



Council of Social Service of New South Wales

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Mr Theo Zotos
Senior Strategic Planner
Liverpool City Council
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Dear Mr Zotos

The Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS) is the peak body for the social and community services sector in New South Wales. NCOSS works with its members on behalf of disadvantaged people and communities towards achieving social justice in NSW.

We welcome this opportunity to comment on the draft *Revitalising Liverpool City Centre Plan* (the Revitalisation Plan) that was released in November 2006. We recognize that the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy *City of Cities* designates Liverpool, along with Parramatta and Penrith, as one of three regional cities that are planned to provide for more lifestyle and work opportunities close to those parts of the Sydney that are experiencing the most rapid and sustained population growth. Because of this the Revitalisation Plan has implications that go beyond just the local area.

NCOSS appreciates that the Revitalisation Plan is the product of genuine collaborative work between the Council and the State Government. We welcome the fact that it contains an explicit target of attracting 15,000 new jobs to the Liverpool CBD by 2031 in areas such as retail, business services, hospitality, medical IT, and health related suppliers and logistics. If translated into action, this would effectively double the current Liverpool city centre workforce and generate more jobs closer to home. This is clearly in line with the objectives of both the Metropolitan Strategy and the NSW State Plan.

We note that the Liverpool city centre current has a residential population of just over 11,000 people, which contains a high proportion of low income groups, new migrants and refugees, lone and group households, and single parent families. The Revitalisation Plan proposes to accommodate an additional 12,000 in the city centre by 2031, with a particular emphasis on attracting more professional households connected to Liverpool's health and vocational educational facilities.

NCOSS appreciates the reasons why Council might seek to promote a more diverse city centre population. We would not wish, however, to see this occur at the expense of an incremental increase in affordable housing opportunities.

Simply encouraging more professional households will not of itself solve the perceived or actual problems with the existing private rental areas. In our view, this requires a joint State and Council effort to initiate an active community regeneration process. We note that the

State Government has developed a policy framework for the regeneration of public housing estates but lacks a similar framework for addressing the disadvantages facing low income private rental precincts that display similar demographic and physical characteristics. This is a matter that has concerned NCOSS for some time. We believe that the valuable work of the Six Cities Taskforce presents an opportunity to develop and test regeneration measures in such locations.

We note that, in contrast to the draft plans for the revitalisation of Parramatta and Penrith CBDs, the Revitalisation Plan for Liverpool contains no specific undertakings in relation to affordable housing. NCOSS believes that this oversight needs to be redressed.

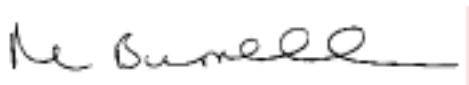
It is well documented that low to moderate income households in Sydney are experiencing increasing housing affordability problems and that the supply of low rent private rental stock for low income households has been declining in both relative and absolute terms. The State Government's own figures show that there are some 175,000 low to moderate income households in Sydney in housing stress, in that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. This group comprises 115,000 private renters and 60,000 home purchasers.

NCOSS recommends that Council prepares, in conjunction with NGO stakeholders and the Departments of Housing and Planning, a draft Affordable Housing Strategy for the City Centre. We suggest that an appropriate target would be for 10% of the new dwellings arising from the Revitalisation Plan to be designated as affordable housing.

We believe that a commitment to affordable housing of that magnitude, if planned sensitively and located appropriately, would not conflict with the other objectives of the Revitalisation Plan.

If you require any further information on this submission please do not hesitate to contact Warren Gardiner, Senior Policy Officer, on 02 9211 2599 or warren@ncoss.org.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Burrell', is written over a thin horizontal line. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Michelle Burrell
Acting Director