



Council of Social Service of New South Wales

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Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001
wentworthpoint@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam

As the peak body for the non-government community services sector in NSW, NCOSS would like to comment on the proposed changes to the planning controls for Wentworth Point.

We note that Wentworth Point is a residential suburb that has been excised from the broader Sydney Olympic Park area. Prior to the redevelopment prompted by the Olympic Games, the area then known as Homebush Bay West consisted of a series of low value warehouses and other non-residential uses. The large public investment that has gone into Sydney Olympic Park has driven the increase in the value of the Wentworth Point sites, making upmarket residential development financially viable.

The exhibited proposal would, if approved, involve an enormous increase in the scale of residential development permitted on certain sites at Wentworth Point, compared to the existing controls under the Homebush Bay West Development Control Plan. The Department's fact sheet estimates that an additional 1,300 apartments would be allowable. This is largely to be achieved by increasing the existing height limit of 8 to 9 storeys to encompass 4 x 25 storey residential towers and 8 surrounding towers of 16-20 storeys.

Clearly an upzoning of this scale would have a range of impacts on Sydney Olympic Park, the nearby suburb of Newington and the wider Auburn local government area. Public transport access to Wentworth Point by bus or ferry is also a concern. These local impacts are not the subject of our submission.

NCOSS believes that any intensification of residential development at Wentworth Point should be conditional upon a substantial contribution of affordable rental housing by the companies that own the sites involved. We have an open mind about the best mechanism for doing this but propose that at least 5% of the additional housing should be designated for affordable housing.

Our position on this matter is consistent with our frequently expressed view that an affordable housing dividend should be required from large scale residential developments that are proposed for either government-owned sites or for privately owned sites whose redevelopment potential is underwritten by large scale public infrastructure investment.

NCOSS believes that the current proposal falls into the second category. While the suburb boundaries adopted a few years ago now separate Wentworth Point from Sydney Olympic

Park, it is perfectly clear that the amenity of Wentworth Point is fundamentally underwritten by public investment in the amenity of Sydney Olympic Park, including the open space, walking and cycling tracks, ferry terminal and other facilities.

Part of what the owners of these sites will be selling is this publicly funded amenity. In return they are only being asked to meet the cost of a bridge linking Wentworth Point and Rhodes and the standard s94 contributions for community facilities. We consider this to be woefully inadequate.

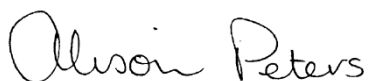
We note that the Central Western Sydney region in general and the Auburn local government area in particular are characterized by high levels of housing affordability stress and widespread serious overcrowding. For this reason we strongly recommend that the present allowable density and building height limits only be increased if the landowners concerned are willing to make a reasonable contribution towards the provision of affordable rental housing at Wentworth Point. Any such affordable housing should be managed by a registered community housing provider.

The developers should also be required to ensure that the new housing is built in accordance with the *Livable Housing Design Guidelines* (2nd edition) prepared by Livable Housing Australia.

Beyond these matters, NCOSS makes no comment on the reasonableness or otherwise of what is proposed.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Mr Warren Gardiner, Senior Policy Officer (housing, homelessness, planning and infrastructure), on 02 9211 2599 ext 112 or warren@ncoss.org.au

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Peters".

Alison Peters
Director