



To: Jim Betts, Secretary, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Marcus Ray, Deputy Secretary, Planning and Assessment, Brett Whitworth, Deputy Secretary
Greater Sydney, Place and Infrastructure Susan Holliday, Member Independent Advisory Group
James Cain, Member Independent Advisory Group, Geoffrey London, Member Independent Advisory
Group

CC: The Hon. Rob Stokes MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP, Minister for Water, Property and Housing
Councillor Clover Moore, Lord Mayor, City of Sydney

Re. Waterloo South planning proposal assessment and consultation

About Inner Sydney Voice

Inner Sydney Voice is a non-profit organisation working to promote social justice and social inclusion, and to provide information, advocacy, support, and community development. For over forty years we have operated in the Redfern and Waterloo area supporting community capacity building and helping co-ordinate the local NGO sector on key issues.

In relation to the Waterloo redevelopment, we successfully delivered a capacity building program in 2017-2019 and supported the Aboriginal community involvement in the redevelopment process with a liaison officer post until May 2020. Despite a lack of funding to do so, Inner Sydney Voice has continued to support and advocate for community groups and residents in the area over the past nine months, using our organisational reserves to cover those costs. This is because Inner Sydney Voice is passionate about the need for community engagement in the urban renewal process.

Planning proposal concerns

Inner Sydney Voice wishes to raise concerns about the Waterloo South planning proposal assessment process, responsibility for which was under the jurisdiction of the City of Sydney and the Land and Housing Corporation. However, NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Rob Stokes, has since handed over authority to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

Inner Sydney Voice is writing to ensure that community concerns are given proper attention as the Waterloo planning process moves forwards. Many hours of work, time and passion have gone into maintaining communications with government agencies to date. Extensive efforts have been invested by community leaders, NGOs, and the City of Sydney to progress to the next stages of consultation. For this to be lost now would be a dire waste of resources, trust and momentum gained.

Inner Sydney Voice hopes that the DPIE will listen to the community and to afford current residents and public housing tenants due respect by providing them with clear and concise information as the redevelopment progresses. Given the project's size and complexity, it is essential that the community is independently supported and resourced to respond to the proposal from an informed perspective.

In that regard, Inner Sydney Voice urges the DPIE to reverse the withdrawal of the previously well-established and respected community support structures. This includes reinstating community development and capacity building staff, bilingual educators, and other social support personnel. Inner Sydney Voice feels it is imperative that DPIE representatives liaise in person with organisations and residents to provide community a genuine opportunity to comment on the Waterloo south planning proposal. Inner Sydney Voice believes that an online public exhibition is inappropriate for a community with poor internet access and a large non-English speaking population.

Inner Sydney Voice is also advocating for the Waterloo South development to accommodate a greater amount of public housing stock. To not use the public land to address a desperate social housing shortfall in Sydney is a wasted opportunity. Inner Sydney Voice is a strong supporter of the City of Sydney's commitment to strengthening the mix ratio of 30% social housing and 20% affordable housing — including 10% affordable housing set aside for the Aboriginal community. As well, Inner Sydney Voice supports the call for adequate community facilities to service the specific needs of the public/social housing tenants. Waterloo South is home to a substantial Aboriginal community and Inner Sydney Voice backs appeals for special efforts to be made by the DPIE to understand the unique needs and requirements of this community.

Inner Sydney Voice urges the DPIE to consider all of the above during the assessment process and when deciding future community consultation on the Waterloo South proposal.

Yours Sincerely,



Claire McAteer

Executive Officer, Inner Sydney Voice.