apartments Urbis representing The Star Entertainment Group Ltd

* Note some people/groups placed themselves under more than one category e.g. resident and business owner.

All submissions are available on the Commission [website](#).

3. Key themes

Key themes

The Commission undertook an analysis of the feedback provided in the Listening Session and through online submissions. Whilst there were differing views expressed by different stakeholder groups, the following common themes emerged:

- the current planning system arrangements within the Review Area are complex, and it can be hard to understand the application of planning controls and their relationship to the vision for the area
- there is a need to give more certainty on planning processes and timeframes and strengthen collaboration between State Government agencies and the Local Council
- some infrastructure is perceived to be at capacity, including open space, recreation facilities, social infrastructure, community facilities and primary education services
- there is a need to improve transport connectivity, particularly pedestrian and cycle links east-west and north-south across the Peninsula and to provide greater capacity on the Light Rail
- there is a need for more consistent and ongoing consultation and engagement
- the area is already successful in attracting innovation enterprises and there is a need to maintain and enhance the village nature of Pymont, its heritage and liveability and its attractiveness to residents, visitors and innovative businesses.

Several stakeholders also raised concerns about the short timeframe for undertaking this planning review and the timeframe for making submissions.

Key themes by stakeholder group

A summary of the key views expressed by each stakeholder group is outlined below. Views expressed that were not within the Review's Terms of Reference have not been included.

Elected representative

Alex Greenwich MP, Independent Member for Sydney.

- Pyrmont is an example of how density can be done well, with planning that has enhanced public space and maintained a vibrant village character. The current scale is at the appropriate level to support liveability and sustainability.
- There are concerns about the short timeframe for the review and a view that it is important to consult with affected communities and business groups about any future development in or vision for the area.
- There is a need to maintain and enhance coordination and collaboration with local and State Government for planning in the precinct.
- The Council and community need to be involved in determining the right mix of development and future vision for the area.

City of Sydney Council

- Pyrmont-Ultimo is one of Australia's densest residential suburbs with limited sites remaining for additional growth. It is essential a strategic approach directs the renewal and development of the few remaining sites to realise locality vision.
- The effectiveness of SREP 26 in delivering the Federal and State Government's aspiration for employment has been challenged by two decades of strong demand for residential floor space, which has resulted in a shortfall in the anticipated jobs.
- Key actions under the draft Local Strategic Planning Statement include improving connectivity, providing a better environment for walking, supporting local centres and delivering affordable and social housing.
- The NSW Government's Eastern City District Plan and the City's draft Local Strategic Planning Statement provide the strategic direction, both of which recognise the important role of Pyrmont-Ultimo in the Harbour CBD strategic area and Sydney's innovation corridor (City Fringe).
- The future planning of Pyrmont-Ultimo must be a collaborative process where the State Government works with the City and the community in an open and transparent manner to achieve the vision.
- Recommendations put forward by City of Sydney are as follows:
 - Control for planning in the area in its entirety should be returned to the City of Sydney who is best placed to deliver the vision for the area
 - Future changes to the existing planning framework should prioritise employment growth and economic development to deliver a genuine mixed-use precinct and ensure that residential development does not compromise commercial development
 - Any future residential development should focus on the delivery of affordable and social housing to promote community diversity
 - A metro station should be provided in Pyrmont as part of Sydney Metro West project to catalyse economic and employment growth
 - Redevelopment of the Powerhouse Museum site should prioritise cultural uses
 - Redevelopment of the Bays Precinct should:
 - prioritise employment uses
 - facilitate an appropriate built form to accommodate targeted land-uses and employment growth that is characteristic of the Pyrmont Ultimo area

- deliver the publicly accessible and continuous 'Harbour Walk'
- deliver open spaces and appropriate infrastructure to support the new living and working population
- Where the State Government retains control of the planning for key sites in Pyrmont-Ultimo, that a strategic planning led process is undertaken in an open and transparent manner in collaboration with the City of Sydney and the existing community.

Inner West Council

- Council is concerned that further intensification of development at Pyrmont needs to be supported by light rail and active transport infrastructure improvements.
- It is particularly important to consider how development at Pyrmont can support employment growth in the Camperdown-Ultimo Collaboration Area.
- The review should consider setting best practice sustainability standards on issues such as zero waste and reduction in carbon emissions, improvement in biodiversity and tree canopy cover.
- Key concerns that Council suggested must be taken into consideration in the review are summarised as follows:
 - Community-led planning - Short time frames associated with the planning review for Pyrmont limits the opportunity for the community to shape the plan with genuine grass roots input. Need to enable comprehensive infrastructure planning to be carried out to support the growing local community.
 - Inclusion of the Bays Precinct – The western side of the Bays Precinct should be considered as part of this review in a holistic manner. If there is a proposed Metro Station at Pyrmont, this must not jeopardise the existing proposal for a station at the Bays Precinct.
 - Infrastructure projects – The cumulative impact of all infrastructure projects proposed in the area, as well as development proposed on Glebe Island, needs to be assessed and taken into consideration.
 - Traffic and parking – Parramatta Road, Victoria Road and the Anzac Bridge are crucial bus transit corridors. Any changes at the Pyrmont Peninsula should not jeopardise opportunities for Council to transform Parramatta and Victoria Roads.
- Inner West Light Rail upgrades – Any intensification of use in Pyrmont/Ultimo will place additional loading on the light rail and this should be a catalyst for a review of its current operations. Consider light rail link across Pyrmont Bridge to the Central CBD's new light rail service.
- Active transport – Consideration should be given to significantly upgrading the area's active transport network with a view to discouraging private vehicle use, supported by reinstatement of Glebe Island Bridge as an active transport link.
- Synergy with Camperdown – The proximity of the Peninsula to the Camperdown/Ultimo Collaboration Area must be taken into account.
- Ferry services – Additional ferry wharves need to be considered around Blackwattle Bay.
- Affordable housing – Affordable housing around Pyrmont needs to be considered to provide a diversity of housing types
- Impacts on Balmain peninsula – There is a need to maintain existing vistas and views to and from the City, Balmain and the Harbour by providing layered or stepped height restrictions. New building controls should be carefully drafted in liaison with Council and the local community.

Community groups

- There is a desire to protect and enhance local character, including close-knit community ties and an appropriate built-form.
- There is a need to maintain and enhance social infrastructure to support the existing population of residents, workers and visitors as well as future growth. This includes improved access to open space and parklands (including the foreshore), schools and affordable housing.
- There are concerns about the short timeframe for the review and a view that it is important to consult with affected communities about any future development in or vision for the area.

Residents, local workers and local business owners

- Generally, the transformation of Pyrmont from an industrial to mixed use area has been supported by the local community who enjoy its unique village atmosphere, heritage, mix of development and proximity to the CBD.
- The existing open space, social infrastructure, public transport, pedestrian and cycle links and the road network are seen to be at capacity. This is seen as a barrier to further development.
- There are concerns about the short timeframe for the review and a view that it is important to consult with affected communities about any future development in or vision for the area.
- There are concerns about the visual and character impact of future residential development, including overshadowing of public spaces.
- Some submissions supported increased commercial floorspace in the Pyrmont Peninsula while recognising a range of factors, in addition to land use, are needed to deliver innovation.

Visitors

- Generally, the transformation of Pyrmont from an industrial to mixed-use area has been supported by visitors who enjoy its unique village atmosphere, heritage, mix of development and proximity to the CBD.
- There are concerns about the short timeframe for the review and a view that it is important to consult with affected communities about any future development in or vision for the area.
- There are concerns about the visual and character impact of future residential development.
- Some submissions supported extending the Sydney CBD into the Pyrmont peninsula. Others thought the area should complement rather than replicate the CBD with a different built form and atmosphere.

Social, transport and heritage peak bodies and organisations

- There are concerns about the short timeframe for the review and a view that it is important to consult with affected communities about any future development in or vision for the area.
- Improving connections to the CBD and neighbouring areas will be critical including improving active transport (walking and cycling).
- The current planning framework provides for social and affordable housing in the area. This should be protected and/or increased.
- The heritage of the Pyrmont Peninsula is critical to the area's identity and feel and should be protected.

Planning industry

- Local strategic planning and community participation are a critical part of the planning system in New South Wales and should be strengthened not undermined through the review. Open and transparent collaboration with local government and the existing community is essential for strategic planning in the area.

Industry peak bodies

- Acknowledgment of the important role of the Pyrmont Peninsula in its proximity to the Global Sydney CBD, Innovation Corridor, and unique inner-city lifestyle. Pyrmont has the potential to be a mixed-use centre with innovation, retail, commercial, and residential in walkable distances.
- The current planning controls may be inconsistent with, and too fragmented to deliver, the vision for Pyrmont, including the need for a broader spatial master plan incorporating adjacent significant projects.
- It is important to consider how the younger generation of knowledge workers want to live and work in the precinct, including the need to attract and maintain innovation and start-up industries, as well as visitors, with vibrant walkable streetscapes, wayfinding and sightlines to the water.
- It is important to enhance transport connectivity to the precinct, including the consideration of a potential Metro station to support jobs growth, as well as water transport such as ferries. Active transport options such as walking and cycling should also be prioritised and end-of-trip facilities enhanced.
- There could be increased opportunities for greater office and retail to support job growth to service the Innovation Corridor. As CBD office vacancy rates decline, Pyrmont can act as a newer commercial centre.
- There is a lack of accommodation options that are both affordable and in proximity to key amenities such as cafés and restaurants. This is one of the biggest inhibitors to growth in the visitor economy.
- There is a need for the development industry to be positively and constructively engaged in the planning process.
- The Commission's review should not impact on significant projects that are well underway in the planning system.

Major landowners

- The planning system is hard to understand and lacks clarity and clear timeframes due to the multiplicity of local and state land use and heritage planning controls impacting on development. There needs to be holistic planning across the area.
- The Commission's review should not impact on significant projects that are well underway in the planning system.
- Recent development in the area has been outside existing Local and State planning controls, with an evolving built form and character and there is a need for clarity on an agreed vision for the area.
- There are different and evolving character areas throughout the area.
- There is the potential to leverage development balanced with good amenity outcomes in the Bays Precinct and Sydney Fish Market.
- It is important to enhance transport linkages to the precinct and improve pedestrian amenity to support jobs growth, including a new Metro station and connections to the CBD.
- New residential developments need to be designed to ensure there is not a conflict between residents and late-night activities such as entertainment venues. Landowners

operating an entertainment business supported maintaining a commercial core zoning to support existing and future entertainment uses.

- The Pyrmont foreshore areas should be declared a State Significant Precinct similar to other “late-night economy” precincts in the CBD.
- There is a need to increase building heights and floorspace ratios to meet the demand for residential and business space, and that restrictive regulations can be a barrier for innovation precincts.

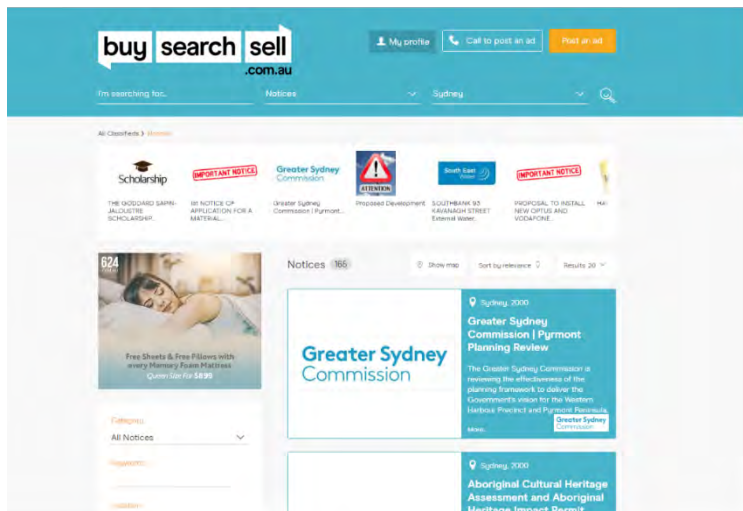
4. Technical briefings

As part of the Commission's review, technical briefings were held with State Government agencies, the City of Sydney Council, Inner West Council, University of Technology Sydney and TAFE NSW. These are listed below:

- Create NSW
- City of Sydney Council
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment
- Destination NSW
- Government Architects Office
- Infrastructure NSW
- Inner West Council
- Ports Authority NSW
- Property NSW
- Schools Infrastructure NSW
- Sydney Metro Authority
- TAFE NSW
- Transport for NSW
- University Technology Sydney.

Advertisements

City Hub



City News

Greater Sydney Commission

▶ Pyrmont Planning Review

The Greater Sydney Commission is reviewing the effectiveness of the planning framework to deliver the Government's vision for the Western Harbour Precinct and Pyrmont Peninsula, as the western gateway of Sydney's CBD.

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To provide feedback or for more information on how to participate, please visit www.greater.sydney

Email to Peak Panel members and community groups listed on the City of Sydney Council website.

Good afternoon

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has requested the Greater Sydney Commission (the Commission) review the effectiveness of the planning framework to deliver the Government's vision for the Western Harbour Precinct and Pyrmont Peninsula, as the western gateway of Sydney's CBD.

The Terms of Reference and review area map can be found [here](#).

How to participate

As part of our review we are seeking to hear the views of stakeholders. There are two ways to provide your input:

1. Online submission, closing date is 5pm Monday 16 September 2019.
2. One-on-one meetings with Commission representatives. These 10-minute meetings will be held on Thursday 12 September and Friday 13 September 2019. To request a meeting, you must fill out an Expression of Interest (EOI). EOIs close at midnight on Sunday 8 September 2019.

Spaces are limited. Priority will be given to those whose concerns most closely relate to the Review Terms of Reference and to ensure that a broad range of stakeholder perspectives are included. Meeting times will be confirmed on Tuesday 10 September 2019.

For more information on the Review and links to the submission form and EOI, please visit our website [here](#).

We encourage you to share this information with your members and peers.

Thank you.

Regards

Stephanie Barker

A/ Executive Director, City Strategy

**Greater Sydney
Commission**

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Listening session attendees

Name	Organisation	Category
Elizabeth Elenius	Pyrmont Action Inc.	Community Group
Sam Stone & Steve Mann	UDIA	Peak
Michael Tilt	Macroplan	Private Business
Ken Loudon		Resident
David Brenac & Madonna Rocle	The Star	Private Business
Wil Nino & Clare Brown	Emag Apartments & Urbis	Private Business
David Hogendijk & Alexis Cella	Mirvac & Ethos Urban	Private Business
Annie Guo & Malcolm Anthony Carson		Resident
Chris Johnson	Urban Taskforce	Peak
James Hulme	Committee for Sydney	Peak
Alex Greenwich MP	Member for Sydney	Elected representative
John Brockhoff (& Greg New, TBC)	PIA	Peak
John Vassallo & Carlos Frias	Celestino & Urbis	Private Business
Darren Williamson & Adam Haddow	Citi 88	Private Business
Tom Lockley	The Powerhouse Museum Alliance	Community Group
Zena Vaassen		Resident
Stevan Pejic		Resident
David Miles		Resident
Lesley Lynch & Asa Wahlquist	The Glebe Society	Community Group
Raema Lancaster		Resident
Yimmy Seifert & Bill d'Anthes	Ultimo Village Voice	Community Group